

the Arts Centre presents

THE CONTINUUM:

BEYOND THE KILLING FIELDS

PERSONAL STORIES OF SURVIVAL FROM CAMBODIA

Conceived and directed by Ong Keng Sen

Produced by TheatreWorks (Singapore)

15 – 18 SEPTEMBER 2010, 8PM

THE ARTS CENTRE, PLAYHOUSE



KENNETH MYER
ASIAN
THEATRE
SERIES

ARTS
VICTORIA



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ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The tragedy and desolation suffered by the Cambodian people at the hands of the Khmer Rouge in the late-1970s is shared in this deeply personal documentary-style production.

Leading this powerful and emotional production is seventy-five year old Em Theay, master dancer of Cambodian royal classical dance and survivor of the Khmer Rouge.

During the massacre, nine out of ten artists were killed by Pol Pot in his fanatical attempt to set the country back to year zero. Despite persecution, Em Theay survived and this is her story about overcoming adversity and grief, and the rebuilding of Cambodia's society and culture.

The production has played throughout the world and is making its Australian premiere at the Arts Centre.



ABOUT THEATREWORKS

theatreworks.org.sg

TheatreWorks, established in 1985, is an international performance company based in Singapore. Under the artistic direction of Ong Keng Sen, the company is known for its reinvention of traditional performance and cross-cultural interdisciplinary approach. It creates highly expressive works that reflect the identities of contemporary Asia within the 21st Century global culture.

In 1996, the company pioneered the Flying Circus Project, a biennial art laboratory program that has since become an internationally recognised and sought-after R&D process. In 1999, it initiated the Arts Network Asia (www.artsnetworkasia.org), a capacity-building grant body that supports arts and cultural exchanges/projects across and within Asia.

Since 2005, the company has assumed residence at 72-13 (www.72-13.com), a converted rice warehouse. Its primary purpose is to encourage collaborations and dialogue; house residences from creatives around the world; and to encourage hybrid creative expressions from young Singaporeans. Initiatives include the Creatives-in-Residence (CIR) program that supports creatives/artists from across disciplines (contemporary performance, documentary film, fashion, new media, visual arts and others) as well as Writer's Lab, Singapore's long-running program for young/emerging playwrights. In 2011, 72-13 will be home to the first Tanz Hus in Singapore.

TheatreWorks celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2010.



The Kenneth Myer Asian Theatre Series provides theatre-goers with a unique opportunity to experience exceptional performances that would not otherwise be seen in Melbourne. Thanks to a commemorative grant from The Myer Foundation and the Sidney Myer Fund, and founding gifts from Mrs Neilma Gantner, Mr Carrillo Gantner AO and Mrs ZiYin Gantner, and Mr Baillieu Myer AC and Mrs Sarah Myer, the Arts Centre is able to bring to Australia a program of brilliant contemporary companies from across the diverse cultures of our own region. We are also proud to honour the late Kenneth Myer and his long involvement with the Arts Centre and his leadership in Australia-Asia relations.

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES



Ong Keng Sen
Director

Singapore-born Ong Keng Sen read intercultural performance at Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, and also holds a degree in law. He has taught in places such as the NYU Asian/Pacific/American Institute and DasArts in Amsterdam, and been the recipient of fellowships from the Japan Foundation, British Council, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Berlin and Asian Cultural Council (New York). Notable productions include the Asian Shakespeare Trilogy comprising *Lear*, *Desdemona* and *Search: Hamlet*; and several documentary performances including *Sandakan Threnody* (2004) which was presented at the Brisbane Festival and Melbourne International Arts Festival. In 1994, he established the Flying Circus Project, uniting traditional and contemporary Asian artists across all disciplines, and has since expanded to include European, American and Arabic artists. For the House of World Cultures in Berlin he created and curated the first two In Transit festivals (2002, 2003). For his outstanding body of work and contribution to Asian expression, Ong Keng Sen was awarded the Cultural Medallion (2003), Singapore's highest cultural award, and most recently the Fukuoka Prize 2010, Arts & Culture.



Em Theay
Collaborator-Performer

Em Theay's love for dance started at the age of seven when she became a classical dance trainee. At fifteen, she became the principle classical dancer of Songkom Reas Niyom, where she was based for the next twenty years. In 1970, with the change in the political situation, she became the classical dancer for the Kampuchean Republic although that was short-lived when civil war broke out in 1975. In 1979, Em Theay returned to dance and was appointed Master of Performing Arts with the Ministry of Culture. Her years as a dancer and singer have allowed her to travel extensively in Asia, Europe and the United States of America. Em Theay is ceaseless in her endeavor to develop her craft and continues to impart her art to the new generations.



Kim Bun Thom
Collaborator-Performer

Kim Bun Thom specialises in classical and traditional dance, musical theatre and chanting. She began her dance training at the Royal Palace at the age of six and upon graduation in 1970 she became a classical dancer for the Royal Palace of Cambodia. Bun Thom's career came to a standstill for four years when civil war tore Cambodia apart. It was only in 1979 that she resumed her career at the Ministry of Culture's Department of Performing Arts. Currently, Kim Bun Thom is a trainer in the development of a new type of classical dance, where she is the Director of Inspection of Classical Dance.



Thong Kim Ann (Preab)
Collaborator-Performer

Thong Kim Ann began her classical dance training after completing her secondary school education in 1962. Her training involved both classical and traditional dance and she specialised primarily in the male and giant roles. However, this was abruptly disrupted with the outbreak of civil war in the country. In 1979, she returned to her roots of dance as a classical performer with the Ministry of Culture. Currently, Kim Ann is involved in dance pedagogy as the Deputy Director of Dance Training in the Department of Performing Arts.



Mann Kosal
Collaborator-Performer

Mann Kosal is a native of Takeo province, Cambodia. Born in 1961, Kosal began his artistic studies in 1984 as a student of Bassac Theater at the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh. From 1991-1997, Kosal concentrated on shadow puppet theatre in the Department of Performing Arts, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. His enthusiasm for shadow puppets has led Kosal to the revival and preservation of the traditional repertory, and authentic Khmer production and technical performance that was nearly lost during the Khmer Rouge era. Since 2000, Kosal is the Artistic Director of Sovanna Phum, an independent arts company in Phnom Penh that focuses on the development of the Sbaek Thom (large shadow puppet).



Scott Zielinski
Lighting Designer

Scott is based in New York where his lighting designs have included the Broadway production of *Topdog/UnderDog* as well as productions at Lincoln Center and the Public Theater, among many others. He has also created designs for theatre, dance, and opera extensively elsewhere in the USA and throughout the world. Upcoming projects include *The Magic Flute* for Canadian Opera Company (Toronto), *Jan Karski* for Festival d'Avignon (France), and *Miss Fortune*, a new opera for Bregenz Festspiele (Austria) and the Royal Opera House (London). Scott received his Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Design at the Yale University School of Drama.



Fukuoka Yutaka (Yen Chang)
Vocalist & Composer

Yen is a musician and composer whose non-verbal voice performances and soulful chants create a unique and inimitable improvised vocalisation style. He has released more than 25 acclaimed albums and currently releases his solo projects under Teichiku Entertainment. In 1985, he organised the rock band PINK, in which he sung and composed. Their first self-titled album, *PINK*, toured Japan extensively and they became a sensation in the music scene. Yen has participated and performed at art festivals and workshops worldwide such as TheatreWorks' Flying Circus Project (2000); Asahi Art Festival in Tokyo (2003); and various shows in Sapporo (2003-04). He also collaborated with dancers of the Iwami Kagura - a traditional folk art festival performed annually in his hometown in Shimane. His recent performances in 2010 include *Yen Calling with Iwami-Kagura* and *Dream Concert* with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra.

THE CONTINUUM: BEYOND THE KILLING FIELDS PRODUCTION CREDITS

Conceived and Directed by
Ong Keng Sen

Collaborator-Performers
Em Theay
Thong Kim Ann (Preab)
Kim Bun Thom
Mann Kosal

Vocals and Music Composer
Fukuoka Yutaka (Yen Chang)

Lighting Designer
Scott Zielinski

Videography
Noorlinah Mohd

Producer
Tay Tong

Production Stage Manager
Lisa Porter

Project Manager
Hoo Kuan Cien

Sound Engineer
Jeffrey Yue

Translator
Suon Bun Rith

Stage Management Intern
Samantha Watson

Special Thanks
Amrita Performing Arts
Valerie Oliveiro

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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- The Trust reserves the right of refusing admission.
- Cameras, tape recorders, paging machines, video recorders and mobile telephones must not be operated in the venue.
- In the interests of public health, the Arts Centre is a smoke-free area.

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