

The mission of
Cambodian
Living Arts
is to facilitate the
transformation
of Cambodia
through
the arts



Press Release

From Cambodian Living Arts



PRESS RELEASE: CAMBODIAN LIVING ARTS PRESENTS JOLANA JONGJAM 2 AND BRINGS CONTEMPORARY DANCE TO PHNOM PENH

This September, Cambodian Living Arts presents *Jolana Jongjam II (Movement Memory 2)*, a youth-oriented festival of contemporary dance. The 4 day festival will feature performances by New Cambodian Artists (NCA), an all-female contemporary troupe based in Siem Reap, and Epic Encounters, a group of artists with and without disabilities established by Kampot-based organization, Epic Arts.

The theme 'Movement Memories' invites the performers to use movement to explore memories, and the idea of memory itself. Last year, the festival pieces looked at memory from the perspective of Cambodia's modern history and the Khmer Rouge regime; this year the pieces also explore personal memories and identity.

On the Saturday and Sunday nights, NCA will premiere their latest work, *Dance to the Moon*. This is a theatrical dance with a "dreamlike associative structure". The four dancers reflect on their past, present and future as dancers and females. *Dance to the moon* is a piece about the pain and happiness it brings to be a dancer. On Thursday and Friday, NCA will perform *Bach/Tango*, a fusion piece combining Cambodian traditions with Bach's cello suites, American jazz and Argentinian tango, and *Growing Up In Public*, a personal piece about growing into strong, expressive artists.

Epic Arts will perform *Krama*, a piece about the use of the *krama* scarf in Cambodian culture, and a celebration of Cambodian daily life, and *Come Back Brighter*, a three-part piece that will explore the history of artists and arts in Cambodia from the 60's and 70's, through the Pol Pot Regime and then to the re-emergence from this of new artists and ideas in the present day.

Khon Sreyneang, NCA's company manager, said, "Presenting "Dance To The Moon" at Jolana Jongjam 2 is a chance for young Cambodian women to show their strength, creativity, and artistic skills. I really believe it is time for a new generation of female contemporary dance."

Po Sokun, a performer in Epic Encounters, said, "We're performing in Jolana Jongjam 2 to show different audiences to see ability, not disability. We want to show unity, and connections between disabled and non-disabled artists. We want to promote Khmer arts, including contemporary arts, to youth in Phnom Penh, and increase knowledge about arts, as well as tell Cambodia's story through our shows."

Yon Sokhorn, program coordinator for CLA, said, "We are really excited to present Jolana Jongjam 2, and to build on the success of the first festival. We can show creative, contemporary dance to even more youth than before as we partner with PUC and AUPP. Often, when people think of Cambodian art, they are not really open to new forms that are creative, dynamic, and engaging. In these performances, it's not just about the past, it's about using your own stories to perform, during your own time, and about being relevant."

Program

Thursday 1 September, 5.30-7pm, American University of Phnom Penh

Friday 2 September, 6-7.30pm, Pannasastra University of Cambodia

Saturday 3 September, 7-8pm, National Museum

Sunday 4 September, 7-8pm, National Museum

Tickets cost \$2.5 and are available from the National Museum or the CLA Office, or by contacting bookings@cambodianlivingarts.org

Press are invited to attend an informal press conference during rehearsal time at Pannasastra University of Cambodia, at 3pm on Friday 2 September. Press are also invited to attend the performances at PUC at 6pm on Friday 2 September and the performance at the National Museum of Cambodia at 7pm on Saturday 3 September. The performance at PUC will include a post-show discussion, and the performance at the National Museum will feature the premiere of *Dance to the Moon*.

For more information, or for further details about press opportunities, please contact hermione@cambodianlivingarts.org or 070 425 661.

The Jolana Jongjam II project was funded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung and by the European Union.

Notes for Editors

Cambodian Living Arts

- Cambodian Living Arts was founded by Arn Chorn-Pond in 1998.
- Cambodian Living Arts is an independent not-for profit organization, based in Phnom Penh.
- The mission of Cambodian Living Arts is to facilitate the transformation of Cambodia through the arts. We work in collaboration with others to create an environment where Cambodian arts empower and transform individuals and communities. We do this by encouraging the growth of artists and the arts community, by promoting awareness of the arts, and by advocating for the arts with cultural policymakers and

major institutions. In doing so, we aim to create value and understanding of what it means to be Cambodian and to create a sense of unity and shared culture. We believe that through creativity we can each expand our potential as human beings.

Epic Encounters

Epic Encounters are a group of talented performing artists with and without disabilities. Working collaboratively with guest choreographers they create dance and theatre productions based on issues facing Cambodia. The team tour nationally and internationally performing and delivering inclusive movement workshops throughout Cambodia and abroad to both children and adults.

Epic Arts

Epic Arts is an international, inclusive arts organization based in Cambodia and registered as a charity in the UK. They use the arts as a form of expression and empowerment to bring people with and without disabilities together. They aim to promote the message that every person counts through inclusive education, community and social enterprise programs.

New Cambodian Artists

Since October 2012, New Cambodian Artists (NCA) has been dedicated to developing a culture of contemporary dance throughout Cambodia. NCA empowers females through dance, exploring the dynamics of tradition and creativity in modern Cambodia. The company consists of four female dancers trained in traditional Khmer dance and a young female company manager. In addition to daily rehearsals, performances and teaching, the New Cambodia Artists take pride in performing in isolated village communities to show their art and become strong role models for young girls from these communities.