

Cambodian Living Arts

A project of World Education



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Environment



Community



Culture



Supporting the revival of traditional art forms of Cambodia and inspiring contemporary artistic expression



Who are we and what do we do?

Cambodian Living Arts, A project of World Education, was founded eight years ago by Arn Chorn-Pond, a Cambodian-American refugee who was featured in the Emmy-nominated movie, *The Flute Player*. Originally called the Cambodian Master Performers Program, Arn founded the organisation when he first returned to Cambodia in order to support the music teachers who helped him survive the horrors of the Khmer Rouge.

Cambodian Living Arts supports the revival of traditional Cambodian art forms, many of which were nearly destroyed during the Khmer Rouge period, and inspires the contemporary expression of Cambodia's arts. We support approximately 300 students across Cambodia in 19 classes led by some of the country's most well respected musicians.

We work to empower our students and master teachers to sustain themselves through the arts. For our master teachers, who were already legends of their craft before the Khmer Rouge came to power, we provide a living wage, basic healthcare, teaching support, technical assistance in recording and archiving their work and support for performances and other income-earning opportunities. For students, we provide a monthly stipend to attend public school while cultivating their artistic skills. For a few exceptional students, we also provide university scholarships.

Anyone who has been touched by the grandeur of Cambodia's centuries-old temples and would like to see the beauty, joy and hope of our living arts, will be inspired by experiencing what our extraordinary musicians and students have to offer.

What you can experience

- See an authentic Khmer *sbaek thom* performance at either a local Wat or in a village. *Sbaek thom* is a form of large shadow puppetry that has been designated a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. As in the past, our *sbaek thom* is performed by firelight in the evening, with the local community joining to watch these spectacular depictions of the *Reamker* (Khmer version of the Hindu epic of the *Ramayana*). All performances must be arranged at least three days in advance, and performances are subject to cancellation during the rainy season.
- Purchase our CDs - Available through Artisans Angkor and select bookstores, CLA's two commercial CDs showcase high-quality recordings of traditional and innovative new Khmer music. Proceeds from sales of the CDs go to support the recording artists and Cambodian Living Arts. These are:
 - ♪ **Khmer Passages: Songs for Cycles of Cambodian Life** depicting a musical tapestry of Cambodian life with songs that are integral to various Khmer rites of passage
 - ♪ **Khmer Jazz Fusion** which merges Cambodian musical instruments with forms of Western jazz
- Purchase a *sbaek thom* or *sbaek toch*! These shadow puppets are made from leather and feature gorgeous, elaborate designs and colouring. Depicting scenes and characters from the *Ramayana*, folktales and everyday Khmer life, these puppets are stunning artefacts of a tradition that dates to pre-Angkorean times. The proceeds from your purchases will support the performers and their community.



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Photos: John McDermott, A.K. Kimoto, Hannah Stevens