

Beloved Turkish actor Cüneyt Arkın dies

ISTANBUL

Famous Turkish actor Cüneyt Arkın has died at the age of 85 from a cardiac arrest on June 28.

After he fell ill last night, he was taken and treated at a private hospital in the Ulus neighborhood in Beşiktaş district in Istanbul.

His wife Betül Cüreklibatır and his family and friends visited him.

Cüneyt Arkın who left his mark on, gave many blockbusters to Turkish cinema and starred in hundreds of films, had won many awards.

“Cüneyt Arkın, a valuable actor of Turkish cinema, died in Liv Hospital, where he came with an ambulance due to a cardiac arrest, despite all efforts to revive him,” said the hospital, where he passed, in a statement.

“As the Liv Hospital family, we are saddened by the loss of the great actor of Turkish cinema,” they said.

“Our condolences to Cüneyt Arkın’s family and all his fans,” they added.

Cüneyt Arkın, whose real name was Fahrettin Cüreklibatır was born on September 8, 1937, in the Alpu district of Eskişehir province.

His father is Hacı Yakup Cüreklivatır who participated in the War of Independence.

He graduated from Istanbul Medical School in 1961.

When he was doing his military service in Eskişehir as a reserve officer, he caught the attention of Halit Refiğ, the director of Şafak Bekçileri (1963).

After he completed his military service, he worked as a physician in and around the Adana province.

In 1963, with the offer of Halit Refiğ, he started working as an actor, and acted in at least 30 films in two years.

The fight scene in his film Gurbet Kuşları in 1964 was a turning point in Arkın’s career. He started working in action films with the suggestion of Halit Refiğ, after playing emotional and romantic characters.

In the meantime, he started getting training for acrobatics at the Medrano Circus in Istanbul province.

By passing on what he learned in the Medrano Circus to the silver screen, he introduced an unprecedented style to Turkish cinema.

Arkın soon became the top choice when it came to high-profile action movies in Türkiye.

Particularly, the films Maden (1978) and Vatandaş Rıza (1979) hold a special place in Arkın’s career.

His first marriage was to his classmate Güler Mocan, in 1964. In 1966, the couple had their first daughter Filiz. Their marriage only lasted for a short time due to Arkin's new career as a film actor.

They divorced in 1968, and he took the stage name "Cüneyt Arkin". After a year, he met and married Betül Işıl Cüreklibatır, the daughter of a rich family that owned a tile manufacturing company.

They had two children, Kaan and Murat Polat.