

MR JIM CHIM:

Okay, it doesn't matter. I think this box is the worst invention of human beings. It separates human beings, really. We have grown up in such an education environment, we communicate with machines. Theatres or theatre works has given me the insight that we have to break through the format and we have to penetrate people's lives. This is not a presentation of the paper. Before we came, we had a conversation of how we're going to conduct this session. We just want to use a very straightforward way so that you can understand us. Some of you may have some idea about us, but I'm sure there are things that you do not know about us. So today we are going to tell you who we are and how we come by.

Okay, so my major work is theatre work. You may say that or you may think that this is a theatre. At first, I also had the same thought. At first I wanted to get into the APA, however I was not successful. I was not admitted. So later I had to come up with all different ideas to make myself really powerful, impressive enough. So I have to make sure that I have different skills so as to be able to enter the mainstream. So now I'm going to tell you my path.

I started as an actor and at that time I knew nothing. Just now I asked the general manager of my theatre company, how many shows I performed last year. He said in fact over 100. So that means I appeared on the stage once every three days. So this hasn't taken into consideration rehearsal time. So now I'm going to introduce myself to you. I'm going to start explaining to you my experience after reaching 20 years old.

I used to be an actor on the streets. However, interestingly enough, at that time there were only very few people who performed on the streets. But I think, well I must say, mime is a very sophisticated and advanced form of performance. It entails a lot of training.

Now you see me juggling these with three because -- this needs a lot of skill -- I needed a crowd of people. So to me it was important to be able to penetrate a crowd.

And then later, when I entered an institution or a school, I received other ideas and insights, so all along I have been thinking what is performance. Later, after my graduation -- well, other students joined various theatre companies and performed in Shakespearian plays. However, I joined the McCally theatre and I did this kind of

performance. I only made use of abstract movements to perform and I think this is what I aspired to.

Later I set up my own theatre company and in the last 14 years -- actually in the first 7 years that is my first stage -- I did work through which I could explore what art is. So for instance these are some of the examples. So in one of the plays I talked about a playwright, who was born 50 years ago and then after the world war he produced or he wrote a script which caused a lot of repercussions. He explored people's values and the value of life. So this is very important to people's lives.

However, I did not adopt a very stern, serious approach. This was a very humorous play and this was actually a comedy. All the audiences laughed all the way except very, very last moment. At the very last moment, they were not brave enough to laugh.

In 14 years' time, we produced 50 original plays. This is what we call (Chinese spoken). Well actually, Mr (Chinese name) wrote this script. And then there are also very classical performances. 100 years ago, (indistinct words) wrote a play and, you know, so there was another play written by (indistinct words) in which people sold their spirits or souls. And then later I also did children's theatre work. I'm not trying to advertise, but this musical play is for children.

So from these slides, you will be able to tell my path in theatre works.

Why did I start to produce plays for children? One reason is that we need to survive. In order to make a living, I have to find a way to survive and then do whatever I like to do. Fortunately, in 1993, when cable TV started to broadcast, at that time they had not many actors. And then I applied to be a programme host of a children's TV programme. Every week I needed to work for them for a day and a half. At first I didn't know that this work was going to lead me to another medium. Many people who are in their 20s or 30s will approach me and say that they had watched those children's programmes of mine at that time and they even were able to quote my parts or my lines in those children's programmes!

In 2001, I had the opportunity to participate in a movie and that was the first film directed by Mr Pang Ho Chung. That time, the audiences started to realise that there is Jim Chim, this person in Hong Kong, and so after that, other directors asked me to join the films or movies. And then later I started to think whether drama should

really only be constrained to stages and recently there is another feature film, (Chinese spoken).

My earlier theatre works were works that tried to manifest the depth of arts, but when I continued to work in different medium, I start to think that drama should not depart from the crowds. We have to be able to get into people's heart and at the same time we should also be able to manifest the depth of art.

So I think popular theatre is one of the possibilities.

In 1994, more than one decade ago, I started to develop this concept. So we produced (Chinese spoken) Show. And one of these programme hosts was Cheung da Meng. And so (Chinese spoken) show, which was another talk show, was inspired by that. And then in the year 2000, we talked to the theatre manager. I said, "If this theatre is going to continue to develop, then it must be a star in our theatre", so, in other words, we have to try to operate so that our theatre is not only a theatre, it is really a human figure which can interact with the audiences.

So later there are other crossovers. In 2004, I had the opportunity to work with (Chinese name) "The Great Entertainer". And then because there is the participation of Lang Wing Kei. So as a result, other audiences started to know me.

And then in 2006, I did a symphony orchestra show with Hong Kong Symphonic Orchestra, and then in 2006, 2007, we tried to see how the message of popular culture can be shared with the audiences. So there are two important works. One is (Chinese spoken) and the other is (Chinese spoken).

So let me do a quick survey here. How many one of you have watched (Chinese spoken)? Okay, quite a lot. Thank you. So in other words I still have a market. I still can command a market. All right.

I have to think how a play can reach different types of audience. This takes hard work. This is not a profitable programme. To me this is really an experimental programme. We need to experiment how our thinking or our ideas can be further developed.

This is (Chinese spoken) which has not been shown yet but then it is closely related to the rapidly changing popular culture in current days. In 2003, I did this (Chinese spoken) during the SARS outbreak. At first I thought that there wouldn't be any

follow-up after this production. Later a DVD was released and in Causeway Bay and Tsim Sha Tsui, this DVD was shown and people could hear my voice when they walked on the streets. They said that that was so irritating because they always heard my voice. This is rather interesting, because theatre works penetrated the crowds via other media.

Later I was featured in advertisements. So for example when you use the ATM, when you cough, you may be able to think of me.

So is it true that I'm now so popular that I can make a lot of money by taking part in advertisement production? Well, Jim Chim on the one hand represents theatre works and on the other hand also becomes part of the mass.

It is very important to choose the right product or to choose the right presentation. Both programmes are closely related to theatre. Someone asked me to take part in a washing powder advertisement and I was asked to play a role and after that eight housekeepers or homemakers would say that the product was excellent.

We really need to know what we want to do and what we are aspired to. This is a musical play, (Chinese spoken), and I tried to cross over to the singing area. These artists and producers have their own experience and capabilities, but then why is it that singing and theatre works have always been separated? So another crossover will happen later.

Mr (Chinese name) is very famous because of the articles he wrote for economic journal and then later there will be this rich father, poor father play.

So how can his investment experience blend with my insights about life? All these will be presented by way of a theatre work. Of course, the bank would like us to put up a show, but for us, we think that we are actually exchanging our views about work.

So I think this kind of crossover has another dimension of meaning.

This is just an introduction. So you will see a lot of advertisements, for example the PARKnSHOP advertisement on TV and on newspapers, well, don't you know that the voiceover in the PARKnSHOP advertisement was done by me? You don't know? Okay, so later on, I hope that you will participate in discussion very enthusiastically. Thank you.