The Creation of *Krai Kha Tia*: A Mixed Media Stage Play for Actor Development and Personal Branding at Maiosiam Artist Management

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Abstract

Thailand's entertainment industry has grown into a dynamic and influential sector, with professional actors playing a key role in setting performance standards and driving success. To maintain excellence and prepare talents for diverse roles, enhancing their capabilities is essential. With the industry becoming increasingly competitive and fast-evolving, developing actors as personal brands has emerged as a strategic approach to captivate both domestic and global audiences. In response, Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd. launched *Krai Kha Tia*, a mixed-media stage play aimed at strengthening the acting skills of its artists while reinforcing their brand identity. The production is directed by Professor Sutida Singharach, Head of Cinematic Arts and Creative Media (International Program) at the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Scheduled for six performances on March 30–31, 2024, at The Street Hall (The Street Ratchada, 5th floor), the initiative serves not only as a platform for professional actors to showcase their talents but also as a learning opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience in stage production. This structured and strategic endeavor highlights Maiosiam's commitment to maintaining high production standards and nurturing its actors as both skilled performers and brand ambassadors.

Keywords : Thai entertainment industry , Actor development , Personal branding , Mixed-media stage play

Objectives

1. To examine how the production of "Krai Kha Tia?", a mixed-media stage play, contributes to enhancing the acting skills and personal branding of the talents at Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd., in alignment with the national strategy for the promotion of the Thai film and video industry.
2. To examine the role of personal branding in positioning Thai actors as cultural representatives particularly in relation to the company's efforts to align talent development with national soft power objectives.

Methodology

The Preparation of Acting Readiness for Actors under Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd.

Currently, emerging actors from various agencies, including those under Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd., are strongly encouraged to continuously develop and refine their acting skills. This preparation not only ensures their readiness for professional work but also instills discipline an essential trait for the new generation of entertainers. Moreover, enhancing the acting readiness of performers helps reduce production risks and quality concerns at every stage of the creative process. As such, investing in the development of new actors' practical skills is a critical and necessary component of today's media and entertainment production landscape in Thailand.

An actor's popularity is a key factor influencing the success of television dramas, as audiences often choose to watch shows based on their favorite performers. Thus, actors serve

as the front line in creating lasting impressions for viewers and followers, while simultaneously representing the agencies and production companies behind them. In this context, actors are akin to products on a competitive commercial stage, where producers must offer diverse and high-quality choices to satisfy varied consumer preferences.

Beyond offering variety, producers must also demonstrate sincerity and credibility by delivering actors who are genuinely talented and worthy of public admiration. This has led entertainment companies such as Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd. to recognize the importance of holistic and well-structured acting preparation. As content production continues to grow alongside increasing viewer demands, the only sustainable path to maintaining a top-tier position in the industry is to produce quality content especially through well-trained actors, who serve as the core product of entertainment organizations. Actors play a crucial role throughout the creative process of performance production (Veera Supa, 1993). Therefore, the systematic preparation of actors under Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd. is a vital process requiring time, strategic planning, and effective implementation to ensure genuine skill development and long-term industry success.



An Explanation of the Entertainment Business Model of Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd.

In addition to planning and setting goals for the development and preparation of acting skills for actors under their management, one crucial factor that each agency must consider is the selection of qualified personnel to take responsibility for designing and overseeing the structure of actor training programs. Recognizing the importance of this element, Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd. has appointed Asst. Prof. Suthida Singharach, Head of the Department of Film and Creative Media Arts, College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University an expert in acting instruction and directing as a consultant and lead coordinator for the company's actor training and development program.

As stated by Assoc. Prof. Kulthana Thanaphongthorn (1992), "The fundamental principle of personnel recruitment in any organization is the search for the most qualified individual who possesses the knowledge and suitability for the position, using effective and efficient methods aligned with the economic conditions and business policies."

Moreover, the College of Communication Arts at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University is well-equipped in terms of faculty, staff, and facilities, making it an ideal learning environment for collaborative activities. This collaboration offers an excellent opportunity for

in-house talent to work with Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd. to enhance their acting potential and become knowledgeable, skilled, and professional performers.

This initiative aligns with the 4th Phase (2023–2027) of Thailand's Strategic Plan to Promote the Film and Video Industry, particularly Strategy 2, which focuses on enhancing human capital to compete at the Asian level and to become a global business partner. This strategy supports the development of capable personnel, the establishment of professional incubators in the film and video sectors, and the recognition and honor of individuals contributing to the industry.

In the process of training acting skills and managing rehearsals for the actors of the mixed media stage play " Krai Kha Tia?" the process is divided into three phases:

Phase 1: Preparation in understanding the acting roles and deep character interpretation

Phase 2: Rehearsing in a simulated space and group rehearsals based on character relationships

Phase 3: Rehearsal and performance in the actual space, allowing audience interaction with actors through a 360-degree stage design.

Details are as follows:

Phase 1: Preparation in understanding acting roles and deep character interpretation At this stage

The director plans the preparation for understanding the roles, which is considered the foundation for the actors to comprehend crucial information related to their characters. The director uses a method of explaining the structure of every character in detail so the actors can clearly visualize the characters they are responsible for.

The process begins with explaining the structure of the Pattharasins family, which appears in the stage play "Krai Kha Tia?", where all characters are interconnected. This is followed by describing each character's background, including their story, origin, life path, upbringing, mindset, interactions with other characters, relationships with the environment, and challenges or obstacles faced at various points. This creates a connection with the storyline and the ongoing struggles and development of each character.

A key emphasis by the director is explaining the desires of each character, as these desires are the core that brings characters to life and drives their purposeful actions. A character's desires are not limited to just one thing; they may change, decrease, or increase at any time. Therefore, the detailed information provided by the director greatly benefits the actors' understanding of their roles.

Besides building role comprehension, the director also emphasizes the importance of strong foundational acting skills and understanding of stage acting techniques. The director explains the steps and forms of stage acting, along with training actors to perform correctly. Training includes movement on stage and proper voice use in stage acting for all actors. This aligns with Chutima Maneewattana (2018), who states that acting principles and character development are key aspects of actor management and development. It is the director's duty to know the basics of acting in order to guide, identify performance issues, and provide constructive criticism aimed at improvement.

Thus, the phase of training acting skills and managing rehearsals for the actors in the mixed media stage play "Krai Kha Tia?" is an appropriate period for the director to identify actors' strengths and areas for improvement. This ensures that actors are well-prepared to use their acting tools effectively to enhance their performances in their respective roles.

Phase 2: Rehearsing in a simulated space and group rehearsals based on character relationships

At this stage, the director brought the actors into a simulated studio space to rehearse their performances and meaningful character movements. The goal was to familiarize the actors

with the actions and lifestyle of their characters within the simulated environment. The director designed the blocking to support the direction, allowing deep communication of the characters' actions and emotions. The simulated rehearsal space was scaled to match the actual performance venue, providing the actors and crew with a realistic experience.

The rehearsal management team divided the rehearsal into three acts so that the actors could follow the sequence continuously without confusion. In each act, the director designed the characters' movements (blocking) while explaining the interpretation of actions, thoughts, feelings, and desires to the actors, who were then expected to perform accordingly. This helped the actors remember their positions while understanding their characters' intentions, behaviors, and desires in detail. Additionally, it allowed each actor to become familiar with the space and the timing of interactions with scene partners. This phase served as physical and mental preparation before the actual performances.

Phase 3: Rehearsal and preparation in the actual performance space with audience interaction through a 360-degree stage design

In this phase, the director brought the actors and crew to rehearse in the real performance venue. The mixed media stage play "Krai Kha Tia?" was performed at The Street Hall inside The Street Ratchada shopping mall for six shows. Upon entering the real venue, the director began by holding a meeting with the team and actors to explain the conditions and constraints of the space, ensuring everyone shared the same rehearsal and work plan.

Regarding direction, the director first arranged and explained the actors' stage positions and entry and exit directions to ensure accurate understanding and memorization. Then, the director led the actors to test their movements and blocking on the actual stage, trying out walking, sitting, turning, and moving according to their characters' entrances and exits. The actors also practiced their vocal projection to assess how well their voices carried throughout the venue, considering ambient noise such as air conditioning during actual performances.

Since the venue had background noise, the director needed to ensure these distractions would not interfere with the audience's experience. Testing revealed that some actors lacked sufficient vocal power to reach all audience areas. To address this, the director adjusted the stage positions and enhanced stage design elements to help actors project their voices effectively to distant audience members.

It is undeniable that staging a live theater performance requires meticulous planning and design to accommodate the venue's limitations. Unlike film or television, live theater has no pauses, advertisements, or opportunities for retakes. Therefore, a director's ability to design performances and solve on-the-spot issues is crucial to overcoming actor challenges and venue constraints to deliver a seamless, high-quality production.

Results

On the actual performance day, it was found that the 360-degree stage design, which did not limit the actors to performing only on a traditional stage, helped create a novel atmosphere for both performing and watching the play. This design enhanced the audience's viewing experience because the seating arrangement surrounded the performance area, allowing viewers to feel closer to the story and the characters, as if they were sharing the same space.

Generally, most theater productions are designed with a clear separation between the audience area and the performance space. Besides positive feedback from the general audience regarding this stage design, it was also observed that fans of the actors under Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd. were especially impressed with the performance and the venue. They appreciated the opportunity to watch their favorite actors up close, creating memorable experiences. This was a great opportunity to foster shared experiences between the acting team and their fan base, as well as with general audience members and actors from other affiliated

agencies who are good partners supporting the actors under Maiosiam Artist Management Co., Ltd.

The production of the stage play "Krai Kha Tia?" is considered a strategic move to support personal branding for the actors under the agency. It aims to highlight their well-rounded acting skills without limiting them to just a few acting styles. This approach responds to a current issue where many new actors from various agencies primarily focus on working with cameras and new technologies. They often work against time and complex production systems, which may cause them to lose sight of the fundamental roots of acting, potentially maintaining their standards only for a short period.

Therefore, this stage play production serves to instill discipline and uphold acting standards among the agency's actors. Throughout the rehearsal period, every actor learns the deep roots of stage acting an art form with a long history. They also gain an in-depth understanding of intricate details, including emotional nuances that must be sharp and clear in order to effectively convey the character's message. Thus, it can be said that training through stage play rehearsals is an important strategy to strengthen the actors' skills within the agency.

Additionally, the agency's management opens opportunities for fan groups who admire the actors to visit rehearsals up close in a friendly environment. Fans are granted the chance to talk with the actors, take photos and videos, and give gifts, presents, and food support to the actors. This simple and informal atmosphere of interaction between fans and actors becomes a distinctive factor in creating a memorable image and a special feeling for fans, allowing them to remember the actors' approachability.

The result of providing this welcoming space between actors and fans, as part of the management's policy, leads to love, goodwill, support, and loyalty from the fan groups. These qualities are highly desired by all artist and actor management agencies. Support and consistent admiration from loyal fans serve as key indicators of growth in personal branding, significantly influencing how others perceive the actors.

Conclusion

Adding value to actors at each stage reflects a personal branding strategy that aligns with the approach of developing a unique identity and image. This is a crucial factor in building a personal brand that is influential and clearly recognized within the industry. Moreover, a strategy that enhances personal branding value helps performers to develop and elevate their career success further.

In the context of the entertainment industry, besides supporting and creating opportunities for affiliated actors and artists to gain experience and practice skills for self-development, retention is also a highly important strategy. Personal branding for actors involves not only the development of their potential and acting skills but also managing the relationship between the agency and the actors (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2017). The retention strategy is therefore a key factor that helps keep actors interested in maintaining long-term collaboration with their agency. This consideration goes beyond financial compensation or career opportunities to include cultivating an organizational culture that values care, fairness, and transparent communication (Boyle, 2020). A family-like management style can reduce the gap between management and actors, promote bonding, and foster motivation for ongoing collaboration.

Therefore, the approach of building personal branding through mixed media stage plays not only helps develop the potential of actors under Maiosiam Artist Management but also promotes their recognition as unique personal brands. This, in turn, will support their ability to expand into future business opportunities.

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