



MOK Hong-si 莫康時 (1908.12.25–1969.4.15)

Director, Screenwriter

A Guangxi native, Mok graduated from the Law Faculty of the University of Shanghai. In his early career, he joined Dachangcheng Film Company where he penned the script for *Dark Shadow* (1932), a film directed by his former primary schoolmate Lee Ying-yuen. In 1935, at the invitation of Fenghuang Production Company, Mok came to Hong Kong to direct the silent film *Sunset*; but the company went bankrupt before the film was released. Mok later worked as a theatre manager in Nanjing, while freelancing as a translator for some American film companies. For a period of time, he joined the Film Section of the Central Publicity Department's Art Unit, run by the Nationalist government. In 1939, Mok came to Hong Kong and collaborated with Lee again, serving as his screenwriter. The scripts he wrote include *The Perfect Woman* (1939), *Marriage Made in Heaven* (1939) and *The Spotlight* (1940). He debuted as a director in 1940 with the Cantonese title *Spring Returns to the Good Earth*.

During Hong Kong's fall to the Japanese, Mok fled to the Mainland and participated in theatrical plays. In 1946, he came to Guangzhou and headed one of the publicity teams organised by the Central Motion Picture Company, during which he toured Zhaoqing and Wuzhou to screen propaganda shorts produced by Central Motion Picture and the United States Information Agency. He moved to Hong Kong the same year and directed the first Hong Kong post-war film, *Flames of Lust* (1946). However, Mok was best known for his comedies. His early celebrated works include the three Cantonese titles centred around the character Broker Lai, namely *Broker Lai* (1950), *Broker Lai and the Smart Fei-tin Nam* (1950) and *The Misarranged Love Trap* (1950), as well as the Mandarin title *Gold Diggers* (1952), which he co-directed with Lee Ying-yuen for Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd. Among his other comedy titles were the Cantonese comedies *Inspectress General* (1961) and *False Alarm* (1962), on which he served as guest director for Motion Picture and General Investment Co Ltd (MP & GI). He also directed numerous features for Liberty Film Co. and Lan Kwong Film Company, both founded by Wong Cheuk-hon. For the former, he directed such Mandarin films as *Mother Dearest* (1956) and *Princess of Sun Moon Lake* (1956). For the latter, he directed *Three Love Affairs* (1963) and *The Student Prince* (1964), all in Cantonese. Around the same period, he became sworn brothers with nine other veteran filmmakers in Hong Kong and formed The Ten Brothers Motion Pictures Co. In 1964, *The Beautiful Heaven* was released, a film co-directed and co-written by the ten directors.

His other prominent works include *A Sorrowful Millionaire* (1963), *The Girl in the Bus* (1965), *The Witty Bus Girl* (1966), and *Lady Bond* series (Part 1-4, 1966-67), etc. His last film was *The Pretty Wild Cat* (1969). Mok directed around 160 Cantonese and Mandarin titles during his career. He passed away of illness in Hong Kong on 15 April 1969. His first wife Luk Siu-sin, also known by her stage name Lan Yin, was a Cantonese opera *huadan* (young female) who had starred in many films; his second wife, Suk Tsi, was a Cantonese movie star. His son, Mok Ka-lun also appeared in films as a child star.
