

Legal wrangles

Channel 5's new drama stars actors with real law degrees, including stalwart Adrian Pang

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Funnyman Adrian Pang calls himself a "fugitive of the law" because he chose to act instead of practise law after studying it in Keele University, England.

"The law has finally caught up proper with me," says the 43-year-old. He plays a fast-talking lawyer in Channel 5's new legal drama, *The Pupil*, which premiered yesterday at 8.30pm.

"It's not that I've not played lawyers before, but this is much more realistic. Previously, in *Red Thread*, I was ostensibly not able to look at my case files because I was blind," he adds. In *Red Thread*, he played a blind lawyer who investigates his wife's death.

So far, the law degree holder says, the closest shave he has had with the law was when he was hauled into court more than 20 years ago in the United Kingdom.

"I hit a parked car and I drove off without reporting it, foolishly thinking that I could get away with it, but two weeks later, cops were knocking on my door," he says.

"I don't even remember how much I was fined, just that the judge kept mispronouncing my name as Pang-ee."

In a case of reel life imitating real, Pang is just one of three trained legal eagles working on this new series.

Co-stars Rebecca Lim, 23, majored in business law while doing her accountancy degree at the Singapore Management University (SMU) and Vadi PVSS, 39, is currently pursuing his law degree at SMU.

Lim plays Wendy in the show, a young Malaysian who starts work as a pupil at a law firm. Pang plays Dennis, the firm's high-flying over-achiever and her mentor. Vadi is Seelan, Dennis' best friend and a wealthy lawyer from a rival firm.

For Pang, being on this series has affirmed his career choice not to be a lawyer.

"I could never take on this sort of responsibilities for other people, even if they paid me," he says.

Lim is happy for her role, which is a change from her usual depressing ones. She played a prostitute in another



Rebecca Lim (left) and Adrian Pang (right) play legal eagles in the Channel 5 series *The Pupil*. PHOTO: MEDIACORP

home-grown drama series, *Fighting Spiders*. In Channel 8's dramedy *Mr & Mrs Kok*, she is an abused wife.

"But the happiest people are my grandparents, because to them, at least I am using my degree to a certain extent," she says.

Vadi adds that his education is also coming in handy in this role: "I can handle the legal jargon much better because I've learnt about it before."

"Actually, the best part about filming is that I get to see the Supreme Court Chambers even before my fellow students

get to go on their excursion."

The toughest part about this role, Pang says, is donning the robes that lawyers wear in court.

"They were so heavy and hot. Thankfully, the air-con was working most of the time," he says.

He adds cheekily: "We felt as if we were going to Hogwarts. Of course, I am Ron Weasley."

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The Pupil airs on Channel 5 every Thursday at 8.30pm.