



LI Ching 李菁 (1948.11.8–2018)

Actress, Producer, Executive Producer

Born in Shanghai as Li Guoying, Li Ching moved to Hong Kong with her family when young. She was accepted into the Southern Drama Group's second training class under Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd while she was in secondary school. She joined the company in 1963 and made her debut in *The Lotus Lamp* (1965). She picked up small roles in *The Dancing Millionairess* (1964) and *The Story of Sue San* (1964), later landed more important roles in *The Crimson Palm* (1964) and *The Female Prince* (1964), before landing the lead role in *The Mermaid* (1965), for which she won Best Actress at the 12th Asian Film Festival at the young age of 17. She was nicknamed Hong Kong cinema's 'Baby-faced Queen' as she embarked on an acting career of glittery brilliance.

In her early years, Li mainly appeared in period films. Although singing was not her forte, she collaborated with Ivy Ling Po in several *huangmei diao* films, including *The Mermaid*, *The West Chamber* (1965) and *The Three Smiles* (1969), and co-starred with newcomer Hsiao Hsiang in *The Pearl Phoenix* (1967). She then gradually shifted towards contemporary films, first playing village girls in *Sweet and Wild* (1966) and *Moonlight Serenade* (1967), and then the character of a capricious city girl in *Susanna* (1967). Her next film put her stylish side on display, as she sang and danced in *Hong Kong Rhapsody* (1968), the top-grossing Mandarin film of that year. Later, her role in *The Merry Wife* (1972) won at the 18th Asian Film Festival award, for Most Popular Actress, marking a major milestone in her acting career.

Li worked with Shaws since the start of her career and she continuously expanded the scope of her acting roles. After *The Invincible Fist* (1969), she worked in several films directed by Chang Cheh, including *Dead End* (1969), *Have Sword, Will Travel* (1969) and *The New One-Armed Swordsman* (1971); also in martial arts films by other directors, including *Valley of the Fangs* (1970) and *Vengeance of a Snow Girl* (1971). While performing a stunt in *Killers Five* (1969), she injured her left foot; it took nearly half a year for her to recuperate before she could resume filming. Later, she appeared in the erotic films *Sexy Girls of Denmark* (1973) and *Sexy Playgirls* (1973), changing her character type in the latter to play a psychologically-twisted woman. She also acted in comedies such as *The Happy Trio* (1975).

In 1976, Li bid farewell to Shaws and went to Taiwan to make films, starring in *Heroes of the Eastern Skies* (1977) and *My Sweet Memory* (1978, Taiwan). She reunited with Ivy Ling Po to act in *Dream of The Red Chamber* (1978), which Ling Po also invested in producing. During that, she wanted to develop her own production business and co-founded Long Horizon Film (Hong Kong) Limited with director John Lo Ma in 1978. The company only released one film, *Chase* (1978), in which she acted and served as executive producer. In addition, she founded Million Film (H.K.) Co. Ltd, releasing *Big Leap Forward* (1979) and *Snake Deadly Act* (1980), on both of which she served as the producer. In the early 1980s, she gradually left the entertainment industry and focused instead on investment businesses. Li passed away in Hong Kong in February 2018.
