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SECOND-GENERATION SURVIVORS OF THE KHMER ROUGE GENOCIDE SHATTER ITS SILENCE

ARTSEMERSON PRESENTS

SEE YOU YESTERDAY

BY GLOBAL ARTS CORPS

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PHARE PERFORMING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND
PHARE PONLEU SELPAK ASSOCIATION**

FIVE PERFORMANCES ONLY

MAY 16 – 19, 2019

AT THE EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER

Press Performance is Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 7:30pm

[Boston, MA – April 19, 2019] – On the heels of Cambodian New Year, **ArtsEmerson** is honored to welcome **See You Yesterday**, a moving performance by **Global Arts Corps** which explores the painful history of the Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia. Directed by Michael Lessac, nineteen Cambodian performers utilize their extraordinary physical skills, including acrobatics and circus arts, to travel back in time and shatter a legacy of silence. Global Arts Corps brings **See You Yesterday**'s U.S. premiere to Boston to close ArtsEmerson's 2018/2019 season, for five performances only, May 16-19, at the Emerson Paramount Center Robert J. Orchard Stage.

Tickets for **See You Yesterday** start at just \$20 and may be purchased online at www.ArtsEmerson.org, by phone at 617.824.8400, or in person at the box office. Group, student, and senior discounts are also available. Tickets are also available at the Merrimack Repertory Theatre box office in Lowell, MA.

Photographer credit: Jacqueline Lessac



Over 22 weeks of development since 2012, Global Arts Corps—whose celebrated work brings together people from opposite sides of violent conflicts—collaborated with these young Cambodian artists as they grappled with the painful history of their country's genocide. While details of the four-year horror have largely gone unexplored by younger generations of Cambodians, the cast of **See You Yesterday** interviewed their elders (and even a former Khmer Rouge child soldier) to build a stunning performance that is both beautiful and cathartic.

"In 2013, when we brought our Northern/North of Ireland production **Hold your Tongue, Hold your Dead** to Boston audiences, we witnessed two communities, separated by an ocean and burdened by their own personalized historical memories, find a common healing ground in talk-backs across the footlights," says **See You Yesterday** director Michael Lessac. "At a time when we seem to be clinging to what separates us and not what connects us, we wanted to be in the same place again to see what happens when another, totally different, theatrical vision of honesty, tenacity, and imagination takes the ArtsEmerson stage. **See You Yesterday** brings to Boston a cast of young Cambodian circus artists whose culture has forced them to live in silence with a harrowing memory. They have created a performance that shows us how hope can emerge from despair and how truth can emerge out of a powerfully moral and courageously honest imagination. I could not be more proud to be working with David Dower and his extraordinary team, in the namesake space of my old friend, Rob Orchard, as we once again explore together what happens when inherited conflict and unspoken multiple truths are surfaced across continents so that generations can talk to each other again."

"**See You Yesterday** is precisely the kind of experience that ArtsEmerson has become known for over these past nine seasons," says ArtsEmerson artistic director David Dower. "The show puts one of most vibrant world cultures in the spotlight. Our region hosts one of the largest Cambodian communities in the nation and as with last season's **Bangsokol**, we are presenting it in deep partnership with that community, both in Boston and in Lowell. This effort to put the world on stage in dialogue with diverse communities delivers that particular synergy between the art and the audience that our supporters have come to count on. **See You Yesterday** also uses a form of storytelling that is entirely ArtsEmerson - sharing its moving search for restorative justice through the tools of circus and dance. We are proud to be working with Michael Lessac and Global Arts Corps to tell this story."

[Listings Information for See You Yesterday](#)

Dates

May 16 - 19, 2019

Venue:

Emerson Paramount Center
Robert J. Orchard Stage
559 Washington Street Boston, MA 02116

Performance Schedule:

Thursday, May 16, 2019	7:30pm	Press Performance
Friday, May 17, 2019	8:00pm	
Saturday, May 18, 2019	2:00pm	
Saturday, May 18, 2019	8:00pm	
Sunday, May 19, 2019	2:00pm	

Ticket Information:

Online: **ArtsEmerson.org**
Phone: **617-824-8400**

In Person: **Paramount Center Box Office**, open Tuesday-Saturday from 10:00am-6:00pm and 2 hours prior to any event until 30 minutes after the start of the show.

Tickets can also be purchased in person at Merrimack Repertory Theatre's box office at 50 East Merrimack St, Lowell, MA Tuesday - Saturday 12:00pm - 6:00pm.

Prices range from \$20-\$85 (subject to change)

Credits

Produced in partnership with Phare Performing Social Enterprise, Phare Ponleu Selpak Association & Amrita Performing Arts

Directed by: Michael Lessac, Global Arts Corps Artistic Director

in collaboration with Global Arts Corps Associate Artists: Arben Bajraktaraj, Robert Berky, & Andrew Buckland

Director of Circus: Khuon Det, Phare Ponleu Selpak Artistic Director

Choreographer: Chumvan Sodhachivy, SilverBell Dance Group, Amrita Performing Arts

Lighting Design and Technical Direction by: Dave Feldman

Original Score by: Michael Jay

Sound Design by: Scott Lehrer

Costumes by: Vong Vannak

Assistant Choreographer: Nam Narim, Amrita Performing Arts

Stage Manager: Lauren Squier

Assistant Stage Manager: Phounam Pin

Cast: Cheat Sopheap, Choup Kanha, Heng Chhaiya, Houn Sopheap, Huot Heang, Khoun Kimlon, Lai Vireak, Mon Borey, Mony Ratanaksombath, Ney Linna, Nov Sreyleak, Nov Sreyleap, Pai Phirom, Phat Sreyleak, Preab Pouch, San Samdy, Sem Sinak, Sim Chantha, Yam Sopheap

Production Team: Jacqueline Lessac, Global Arts Corps Executive Producer; Huot Dara, Phare Performing Social Enterprise Chief Executive Officer & Tour Company Manager; and Natalie Stringer, Global Arts Corps Program and Development Manager

For production stills and other media kit assets, click [here](#).

About Global Arts Corps

For the last 17 years, Global Arts Corps (GAC) has been bringing together performing artists from opposite sides of cultural, religious and racial divides to create original theatre productions that encourage a playwriting dialogue between people who fear, disdain, mistrust and even hate each other. The stage becomes a laboratory where each new production finds its own unique way to unpeel these feelings and rehearse a new empathy. These collaborative productions have been performed for over 100,000 audience members in 28 cities in 12 countries on 4 continents. The casts of these productions have facilitated empathy and perceptual change workshops that have brought together close to 20,000 participants. The award-winning film, "A Snake Gives Birth to a Snake," resulting from our South African project *Truth in Translation*, has been shown in educational centers and film festivals in 19 cities in nine countries and a new film, based on *See You Yesterday*, has just completed principle editing. Over these years, the GAC team of directors and actors has accumulated experience across borders. They continue to contribute their talents and experience to each new project and are presently developing a multi-national project that will draw from five continents. The cast of *See You Yesterday* has recently completed an educational tour in Cambodia, giving workshops to teachers-in-training interested in using GAC's process of safely approaching an empathic understanding of painful histories and traumatic pasts.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre. We are dedicated to engaging all communities through stories that reveal and deepen our connection to each other. By cultivating diversity in the arts and in the audience, we ignite public conversation around our most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — we committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. We

program a full season of performances, film and dialogue that invites each of us to engage in a more contemporary narrative of Boston as a truly global city. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. 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.

Creative Biographies

Michael Lessac, Director

Michael Lessac combines multiple careers as a director of film, television, theatre, and holds a PhD in Perception and Early Childhood Development, and has taught at several universities. As a songwriter/performer, he toured extensively, and John Hammond with Columbia Records produced his album "Sleep Faster We Need The Pillow." In 1973, he founded the award-winning Colonnades Theatre Lab in NYC, and for 10 years produced and directed over 30 theatrical productions. He has directed over 200 television shows and TV pilots in Hollywood including "Taxi," "Newhart," "Grace Under Fire," "The Drew Carey Show," "Everybody Loves Raymond," "Lucky," "George and Leo," among others, as well as the feature film "House of Cards," which he wrote and directed, starring Kathleen Turner and Tommy Lee Jones. He recently directed the award-winning documentary film "A Snake Gives Birth to a Snake" and has directed freelance internationally and in the US at the Kennedy Center, the Public Theatre, the Arena Stage, The Guthrie Theatre, among others. Lessac is the creator and director of the award-winning international theatre piece *Truth in Translation*, which he co-produced with South Africa's Market Theatre. *Truth in Translation* performed in 24 cities in 11 countries and led to his founding of Global Arts Corps.

Arben Bajraktaraj, Associate Director

Arben Bajraktaraj is an Albanian actor from Kosovo, living in France. He has worked with many theatre companies in France, Kosovo, Albania and Slovenia and played in various classical and contemporary productions. In cinema, he has worked David Yates on "Sex Traffic" and played "Dolohov" in "Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix" and in "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows." He also worked with Tony Gatliff on his World War II drama treating a destiny of a gypsy family, Gilles Pacquet-Brenner on "Sarah's Key," Jean-Pierre Ameris on an adaptation of Victor Hugo's "The Man Who Laughs," and appeared in numerous French movies such as Xavier Beauvois' "Of Gods and Men" (Grand Prix du Jury, Cannes 2010) and Maïwenn's "Polisse" (Prix du Jury, Cannes 2011). Recently, he had the lead role in "The Shelter among the Clouds" (Cinequest Global Vision Award, San Jose 2019).

Bob Berky, Associate Director

Bob Berky, an OBIE AWARD winning solo artist, has performed in major theatres and theatre festivals throughout the world. He received a Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Festival for his one-man show *FOOLSFIRE*; is also recipient of the Kennedy Center's New American Plays Award for his two-man play, *Cooking the World* and the Sarrett National Playwriting Prize for *The Redness Of The Woodpecker*. Bob has taught at many universities and theatre programs, including Brown University, University of Iowa, University of Texas, Austin and the Juilliard

School. He joined Global Arts Corps as a participant and trainer for workshops in South Africa and the creation of *See You Yesterday* in Cambodia.

Andrew Buckland, Associate Director

After tripping and falling into theatre as a student in 1974, Andrew has been active both as a theatre maker and as an actor performing in a range of theatre, film and television roles in both classical and contemporary genres. Highlights include his performance as “Hamlet” for SABC, and three Fringe First Awards from the Edinburgh Festival, the role of “Sgt Pepper” in the Las Vegas production of *LOVE The Beatles* for the prestigious Cirque du Soleil in 2008/2009. During his 44-year-long career he has also developed a reputation for producing an extraordinary range of cutting edge original work which has won over 20 national and international theatre awards for such works as *The Ugly Noo Noo*, *Between The Teeth*, *Bloodstream*, *Feedback*, *The Well Being*. He played a key role in the Drama Department of the University currently known as Rhodes between 1992 and 2017 when he retired and was named Associate Professor Emeritus. Andrew continues to engage strongly in the creation of new works and recent collaborations include; *Crazy in Love* with Conspiracy of Clowns (winner of best international production at the Amsterdam Fringe), as well as *Tobacco* for the Fortune Cookie Theatre Company for which he was awarded the 2016 Best Actor Prize at Woordfees in Stellenbosch for his role as “Ivan.” He won the 2016 Fleur du Cap Award for Best Actor, and the Naledi 2016 Award for Best Actor for his role as “Paul” in *The Inconvenience of Wings* by Lara Foot. He also appeared in the role of “Heiner Muller” in the feature film “Catching Feelings” written and directed by Kagiso Lediga which was released internationally by Netflix. In Dec 2017 Andrew returned to full time professional freelance work as an actor, director, teacher, theatre maker, voice artist, performance consultant. Andrew toured extensively as a cast member in *Truth in Translation* and has worked with Global Arts Corps as a trainer in both Northern Ireland/North of Ireland and Cambodia.

Khuon Det, Director of Circus

Khuon Det was born in 1972 to a rural family in Battambang, Cambodia. At the time, the civil war was raging and was soon followed by the genocidal regime of Pol Pot and his murderous organization, the Khmer Rouge. At a young age, Det fled to a vast refugee camp on the border of Thailand in order to escape the atrocities. He lived there until the age of 22. It was the “survival of the fittest” in the chaotic camp environment, so he learned martial arts in order to defend himself. In addition to practicing combat techniques and gymnastics, Det participated in drawing workshops offered to child refugees. His experiences led him and a group of friends to create Phare Ponleu Selpak (“The Brightness of the Arts”), with the goal of helping youth in his situation overcome the trauma of war. Established in 1994, the association now cares for many children, offering circus, drawing, theatre, dance and music classes as well as a general education. As Artistic Director, he had created dozen of productions and brought them on tours locally and globally. Det was awarded the recognition of the Knight of Order in Arts and Literature by the French Government in 2018.

Michael Jay, Composer

Michael Jay is a composer and audio engineer who contributed to some of the milestones in music technology. Recently, Michael mixed projects nominated for Grammy and Academy awards, as well as the first TV program to be mixed digitally. As a music editor, he won a contributing Emmy award, worked on Michael Jackson’s “Ghosts,” and on Oliver Stone’s 2016 biopic of NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden. As a music engineer, Michael has worked with Neil Young, Brian Eno, and the band Yes, for whom he engineered “Talk” – the first album to be recorded to personal computer. Michael’s work as composer of incidental music for theatre goes back many years starting with Michael Lessac at the Colonnades theatre in NYC. Michael also has been a graduate professor at New York University.

Dave Feldman, Lighting Designer

Dave Feldman has been providing lighting design for television, video, dance, theater and music for more than 30 years. His TV designs include shows that can be seen on NBC, HBO, MTV,

VH1, A+E, Comedy Central, AXS- TV, SiriusXM, NBA-TV, PBS, & Disney television. His theatrical designs have been seen in over 25 countries at prestigious theaters such as: London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, The Millennium Dome, The National Theatre of Taiwan, The Iblana Theater in Dublin, the New Victory Theater and Lincoln Center in New York. He continues to consult on new TV studios and theaters throughout the US. Dave received the New York Dance and Performance award, "The Bessie" for outstanding creative achievement as a lighting designer. He has been a guest artist and teacher at Wright State University and Princeton University.

Chumvan Sodhachivy, Choreographer

Born in 1985, Chumvan Sodhachivy (Belle) is a dancer, choreographer and teacher from Cambodia. Belle began her training in Cambodian Classical Dance in 1994. In 2003 she graduated from the National High School of Performing Arts and continued on as a final year student at the Royal University of Fine Arts in 2007. As a performer, she has toured throughout Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. She has studied under Robert Wilson in the U.S. and has been a featured dancer in works by Emmanuelle Phne, Arco Renz, Peter Chin and others. Belle has also choreographed many of her own works and was most recently a featured dancer in Stravinsky's *Persephone* directed by Peter Sellars at the Teatro Real in Madrid, Spain. In Cambodia, she is a lecturer on the Faculty of Choreography Arts in Phnom Penh and was a choreographer/dancer at Amrita Performing Arts.

Scott Lehrer, Sound Designer

Scott Lehrer began his theatre sound work as a member of Michael Lessac's Colonnades Theatre Lab and has designed over 150 plays and musicals since then. In 2008 he received the first sound Tony Award for the Broadway revival of *South Pacific*. As a music producer/engineer his work includes the 2015 Broadway cast recording of *An American in Paris* (Grammy nom), Loudon Wainwright's *High Wide & Handsome* (Grammy award) and Meredith Monk's *mercy*.

Vong Vannak, Costume Designer

Vong Vannak is an international performer and designer. Vannak began his training at age 10 at the Secondary School for Fine Arts. Upon graduation with a concentration contortion, silks, and classical ballet, he attended the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh to further develop and refine these skills. Since graduation in 2009, Vannak has studied and worked internationally for private and national companies in Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos as a designer, choreographer, and performer. Vannak designs for Sophy & Sina Boutique in Phnom Penh and international contemporary dance troupes.

Creative Biographies

Cheat Sopheap

Cheat Sopheap started his circus training in 2006 at Phare Ponleu Selpak. His circus skills are acrobatics and balancing act. He has been part of the Rouge and Eclipse productions. He has toured to Europe and to Hong Kong.

Chuob Kanha

Chuob Kanha is 20 years old. Inspired by her brother who is a music student at Phare Ponleu Selpak, Kanha started her circus training in 2003. She is a contortionist and does partner acrobatics. She has worked with many local and international theater and circus artists and recently toured to France in the Eclipse production.

Heng Chhaya

Heng Chhaya was born in 1991. He started his circus training at Phare Ponleu Selpak in 2003, specializing in acrobatics. He is in the Eclipse cast that recently toured in France.

Houn Sopheap

Houn Sopheap (Lign) was born in 1993. He started his circus training in 2003 at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He performs in Rouge and Eclipse.

Houth Hieng

Houth Hieng is among the first generation of professional artists at Phare Ponleu Selpak. She started her circus training in 1998. She has worked on numerous projects including Theatre du Soleil and has toured to countries in Europe and Japan. Currently Hieng is an instructor and pedagogy coordinator at Phare Ponleu Selpak.

Khuon Kimlon

Khuon Kimlon was born in 1990. He was trained in circus at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He has been in several of Phare's productions including "Putho!," "Sokha," "My Village," and most recently "White Gold."

Lay Virak

Lay Virak was born in 1991. He was trained in theater at Phare Ponleu Selpak in 2010. Verak has been part of several productions at Phare.

Mon Borey

Mon Borey is 18 years old. He was trained in theater at Phare Ponleu Selpak. Borey has a strong interest in theater and this is his first professional production.

Mony Ratanak Sambath

Mony Ratanak Sambath, age 23, was trained in circus at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He is an acrobat and juggler. Sambath is a very talented artist and has toured extensively in Europe to perform. He has keen interest in developing his arts further.

Ney Lina

Ney Lina, born in 1990, was trained in theater at Phare Ponleu Selpak. She has performed in several educational theater projects.

Nov Sreyleak

Nov Sreyleak was born in 1991 and started her circus training at Phare Ponleu Selpak in 2004. She is an Arn Chorn-Pond Scholarship Awardee. She performed in her first production at the age of 14. She is a contortionist, hand balancer and acrobat. She has recently toured to France as part of the "Eclipse" production.

Nov Sreyleap

Nov Sreyleap was born in 1987 and was trained in theater at Phare Ponleu Selpak. For the past 15 years at Phare, Sreyleap has worked in numerous projects, including the production with Theatre du Soleil.

Pai Phirom

Pai Phirom is 22 years and was trained in circus at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He is an acrobat and rola bola specialist.

Phat Sreyleak

Phat Sreyleak is 18 years old and was trained in circus at Phare Ponleu Selpak. She is among the youngest members of the cast in this production. Sreyleak has demonstrated great interest and dedication to her artistic development for the past two years working on this project. She is now attending university while continue to be performing artist at Phare.

Preap Pouch

Preab Poch was born in 1987 and started his theater training in 1998 at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He has performed in numerous educational theater projects and toured to provinces in

Cambodia. From 2006-2013, Pouch was a cast member of “Eclipse” and “Royaume du Cambodge.” He also performed in the production of “The Terrible yet Unfinished Story of Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia.”

San Samdy

San Samdy is 24-years-old and started training in circus in 2006 at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He has performed in “Eclipse” in Cambodia and has toured to Europe several times.

Sem Sinak

Sem Sinak, born in 1983, was trained in theater at Phare Ponleu Selpak. Sinak believes in the arts because she can contribute to improving her own community and she learns passionately about life.

Sim Chantha

Sim Chantha was born in 1993. When he was young, he saw the training at Phare Ponleu Selpak and was fascinated. He was trained in the juggling act in circus at Phare Ponleu Selpak. Chantha is also a cast member of “Eclipse.”

Yam Sopheak

Yam Sopheak was trained in the diabolo act in circus at Phare Ponleu Selpak. He joined the school in 2007. He is currently a circus student at Phare Ponleu Selpak.

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