UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12PM THURSDAY 13 JULY

POWERFUL NEW PIECE BY HIM SOPHY AND RITHY PANH

BANGKOK: A Requiem for Cambodia is an on stages around the world in 2017

PHUKET, THAILAND, 4 JULY 2017 – Bangkok: A Requiem for Cambodia, is a groundbreaking new composition fusing music, voice, film and movement, and the first major symphonic work addressing the travails of the late 1970s in Cambodia. Commissioned by Cambodian Living Arts, the symphonic work is performed by internationally-acclaimed composer IMH Sophy and internationally-renowned film director Rithy Panh. It will premiere in Melbourne in October 2017, and travel to New York and Boston in December 2017. 2018 will see performances in Europe and Asia, and in 2019 it will return to Phnom Penh, in the 40th year since the fall of the Khmer Rouge.

Bangkok: A Requiem for Cambodia blends traditional Cambodian music with the Western requiem form and elements from Buddhism, the ceremony that accompanies Buddhist funeral rites. IMH Sophy’s score is performed by a 6-piece ensemble of traditional Cambodian instruments, a Western orchestra, singers IMH Sophy and CHHON Sam Ath, and a chamber choir. Rithy Panh is the projections artist/architectural footage with surreal imagery, capturing defining moments from Cambodia’s history. Together with stage performance by OMAVAN (Barre Sobelship), Bangkok is a truly immersive experience.

Bangkok: A Requiem for Cambodia is the latest major production commissioned by Cambodian Living Arts, as well as being an important and meaningful story about conflict and healing, with resonance around the world. CLA hopes that Bangkok will help draw global attention to the art being made in Cambodia today. An artistically complex and challenging piece, CLA is working to build capacity in Cambodia so that it can be performed here in 2018, including supporting the development of a Cambodian chamber orchestra. Bangkok ends with a message of hope – that even after atrocities, the transmission of arts and culture is both possible and vital, a sentiment that has been at the heart of CLA’s work since the beginning.

PHAvea PEM, Executive Director of Cambodian Living Arts, said:

“I’m thrilled that CLA, as commissioner and executive producer, can help tell this vital and – today, exceptionally relevant – story from Cambodia. Bangkok shows the resilience of Cambodian people – adversity remains alive despite a genocide and an attempt to eradicate our culture. Bangkok offers that sense of healing, personal reconciliation, and renewed hope for the future to Cambodians across generations firing all over the world. I hope that those in other post-conflict nations will be inspired by this piece, and it can support their own healing, and the continued transmission of their cultures.”

IMH Sophy said:

“When I composed the music I wanted the feelings I had during the Khmer Rouge times, it was hell on earth. It is important for the requiem to be shown around the world so that everyone can see that tragedy is a shared experience. There is hope in creation, I always tell people. Remember, never forget. Protect the future from repeating the past.”

Rithy Panh said:

“Bangkok is a vital act of memory. It is an attempt to give dignity to the dead; to reconnect with our own past to give a face and a name to the victims, to give their souls peace. Some have said that poetry after atrocity is not possible anymore, yet we need to hear it. We must continue to create. We can’t stop mourning without knowing how, and part of knowing how is to accept something very painful, something unmentionable. This act may bring us answers, help us accept our pain and loss. Yet, it is more than an act of remembrance, it’s an act of transmission and brings humanization. Something which the Khmer Rouge attempted to take away from us.”

Bangkok: A Requiem for Cambodia is a global collaboration centered in Cambodia, based on an original idea by CLA’s founder Chea CHEY. The Requiem was written by Frank WAHOUT, a scholar of Southeast Asian Buddhist music. Melbourne-based Gibbon CHANAKN Throughout music director Andrew CHIN is a conductor of the orchestra, the New York-based Metropole (assemble). Cambodian Living Arts performing arts served as the producer and company manager in Cambodia, and Phnom Penh’s provided archival material and technical expertise. The producer is THE AVANCE performing arts • FILM. The Embassies of Australia and of the United States have provided invaluable support.

There will be a press conference with the creative teams, including IMH Sophy and Rithy Panh, and Phnom Penh on 19-20-21 at 12-PM on Thursday 13 July at the Cambodian Living Arts Theater at the National Museum of Cambodia. To attend, or for any further inquiries, please email: phnompenh@CambodianLivingArts.org or call: 012345678.

For full information and media resources, please visit www.Bangkok-CambodianLivingArts.org

About Cambodian Living Arts

- Cambodian Living Arts was founded in 1998 by musician and human rights activist Am CHHON Sam Ath
- Cambodian Living Arts mission is to be a catalyst in vibrant arts sector, inspiring new generations
- CLA helps talented people to build and develop careers in the arts, through scholarships, fellowships, and support to composers and individuals. CLA aims to promote creativity and innovation in the art sector, and to build links with neighborhoods in the Greater Mekong region and further afield in Asia. CLA is also working to get more arts and culture education into Cambodian public schools, and to increase performance opportunities for Cambodian artists.

Media Contact:
Name: Hector Strook
Phone: 012345678
Email: hector@CambodianLivingArts.org

Connect with us: