

= Shangguan Yunzhu =

Shangguan Yunzhu (Chinese : 上官云珠 ; Wade ? Giles : Shang @-@ kuan Yün @-@ chu ; 2 March 1920 ? 23 November 1968) was a Chinese actress active from the 1940s to the 1960s . She was considered one of the most talented and versatile actresses in China , and was named one of the 100 best actors of the 100 years of Chinese cinema in 2005 .

Born Wei Junluo , Shangguan Yunzhu fled to Shanghai when her hometown Jiangyin was attacked by the Japanese . In Shanghai she became a drama and film actress , and her career took off after the end of the Second Sino @-@ Japanese War . She starred in several prominent leftist films such as Spring River Flows East , Crows and Sparrows , and Women Side by Side . After the Communist victory in mainland China in 1949 , her career was set back when her husband was embroiled in the anti @-@ capitalist Five @-@ anti Campaign , but she later portrayed a wide variety of characters in many films .

Shangguan Yunzhu was married three times and had three children , but all her marriages ended in divorce . She was said to have had an affair with Mao Zedong , for which she was severely persecuted by the followers of Mao 's wife Jiang Qing during the Cultural Revolution , leading to her suicide in November 1968 .

= = Early life = =

Shangguan Yunzhu was born in 1920 in the town of Changjing (??) in Jiangyin , Jiangsu province . Her birth name was Wei Junluo (Chinese : 魏君露) , and she also used the name Wei Yajun (魏亚君) . She was the fifth and youngest child of her parents . In 1936 she married Zhang Dayan (张 dayan) , an art teacher and a friend of her brother 's , and soon gave birth to a son named Zhang Qijian (张启建) at the age of 17 .

Soon after her marriage , the Second Sino @-@ Japanese War erupted . In November 1937 the invading Japanese army attacked Jiangyin , and one of Wei Junluo 's sisters was killed in a bombing raid . She fled to Shanghai with her family .

= = 1940s = =

In Shanghai Wei Junluo found work at a photo studio owned by He Zuomin , a photographer for the Mingxing Film Company . Influenced by the studio 's many customers from the film industry , she became fascinated with acting . In 1940 she enrolled in a drama school and was employed by the Xinhua Film Company after graduation . She adopted the name Shangguan Yunzhu suggested by the influential director Bu Wancang . After successfully playing the female lead in Cao Yu 's stage play Thunderstorm , Shangguan joined the Yihua Company and made her film debut in Fallen Rose in 1941 .

In 1942 Shangguan joined the Tianfeng Drama Society , where she met the playwright Yao Ke (姚 柯) . The next year Shangguan divorced Zhang Dayan and married Yao . In August 1944 she gave birth to a daughter named Yao Yao (姚 姚) . However , her new marriage was short @-@ lived due to Yao 's infidelity , and the couple divorced before their daughter turned two . Shangguan subsequently had a brief relationship with the actor Lan Ma (蓝 马) .

In the post @-@ war period , Shangguan Yunzhu played her first lead roles in Dream in Paradise directed by Tang Xiaodan and Long Live the Missus directed by Sang Hu . She then starred in several leftist films including Spring River Flows East (1947 , directors Cai Chusheng and Zheng Junli) , Myriad of Lights (1948 , director Shen Fu) , Crows and Sparrows (1949 , director Zheng Junli) , and Women Side by Side (1949 , director Chen Liting) . Her masterful performances in these popular films brought her great fame and critical acclaim .

= = After 1949 = =

After Mao Zedong 's communists won the Chinese Civil War and established the People 's Republic

of China in 1949 , Shangguan Yunzhu continued her acting career under the new government . In 1951 she married her third husband Cheng Shuyao (???) , manager of Shanghai 's Lyceum Theatre . She gave birth to a son named Wei Ran (??) . However , Cheng Shuyao was soon embroiled in the Five @-@ anti Campaign , a political campaign launched by Mao against the capitalist class in 1952 . He was accused of embezzlement and confessed to the charges under pressure . Shangguan decided to divorce Cheng ; their marriage lasted less than two years . She later had another relationship with the director He Lu (??) .

Affected by her association with Cheng Shuyao , Shangguan did not play any major role for several years . This changed in 1955 , when she starred in the film Storm on the Southern Island . Director Bai Chen (??) chose her to play the leading role as a heroic nurse , a far cry from her traditional roles of socialites and rich wives . She adjusted to her new role well , and portrayed a wide variety of characters in many films including It 's My Day Off (1959) , Spring Comes to the Withered Tree (1961 , director Zheng Junli) , Early Spring in February (1963 , director Xie Tieli) , and Stage Sisters (1965 , director Xie Jin) . She was recognized as one of the most talented and versatile actresses in China .

= = Relationship with Mao = =

Shangguan Yunzhu was said to have had an intimate relationship with Chairman Mao Zedong . On 10 January 1956 , Shangguan and Mao had a private meeting set up by Shanghai mayor Chen Yi , at which Mao said he was a fan of hers . Mao was said to have requested to meet her " in private " many times .

= = Suicide = =

In 1966 Shangguan was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a successful surgery . However , only two months later it was found that she also had cancer in her brain and had to undergo another major operation .

At the same time , the Cultural Revolution was under way . Two films Shangguan had appeared in , Early Spring in February and Stage Sister , had been denounced as " huge poisonous weeds " . She was also under severe persecution for her alleged affair with Mao . She was badly beaten by followers of Mao 's wife Jiang Qing , who gave her an ultimatum to confess her relationship with Mao . At 3 am on 23 November 1968 , Shangguan Yunzhu jumped from her apartment in the Wukang Mansion to her death .

= = Biographies and museum = =

Several biographies have been published in Chinese about Shangguan Yunzhu 's life :

Chen Danyan , Shanghai Beauty (???????) (2000) ? Biographical account of Shangguan and her daughter Yao Yao , who was killed in a traffic accident in 1975 .

Wei Xiangtao , Grieving for a movie star : a biography of Shangguan Yunzhu (1986) .

Chen Fuguan (???) , Shangguan Yunzhu .

In 2007 , her childhood home in Changjing , Jiangyin was opened to the public as the Shangguan Yunzhu Museum .

= = Selected filmography = =

1941 Fallen Rose (dirs . Wu Wenchao and Wen Yimin)

1947 Dream in Paradise (dir . Tang Xiaodan)

1947 Long Live the Missus (dir . Sang Hu)

1947 Spring River Flows East (dirs . Cai Chusheng and Zheng Junli)

1948 Myriad of Lights (dir . Shen Fu)

1949 Hope in the World (dir . Shen Fu)

1949 Crows and Sparrows (dir . Zheng Junli)
1949 Women Side by Side (dir . Chen Liting)
1955 Storm on the Southern Island (dir . Bai Chen)
1959 It 's My Day Off (dir . Lu Ren)
1961 Spring Comes to the Withered Tree (dir . Zheng Junli)
1963 Early Spring in February (dir . Xie Tieli)
1965 Stage Sisters (dir . Xie Jin)