



## WONG Hok-sing 黃鶴聲 (1913.10.12–1994.2.1)

### Director, Actor

Born in Foshan and alias Wong Kam-yan, Wong was a native of Huaxian, Guangdong. His paternal grandfather was part owner of Foshan's Qingping Theatre. In the late 1920s, he was accepted into the Guangdong Drama Research Centre, studying alongside future filmmakers Lo Duen and Ng Wui. He was trained in Cantonese opera and Kunqu and later introduced Northern-style *gongjia* (feats) to Cantonese opera, becoming one of the key reformers of the art. After the Centre ceased operations, he continued his training at the Guangdong Professional Union for Cantonese Opera Performers. After graduation, he was assigned to Sit Kok-sin's Kok Sin Sing Opera Troupe as *xiaowu* (young military male). As his tenure ended with the Sit's troupe, he performed for numerous opera troupes, including Po Chai Tin Opera Troupe, Pak Yuk-tong's Tong Tin Bo Opera Troupe, Shing Sou Lin Opera Troupe and Tai Law Tin Opera Troupe. In 1937, he joined the Forever Green Opera Trope, receiving the top-billing as *wenwusheng* (civil and military male). In 1940, he joined Ma Si-tsang's Tai Ping Opera Troupe.

Wong was one of the earliest Cantonese opera artists to join the film industry as well as one of the few who became a director. His screen debut was *Breaking Through the Bronze Net* (1939). In 1940, while on tour in the United States, he met Joseph Sunn, the founder of Grandview Film Company Limited (U.S. Branch) who later offered him training in film production. In 1941, as he went on tour in San Francisco, he directed and acted in such films as *Angel* (aka *White Powder and Neon Lights*, 1947). He later became one of Grandview's mainstay directors. He returned to Hong Kong in 1948 and continued to build his career. Between 1940 and 1970, he acted in over 60 films and directed over 200, specialising in shooting *luogu* musical films. In the 1960s, he adapted several masterworks from the Tai Lung Fung Opera Troupe, including *The Princess in Distress* (1962). He also directed over 50 productions for Lux Film Company throughout his career, including *How Nazha Shattered Heaven to Save His Mother* (1962). His films documented many of the iconic Cantonese opera stage performances and feats, such as Yam Kim-fai's brilliant interpretation of the opera classic 'Ten Admonitions of Yim Sung' in *The Great Red Robe* (1965) and Fen Ju Hua's astounding water bucket balancing acrobatics in *The Capture of the Evil Demons* (1962). Wong also directed films of other dialects including the Chaozhou film *The Chaozhou Female Top Scholar* (1962) and the Amoy film *Three Daughters* (1964). Notable modern dramas include *Hut in Paradise* (1965) and *Dial 999 for the Three Murderers* (1965).

On 1 June 1963, Wong and nine other famous directors, including Wong Toi, Mok Hong-si and Lung To, swore in as 'Ten Brothers'. They were touted as the 'Ten Great Directors' in Hong Kong. In 1969, he immigrated to San Francisco. In his later years, he managed the operations of Chinatown Theatre founded by Wong Cheuk-hon and helped handle the affairs of the Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong. In 1994, he passed away in San Francisco.

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