

NEWSLETTER

Department of Foreign Languages & Applied Linguistics
National Taipei University
An Special Edition of the 2012 Annual Play

Crimes of the Heart

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Interviews

Family Support is the Name of the Play

Ingrid Chang(張黛筠), the director of Crimes of the Heart to be played by FLAL in May 2012, talks about her passion for art and the importance of family supports in an interview conducted by Evil Chen(陳亭如)

Q: What makes you want to be the director of the annual play? You know, it's a very heavy job.

A: The main reason is that I love art—music, movie, painting, dancing and literature—I think drama or theatrical play is the combination of all.

Q: So this is a good chance in your college days to create something.

A: Yes, probably. Maybe not the only chance but this is definitely a very good chance for me to fulfill my passion for art. I still haven't decided on my future goal yet, but I may have the passion for being a director in the future.

Through the experience of doing mini play and role play, I find that I want to challenge myself to be the director of the annual play. I like to face difficulties, having hard tasks to complete. I think it will make me grow.

Q: Being the director, what do you think is the theme of Crimes of the Heart?

A: I think it's—family. From the script, we know that families can always support you. They may not be able to solve your problems in your life, but they will give you the support you need.

The three sisters in the play—Lenny, Meg, and Babe—they at first are not very close to each other. They have their own careers, their own lives, their own problems. Lives can be complicated for them. In the end, maybe those problems are still there, but they find a way to support each other. I think it is very important.

Q: So after you started doing rehearsals, with actors and actresses acting out their roles, what surprised you the most?

A: When I first read the script, I thought the story will not impress many people, because what we have in it are mostly ordinary conversations between very ordinary people.



But when we started to rehearse, the actors seemed to understand their lines better and deeper. At the same time, their acting skills became more matured. Then I found that their conversations became enlightened, more alive. You began to see their emotions, their desires, and their characters in them. The script has not changed, but it's the actors who made the words from the script alive.

Q: Crimes of the Heart is a classic. It's been made into a film, and many schools have played it in recent years. So what makes our performance stand out, so people want to come and see our version?

A: I have seen the movie and some short video clips of the play, performed by other schools. The most important difference between movies and theatrical plays is obvious. In the movies, your facial expressions are very clear. You don't have to make dramatic movements to impress your audience. But in a play, you need to magnify all your movements on stage.

In other words, you have to exaggerate things in the play. Some versions of the play were very entertaining, almost like a comedy. Yet others were more serious in their tones. I have tried to strike a balance between those extremes, so the audience would have tears, laughter, and a lot of thinking at the same time.

Also, we made a very interesting variation from the original script by acting out the memories of the protagonists. The audience can actually see those scenes on stage, rather than slicing those memories into their imagination, inspired by the dialogues between actors. I think this is an interesting feature that makes our version different.



A Life's Happy Memory for Everyone

Emma Huang(黃郁婷), production manager of the annual play, talks about her international ventures and their unexpected merits in an interview conducted by Arianna Chen(陳雅妮)



Q: Being the production manager is quite a challenge. Why are you willing to take up this position?

A: Actually, I never thought about it in the beginning, but people close to me encouraged me to give it a try, believing that I have what it takes to organize the annual play. I took it as a practical joke, at first.

The job means a lot of responsibilities falling upon your shoulders. You have to solve all the problems and be a coordinator among all the staff up until the end. At first, I didn't think that I could do it. But then, I asked myself, if I didn't even try, how could I know?

I think we should challenge ourselves and try out new things in life. Otherwise, we could never learn anything. Also, since the annual play may be the most important memory in our college life, I want to be a contributor for our class.

Q: Now the annual play will be in just a few days, do you feel nervous or excited?

A: Well, it's a little complicated. True, I'm quite nervous now. The day of the performance is approaching quickly, and yet there are still so many things we haven't done, and there are problems we need to solve.

However, at the same time I feel excited and am really looking forward to our show, because it's the time all our efforts and hard work throughout the year pay off. Everyone has been trying so hard, hoping that we could present the best to the audience.

Q: You have been an international volunteer twice—first in Russia, and then Turkey. Those are very challenging experience too. You have to be on your own, solving all the problems you may have, being abroad. Has the experience helped you do a better job as a production manager?

A: Well, there is one thing in common between them. We have to do new things, which we have never done before.

But as an international volunteer, the challenges lied mostly with the fact that we have to deal with foreign cultures and people. We have to adapt to different environment and even get used to it. It's not easy, because there are language barriers. You have to speak English since nobody understands Chinese; sometimes nobody understands even English. With those challenges, you are forced to refocus on your ultimate goals, which led you there in the first place.

So when you face the problems, you develop the abilities to solve them on your own. But being a production manager is another matter. You have to learn to be a leader and a mediator at the same time. When there are disagreements or disputes, you need to build up communications between them. You have to integrate different parts into a whole, convincing everyone to consider the benefits of the team, not just their own.

Q: So, which is more difficult for you? Being an international volunteer or the production manager?

A: Well, both are difficult tasks. But for me, being the production manager is more challenging, because you have to communicate with so many people. It really needs some wisdom to do well.

Q: In the process of preparation and rehearsals, what has impressed you the most as our production manager?

A: Everyone's potentials really impressed me a lot. For example, before I saw some actresses practicing their roles, I didn't even know they are so talented in acting on the stage. They do have the potentials, almost like they were born to be professional actresses.

Not to mention other classmates. You know, everybody has been doing a great job, showing different talents on different tasks. Our classmates

are beyond my imagination.

Q: Then, what are your expectations from this event?

A: There is one word that can summarize my expectations pretty well. The word is—happiness. It's a very simple word, but hard to achieve.

At first, I had the ambition to want to make our play the best, compared with those of our seniors' in previous years. I wanted to surpass their calibers. But then, I realized that whether we are the best isn't that important. Actually, it doesn't matter at all.

What is important is that this event can become a happy memory for everyone involved. I hope that we could complete the annual play together happily. After ten years, when we look back to this event, I hope everybody will still feel happy about it, and would like to revisit the good memories again. Otherwise, if nobody wants to talk about it or consider it as a bad memory, then even if we truly produce a best play ever, it won't mean much to us.



Lenny Helps Me Become Confident and Brave

Ling Li Chin(晋玲莉), who plays Lenny MaGrath in Crimes of the Heart, talks about her role in the play and how it has influenced herself as a person in an interview conducted by Alice Yu(游筑鈞)



Q: The annual play is right around the corner, how do you feel now?

A: I feel pretty excited, but also anxious. A few days ago, we got our revised script, so I have to adjust myself getting comfortable with the new arrangements for the role I play.

Q: Have your lines been cut from the original?

A: In some scenes, yes. Most of the cuts though, are in the last scene, where we have to sing in celebration of my birthday with my sister. Professor Liu thought it is too long so we streamline our lines to make it better.

Q: Do you think your role of Lenny fits you perfectly?

A: In some ways, yes. Lenny is a conservative woman and I think I am also very conservative. Also, Lenny is an innocent person, but sometimes she tends to think too much. I guess I am that kind of person too. I may complicate things which are otherwise rather simple.

Q: Is there anything else you want to say about the role you play?

A: Lenny is a woman that doesn't have a lot of confidence. She could have told Charlie, the man she was dating, the truth about her problems. And maybe Charlie would also have shared his problems with her. Communications are very important. It seems that she wants to keep a lot of her feeling to herself, but in fact she always feels angry, sad, and disappointed. She otherwise could be a very caring person in the family.

Q: What expectations do you have from this role?

A: I hope the role I play would bring the audience tears and laughter. It is, after all, a black comedy. In the play, we have serious issues to deal with in our lives, but we have to move on. There are certain senses of humor

and irony in the role of Lenny, in the ways she interacts with her sisters.

Q: You have spent a lot of time in rehearsing, is there anything you want to complain?

A: Not really. It all comes back to the day of audition. In the beginning, I didn't even want to play a role, but as a member of the script team, I had to help those coming for the audition with their lines. That's when the professors noticed that I could be suitable for the role of Lenny.

My original idea was to be a backstage staff, but professors encouraged me to go for it. By the time I accepted this role, I only wanted to try my best and be a contributor. So I never complained about anything. The only thing I have in mind when we do rehearsals is to keep practicing—the only way to be a better actress on the stage.

Q: Has your involvement with the annual play influenced your personal life as a college student?

A: Yes, I think through these six months of rehearsals, I've become more confident and brave. Just a few weeks ago, my families came back to Taiwan to visit me. One night, we had a long rehearsal, so when I went home, it was already about 10 pm, although I promised my dad that I would be home at 8. My dad was very, very angry.

I was dumbfounded because I thought there is no reason for him to be that angry. So I sort of argued with him, with my voice raised, which made him even more furious. I told him that I am already a college student, so he shouldn't be so worried about me. Then I found out that there were six missed calls from him that night.

So I apologized to him, saying that I should have returned the calls. I hoped that he would stop being so angry at me, but then he just kept silent and so I cried. In a way, I think it was brave of me to talk to my dad like that. In the past, when I had conflicts with him, I just went back to my room, smashed the door, and not talking to him for many days. But now, as an actor, I have become more confident and can communicate better. I also realize that saying sorry to others isn't really a shameful thing to do. It is actually showing love for your families, the people you love.



Accepting Life as It Is and Then Move On

Roxanne Huang (黃資勻), who plays the role of Meg, talks about the challenges and expectations from the play in an interview conducted by Amber Pan (潘巧紋)



Q: What made you want to audition for the role of Meg in *Crimes of the Heart* in the first place?

A: I have always wanted to play a role in the annual play since sophomore year, so I went to the audition. As for Meg, she is like an opposite person from who I am, so I figured it would be a great

challenge if I play a totally different person from me.

Also, Meg has a more distinct personality than Babe or other female protagonists. Their characters are plainer, and therefore are more difficult to act out on stage. Meg is the one that's easier to impress the audience. So I picked Meg.

Q: How do you interpret Meg as a person in the play?

A: She has strong personalities, a very cool person. I think every girl has the bad-girl part in them. But Meg is not even a bad girl. She is more protective. Being bad is what protects herself.

Q: And you said you are an opposite person from Meg. Why?

A: I am a bad girl in some way, but not that kind of bad. I don't smoke and everything, but sometimes I am a bad girl too, in different ways. But I like singing, like Meg in the play. Also, there is one thing we have in common—we both are strong persons. When we encounter with difficulties, we don't run away.

Q: Since Meg is a totally different person from you, is it a challenge to get into this role?

A: I think the most difficult part is the smoking part. Meg has very vivid personalities, but there are many people like her around us. At least, there are many people like Meg in the movies, so it's not that hard to act out the role, or you know, to find a role model of her kind.

So, I think the hardest part is the smoking part, because I have no idea how to hold the smoke in my hand. I actually learn by watching other girls when they're smoking. I watch the way they hold the cigarettes, and the way they exhale in a very cool way. I think that's the hardest part.

Q: What's your expectation from this play, then?

A: I hope that we have a good performance on the performing day. Everyone has made improvements through practice, and we know we have to appreciate for having the opportunity to perform. We have improved in terms of expressing ourselves by talking and moving on stage. We have also become more matured through this process, I hope.

Q: What if you receive any negative comments over your performance?

A: Well, at first, I may cry, since we've been working so hard. But later, I may realize that it may not be a negative opinion at all, nothing personal. You can't get everybody to like you. So if indeed there are negative comments, as an actress, I won't make a big deal out of it. I would just accept it, and then move on.

Q: How do you cheer yourself up when you feel upset?

A: A piece of cake will do. A piece of chocolate. Or maybe just share your feeling with people you are intimate with, like your friends or families. They can always cheer you up. I think it's important to talk it out.

Q: So how do you feel now, just a few days before the real action?

A: Very nervous. Although you've prepared for a very long time, you still feel nervous. You are afraid that something may happen accidentally, something you don't know. Maybe the chair will fall apart. Maybe you will fall. Maybe someone just forget their lines. Maybe I am the one who forgets the lines. How should I position myself on stage? What if I forget to enter the stage? Everything makes me very nervous. We can just hope for the best.



A Staunch Woman at Heart with a Delicate Face

Iris Lin(林亭妤), who plays Babe, talks about her role, her fears and herself in an interview conducted by Serene Ko(柯雅寧)



Q: You are the deputy production manager, but you also went to the audition for the role of Babe. Why?

A: Well, when I told other members of the Security Social Society (SSS) about the audition, they encouraged me to try. So I did. Originally I wanted to audition for Meg and Babe, but I found that I would be too busy to try two characters, so I picked Babe.

Q: What kind of a person do you think Babe is?

A: I think she's very emotional and somehow innocent. She's brave to do what she wants to and confront with someone more powerful. She's a modern woman, not very fragile. Instead, she is staunch.

Q: Do you think she's crazy in this story?

A: No I don't think she's actually crazy. There is a trauma taking place in Babe's life. She is a very sensitive woman, and she can't take it. So she explodes

Q: What has been the biggest challenge in playing the role?

A: Hmm...to catch Babe's spirit! For example, Babe has many emotional scenes in the drama, but I also have to convince the audience that I am holding back my sadness. So happiness is not the true happiness, and the struggle between being a happy and sad on stage is a challenge for me.

Q: Did the director give you enough instructions?

A: Yes, I think so. Sometimes when I was on the bus and looked outside the window, I thought about those horrible things happening to Babe, and I thought I could relate to her.

Q: I went to the rehearsals several times and was impressed by your performance. Did you make a lot of efforts to act out Babe?

A: Of course, I made a lot of efforts to act out Babe. I think I do share some similarities with Babe as well. Like her, I may be fragile in my appearance, but inside of me, I am a staunch woman.

Q: Is there anything you are afraid that might happen on stage?

A: Stage fright. I am a person who's easy to get nervous. When I get nervous, my brain goes totally blank. I can't think of any lines. I am afraid I will be very nervous on the stage.

Q: Did you ever try to think of the audience as watermelons to get rid of your nerves?

A: No, it will only make me laugh.

Q: Because it works out for me, though. So, how do you strike a balance between the study and the annual play?

A: Well, I have to make a schedule, and check it every moment so I will finish my homework before the class. If I forget to check my schedule, I will feel anxious. I want to have things in control. It's a task for me

Q: Who gives you the biggest supports during this year?

A: My friends and my families. They give me the supports I need when I face difficulties or when I feel sad and frustrated. Their comforts made me better and I appreciate them.

Q: Have you changed after you act as Babe?

A: Yes. I become more open-minded and more emotional. You have to maximize your sadness and happiness on stage so that audience can feel it. I think it's the biggest change for me in my personality. I have to amplify things so the audience can feel my sadness and happiness.

Q: So through assimilation, you and Babe have become one person.

A: Isn't that a good thing?

Q: What's wrong with the Zackery and Babe's marriage?

A: Well, Zackery tortured Babe and he didn't respect Babe as a woman. He married her just because she's young and pretty. For Babe, it is just an impulsive marriage; she's too young to judge if he's the right guy for her in her life. Zackery is a high class person and he's rich. He gave everything Babe wanted. But I don't think Babe knew what love really is at that young age.

Q: If you were Babe, what would you do if your husband treats you like that?

A: First of all, I won't marry a man that I don't know well, and I won't marry a man like Zackery. I will think twice because it's an important thing. I think love is very important, so I have to know what it is.



The Audience May Hate Me, I am Afraid

Andrea Lin(林怡德), who plays Chick Boyle, talks about how to portray her role and how she keeps a balance in life in an interview conducted by Alice Yu(游筑鈞)



Q: The annual play is just a few days ahead, how do you feel now?

A: The feeling I have is complicated. I am very nervous and anxious, because I worry that I might drop some lines or forget some of my actions, so I kept practicing and practicing.

Also, I double-major in accounting, and I have a lot of extra activities, part-time jobs, and homework, so I am worried that the annual play will influence my academic performances. I hope the annual play would come to an end faster, so I can go back to my school work.

Q: What is your expectation from the role you play or the annual play?

A: I learn a lot from my role Chick, because I can see the other side of me. Chick is a very mean person, so when I'm watching TV, I would pay attentions to the expressions and movements of the actors, and I start to imitate them. I am also very grateful for all the acting team members and all the staff from the class. They really help a lot. I hope the play could go smoothly.

Q: I know you are so busy with your school work, so have you ever complained about it?

A: Yeah, I complained a lot, because when I finished the rehearsals, I went back home around nine thirty or ten in the evening, and when I got home, I felt really tired and sleepy, and I didn't want to do my schoolwork, but go straight to bed. So, I hope the play can be finished soon.

Q: So have you been better in your time management?

A: Yes, because I have to handle a lot of things at the same time. I actually have a daily schedule for me, slating everything from nine o'clock in the morning till twelve o'clock at night, so I wouldn't miss any of my homework or things I have to do for the annual play. I think that really helps a lot.

Q: Have you ever regretted about participating in the annual play?

A: Yeah, but I think my situation a lot better than the three sisters, because they have far more lines and they have to invest far more time in the annual play. I think I am pretty lucky..

Q: You have been rehearsing the role for six months, so how do you like Chick as a person?

A: I don't really like her character, because she is very mean and a kind of silly, I think. I don't think I am very much like her, and when I am playing this role, sometimes I feel like maybe my classmates will hate me because I am so snobbish and everything.



I Am Childish but I Never Have Stage Fright

William Yeh(葉俊甫), who plays Doc Porter, talks about how his role in the play has changed himself and how his stage experience helps him face the challenge in an interview conducted by Nyx Huang(黃育敏)

Q: How did you feel when you were chosen to play Doc?

A: I was surprised, because I don't



think that I did a good job in the audition. Actually I didn't take the audition seriously. I just wanted to give it a try, not thinking too much about it. Now, I want to do my best to act the role of Doc Porter, hoping that I could do well on the stage.

Q: Doc is shy and gentle, but you are young and passionate. How did you deal with the challenge of acting out Doc, who is a very different character from yourself?

A: It is true about the differences. In the beginning, it is very difficult for me to act the role, so I tried many ways to prove my performance. I think the most effective way is that the director asked us to write our autobiographies and create our own stories. And during this process, we got to know the roles better.

Q: I was surprised to see play in the winter vacation. You were just like the Doc in the movie. Did you see the movie to help with your acting skills?

A: No, I did not see the movie before the winter vacation, because the directors asked us not to see the movie. She wanted us to use our ways to act the role, instead of following the movie's version.

Q: Has there been any change in your life since you started to play the role of Doc?

A: Actually, it has really changed my daily life. Doc is older than me and he's a gentleman. So when I am in some situations, I would ask myself what Doc would do in my place. I think acting the role of Doc Porter has made me more mature, because everybody knows that I am very childish. So I think this helps me a lot, and other people may get to know other sides of me, a different William Yeh from the one they think they know.

Q: When you were doing rehearsals, sometimes people would say, "Oh, William's personalities jumped out in the play." How would you feel if people say that?

A: I don't think I'm a very good actor, compared with others like Meg, Babe, or Lenny. They are very good actresses with a lot of talents. Sometimes they can easily act their roles well, so I have lots of pressures acting with them. Sometimes I didn't pay lots of attentions when acting on the stage, but I think I have improved.

Q: Do you have stage fright?

A: No, I do not, because I have done some performance on the stage before. I had some stage experiences when I was in senior high school. I was in the dancing club, so I had some experience on the stage.

Q: No stage fright even in the Hakka Culture Center?

A: No, because when I was in the dancing club, I danced in front of the Taipei County Government, and there were more than 1,000 people. At that time, I enjoyed being on the stage. Although I am still not so good at acting, I am pretty confident. The different conditions at the Hakka Center won't bother me.

Q: What are your expectations from our annual play?

A: For myself, I can still make improvements during the final countdown. I hope that I could remember my lines better, so I won't forget what I have to say on the stage. As to the whole team, I hope that everyone could stay healthy. Lenny has just recovered from a serious illness. So I hope that we could all be healthy.



A Lawyer Looking Forward to Shining on Stage

Jonathan Wang(王適言), who plays Barnette Lloyd, talks about the person he plays and the person he really is in an interview conducted by William Yeh(葉俊甫)



Q: How do you like the rehearsals so far?

A: Well, everything goes pretty well, and it's been a wonderful experience rehearsing on the 12th floor.

Q: What drove you to go to the audition for the role of Barnette Lloyd?

A: I think acting as a lawyer is challenging, and I myself like acting very much. It is fun and I always learn a lot from acting, so I give it a try.

Q: Tell us more about the character of Barnette Lloyd?

A: Barnette Lloyd is a lawyer, who has a person vendetta with Babe's husband. So on the one hand, he wanted to help Babe. On the other, he wanted to revenge against Zackery, Babe's husband.

Q: What has been the biggest challenge for you after all those rehearsals?

A: I think fitting into the character is the biggest challenge. You do not know the character's life, so you have to create his life. I have to create my own story.

Q: Is there any possibility that you will be the person just like Barnette Lloyd in the future?

A: Well, I don't think so, because I don't like Barnette's character. He is fanatic about something, and it is not my style.

Q: You just said that you like to act very much. But do you think you are good at acting or not?

A: Well, maybe after practicing, I could be a good actor. Anyway, all depends on practicing.

Q: Have you ever considered giving up?

A: No, never. I cannot give up, because it is my responsibility to act. Well, you know, so I cannot give up.

Q: Tell us about your expectations.

A: Well, I hope the annual play can give us a wonderful memory. I hope we can shine on the stage, which will be unforgettable in our life. So, good luck, everyone.



When All Is Set, Timing Is Everything

Mary Chen(陳思婷), the stage manager, talks about the challenge of keeping perfect timing with lighting and sound effects in an interview conducted by Laura Tang(唐稚鑫)



Q: How did you become our stage manager?

A: In the very beginning, the production manager Emma Huang posted a message on my Facebook, asking me to take up this position. It took me like three days to accept it.

Q: So you did not accept it right away. Why?

A: The stage manager is charged with coordinating with stage lighting team and sound effects team, and has to "cue" them at the precise timing. I have never had such an experience before, so I wasn't sure if I can do a good job. That's why I needed a few days to think it over.

Q: Have you ever had a second thought after taking this position?

A: I still think that this is a challenging job. But I don't think too much about it now. I just try my best to learn by doing. I have to have many meetings with team leaders in charge of stage lighting and sound effects. Most of the time, I keep the details on my note after reaching a decision with them. Then, in the rehearsal, I have to dictate when to play the music or create a specific lighting effect. It actually takes patience and concentration to do the job well.

Q: Are there many coordination works between you and backstage manager?

A: Actually we don't have many interactions in our work. She is responsible for the actors. And I am responsible for the music and lighting. But in private, we would complain about the efficiency of our rehearsals. We have to be at the rehearsals every time, but sometimes we don't have to do anything. Still, we have to know all the details about the acting team, so being there is necessary.

Q: What has been the biggest challenge for you in this position?

A: I think the most challenging part is to control the timing when music or lighting should come out. Although we have discussed a lot in our meetings, doing is actually another thing. The timing is quite hard to control. Sometimes there would be some time lag. When I think it's the right time to play the music, after I use microphone to command "go", it may take one or two seconds for them to respond. Then the best timing would be lost. Sometimes the director has some comments about that, but it's hard to be perfect. Besides, I need to have a good feeling of the script. Therefore, I have to take myself as an actor and actress, so I can feel how their minds change to give out the right music at the right time.

Q: In *Crimes of the Heart*, which is your favorite part?

A: It is in act two, when the three sisters have an argument. I think that part is the climax of the whole play. The three sisters talk about how they feel and what they think to each other. Every time I see this scene, I feel that our three actresses put their whole heart and mind in their characters. So I always feel touched. I think they all do a great job.



A Self-made Stage Designer at Work

Amy Wei(魏奕寧), the art director, talks about how she learns everything about stage designing on her own and what the job means to her in an interview conducted by Roxanne Huang(黃資勻)



Q: You are a transferred student from the Department of Social Work, so have you heard about the annual play before you transferred?

A: Yes. Actually, my friends from Social Work once asked me if I would join the event. My answer to them, then, was I don't know yet. Have to wait and see. But now, look what I have become—the art director of the annual play.

Q: Have you seen any of our annual plays in previous years?

A: No. I didn't have the chance to. But I knew it is a big event, and just about everyone in the department is involved. Now I am glad that I have been a part of it.

Q: How did you feel when the director asked you to be the art director half way through the process of preparations?

A: Nervous, but also flattered. It was completely out of the blue, because I had no idea I would be asked to. The director has been a good friend of mine, and perhaps that's why. I am pretty happy to take up this job, so we could work together as a team.

Q: Have you ever learned art designs or drawing?

A: No, never. So I asked my friends to borrow reference materials and books from the library of National Chengchi University, because we don't have that kind of books in our own library. I then started to dig out what was in those books and try to self-educate myself to draw.

Also, I got consultations from the father of a friend of mine. He is an experienced stagehand, a carpenter. What he told me is that, I only have to worry about the art design part of the work, and don't have to worry about how those design ideas could be translated into stage sets on the deck. So what I have to do would be to tell the carpenter my ideas, and then leave all the construction works to the theater carpenters.

Q: So you learned everything about stage design from the beginning?

Amy: Yes, but I also asked last year's art director for the annual play for help, although she couldn't tell me too much about stage design either. So it was pretty bumpy at first. Eventually, I went through those difficulties.

Q: Did you use any computer programs for graphic design?

A: No. I didn't know anything about those computer programs, so I just drew on the paper, the old-fashioned way.

Q: What is the most difficult challenge you have encountered so far?

A: The basics, I am afraid. I don't know how to draw in the first place. At first, my drawing is hard to know what I was drawing. Then I learned by reading books, which taught me how to draw chairs, counters, windows, or doors—all those basics, everything.

Q: Do your families support you doing all this?

A: They do support me, asking me to go for it. But, they don't really understand what it is that I've been working on. Anyway, they will come and see our performance.

Q: Do you get a sigh of relief when the stage is finally finished?

A: No. I was pretty worried, actually, because it didn't look very good. There was no paint, no wall paper, and no furniture. All looked so unfinished. One afternoon I just stood there in front of the stage, and I started to cry.

Q: Have you every regretted about accepting this job?

A: No, I think I learned a lot about designing and communicating with others. I have to brief others over how things have progressed. I have to discuss with the stage carpenter about the stage designs. Most importantly, I got to know my classmates, spending time with them. When I just got transferred here, I was not familiar with them. Now we have become friends, for that I feel so grateful.



Making Cold Calls with Warm Hearts

Fanny Lee(李明芬), head of the public relations team, talks about how her team managed to get all our sponsors in an interview conducted by Sabrina Chang(張薰文)

Q: Could you tell us about how you became our head of public relations?

A: Back then, I just finished my work with AIESEC, and I was looking for a new challenge for myself. One night, Emma, our production manager, called me, asking me to take this job. I took it, seeing it as a new challenge for me.

Q: Have you had any second thought about your decision?

A: No, because the whole process has been so wonderful. My teammates have been working so hard. I had a great time working with them.

Q: Were you also involved with public relations at AIESEC?

A: Yes, I was at the external relationship department as the account manager, so I actually had some experience in this field. These experiences served their purposes nicely, helping me to do my job better.

For example, last semester, our main responsibility was to list all possible sponsors. To do so, we had to do research, and then practice dealing with those companies, creating our script for cold calls. Then, every week, we did the cold calls at least five times.

Q: What are "cold calls"?

A: They are the companies with unenthusiastic responses, not willing to give you sponsors. So we call them cold calls, because we still call them anyway.

Q: Did you have any problems or difficulties getting sponsors?



A: At first, we got lots of cold calls because most of the companies were not willing to sponsor us. After all, we don't have much to offer them in return. We can't give them many rewards for helping us. Also, we may not be familiar with making cold calls, so the failure rate was really high in the beginning.

Q: How did you solve this problem?

A: First, I invited a friend of mine to give us a lecture. Then I organized a workshop, training our team members how to make cold. We, together, created the script for cold calls.

Q: Can you tell us what the script is?

A: Okay. First, we called out, and their operators would pick up the phone. You don't have to say too much to the operators, and instead you ask the operators to transfer your calls directly to specific persons in charge. Then you tell them about our annual play, and tell them how we could help with their publicity and that we are willing to organize lecturers or something like that for them in return.

So you see, it's important to do research first, because then we know what kind of lecturers or promotion events would interest them. We don't make calls without doing research first. It would be impolite and ineffective.

Q: Were there any problems between your team members?

A: There was no problem in our team. Everyone made lots of efforts in this task. The team was divided into four sub-groups, and each of the group managed to get pretty good results.

Q: What is your secret to keep your team working efficiently?

A: At first, we created a PA, which is like your work schedule. Each week, you have to fill in what you're going to do next week. For example, the first one is to make 5 cold calls. The second one is to visit two sponsors. By using the PA, everyone knows exactly what should be completed next week. So no one will be fooling around, without specific goals in mind.

Q: What is the focus of your work during this semester?

A: For this semester, our focus has been to promote our annual play. Also, we have to contact our sponsors because we need their information to put on our website. And we have to send the invitations as well.

I want to say thank-you to all the team members. We are all inexperienced in doing our work, but we manage to get so many sponsors in this short period of time. We have gone a pretty good job.





Advertisement Analysis

Cindy 謝欣蓉

TV commercials for alcoholic drinks usually show images of night life and luxuriousness. Scenes of parties and nightclubs, or close-up shots of beverages being poured from beautiful bottles to exquisite wineglasses, are familiar scenes of alcohol advertisements. But these elements can only resonate with those who like to drink or who are familiar with nightlife. A well created advertisement not only draws attention to its target customers, but also strikes a chord with other people whom are not originally the targets. This principle is well held in Heineken's advertisement "Walk-in Fridge," for it catches everyone's attention, beer lovers or not, by presenting a comparison of men's and women's material desires within a daily setting.

The advertisement brings us into a household setting where the hostess is giving a house tour to her female friends. After showing them the living room and the bedroom, she opens a walk-in closet in which a dazzling array of beautiful clothes and accessories are displayed. On seeing this "splendid view," all of the women start screaming with great excitement. Just at the same moment, they hear sounds of screams from the next room. The scene then changes to a walk-in fridge where countless bottles of Heineken are stored, and the host and his male friends are screaming crazily with their eyes widely open and hands swinging randomly. At the end of the advertisement, there's a line of a Chinese idiom meaning "with one voice" appears in the middle of the frame, making us wear an understanding smile on the face after watching it.



Within thirty-three short seconds, this TV commercial successfully obtained its popularity by highlighting two factors: One is the similarity of men and women's desire toward material comforts, and the other is the atypicality of men screaming excitedly as women usually do when presented with magnificent scenes or unexpected surprises.

While women are crazy for clothes and accessories, men go crazy for Heineken. This comparison conveys the idea that men also have material desire in the same degree as that of women's. Having a dazzling array of clothes and accessories is every woman's dream and delight; likewise, having a grand collection of Heineken is every man's envy and joy. Just as women would like to own a room exclusively for garments, men would go so far as to create a special space to house Heineken. Simply put, clothes are to women what Heineken is to men.

Moreover, what makes this commercial interesting is that both groups show their excitement with totally the same series of actions, screaming aloud crazily, swinging hands randomly and jumping frenziedly. Stereotypically, we think it's normal for women to lose control when they see something exciting or surprising; however, it's rather atypical for men to behave in the same way under the same situation, since boys are taught not to reveal their emotion too often. With those men's atypical behavior, we find this ad not only amusing to watch but also meaningful for brand promotion. Besides creating a walk-in fridge for Heineken, men would be so proud of owning a Heineken collection as to show it off to their male friends. What's more,

upon seeing the "magnificent scene," those friends behave atypically, expressing their consensus of viewing Heineken as the best enjoyment. This series of men's deeds and reactions implies that Heineken drives men crazy, and that men would do anything for Heineken.

A successful creation often leaves a strong impression in our memory and sense by relating to things we are familiar with. Just like literary and art masterpieces, effective advertisements arouse resonance in our mind by referring to human nature and human life. The reference to humanity is exactly the technique used in this "Walk-in Fridge" episode to intensify the brand name of Heineken and identify itself as the most desired drink among the alcoholic beverages.



The Otaku

Stella 溫星茹

Nowadays, with well-developed Internet systems, more and more people can easily have the access to a lot of information without stepping out of their houses. The convenience the Internet brings to some extent makes people unwilling to go out since they can get whatever they want through the Internet. This behavior is just the cause for the rise of the *otaku* group, and these people play an important role in modern society since they generate a series of social reforms.

The word, *otaku*, is a phrase originated in Japan. This word means "home" originally; however, it is bestowed with a new meaning in recent years. Because Japan has been experiencing serious slumps in the past two decades, Japanese began to reduce the frequency they go out to avoid lavishing money on unnecessary expenditure. Then, the time they spent at home increased a lot, which was the reason of the new meaning of *otaku*. And what did these Japanese do when staying at home? Most of them explored and indulged themselves into their hobbies. Thus, *otaku* was given a new explanation which stood for mania for specific things as time went by. And when this term was spread to Taiwan, Taiwanese people gave it a somewhat different explanation. Because the first acquisition of this word for most Taiwanese was mainly through a Japanese soap opera, *The Train Man*, the word was regarded as an adjective describing those who were extremely interested in TV programs, then extended to PC games and comics. Nowadays, some Taiwanese people also began to use *otaku* to refer to those who always stayed at home and had little social life with others. A big difference of the usage of this word between Japan and Taiwan also came into view: Taiwanese people often used this word with a negative aspect while in Japan, *otaku* was used as a neutral word without any special implied meaning.



Responding to this *otaku* phenomenon, some invisible reforms have been undertaking. First, in terms of economy, a trend called *otaku* economy boosts. In recent years, because of the economic recession, many people are laid off or asked to have a leave without pay. Since people's income has decreased, the public tend to spend their money on things that cost less, and some of the typical commodities are online games and renting videos or comic books.

This is one of the reasons that the market of online games thrives and video and comic books renting revives. The profit consuming these kinds of products brought what the public called as *otaku* economy. However, *otaku* economy could be explained in another way. Also responding to the economic recession, a new type of trading has appeared. This kind of deals is mainly done through the Internet because online businesses do not need physical stores thus shopkeepers could save the money on maintaining store facilities. Trades done on the Internet are also called *otaku* economy. The second reform proceeds socially. Because almost all the *otaku* related terms could be associated with comics, some people thought that the *otaku* groups are those who are indulged in

fictitious world thus are disconnected with real society. This kind of thought makes those who hold a negative attitude toward otaku become even more hostile when it comes to the term of otaku; therefore, the utterances of those who are against otaku are easily to have discriminated words attached when these people talked about otakus. Some otaku groups undoubtedly defend for their hobbies, claiming that everyone has his own interest thus their hobbies deserve respect since those who isolate themselves are extreme cases; most otakus just enjoy in the comic world, not addicted to it.

Though the debate continues, reaching no conclusion; the emergence of the otaku group gives the whole society an opportunity to ponder over the problems that the new era brings: to take the new social behavior, trend, and idea or not. If our society begins to tolerate or accept this new population and its relevancies, how do the public deal with their previous thoughts? If general people reject this new group, how do otakus suit themselves in our society? To clearly see through all the things that challenge people's habits is an important feature to adapt in this continuous flowing society. And maybe the most important thing that people should do first is to think about what the otaku phenomenon brings.

Disney Makes Dreams Vivid

Janet 厲嘉鎡



Mickey Mouse, Snow White, Cinderella, and The Lion King are very well-known animated figures created by Disney. Since Walt Disney set off a cartoon studio in Hollywood in 1923, his animations have accompanied a countless number of people passing through

their childhood. Disney has always been one of loved cartoon producers all over the world. Although the plots of Disney animations appear simple, the making processes are extremely elaborate. A group of making one animation might consist of more than 500 people. In the exquisite producing processes, expertise and teamwork play great roles in Disney Studio for making a hit. The producing process could be roughly classified into three stages, pre-production, production, and post-production; however, each stage has to be subdivided into smaller details which cannot be taken lightly. The very beginning of making a film is the essential and the most complicated part with the rest parts followed by the rules made during the stage of pre-production. Therefore, this essay would only focus on the five steps of sorting in the pre-production stage.

To begin with, every animation starts from creative ideas. If the idea proposer is not an employee of Disney, a broker would be hired to handle all the relevant processes. For instance, when Mulan attends the military service, she is called "Fa Ping." A golf company in the United States coincides with the same name, *Ping*. To prevent from legal issues, Disney prefers hiring an agent to deal with possible conflicts. However, most of the ideas for the Disney animations originate from the inner studio. The first as well as the usual way of bringing up ideas is from the Department of Creative Executive in Disney, a seven-member committee responsible for collecting folk tales, legends, plays, and stories around the world. Second, some stories are determined as executive decisions. Take *The Lion King* as an example. The CEO of Disney was hit upon a thought to make a cartoon similar to *Bambi*; as a result, the crew came up with the idea to combine *Bambi* with *Hamlet* to create *The Lion King*. The third source of ideas is from the annual *Gong Show*, where employees bearing a story to share might share their concepts with the chief managers of Disney. These idea generators would be given five minutes to present their stories onstage with drafts or posters. *Gong* would be beat when the time runs out. *Hercules* stood out in a *Gong Show* and was made as an animation.

After building a concrete idea for an animation, playwrights would write a blueprint- the script- of a film based on the idea. Disney animations put much emphasis on visual movements of characters, so

they use much more visual performance than spoken words to show relationships and emotions of characters in the script. For instance, an angry figure is often made look fierce with teeth exposed. Moreover, a storyboard is highly associated with the script. A storyboard is like a strip cartoon with lines under sketches. Before officially embarking on the producing process, story artists could realize the whole plot via the storyboard, using voices, facial expressions, and dialogues to perform the content. A scene might end up with two or three versions because of different interpretations of artists; therefore, they have to negotiate for the best version with the director, the producer, and the artists. A long animated film requires considerable amount of brain-storming. A storyboard marked with story beats might help show the tension in every scene. In addition, the essential job of story artists is to thoroughly understand the personality and relationships of every single character. Based on the characterization, plots are pressed close to the public.

When the script is completed, the further step for materialization is the visual development, or called art design. Disney highlights variety, changes, and development in the process of producing an animation. In this step, artists are encouraged to try their best to release all the potential covered in the script. From the main style, character design, color setting, background arts, to atmosphere design include in the visual development. During this stage, artists enjoy freely to create an imaginary world according to individual interpretations. However, a film relies on a great number of the crew to work together; therefore, the Artist Supervisor on character design has to come up with a series of certain principles for others to follow. When all the main characters are roughly sketched, artists have to make model sheets showing all the gestures or movements designated to different characters for the entire crew to mimic. Then color stylists along with the Art Director decide the color scheme according to the personalities of the characters. After ensuring the shapes and appearances of the characters, size comparisons, which are important to the compositions of scenes, are left to be done. Each character has its unique shape and appearance, reflecting the personalities. A good style design means that people could recognize a character even from its shadow. To more easily turn imaginary figures into animated characters, animators would usually depict characters with the help of solid maquettes which are made according to the plane model sheets. Sometimes, animators would feel



confused while drawing some special postures, such as bowing. Having a maquette alongside is just like a model demonstrating right beside the animators at all times. Therefore, animators might seek out the best way to depict every angle of characters with the assistance of maquettes. Prior to the application of maquettes, Disney used to shoot films starred by real people in order to help animators draw the characters more vividly. This technique played a big role in the process of producing *Snow White*.

The crew moves to scene designing right after the model sheets are set. The designs of scenes have to correspond to the personalities of characters and the background settings. Based on the plot as well as the places where stories happen, production designers propose basic settings and work with the Art Director, the Head of Layout, and the Head of Background. Art designers set up a series of art styles for layouts as well as background designers to handle every detail in each scene. Disney animators also like to leave some small jokes or traces in design charts. For instance, as the audience pay more attention on trivialities during watching *Mulan*, they might find the names of the project crew craved on the stela in the ancestral shrine. In *Aladdin*, people might notice another joke on anachronism. If the audience looks carefully on the scene of the palace filled with treasures right after the robbery, they might find things which are not supposed to exist at that time, for example, a toaster, a Mickey watch, and pelota. Furthermore, a color script, one of the important components in the visual designing, is reserved to work on until the model sheets and scene designs are both finished. A color script is composed of a chain of colorful cinescripts. To meet the needs of the plots and atmosphere, it is necessary to change

different color tones to correspond with the ups and downs of stories. Colors have great influence on the emotional aspect of the audience; as a result, the Art Director takes good advantage of a color script to properly control the rises and falls in films.

While the Art Department pours out their hearts on creating amazing visual parts of an animation, the Sound Department also concentrate on their own tasks, including dubbing, soundtracks, songs, and background music. First, the Voice Casting Director is in charge of looking for suitable dub actors/ actresses and singers whose traits are close to the personalities of the characters for interpreting the animated figures well. Second, unlike Japanese animations, Disney prefers recording voices before films are completed. Then the animators would draw the movements of mouths based on the soundtracks so that the two parts would perfectly correspond to each other. In addition, the animators would have better ideas on facial expressions of the characters because of the dubbing. After dubbing is finished sound readers would analyze the syllables as well as stresses of each sentence on the recording machine and make an exposure sheet, or so-called X-Sheet. With setting syllables apart, the animators are able to draw the movements of mouths with ease. During dubbing, the director and the animators would definitely meet to discuss the appropriate ways that the dub actors/actresses should apply when dubbing so as to interpret the lines with the best voice and tone. Third, songs are strong instruments to express inward feelings of the characters. The animations produced by Disney have been adapted to marry Broadway-style musicals. Songs enter the films naturally to push the plots moving forwards. The lyrics of songs press close to situations of the characters and help them express their thoughts.

At the end of pre-production, a story reel and a workbook would be accomplished. The Editorial Department would scan all the design charts into computers. The script, dubbed with voices as well as background music, is edited as a video, and becomes a story reel. The essential task here is to add "time" into the storyboard in order to clearly realize the timing along the development of the story. From the story reel, the crew might screen out the inappropriate timing and failures to prevent major problems at the stage of pre-production. When moving further to the workbook, the cinematic language would be added, such as the camera work and angles of shooting, in order to strengthen the tension of a film. Since the color script, the model sheet, and the work book are all well-set, the stage of pre-production is coming to an end. The rest stages of production are all based on pre-production, which is the blueprint of the entire work.

In the process of producing a film, pre-production is not only the most exhausting stage but also the most interesting part. Disney animations bring the world a considerable deal of joy and laugh. The fascinating animations are composed of extremely exquisite producing stages. From nothing to a presentable story, film making resembles a major construction work that needs a great deal of collaboration and cooperation of a crew with talents who thrive to make our dreams vivid and enjoyable. Disney has shown infinite potential of turning imaginations into films. With highly fancy procedures and creative ideas, Disney still amazes the world with its outstanding animations.

National Movie Fever

Erica 莊紹琦

In the year 2008, Cape No.7 released and earned great reputation from viewers. Many directors were eager to try to film movies on different topics. Until now, many good works have been presented and the national movies fever has become even higher and higher. There must be some reasons that had caused the national movies fever. Some popular national movies released between 2009 and 2011 share similarities and have attracted many attentions at the same time. The following analyses of movies will point out the government's role in the movie industry and show important reasons behind a successful movie, including the three attracting elements, topics of movies and methods that help increase more sales.

In those years before 2008, national movies were not so popular. Few people went to theaters and watch movies. However, in 2008, Cape

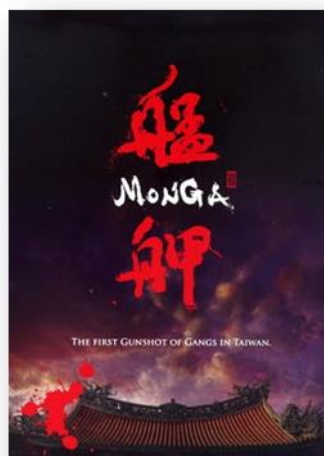
No.7 by director Wei made a 7 hundreds million box office. Since 2008, different national movies focusing on different subjects occupied the headlines of newspapers. All directors wanted to reproduce the same success. During this movie-making process, our government is an essential factor. The government was willing to be the sponsor and offer subvention to directors whose idea were special and educational. The government has been holding Taipei Film Festival since 1998 and the reward differs from one hundred thousand to one million dollars. If the award had not been offered by the government, the movies would not have been filmed so successfully.

In each year, the prize-winning movies will get the chance to attend international movie exhibitions and win more popularity. Moreover, in the past time, topics in movies were either family-related or touching stories. Nowadays, some new and controversial topics such as lesbian (Spider lilies), obsequy (Seven Days in Heaven, Make Up) are chosen. The public seems to accept them with an open mind. The variety attracts people to go to theaters and enjoy our own movies one after one. Have a look at those released popular national movies. They show that a movie is made up of three basic plots: conflicts, relationships (friendship, love affairs) and departures. Conflicts in movies created climates that hang the audience's nerves at times and made audience seat on edge. Friendship or love affairs tell people there is still some wrath in life, while departures deprive human's happiness.



girl and a postman who is the leading character in this movie. Through the process of daily carrying letters, the postman always got a returned mail package. The address on that package was wrong so that it failed to reach the right place. After he read those letters, he was deeply immersed in the history that caused the departure of two lovers. It was about a departure between a Taiwanese girl and a Japanese teacher. When the sovereignty was given back to Taiwan, all Japanese were sent back to Japan. A large quantity of letters were written on the ship but failed to be received. Another departure brought out a famous speech "Stay or I will go with you." said to the main actress by the main actor. This plot caught many people on edge.

The second one is MONGA which was released in 2009. The movie focused on conflicts between different fractions or cliques. At the time when Wan Hua was still a downtown, many people do nothing but fight every day. Wan Hua was occupied by many gangsters. One had better join a group of alliance or he may run the risk of getting hurt in hundreds of fights happening on street. Five boys officially formed an alliance and promised none of them will betray the group. However, when the antagonistic gang tried to destroy their friendship and



association in purpose, the organization was in a dangerous condition facing collapse. Whether the character will choose his homeboys or join the Occidentalized gang remained to be a mystery. Moreover, when the antagonistic gang started to use pistols, the little alliance only had sticks to protect themselves. It made the situation more disadvantageous to them. When one of the members died in an impulsively fight with the antagonistic gang. The five people faced a departure.

Departure not only brought sadness but also taught them an important lesson: think and do everything rationally.

The third one is "You Are the Apple in My Eye", the most popular movie among teenagers and had successfully broken the highest box office until now. The movie had brought the national movie trade to an even higher level. The story began in a special way: the heroine forced the boy to study. Little by little, the boy got used to her accompanies and little quarrels over trivialities. The main character finally had a crush on the girl. However, in junior and senior high schools, almost every boy wanted to express their love for the girl. The boy was afraid of facing failures after his other friends all got refuse. After they went to different



colleague, the boy tried to express his love by holding a boxing game. He wanted to show his glamour so that the girl would seriously consider to date with him. Unfortunately, the girl did not like the idea, she scold him as an idiot. They argued intensively and their friendship was frozen. Once the dream has broken they could never go back. The last departure was on the girl's wedding. When the boy said the speech: when I really love a girl, I know I could give her the best wishes I thought I

could not: be happy every day. Whether it is a romantic movie or an inspiring documentary film, speech is an important element in movies. But in comparison, the three elements: conflicts, friendships, and departures are essential. The three movies were filmed by three different directors in different years. But they could be viewed and analyzed in the same way.

Every time when a new movie is filmed, the moviemaker must come up with some ways to promote the movie. After the movie is released, advertisement comes to be another important work. The advertisement could affect both the sales and the evaluation. Here are some basic points for filming a successful movie. And the above three movies used the same methods, too. First, the director should make sure all the information mentioned in the movie is correct. Take the background stories about the sovereignty by Japanese in Cape No.7 as an example. It is necessary to do some research and investigation about its history background. Its accuracy may not affect the movie plots too much, but for some picky audience or historians, it is vital. Second, the director needs a location for shooting, which may be a beautiful, unknown, and unexplored place to most people. After the release of a movie, people crowd to those locations, hoping to experience the atmosphere in the movie, which in turn to boost the popularity of that place and indirectly help improve the prosperity of that area.

Cooperating with some local governments is another way to propagate the movie and could also help the city tourism as well. The beach in Ken Ting and the setting scene in the main actor's house became popular places for movie fans to pay a visit. The travel agent also caught the chance and sold an online travel package that include all of the scenes in the movie Cape No.7. Last but not least, choosing characters is also an important preparation. Recently, many popular idol singers or models are chosen to be leading roles by movie producers. Regardless idol singers' acting skills, their popularity among audiences is the factor that greats box offices. Sometimes, movies directors will chose newcomers as the main actors. Newcomers can attract the media and press because the public expect their performances. Newcomers always corporate with other experienced actors. Those actors may not be popular, but they do have professional acting skills. Through this way, the newcomer got fame and successfully won the attention from audience for the whole movie. In the movie "You Are the Apple in My Eye", the main character was a colleague student. He had no experience in making movie before. However, after the release of the movie, he quickly gained popularity and even has another chance to become a singer. Previous records also showed that it is a good method to attract more potential popularity and sales.

Every time when a movie is released, critics and complements appear at the same time. Some get high evaluations while others get low.

Although it is a trade-off between the cruelty of criticism and the money gathered movie goes, one should think more seriously and more deeply while watching movies. In each movie, the director wants to express his or her thoughts and concerns toward the society. Whether it is a hard issue or humorous animation, one should remember not to blindly follow the trade but try to reflect upon the lessons from conflicts, friendships and departures, and realize that the movie industry is developed within creativity, collaboration, and a lot of team work.

