## From page 98

with director Ruj Ronaphop in 1971, in which he starred with actress Aranya Namwong.

The couple became Thailand's sweethearts and when the audience referred to Sombat, they also mentioned Aranya as if they were a single item.

He later began his own production house with wife Karnjana.

Even though his first self-produced film "Maimee Kamtob Jak Sawan" (No Answer From Heaven) flopped, Sombat did not give up. He worked harder and in the end churned out blockbusters like "Nak Leng Tewada" (The Holy Hoodlum, 1975), "Ta Marutayu" (Daredevil, 1976), "Yae Nuad Sua" (Tickling the Tiger, 1977), "Mahapai Pan Nar" (Menace with a Thousand Faces, 1978), and "Salakjit" (1979).

His productions were seen not as just another film, since Sombad had huge investments in them as evidenced in scenes like a helicopter chase and a



For over 40 years Sombat Metanee has remained an unconquerable actor who today is praised as one of Thailand's most respected and influential screen legends.

giant imported balloon floating in the sky.

As he became slightly older,

Sombat's charm helped him retain his position as superstar. The next blockbuster was a love

story "Salakjit", in which he played a middle-aged man who falls in love with a young woman, played by Jarunee Suksawad who later became Thailand's superstar.

He continued acting and directing many other films for studios, such as "Plon America" (The American Job, 1977), "Nak Pan Din" (The Ungrateful, 1977), "Nak Leng Ta Tip" (The Magic-Eyed Gangster, 1980), "Luk Sao Kamnan" (The Headman's Daughter, 1981), "Mae Tang Rom Bai" (1982), "Nak Leng Computer" (The Computer-Age Gangster, 1982), "Nak Kar Jao Phraya" (The Killer from Chao Phraya, 1982), "Pleng Rak Gong Loke" (The Greatest Love Song, 1983), "Nor Sor Luk Wa" (Ms Luk Wa, 1984), "Kote Kon Jing" (The Real Thing, 1984), and "Koo Sang Koo Som" (Soul Mates, 1987).

For over 40 years Sombat Metanee has remained an unconquerable actor who today is praised as one of Thailand's most respected and influential screen legends. ■



The Nation JULY 2006