



LAW Chi-hung 羅志雄 (1912–1991.1.6)

Director, Screenwriter

Born Law Kwong-chung of Zhongshan, Guangdong ancestry, Law Chi-hung also worked under the stage name, Law Chap-kwan. Law was a Cantonese opera apprentice during his formative years. He arrived in Hong Kong in 1937 and joined the Grandview Film Company Limited as an assistant director before making his directorial debut with the Cantonese film, *Freedom of Speech* (aka *Emperor Without a Crown*, 1937) in the same year. Over the span of his career, Law directed over 40 films, also serving as the writer for 25 of his films. His most notable works, *Small Canton* (1940), the patriotic film that he co-directed with Tang Xiaodan and *The Little Tiger* (1941) topped the box office in 1940 and 1941, respectively. After the war, Law returned to Hong Kong from Guilin and directed a long string of Cantonese movies, including *The Fearless* (1947), *The Story of Wong Fei-hung*, *Grand Conclusion* (1951) and *The Long Wait* (1948), in which he also acted. In the early 1950s, he moved to Guangzhou and was appointed the director of the Cantonese Opera Theatre of Guangdong. In 1957, Law returned to Hong Kong and joined the Sun Luen Film Company, serving as both writer and director for three back to back 'Judge Bao' films: *Pearl's Reconciliation* (1957), *Judge Bao's Mysterious Case of Chalk Circle* (1957) and *Bloody Palm Prints* (1957). In the same year, he wrote and directed *The Nymph of River Lo* that featured Cantonese opera legend Fong Yim-fun, establishing his *métier* for directing Chinese opera adaptations.

When the Sun Luen Film Company later made a foray into producing Chaozhou-dialect films under the Hung Tu Film Co banner, Law was hired to direct three Chaozhou opera films: *The Story of Sixth Madam Su* (1960), *A Woman Sues Her Own Husband* (1961) and *Swallows Greet the Spring* (1962). *The Story of Sixth Madam Su* that featured the Guangdong Chaozhou Theatre Number One Troupe, was a box-office success in Hong Kong and across Southeast Asia. The film is often credited for inciting the subsequent popular wave of Chaozhou opera film productions. Law later directed both the Cantonese opera film *Yim Shung* (aka *Showdown at the Hall of Yim*, 1962), starring Yam Kim-fai and Ng Kwan-lai, and the Chaozhou-dialect version, *Madam Lan Ching* (1962). He also directed many Chaozhou opera films for Eng Wah & Company, including *The Nun's Story* (1962), *The Precious Lotus Lamp* (1963) and *Siang Tse Bridge* (1965). Law was also responsible for *sheng* actress Chan Chor-wai's most well-known films, *The Misplaced Love-Token* (1962) and *A Common Scholar* (1963). The last film he directed was *Golden Phoenix* (1968). His reputation as a meticulous director and the massive success of *The Story of Sixth Madam Su*, both established Law's name within the history of Chaozhou-dialect cinema.

In the mid-1960s, Law Chi-hung retired from filmmaking due to health issues. Law passed away from illness in Hong Kong on 6 February 1991. His paternal cousin Lo Kwan-hung, son Law Kee-shik, and nephew Law Chi are all film directors.