



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARTSEMERSON WELCOMES
BANGSOKOL: A REQUIEM FOR CAMBODIA
TWO PERFORMANCES ONLY | DECEMBER 19 and 20, 2017
EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER'S ROBERT J. ORCHARD STAGE

**PART OF *CAMBODIAN ART, CULTURE AND HISTORY*, A MONTH-LONG SERIES
OF EVENTS IN BOSTON AND LOWELL CELEBRATING CAMBODIAN CULTURE
INCLUDING FILM, WORKSHOPS, CONVERSATIONS AND MORE**

The Press Performance for BANGSOKOL is December 19, 2017 at 7:30pm
email ami@motormmm.com for tickets, more information, images, and select interviews

[Boston, MA—November 20, 2017] ArtsEmerson, Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre, proudly welcomes **Bangsokol: A Requiem for Cambodia** — for two performances only — a collaboration by Rithy Panh and Him Sophy, survivors of the Khmer Rouge, that fuses music, film, voice and movement to address the traumas that occurred in Cambodia. Performances take place December 19 and 20, 2017 at the Emerson Paramount Center's Robert J. Orchard Stage, located at 559 Washington Street in Downtown Boston. Tickets range from \$20-90, and may be purchased online at www.ArtsEmerson.org, by phone at 617.824.8400, or in person at the box office. Student, senior and group discounts are available.



Bangsokol: A Requiem for Cambodia is an extraordinary new composition fusing music, film, voice and movement. It is the first major symphonic work that addresses the traumas that occurred in Cambodia in the late seventies, and is the first collaboration between the Oscar-nominated director Rithy Panh and lauded composer Him Sophy — both survivors of the Khmer Rouge and now at the forefront of Cambodia's cultural renaissance. Anchored in "bangsokol" — a ritual for the dead or soon to be

deceased — the performance intertwines traditional Khmer instruments with The Metropolis Ensemble orchestra and the Taipei Philharmonic Chamber Choir. All together, they create something innately Cambodian but relatable to audiences everywhere.

Bangsokol is an act of cultural renewal, aiming to return the arts to their place at the heart of Cambodian society. While the world continues to witness new genocides, wars and destruction, Bangsokol urges us to express our scars from the past in order to forge a new path forward. Click here to view the **Bangsokol: Requiem for Cambodia** video trailer: <https://youtu.be/DnDkggmSFEA>

Bangsokol: A Requiem for Cambodia Creative Credits

Filmmaker & Director	Rithy Panh
Composer	Him Sophy
Music Director/Composer	Andrew Cyr
Libretto	Trent Walker
Set Designer	Rithy Panh
Costume Designer	Romyda Keth
Staging Director	Gideon Obarzanek
Concept	Charlie Todd
Vocal soloists	Chhorn Sam Ath & Him Savy
Cambodian Ensemble	Keo Dorivan, Keo Sonankavei, Keo Sophy, Pov Reaksmeymony, Say Tola, Sngoun Kavei Serey Roth
Ensemble	Metropolis Ensemble
Choir	Taipei Philharmonic Chamber Choir
Performer	Sodhachivy (Belle) Chumvan
Original Idea	Charley Todd
Commissioner	Cambodian Living Arts
Producer	THE OFFICE performing arts + film Musically developed in collaboration with Metropolis Ensemble

Bangsokol: A Requiem for Cambodia Performance Schedule

Tuesday, December 19, 2017	7:30pm	Press Performance
Wednesday, December 20, 2017	7:30pm	

Cambodian Culture, Art and History Series

ArtsEmerson and community partners present **Cambodian Culture, Art and History** a month-long series of community engagement events in Boston and Lowell that include films, conversations and workshops; and culminate with a screening and conversation of the film **First They Killed My Father**, produced by Oscar-nominated Rithy Pahn and Angelina Jolie, and ArtsEmerson's presentation of **Bangsokol: A Requiem for Cambodia**. Other events include a Rithy Panh film retrospective, Cambodian classical music workshop and community meet and greets throughout Boston and Lowell.

“One of the habits we have cultivated here at ArtsEmerson,” shares Artistic Director David Dower, “is purposefully programming deep dives into the local cultures that enrich our city and our lives. We are honored to be a regional host for this ambitious series of events focused on celebrating our Cambodian friends and neighbors. There are so many ways to enter this month's offerings, from film to performance to workshops, to parties and lectures. ArtsEmerson is but one piece of a large coalition of organizations that have come together to pull it all off. I am proud of this community effort and eager to experience the results.”

The ArtsEmerson series is presented in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival, Angkor Dance Troupe, Flying Orb, Middlesex Community College, UMass Lowell, Lowell High School, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, Bunker Hill Community College, Stoklosa Middle School and Cambodian Living Arts.

Liberty and Justice Film Series

Emerson Paramount Center's Bright Family Screening Room*

(*except where noted otherwise)

Tickets at www.ArtsEmerson.org or 617.824.8400 or at Emerson Paramount Center Box Office

Friday, December 1, 2017 6:30pm

Island Soldier

The untold story of Micronesian citizens fighting America's wars. Through the personal odyssey of the Nenas, one family experiences the consequences of military service, as they represent a pristine Pacific island on the brink of economic collapse. In partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival.

View the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyXnzYd7wyA>

Tickets \$11.00

Friday, December 1, 2017 9:00pm

S-21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine

A unique documentary, directed by Rithy Panh, on the notorious S-21 prison, today the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, with testimony by the only surviving prisoners and former Khmer Rouge guards. Part of a Rithy Panh film retrospective in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival and Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association.

View the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3UoFMl0oHk>

Tickets \$11.00

Saturday, December 2, 2017 3:30pm

The Chinese Exclusion Act

This film underscores important connections between the Chinese Exclusion Act and the history of US immigration. By examining the socio-economic and geo-political forces that led to the Act, the film uncovers its unmistakable and wide-ranging consequences on national attitudes towards race, culture, politics, and society. In partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival and Chinese Historical Society of New England.

Tickets \$11.00

Saturday, December 2, 2017 8:00pm

Monkey Dance

Monkey Dance is a documentary film about three teens coming of age in Lowell, Massachusetts.

Children of Cambodian refugees, they inhabit a tough, working class world shadowed by their parents' nightmares of the Khmer Rouge. Traditional Cambodian dance links them to their parents' culture, but fast cars, hip consumerism, and good times often pull harder. For the parents, Lowell held the hope of safety, employment, and a chance to finally rebuild some of what was shattered by the Khmer Rouge. But for their children, the city offers a dizzying array of choices - many of them risky. *Monkey Dance* is the story of how three kids navigate the confusing landscape of urban adolescence and ultimately start to make good on their parents' dreams. Part of the Rithy Panh film retrospective in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival and Ankor Dance Troupe, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

View the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6u6hCbrPunM>

Tickets \$11.00

Sunday, December 3, 2017

1:30pm

The Apology

The Apology follows the personal journeys of three former "comfort women" who were among the 200,000 girls and young women kidnapped and forced into military sexual slavery by the Imperial Japanese Army during World War II. Some 70 years after their imprisonment in so-called "comfort stations," the three "grandmothers-Grandma Gil in South Korea, Grandma Cao in China, and Grandma Adela in the Philippines-face their twilight years in fading health. After decades of living in silence and shame about their past, they know that time is running out to give a first-hand account of the truth and ensure that this horrific chapter of history is not forgotten. Whether they are seeking a formal apology from the Japanese government or summoning the courage to finally share their secret with loved ones, their resolve moves them forward as they seize this last chance to set future generations on a course for reconciliation, healing, and justice. In partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival.

View the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTtm2HlvwK4>

Tickets \$11.00

Sunday, December 3, 2017

4:30pm

The Missing Picture

Rithy Panh uses clay figures, archival footage, and his narration to recreate the atrocities Cambodia's Khmer Rouge committed between 1975 and 1979. Part of the Rithy Panh film retrospective in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival and Flying Orb.

View the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tZL5S5thvs>

Tickets \$11.00

Monday, December 4, 2017

3:00pm

The Land of the Wandering Souls

The Land of Wandering Souls follows a group of workers who are laying a high-tech fiber optic cable that will link Cambodia to the rest of Asia and Europe. The project is a hopeful symbol of the country's slow integration into the world community and the modern technological age. However, for the people employed to actually dig the trench by hand -- a group of rice farmers, ex-soldiers, and their families, the poorest of the poor -- the work is a mixed blessing. This film provides a haunting glimpse into the lives of these indigent workers as they encounter the painful remnants of the past - mines, bones, and a landscaped littered with human suffering - and labor to bring Cambodia into the modern age. In partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival. View the trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgZrrZNVfZw>

Free, open to the public, no rsvp required

*Middlesex Community College, 50 Kearney Square, Lowell, MA

Saturday, December 9, 2017

2:00pm

First They Killed My Father

Screening and Community Conversation

First They Killed My Father is the adaptation of Cambodian author and human rights activist Loung Ung's gripping memoir of surviving the deadly Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1978. The story is told through her eyes, from the age of five, when the Khmer Rouge came to power, to nine years old. The film depicts the indomitable spirit and devotion of Loung and her family as they struggle to stay together during the Khmer Rouge years. Angelina Jolie directs this unflinching true story. In partnership with CMAA, BAAFF, Netflix and additional Lowell community organizations. View the trailer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uS3Vp_quGCw

Free and open to the public, no rsvp required.

*Lowell High School, Cyrus Irish Auditorium, 50 Father Morissette Boulevard, Lowell, MA

Community Engagement Events at Various Locations

Thursday, December 7, 2017 11am

Conversation with Him Sophy and musicians from Bangsokol

Middlesex Community College, 50 Kearney Square, Lowell, MA 01852

Free, no rsvp required

Thursday, December 7, 2017 2pm

Cambodian Classical Music Workshop

Observe a master class with musicians from Cambodia and Lowell as they learn the score from Bangsokol.

UMass Lowell, Durgin Hall #113, 35 Wilder Street, Lowell, MA

Free, no rsvp required

Thursday, December 7, 2017 6:30pm

Exclusion, Internment and Today

Screening, reading and discussion

On the 76th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, join this dynamic conversation about the ongoing struggle to define who is American.

In partnership with the Chinese Historical Society of New England and Old South Meeting House, with support from The Lyric Stage Company, Institute for Asian American Studies/UMass Boston, Japanese American Citizens League-NE, and Boston Asian American Film Festival

Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Free, rsvp requested

Friday, December 8, 2017 7:30-9:30pm

Welcome to Boston: A Cast Party for Bangsokol: A Requiem for Cambodia

In the spirit of Elma Lewis, ArtsEmerson, Bunker Hill Community College, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, and Boston Asian American Film Festival invite all to performances by Angkor Dance Troupe Bunker Hill Community College, 250 New Rutherford Avenue, Boston, MA

Free, rsvp requested

About Filmmaker and Director Rithy Panh

Rithy PANH, named Asian Filmmaker of the Year by the Busan International Film Festival in 2013, is an internationally and critically acclaimed Cambodian documentary director and screenwriter who received his formal education at the Institute for High Cinematographic Studies in Paris. He is the first Cambodian filmmaker ever to be nominated for an Oscar—for *The Missing Picture* in 2013. In the same year he received a prize in the “Un Certain Regard” category at the Cannes Festival. He has also directed many documentaries, including *S-21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine*, for which he was awarded the prestigious Albert Londres Prize in 2004. Most recently, he worked as producer for Angelina Jolie’s film *First They Killed My Father*, which is due to be released in 2017.

About Composer Him Sophy

Trained at the Moscow Conservatory of Music as well as the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, Dr. HIM Sophy brings a unique perspective to **Bangsokol**. His previous works, including the acclaimed rock opera *Where Elephants Weep*, have demonstrated an unparalleled facility for bringing Western and Khmer musical worlds into intimate conversation. This time, he combines a Western chamber orchestra and chorus with Khmer instrumentalists and vocalists. The traditional Khmer musical forms represented include several endangered forms of funeral music, such as *kong skor*, *smot*, and *pin*

peat. These traditional musical forms are crucial for honoring the dead; unfortunately, live performances are seldom heard in the capital and rapidly disappearing in the countryside.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. It is dedicated to engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. These programs are core to ArtsEmerson's mission and expresses commitment to civic responsibility to create a more cohesive society. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. This shared leadership model reflects the organization's values — that diverse perspectives are essential to leading a 21st century arts organization. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit emerson.edu.

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