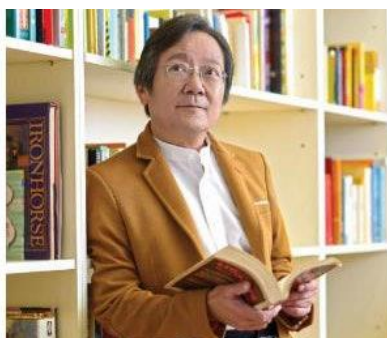


香港吐露港扶輪社 -- 榮譽社員古天農

Honorary Rotarian Ko Tin-Lung

The Rotary Club of Tolo Harbour, Hong Kong

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) Charter President 1987-88-89, Rotary Club of Tolo Harbour
7 July 2022



古天農（1953年—2022年6月23日），香港資深舞台劇演員和導演、電視及電台節目主持。生前曾任中英劇團藝術總監；香港藝術發展局藝術推廣委員會主席、戲劇組主席、策略委員會委員；香港政府康樂及文化事務署，以及香港演藝學院戲劇學院之顧問委員。

古天農是參加了香港吐露港扶輪社二十多年的「資深榮譽社員」。通過扶輪社這個平台，他以「職業服務」貢獻社會。古天農以戲劇導演的職業為服務通路，多年來獲得扶輪社的贊助和扶輪社員的熱情參與，主導舉辦了高等學校戲劇比賽、表演藝術工作坊和文化教育項目等。

古天農完整展示了自己是一名真正的扶輪社員。無法成為「現職社員」的原因，是因為他的工作時間不規律，沒有辦法實踐扶輪社章程規定的出席要求。

Ko Tin-Lung (1953-2022) was for more than 20 years a “senior honorary member” of the Rotary Club of Tolo Harbour, Hong Kong, on which was his platform to serve the community through the “vocational avenue”. Providing by his profession as a career drama director on the stage, Ko conducted in many years the annual drama competitions for high schools, performance art workshops, and other cultural education programs, etc., through the sponsorship of the Rotary Club and the enthusiastic participation of its Rotarians.

Ko exemplified himself as a true Rotarian, though not an Active Member due to his job nature of irregular working hours that affecting his attendance requirements as laid down by the Club’s Constitution and By-laws. Read more about his story on Page 5.



古天農早年在九龍黃大仙區成長，曾就讀彩蒲仙學校（小學部）、花地瑪英文小學。中學就讀聖芳濟書院(St. Francis Xavier's College)，但由於有一次校長責備班房內的某位同學過於嘈吵，而古天農挺身而出，使校長對古留下不好的形象。加上古的成績未足以讓自己在原校升讀預科，最後促使他轉到新法書院(New Method College)完成中六預科課程。後考入香港中文大學崇基學院社會學系，1979年畢業取得社會科學學士學位。其後，他曾修讀了香港大學教育文憑課程，亦曾任陳樹渠紀念中學的英文科及經濟科教師。

古天農對戲劇的興趣始於中學時代，與前規劃署署長凌嘉勤為高中同學，並一起籌辦校內戲劇活動。在整段中學及大學的日子，都與戲劇為伴。讀大學時，便曾因常常曠課去排戲而被校方警告。當了幾年中學教師後，到1983年才加入香港話劇團(Hong Kong Repertory Theatre)任全職演員，展開全職戲劇工作生涯。

古天農最初加入香港話劇團時只任職演員，後來則參與一些短劇的編導工作。首部自編自導的舞台劇名為《師生之間》。1988年，他獲亞洲文化協會(Asian Cultural Council)的獎學金赴美國紐約研習。一年後回港，並擢升為香港話劇團助理藝術總監。他於1993年起轉到中英劇團(Chung Ying Theatre Company)出任的藝術總監，成為該團首任華人藝術總監。他曾先後擔任多個劇目的編、導、演工作，當中與杜國威合作的《我和春天有個約會》及《南海十三郎》最為成功。更屢次在舞台重演，成為香港最受歡迎的舞台劇。

2022年6月23日，古天農於睡夢中離世。遺孀黃秀英女士，是香港有線電視前任新聞主播，兩人育有一個兒子。

編寫或執導作品

中英劇團

《始皇最後的日子》

《紅頂商人胡雪巖》

《小謫紅塵》

《元宵》

《仲夏夜之夢》

《悟空》

《冰鮮校園》

《相約星期二》— 第17屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳導演（悲/正劇）」

《同行四分一世紀》

《廠出樂人谷》

《芳草校園》— 第4屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳導演（喜/鬧劇）」

《事先張揚的求愛事件》

《伴我同行》（第一步、第二步）

《留守太平間》

其他

《師生之間》

《伴我同行》

《我和春天有個約會》— 第2屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳導演（悲/正劇）」

《南海十三郎》

《承受清風》

《中大人家》

監製作品

1994年 我和春天有個約會

1994年 伴我同行

演出作品

電影

1983年 半邊人

1994年 伴我同行

2001年 地久天長

2002年 男人四十 飾 國舊同學

2018年 大師兄 飾 張老闆

舞台劇

《蝦碌戲班》— 第2屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳男主角（喜/鬧劇）」

《香港電影第一 Take — 黎民偉開麥拉！》

《幸遇先生蔡》— 飾演蔡元培

《謀殺遊戲》

《金池塘》

《玻璃偵探》中英劇團

《相約星期二》中英劇團

電視節目

1984年《獅子山下：平步青雲》飾演 阿志（香港電台電視部）

《頭條新聞》（香港電台電視部）

《古寶尋蹤》（亞洲電視）

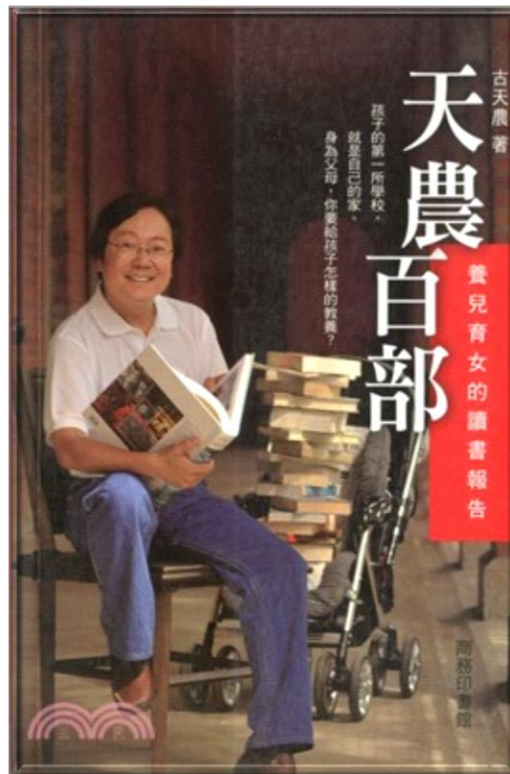
《演藝界512關愛行動大匯演》（所有香港電子媒體）

著作

《天農百部》 ISBN 9789620755613

獎項及榮譽

- 1991年 香港藝術家年獎「舞台導演獎」
- 1991年 第二屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳導演（悲/正劇）」《我和春天有個約會》
- 1991年 第二屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳男主角（喜/鬧劇）」《蝦碌戲班》
- 1994年 香港戲劇協會「十年傑出成就獎」
- 1995年 第四屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳導演（喜/鬧劇）」《芳草校園》
- 2006年 以「推動文化藝術發展傑出人士」的身份獲頒「民政事務局局長嘉許獎狀」
- 2008年 第十七屆香港舞台劇獎「最佳導演（悲/正劇）」《相約星期二》



Remembering Hong Kong theatre legend Ko Tin-lung, who died in his sleep aged 69. ‘He had a great eye for new talent’

By Enid Tsui 《South China Morning Post》 5 July 2022

- Ko acted in, wrote and directed hundreds of plays in his almost 40-year career, including runaway successes *I Have a Date with Spring*, and *The Mad Phoenix*
- Born in Hong Kong in 1953, he started acting at secondary school before being hired full-time as an actor by the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre in 1983



The late Hong Kong actor and theatre director Ko Tin-lung in a photograph from 1993.

(Photo: Chung Ying Theatre Company)

In 2016, Ko Tin-lung was asked by the Hong Kong branch of the International Association of Theatre Critics to pick one play out of all the ones he had been involved in that had meant the most to him.

Of the hundreds that he had acted in, written and directed over three decades, he chose *One of the Lucky Ones*, a 1990 play that he adapted from the autobiography of Lucy Ching Man-fai, a blind activist and social worker in Hong Kong.

The 1992 production *I Have a Date with Spring*, directed by Ko and performed by the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre (HKRT), might have been the more obvious choice; the production was one of the most successful in modern Cantonese theatre.

Written by Raymond To Kwok-wai, *I Have a Date with Spring* – the story of four former nightclub singers and how their lives were changed by major political upheavals from the 1960s onwards – was a hit from the start. It turned lead actress Alice Lau Nga-lai into a star overnight and led to numerous film, television and stage spin-offs in Hong Kong and mainland China over the years.



Ko promoted young local writers and Cantonese-original plays as artistic director of the Chung Ying Theatre Company. (Photo: Chung Ying Theatre Company)

Alternatively, there was that other legendary creation of Ko and To, the 1993 play *The Mad Phoenix*, based on the real-life story of a genius Cantonese-opera scriptwriter. That, too, was turned into a film and had sold-out reruns.

But *One of the Lucky Ones* epitomised Ko's artistic convictions. He had read the 1980 English-language autobiography of Ching, often referred to as China's Helen Keller, and was so moved by her determination and relationship with her devoted maid that he convinced her to let him adapt her life story into a Cantonese play.



*A scene from the original 1992 production of *I Have a Date with Spring* by the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre. (Photo: Hong Kong Repertory Theatre)*

Ko would restage the play as artistic director of the Chung Ying Theatre Company in 2005 with a cast of both seeing and blind actors, a rare example of equality on stage.

“He had a great eye for materials and for new talent,” says Edmond Lo Chi-sun, one of Ko’s protégés, who went from actor at the Chung Ying Theatre Company to becoming its assistant artistic director.

In 2007, Ko cast Lo with the veteran actor Chung King-fai in Chung Ying’s adaptation of Mitch Albom’s book *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

“It wasn’t a particularly popular book in Hong Kong at the time but [Ko] came to me in 2006 and asked me to read it because we were going to do the play next year. I was worried that the dialogue was too wordy and wouldn’t work well on stage. But now we know it was a big hit; 120,000 people saw it over many, many runs in Hong Kong and abroad,” Lo says.



Ko (centre) at a rehearsal for Chung Ying Theatre Company’s Tuesdays with Morrie, which he adapted from the book by Mitch Albom. The play starred Chung King-fai (right) and Chan Kwok-pong (left). (Photo: Chung Ying Theatre Company)

As a director, Ko was demanding and expected strict professionalism from his actors, Lo says. “But he was also sensitive, generous and had a wonderful sense of humour.”

Ko showed his comedic talent in the early 2000s as a regular on the since-cancelled Radio Television Hong Kong satirical TV show Headliner. In one popular skit, he played a shrewd political secretary of a self-delusional and egotistic politician.

Speaking to the Hong Kong Economic Journal after Headliner was suspended in 2020, Ko was critical of the Communications Authority's verdict that the series had smeared and insulted the police, saying that he feared for freedom of expression in the city.



Ko (centre) at a 15th-anniversary event for the Chung Ying Theatre Company in 1994.

(Photo: Chung Ying Theatre Company)

Dominic Cheung Ho-kin, who succeeded Ko as artistic director of Chung Ying Theatre Company in 2019, says the news of his predecessor's death was a complete surprise.

He was told by the family that Ko had complained of feeling slightly unwell on June 22 and gone to bed, only to die in his sleep.

“He was hospitalised for three weeks back in 2014 when he had a liver disease. But he recovered and was very health-conscious. He was the one who always told me to eat healthy and exercise more,” Cheung says.



*Ko (middle row, far right) with fellow members of the Chung Ying Theatre Company in 1995.
(Photo: Chung Ying Theatre Company)*

Ko was born in Hong Kong in 1953. He began acting on stage when he was a student at St. Francis Xavier's College, a Catholic secondary school in Tai Kok Tsui. He continued to act when he was studying sociology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and when he was a schoolteacher for three years.

In 1983, he was hired full-time as an actor by the HKRT. In 1988, he won an Asian Cultural Council scholarship to study in the United States for a year. Upon his return to Hong Kong, he was promoted to assistant artistic director of the HKRT and in 1991 won the first of many major theatre awards when he was named best stage director in the Hong Kong Artist of the Year Awards.

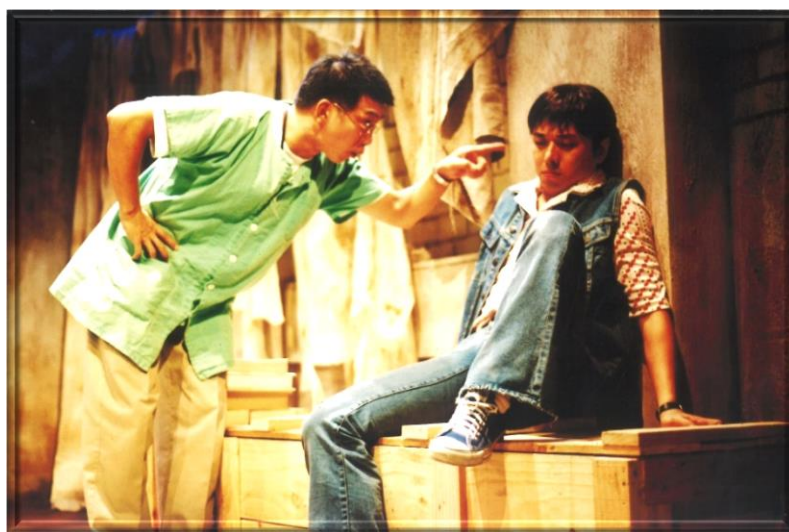
Two years later, he succeeded Chris Johnson as artistic director of the Chung Ying Theatre Company, a troupe set up in 1979 by the British Council and which became independent in 1982.



*A scene from the original 1990 production of One of the Lucky Ones by the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre.
(Photo: Hong Kong Repertory Theatre)*

The troupe was established with a focus on introducing young people to English plays that were often translated into Cantonese. But when Ko took over, he began to promote young local writers and Cantonese-original plays that more closely reflected the world in which the theatre's core audience lived.

Prize-winning writer Candace Chong Mui-ngam joined the Chung Ying Theatre Company under Ko's directorship and one of her first successful scripts was *Alive in the Mortuary* (2002), which was inspired by doctors working for Medecins Sans Frontieres.



A scene from Alive in the Mortuary (2002), written by Candace Chong for the Chung Ying Theatre Company, and directed by Ko. (Photo: Chung Ying Theatre Company)