



POON Yat On 半日安 (1904–1964.3.3)

Actor

A native of Nanhai County, Guangdong Province with the real name Lee Hung-on, Poon is a Cantonese opera fan when he was young. He became Leng Chung Yuk's apprentice, and later learned under So Wan Lan. He joined the Tai Law Tin Opera Troupe led by Ma Si-tsang and performed *lache* (performers who play miscellaneous roles) at the time. His stage name which literally translated to 'half day of peace' was given by Ma and was derived from the poetic line of 'It is difficult for a gentleman to have half day of peace'. His wife is famous Cantonese opera star Shanghai Mei.

Poon had been enlisted and performed in Kok Sin Sing Opera Troupe led by Sit Kok-sin. He was best remembered for his impersonation of the mother-in-law in *Why Not Return?* He was also a great *chou* (the clown category of performing parts) player and was considered, together with Liu Hap-wai, Lee Hoi-chuen, and Yip Fut-yeuk, one of the four great *chous*.

Poon entered the film industry in 1934 with a starring role in *The Mischief Makers*; his first title role was in *A Night of Romance* (1935). From 1934 to 1964, he appeared in over 260 films. Some of the best of his film assignments include *The Witty Taoist Master* (1941), *Twin-heads Selling Martial Arts* (1948), *The Nymph of the River Lo* (1957), *Why Not Return?* (1958), *Gold-Braided Fan* (1959), *Snow in June* (1959), *Golden Phoenix and Dragon* (1961), and *Drums Along the Battlefield* (1963). Soon after making his last film *Happiness Reigns Everywhere* (1964), Poon died in 1964.