



## SEK Yin-tsi 石燕子 (1920–1986.9.9)

### Actor

A native of Shunde, Guangdong with the original name Mak Chi-sing, Sek was also affectionately known as 'Sek God' (*Sek Sun*) or 'Brother Sing' (*Sing Gor*). Sek was a pupil of famous Cantonese opera artist Ho Sai-gei since young, and was lauded as a child prodigy as he made his stage debut at eleven years old. Skilled at combat scenes that showcased his outstanding Northern School martial art techniques, especially his *tuo shou* artistry (adept footwork and wielding of tasselled spears), Sek received the accolade of 'New Martial Champion'. He was disciple of famous Cantonese opera artists including Law Kar-kuen and Lan Chi Pak.

In 1939, Sek went on a performing tour in the US. Because of the Pacific War, he was stranded there in 1941. Upon his return to Hong Kong in 1947, he collaborated with other performers including Luo Pinchao, Sun Ma Si-tsang, and Ho Fei-fan. In 1948, Sek joined the Tai Kam Lung Opera Troupe, and performed repertoires including *Tan Kei in the Meat Hill* and *Sex to Kill the Devil* with Chung Shiu-lee and Law Kar-kuen. He later joined the Kwong Wah Opera Troupe, which starred along Yu Lai-zhen in programmes including *Chung Mo-yim* and *Encounter with the Gods*. Sek formed his own troupe, Yin Sun Sing Opera Troupe, in 1949 and performed *The Sentimental Swallow Returns*. He later formed Yin Tsz Opera Troupe in 1957 and performed famous programmes such as *The Colourful Butterfly* and *The Death of Bo Chi*.

During Sek's stay in the US, Sek acted in *The Returned Soul* (1947) and *Pear Flower in the Storm* (1948), both produced by Grandview. The first movie he appeared in after returning to Hong Kong was *Fong Sai-yuk and Miu Chui-fa* (1948). From 1947 to 1987, he played in around 140 films. He is best remembered for his characterisation of the young Shaolin kung fu rebel Fong Sai-yuk in a series of 20 films. Some of the films in which he had a leading role include such *wuxia* films as *Three Attempts at the Nine Dragon Cup* (1949), *The Bloody Fight Between Big Blade Wong Fifth and the Invincible Kid* (1950), and *Her Majesty's Imperial Warrant* (1962). Sek continued to make film appearances in the 1980s. He and his wife, Yam Bing-yee, made cameo appearances in *Silent Romance* in 1984 as Cantonese opera performers on stage. He also appeared in *A Better Tomorrow* (1986) with *Happy Go Lucky* in 1987 being his last film.

Apart from being a fine actor, Sek was also well known as an artist, particularly for his paintings featuring Buddhist figures as a motif. Passionate about horse riding, Sek was a professional jockey in Singapore and won equestrian jumping competitions in Hong Kong before. He was the racecourse manager at Xiangmi Lake in Shenzhen before he passed away. Sek was a council member, general affairs officer, and vice chairman of The Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong, and founder of the Hong Kong Cantonese Opera Artists Club. In 1986, he passed away in Hong Kong.

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