



Maggie Li 李琳琳 (1948–)

Actress

A native of Hebei, Tianjin with the original name of Li Yueh-ling, Li came to Hong Kong with her family at the age of three. As a child, she studied Peking opera under Fen Ju Hua. In 1962, Motion Picture & General Investment Co. Ltd. (MP & GI) recruited young actors for *Because of Her* (1963), giving way to Li's screen debut as a member of a song and dance troupe. After she received training from the film company, she became a contract actor. Fluent in both Mandarin and Cantonese, Li was initially cast in *I Love Them Both* (1964) by MP & GI's Cantonese Unit and later focused on Mandarin films. In her early career, Li mainly appeared in secondary roles. She started to gain recognition playing the sister of Betty Loh Ti's character in *A Debt of Blood* (1966) directed by Yuan Qiu-feng. She later landed the lead role for the first time in *Teenagers' Holidays* (1968) also directed by Yuan whom she collaborated in *The Lightning Sword* (1969). Having also appeared in films like *Young Love* (1967) and *Summer Love* (1968), Li became a teen idol. She broke the mold and played a young wife in *The Homemaker* (1970). The film was a critical success.

Li worked for eight years at MP & GI, which was later renamed Cathay Organisation (Hong Kong), and remained an A-list actress. After Cathay Organisation withdrew from film production, Li continued as a freelance actress. She appeared in films like *House of Tears* (1971), and co-starred with Alan Tang in films like *Song of Happy Life* (1971). She continued exploring different genres such as erotic thrillers like *Love and Blood* (1972) and *The Call Girls* (1973), as well as martial arts films like *The Prodigal Boxer* (1972). In 1974, Li married actor and director John Chiang, and also starred in *A Mad World of Fools* (1974) directed by Chiang.

Li appeared in a cameo role in the 1975 anthology series *Superstar Special* by Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB). By the end of the year, she starred in the sitcom *Tea for Two*, which was a major hit and a sequel was filmed in the following year. Li began to place her focus on television and starred in television series including *Many Many Chambers in My Heart* (1976), *MQ 77* (1977), and *Romantic Swordsman* (1978). She also played the memorable roles of Phoenix and Zhu Yingtai in *Chinese Folklore*. Li switched to Commercial Television in 1978, and returned to TVB when Commercial Television ceased operation. She acted in a variety of television series, including the serial drama *Five Easy Pieces* (1980), as well as *Poor Angel* (1979), *Double Fantasies* (1981), and *The Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils* (1982).

Li occasionally appeared in films including *One Way Only* (1979) and sometimes in cameo roles like in *Plain Jane to the Rescue* (1982). In *The Wrong Couples* (1987) directed by John Chiang, Li was cast as the best friend of Josephine Siao Fong-fong's character. After the mid-1980s, Li hosted the TVB informational programme *Woman Today*. In the early 1990s, she immigrated to Canada where she hosted local radio programmes. Li has since returned to Hong Kong.