

A twin rivalry

by JERRY DONATO
Philstar.com

MANILA—It's going to be a rat race when Shaina Magdayao and Melissa Ricks' characters come face to face in the upcoming ABS-CBN's afternoon fantasy-drama *Kambal sa Uma*. The TV series will premiere on April 20 after *Wowowee*.

"It will be a healthy one," says Melissa of she and Shaina's possible rivalry in the acting department. "We have to enjoy our work and do what is expected from us. We worked together before on *Rounin*."

"I have accepted the fact that people will always make comparisons," adds Shaina. "Instead of getting affected by these, I should challenge myself and aim for a better performance. At the end of the day, it's just a job."



Shaina Magdayao (right) and Melissa Ricks play twins with rat-like characteristics on ABS-CBN's *Kambal sa Uma*.

The two beautiful ladies also shrug off the billing issue and both don't mind that Shaina's picture comes first before Melissa's. What matters to them is they still have work during these hard economic times.

The rivalry between their characters, however, is inherent in the story as the show's executives point out. And it will be intensified as the storytelling begins.

Kambal sa Uma is the small screen adaptation of Rio Locsin's 1979 movie. This time around, it is about fraternal twins named Ella (Melissa) and Vira (Shaina) who have rat-like characteristics. They have been separated at birth and are different from each other. The one will have the intuition of a rat, while the other has the features of a rat including tail and "big round ears."

Similar to the idea of yin and yang, Vira is rich but suffers emotionally. Ella, on the other hand, struggles in life but is nurtured and supported by a doting mother.

Rio who played the original role is the mother of the twins. The word *uma* means farmland.

Expect a lot of controversy as Ella and Vira clash with their differences in upbringing and background.

Is *Kambal sa Uma* the most challenging project for Shaina and Melissa to date?

"I must admit that it is challenging," says Melissa. "And it is physically difficult. It takes two hours to put the prosthetics on me. Then, an hour to take it off. I have extra hair, a tail and big, round ears."

"My role is exciting," shares Shaina. "It seems that Vira has a dual personality. She wears a strong front at school but she is battered at home."

What makes their roles more challenging is the fact that they are afraid of rats in real life. Shaina and Melissa will perhaps squeal at the thought of seeing a rat around the set.

In the afternoon soap, Melissa will still be paired with Matt Evans, her love team on *Underage* soap on Sunday afternoons. Shaina is paired with Jason Abalos on the show.

Melissa, whose hands are full these days, is very happy with her inclusion in the new *Kapamilya* show. She says her patience has paid off and has learned that it's better to take things slowly but surely.

Aside from *Kambal sa Uma* and *Underage*, Melissa is also a regular host on *ASAP*.

Does she consider herself lucky?

"Yes, I am, considering that there are artists who look for jobs," answers Melissa. ■

Wanted: Wedding singer

RYAN AGONCILLO realized that his TV5 show *Talentadong Pinoy* has attracted a loyal audience when strangers started stopping him on the streets, asking if they could audition.

"From the crazies to the genuinely gifted," Ryan told *Rushes'* Bayani San Diego Jr.

The show has gathered a motley crew, including a beat-box trio, a man who peels coconuts with his teeth, snake wranglers and contortionists.

While Ryan was car-racing in Clark, Pampanga, an Aeta kid stood in his way and belted R&B tunes.



Ryan Agoncillo

Talent scouting is part of his job as host—quite a stretch from his first gig on ABC 5's *Philippine Idol*.

Every week, Ryan explained, the show is guaranteed to discover talents that are either awe-inspiring or amusing.

Among the most shocking so far was a blade eater. "While I was interviewing him, I could smell and see blood," Ryan recalled. "Maybe he got nervous. But he wasn't seriously hurt."

Such unexpected moments make the show a roller-coaster ride for audiences and show regulars (aside from Ryan) Audie Gemora, Cherie Gil, John Lapus, Eugene Domingo and Amy Perez, among others, who are also called "Talent Scouts."

"I thought they would be jaded," Ryan said. "After all, they've been in the business for so long. Still, they are truly entertained. Amy once asked a *Talentado*, 'Can I hire you for my son's birthday party?'"

Indeed, some *Talentados* have been spotted by booking agents and clinched assignments through the program.

Has Ryan found a singer for his forthcoming wedding to Judy Ann Santos? He laughed and said Judai herself has singled out a ventriloquist with five dummies.

Judai acted as a Talent Scout for Ryan's birthday special, to be aired April 18 (he turned 30 on April 10.)

Will the ventriloquist be at their wedding? Abangan. (*Inquirer.net*)

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