From Laundryman's Daughter to Hollywood Legend

ANNA MAY WONG

GRAHAM RUSSELL GAO HODGES
Resumo de Anna May Wong: From Laundryman's Daughter to Hollywood Legend

Anna May Wong was one of Hollywood's most well-known Chinese American actresses. Between 1919 and 1960, she starred in over fifty movies, sharing billing with Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., Marlene Dietrich and Werner Oland. Her life, though, is the prototypical story of an immigrant's difficult path through the prejudices of American culture. Born in Los Angeles in 1905, she was the second daughter of six children born to a laundryman and his wife. Her life there fuelled her fascination with Hollywood and, in 1919 she secured a small part in her first film, The Red Lantern. Her most famous film roles were in Thief of Baghdad, Old San Francisco and Shanghai Express. Discrimination against Asians, though, was commonplace and when it came time to make a film version of Pearl Buck's The Good Earth, she was passed over for the role that was ultimately given to the Luise Rainer. In a narrative that recalls both the pathos of life in Los Angeles's Chinese neighborhoods and the glamour of Hollywood's pleasure palaces, Graham Hodges recounts the life of a Hollywood legend.

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