



LEE Hoi-chuen 李海泉 (1898–1965.2.8)

Actor

Born Lee Moon-chuen, Lee was a native of Shunde, Guangdong Province. He started out as an apprentice in a teahouse in Foshan, but he successfully impressed one of the teahouse guests and opera veteran Siu Sang Yik and thus became his disciple. He initially trained in Cantonese opera as an amateur but eventually performed full-time in the Sun Chung Wah Opera Troupe, mostly in *xiaosheng* (young male) roles. Later, he quit and joined Wing Sou Lin Opera Troupe, starting to play *chou* (clown) parts. He became member of several famous troupes after the war, including Kwok Fung Nin Opera Troupe and was featured in their signature plays.

Lee went on tour in Canada and the US during the war. In 1939, he brought along his wife to the US who gave birth to Lee Jun-fan (who would later become international superstar Bruce Lee) the next year. He was later a mainstay at Kam Tim Fa Opera Troupe, playing in such famous plays as *Three Attempts to Steal the Cup of the Nine Dragons*, *Copper-Netted Trap* and *Two Drug Addicts Sweep a Long Dike*. In 1958, he made his exit from the stage. The last troupe he was featured in was Lei Yuen Lok Opera Troupe.

Adept at *chousheng* (male clown) roles, Lee was also known for his parts in films that feature characters in tattered costumes. Besides, he is famous for his rusty vocal style. He was, together with Liu Hap-wai, Poon Yat On and Yip Fut-yeuk, one of the 'Four Great *Chous*'. Keen on nurturing talents, Lee had mentored such new rising stars as Fong Yim-fan and Sun Hoi-chuen.

Lee made his acting debut in 1939 with *Robbing the Dead*. Between 1939 and 1961, he went on to appear in over 100 features. His well-received films include *Feed the Scholar* (1947), *Two Opium Addicts Sweep a Long Dyke* (1948), *Trashy Heaven* (1949), *The Kid* (1950), *A Buddhist Recluse for 14 Years* (1958) and *Three Attempts to Steal the Goblet of Nine Dragons* (1959). His last film was *The Orphan's Adventure* (1961) and he passed away in 1965 in Hong Kong.