

“Hong Kong Pop 60+” Exhibition

Audio Tour Script

Commemorative trophy for the musical *Legend of the White Snake* by Roman Tam

1982

Roman Tam was known for his sonorous voice and clear pronunciation with a polished accent, along with putting emotion into his songs with an avant-garde, unique style. For more than 30 years after his debut, Tam relentlessly pursued musical accomplishments. With his numerous hit songs, he has an immortal status in Hong Kong’s music circle.

Roman Tam started his career in the 1960s, and was initially influenced by Western pop music. He and his friends formed Roman and the Four Steps, with Tam as lead singer, performing English-language songs.

Later, Tam’s singing skills were appreciated, and he was invited to be the backstage and backup singer behind the scenes for Mandarin films. Afterwards, he released records on the Pathé Records label, and officially embarked on the road to stardom. In 1974, Tam went to Japan to develop his talents, which broadened his horizons, improved his stage and singing skills, and laid the foundation for future golden hits in different styles.

Later, with the rise of TV culture, TV drama became a part of popular culture, leading to a boom in TV drama series theme songs. In 1976, Tam returned to Hong Kong to sing the theme song *Bright Future*, of the Japanese TV drama series with the same title. The song was popular throughout Hong Kong, and Tam decided to stay in Hong Kong to further his career. Subsequently, he performed a number of well-known TV drama series theme songs, such as *A House Is Not a Home*, and *Romantic Swordsman* and *Below the Lion Rock*, propelling his singing career to new heights.

Tam was full of passion and aspirations for music, hoping to contribute to the promotion of culture and art in Hong Kong. He dreamed of staging a Cantonese musical ever since watching a Chinese musical, *Pai Niang Niang*, performed by Rebecca Pan in 1972. At last, he organised two Cantonese musicals – *Legend of the White Snake* and *Liuyi’s Letter*, in 1982 and 1984, respectively, realising his musical dream.

The commemorative trophy for the musical *Legend of the White Snake* is one of the three most cherished souvenirs in the life of Roman Tam. It recognised his persistence and pioneering work in developing music, and was an epoch-making milestone in Hong Kong’s music circle.

Tam’s performing life was indelibly linked to popular music in Hong Kong. The music world made Roman Tam successful, and Roman Tam fostered the development of

music in Hong Kong.