

## **CAI BI XIA, 36 THEATRE**

Bi Xia is not only renowned as an actress within the Chinese Opera circle, but also well respected for her aptitude in training the next generation of performers. Equally adept in Teochew, Hokkien and Huang Mei opera styles, she has won acclaim and awards for her artistry.

The daughter of a Singaporean who migrated to China in the early 1950s, she grew up in Nan Jing in Fujian province, graduating from a local opera school with honours in 1986. She was then invited to join the Nan Jing Hokkien Opera Troupe and played lead roles with great success.

In 1993, after graduating from the Guangdong Province Teochew Opera School as the top student in her class, she was immediately invited to be a lead actress with the Shantou Opera Art Troupe. In the same year, she won the Bronze Medal at the First National Rising Star for TV and Drama Competition.

Since coming to Singapore to work for the Chinese Opera Institute in 1997, Bi Xia has been directing and performing in the Institute's Arts Education Programme. With experience accumulated over the years, she adopts innovative approaches to guide her students, regardless of whether they are teenagers or senior citizens, in mastering the art of Chinese Opera.

As an eminent performer, she has played the lead roles in many operas presented in Singapore and abroad. She has consistently received positive reviews for her overseas performances at festivals such as the First Asian Folk Drama Festival (Thailand, 1998), International Ramayana Festival (Thailand, 1999 & 2002), Seoul International Theatre Festival (1999), Liverpool International Theatre Festival (Canada, 2000), Girona International Theatre Festival (Spain, 2000), Chun Cheong International Theatre Festival (Korea, 2002) and the International Theatre Festival commemorating Hans Christian Andersen (Denmark, 2005). She also directed *Ne Zha Wrecks Havoc at the Eastern Sea* at the Asia-Pacific Festival of Children's Theatre in Toyama (2004) and *The Woman General* at Bulgaria's International Theatre Festival (2007).

In 2003, Bi Xia published a book on Teochew Opera in Singapore. She also won the prestigious Best Actress Award in American Association of Community Theatre's International Theatrefest in 2006.