



Lily CHAN 陳麗麗 (b. 1941.10.28)

Actress

Born Chan Lai-yu, Lily Chan was a native of Chenghai, Guangdong. She has been passionate about Chaozhou opera since she was a child. While attending junior secondary school, she was accepted to Yuli Chaozhou Opera Troupe as a *huadan* (young female) trainee. Soon after she began her apprenticeship, Chan was offered the lead role in the play, *The Mix-Up*. She later went on tour with the troupe, performing in rural villages and towns. After moving to Hong Kong in the late 1950s with her family, Chan joined the theatre troupe of Hong Kong Swatow Importers & Exporters Association (which later became Hong Kong Chaozhou Opera Troupe and Hon Kwong Chiu Chow Opera Troupe); and performed in Chaozhou operas such as *Jiu Feng Chen* and *Gao Qinfu*. In 1961, Chan signed an exclusive contract with Tai Lang Film Co and became the film company's primary lead actress, starring back-to-back in a number of films, including *The Chivalrous Songstress* (1961), *The Mix-Up* (1962) and *For Life or for Death* (1962), often playing opposite *xiaosheng* (young civil male) actresses, such as Chan Shuk-wah, Lee Mei-ying (who was renowned for playing either male and female character) and Nan Yan. In 1962, Chan signed with the Chiu Ngee Motion Picture Production Company, founded by the Singapore-based Kong Ngee that specialised in producing Chaozhou-dialect films. She partnered with Xintiancai Chaozhou Opera Troupe's *xiaosheng* performer, Chan Chor-wai, for a series of Chiu Ngee productions, including *Dream in Peony Pavilion* (1963), *Story of the Plum Blossom* (1963), *Fairy and Man* (1963) and so forth. Despite having acted in some 10 films throughout her career, Chan was best remembered for her tender and vivid portrayals of spirited, quick-witted and courageous young women who persevered against adversity.

In 1965, Chan toured Thailand with Yixing Chaozhou Opera Troupe and Ting Chor-kiu, the acclaimed Chaozhou-dialect film actress who had switched to perform *xiaosheng* roles. Chan later immigrated to Canada.