

SIRAJ

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User Manual

Actor’s Digital Studio: from text to performance

Version 1.0 · November 2026

> In tribute to
> **Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha and Natasurya Phani Sarma, who made Siraj (1948)**

Created by Dr Mrinal Jyoti Goswami on behalf of AANK_A Creative Line, Assam, India · aank.org/apps/siraj

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1 Welcome to SIRAJ

SIRAJ is a studio for an actor's own work on a role. It takes you from the first reading of a script to the last show: you analyse the text, build the character, learn the lines on cues, keep a rehearsal journal, prepare for each show and print the whole preparation as a Role Book.

It is made for drama students, for teachers who guide them, and for working actors in theatre, mobile theatre, film and television. In **Student** mode every page explains what to do and why. In **Professional** mode the explanations are hidden and the pages stay clean. You can switch at any time from the top bar.

- Works in Assamese and English. The whole interface changes language with one click; your own notes stay as you write them.
- Works without internet once it is open or installed.
- Nothing is uploaded. Your script, notes and recordings stay on your device. No account is needed.
- Free. A Pro version with a few more advanced features is planned for later; that version will be a paid edition.

The name honours 'Siraj' (1948), the film made by Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha and Natasurya Phani Sarma. SIRAJ is dedicated to them.

What you need

- A laptop or desktop with Chrome or Edge for bringing in a script, the full analysis and printing.
- A phone or tablet is good for learning lines, reading notes and checking the call time on tour.
- A microphone (built into most laptops and phones) if you want to record your partners' cues.

> i New to SIRAJ? Open the demo first (section 3). It shows a complete preparation, so you can see what each page is for before you start your own role.

2 Opening SIRAJ

There are two ways to use SIRAJ. Both work offline and keep your work on your device. The Installation Guide explains each step for computers and phones.

The web app	Open **aank.org/apps/siraj/** and choose **Open SIRAJ**. You can install it from the start page so that it opens like any other app.
The offline file	On the same page, choose **Download the offline file**. It is a single file, SIRAJ-1.0.html. Keep it on your computer and double-click it to open SIRAJ in your browser.

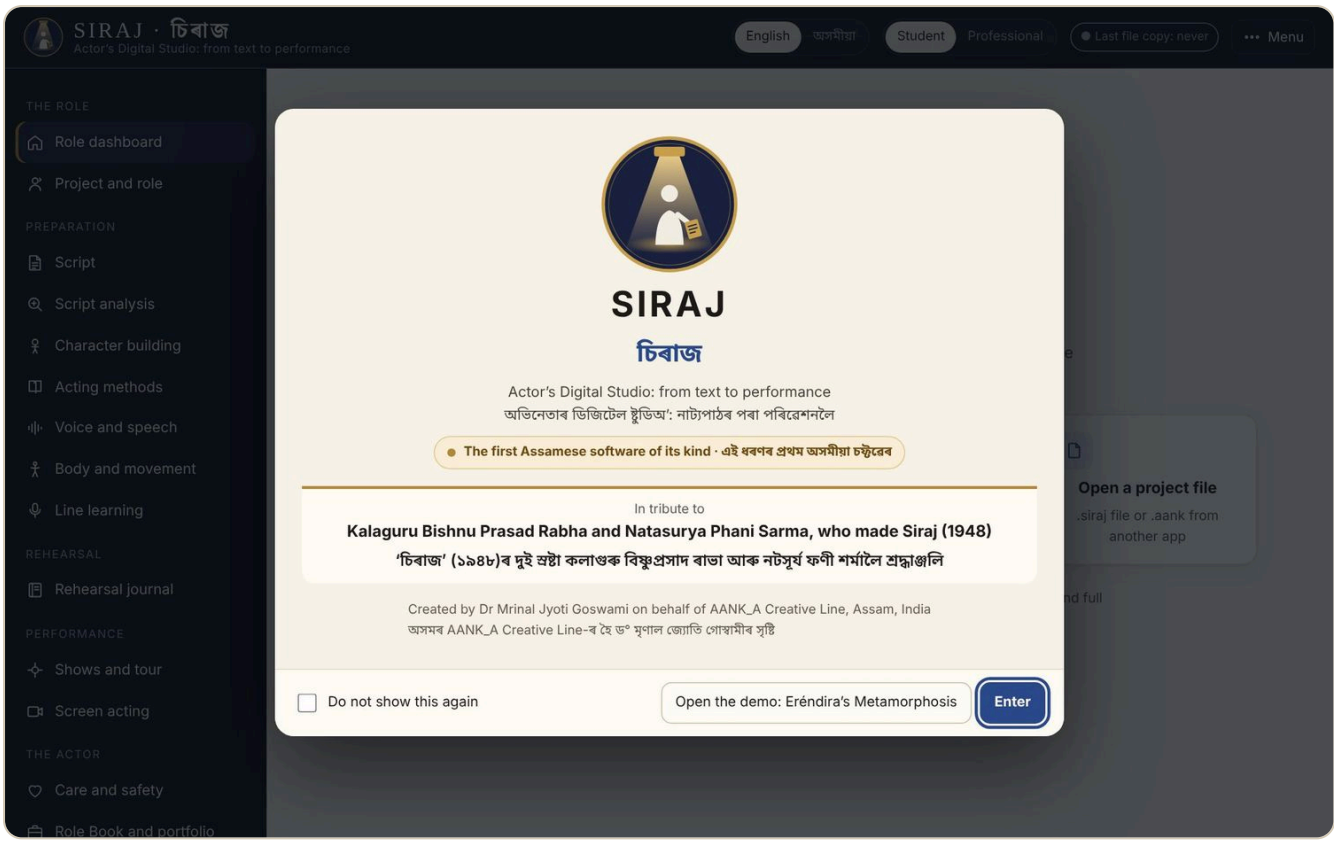


Figure 1. The welcome screen, with the tribute and the button that opens the demo.

The first time, a welcome screen appears. Choose **Enter** to begin, or **Open the demo**. Tick **Do not show this again** if you do not want to see it each time. You can open it again from **Menu › Welcome screen**.

The screen at a glance

Top bar	The roles you play and the play's title; the language switch (**English · অসমীয়া**); **Student · Professional**; the **Last file copy** chip, which shows when you last saved your work to a file; and **Menu**.
Sidebar	The pages of SIRAJ in six groups: **The role**, **Preparation**, **Rehearsal**, **Performance**, **The actor** and **Reference**. A small number beside **Line learning** shows how many lines are due today.
Menu	New role, My roles, Import a script, Open and Save a project file, Send to another AANK app, Open work from another app, the colour theme (light, dark or as the device), the welcome screen, About SIRAJ, Send feedback and Install.

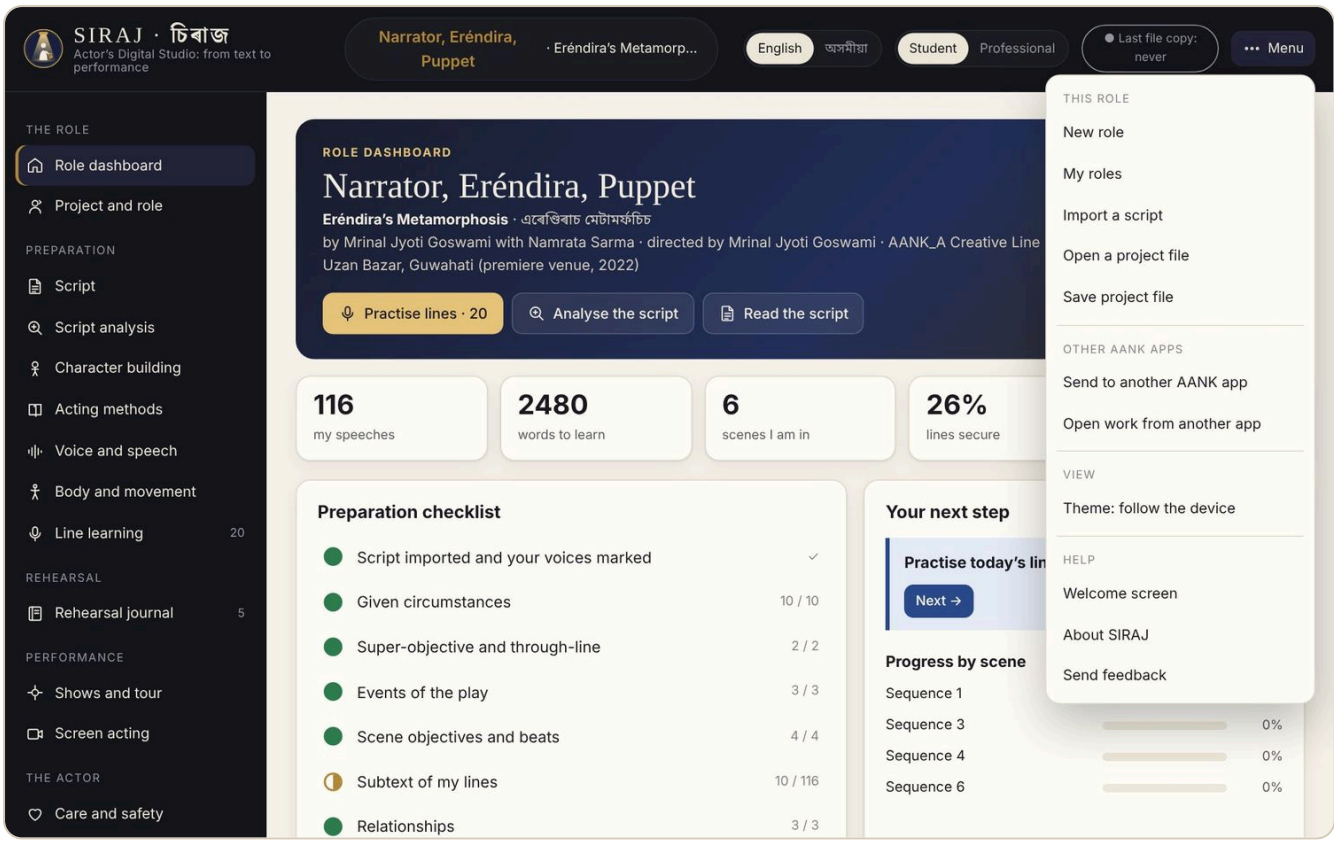


Figure 2. The Menu holds the commands for files, the other AANK apps and help.

3 Start with the demo

The demo is Eréndira's Metamorphosis, a play for a single narrator by Mrinal Jyoti Goswami with Namrata Sarma, first performed by AANK_A Creative Line at Udara, Uzan Bazar, Guwahati, on 26 June 2022. It is published as an e-book by AANK_A Creative Line.

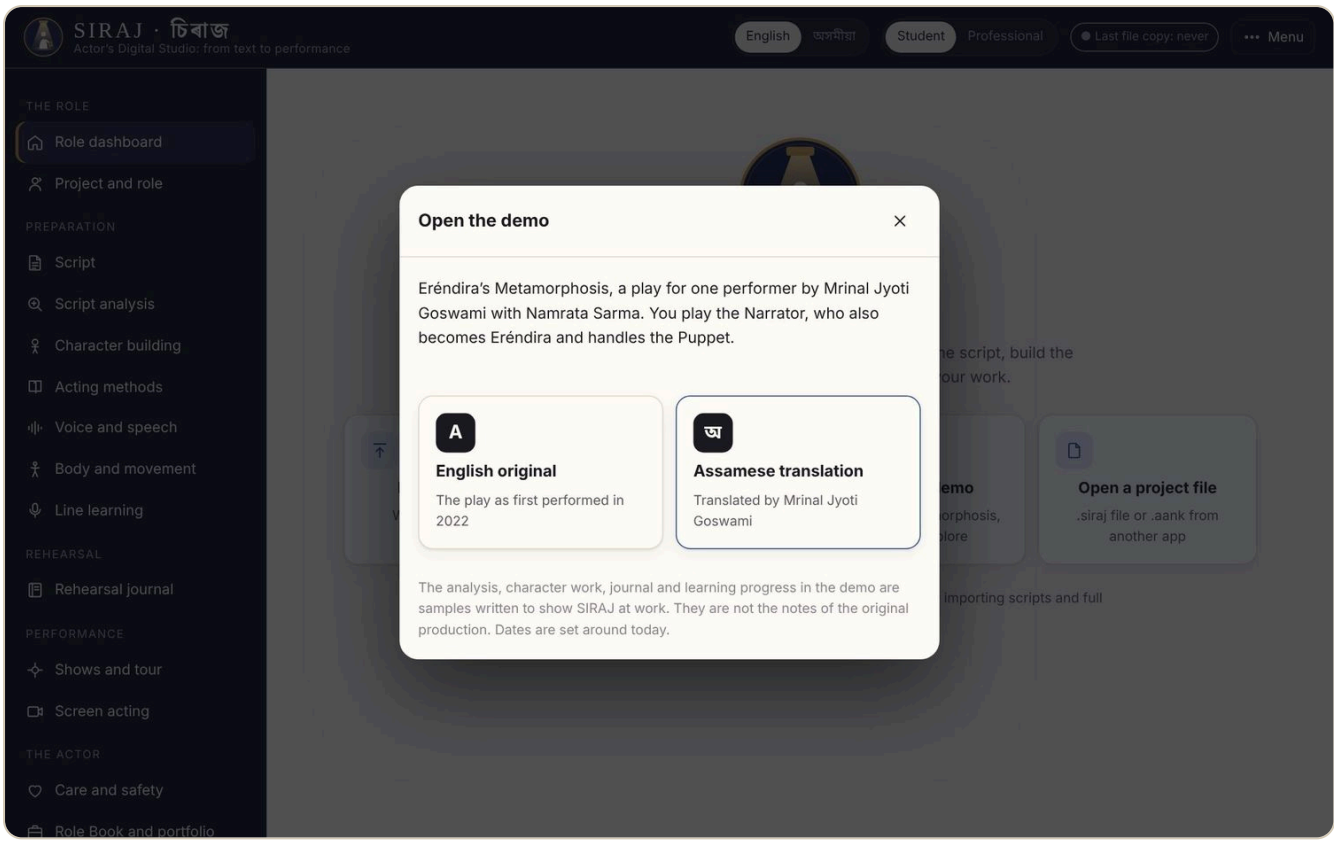


Figure 3. Choose the English original or the Assamese translation.

1. On the start page, choose **Open the demo**.
2. Choose **English** for the original text or **Assamese** for the translation.
3. SIRAJ opens the role of the Narrator, who also plays Eréndira and handles the Puppet. The analysis, character work, journal, shows and cues are already filled in.

The dates move with you: the opening night is always 24 days from the day you open the demo, and some lines are due for practice today. Explore every page and change anything you like. The demo is kept as a separate role in **My roles**, so it never mixes with your own work.

4 Starting your own role

Bring in the script

On the start page or from the Menu, choose **Import a script**. There are four ways:

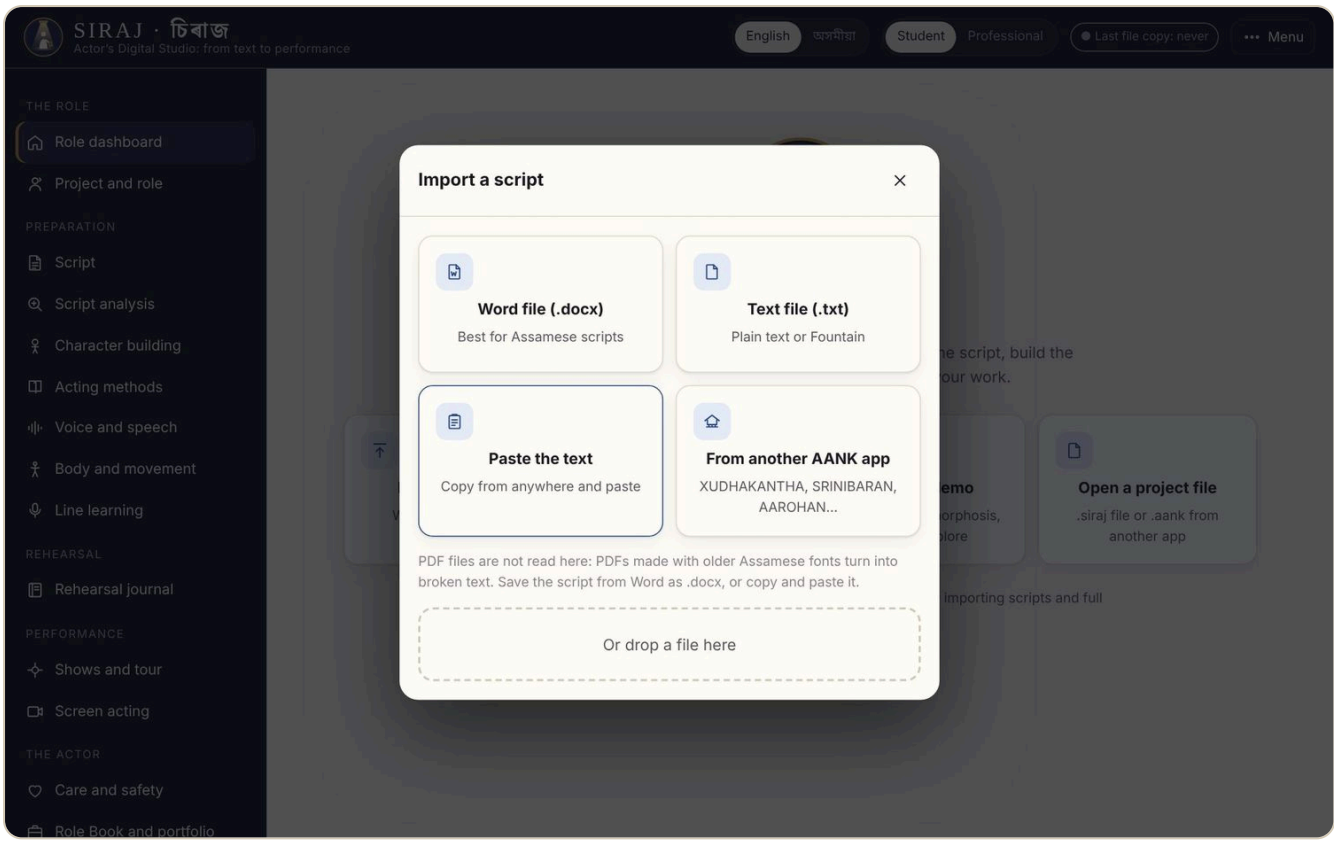


Figure 4. Four ways to bring in a script.

Word file (.docx)	The best way for Assamese scripts. Unicode text from Word comes in exactly as written.
Text file (.txt)	Plain text, or a screenplay in Fountain format.
Paste the text	Copy the script from anywhere and paste it.
From another AANK app	A script sent from XUDHAKANTHA, SRINIBARAN or AAROHAN as an .aank file.

> **!** PDF files are not read. PDFs made with older Assamese fonts turn into broken text when the words are taken out of them. Open the script in Word and save it as .docx, or copy and paste it.

SIRAJ recognises character names, speeches and stage directions, and divides the play into scenes. Check the result, and correct a line by clicking it in the Script.

Mark the voices you play

Open **Script › Characters** and tick every voice you play. You may play several, as the Narrator does in the demo. Your lines are then lit in the script, counted on the dashboard and offered for practice.

Fill in the project and the role

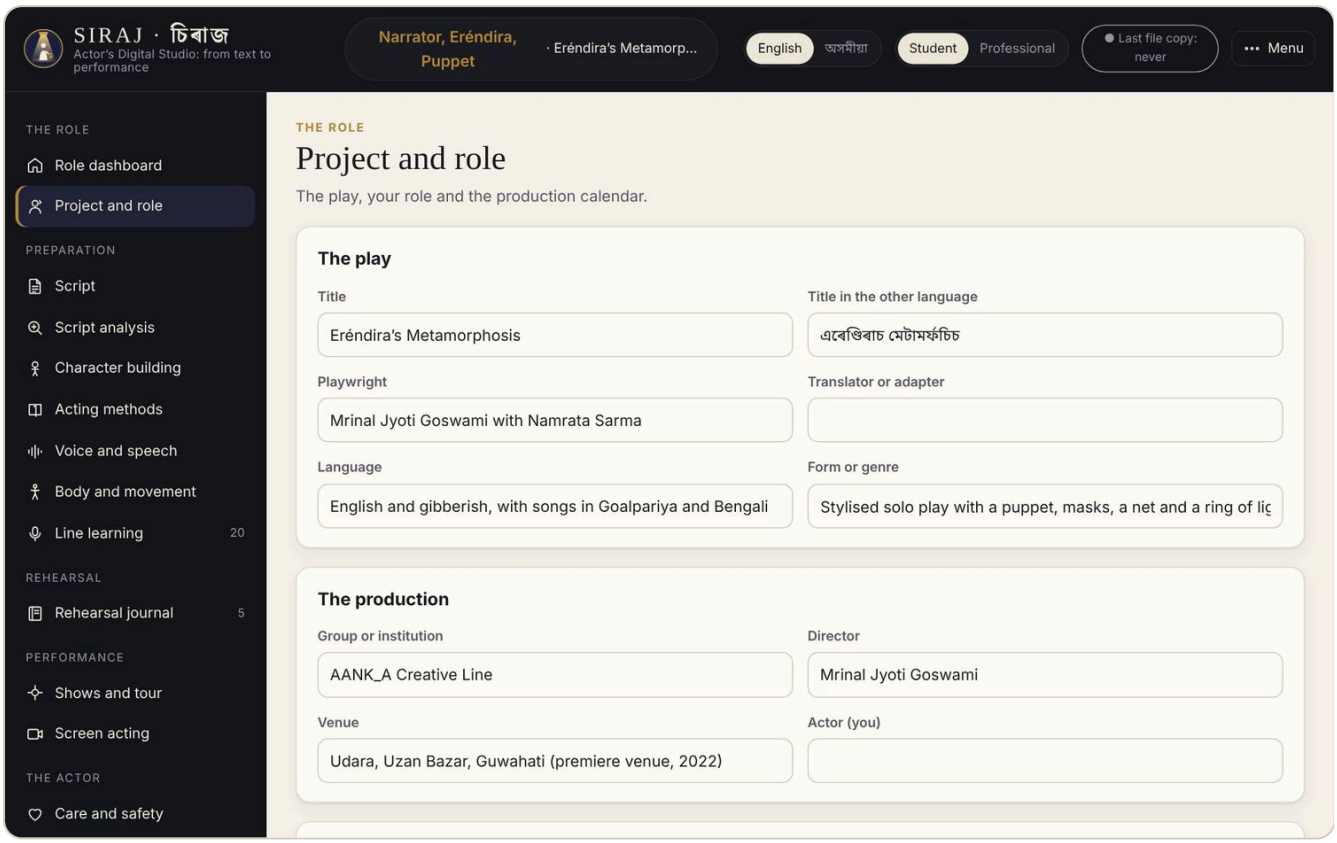


Figure 5. Project and role: the play, the production and the calendar.

In **Project and role**, write the play's title (and its title in the other language), the playwright, translator, group, director and venue, and the calendar: when rehearsals begin, the opening and the number of shows. The opening date drives the countdown on the dashboard.

> You can also choose **Start a new role** and fill in the play first, then import the script later.

5 The role dashboard

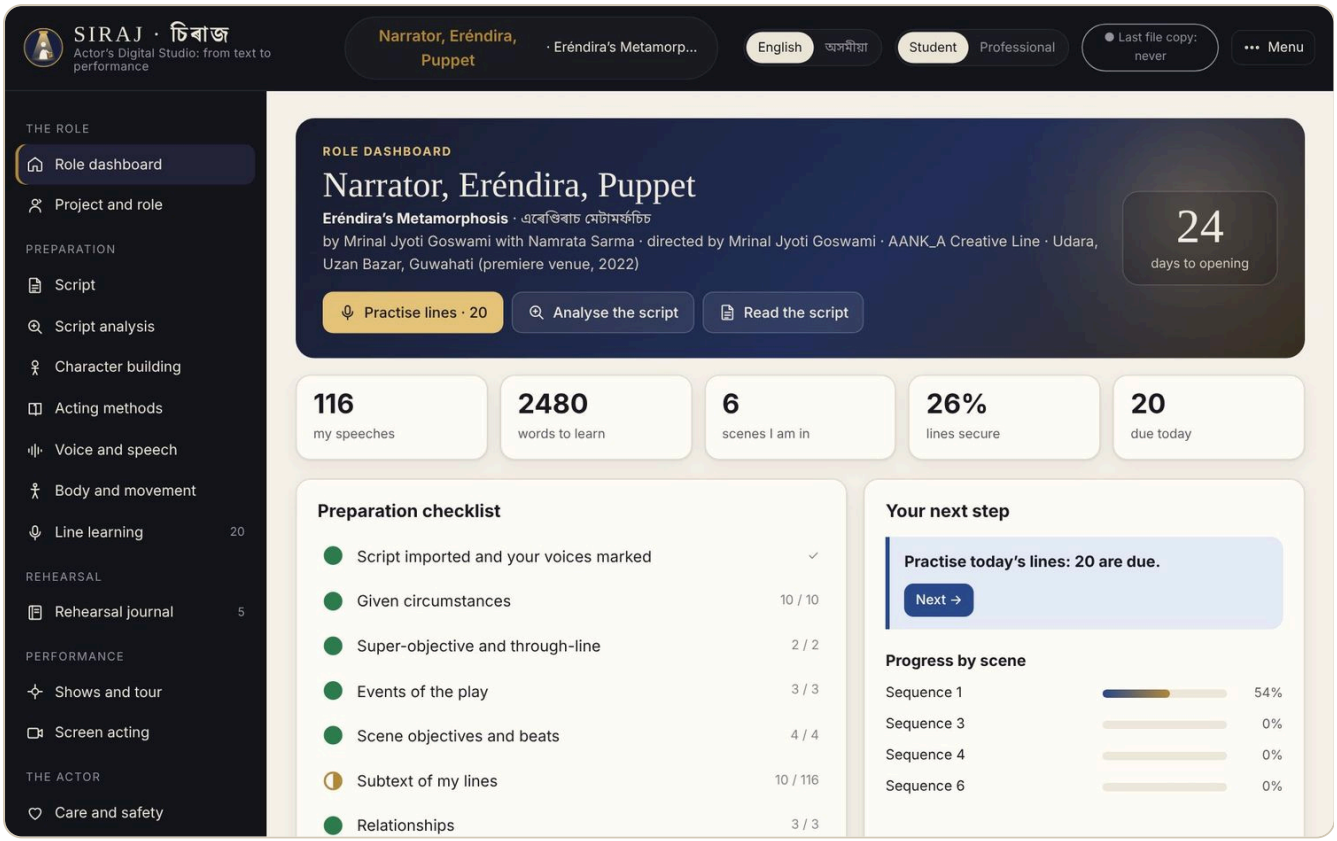


Figure 6. The role dashboard of the demo.

The dashboard is your home page for a role. At the top are the roles you play, the play and the production, and the number of days to the opening. Below are your speeches, the words to learn, the scenes you are in, how much is secure and how many lines are due today.

The **Preparation checklist** follows the stages of the work: script and voices, given circumstances, super-objective, events, objectives and beats, subtext, relationships, evidence, biography, method worksheets, physical score, lines secure and the journal. **Your next step** suggests what to do now, and **Progress by scene** shows how well each scene is learnt.

6 Reading the script

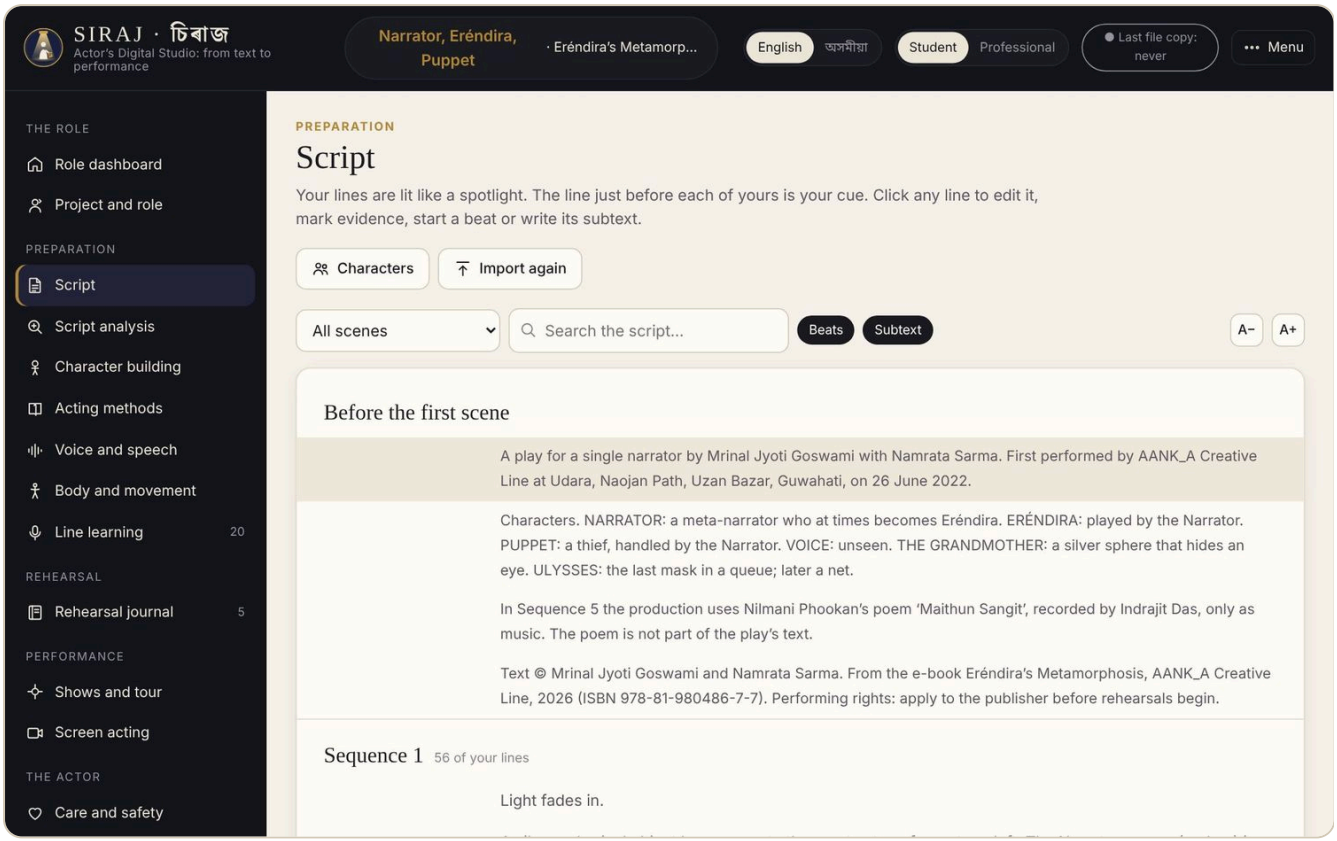


Figure 7. Your lines are lit like a spotlight; the line before each one is your cue.

- **All scenes** or **My scenes**, and a jump list for each scene.
- **Beats** and **Subtext** show your beat divisions and your subtext under the lines.
- **A−** and **A+** change the size of the text.
- Click any line to edit it, mark it as evidence, start a beat there or write its subtext.
- **Characters** sets the voices you play; **Import again** brings in a corrected script.

7 Script analysis

Read the play as your character lives it. Begin with the facts of the text, then make your choices, and keep the two apart. The analysis has eight tabs.

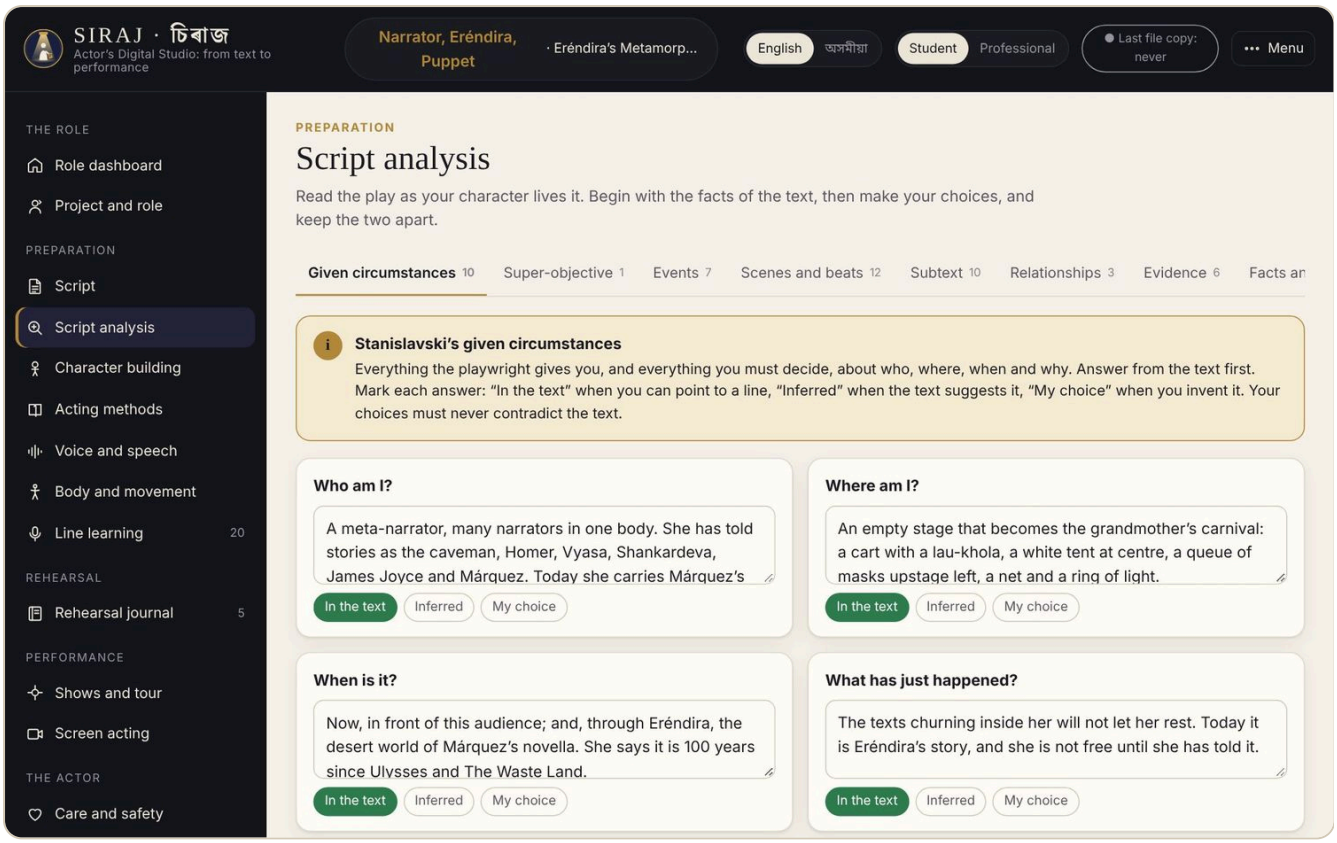


Figure 8. Given circumstances: every answer is marked as In the text, Inferred or My choice.

Given circumstances	Who, where, when, what has just happened, what I want, why, how, what stands in my way, before the play begins and the world of the play. Mark each answer **In the text**, **Inferred** or **My choice**. Your choices must never contradict the text.
Super-objective	The spine of the role: the super-objective, the through-line of action, the counter-action, how I change, a central image and what the play is about, for me.
Events	The moments after which nothing can be the same, in the order they happen, with the scene and what each one changes in you.
Scenes and beats	For each of your scenes: where I come from, the scene objective, obstacle, stakes and where I go next. Then divide the scene into beats, each with an objective ("I want to…") and an action verb you can play. The **Verb bank** helps you find verbs.
Subtext	Under each line: what I really mean, and the action I play on the other person.
Relationships	For each person: what we are to each other, what I want from them, what I think of them and what they think of me, our history, and status from far below to far above. A map shows the relationships.

Evidence	What I say about myself, what others say about me, and what the playwright says, each with who says it and where. Add evidence by clicking a line in the Script.
Facts and questions	Facts you can prove from the text, and questions the text does not answer. Answer the questions in rehearsal and tick them off.

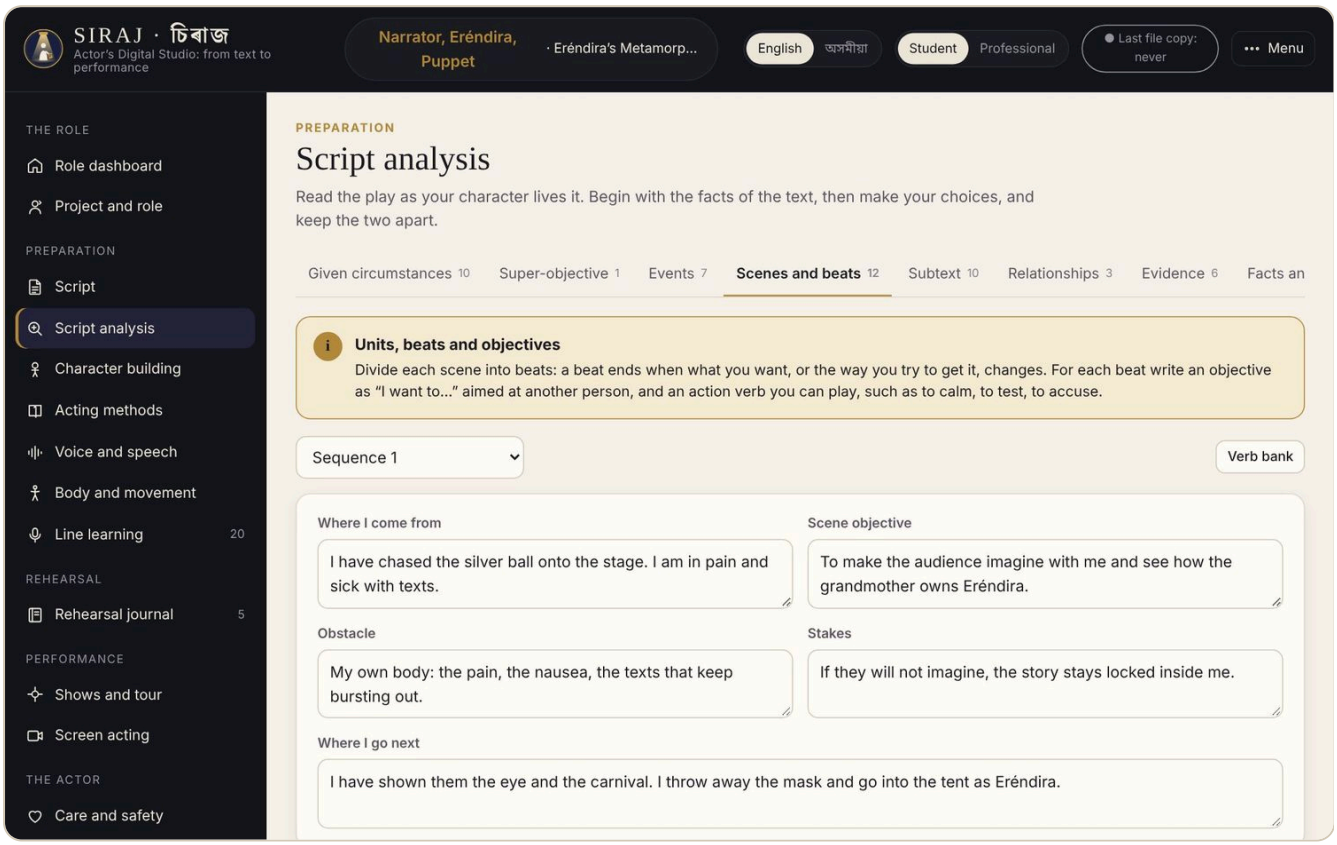


Figure 9. Scenes and beats, with the scene objective, obstacle and stakes.

8 Learning lines

SIRAJ teaches you to learn on cues, not on the page. It uses spaced practice: each line comes back just before you would forget it, so short daily sessions are enough.

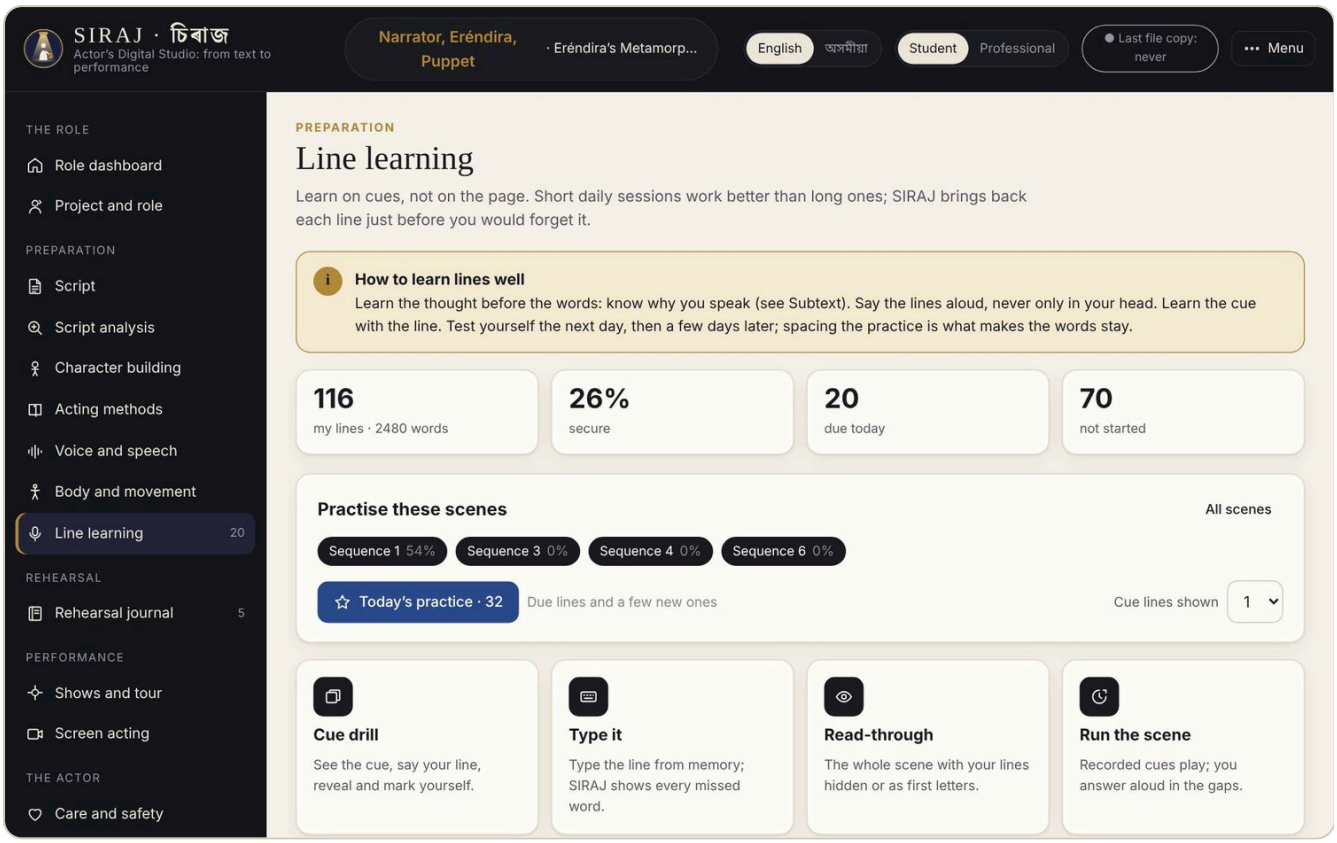


Figure 10. Line learning: today's practice and five ways to work.

Cue drill	See the cue, say your line aloud, then press **Show my line** (or Space) and mark yourself **Got it**, **Nearly** or **Missed**. **First letters** gives a hint.
Type it	Type the line from memory. SIRAJ shows every word you missed.
Read-through	The whole scene with your lines hidden or shown as first letters. Tap a line to show it.
Run the scene	Your partners' recorded cues play and you answer aloud in the gaps. Choose the speed, or **Hands-free** to move on by itself after the time your line needs.
Record the cues	Record the other characters' lines yourself, or ask a friend to. Cues you have not recorded can be read aloud by the device voice.

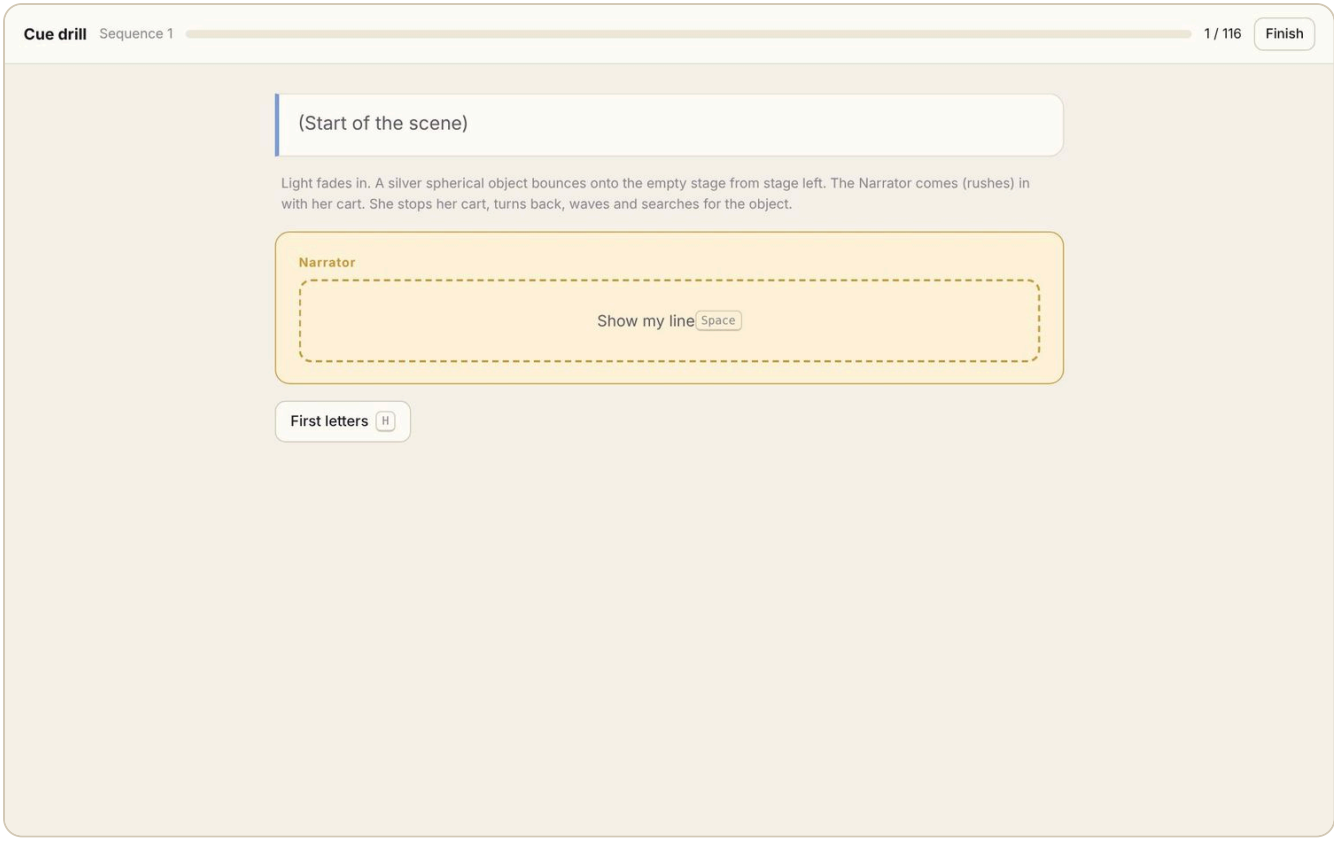


Figure 11. A cue drill: the cue is shown, your line is hidden until you ask for it.

Today's practice gathers the lines that are due and a few new ones. **Practise these scenes** lets you choose scenes yourself. **Recent practice** lists your sessions.

> i Learn the thought before the words: know why you speak (see Subtext). Say the lines aloud, never only in your head. Learn the cue with the line. Test yourself the next day, then a few days later.

> ! To record, allow the microphone when the browser asks. Recording works when SIRAJ is opened from aank.org, or as the offline file in Chrome or Edge.

9 Building the character

Character building gives the role a life before and beyond the text, in four tabs.

Biography	Written in the first person, as the character: family and childhood, education and work, home, money and place in society, beliefs, a memory you treasure and one that hurts, a secret, fears, dreams, habits, how you speak, what you wear and carry, and a day in your life. Mark each answer as in the given circumstances.

Inner life	The **magic if** (if I were in these exact circumstances, what would I do?), the **inner monologue** for chosen lines, and the inner images you see when you speak.
Physical life	The centre (head, chest, belly, pelvis or elsewhere) and how it leads you; walk, posture, hands and gestures, usual status; an animal and how much of it shows; and the tempo-rhythm of each scene, inner and outer.
Character sheet	The whole character on one page. Choose **Print or save as PDF** to take it to rehearsal.

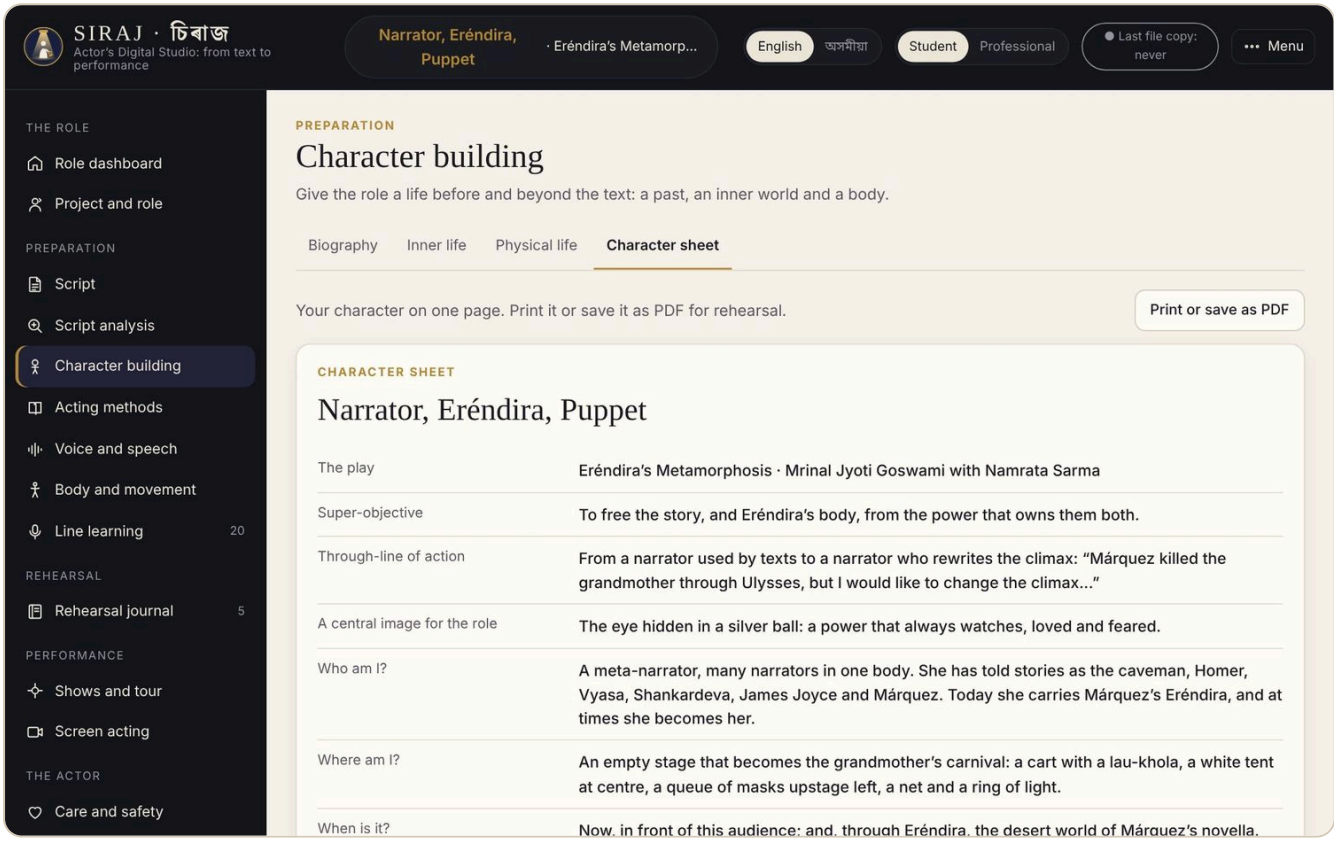


Figure 12. The character sheet gathers the spine, the circumstances and the biography.

10 Acting methods

SIRAJ holds seventeen methods and traditions. Choose those you want for this role; each one adds its own tab with an introduction, key ideas, a worksheet tied to your scenes, timed exercises and further reading.

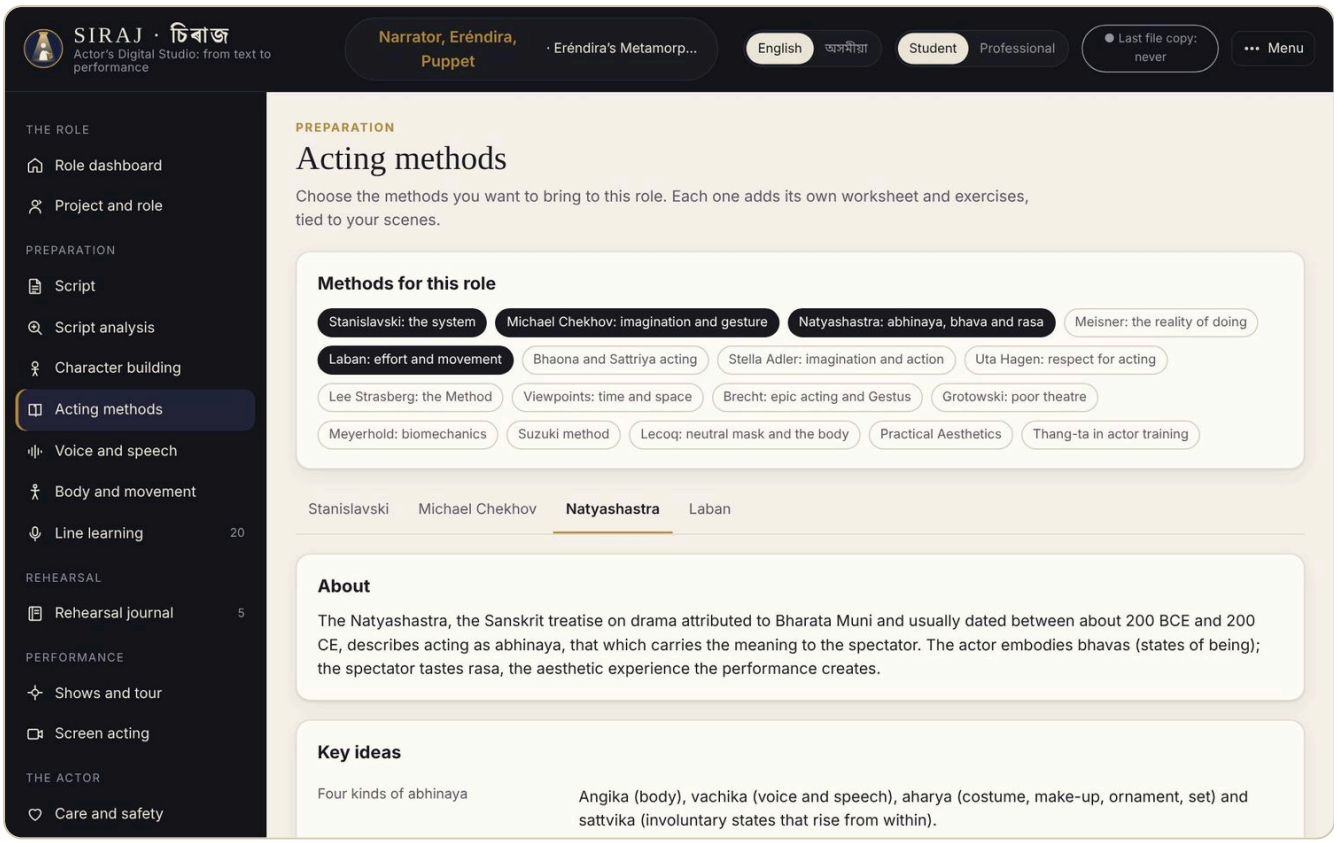


Figure 13. The Natyashastra worksheet: abhinaya, bhava and rasa for each scene.

- Stanislavski: the system · Michael Chekhov: imagination and gesture · Natyashastra: abhinaya, bhava and rasa
- Meisner: the reality of doing · Laban: effort and movement · Bhaona and Sattriya acting
- Stella Adler · Uta Hagen · Lee Strasberg · Viewpoints · Brecht · Grotowski
- Meyerhold: biomechanics · Suzuki method · Lecoq · Practical Aesthetics · Thang-ta in actor training

An exercise opens with a timer and its steps, one at a time. Work on what you find in the worksheet, scene by scene, and the dashboard counts it.

> ! Some methods carry a caution in their page. Do physical work such as Suzuki, biomechanics and Thang-ta only within your limits and, for Thang-ta, only with a trained teacher and without weapons. Work from personal memory (Strasberg) needs care; stop if it disturbs you.

11 Voice, speech and body

Voice and speech

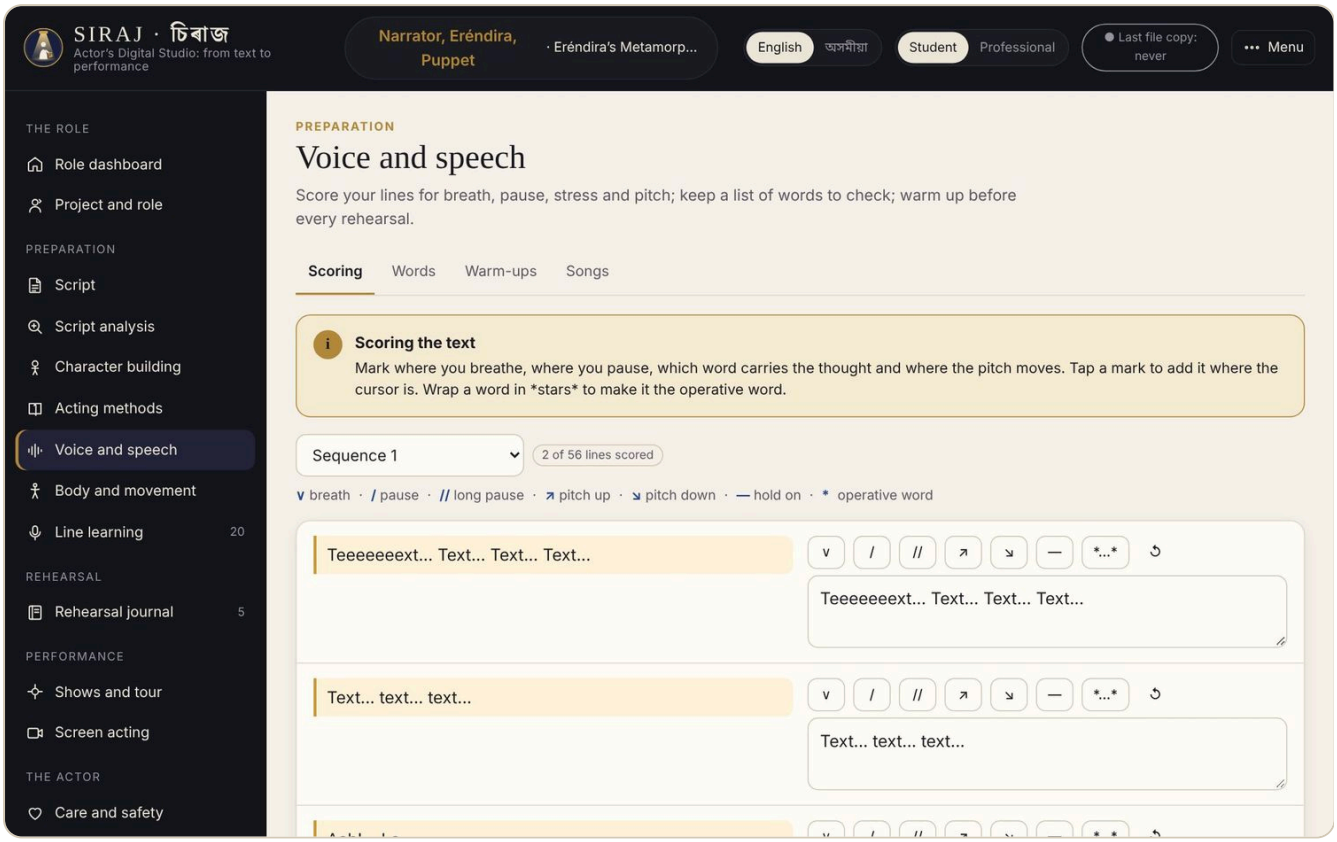


Figure 14. Scoring a line: tap a mark to add it where the cursor stands.

Scoring	Mark breath ∨, pause /, long pause //, pitch up ↗, pitch down ↘ and hold —. Put the operative word between stars, *like this*, and it is underlined.
Words	Words to check: pronunciation, meaning, dialect, a Brajavali or Sanskrit word, a name. Ask the director or your guru, write the answer, and tick it when checked.
Warm-ups	Short routines with a timer for breath and support, resonance and articulation.
Songs	Songs, slokas and chants in the role, with the scene and the raga, key or tune.

Body and movement

Physical score	For each scene: how the body holds itself, the key gestures, the tempo and the Laban effort.

My blocking	Bring in the blocking file from SRINIBARAN and see only your own moves, scene by scene.
Warm-ups	Routines to release and wake up the body, and to move into the role.

12 The rehearsal journal

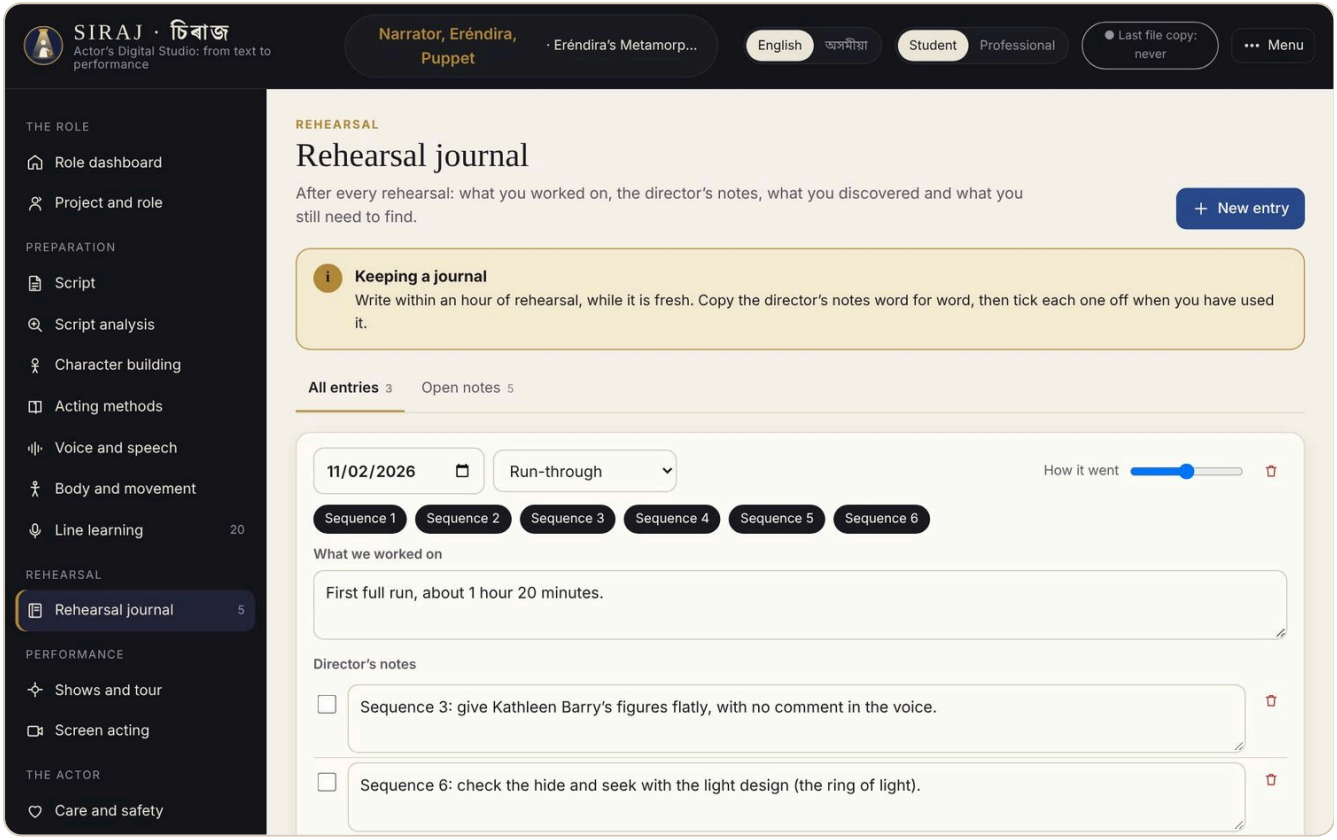


Figure 15. A journal entry with the director's notes ticked off as they are used.

After every rehearsal choose **New entry**. Choose the kind of session (rehearsal, run-through, technical, performance, class or workshop, work on my own) and write how it went, what you worked on, the director's notes, what you discovered and what you still need to find.

Copy the director's notes word for word. **Paste several notes, one per line** adds a whole list at once. Tick each note when you have used it; **Open notes** shows only the notes still to do.

> Write within an hour of rehearsal, while it is fresh.

13 Shows and tour

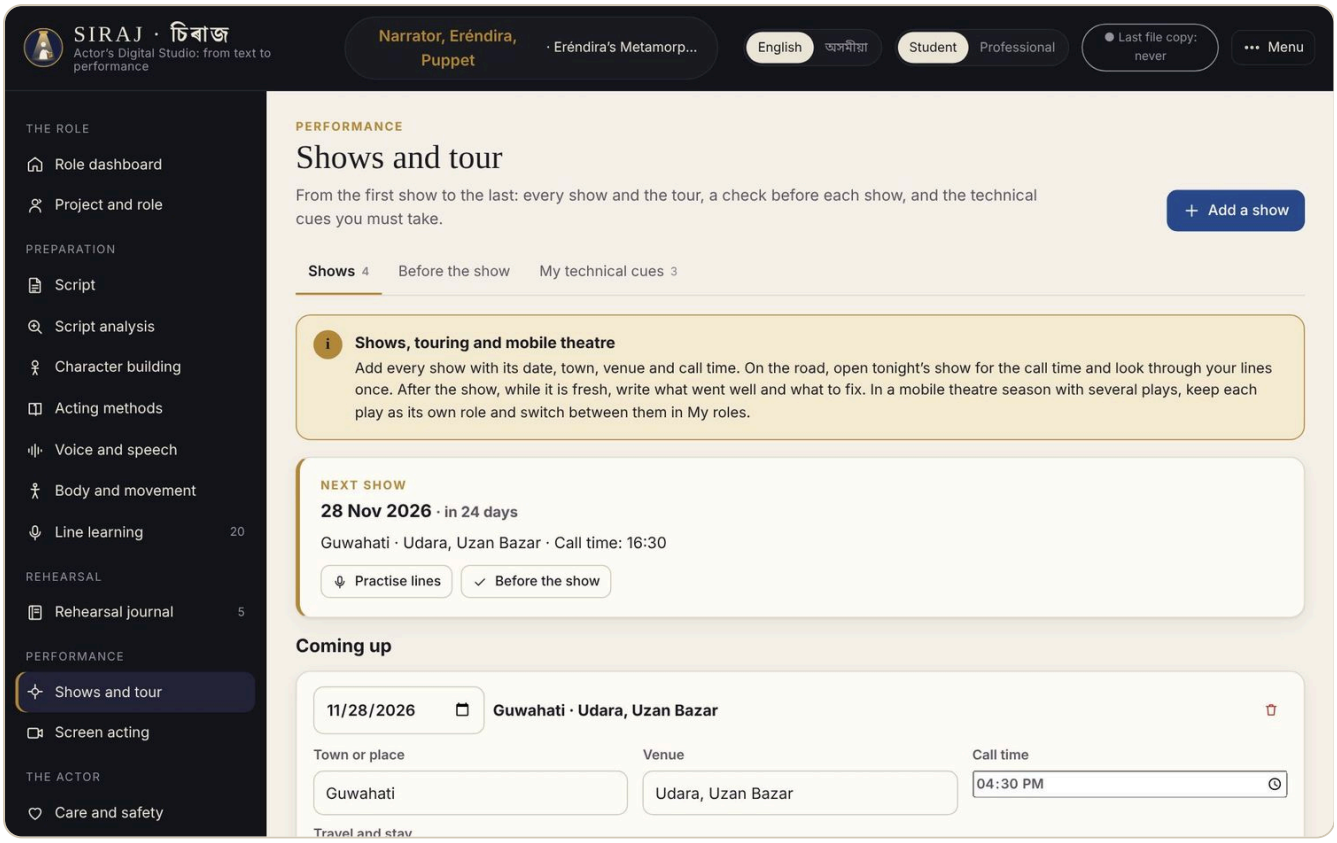


Figure 16. The next show, with town, venue and call time.

Shows	Add every show with its date, town, venue, call time, and travel and stay. The next show appears at the top with the days left; on the day, it becomes **Tonight**. After the show, write the audience, what went well and what to fix next time.
Before the show	A checklist of eight items to tick before you go on. The ticks clear themselves the next day. Add your own items, and keep **Notes to remember tonight**.
My technical cues	The light, sound, set, prop and costume cues you must take or give: the cue and what you do.

> In a mobile theatre season with several plays, keep each play as its own role and switch between them in **My roles**.

14 Screen acting

For film, television and web work. A screenplay from AAROHAN comes in through **Open work from another app**.

Scene notes	For each scene: the shot size, your eyeline, your marks, continuity, and the level of feeling to match in every take.
Take log	Note what you did in each take: which hand, which word, which level.
Screen terms	Shot, take, wide shot, close-up, eyeline, continuity, mark, coverage and more, with the Assamese term and meaning.

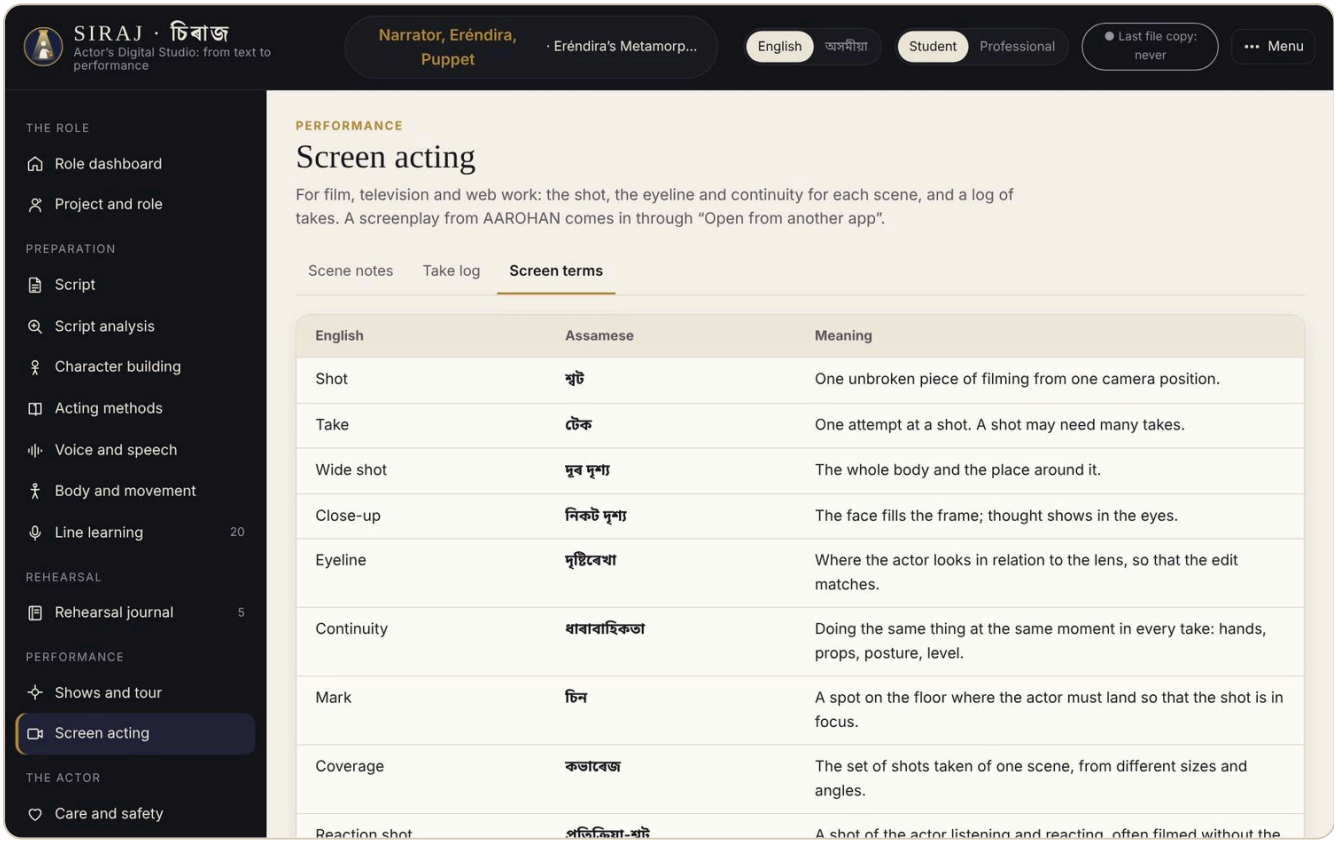


Figure 17. Screen terms in English and Assamese.

15 Care and safety

This page looks after the person who plays the role.

Leaving the role	A five-minute routine with a timer to step out of the character after a heavy rehearsal or show, and a place to write what you leave behind tonight.
Voice care	Good habits for the voice, and a voice log of how it feels and how many hours of heavy use. If hoarseness lasts more than two weeks, or the voice goes suddenly, see an ear, nose and throat doctor.
Intimacy and fights	Each intimate scene, fight or risky moment is set like choreography: what exactly happens, your limits, who leads it and the stop word, with a tick for **Checked before tonight's show**. Never improvise them.

Stage nerves	A three-minute routine before your entrance.
Privacy	A PIN of 4 to 8 digits keeps the rehearsal journal and this page closed on this device.

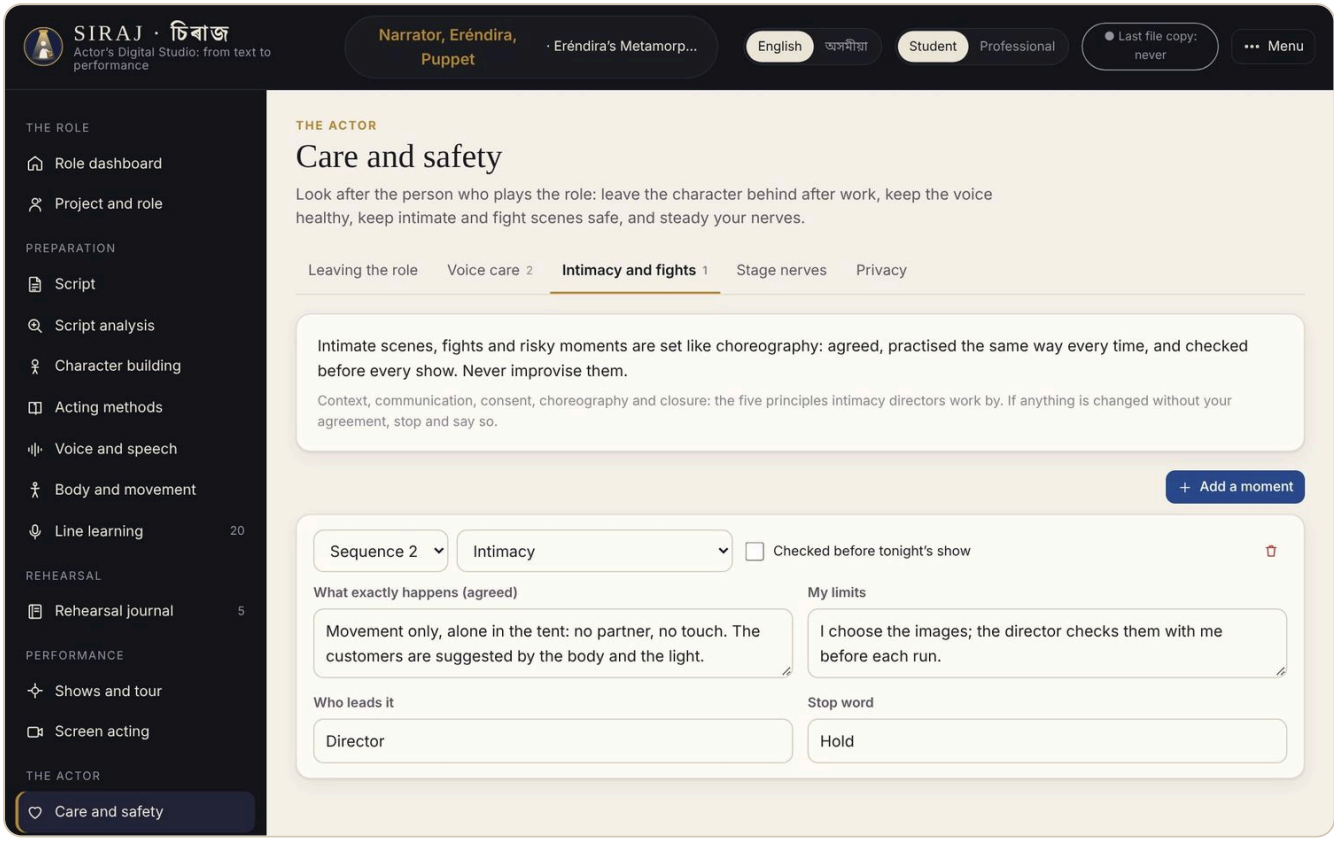


Figure 18. An agreed fight moment, with limits and a stop word.

> **!** The PIN does not encrypt the project file, so keep that file private too. If you forget the PIN, the lock can be removed only by deleting the rehearsal journal and the care notes of that role. A locked journal is left out of reports and the Role Book.

16 Role Book, portfolio and auditions

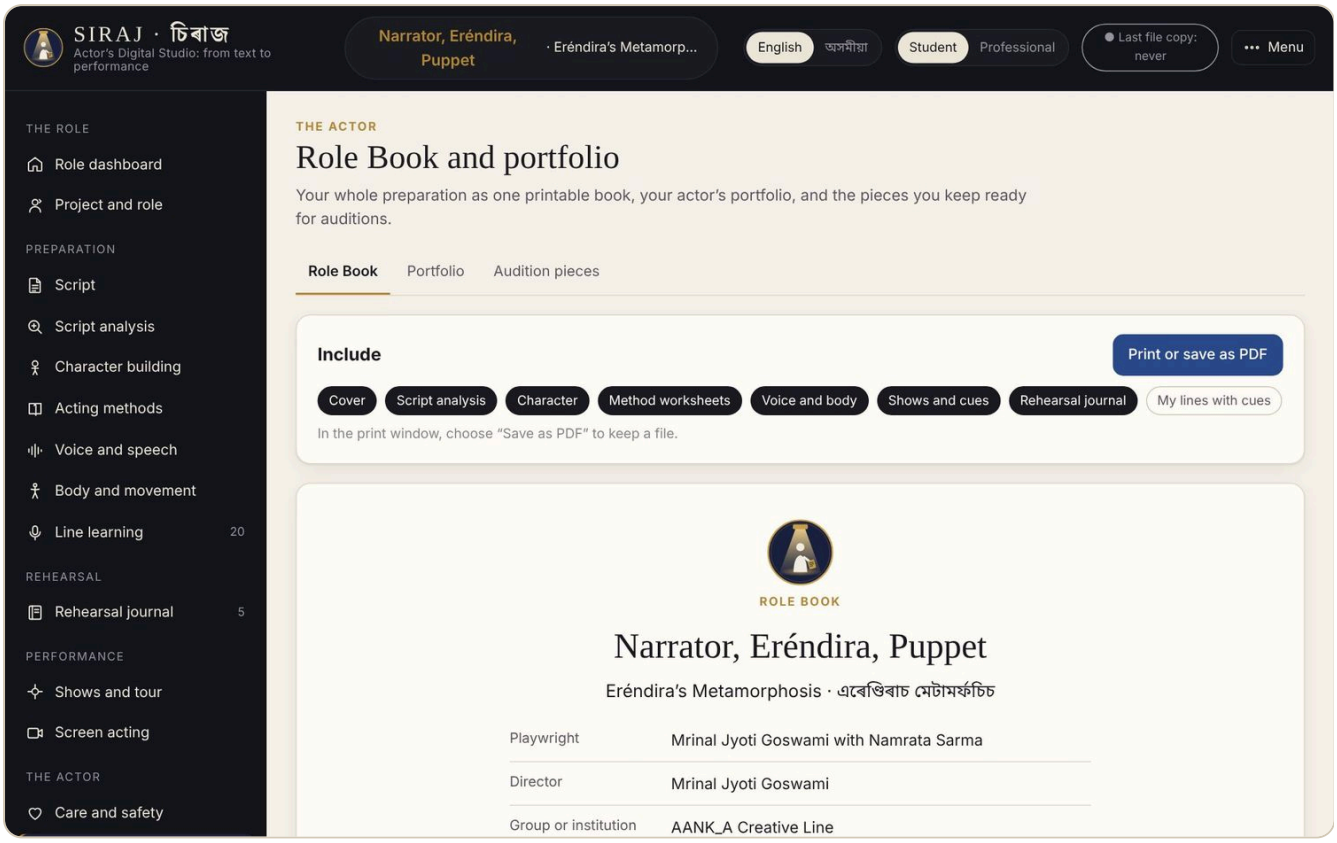


Figure 19. The Role Book: choose the parts and print it or save it as PDF.

Role Book	Your whole preparation as one book: cover, script analysis, character, method worksheets, voice and body, shows and cues, the journal and, if you want, your lines with cues. Choose **Print or save as PDF**; in the print window choose "Save as PDF" to keep a file.
Portfolio	Your actor's profile with a photo, languages, training, skills and roles, printed as a one-page résumé. Roles prepared in SIRAJ are listed on their own; add earlier roles yourself.
Audition pieces	Keep two or three contrasting pieces ready, each under two minutes. **Prepare as a role** makes a new role for the piece; bring in its text from Script.

The portfolio is kept in this browser for all your roles, not inside a project file. Print the résumé or save it as PDF to keep a copy.

17 Glossary

The glossary gives 39 acting terms: the English term, the Assamese term SIRAJ uses, and what it means. Search with the box at the top. If you know a better Assamese word, choose **Suggest a better word**.

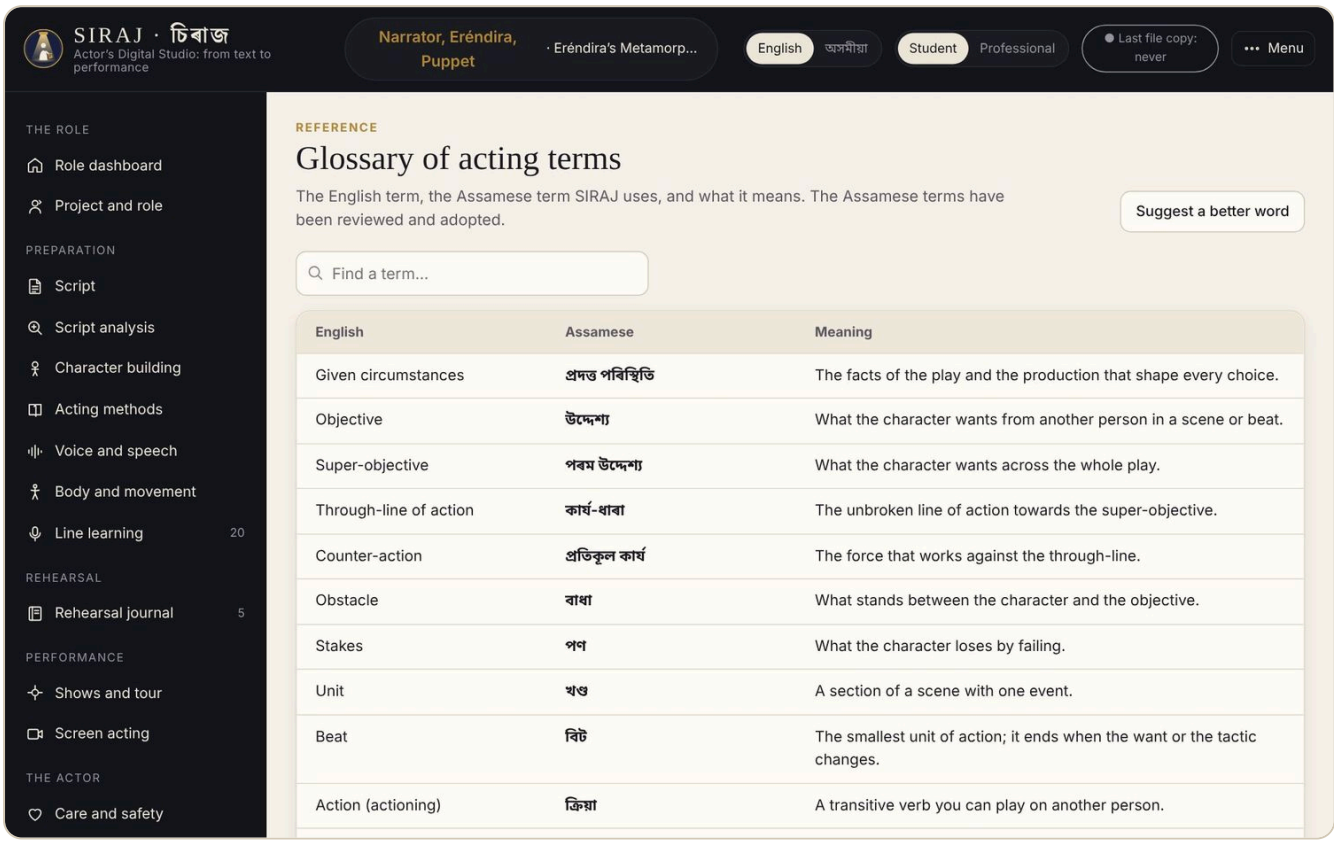


Figure 20. The glossary of acting terms.

18 Saving, backups and sharing

Saved as you work	Everything is saved in the browser on this device as you type. The last five automatic backups are kept too; click the **Last file copy** chip, or open **About SIRAJ**, to see them and restore one.
Keep a file copy	Choose **Menu › Save project file** to save the role as a .siraj file. Do this regularly and keep copies in two places, such as the computer and a pen drive or Google Drive. The **Last file copy** chip reminds you.
Open a file	**Open a project file** brings back a .siraj file, on this device or another one.
My roles	Each role is kept separately. Open, switch or delete roles here.

Other AANK apps	**Send to another AANK app** passes your work to XUDHAKANTHA, SRINIBARAN, AAROHAN and the other studios. On aank.org the other app receives it at once; elsewhere save it as an .aank file and open it there with **Open work from another app**.
Feedback	**Menu › Send feedback** writes an email to mrinal.goswami2026@gmail.com. Your script, notes and recordings are never attached.

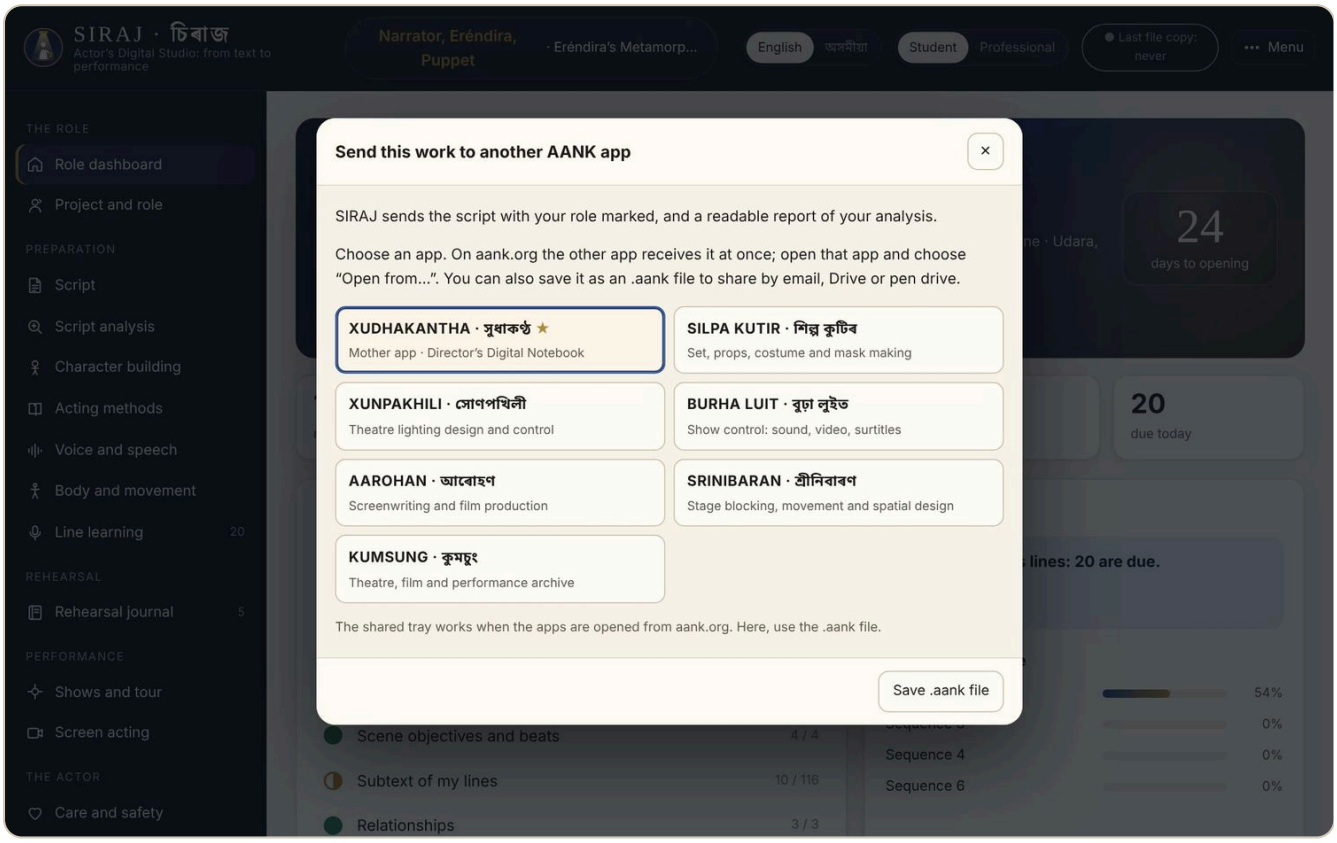


Figure 21. Sending the work to another AANK app.

> **!** Clearing the browser's data, or using a private window, removes the work kept in the browser. A .siraj file is the safe copy.

19 On a phone

On a phone SIRAJ is best for learning lines, reading notes and checking the next show. Install it from the start page (Android) or with **Add to Home Screen** in Safari (iPhone and iPad). The sidebar opens from the menu button. For bringing in scripts, full analysis and printing, use a laptop.

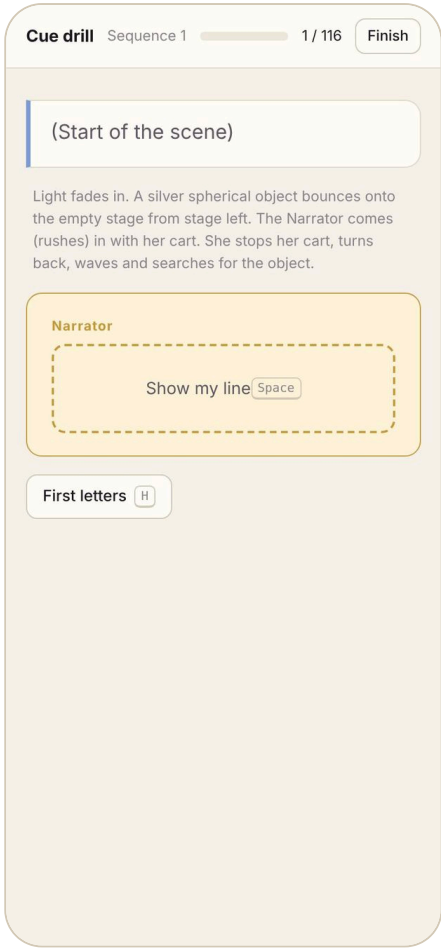


Figure 22. A cue drill on a phone.

20 Questions and answers

The Assamese text looks broken after import.

The script was probably taken from a PDF or typed in an old non-Unicode font. Bring it in from a Word .docx file, or copy and paste Unicode text.

The microphone does not work.

Allow the microphone in the browser's address bar. Open SIRAJ from aank.org, or as the offline file in Chrome or Edge.

My work has gone.

Check that you are using the same browser and not a private window. If the browser's data was cleared, open your last .siraj file.

I forgot my PIN.

Choose **Forgot the PIN?** on the locked page. The lock is removed by deleting the journal and care notes of that role.

The printed Role Book has no colours.

Print from Chrome or Edge and turn on “Background graphics” in the print window.

A message says “A new version is ready”.

Choose **Update now**. Your work stays as it is.

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