

留住這時光：「光影·歷史·築蹟」策展絮語

Time Sealed on Celluloid: On Curating  
'Cityscape in Sight and Sound' Exhibition

黃愛玲談左翼電影的美學

Wong Ain-ling on the Aesthetics of Left-wing Cinema

「通台老倌」張月兒

'Master of Versatility': Cheung Yuet-ye

吳君麗——朝氣勃勃、率性自然

Ng Kwan-lai: The Vibrant But Unassuming  
Diva of Cantonese Opera

# 通訊

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編者的話 | Editorial@ChatRoom

封面：三、四十年代，不少當紅歌壇女伶躍登銀幕，張月兒為其中佼佼者；圖為她與馬師曾（右）合演夫妻的《苦鳳鶯憐》（1941）中的一幕逗趣場面。

鳴謝美國三藩市華宮戲院方創傑先生

Cover: Cheung Yuet-ye was among a host of female vocalists who crossed over to the big screen in the 1930s and 40s. Pictured is a rib-tickling scene from *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole* (1941) in which she starred opposite Ma Si-tsang (right).

Special thanks to Mr Jack Lee Fong of Palace Theatre, San Francisco, USA

新年伊始，萬象更新。香港電影資料館的展覽廳、電影院及票房，經過三個多月的大翻新，現已換上新裝，並重新投入服務。換妝後首個展覽「光影·歷史·築蹟」，選輯了十九世紀末至六十年代初的香港紀錄片及劇情片中的數以百計的精華片段，重現香港昔日的面貌及地標。滄海桑田，城市與鄉郊的舊貌在現實中已不復見，唯有光影永留記憶，負責策展的節目組同事陳彩玉訴說箇中得著。

今年三至五月迎來「尋存與啟迪四：香港早期聲影遺珍」，分別以「梨影交匯」、「左翼美學」等不同專題，再探香港早期電影。若看過第一輯選映的《苦鳳鶯憐》（1941），當會對片中與馬師曾合演鬥氣夫妻的張月兒留下深刻印象，吳月華博士特別介紹這位「通台老倌」的銀幕歷程。

已故前資料館研究主任黃愛玲女士，一直為前三輯「尋存與啟迪」電影戮力進行研究，我們特地將她於首輯評論《天上人間》（1941）、題為「左翼電影的美學」的座談會講辭整理成文，內容上溯至中國抗戰時期的電影、下至五十年代香港左派影片，並旁及法國電影，縷析條分，發人深省。前輩去世已逾一年，我們希望透過分享她的精闢見解，啟發年輕一代，讓電影文化研究的種籽，春風吹又生。

今年是粵劇申遺成功十周年，資料館亦計劃透過展覽、放映、出版，探索存留於電影中的粵劇珍貴文化寶藏。粵劇專家陳守仁博士率先撰文回溯吳君麗女士的演藝事業，紀念這位於去年九月逝世的一代紅伶，而其伶影雙輝的事業可說是過往不少名伶的寫照，有關這課題我們將會陸續探討。 [mkyung@lcsd.gov.hk]

The Hong Kong Film Archive rings in the new year with the re-opening of its newly refurbished Exhibition Hall, Cinema and Box Office. Priscilla Chan from the Programming Unit recounts the story behind our latest exhibition 'Cityscape in Sight and Sound' in the brand new hall, which visually remaps old Hong Kong through hundreds of footage selected from documentaries and feature films made between the late 19th century and early 1960s. Though some of our most memorable sceneries and vistas have been irrevocably lost to urbanisation, their former glory is preserved on celluloid for posterity.

The fourth chapter of the 'Early Cinematic Treasures Rediscovered' series will kick off in late March. The two-month event explores early Hong Kong cinema under the themes of 'Tango between Stage and Screen', 'The Art of Left-wing Cinema' and more. Those who saw *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole* (1941) during the first instalment in 2015 would have fondly remembered Cheung Yuet-ye as one half of the feuding couple opposite Ma Si-tsang. Dr Stephanie Ng especially devotes an essay to the screen career of this versatile veteran.

In tribute to the late Ms Wong Ain-ling, former Research Officer of the Archive who contributed unceasingly to all three previous chapters of the 'Early Cinematic Treasures Rediscovered' series, we have collated her findings and thoughts in the seminar 'The Aesthetics of Left-wing Cinema' from the first chapter. Her discussion of *Follow Your Dream* (1941) in the contexts of Chinese films made during the War of National Resistance and Hong Kong's left-wing cinema of the 1950s, along with an examination of a French film, makes an insightful and inspiring read for cultural studies aspirants.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the inscription of Cantonese opera on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Archive will shine a spotlight on Cantonese opera's legacy in cinema with an exhibition, screenings and publications. In remembrance of a diva who bid the audience a final farewell last September, Dr Chan Sau-yan takes a retrospective look at Ng Kwan-lai and her splendid screen and stage days. His essay marks the first of a series highlighting maestros of her time who enjoyed an equally successful dual career. [mkyung@lcsd.gov.hk]

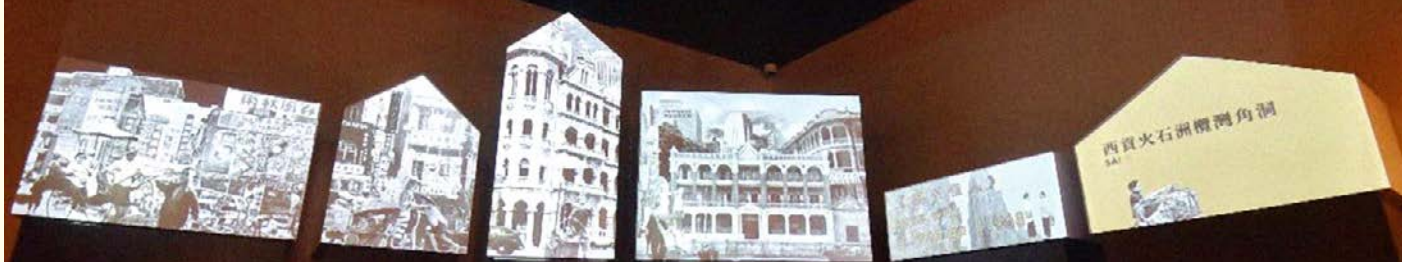
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本刊所載文章內容為個別作者的觀點，並不代表香港電影資料館的立場。

The views put forward in all the written materials are those of the authors themselves and do not represent the views of the Hong Kong Film Archive.





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Time Sealed on Celluloid: On Curating 'Cityscape in Sight and Sound' Exhibition

陳彩玉 Priscilla Chan

**早**在十九世紀末，外國人已開始用攝影機探索香港。時至今日，無數紀錄片和劇情片為香港各地風光留影，提供一個直接渠道，讓觀眾認識或回望這個城市。正如經典歌詞「變幻才是永恆」，香港城市面貌瞬息萬變，我們亦無法穿越過去的時空，電影卻凝住了不同年代的自然景色和人文環境，因而興起了策劃是次「光影·歷史·築蹟」展覽的念頭，希望和觀眾一同從一格格電影菲林中尋找昔日影像，重溯香港百年來的社會變遷。

### 一切從館藏開始

香港電影資料館館藏影片約四千部，佔香港電影產量幾近一半，尤以上世紀四十至六十年代的作品佔大多數。我們普遍認為七十年代末到八十年代初的香港新浪潮電影以社會民生作為題材，經常走出片廠到街上拍攝，故此外景場面特別多；但早在五十年代末，香港電影的年產量顯著增長，片廠需求大增，在供不應求的情況下，懂得應變的電影人自然要思量如何走出片場到實地取景。正如活躍於五、六十年代影壇的陳焯生導演所言，既然租片廠搭景的預算緊絀，何不拍攝外景，既能節省成本，也是影片的綽頭和賣點，一舉兩得。<sup>1</sup>

### 大海撈針

從海量的館藏中，尋找影片中的外景，談何容易。我們開展這項工作時，首先將古裝片、戲曲片、武打片等從選單上刪除；由於七十年代後的香港電影坊間也流通，故此我們希望觀眾能看到較少機會曝光的片段，經多次篩選後，僅是十九世紀末至六十年代有館藏影像資料的紀錄片和劇

情片也逾千部，幸得前研究組同事周荔嬌和其他同事，以及義工的協助，由構思、搜集資料、整理片目、揀選片段、地標溯源、研究分析、申請版權、場地設計、剪輯影像到其他數不盡的相關工作，若不是大家目標一致，這個非常任務絕不可能在九個月內完成。

### 回憶總是美好

構思展覽時已經計劃將展場分為三個區域，以不同方式展示影像，並附以文物和模擬實景作對照，鉤沉昔日的香港地標，疏理它們在電影內、外的意義。位於展場入口處的第一區，映入眼簾的是早於十九世紀末記錄香港早期市況、多是由外國人拍攝作商業或教學用途的影片。基於當時異國旅遊相對困難，這些紀錄片成為洋人窺探東方的一扇窗。第二區的主題是探索電影地標的象徵意義，我們揀選了數十部影片，分析導演如何利用不同地標加強劇力，成為扣連故事或角色的符號。我們透過光雕投影（projection mapping）和動態圖形（motion graphic）技術，把電影片

段、街景照片拼貼並投射在六組立體方塊，不再局限於平面的戲院銀幕，希望增加觀看的趣味之餘，並刺激觀眾的想像力，重新思考地標在個別電影的含義。隨後第三區以電影有意或無意展現的景觀、地貌出發，由黑白到彩色，重現來自不同年代但已成為集體回憶的地標，引領各年齡層的觀眾走進光影中的時光隧道，一同感受由四十年代到六十年代市民生活的改變，回味或探知香港的不同面貌。

### 無言感激

每次參與籌劃展覽，都深深感受到「出外靠朋友」這諺語的意思，感謝各電影公司及工作人員、版權人，以及資料館同事、義工隊伍，在我們最「危急」的關頭伸出援手，尤其是修復組的協助及包容，讓這些珍貴的影像在「光影·歷史·築蹟」展覽中得以展現。■

### 註釋

1 引述的內容出自香港電影資料館的陳焯生口述歷史訪問的抄錄稿，劉欽訪問，2012年10月25日。

陳彩玉為香港電影資料館節目組一級助理館長



是次展覽展出的影像包括攝於1898的《愛迪生短片》這部資料館現存最早的記錄片，彌足珍貴。Invaluable footages from *The Edison Shorts* (made in 1898), the earliest documentary in our collection, are shown at the exhibition.



攝影機記錄消失或變化了的地標，並轉化成永恆的光影。圖中的兩部35毫米攝影機，分別為五十年代在香港廣泛使用的米契爾NC（左）及六十年代開始用於拍攝香港電影的阿萊IIC（右）。

Cameras capture glimpses of our environment, leaving on record precious images of former landmarks. Pictured here are two 35mm cameras: a Mitchell NC that was widely used in Hong Kong in the 1950s (left) and an Arri IIC, one of the most frequently used machines for shooting local features in the 1960s (right).

Westerners first took their camera out and about Hong Kong as a means to explore the city as early as the late 19th century. Years passed and a vast library of documentaries and feature films opens a direct portal for today's audiences to either get to know or revisit the city in its old glory. This cinematic time-travel is particular poignant with the ever-changing cityscape of a place that dearly embraces the now-classic lyric, 'Only changes are eternal'. Such is the inspiration and vision behind our latest exhibition, 'Cityscape in Sight and Sound', to retrace each step of Hong Kong's social and historical journey through frames of archival prints.

### Archival Collection as First Port of Call

Our 4000-title strong collection accounts for almost half of Hong Kong's total film output, with the largest proportion made up of releases from the 1940s to 60s. While some were quick to assume films of the Hong Kong New Wave of the late 1970s and early 1980s, concerned with social realism, would demand that directors take their cameras to real-life settings, a blooming film industry

in the late 1950s accompanied by a surging demand for soundstages also drove filmmakers outdoors. As veteran director Chan Cheuk-sang once shrewdly noted: why stretch a shoestring budget for building indoor sets when you could shoot outdoors at a fraction of the cost, and with a little gimmick to boot? <sup>1</sup>

### Finding Needles in a Haystack

Culling our vast collection for outdoor scenes was an insurmountable task. It was thankfully reduced by taking away period, operatic and martial arts titles. Making rarely seen film clips a priority, we further narrowed down our selection to late 19th century to 1960s releases of which there are available footages, which still amount to over 1,000 titles! The daunting nine-month mission—from idea incubation, research, compilation of film lists, selection of film clips, identification of landmarks, studies and analysis, copyright clearance, venue design and editing of clips, among countless other duties—was only accomplished thanks to the tireless efforts and combined ingenuity of Ms Janice Chow, former Research Assistant of the Hong Kong Film Archive, and other colleagues as well as volunteers.

### Memories are Always Precious

At the stage of conception, the plan was already to split the exhibition space into three zones to display images in different ways that would be complemented by artefacts and dioramas. The idea is to examine the landmarks of old Hong Kong and reflect on the meaning of them in, and outside films. Filling Zone One near the exhibition entrance are film footages mostly shot by foreigners for commercial or educational purposes in the late 19th century. These documentaries allowed foreigners to peek into the lives of the Oriental at a time when cross-country travelling was relatively difficult. Zone Two is dedicated to the exploration of geographical landmarks and their significance in films. We have chosen several dozen films, highlighting the ways in which directors turned iconic sites into symbols to heighten the dramatic narrative and characterisation. Collages of film clips and street snapshots are projected onto the surfaces of six cubic installations for an enhanced visual experience with the help of projection mapping and motion graphic techniques, sparking imagination and provoking thought on





展覽工作人員合照  
Group photo of exhibition staff

the roles each site-specific landmark plays in its cinematic world. Zone Three takes visitors back in time to the 1940s to 60s. Transiting from black-and-white to a rainbow of colours, the time tunnel comprises old locales and landmarks that once intentionally or haphazardly graced the screens, conjuring our collective memories of yonder years and re-mapping the changing cityscape of Hong Kong.

## A Debt of Unspeakable Gratitude

The preparation of each exhibition, without fail, humbles me with the wisdom of an old Chinese saying, 'One depends on one's friends when being away'. My heartfelt gratitude goes to all the film organisations and their staff members, copyright owners, my Archive colleagues (with a special mention to members of the Conservation Unit for their unstinting assistance and understanding), and volunteers, who lent a big helping hand when it was most needed. Your contributions breathed new life into our archival images for this exhibition.

[Translated by Agnes Lam] ■

### Note

1 Refer to the Hong Kong Film Archive's Oral History Interview with Chan Cheuk-sang, conducted by Lau Yam, on 25 October 2012.

**Priscilla Chan** is Assistant Curator I of the Programming Unit of the HKFA.



《賊王子》(1958)  
*Prince of Thieves* (1958)

## 粵語電影波斯夢 10/2/2019 Cantonese Cinema's Persian Dreams

「瑰寶情尋」之「賞文·閱影：外語名著改編」(10/2-8/9/2019)的一系列放映，配合座談會與觀眾探討由外語文學名著過渡至香港粵語電影中間的多重詮釋以及本土化過程，由紀陶主講的「粵語電影波斯夢：尋找香港草根文化的1001夜」於2月份為節目揭開序幕。

中港台三地中，香港出品了最多改編自波斯文化的電影，紀陶以「古靈精怪、鬼五馬六」，言簡意賅地道出波斯文化對粵語電影的影響。《天方夜譚》中的世界充滿奇趣魔術，本身已是很適合影像化成電影，如先有粵劇，再改編成粵語片的《賊王子》(1958)，片中出現的神燈、飛氈及飛馬等奇幻的異國元素，令觀眾嘆為觀止。紀陶續指，波斯文化元素亦見於其他粵語片，如多部改編自金庸筆下小說《倚天屠龍記》的同名電影，以及《武林聖火令》(上、下集，1965)、《聖火雄風》(上、下集，1966)等武俠片當中提及的聖火令，也是取材自古代波斯的祆教教義中的永恆不滅之火。

除了《天方夜譚》之外，同系列改編自外國童話、小說和戲劇經典作品的香港電影放映及座談會陸續登場，影迷、書迷不容錯過。

'Worth a Thousand Words: Adaptations of Foreign Literary Classics' (10/2-8/9/2019) of the 'Archival Gems' series features a series of screenings complemented by seminars to engage audiences in appreciating the dynamic process and manifold possibilities of adapting western literary works for the local screen. The programme kicked off in February with the seminar 'Cantonese Cinema's Persian Dreams: In Search of Hong Kong Grassroots' Thousand and One Nights' hosted by Keeto Lam.

Of the three cinemas on both sides of the strait, Hong Kong boasts the largest number of films exhibiting influences of Persian storytelling, which Lam described as 'funny, outlandish and downright hilarious'. A magical world populated by fantastical people and events, stories from *One Thousand and One Nights* lend themselves readily to screen adaptation. Adapted for the Cantonese opera stage before the silver screen, *Prince of Thieves* (1958) with its exotic magic lamp, flying carpet and flying horse wowed local audiences. Lam pointed out that Persian culture is also referenced in other Cantonese films. The sacred fire decree mentioned in the many adaptations of Jin Yong's *Heaven Sword and Dragon Sabre*, as well as *Moslem Sacred Fire Decree* (Part One and Two, 1965) and *Sacred Fire, Heroic Wind* (Part One and Two, 1966), is likely a reference to the symbol of eternal flame central to Zoroastrian practices.

Apart from *One Thousand and One Nights*, other local screen adaptations of foreign folktales, novels and theatre classics, also complemented by seminars, will be held in the months to follow. Don't miss out!



紀陶 Keeto Lam

# 黎民偉日記及相片搜集記

## An Account of the Acquisition of Lai Man-wai's Diary and Photographs

蔡俊昇 Kevin Choi

2018年12月，我們接到黎民偉先生的兒子黎錫先生（錫叔）來電，表示黎民偉子女願意捐贈一批珍藏的電影資料，當中包括黎民偉日記及多幀珍貴相片。

黎民偉是中國與香港電影先驅人物，收藏了不少昔日電影資料。追尋父親電影足跡已久的錫叔與本館相識多年，一直非常認同及支持本館保存香港電影的工作，過去曾經多次慷慨捐贈父親珍藏予本館。

原來黎民偉子女早就有意捐贈一批電影資料，最近完成整理，便決定交付我們妥為保存。這批資料包括黎民偉的日記及幾百張珍貴相片。日記雖然歷史悠久，但文字仍然清晰可讀，本館亦早於2003年出版由錫叔根據日記內容編訂的《黎民偉日記》一書。相片則橫跨香港民新、上海民新、聯華及抗戰以後等時期，以多本相冊分類整理，並附有文字說明，不難想像黎民偉子女在查考、編排及描述這些相片時，所花費的時間與心思。

本館一直致力搜集香港電影及相關資料，熱心人士的支持實在不可或缺。這次有幸再次得到黎民偉子女信任，捐贈日記及相片等重要資料予本館作永久保存，使這些文物得以流傳後世，本館深表謝意。■

蔡俊昇為香港電影資料館搜集組二級助理館長



錫叔與我們分享相片背後的故事  
Uncle Shek shares with us background stories of the photos.

In December 2018, we received a call from Mr Lai Man-wai's son, Sidney Lai Shek (Uncle Shek), telling us that their family is willing to donate some invaluable film-related materials, which include Lai Man-wai's diary and a number of photographs, to the Hong Kong Film Archive.

Lai Man-wai was a pioneer of Chinese and Hong Kong cinema and had left behind a treasure trove of film-related materials from the early days. Uncle Shek, in search of his father's cinematic footprints over the years, has crossed paths with the Archive along the way, and has since maintained a close connection with us. He appreciates and supports our work in preserving Hong Kong cinema, and has generously donated his father's collections multiple times in the past.



錫叔展示父親黎民偉的日記  
Uncle Shek holding his father Lai Man-wai's diary.

The Lai family has long wanted to donate the trove of film-related materials; they have recently finished sorting through it and it is now ready to be handed over to us for future preservation. These materials include Lai Man-wai's diary and several hundred valuable photographs. The diary may be old but the handwriting is still clear. Back in 2003, the Archive already published *The Diary of Lai Man-wai*, collated by Uncle Shek, which chronicles the life of Lai and his family. The photographs that were taken during the eras of China Sun Motion Picture Company in Hong Kong and Shanghai and United Photoplay Service as well as the post-war years, have also been carefully categorised and captioned. The enormous time and effort that the Lai family put into cataloguing them is highly appreciated.

The Archive relies heavily on the support of aficionados in acquiring Hong Kong films and related materials. We are deeply grateful to the Lai family for the trust they have placed in us once again. Their generous donation of Lai's diary and photographs allows these cinematic artefacts to be preserved for appreciation by future generations.

[Translated by Diane To] ■

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# 黃愛玲談左翼電影的美學

## Wong Ain-ling on the Aesthetics of Left-wing Cinema

講者：黃愛玲 Speaker: Wong Ain-ling  
整理：吳君玉、許佩琳 Collated by May Ng and Hui Pui-lam



香港電影資料館前研究主任黃愛玲女士於去年年初辭世，距今一年。過往黃愛玲女士為本館編輯了許多電影研究書籍，亦主講了不少專題座談會，其富於洞見及視野的分享，一直是啟迪後學、滋育文化發展的重要素養。今年三月正值本館舉辦「尋存與啟迪——香港早期聲影遺珍」第四輯的放映及座談會，為懷念黃愛玲女士，及讓觀眾對這批電影有更深入的认识，本刊特地將她於2015年3月29日為首輯「尋存與啟迪」主講的「左翼電影的美學：《天上人間》映後座談會」的講辭，整理及節錄成文。冬去春回，我們冀望藉此讓黃愛玲女士對電影研究鍥而不舍的精神延續下去，並煥發文化的新芽。

香港電影一直非常欠缺三十年代末至四十年代初的影片資料，是次能夠尋回《女性之光》（1937）、《續白金龍》（1937）、《太平洋上的風雲》（1938）、《天上人間》（1941）及《蓬門碧玉》（1942）等電影，真是十分寶貴及難得。它們都是於1937至1941年，也即是抗戰時期拍成的，部分更被稱為國防電影，儘管當中包含不同類型。《天》於1940年底開拍，1941年11月9日公映；一個月之後，12月8日，太平洋戰爭爆發；12月25日，香港淪陷。這部片由拍攝至公映均在香港淪陷前夕，說得上屬於淪陷前的最後一批國防電影，這是討論這部電影的一個重要背景。

盧敦是《天》的導演，他亦參與編劇（劇本故事來自盧敦，分幕及對白則是由他與李晨風合寫），是整部電影的靈魂人物。盧是後來新聯影業公司的創辦人之一，是五、六十年代香港左派粵語電影的一個標誌性人物。由於他的左翼背景，我今天就從左翼思想背景切入討論。現在很多人聞「左」色變，其實左翼思潮並非中國獨有，而是西來的。歐洲由二、三十年代起，左翼思潮已非常活躍，在年輕人和知識份子之間是一件很正常的事情，亦是大氣候，文學、戲劇、電影、繪畫等各方面的文藝創作

均呈現左翼思潮的影響。

### 中國左翼電影的萌芽

國共合作破裂之後，國民政府與共產黨都力爭輿論陣地，電影更是必爭之地。國民政府在二十年代末把電影納入中央管理制度，譬如頒佈電影的檢查法，對電影實施的管制愈來愈嚴密，企圖將電影納入國民政府的意識形態版圖。國民政府一方面大力推動拍攝符合國策的電影，例如聯華公司出品、朱石麟導演的《國風》（羅明佑合導，1935）及費穆的《天倫》（1935）；另一方面，亦「使橫手」（使用不光采的手段），搗亂一些左翼分子活躍的電影公司，電影史對此有清楚記載。<sup>1</sup>同時，「九一八」、「一二八」等日本軍國主義侵略中國的事件對中國電影有極大影響。自1931年起，戲劇界以至文化界對電影的關注愈來愈大，中國左翼戲劇家聯盟於同年發表《最近行動綱領——在現階段對於白色區域戲劇運動的領導綱領》，表示了左翼文人、文化人對電影的關注；翌年更創辦《電影藝術》等專門的電影理論雜誌，清晰地提出共產黨推動電影的大原則：「現中國的電影必定是被壓迫民眾的呼喊」。

那時候中國的年輕文化人很自然會有一種抗日、對國民政府不滿的思想。中國電影文化協會於1933年在上海

成立，團結了大批電影人士，這批左翼文化人士中，有部分是地下黨員，如夏衍，但亦有很多從事電影製作或創作的，包括編、導、演，他們不抱有共產主義思想，卻有一種急切要求電影進步的理想，例如《神女》（1934）的導演吳永剛，他是站於被壓迫者的一方去拍一位被壓迫的女性，但他不是一個左翼人士，而是一個很純正的藝術家。又如孫瑜執導《大路》（1934），是以一片愛國、熱愛青春的丹心，拍一部好看而又傳遞正面信息的電影。1935年華北事變後有「一二九」愛國學生運動，之後文化界就提出國防文學、國防戲劇，而強調反帝國主義的國防電影亦是這個大氣候下的自然產物。當時左翼人士提醒，不要將作品口號化，要避免表面化，要容許藝術的多元化發展。所以比較優秀、保留下來的所謂國防電影的藝術模式也各有不同，像袁牧之的《馬路天使》（1937）與費穆的《狼山喋血記》（1936）很不同，程步高的《新舊上海》（1936）與沈西苓的《十字街頭》（1937）亦有相異之處。

盧敦深受這些不同藝術風格的電影及上海左翼思潮影響，他在回憶錄提及，當年的聯華電影令他印象深刻。當時香港華人雖然身處英國殖民地，可以



進步青年朱子清（張瑛）渴望回國服務，但因家累而難以抽身，一籌莫展。（左起）微風、張瑛

Progressive intellectual Chu Tse-ching (Cheung Ying) wishes to serve the country but feels burdened by his family. (From left) Mei Fung and Cheung Ying.

置身事外，但亦處處表現「國事家事，事事關懷」的情懷。1935年關文清編導的《生命線》，便是一部很出色的國防、愛國電影，它描寫一個工程師如何排除萬難在祖國建設一條對國防、民生均有很大貢獻的生命線——鐵路，這戲碼很容易令人想起孫瑜的《大路》，該片是描寫一班普通的勞工如何建設一條大路，讓軍隊可以運輸貨物。這就是當年的氛圍：大家可能有不同意識形態，但愛國可以是不同政治理念、無分左右、共通的一樣東西。

上海在1937年淪為孤島，環境愈來愈惡劣，不能再拍明顯地傳遞愛國或抗日信息的國防電影。殖民地時期的香港暫時避開了戰火的蹂躪，在1937至1941年間拍了不少被稱為國防電影的影片。《天》就是在這個背景下拍攝的一部國防電影。戲中那群「天台客」來自不同地方，主要是廣東一帶。他們每天相聚於「聚義堂」，「聚義堂」牌匾下掛有蔣介石肖像，肖像兩旁有對聯，寫著：「人無分男女老幼，地無分南北東西」，是蔣的抗戰名言。這部1941年的作品可說是當時香港電影對時代的一個直接而有份量的註腳。

當時大中華與小香港的關係，時有緊張，愛恨交纏。1937年，國民政府曾頒令禁拍方言電影，其實就是針對香港的粵語片。抗戰時有所謂「以空間換取時間」的策略，這時候華南電影界採取拖延策略，企圖以時間換取創作空間。最後國民政府大約於1940年中才正式施行法令，但該法令最後也是形同虛設。學者李培德曾撰文指出，法令頒



珍妮（林妹妹）與張潔玲（微風），坦然面對為解決生計而出賣身體的處境，無怨無疚。（左起）微風、林妹妹

Jenny (Lam Mui-mui) and Cheung Kit-ling (Mei Fung) have no qualms about selling their bodies in the face of hardships in life. (From left) Mei Fung and Lam Mui-mui.

下後，電影界人士想了很多主意，譬如每部粵語片內加插一條國語短片，以此交差；<sup>2</sup>《天》也有幾首國語插曲，可能也是為了交差。這電影既有左翼青年想傳遞的進步思想，亦有應酬國民政府的一些手法，互不違悖，這就是當時拍戲的現實。

### 盧敦的思想背景

盧敦1911年在廣州出生，成長於中國左翼思潮非常活躍的時期。盧於回憶錄憶及，<sup>3</sup>1927年12月廣州暴動失敗後，國民黨軍隊進入學校，搜捕有左派背景的學生，他亦有同學被抓走後從此失蹤。盧敦與李晨風就讀同一所學校，看到環境如此惡劣，他們都害怕，才十六、七歲就離開學校，去了廣東電影學院，接觸到一班同樣喜歡電影的年輕人，像吳回等都是同期的學員；之後還有譚新風、李化、袁耀鴻。他們後來都成了香港電影界，特別是粵語片的重要人物。他們都參加廣東戲劇研究所，師承於當時有「北梅南歐」之稱的歐陽予倩（北為梅蘭芳）。三十年代中，歐陽予倩在上海寫信給盧敦，請他前去上海幫忙。大概是1935、36年，盧敦在上海住了兩年，之後欲於上海發展，但礙於時勢，只好回港。

盧敦回港之後，1940年拍的第一部片是《斬龍遇仙記》，是一部迂迴地傳遞保衛國土的作品，亦即所謂的國防電影。接著，他去了重慶參與司徒慧敏的《白雲故鄉》（1940），同期開始構思《天》的故事。他身處內地，覺得中國很需要青年人回去服務，希望鼓勵

香港的青年人回國服務，不要留在殖民地苟安。<sup>4</sup>他於同年年底回港，很快便投入拍攝《天》。同年他拍了改編自陳白塵舞台劇《魔窟》的國防電影《烽火故鄉》（1941），這部片早《天》一個月公映。翻看資料，《烽》有相當多正面的評論，反而有關《天》的評論則不多。

回顧盧敦的經歷，他除了喜歡上海聯華的電影，亦看了很多出色的荷里活文藝片。<sup>5</sup>此外，他就讀戲劇學校時也與一班朋友組成時代劇團。他分別從荷里活電影及戲劇學習中吸收了歐美及蘇聯的戲劇理論。他們那輩包括盧敦、李晨風及吳回等中聯班底，劇本多走比較寫實的路線，與其他粵語片相比，整體來說較紮實，演員的演出也比較生活化，相信與其戲劇背景有關。

### 《天上人間》描繪浮城眾生

《天》的劇本結構是相對較完整的。張潔玲（微風）一出場，密雲滿天，然後是場景落到尖沙咀火車站，鏡頭一剪接便見她與母親走到街上，接著是很吃力地步上街上一道石梯，步入唐樓後未進門已聽到房子裡有人唱戲的聲音，嶺南的味道已然出來，很好玩。門開了後包租婆、小女孩等人物很自然流暢地一一出場。結尾時，張潔玲下樓梯，追回朱子清（張瑛），然後二人再上樓梯回去的鏡頭，首尾呼應。其他女角的出場也很有趣，歌伶飄零女（胡美倫）及風塵女子珍妮（林妹妹）出場，都是「先聞其聲，再見其人」，像做大戲，鑼鼓先響，花旦才出場，可見劇本用心鋪排每個人物的出場。

這一路的電影，群戲很重要，而《天》中群戲的空間便是唐樓。那時香港開始現代化、都市化，出現了比較摩登一點、可容納多一些人居住的唐樓。唐樓至少一梯兩戶，每戶再用木版分隔成板間房，分租出去。一班人住在一個侷促的環境，形成一個社群，所以唐樓既是居住環境，也是公共空間。每個城市都有不同的公共空間，里弄就是上海開始城市化、都市化時的居住空間，很多三十年代的上上海電影故事都在那兒發



生，如《馬路天使》、《十字街頭》等。

《天》中人物來自不同背景：包租公（吳回）、包租婆（李月清）來自廣州，應該有點家底，暫避香江後家業就沒了；張瑛飾演的朱子清，明顯是一個進步的知識青年；張潔玲很斯文，應該是一個來自良好家庭的閨秀。住客還有做大戲的高佬勝（高魯泉）和曾在廣州大新天台遊樂場幹活的大牛標（陳虹）等。《天》更很巧妙地以包租婆旁敲側擊地點出香港的殖民地環境：她在吹噓那間頭房空氣很好時，說洋人住山頂也是因為著重空氣質素云云。

當年《天》在報紙的宣傳廣告：「一部香港本地風光實錄」，<sup>6</sup>現在看來甚是有趣。飄零女、珍妮來自何方，戲裡沒怎麼交待，但前者在茶樓唱的是代表傳統文化的曲詞，後者則是略懂一兩句英語、以伴舞為業的舞女，這一中一西，都是香港的一部分。這就是香港，香港就是由不同背景的人所組成的一個地方，這亦是香港的有趣之處。

片中對性別的描寫也很有趣。朱子清在那群人中，雖是讀書最多的知識份子，但卻很小氣，氣象不夠開朗，壯志未酬，令人覺得他帶有一股怨氣，很多事情他都推卸予張潔玲，潔玲幫助他，他還罵她，說她不應應酬闊少黃尊尼（馮應湘）。相對來說，片中的三位女性都相當有氣度。胡美倫是很有氣度的歌伶；林妹妹擺出來的架勢已經很厲害，她坦言賣身是養家而已，沒甚麼大不了。張潔玲見母親病重，她穿了件旗袍外出，回來便有很多錢，不用交代，大家都知道發生了甚麼事，可是她沒有一種鬱結，反而很有氣度地面對生活的困頓、身體的失落，很大方地把錢給了朱，叫他回國服務。<sup>7</sup>粵語片到了五、六十年代，道德標準反而收窄了、保守了，強調貞操、守身如玉。

### 香港左翼電影的群戲空間

五、六十年代唐樓這個群居生活空間，成為當時香港一個很重要的戲劇、電影空間，成了一道人文風景。左翼的思想強調集體的力量；以比較

貧困的人聚居的空間作環境，聚居的人倫網絡便提供了豐富的戲劇元素，藉不同背景的人互相幫助的故事，強調了低下階層團結的群眾力量，後來更發展出中聯出品、李鐵導演的《危樓春曉》（1953）中的「人人為我、我為人人」的故事。《危》內有吳楚帆飾演一個工人，很講義氣，是無產階級的模範；又有自私自利、屬於買辦階級的黃大班；業主就是大地產商，至今仍存在；代表社會上不同階層的人物均凝聚在這有限的空間裡。不少五、六十年代的電影，都是一梯多伙的故事，譬如龍馬出品、朱石麟導演的《一板之隔》（1952）及《水火之間》（1955）；新聯出品、李晨風導演的《再生花》（1953）；盧敦的《十號風波》（1959）等。

《危》的戲劇結構以至人物原型，均可以在《天》找到線索。從戲劇結構來看，兩部電影都是透過新住客入住，進屋後各個人物陸續登場，在不到十多分鐘內就差不多將屋內主要人物很順暢地串起來，之後便是帶出了「逼遷」事件：《危》裡是把黃楚山、黃曼梨一家逼到一個床位，甚至差點兒連床位也沒得睡；而《天》就是把張瑛一家逼遷到天台。《危》內的人物也有不少《天》的影子，紫羅蓮飾演的白瑩本是知書識墨的，後來做了風塵女子，她的氣度就好像《天》中幾個女子集合於一身。

《危》中張瑛飾演的小氣的讀書人羅明，他和白之間的關係，可以與《天》內的朱子清和張潔玲互為對照，相當有趣。《危》由盧敦和陳雲聯合編劇，所以《危》會有他過往作品的元素，不足為奇。

《危樓春曉》是中聯出品，《十號風波》則是新聯的作品，兩者都是讓一群窮困的好人團結起來打倒壞人。《危》最後是狂風大雨，危樓塌下來壓死了大班，由此反映普羅大眾希望透過另一個力量，完成他們達不到的、打倒壞蛋的心願。當然，問題仍然未解決，大業主還在，對否？《十》結尾，亦是全部窮困的人在天台團結起來，打退放高利貸的大壞蛋馮峯，也是以群眾力量

戰勝惡勢力。但你又不可以說這是很左翼的味道，畢竟人處於這麼艱難的環境裡，唯有「你幫我，我幫你」，才能解決問題。

《天上人間》的矛盾是怎樣戰勝生活困境，然後回祖國服務；到了《危樓春曉》、《再生花》及《十號風波》，矛盾已變為怎樣立足香港。雖然《危》及《十》均強調階級對立，但前者的對立沒有後者般明顯：大班和大地主當然是大壞蛋，但知識份子和工人之間是可以調和的。《危》中黃曼梨飾演的威嫂需要輸血，逼迫他們交租的張瑛，最後知道自己不對，得知只有他的血型適合威嫂時，捐血救了她，這是透過一個戲劇性的橋段，將知識份子與工人的關係可以調和的意識呈現出來；但到《十》就是純粹兩個階級的對立。

### 《朗基先生的罪行》的空間處理

在此我引申說明一下，<sup>8</sup>如前所述，二、三十年代歐洲的左翼思潮非常活躍，其影響不單在政治層面，亦反映在文藝創作。法國電影大師尚·雷諾亞的《朗基先生的罪行》開拍於1935年10月，時值法國左翼人民陣線參選的前夕。電影拍了一個月便完成，由創作以至公映都是左翼思潮於政治實踐最活躍的一段時間，片中亦充滿了時代痕跡。

《朗》的法文原名「Sur la cour」，直譯就是「鳥瞰院子」，即是從上俯視院子，而整個故事的戲劇空間就在院子裡，出版社、洗衣房等全在裡面。出版社老闆為人很奸狡，主角則是一個愛幻想、寫很多牛仔小說的編輯。那時出版社生意欠佳，有一天，老闆坐的火車失事，別人都以為他死了，原來他欠債纍纍，與別人調換衣服來裝死。出版社工人為了生存，團結一致，改以合作社的形式繼續經營下去，後來老闆回來，見出版社轉虧為盈，就說要拿回，結果是編輯槍殺了老闆。《朗》以倒敘形式，一開始就是編輯與女朋友在逃往瑞士邊境時，在酒店被人認出，然後女友將他們的經歷說出來，交由群眾決定是放了他們還是報警，最後那群人決定讓他們離開。

《朗》是雷諾亞相當出色的一部作品。片中作為戲劇空間的院子，是很完整的搭建出來。他善於運用長鏡頭、深焦鏡頭，而這個戲劇空間的設計令他可以經常以鏡頭跟著人物上落樓梯、穿堂入室，充份呈現其美學。片中最聞名一幕，是合作社工人開派對慶祝，男主角發現老闆在辦公室，於是尾隨他到院子，攝影機隨著他上樓、下樓、進院子，用一個360度的鏡頭拍攝他槍殺了老闆。雷諾亞是一個很自覺的藝術家，《朗》的佈景及空間的設計結合運鏡的美學，成功地呈現這個集體空間內發生的故事。

今天回看《天上人間》等這批電影，可看到它們與中國的關係、在中國電影及香港電影裡面的脈絡，因此，這是一批非常重要的作品。《天》雖然帶了一些左翼思潮的味道，但是沒有左翼電影那種教條，那些人物是非常活潑、開放。我希望為大家提供不同的角度，去思考這一部以至這一批電影的重要性。■

#### 註釋

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鳴謝美國三藩市華宮戲院方創傑先生

Ms Wong Ain-ling, Hong Kong Film Archive's respected and beloved former Research Officer, passed away early last year, leaving behind a rich and insightful legacy of scholarship on Hong Kong cinema that continues to inform and advance studies of local cultures. On the occasion of the fourth chapter of the 'Early Cinematic Treasures Rediscovered' series, we pay tribute to Ain-ling on the first anniversary of her passing with the transcription of her seminar 'The Aesthetics of Left-wing Cinema: Post-screening Seminar of *Follow Your Dream*' held on 29 March 2015 during the running of the first chapter of the series. Ain-ling's passion and ardent devotion to film scholarship, as we firmly believe, will endure to inspire new generations of cultural researchers.

The recent discovery of the prints of *The Light of Women* (1937), *The White Gold Dragon, Part Two* (1937), *Incident in the Pacific* (1938), *Follow Your Dream* (1941) and *The Rich House* (1942) provides the missing link to Hong Kong cinema of the late 1930s and early 1940s, which, until now, has remained a void for film researchers. Made during the War of National Resistance between 1937 and 1941, some of them were duly dubbed 'national defence' films despite varying in genre. Production of *Follow Your Dream* began at the end of 1940; it premiered on 9 November 1941, just one month before the outbreak of the Pacific War on 8 December and Hong Kong's fall on Christmas Day. This timeline puts it among the colony's last batch of national defence films before its fall and in a historical context that takes on a great significance.

Lo Duen was the brains behind *Dream* in his double role as director and screenwriter (the story of *Dream* was created by Lo whereas the scenes and dialogues were co-written by Lo and Lee Sun-fung). A co-founder of Sun Luen Film Company, Lo was an iconic figure of

left-wing Cantonese cinema in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 60s. I'd like to begin my discussion today with left-wing ideologies. More likely to raise eyebrows than not these days, left-wing thinking is in fact a western invention which has found favour with the youth and intellectuals in Europe and seeped into the cultural milieu of literature, theatre, film and painting since the 1920s and 30s.

### Birth of Chinese Left-wing Cinema

Cinema was a fiercely contested ground for the Nationalist government and Chinese Communist Party (CCP), both vying for good publicity, especially after the failure of collaboration between them. The Nationalist government tightened its grip on cinema and implemented a film censorship act as a tool to tighten ideology control over the masses. While advocating and backing production of films that followed the government's line of political correctness, such as Zhu Shilin's *Civil Wind* (co-directed by Lo Ming-yau, 1935) and Fei Mu's *My Husband* (1935) for United Photoplay Service Limited, it also resorted to underhanded means of vandalising left-wing film companies, all of which are well documented



in film history books.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, Japanese military aggressions marked by the Mukden Incident and January 28 Incident cast a long shadow over Chinese cinema. From 1931 onwards, filmmaking became a matter of increasing concern for theatre and cultural workers, a resolution professed in the Chinese League of Left-wing Dramatists' *The Directive of the Most Recent Activities*. Launched by intellectuals and cultural workers of the left-wing camp in 1932, *Film Art* was among a number of periodicals devoted to serious discussion of cinema. It laid down the communists' principle of filmmaking: 'The cinema of China now is the outcry of the suppressed people.'

Understandably, there was a growth of resentment towards the Japanese invaders and the Nationalist government among young intellectuals at the time. In 1933, the Chinese Film Culture Association was formed by a group of left-wing intellectuals in Shanghai. While some were underground communist members such as Xia Yan, the mainstays were screenwriters, directors and actors who were driven not by Communist ideals but an earnest quest for progressive filmmaking. Wu Yonggang, who told the story of an oppressed woman in *Goddess* (1934) from the perspective of the victim, wasn't a leftist but rather a bona fide artist. Working with the purest of heart filled with youthful zest and patriotic enthusiasm, Sun Yu's *The Big Road* (1934) is a cinematic treat imbued with positive sentiments. In the aftermath of a



《天上人間》開首是張潔玲（微風）與母親步向街邊石梯，最後則是潔玲追回朱子清（張瑛），二人一同返回住處作結，首尾呼應。

*Follow Your Dream* opens with Cheung Kit-ling (Mei Fung) labouring up a flight of stone stairs with her mother and ends with Cheung coming down the stairs to look for Chu Tse-ching (Cheung Ying) before the pair makes their way back up; the ending scene echoes the story's beginning.

series of events in northern China and the December 9th Movement in 1935, the left-wing camp espoused the notions of national defence literature and theatre, which gave birth to films redolent with stirring anti-imperial themes. But left-wing filmmakers did so with caution, avoiding the propagandistic and promoting artistic diversity. Surviving national defence films are a testament to this artistic diversity: Yuan Muzhi's *Angels in the Street* (1937) is widely different from Fei Mu's *Blood on Wolf Mountain* (1936), just as Cheng Bugao's *The New and Old Shanghai* (1936) and Shen Xiling's *Crossroads* (1937) are chalk and cheese.

Lo Duen was deeply impacted, artistically and ideologically, by these left-wing films. In his memoir, Lo mentioned how United Photoplay films left a deep impression on his mind. Though residing in the British colony, many Hong Kong Chinese were too much a consummate patriot to detach themselves from the war turmoil. Kwan Man-ching's Hong Kong film, *Lifeline* (1935), is a remarkably accomplished patriotic

film about an engineer who fights against all odds to construct a lifeline of national importance—a railway. The plot draws a parallel with Sun Yu's *The Big Road* with its story of labourers constructing a highway for the transportation of army supplies in the war. Such were the sentiments shared by all intellectuals: patriotism knows no political divide.

Severely curtailed in 1937, Shanghai of the Orphan Island period was no longer a safe haven for making overt anti-Japanese propaganda films. And this role was passed on to the then safe colony, which churned out a bumper crop of national defence films between 1937 and 1941. *Dream* was a national defence film made against this social backdrop. Hailing from Guangdong province, the multiple denizens of the tenement house get together every day in the 'Hall of Heroes'. On the wall is a portrait of Chiang Kai-shek, flanked by a couplet of his famous wartime address: 'All humans are equal, be they men or women, young or old; the Country is one whole, be it north

or south, east or west', carrying with it a compelling footnote that Hong Kong cinema added to its time.

At the time, Hong Kong and the Mainland had a love-hate relationship fraught with tension. In 1937, the Nationalist government issued a ban on dialect films, the main target of which were Hong Kong cinema's Cantonese outputs. Similar to the war strategy of trading space for time, film circles in Southern China used a stalling tactic to strive for creative space. The ban wasn't enforced until around mid-1940, which rendered it practically ineffectual. Scholar Lee Pui-tak noted in an essay that filmmakers skated around the law by incorporating Mandarin excerpts in their Cantonese films, among many other tricks;<sup>2</sup> likewise, *Dream* features several Mandarin songs. Keeping the realities of filmmaking in check, they struck the perfect balance by putting a progressive spin on their films while pacifying the authorities.

### Lo Duen's Ideological Background

Born in Guangzhou in 1911, Lo Duen grew up at a time when China was swept by a tidal wave of left-wing fervour. According to his memoir,<sup>3</sup> following the quelling of the riots in Guangzhou in December 1927, Nationalist soldiers were sent to school campuses to arrest leftist students, some of whom were never heard of again. Filled with fear, Lo and fellow student Lee Sun-fung, then aged around 16 and 17, quit school and left for the Guangdong Film Academy, where they befriended like-minded

aspirants Ng Wui, and later Tam Sun-fung, Lee Fa and Yuen Yiu-hung. This cohort would graduate to become the backbone of Hong Kong's Cantonese cinema. They all went on and apprenticed under maestro Ouyang Yuqian at the Guangdong Drama Research Centre. In around 1935 to 1936, Lo received a letter from Ouyang inviting him to join the maestro in Shanghai. Lo contemplated a longer stay after a two-year tenure but the hostile circumstances in Shanghai made it necessary for him to return to Hong Kong.

Filming started once Lo returned. *Encounter with the Gods* (1940), in its oblique way, champions the great cause of protecting the motherland. Then, he travelled to Chongqing to take part in Situ Huimin's *My Motherland* (1940) where he conceived *Dream*, feeling compelled to call on young people in Hong Kong to perform their due duties in nation-building.<sup>4</sup> The film was launched into production upon his return. In the same year, he made another national defence film—*Fiery Village* (1941), an adaptation of Chen Baichen's stage play, *The Devil's Hideout*. Research indicates that *Fiery*, which beat *Dream* to the screen by a month, garnered critical acclaim while little was written about the latter.

Whilst a drama student, Lo formed The Times Troupe with friends. He devoured United Photoplay films and Hollywood melodramas in equal measure,<sup>5</sup> feasting on theories of western and Russian theatres. Owing to their theatrical backgrounds, the

scripts penned by Lo and his peers, including Lee Sun-fung and Ng Wu, et al, for The Union Film Enterprise Ltd were fleshed out and their acting invested with realism.

### Vicissitudes of Life in *Follow Your Dream*

*Dream* has a well-knit plot. The entrance of Cheung Kit-ling (Mei Fung) under a gloomy sky is cut to the old Tsim Sha Tsui train station and back to Cheung and her mother labouring up a flight of stone stairs. Oozing distinct Lingnan flavours, snatches of Cantonese operatic tunes stream out of the door of a tenement house. When it opens, they are greeted by the landlady, a little girl and other tenants. The ending scene echoes the story's beginning: Cheung comes down the stairs to look for Chu Tse-ching (Cheung Ying) before the pair makes their way back up. The introduction of other female characters, such as Wandering Girl (Wu Mei-lun) and the taxi dancer Jenny (Lam Mui-mui), is equally well thought-out and engrossing. They are often heard before they are seen, bringing to mind the way beats of drum and gong precede the entrance of a *huadan* (female lead) in Cantonese operas.

Ensemble scenes are at the heart of this genre. Hong Kong was undergoing rapid urbanisation and modernised tenement houses sprang up to accommodate multiple households. These communal dwellings were often partitioned into small living units and the line between private and public was very thin in these cramped spaces. Similarly, the alleyway communities of an urbanised Shanghai in the 1930s



provided a time-appropriate milieu for such classics as *Angels in the Street* and *Crossroads* to take place.

The residents in *Dream* are a motley crew. Hailing from Guangzhou, the landlord (Ng Wui) and landlady (Lee Yuet-ching) were probably well-to-do until their fortunes dwindled in their refuge of Hong Kong. Chu Tse-ching, is evidently an intellectual with progressive thoughts. If her graceful demeanour is anything to go by, Cheung Kit-ling very likely had a good upbringing. Other tenants include an over-the-hill Cantonese opera actor Shing (Ko Lo-chuen) and Bill the Bull (Chan Hung), a circus strongman. It's the witty words of the landlady that nail the unique social milieu of the colony: boasting a room's great air circulation, she tells a prospective tenant that even 'westerners live high up on the Peak for its fresh air'.

Advertisements of the day touted the film as 'a veritable record of the local scene'.<sup>6</sup> Little was known about the past of *Wandering Girl* and *Jenny*: the former sings traditional tunes in a teahouse for a living, the latter a taxi dancer who throws in an English phrase or two in her speech. This heady mix of East and West represents the interesting melting pot that was Hong Kong.

The film is remarkable in its unorthodox portrayal of the sexes. Chu Tse-ching, though the most educated of the bunch, is petty and perpetually downcast. He would constantly turn to Cheung Kit-ling for help but repay her with sneer rather than gratitude. In contrast, all three women are gifted with a big

heart. *Wandering Girl* is an altruistic songstress; *Jenny* the taxi dancer has no qualms about selling her body. Seeing her mother helpless on her sick bed, Cheung changes into a *qipao* and leaves home, only to coming back with a wad of cash for her mother's medical bills and Chu's pursuit of his patriotic dream. No question needs to be asked as she takes it all in stride.<sup>7</sup> One wonders why moral tolerance took a step back in Cantonese cinema of the 1950s and 60s with its fixation on sexual morality and chastity.

### Ensemble Scenes in Hong Kong Left-wing Films

These tenements lent themselves as flavoursome human and social landscapes for the theatre and Hong Kong cinema in the 1950s and 60s. For the leftist culture that harnessed the power of people, these communal dwellings and human networks served as a fount of drama to sing praises of the collective force of the lower-class masses. *Dream* was a precursor to *In the Face of Demolition* (1953), a Union Film production directed by Lee Tit, best known for its motto, 'one for all, all for one', and populated by a cross-section of society: Ng Cho-fan's selfless character is a fine specimen of the proletariat; the selfish Taipan Wong belongs to the comprador bourgeoisie; the property owner a member of the bourgeoisie. Many 1950s and 60s releases adhere to this ensemble format: the Dragon-Horse Films productions *The Dividing Wall* (1952) and *Between Fire and Water* (1955), both directed by Zhu Shilin; Sun Luen's *A Flower Reborn* (1953) directed by Lee Sun-fung and *Typhoon Signal No. 10*

(1959) directed by Lo Duen.

*Demolition's* narrative frame and character prototypes take their cues from *Dream*. Structurally, both dramas begin with the new tenants moving in as other characters are introduced one by one in a fluid sequence. The turning point—the moment of conflict—comes in the form of forced evictions: in *Demolition*, the family of Wong Cho-shan and Wong Man-lei is squeezed into a small bedsit; in *Dream*, Cheung Ying's family is banished to the rooftop. Many of the characters in *Demolition* are redolent of *Dream's* house of tenants: Pak Ying (Tse Lo Lin), an educated lady-turned-taxi-dancer, is an embodiment of the three big-hearted women in *Dream* all rolled into one. Her relationship with Law Ming (Cheung Ying), a close-minded intellectual, makes an interesting comparison with the couple in *Dream*. Such recurring elements come as little surprise with Lo Duen penning both scripts.

*Demolition* is a Union Film production; *Typhoon* is a Sun Luen film. Pared down to their barest, both films are about a bunch of have-nots teaming up to take on the big gun. In *Demolition*, the mission is accomplished through a stroke of misfortune: the building collapses and buries the taipan in the wreckage; it matters not the problem is far from solved with the property owner still at large. Likewise, the drama of *Typhoon* culminates in a final confrontation with the loan shark (Fung Fung) on the rooftop. Viewers may find them less an all-out leftist propaganda than about the primal law of survival: you help me and I help you.

The resolution in *Dream* lies in overcoming straitened circumstances and returning to the Mainland to serve the country. More tellingly, there is a shift of allegiance to the adopted home of Hong Kong in *Demolition*, *Reborn* and *Typhoon*. Class conflict, though a theme shared by *Demolition* and *Typhoon*, is appreciably toned down in the former: while the taipan and the property owner are irrevocably evil, the division between intellectuals and working class can be easily resolved. *Demolition* contextualises this ideological shift and conflict resolution in the scene where Law Ming, setting out to hound tenants to pay their rent, is struck by a pang of conscience and donates his blood to save Wai's wife (Wong Man-lei). *Typhoon*, in contrast, brings only the capitalist and the proletariat into direct juxtaposition.

### Spatial Treatment in *The Crime of Monsieur Lange*

Let me elaborate on this with a French work.<sup>8</sup> As said before, left-wing movements have been a well-established tradition in Europe since the 1920s and 30s, influencing not only politics but also literary works. *The Crime of Monsieur Lange*, a masterpiece by Jean Renoir, was made in October 1935 on the eve of the Popular Front's victory in the legislative election. Born from the atmosphere of its time, the film took one month to complete and hit the screen when left-wing movements were at fever pitch. Originally entitled 'Sur la Cour' (literal translation 'Overlooking the Courtyard'), the film unfolds in a courtyard that hosts a publishing and laundry

cooperative. At the centre of the story is the cash-strapped owner of a publishing house and his editor, a dreamer at heart. Fleeing his creditors, the publisher takes the opportunity to fake his own death when the train he is on crashes. The abandoned workers decide to form a cooperative and find great success. When the publisher returns from the 'dead', intending to reclaim the business, the editor has no choice but to shoot and kill him to protect the cooperative. The film is revealed in a reverse order. Fleeing from his crime, the editor and his girlfriend stop at an inn near the border where he is recognised as the wanted man. Leaving their fate in the hands of the people, they begin to recount their story. In the end, the people decide to let them walk free.

*Crime* is one of Renoir's finest works. The courtyard milieu is an all-inclusive constructed space of drama, offering a thorough-going perspective achieved by his deft use of long and deep focus shots that follow his wide gallery of characters as they weave their way in and out, up and down the publishing house. In the film's most celebrated scene, Renoir uses the camera to follow the editor as he climbs up and down the stairs to the fountain in the courtyard where he shoots the boss, the action augmented with a 360-degree view. A conscientious artist, Renoir's camera beautifully blends into the architecture of the courtyard as it gathers the social circumstances of the milieu in one spiral motion.

The recovery of these long-lost films sheds new light on their

connection with China and their imprints on Chinese and Hong Kong cinemas. The importance of these films cannot be overstated. *Dream* may be tainted with leftist proclivities but it remains free of didactic lecturing. Its characters are animated and free-minded. I do hope many of you in the audience will come away with a new perspective on the film and a keen appreciation of the importance of these recent discoveries. [Translated by Agnes Lam] ■

### Notes

- 1 Cheng Jihua, Li Shaobai and Xing Zuwen (eds), *A History of the Development of Chinese Cinema Vol 1*, Beijing: China Film Press, 6th edition published in Beijing in June 2012 (1st edition published in February 1963), pp 296-299 (in Chinese).
- 2 Lee Pui-tak, 'To Ban and Counter Ban: Cantonese Cinema Caught Between Shanghai and Hong Kong in the 1930s' in *The Hong Kong-Guangdong Film Connection*, Wong Ain-ling (ed), Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2005, pp 30-49.
- 3 About Lo Duen's school days, refer to Lo Duen, *Half a Century as a Lunatic*, Hong Kong: Xiang Jiang Press Co., Limited, 1992, pp 10-37 (in Chinese).
- 4 'Scripted and Directed by Lo Duen; Follow Your Dream Starts Filming at Grandview Studio', *Artland Biweekly*, No 87, 1 December 1940 (in Chinese).
- 5 See note 3, p 29.
- 6 Advertisement for *Follow Your Dream*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 4 November 1941 (in Chinese).
- 7 For Wong Ain-ling's review on *Follow Your Dream*, see also Wong Ain-ling, 'People of Paradise' in *Early Cinematic Treasures Rediscovered* (e-publication), Winnie Fu and May Ng (eds), 2015, pp 76-83, [https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/HKFA/documents/2005525/2007294/EC\\_ebook.pdf](https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/HKFA/documents/2005525/2007294/EC_ebook.pdf)
- 8 Ms Wong Ain-ling was invited as guest commentator of *Follow Your Dream* and she selected Jean Renoir's *The Crime of Monsieur Lange* (1935) as reference film.

Special thanks to Mr Jack Lee Fong of Palace Theatre, San Francisco, USA





## 「通台老倌」張月兒

'Master of Versatility':  
Cheung Yuet-ye

吳月華 Stephanie Ng

有聲電影的出現，令香港成為重要的粵語片製作基地，求賢若渴，製片家自當向已有一批捧場客的茶樓歌壇女伶招手，張月兒、徐柳仙、胡美倫和小燕飛等紛紛加入影壇。當時盛行的歌唱片自少不了她們的蹤影，她們的歌壇和唱片名曲又成為電影改編的名片，為電影新撰的電影歌曲隨後又會被灌成唱片。女伶們的歌聲因著電影和唱片走出茶樓，飄送得更廣更遠。這批女伶中，論曲藝、可塑性和受歡迎程度，當推「鬼馬歌王」張月兒（又稱月兒），她與徐柳仙、小明星和張蕙芳並稱歌壇的「四大平喉」。張月兒在影壇頂峰的時間是戰前，是當時最受歡迎的歌影雙棲明星。雖然她參演的電影達38部，包括17部戰前攝製的作品，可惜她主演的作品僅存近年從海外尋回的《苦鳳鶯憐》（1941）。<sup>1</sup> 因此本文只能從報章和雜誌的報導、廣告、電影宣傳品和她僅存的幾部作品，嘗試勾勒出她在銀幕上悲喜交錯、運轉乾坤的「通台老倌」歌影圖譜。

張月兒12歲喪父後來港，為習一技營生，師從歌壇名師徐桂福。因歌唱天份非凡，13歲已登台演唱，並因音域廣、莊諧俱佳，且能一人演唱多種歌喉，迅速走紅於歌壇，〈通台老倌〉便是她一人演唱多角的名曲。歌路廣闊的張月兒走紅後，不只遊走省港兩地茶樓，亦成為唱片和電影界羅致的對象，成為一名跨界伶人。有聲電影出現不久，張月兒已被邀參演電影，首現銀幕之作是《哥哥我負你》（1935）。此片是上海天一影片公司來港設立「天一港廠」後，最先開拍的電影，現存資料中未見影片拍攝時有報道張月兒參演的消息。及後影片因故重拍，<sup>2</sup> 公映時始見她客串的宣傳，並在影片中高歌一曲〈壽星公〉。<sup>3</sup> 可惜《哥哥我負你》成績未如理想，<sup>4</sup> 張月兒亦未有立刻再現銀幕。

### 鬼鬼馬馬現銀幕

雖然張月兒演出《哥哥我負你》後，她的歌唱事業仍如日方中，但因她年紀漸長，在歌壇唱子喉已感吃

力，正謀轉營之計，遇上導演陳皮邀請合作。陳曾活躍於唱片界，他的電影事業剛憑歌唱片和喜劇冒起，遂邀請唱諧曲了得的月兒與伊秋水合演《老婆皇帝》（1937）。<sup>5</sup> 在影片中張月兒飾一位嚴妻，既與伊秋水合演一對幽默惹笑的夫妻，同時亦大展歌喉，唱出四首電影歌曲，包括她的名曲〈一代藝人〉。<sup>6</sup> 影片十分成功，也奠定張月兒喜劇演員的地位，讓她可從歌壇轉放更多心力於電影和唱片事業。<sup>7</sup>

從張月兒僅存的戰前電影《苦鳳鶯憐》可見，她的演技絕不弱於同期的演員，演出自然，能掌握戲劇節奏，身體語言豐富，可惜未能一睹她唱諧曲的風采，但在影片中她唱曲時，卻甚有壓場感。可是主演《老婆皇帝》之後，她參與的電影多為大堆頭的歌唱喜劇如《七十二行》（1937）、《七星伴月》（1938）、《好女十八嫁》（1938）和其續集（1939）等。這些以歌唱為賣點的影片中，亦不乏其他歌壇的好手。如《七十二行》中便有徐柳仙與男主角

何大傻合唱〈賣生藕〉，以及「中板王」胡美倫與何大傻、梁添添合唱〈道士祈神〉。<sup>8</sup> 何大傻是粵樂界「四大天王」之一，也是新月留聲機唱片公司的中流砥柱，玩音樂之餘，也經常演唱諧曲和演出粵語喜劇片。其時電影歌曲是唱片的重要曲目，本片的歌曲亦曾出版唱片。<sup>9</sup> 當然亦有將唱片曲、歌壇粵曲改編成電影的例子。

張月兒早已憑唱片建立了海外市場，電影公司當然不會放過將她行銷海外的唱片曲改編成電影的機會，《口花花》（1939）便開宗明義以「一張唱片 風行海外 月兒歌后 由此成名 攝為聲片 精彩絕倫」作為廣告宣傳語句，<sup>10</sup> 可見唱片對聲片的宣傳助力。其實唱片和電影界的跨界合作不限於幕前，宣傳電影時亦標榜電影歌曲的幕後創作和拍和班底，本片和《花公花婆》（1940）的廣告和報道也特別提到九叔，九叔正是唱片界著名撰曲人黃景球。由此可見香港唱片和電影界的跨媒體互動早於戰前已出現。<sup>11</sup>

## 雌雄莫辨扮鬼扮馬

張月兒作為一位演員，其喜劇天賦亦不容忽視。從影像資料可見，張月兒身材高大，身高與少新權相若，比新馬師曾和譚蘭卿高出大半個頭，因此不少報道皆以「高婆」稱呼她。身材高大不只成為她音域和音量高廣的有利演唱條件，也有助於她反串演出。張月兒於同一部電影中時男時女的戲劇功能十分豐富。如在《七星伴月》中，她女扮男裝，令眾女性傾慕，因而引出一連串的喜劇情節。<sup>12</sup> 她亦可同時化身男和女的角色，在《好女十八嫁》中分身兼演老夫老妻拍拖。<sup>13</sup> 張月兒在《好女十八嫁續集》中，不只扮靚媽姐阿柳、八卦婆和鄉下妹，還和大口何一起扮「伯爺公」。<sup>14</sup> 在《十月芥菜》（1939）中，月兒則演一名爭取婚姻自主權的女性，但不像一般粵語片握拳大罵上一輩思想封建，而是穿起唐裝扮新郎哥朱普泉的祖父，「煞化」（戲弄）這個「孫兒」，<sup>15</sup> 巧妙地運用倫理的權力架構，以祖父的身份對抗父母的盲婚安排。這種生動的演出在她後期的一部全女班影片《巧鳳試郎心》（1962）亦可見一斑。張月兒先演氣定神閒地胡亂斷症的醫生黃綠，後又演縣官胡塗。胡塗初以一副官威出場，但人如其名，審理案件胡裡胡塗，總是有理無理地誰也先打四十大板，但當他得知護夫的鳳儀（鳳凰女飾）娘家權傾朝野，又迅即變得閃縮畏懼。單從這兩個小角色已見張月兒善於捕捉人物性格和情緒變化，以豐富而細緻的眼神、表情和身體形態作出精準的演出。她與徐柳仙、任劍輝三人鏗鏘地以具韻律的口白對質也精彩非常，盡見各人的唱功，此片亦是徐柳仙最後一部的電影作品。

其實張月兒反串演出的可塑性不止於諧劇，還可運用於演出其他類型的電影。1939年，月兒在民間故事片熱潮下主演《桂枝告狀》，飾演被後母陷害，死裡逃生的桂枝，為替父親申冤，她女扮男裝為縣官。<sup>16</sup> 此外，

張月兒作為歌壇名伶，歌女電影亦是她顯露才華的重要電影類型。

## 唱盡歌女生涯

歌女生涯當然少不了歌，有些是由名曲改編成電影，如《苦盡甘來》（1938）和《一代藝人》（1941）；而《何日君再來》（1940）和《何處不相逢》（1940）的電影歌曲則成為傳誦一時的名曲。在《苦盡甘來》，張月兒首演歌女要角；她飾演的月仙遭夫拋棄，幸遇良師指點，靠賣唱將兒子養大成人，兒媳孝順，苦盡甘來。<sup>17</sup> 在現實中，張月兒亦是一位良師，她當時只有13歲的徒兒張蝶兒也有參演本片，且與師父搭唱數闕歌曲，拍攝電影後又隨師往新加坡演唱，她亦是師父灌唱片的好拍檔。<sup>18</sup> 張蝶兒其後亦參演師父主演的《十月芥菜》、《一代藝人》等電影，並曾活躍於戰前和戰時的省、港、澳歌壇。

《一代藝人》歌女的命運剛好與《苦盡甘來》相反，為救女兒而於火災中毀容，不能再賣唱，改任傭人，女兒卻未存反饋之心，<sup>19</sup> 故事跟她所唱、取材自影星阮玲玉一生故事的同名名曲不同。<sup>20</sup> 由此片和《苦鳳鶯憐》主題曲可見，戰前由名曲改編電影時，不一定沿用相似的故事情節，名曲可能只為吸引觀眾買票入場。

1938年，廣州淪陷，張月兒在廣州的新宅和財物全被毀於戰火中，剛好遇上南洋影片公司改變過往濃厚商業作風和《苦盡甘來》的成功，換來了雙方合作的長約。<sup>21</sup> 張月兒主演的《何日君再來》和《何處不相逢》正是南洋特聘文人撰寫劇本以提高影片水準的作品。《何日君再來》片中的歌女為供愛人學醫，賣藝維生，二人再見之際，已是歌女因犯殺人罪而自殺垂死之時，學醫歸來的愛郎也欲救無從。<sup>22</sup> 這部電影的同名主題曲亦成為月兒的名曲。

《何處不相逢》則是張月兒與名伶白駒榮首度合作的作品。雖然影片宣傳未有改編之說，但影片情節卻跟奧地利猶太裔作家史提芬·褚威格



在《苦鳳鶯憐》中與馬師曾合演鬥氣夫妻，風趣鬼馬。  
Cheung Yuet-ye plays the quarrelsome and witty better half of Ma Si-tsang in *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole*.

（Stefan Zweig）於1922年出版的短篇小說《一位陌生女子的來信》（*Letter from an Unknown Woman*）相似。歌女與紅伶發生一夜情後，紅伶離去，忘卻歌女，歌女卻已懷有他的骨肉，未幾歌女病危，只好寫信予薄情郎托孤。這個粵語版比荷里活1948年的電影版更早出現，主角之子亦沒有病死，影片亦有時代和地方特色。二十年代，香港的風月場所盛極一時，但1935年全面禁娼，歌藝出色的歌姬可轉往茶樓歌壇賣唱，但亦有任導遊女掩飾身份重操故業，而張月兒在片中飾演的角色正是嚮導歌女。

## 戰後淡出影壇

張月兒的銀色旅途在戰後仍有短暫的光芒，這位「通台老倌」既主演喜劇《鬼馬歌王鬚舅爺》（1947），也在《西廂記》（1947）反串張生和在由吳一嘯撰寫的唱片名曲改編而成的同名電影《賣肉養孤兒》（1947）飾演歌女。可是戰後的月兒已逾四十歲，歌壇進入五十年代，盛況亦不如前。除較年輕的小燕飛外，戰前歌影雙棲的女伶如胡美倫和徐柳仙於1952年的歌唱片熱潮後，相繼淡出影壇，月兒亦轉為專心授徒，<sup>23</sup> 只在幾部影片中任配角，反串演畢兩部陸邦導演的全女班電影《巧鳳試郎心》和《點錯鴛鴦》（1963）後，也離開影壇。■

### 註釋

- <sup>1</sup> 《苦鳳鶯憐》1941年攝製，但因戰事，延至1947年才在香港公映，現存的版本是2012年從美國三藩市尋回。
- <sup>2</sup> 根據曾任職天一的珠璣憶述，《哥哥我負你》完成後，邵醉翁始來港，觀後認為影



片未如理想，於是重拍；見珠璣：〈上海天一公司遷港 開拍白駒榮主演之《泣荊花》〉，《新電視》，第379期，1981年，頁36。

- 3 《哥哥我負你》廣告，《香港工商日報》，1935年2月13日。
- 4 見珠璣：〈「天一」三年半〉，《新電視》，第380期，1981年，頁36。
- 5 魯金：《粵曲歌壇話滄桑》，香港：三聯書店（香港）有限公司，1994，頁71。
- 6 《老婆皇帝》廣告，《華僑日報》，1937年3月13日。
- 7 〈月兒披上嫁衣重作新娘〉，《藝林》半月刊，第3期，1937年4月1日。
- 8 《七十二行》廣告，《國華報》，1938年4月28日。
- 9 何大傻和上海妹唱的《七十二行》主題曲曾出版唱片，見「和聲歌林貳拾期片」廣告，《華僑日報》，1938年4月11日。
- 10 《口花花》廣告，《華僑日報》，1939年5月9日。
- 11 《口花花》廣告，《華僑日報》，1939年5月10日；《花公花婆》廣告，《華僑日報》，1940年1月13日；〈月兒回港主演《口花花》 苦盡甘來成績優異再來主演一部全唱影片〉，《藝林》半月刊，第42期，1938年11月15日。
- 12 《七星伴月》廣告，《華僑日報》，1938年1月7日。
- 13 《好女十八嫁》廣告，《華僑日報》，1938年5月11日。
- 14 《好女十八嫁續集》專輯，《華僑日報》，1939年1月7日。
- 15 《十月芥菜》廣告，《華僑日報》，1939年9月25日。
- 16 《桂枝告狀》廣告，《華僑日報》，1939年11月26、30日。
- 17 《苦盡甘來》廣告，《華僑日報》，1938年9月30日。
- 18 〈月兒大顯歌喉〉，《藝林》半月刊，第30期，1938年5月15日；〈月兒的苦盡甘來〉，《藝林》半月刊，第31期，1938年6月1日。
- 19 見《一代藝人》廣告，《華僑日報》，1941年9月20日。
- 20 〈一代藝人〉原曲的故事可參見魯金：《粵曲歌壇話滄桑》，同註5，頁72-74。
- 21 有關張月兒與南洋簽長約，參見黃十風：〈月兒銀壇走紅運〉，《華字日報》，1939年1月21日；〈月兒回港主演《口花花》 苦盡甘來成績優異再來主演一部全唱影片〉，同註11。有關南洋影片公司改革之緣由和詳情可參見〈在革新粵語片大路上 南洋公司昂然邁步〉，《華字日報》，1940年9月28日；〈製片家經已改變態度了 粵語片轉變中一個好現象〉，《藝林》半月刊，第71期，1940年4月1日。
- 22 見〈月兒·何日君再來·〉，《藝林》半月刊，第70期，1940年3月15日；〈何日君再來〉廣告，《華僑日報》，1940年3月20日。
- 23 顧曲：〈月兒告別歌壇〉，《新晚報》，1958年10月21日。

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鳴謝美國三藩市華宮戲院方創傑先生

Since the emergence of sound films, Hong Kong had become a vital hub in producing Cantonese films, with a thirst for talents. Producers naturally turned their attention to the teahouse *nüling* (female singers) who already had loyal fans. Vocalists such as Cheung Yuet-ye, Tsui Lau-sin, Wu Mei-lun and Siu Yin Fei all transitioned into the film industry. These artists not only left their marks on musical films at the time; their hits from teahouses and albums were adapted into celebrated titles, while new songs from their films were then made into records. The voices of these vocalists found their way out of the teahouses through films and records, carried far and wide to new audiences. The most illustrious amongst them, in terms of craft, versatility and popularity, would be ‘Whimsical Songstress’ Cheung Yuet-ye (also known as Yuet Yee). Cheung, along with Tsui Lau-sin, Siu Ming Sing and Cheung Wai-fong were dubbed as the ‘Four Great *Pinghou* (singing with natural voice without falsetto)’. Cheung was at the height of her stardom in the film industry before the war—she was a star in both film and music. She featured in a total of 38 titles, of which 17 of them were filmed before the war. However, the only film starring Cheung that survived is a print of *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole* (1941)<sup>1</sup> acquired from overseas. It is for this reason that this article is mainly based on research from magazines and newspaper articles, advertisements, film promotional materials and a few of her remaining features—in an attempt to depict her joy and sorrow on the silver screen, as well as her evolution into a ‘Master of Versatility’ on screen and on stage.

Cheung Yuet-ye arrived in Hong Kong when she was 12 years old, after the death of her father. She began to train as a performer for livelihood, under the tutelage of maestro Tsui Kwai-fook. With her remarkable talent, Cheung started performing on stage at the age of 13. Thanks to her versatile vocal register, perfect harmony and ease in singing a variety of styles, she rose to fame swiftly in the music world. ‘Master of Versatility’ was Cheung’s signature solo song, which she would perform as different characters. The gifted Cheung Yuet-ye became a highly sought-after performer, not only in teahouses across Hong Kong and the Mainland, but by the music and film industries. Not long after the appearance of sound films, Cheung was invited to act in films. She debuted on the silver screen with *Unworthy of Love* (1935). It was the first feature shot by the then newly established Unique (HK), a

subsidiary of Shanghai’s Unique Film Productions. Existing materials reveal that Cheung’s casting was not publicised when the film first started shooting. It was reshot sometime after due to specific reasons<sup>2</sup> and Cheung was promoted as a cameo during release. She also sang the song ‘Deity of Longevity’<sup>3</sup> in the film. Unfortunately, the box-office performance of the film was less than desirable,<sup>4</sup> and Cheung did not grace the screen promptly after *Unworthy of Love*.

## Mischievous Presence on the Silver Screen

While Cheung was still at the prime of her singing career after her debut in *Unworthy of Love*, she felt strained when singing in a *zihou* (use of falsetto voice by actresses) style because of her age. She was planning for a change professionally when she met director Chan Pei who invited her for collaborations. Chan was previously active in

張月兒的不同幕前扮相：  
Versatile roles of Cheung Yuet-ye on screen:



《老婆皇帝》中御夫有道的惡妻，  
旁為飾演其丈夫的伊秋水。  
Cheung plays a strict wife to Yee Chau-  
shui (left) in *Wife, Emperor!*.



《七星伴月》中令眾女性傾慕的男  
裝扮相  
The cross-dressing Cheung adored by  
all the ladies in *Seven Beauties*.



《苦盡甘來》中靠賣唱養育親兒的  
歌女，旁為子喉七。  
Cheung makes a living as a songstress  
to raise her son in *Sorrow Gives Way to  
Happiness*; (left) Tsi-hau Tsat.



《十月芥菜》中爭取婚姻自主權的  
女性  
Cheung fights for marriage autonomy  
in *Longing for Love*.

the record industry and his film career had just arisen with musical films and comedies. Therefore he proposed to Cheung, who was great at singing comedic tunes, to take part in *Wife, Emperor!* (1937) with Yee Chau-shui. Eager to take her career to new directions, Cheung happily agreed.<sup>5</sup> In the film, Cheung plays a strict wife to Yee; together they make a funny and mischievous couple. Cheung showcased her remarkable singing with four songs in the film, including the well-known 'The Great Artist'.<sup>6</sup> The film was a huge success and established Cheung's standing as a comedian, allowing her to shift her focuses from performing at teahouses to films and records.<sup>7</sup>

From Cheung's sole surviving film before the war, *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole*, her acting skills were by no means inferior to her peers at the time. She was a natural performer; she was able to master the dramatic rhythm and her body language. Sadly, we were not given the opportunity to catch a glimpse of her singing comedic tunes. Nonetheless, her singing in the film was undeniably enthralling. After starring in *Wife, Emperor!*, Cheung was involved in multiple comedy musical films such as *Seventy-two Professions* (1937), *Seven Beauties* (1938), *A Woman of Many*

*Husbands* (1938) and its sequel, *A Woman of Many Husbands, Part Two* (1939), etc. There were also a number of other vocal talents from teahouses in these films since music was their selling point. In *Seventy-two Professions*, there was a duet 'Selling Raw Lotus Root' between Tsui Lau-sin and the leading actor Ho Tai-so; as well as the song 'Taoist Prayer'<sup>8</sup> between Ho Tai-so, Leong Tim-tim and the 'Queen of Zhongban' Wu Mei-lun. Ho was one of the 'Four Kings' of Cantonese music industry and the backbone of New Moon Record Company. Besides making music, he would often perform comedic tunes and take part in Cantonese comedies. At the time, film songs made an important part of an album; and tunes from *Seventy-two Professions* were released on records.<sup>9</sup> Songs from albums and Cantonese operatic songs from teahouses were adapted into films as well.

Cheung already had an established international following for her music. Film companies thus naturally capitalised on her overseas audiences by adapting Cheung's records into films. *The Frivoller* (1939) declared outright in its promotion: 'A hit record that took the world by storm and made songstress Yuet Yee an international

sensation; now adapted as a sound film on the big screen that is beyond compare.'<sup>10</sup> It illustrated the power of a hit record in promoting a film. In fact, collaborations between the film and music industries had never been limited to what was on screen. It was standard practice in film marketing to publicise the creative team and music crew of film songs. Uncle Kau, referring to famous composer Wong King-kau from the record industry, was highlighted in the advertisements and promotions of *The Frivoller* and *The Philanderer and His Mate* (1940). We could see that the cross-medium exchange between music and cinema in Hong Kong had begun long before the war.<sup>11</sup>

## Androgyny and Comedic Talent

Cheung's comedic talent was undeniable as an actress. From the film footage, we could see that Cheung was tall in build. She was at least the same height as actor Siu Sun Kuen, and was even taller than Sun Ma Si-tsang and Tam Lan-hing by more than half a head. It was why numerous media nicknamed her the 'Tall Lady'. Her tall stature was not only advantageous in improving her vocal range and projection for



performances, but also enabled her to play gender-reversed roles. Cheung's ability to transform into male or female characters within the same film was outstanding. For example, in *Seven Beauties*, her character masquerades as a man adored by all the ladies, leading to a series of comical events.<sup>12</sup> She also acted as an old couple, concurrently as both the man and woman, who are dating in *A Woman of Many Husbands*.<sup>13</sup> And in its sequel *A Woman of Many Husbands, Part Two*, she played the attractive aunt, Ah Lau, a nosey woman, a country girl, as well as one of the 'old grandpas' with Tai Hau Ho.<sup>14</sup> In *A Ready Lover* (1939), Cheung portrayed a woman fighting for her marriage autonomy. However, her character did not confront the outdated mentality with fury and a raised fist like in most Cantonese films. Instead, she dons on traditional Chinese pantsuits and acts as the grandfather of the groom (played by Chu Po-chuen) to 'play a trick' on his 'grandson'.<sup>15</sup> Cleverly enforcing her authority as the grandfather, she is able to put an end to the arranged marriage imposed by her parents. Cheung turned in a comparably lively performance as part of an all-female cast in a later film *Two Women Struggle for a Husband* (1962). She first played the dubious doctor Wong Luk, who would recklessly diagnose patients in a calm and composed demeanour. Cheung then depicted the county magistrate, Wu Tou (which literally means befuddled), who first enters the scene with all confidence as a high-rank official, but quickly exposes himself as a befuddled bureaucrat—hearing his cases

haphazardly and punishing anyone accused without rhyme or reason routinely with 40 lashes. However, when Wu learns of the doting wife Fung Yee's (played by Fung Wong Nui) powerful family connections, he immediately becomes a panicky and spineless coward. Even with these two small roles, it was clear that Cheung was remarkable at capturing the personalities and emotional changes of characters, which were conveyed through the meaningful and delicate glances, expressions and body language in her performances. The eloquent and rhythmic exchange of *koubai* (plain speech) between Tsui Lau-sin, Yam Kim-fai and her was as well spectacular and showcased the singing skills of each vocalist. *Two Women Struggle for a Husband* was also the last film that Tsui starred in.

In fact, Cheung's versatility in playing gender-reversed roles was not limited to comedies, but suitable for films of other genres. In 1939, Cheung starred as the lead in *Daughter Vs Stepmother* (1939), during a craze for folktale film adaptations. She played Kwai-chi who has a narrow escape after being entrapped by her stepmother. In order to help exonerate her father, she disguises herself as a male county magistrate.<sup>16</sup> As a prominent teahouse performer, songstress films became the perfect platform for Cheung to showcase her talents.

### Portraits of Songstresses

It would be ludicrous to depict the lives of songstresses without songs. Some of these songstress films, including *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness* (1938) and *The*



曾與尹秋水、劉克宣合演《鬼馬歌王》(又名《鬼馬歌王贖舅爺》, 1947), 圖為戲橋。  
Cheung collaborated with Yee Chau-shui and Lau Hark-suen in *The Tricky and the Honest* (1947); pictured here is a handbill of the film.

*Great Artist* (1941), were adapted from popular songs; while tunes from films such as *When Will You Return?* (1940) and *When Will We Meet Again?* (1940) became iconic hits of the time. In *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*, Cheung acted as a songstress for the first time. She played the protagonist, Yuet-sin, who is abandoned by her husband. However, through the fortunate meeting of a mentor, she becomes a singer to make a living to raise her son. All her struggles and sorrows give way to happiness in the end, when her son grows up and marries a pious wife.<sup>17</sup> In real life, Cheung also acted as a mentor. Her 13-year-old apprentice at the time, Cheung Dip-ye, also starred in the film and sang several songs together with her instructor. After shooting *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*, she accompanied Cheung to perform in Singapore, and was a great partner to Cheung during recording sessions.<sup>18</sup> Cheung Dip-ye went on to star alongside



張月兒在《巧鳳試郎心》中分飾兩角，圖為扮演醫師黃綠。

Cheung Yuet-ye plays two different roles in *Two Women Struggle for a Husband*; pictured here is the dubious doctor Wong Luk played by Cheung.



《巧鳳試郎心》以「全女班、全唱家」作號召，網羅多位紅伶演出：(左起)徐柳仙、張月兒、李寶瑩、任劍輝、譚蘭卿、戴慶瑤。

*Two Women Struggle for a Husband* appeals to audiences with an 'all-female and all-singer' cast and includes performances from a number of renowned Cantonese opera artists; (from left) Tsui Lau-sin, Cheung Yuet-ye, Lee Bo-ying, Yam Kim-fai, Tam Lan-hing and Tai Hing-yiu.

with her instructor, who was the lead, in films such as *A Ready Lover* and *The Great Artist*. Cheung Dip-ye was also an active performer in the teahouses of Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Macau, before and during the war.

The fate of the songstress in *The Great Artist* was the exact opposite to her counterpart in *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*. The songstress becomes disfigured after saving her daughter in a fire and is no longer able to perform for a living. She works as a servant instead to support her ungracious daughter.<sup>19</sup> The film's plot differed significantly from the original song that Cheung sang which was inspired by the life of film star Ruan Lingyu.<sup>20</sup> From *The Great Artist* and the theme song of *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole*, it could be seen that films were only loosely adapted from popular tunes before the war, often with narratives that did not necessarily follow the same premises. Associations with hit records might have only been a device to attract audiences to the theatres.

Cheung Yuet-ye's new home and all her belongings were destroyed when Guangzhou fell under Japanese occupation in 1938. Luckily, with Nanyang Film Company moving away from its business-oriented filmmaking style at the time, and the success of *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*, Cheung was able to secure a long-term contract with the company.<sup>21</sup> She subsequently starred in *When Will You Return?* and *When Will We Meet Again?*, both results of Nanyang's efforts to improve the quality of their films by hiring literati to pen their screenplays. The leading songstress in *When Will You Return?* performs to put her lover through medical school. However when the two finally reunite, it is under the worst of circumstances: the songstress is on the brink of death from committing suicide after killing someone, and nothing can be done, not even by her lover who has returned and since become a doctor.<sup>22</sup> Its theme song bearing the same name also became a renowned hit of Cheung.

*When Will We Meet Again?*

marked the first collaboration between Cheung Yuet-ye and celebrated actor Pak Kui-wing. Although the film was never cited as an adaptation in its promotion, its plot bore a resemblance in many ways to Austrian-Jewish author Stefan Zweig's short story *Letter from an Unknown Woman* published in 1922. A songstress has a one-night-stand with an eminent actor, after which he leaves and forgets about her. However, she gets pregnant from the brief union and falls terminally ill not long after. With no better option, she writes a letter to her fickle lover, in hopes of entrusting their child to him. This Cantonese version was released even earlier than the Hollywood version from 1948. While the protagonist's child did not die from illness in the story, *When Will We Meet Again?* also depicted the characteristics of the time and of Hong Kong. In the 1920s, vice establishments and red-light districts were all the rage in Hong Kong. Yet with a total ban on prostitution in 1935, songstresses who were brilliant vocalists would move their performances onto the stages of teahouses, while others continued their previous jobs in the guise of travel escorts. Cheung's character in the film was precisely an escort-courtesan.

## Fading out from Films After War

Cheung's career continued to shine briefly on the silver screen after the war. This 'Master of Versatility' starred in the comedy *The Tricky and the Honest* (1947) and cross-dressed as the male lead Cheung Sun in *Romance of the Western*

*Chamber* (1947). She also acted as a songstress in *Prostituting to Raise the Orphan* (1947), a film adapted from a popular song of the same name composed by Ng Yat-siu. However by the end of the war, Cheung was over 40 years old, and the music industry also went downhill at the start of the 1950s. Apart from Siu Yin Fei, who was relatively younger, many *nüling* such as Wu Mei-lun and Tsui Lau-sin, who were active in both the music and film industries before the war, faded out from the cinematic scene after the boom of musical films ended in 1952. Cheung also shifted her focus to mentoring new performers.<sup>23</sup> After cross-dressing as a supporting character in two all-female cast films directed by Luk Bong, *Two Women Struggle for a Husband* and *A Fair Lifemate* (1963), Cheung officially retired from the silver screen. [Translated by Hayli Chwang] ■

#### Notes

- 1 *Bitter Phoenix, Sorrowful Oriole* was shot in 1941 but it was not released in Hong Kong until 1947 due to the war. The existing print was recovered in 2012 from San Francisco, US.
- 2 According to Chu Kea's memoirs of his time at Unique, Shao Zuiweng arrived in Hong Kong after filming *Unworthy of Love* (1935). After watching the film, Shao felt that it was not ideal and decided on a reshoot. See Chu Kea, 'Shanghai's

- Unique Film Moved to Hong Kong: Filming Began on Mourning of the Chaste Tree Flower starring Pak Kui-wing', *Hong Kong TV New*, No 379, 1981, p 36 (in Chinese).
- 3 Advertisement for *Unworthy of Love*, *The Kung Sheung Daily News*, 13 February 1935 (in Chinese).
- 4 See Chu Kea, 'Three and a Half Years at "Unique"', *Hong Kong TV New*, No 380, 1981, p 36 (in Chinese).
- 5 Lu Jin, *Discourse on Transformations of the Cantonese Music World*, Hong Kong: Joint Publishing (Hong Kong) Company Limited, 1994, p 71 (in Chinese).
- 6 Advertisement for *Wife, Emperor!*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 13 March 1937 (in Chinese).
- 7 'Yuet Yee Dons a Wedding Dress to be a Bride Again', *Artland Biweekly*, No 3, 1 April 1937 (in Chinese).
- 8 Advertisement for *Seventy Two Professions*, *Guohua News*, 28 April 1938 (in Chinese).
- 9 Performed by Ho Tai-so and Sheung Hoi Mui, the theme song of *Seventy Two Professions* was released as a record. See advertisement for Harmony Music 20th Music Record, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 11 April 1938 (in Chinese).
- 10 Advertisement for *The Frivoller*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 9 May 1939 (in Chinese).
- 11 Advertisement for *The Frivoller*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 10 May 1939 (in Chinese); advertisement for *The Philanderer and His Mate*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 13 January 1940 (in Chinese); 'Yuet Yee Returns to Hong Kong to Star in *The Frivoller*: Yuet Yee Performs Again in an All-Singing Film Following the Success of *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*', *Artland Biweekly*, No 42, 15 November 1938 (in Chinese).
- 12 Advertisement for *Seven Beauties*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 7 January 1938 (in Chinese).
- 13 Advertisement for *A Woman of Many Husbands*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 11 May 1938 (in Chinese).
- 14 Spotlight on the album of *A Woman of Many Husbands, Part Two*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 7 January 1939 (in Chinese).
- 15 Advertisement for *A Ready Lover*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 25 September 1939 (in

- Chinese).
- 16 Advertisement for *Daughter Vs Stepmother*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 26 and 30 November 1939 (in Chinese).
- 17 Advertisement for *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 30 September 1938 (in Chinese).
- 18 'Yuet Yee Shows off Her Vocal Talent', *Artland Biweekly*, No 30, 15 May 1938 (in Chinese); 'Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness for Yuet Yee', *Artland Biweekly*, No 31, 1 June 1938 (in Chinese).
- 19 See advertisement for *The Great Artist*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 20 September 1941 (in Chinese).
- 20 For the original story of 'The Great Artist', see note 5, pp 72-74 (in Chinese).
- 21 Regarding the contract Cheung Yuet-yee signed with Nanyang, refer to Huang Shi-feng, 'Yuet Yee's Rise to Fame on the Silver Screen', *Chinese Mail*, 21 January 1939 (in Chinese); 'Yuet Yee Returns to Hong Kong to Star in *The Frivoller*: Following the Success of *Sorrow Gives Way to Happiness*, Yuet Yee Performs Again in an All Singing Film', see note 11. For the details and reasons behind the reform of Nanyang, refer to 'Nanyang Films Bravely Steps up to the Revolution of Cantonese Films', *Chinese Mail*, 28 September 1940 (in Chinese); 'The Changed Attitudes of Film Producers; a Good Sign in the Transformation of Cantonese Films', *Artland Biweekly*, No 71, 1 April 1940 (in Chinese).
- 22 See 'Yuet Yee · When Will You Return ·', *Artland Biweekly*, No 70, 15 March 1940 (in Chinese); advertisement for *When Will You Return?*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, 20 March 1940 (in Chinese).
- 23 Gu Qu, 'Yuet Yee Says Goodbye to the Music Industry', *The New Evening Post*, 21 October 1958 (in Chinese).

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Thank you!



# 吳君麗 ——朝氣勃勃、率性自然

Ng Kwan-lai:  
The Vibrant But Unassuming  
Diva of Cantonese Opera

陳守仁 Chan Sau-yan

《百花亭贈劍》特刊  
Programme book of *Presenting a Sword at Hundred-Flower Pavilion*  
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1958年10月，一張俏麗脫俗的面容、一個燦爛甜美的笑容刊在一本粵劇演出的特刊上，旁邊是英姿颯颯的名伶何非凡（1919-1980）。這齣新戲的編劇是炙手可熱的唐滌生，劇名叫《百花亭贈劍》。這擔正了才不到兩年半、朝氣洋溢於舉手投足、青春如沐春風的正印花旦，藝名吳君麗，芳齡才24歲。

吳君麗（1934-2018；另說1930-2018）原名「吳燕雲」（另說「吳雲」），人稱「麗姐」；她與芳艷芬（生於1926年）、白雪仙（生於1928年）、紅線女（1925-2013）合稱五十年代粵劇「四大名旦」。晚年一直和藹可親、平易近人的她不幸於2018年9月26日辭世，享年84歲（或說88歲）。她一生開山了49齣粵劇，在其中36齣擔任「正印花旦」，並演出過一百五十多部粵語電影，<sup>1</sup>灌錄了不少唱片。正因她的聲、影深入香港人心，令我們對她無限懷念。

據說麗姐在上海出生和接受教育，但關於她的早年生活，資料不多。據說她1952年隨家人搬到香港定居；翌年，即她19歲那年，她加入了前輩名伶陳非儂（1899-1984）於1952年創辦的非儂粵劇學院學習粵劇，其後又拜幾位音樂家如林兆奎（1917-1979）等為師，鑽研粵劇唱腔，開發了一副悅耳的「正宗子

喉」，<sup>2</sup>為她日後在粵劇壇上與比她早出道的名伶芳艷芬和白雪仙爭鋒而增添本錢。在五十年代的香港，粵劇與粵劇電影仍是大型娛樂的主流，若非聲、色、藝俱備，藝人根本無法立足擔任主角。並非「著紅褲仔」出身的麗姐，卻擁有出塵的美貌和細膩的歌喉，固然是她日後創造奇蹟的重要條件。

## 出道期——幫花期： 1954至1955年4月

麗姐在1954年年底初登台板，在開山師傅陳非儂改編的《危城鶻鵲》<sup>3</sup>裡演出，大概是任第三花旦。<sup>4</sup>由1954年12月至1955年3月，她分別在「大世界」（陳錦棠〔1906-1981〕、羅麗娟〔1917-1999〕領導）和「多寶」（任劍輝〔1913-1989〕、白雪仙領導）等劇團參演了九齣「唐劇」的開山，相信仍是擔演第二、三花旦。這幾齣戲中，今天仍經常在香港

上演的是1955年2月17日開山的《胭脂巷口故人來》。

## 麗聲初期——刀馬期： 1956年5至11月

吳君麗並沒有因得著了美妙的「子喉」而自滿；反之，她又拜南來香港的京劇男旦祈彩芬、祈玉崑（二人生卒年份不詳）父子學習北派武場功架，並刻苦鍛鍊。<sup>5</sup>大概是在芳、白之間獨樹一幟，當她在1956年5月組織自己領導的麗聲劇團時，她首演的是當時初露頭角的編劇家蘇翁（約1925-2004）編劇、以武場戲為主的《梁紅玉擊鼓退金兵》（1956年8月拍成電影），奠定了她「正印花旦」和「刀馬旦」的地位。這時候，她才22歲。

在「麗聲初期」開山的五個新戲中，麗姐扮演了如梁紅玉、花木蘭和華山聖母（楊嬋）等人物，相信還是以武場戲作為號召。故「麗聲初期」也是麗姐的「刀馬期」。

唐滌生為吳君麗度身塑造了多個粵劇經典角色，包括：《白兔會》中含辛茹苦的李三娘（左）、《百花亭贈劍》中文武兼擅的百花公主（右）。

Tong Tik-sang created many classic roles for Ng Kwan-lai: Sam Neung who endures all kinds of hardships in *Madam Lee Sam Neung* (left); the civil-cum-military Princess Pak-fa in *Presenting a Sword at Hundred-Flower Pavilion* (right).



## 唐劇期——春風期：

1956年11月至1959年8月

五十年代是香港粵劇的黃金歲月，但回顧活躍於這期間的花旦，並不是每一個都曾受惠於「唐劇」。箇中原因當然是因當時唐哥（唐滌生）名氣如日處中天，<sup>6</sup>況且人才輩出，可想而知，不是每個名角都能吸引他的注意。

當年銳意在粵劇圈開創一番事業的麗姐不只沒有錯過唐哥的才華，並且接受了唐哥「文長武短」的忠告，以自己得天獨厚的嗓子為「本錢」，轉而磨鍊青衣、閨門旦等在文場戲有較大發揮的行當。<sup>7</sup>1956年11月14日，唐劇《香羅塚》由吳君麗夥拍陳錦棠（1906-1981）、麥炳榮（1915-1984）在利舞台開山。劇中，麗姐扮演賢妻良母林茹香，卻被善妒的丈夫咬定與兒子的老師有染，又被誣告殺夫而被做官的老師判斷，幸得禁衛相救；幾經委屈、死裡逃生後，她原諒了魯莽的丈夫和固執狠心的老師。在唐哥編劇時，麗姐沒有要求突顯她扮演女主角的戲份，也不要求女主角運用機智來扭轉乾坤。在演出場刊裡，

唐哥稱讚麗姐是「新氣象」和「新的朝氣」的帶動者，足見他對麗姐平實作風的肯定。

《香羅塚》打響頭炮後，麗姐初出道便呈現的「朝氣」，激發了唐哥為她寫了另外的八齣戲，其中公認為麗姐的代表作的，有《雙仙拜月亭》（1958年1月）、《白兔會》（1958年6月）和《百花亭贈劍》（1958年10月）。

麗姐在《雙仙拜月亭》裡扮演在戰亂間爭取自由戀愛的尚書千金王瑞蘭，與由何非凡扮演的落魄書生蔣世隆相戀，卻被父親斥責為「無媒苟合」，被逼與愛郎訣別。最後貴為宰相的父親又逼她改嫁新科狀元；她決意殉情，卻與高中狀元的世隆重遇。在《白兔會》裡，麗姐演活了逆來順受、含辛茹苦的李三娘。在《百花亭贈劍》，唐哥為麗姐度身塑造了「文武兼擅」並多情孝義的「百花公主」；她為情而放走被懷疑是奸細的情郎，又為救父而被逼解甲投降，一直在情義兩難全的矛盾中掙扎。時至今日，每次重演這幾齣戲時，演員的感情戲和傾情的唱段仍多少繫著凡哥（何非凡）和麗姐的影子。1959年8

月24日，麗聲劇團開山了唐哥的《血羅衫》後，不到一個月，多年來不辭勞苦為粵劇創作而殫智竭力的唐哥便不幸辭世了。

## 後唐劇期——摸索期：

1959年底至1967年

唐哥在1959年9月15日遽然離世，是對當時粵劇圈，尤其是所有受惠於唐劇的名角的莫大打擊。芳艷芬結婚離開了粵劇舞台後，嘗試尋覓唐哥的替代但失敗的「仙鳳」也決定息演。然而，戲還是要演下去的，麗姐當然不甘心就此作罷。在這摸索期間，麗姐曾起用了好幾位開戲師爺為她編劇。1960年4月，凡哥與出道不久的葉紹德（1930-2009）合編的《紅樓金井夢》，由凡哥和麗姐主演，後來並灌錄了唱片傳世，可以說是麗姐摸索期的代表作。

## 頌新聲期——能文能武期：

1971至1975年

七十年代是林家聲（1933-2015）大展拳腳的年代。麗姐與聲哥（林家聲）年齡相若，更同樣是能





吳君麗曾與新馬師曾拍檔演出多部電影，圖為新馬自編自導的《萬惡淫為首》。

Ng Kwan-lai collaborated with Sun Ma Si-tsang in a number of films; pictured here is a still from *Lust is the Worst Vice*, written and directed by Sun Ma.

吳君麗與任劍輝在銀幕上多次合作，彌補了戲台上的缺失，圖為《教子逆君皇》(1960)。

Ng Kwan-lai often starred opposite Yam Kim-fai on screen, which made up for their rare partnership on stage; pictured here is a still from *The Unroyal Prince* (1960).

文能武，可謂志趣相投。他們合作開山了十齣新戲，較出色的有《朱弁回朝》和《春花笑六郎》。在兩劇中，唱和做都已成熟的麗姐不只重拾當年「文武兼擅」的熱情，嚴格而言，是真的達到了「能文能武」的境界。

## 麗姐的電影

麗姐並不是第一個從電影銀幕走上粵劇舞台的演員；在三十年代，同樣是「半個上海人」的唐雪卿（1908-1955）和鄭孟霞（1912-2000）都是在拍電影成名後才兼演粵劇。<sup>8</sup> 1955年8月，麗姐成為電影《臥薪嘗膽》的女主角，夥拍新馬師曾（1916-1997），比她在粵劇《梁紅玉擊鼓退金兵》中擔正，還早將近一年。<sup>9</sup>

麗姐在名角輩出的年代沒有錯過唐滌生的才華，卻錯過了與任劍輝在舞台上合作的機會。幸好，在銀幕上，麗姐與任姐（任劍輝）主演了多部電影，彌補了戲台上的損失，代表作有《釵頭鳳》（1957）、《大明忠烈傳》（1957）、《張巡殺妾饗三軍》（1958）和《蘭貞鬧嚴府》（1962）等。這些「任、麗電影」

中，也不乏由唐劇遺作改編過來的，較知名的有《白兔會》（1959）、《一樓風雪夜歸人》（1962）、《一點靈犀化彩虹》（1963）、《一彎眉月伴寒衾》（1964）和《紅菱血》（1964）等。

另一個與麗姐夥拍多部電影的是名伶新馬師曾，代表作品有《臥薪嘗膽》（1955）、《萬惡淫為首》（1963）和《濟公鬥八仙》（1966）等。

## 結語

雖然麗姐曾以「能文能武」的形象演了一些如《百花亭贈劍》的名劇和拍了好幾部如《龍鳳爭掛帥》（1967；夥拍林家聲）等名片，但今後長留香港人心目中的，相信仍是她那副楚楚可憐、逆來順受的造型。麗姐之令人懷念，相信也是因為她的銀幕形象，確是出自其胸無城府、率性自然的個性。也許，這正正是五、六十年代不少香港女性的寫照。■

## 註釋

1 見〈歷年新編劇目演出年表〉和〈電影演出年表〉，載香港文化博物館編：《文武兼擅——吳君麗戲劇藝術剪影》，香港：康樂及文化事務署，2004，頁126-129。

- 2 見葉紹德：〈一位與我相交五十年的名花旦：麗姐（吳君麗女士）〉，載香港文化博物館編：《文武兼擅——吳君麗戲劇藝術剪影》，同上註，頁8。葉說麗姐在1953年加入了陳非農的「香江粵劇學院」；但據陳非農的自傳所說，學院名叫「非農粵劇學院」；見陳非農口述，伍榮仲、陳澤雷重編：《粵劇六十年》，香港：香港中文大學音樂系粵劇研究計劃，2007，頁40-41。相信「香江粵劇學院」也即「非農粵劇學院」。
- 3 這是據〈歷年新編劇目演出年表〉所載。同註1，頁126。陳非農指出《危城鶻蝶》是1930年代初「新春秋」班的創班名劇，由陳天縱（1903-1978）編；見伍榮仲、陳澤雷重編：《粵劇六十年》，同上註，頁30。1954年演出的《危城鶻蝶》，應該是陳非農的重新改編。
- 4 見〈歷年新編劇目演出年表〉，同註1，頁126。
- 5 同註2，頁8。
- 6 據說當時唐哥編劇所收「筆金」高達港幣1,500元；見陳守仁：《唐滌生創作傳奇》，香港：匯智出版有限公司，2016，頁125。
- 7 見葉紹德：〈一位與我相交五十年的名花旦：麗姐（吳君麗女士）〉，載香港文化博物館編：《文武兼擅——吳君麗戲劇藝術剪影》，同註2，頁8-9。
- 8 同註6，頁5、30。
- 9 見蒲鋒：〈先武而後文 粵劇電影一代奇才——吳君麗〉，《明報》，2018年10月6日。

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In October 1958, a vibrant smile and the unearthly look of a budding prima donna appeared on the cover of a Cantonese opera programme book. Posing next to her was Ho Fei-fan (1919-1980), the dashing superstar male lead, and the work to be premiered was a masterpiece written by the renowned Tong Tik-sang (1917-1959). It was entitled *Presenting a Sword at Hundred-Flower Pavilion*, and she was stage-named Ng Kwan-lai, who had just started her career less than three years ago. Pert, pretty and passionate, she was only 24 years old.



吳君麗與羅劍郎（左一）、林家聲（右二）、任冰兒（右一）合演《龍虎關前烈女魂》（1960）。

Ng Kwan-lai collaborated with Law Kim-long (first left), Lam Kar-sing (second right) and Yam Bing-ye (first right) in *Patriotic Heroine* (1960).

Nearly 60 years had passed when Ng passed away on 26 September 2018 at the age of 84.<sup>1</sup> She had premiered altogether 49 Cantonese opera works, starred in over 150 films and made a number of albums throughout her career. Subsequent to her sad demise, while her voice and image would always stay with her fans, those who knew her personally would remember her as a graceful, courteous and modest lady.

Apart from the fact that she was born in 1934 in Shanghai and had settled in Hong Kong with her family in 1952, little is known about Ng's early life. In 1953, she became a disciple of Chan Fei-nung (1899-1984), the respected and then retired actor of *huadan* (female lead) who had just founded the Hong Kong Academy of Cantonese Opera in the previous year. Benefitted from a number of capable music maestros and instructors, Ng soon acquired an impressive voice. Further with arduous training under several Peking opera masters, she built a solid foundation in martial arts.<sup>2</sup> Unlike most stars of Cantonese opera who had entered the profession in their early teens, Ng started as an adult beginner. Yet

undaunted by her limitations, she worked double hard to overcome them. She debuted in October 1954, playing a supporting role in *War and Love*, performed by Chan's troupe. Within the next 18 months, she took part in the premieres of 12 operas, serving as the second or third female role under some of the top female leads of the time, who included Pak Suet-sin (born in 1928). One of such plays was *An Old Folk's Return to Rouse Alley*. It premiered in 1955 and has become a frequently staged work in the contemporary repertoire. In less than a year, Ng played the female lead in the film *A King's Revenge* (1955), featuring the famous Sun Ma Si-tsang (1916-1997) as the male lead.<sup>3</sup>

### Kicking off Her Career in Cantonese Opera

During the first stage of Ng's operatic career which lasted from 1954 to 1955, she originated the supporting roles in nine works by Tong Tik-sang, the most sought-after playwright of the 1950s. Yet, it would take another year's hard work before Ng could successfully attract the attention of this master.

Ng founded the Lai Sing Opera Troupe in May 1956 and kicked off her

ambition with *How Leung Hung Yuk's War Drum Caused the Jin Army to Retreat*, playing the audacious woman marshal Leung Hung-yuk of the 12th century. It was followed by another four operas which also featured her martial arts and military competence. By then, she had successfully established herself as a *dou ma dan* (the female martial role; literally 'female role of dagger and horse'), enhanced by her touching voice, to compete with Pak Suet-sin and Fong Yim-fun (born in 1926) in Hong Kong, and with Hung Sin Nui (1925-2013) who had settled in Guangzhou in late 1955. Years later, they were honoured as the 'Four Great Divas' of Cantonese opera in the 1950s.

### Assault on the Pinnacle

Ng's climb to prominence would not have been possible without the help of Tong Tik-sang. The 1950s were the heydays of Cantonese opera and of operatic films when countless talents were struggling for recognition. Needless to say, the key was to capture the attention of prominent figures. Being the playwright who had brought Pak and Fong to fame with his creative craft, Tong Tik-sang, who was also a top screenwriter, film



在《雄心太子》(1965)中吳君麗飾演西國百花公主，英姿颯爽。(前排左起)少新權、李鳳聲、吳君麗、金影憐

Ng Kwan-lai plays the charismatic heroine Princess Hundred Flowers of Western Kingdom in *The Ambitious Prince* (1965). (From front left): Siu Sun Kuen, Cecilia Lee Fung-sing, Ng Kwan-lai and Kam Ying-lin.

director and owner of a film company, was only interested in those who demonstrated an inspiring flair.

In 1956, Tong's advice of remodelling Ng from a *dou ma dan* to *kwei mun dan* (the girl from an affluent and respectable family) or *tsing yi* (the gentle young woman who suffers a distressing fate and ends up destitute) had won Ng's trust. On 14 November 1956, Tong's *A Beauty's Grave* was premiered at Lee Theatre, featuring Ng, the veteran actor Chan Kam-tong (1906-1981) and the rising young actor Mak Bing-wing (1915-1984). Ng, playing Lam Yu-heung, a young mother, is accused by her jealous husband of having an affair with the tutor of their child, and is blamed by the tutor of allegedly hitting on him. To make things worse, she is later convicted of murder by the tutor who has become a magistrate. Having been rescued by a righteous guard, Lam pardons her husband and the tutor when the truth is revealed. With her exquisite portrayal of the scapegoat, Ng was shot to fame overnight. And in Tong's eyes, the 22-year-old Ng was vibrant, unassuming and worthwhile of his further efforts.

Tong wrote another eight Cantonese opera works for Ng in the next three years. Among them, *Two Immortals at the Pavilion of the Moon*

(January 1958), *Madam Lee Sam Neung* (June 1958) and *Presenting a Sword at Hundred-Flower Pavilion* (October 1958), which all featured Ng and Ho Fei-fan, were regarded as Ng's masterpieces.

In *Two Immortals at the Pavilion of the Moon*, Ng acted as Sui-lan, the daughter of Minister Wong, who married Sai-lung, played by Ho, when they fled their lives during an upheaval. Wong however denies the matrimony on the ground that Sai-lung is a plebeian. Due to filial piety that she has been taught since she was a child, Sui-lan bids a tearful farewell to Sai-lung. Wong spreads the news that his daughter is dead, and Sui-lan thinks Sai-lung has drowned himself. Three years later, Wong tries to coerce his daughter into marrying the First Scholar. While praying at the Pavilion of the Moon, Sui-lan plans to kill herself because she could not forget Sai-lung. The two finally reunite when Sai-lung, now the First Scholar, goes to the Pavilion of the Moon to offer a prayer. To teach Wong a lesson, Sai-lung pretends to be down and out upon the arrival of Wong. Wong is about to flog Sai-lung when everyone show up to vouch for Sai-lung's noble identity.

In *Madam Lee Sam Neung*, Ng portrayed the young sister, Sam Neung, who performs all kinds of

labour work and endures bullying from her eldest brother and sister-in-law because her husband, played by Ho, has been driven away. She even cut the umbilical cord of her baby with her own teeth when giving birth to him. 15 years later, her husband comes back in the robe of a nobleman. He humiliates and punishes the villains before welcoming Sam Neung and their son to his palace.

In *Presenting a Sword at Hundred-Flower Pavilion*, Ng played Princess Pak-fa who is also the marshal of her father's kingdom. Having fallen in love with a spy, played by Ho, who is sent by his emperor, she is mired in romance, loyalty and filial piety.

Up until recent years, whenever these plays are restaged, they bring to mind of audiences the silhouettes and echoes of the charismatic couple, Ng and Ho. Ng's third stage and peak of her career ended with Tong's untimely decease on 15 September 1959.

## Transition

Ng, together with Pak Suet-sin and the entire circle of Cantonese opera in Hong Kong, suffered an age of abeyance in the wake of Tong Tik-sang's sudden death. Among the nine Cantonese opera works that Ng premiered from October 1959 to early 1967, *Dream of the Golden Well in Red Chamber*, co-written by Ho Fei-fan and Yip Siu-tak (1930-2009) in 1960, depicts the story between Bo-yuk and his maid Kam-chuen, is regarded as an outstanding piece. The vinyl that Ho and Ng recorded subsequent to the success of the opera is not only a precious keepsake for posterity but also a documentation of singing of the two masters.

## Collaboration with Lam Kar-sing

Ng Kwan-lai worked with Lam Kar-sing (1933-2015) when they were

playing supporting roles in their younger years. Of similar age, and with almost the same aspiration of becoming an all-round Cantonese opera artist, they performed together in 10 newly created works, including a series of military-cum-civil plays from 1971 to 1975. *Spring Flower Mocks the Young Master* was one of their more well-known works. It premiered in 1973 and depicted the story of Spring Flower, the chieftain of a gang of righteous bandits played by Ng, who disguises herself as an ugly maid in the marshal's mansion to bide her time. Though infatuated with the proud and brash young master, Spring Flower is derided and thwarted by him. When the barbarians invade his land, the young master is mired in the battlefield. Wearing armour and a mask, Spring Flower rescues him and agrees to marry him. The young master eventually unveils the secret identity of his maid in the bride's chamber.

Though Ng's operas from her post-Tong stages lack the dramatic and musical sophistication of the works of Tong Tik-sang, she, while maturing, invigorated and perfected her original endeavour of making a

military-cum-civil diva.

## Films

Having recruited Tong Tik-sang to tailor-make works for her, Ng failed to secure Yam Kim-fai as her partner on stage. Yam, the most wanted actress for male leading roles of the era, was then jointly monopolised by Pak Suet-sin and Fong Yim-fun onstage. Ng, however, had collaborated with Yam in a number of popular films. Needless to say, many of which were adapted from Tong's plays. The notable ones included *Lee Sam-neung* (1959), *Stormy Night* (1962), *The Rainbow* (1963), *A Half-moon Night* (1964) and *The Red Shoes* (1964).

Another favourite film partner of Ng was Sun Ma Si-tsang. Together they made a number of sensational works such as *A King's Revenge*, *Lust is the Worst Vice* (1963) and *Chai Kung and the Eight Immortals* (1966).

## Afterthoughts

In 2004, Ng donated her operatic collection, some 3000 items of librettos, costumes, photos and like,

to the Hong Kong Heritage Museum. The programme book of 1958 which captured her vibrant smile has been made available to the public since then.

Like Princess Pak-fa and Spring Flower, what lingers in the minds of audiences about Ng Kwan-lai is her versatile image: a military-cum-civil heroine, and a meek-and-unassuming lady. I believe the latter would prevail eventually as it shows not only the true charisma of Ng but also the characters of many Hong Kong women in the 1950s and 60s. ■

## Notes

- 1 Another source says Ng Kwan-lai was born in 1930.
- 2 Yip Shiu-tuck, 'Sister Lai (Ng Kwan Lai) - A Famous Opera Artist I have Known for Fifty Years' in *A Synthesis of Lyrical Excellence and Martial Agility - The Stage Art of Ng Kwan Lai*, Hong Kong Heritage Museum (ed), Hong Kong: Hong Kong Heritage Museum, 2004, p 8 (in Chinese).
- 3 'Chronology of Ng's Major Stage Performances' and 'Chronology of Ng's Silver-screen Performances', in *A Synthesis of Lyrical Excellence and Martial Agility - The Stage Art of Ng Kwan Lai*, Hong Kong Heritage Museum (ed), Hong Kong: Hong Kong Heritage Museum, 2004, pp 126-129 (in Chinese).

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## 伶影雙輝——吳君麗舞台藝術剪影

### A Star on the Stage and on the Silver Screen—The Stage Art of Ng Kwan Lai

享譽粵劇與電影界的吳君麗女士（麗姐）於2018年9月26日離世，香港電影資料館為了紀念這位一代紅伶，特別配合由香港文化博物館舉辦的「伶影雙輝——吳君麗舞台藝術剪影」展覽，策劃電影回顧節目，精選八部由麗姐主演的電影，於去年12月在文化博物館的劇院放映，包括《三王嫁二喬》（1958）、《教子逆君皇》（1960）、《龍虎關前烈女魂》（1960）、《百鳥朝鳳》（1961）、《白門樓斬呂布》（1961）、《雄心太子》（1965）、《鐵面無私包公審烏盆》（1967）和《風流才子俏丫環》（1967），涵蓋了麗姐以刀馬旦、青衣及閨門旦應工，與新馬師曾、任劍輝、羅劍郎、林家聲、陳寶珠等名伶合作演出的粵語戲曲片，展現麗姐文武兼擅、剛柔並重的精湛技藝。

In remembrance of renowned Cantonese opera artist and film actress Ms Ng Kwan-lai, who passed away on 26 September 2018, the Hong Kong Film Archive curated a retrospective to echo the exhibition 'A Star on the Stage and on the Silver Screen—The Stage Art of Ng Kwan Lai' organised by the Hong Kong Heritage Museum. Eight



classics starring Ng, including *The Marriage of the Two Princesses* (1958), *The Unroyal Prince* (1960), *Patriotic Heroine* (1960), *The Courtship of the Queen* (1961), *Lui Po* (1961), *The Ambitious Prince* (1965), *The Impartial and Incorruptible Judge Bao* (1967) and *A Merry Maid* (1967) were screened at the Theatre of the Museum last December. These Cantonese opera films, featuring Ng alongside such heavyweights as Sun Ma Si-tsang, Yam Kim-fai, Law Kim-long, Lam Kar-sing and Connie Chan Po-chu, highlight Ng's superb artistry and versatility in playing both military and civil roles as *dou ma dan*, *tsing yi* and *kwei mun dan*.



導演許鞍華1979年進軍影壇首作，劇本由著名編劇陳韻文編寫。取材自龍虎山雙屍案，運用時空交錯的敘事結構，交織出悲劇的真相，並以凌厲的影像，表現新舊文化的磨擦，扣連人物的心理，盡見人文關懷與新銳風格，為香港新浪潮開展新章。影片經數碼修復，幽魅色彩與詭秘氣氛得以重現。

Penned by renowned screenwriter Joyce Chan, the film was Ann Hui's directorial debut released in 1979. Based on a homicide case, it utilises a non-linear narrative structure to unpeel layer after layer of secrets. Its clever use of visual contrast not only underscores the clashes between cultures old and new, but also mirrors the psychological tension of characters and hence heralds the Hong Kong New Wave with its innovative styles. The nostalgic world of mystique created is now digitally restored to its original splendour.



\$135

語言：粵語

Language: Cantonese

字幕：繁體中文／英文

Subtitles:

Traditional Chinese / English

附64頁小冊子

Plus a 64-page booklet

2019



## 彩色青春 Colourful Youth

(2-DVD)

\$160

語言：粵語

Language: Cantonese

字幕：繁體中文／簡體中文／英文

Subtitles: Traditional Chinese / Simplified Chinese / English

附76頁小冊子

Plus a 76-page booklet

2016

## 費穆作品 《孔夫子》 Fei Mu's Confucius

(DVD)

\$105



語言：國語

Language: Mandarin

字幕：繁體中文／簡體中文／英文

Subtitles: Traditional Chinese /

Simplified Chinese / English

附八頁小冊子及四款明信片

Plus an eight-page booklet and

four postcards

2012

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For other sales outlets, please refer to the Archive website.