



CAMBODIAN

ROCK BAND

BY **LAUREN YEE**

FT. SONGS BY **DENGUE FEVER**

DIRECTED BY **LILY TUNG CRYSTAL**

JUN 8 - JUL 31 |

JUNGLE THEATER

THEATER
MU

PHOTO BY RICH RYAN FT. CHRISTOPHER J. POW, DANIELLE TROMANO, AND GREG WATANABE

D'LOURDES



- 1. How Did You Get So Good?*
- 2. Texas In The Spring*
- 3. Wait For Me*
- 4. Melancholy*
- 5. Mr. Man*
- 6. sophie voice memo*
- 7. Catholic Guilt*
- 8. Love Isn't For The Weak*

available on all music platforms



follow D'LOURDES:



WELCOME TO CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The land on which the Jungle resides is the stolen and occupied ancestral homeland of the Dakota peoples. Mni Sota Makoce (Minnesota) is land with a deep history and with many stories to tell, stories belonging not only to the Dakota, but to the Anishinaabe and the many other tribal nations who call this place home.

We recognize that this acknowledgment is the first step, but we start by honoring the truth and the work of Indigenous activists towards a greater recognition that our relationship to the land matters.

AUDIENCE INFO & POLICIES

COVID-19 POLICY: The Jungle Theater requires masks for audience members in all areas of the theater, as well as proof of up-to-date vaccination or proof of negative Covid-19 test within 72 hours of showtime.

PHOTO & VIDEO: The video taping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings of this production and distributing recordings or streams in any medium, including the internet, is strictly prohibited, a violation of the author's rights, and actionable under United States copyright law. For more information please visit: concordtheatricals.com/resources/protecting-artists.

PHONES: Please turn off or silence all devices during the performance.

CONCESSIONS: Our Jungle concessions will be open for intermission. Complimentary water is available on the south end of the lobby. We ask that food and drink consumption remains in the lobby.

OUR ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

The Jungle Theater embraces both the law and the spirit of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) in our commitment to assuring that all members of our community can participate as fully as possible in our events, programs, meetings, facilities, and communications.

ASL INTERPRETED/AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES:

The Jungle offers both ASL and audio described performances for our season. These performance dates can be found on www.jungletheater.org/accessibility.

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Minneapolis, MN 55413



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Monday: 8:30am - 1pm; 2:30pm - 6pm
Tuesday: 2pm - 6pm
Wednesday: 8:30am - 1pm; 2:30pm - 6pm
Thursday: 2pm - 6pm
Friday: 8am - 1pm

lynlakechiropractic.com

FROM THE DIRECTOR

When I first experienced *Cambodian Rock Band*, it was a revelation.

My grandfather, great grandmother, and more than half of my father's 16 siblings lost their lives at the hands of communist soldiers. I learned that history through family stories, but also discovered it through the unraveling of family secrets, held tight by my parents as they fought to keep my brother, sister, and me free from their burdens of the past.



At its heart, *Cambodian Rock Band* is a story of intergenerational war trauma and how one man's survival through genocide impacts his daughter's American journey. Many of us in the refugee and immigrant communities know this narrative well. As we navigate our identities, as first, second, and third generation Americans, we wonder about the history from whence we came. How do our parents' and grandparents' paths determine ours? How does our ancestors' trauma affect us? And can facing our past heal our family wounds?

Like Chum, many of our parents faced unimaginable suffering and then courageously came to America to give their children a better life. What were they forced to endure? What would we have done to survive had we been in their shoes? What would we have sacrificed—ourselves, our loved ones, our humanity?

Into this story of love and loss enter the vibrant sounds of Khmer music. It lifts and complicates, kills and saves. As in many communist revolutions, the Khmer Rouge takeover brought an artistic annihilation—musical careers, dreams, and lives cut short. As the musicians of *Cambodian Rock Band* come back to life through storytelling, we feel the deep chasm they left in Cambodia and the world when that music died.

But it's also the artists—present, past, and future—who remind us that hope exists. The music continues. It lifts. It transforms. And that's where the brilliance of *Cambodian Rock Band* lies. While it mourns a region's immense loss, it also celebrates the resilience of the human spirit. We hope you honor that story with us today, as it magically weaves together music and words, tragedy and joy.

LILY TUNG CRYSTAL

Director
Artistic Director, Theater Mu

██████████
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██████████, Angry
Men ██████████
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JUNGLE THEATER

THEATER
MU

P R E S E N T S

CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND

WRITTEN BY **LAUREN YEE**

FEATURING SONGS BY **DENGUE FEVER**

DIRECTED BY **LILY TUNG CRYSTAL**

MUSIC DIRECTOR **MANDRIC TAN**

SCENIC & PROJECTION DESIGNER **MINA KINUKAWA**

COSTUME DESIGNER **KHAMPHIAN VANG** | COSTUME DIRECTOR **SARAH BAHR**

WIG, HAIR, AND MAKEUP DESIGNER **EMMA GUSTAFSON**

LIGHTING CO-DESIGNER **AMY ADELAIDE NGUYEN** | LIGHTING CO-DESIGNER **KARIN OLSON**

SOUND DESIGNER **SEAN HEALEY** | FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER **ANNIE ENNEKING**

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR **JAKE SUNG-GUK SULLIVAN** *

STAGE MANAGER/PROPERTIES DESIGNER **JOHN NOVAK***

CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE CONSULTANT **MONGKOL TENG**

DRAMATURGY FELLOW **CODY KOUR** | DRAMATURGY ADVISOR **ANNIE JIN WANG**

ASSISTANT SCENIC DESIGNER **YUNZHU "JESSICA" CHEN**

CAST

Pou/Karaoke Host/S21 Guard **MAYDA MILLER**
Rom/Journalist **SHAWN MOUACHEUPAO**
Ted/Leng **CHRISTOPHER THOMAS POW**
Duch **ERIC SHARP***
Neary/Sothea **DANIELLE TROIANO**
Chum **GREG WATANABE***
Acting Fellow: Karaoke Host/
Journalist/S21 Guard **DERYCK HAK**
(Jun 28-Jul 31 performances)

SPECIAL THANKS

Sarah Rasmussen, Shannon Robinson, Shannon Fitzgerald, Nanci Olesen & Steve Epp, Cedar Cultural Center, Children's Theater Company, Lisa Crystal and Mark Houts, Dr. Zeke McKinney, the Hak Family, Amber Bjork, Jeremy Ellarby, Jared Zeigler/Interact, Tony Stoerli/Carleton College, Costume Collective, Augsburg University

CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND commissioned and first produced by South Coast Repertory with support from the Time Warner Foundation.

This play is a recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award.

Developed with support from The Ground Floor at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA.



* These actors and stage managers are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



* Member of IATSE, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States. The IATSE is the labor union representing technicians, artisans and craftspersons in the entertainment industry, including live theatre, motion picture and television production, and trade shows.



Financial support for the associate director of this production is provided by the Knight Foundation through a collaboration with the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts' GreenRoom initiative.

PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCTION MANAGER **MATTHEW EARLEY** | TECHNICAL DIRECTOR **MATTHEW ERKEL**
HEAD ELECTRICIAN **RAY STEVESON** | SCENIC CHARGE ARTIST **JENI RADDATZ TOLIFSON**
BOARD OPERATOR/PROGRAMMER **MICAYLA THEBAULT-SPIEKER** | SOUND INTERN **LUCAS MARTIN**
AUDIO ENGINEER **MICAH KOPECKY** | AUDIO ENGINEER SWING **CHARLOTTE DERANEK**
DRESSER **BECCA MICHELLE** | DRAPER **SHEILA HEIL** | STITCHERS **DAKOTA BLAKENSHIP, REBECCA KARSTAD**
FIGHT CAPTAIN **DANIELLE TROIANO** | COVID-19 SAFETY COORDINATOR **BARRY INMAN**
STAGE MANAGEMENT INTERN **SKYE REDDY** | PRODUCTION ASSISTANT **JOHN MIDDLETON**
ELECTRICIANS **MICAYLA THEBAULT-SPIEKER, JEREMY ELLARBY, ERIN BELPEDIO, ANDY GLISCHINSKI,**
PAUL EPTON* | CARPENTERS **JOHN STILLWELL, JULIA REISINGER, BRENT ANDERSON, GUNTHER**
GULLICKSON, ALLANA OLSON*, TYLER KROHN, KAT HUNTER, JOHN LUTZ
RUN CREW **JOHN MIDDLETON, NATHAN KLEPPE** | RUN CREW SWING **CULLOM MCCORMICK**

SONG CREDITS

"Uku" "Family Business" "One Thousand Tears of a Tarantula" "Cement Slippers" "Sni Bong" "Tooth and Nail" all written by Dengue Fever. All Dengue Fever songs administered by Ellipsis Music Corp. (ASCAP) and Pentagon Lipservices (BMI) on behalf of CHOM CHIMNEY • 1 ARMED CRAB PUB • FOOLISH MORTAL PUB • NOON KEY MUSIC • S W O P SONGS • TROLL UNDER THE BRIDGE. Dengue Fever music and information are available from <http://denguefevermusic.com>

'The Times They Are A-Changin'' Written by Bob Dylan, Copyright © 1963, 1964 by Warner Bros. Inc.; renewed 1991, 1992 by Special Rider Music. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

JEAS CYCLO by Yo! Aularong; TODAY I LEARN TO DRINK, OLD POT STILL COOKS TASTY RICE, I AM SIXTEEN by Ros Serey Sothea; and CHAMPA BATTAMBANG by Sinn Sisamouth

All used by arrangement with Minky Records, Inc.

Additional Arrangements by Matthew MacNelly and Jane Lui.

*Minneapolis Arrangements by Mandric Tan.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



MAYDA MILLER

Pou/Ensemble | She/Her

Mayda is a Korean adopted musician/producer. She has been writing her own music and performing internationally for over 10 years. Mayda's music has been featured on the *Rachael Ray Show*, HBO, Showtime, *Good Morning America*, KFC, MTV, BRAVO TV, KARE 11, movies, and commercials. In 2015, Mayda cut her teeth in theater by boldly writing and producing her one-woman piece, *DeMayda'd*. *DeMayda'd* debuted at the Guthrie Theater for two nights. She remounted the performance for a four-day run at the Bryant Lake Bowl & Theater the next year. Since then, Mayda has been cast in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* at Theater Latté Da. Mayda is planning on releasing a new album in the fall of 2022 and continues to see where theater and music takes her.



SHAWN MOUACHEUPAO

Rom/Ensemble | He/Him

Shawn is a Hmong American drummer, composer, and educator based out of Saint Paul, Minnesota.

He is a proud representative of Hmong musicians and encourages education and commitment to the craft. Shawn has composed multiple songs for bands, and radio stations such as MPR, the Current, and KFAL.



CHRISTOPHER THOMAS POW

Ted/Leng | He/Him

Christopher is so excited to make his Minneapolis debut with the Jungle and Theater Mu! Christopher is an actor and musician from Chicago, Illinois. Previous credits include Pip in *Great Expectations*, Ferdinand in *The Tempest* (Great River Shakespeare Festival [GRSF]); Ted/Leng/Guitar in *Cambodian Rock Band* (co-produced at Victory Gardens Theater, City Theatre Company, and Merrimack Repertory Theatre); and Thuy Fan/Hong Feng/Mr. Cheung in *Mliima's Tale* (Griffin Theatre Company). Christopher also voiced Ross in the GRSF's audio production of *Macbeth* and Jeff Balasco in Evil Kitten Production's audio drama *The Continuing Adventures of John Blade: Super Spy* by Kyle Encinas. Christopher is currently working on his debut music album and hopes to release it in 2022. He is represented by Shirley Hamilton Talent Representation.



ERIC SHARP

Duch | He/Him

A veteran of both Mu and Jungle stages, Eric is thrilled to be a part of this wonderful

collaboration. At Theater Mu, Eric has appeared in *Today Is My Birthday*, *Hot Asian Doctor Husband*, *Charles Francis Chan Jr...*, *Two Mile Hollow*, and *Yellow Fever*, among many others. Eric recently directed the YouTube series *The Remix with Theater Mu*, and produced, directed, and performed in *You Shall Hear Me: Stories From Beyond*. Jungle audiences have seen him in *Hand to God*, *Small Mouth Sounds*, and *Is Edward Snowden Single?* Other credits include Paula Vogel's *Bard at the Gate*, Guthrie Theater, Ten Thousand Things, Trademark Theater, Frank Theatre, and the Minnesota, Toronto, and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals. Eric's voiceover work can be heard on Netflix, Hulu, HBO Max, and Penguin Random House Audio. Up Next: *Vietgone* at the Guthrie Theater | worksharpp.org



DANIELLE TROIANO

Neary/Sothea,
Fight Captain | She/They
Danielle graduated from

the UMN/Guthrie BFA acting program in 2020. Theater credits include The Acting Company in NYC, Guthrie Theater, Ten Thousand Things, Parallel 45, Theater Mu, and Notre Dame Shakespeare. Aside from acting, her biggest passion is her musical persona under the name D'LOURDES, and she released her first EP of the same name in May, available on all platforms! Go check it out! She recently opened for Jay R, the "Filipino King of RnB" in March, and she is looking forward to doing more live shows with her original music in the coming year. Be sure to follow her journey on IG @danielle.troiano, TikTok @dourdesmusic, as well as on Facebook and YouTube for release dates, upcoming performances, and good ol' fashioned foolery.



GREG WATANABE

Chum | He/Him

Greg made his Broadway debut in *Allegiance* and was recently seen in *Cambodian Rock*

Band at Victory Gardens, the City Theatre Pittsburgh, and Merrimack Repertory Theatre, *Hold These Truths* at Virginia Stage Company, and *The Great Leap* at Asolo Repertory Theatre. Other appearances include world premiere productions of

The Ballad Of Yachiyo (Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Public Theater-New York), *The Summer Moon* (A Contemporary Theater, South Coast Repertory Theatre), *The Happy Ones* (South Coast Rep, LA Drama Critics Circle nomination for best featured performance), and *Extraordinary Chambers* (the Geffen Playhouse, Ovation nomination for best featured actor). Other appearances include *Golden Child* (Signature Theater), and *Yellow Face* (Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company, San Diego Theater Critics Circle nomination for Outstanding Lead Performance in a Play).



DERYCK HAK

Acting Fellow:
Ensemble | He/Him

Deryck is thrilled to be part of his first production with

Theater Mu! Favorite credits include Laurie in *Little Women* (Lyric Arts), Minoru Masuda in *Christmas of Swing* (History Theatre), and himself in his one-man show, *Between* (Renegade Theatre). He has also had the pleasure of working with Minneapolis Musical Theatre, Wildwood Theatre, and the National Theatre for Children. He received his BFA in acting from the University of Minnesota Duluth. Deryck would like to thank his family for their continued support and love. When he is not on the stage or waiting tables at Olive Garden, he can be found snuggled up in a blanket with Dude... his 10-year-old tabby cat. Enjoy the show! | deryckhak.com



LAUREN YEE

Playwright | She/Her

Lauren was the second most produced playwright in America for the 2019/20

theatrical season (as per *American Theatre Magazine*). Her plays include *Cambodian Rock Band* (South Coast Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, City Theatre, Merrimack Rep) and *The Great Leap* (Denver Center, Seattle Repertory, Atlantic Theater, Guthrie Theater, American Conservatory Theater, Arts Club, InterAct Theatre, Steppenwolf). Honors: Doris Duke Artists Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Whiting Award, Steinberg/ATCA Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters literature award, Horton Foote Prize, Kesselring Prize, Primus Prize, Hodder Fellowship, No. 1 and No. 2 plays on 2017 Kilroys' List. New Dramatists, Ma-Yi Writers' Lab, Playwrights Realm alum. TV: *Pachinko* (Apple+ TV), *Soundtrack* (Netflix). BA: Yale. MFA: UCSD. | laurenyee.com

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



LILY TUNG CRYSTAL

Director, Theater Mu
Artistic Director | *She/Her*
Grateful to be collaborating

with such talented and generous artists in the Twin Cities, Lily has directed Jiehae Park's *peerless* and Susan Soon He Stanton's *Today Is My Birthday* at Mu, and MN Opera's *Art is a Verb* (Harrison Rivers, librettist). Other shows include David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish* and *Flower Drum Song* at Palo Alto Players, and the world premiere of Leah Nanako Winkler's *Two Mile Hollow* at Ferocious Lotus, all for which she was named a three-time Theatre Bay Area Award Finalist for Outstanding Direction. As an actor/singer, Lily has performed at theaters across the country, including Cal Shakes, Crowded Fire, Magic Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, New World Stages, Playwrights' Center, Portland Center Stage, SF Playhouse, and Syracuse Stage. She is a YBCA 100 honoree, named by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts as a "creative pioneer making the provocations that will shape the future of culture." | theatermu.org, lilytungcrystal.com

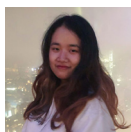


SARAH BAHR

Costume Director |
She/Her

Sarah is a Twin Cities-based
freelance costume and

scenic designer for theater, dance, and opera. Her designs have been featured with companies including the Jungle Theater, Theater Mu, Minnesota Opera, San Diego Opera, Trademark Theater, Ten Thousand Things Theater, History Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Penumbra Theatre, Guthrie, and Vail Dance Festival. In addition to teaching at various colleges in the metro area, Sarah advocates for creating space and meaningful mentorship opportunities for emerging theater makers, along with equity among theater designers and technicians. She holds a Design and Technical Theatre BFA from University of Minnesota Duluth, a Studio Art MA from New York University, and a Design and Technical Theatre MFA from the University of Minnesota. | sarahbahr.com



YUNZHU "JESSICA" CHEN

Assistant Scenic
Designer | *She/Her*

Jessica is a rising junior
studying theater and technical theater at
Macalester College. She has worked on

various department productions as an assistant sound designer and properties designer, and she has worked with Theater Mu as the assistant sound designer for the production of *Man of God*. Jessica is excited to work with Theater Mu again and with the Jungle Theater as the assistant scenic designer on this production of *Cambodian Rock Band*. She wants to thank Mina, Theater Mu, and Jungle Theater for making this happen and for the help along the way.



ANNIE ENNEKING

Fight Choreographer |
She/Her

Annie is a fight director,
musician, teaching artist, and
former actor. Her work in theatrical violence
has been seen on nearly every stage in
the Twin Cities. Highlights include *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Guthrie), *Extremities* (Dark and Stormy), *Man of La Mancha* (Theater Latté Da), *Noises Off* and *Hand to God* (Jungle Theater), and most recently *Man of God* (Theater Mu), as well as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* (University of Minnesota/Guthrie BFA program, where she is an instructor). Annie is a 2010 Playwright's Center McKnight fellow, and has received support from the Minnesota State Arts Board, Jerome Foundation, and MRAC to devise performances that use music as their primary mode of expression. She fronts and founded the rock band Annie and the Bang Bang, with whom she goes on adventures.



EMMA GUSTAFSON

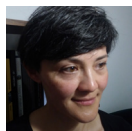
Wig, Hair, & Makeup
Designer | *She/Her*

Emma is a Twin Cities-
based wig, hair, and makeup
designer for opera and theatre. Emma holds a
cosmetology license and training from Aveda
Institute Minneapolis and a Bachelor of Arts in
Theatrical Design from Augsburg University.
By day, Emma is the Head of Wig and Makeup
at Children's Theatre Company, and by night,
you can find her jetting around working on
various projects all around town. Her passion is
putting beautiful, appropriate, flattering, and
natural-looking wigs on stage that make actors
and audiences feel at home. Emma has had
the opportunity to work with many incredible
companies including Minnesota Opera,
Children's Theatre Company, Utah Shakespeare
Festival, Guthrie Theater, Chanhassen Dinner
Theatres, Mixed Blood, Santa Fe Opera, and of
course, Jungle Theater!

SEAN HEALEY

Sound Designer | *He/Him*

Sean is currently based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Credits there include the Jungle Theater, Children's Theatre Company, Open Eye Figure Theatre, Guthrie Theater, and Theater Latté Da. Regional theater credits include the Old Globe, Dallas Theatre Center, the New Victory Theater, Arizona Theatre Company, Seattle Children's Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, Cornerstone Theater Company, and ZACH Theatre. BFA: California Institute of the Arts, 1997.



MINA KINUKAWA

Scenic & Projections Designer | *She/Her*

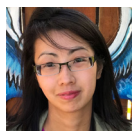
Mina has been freelancing in Minnesota for the last decade. Most recently she has designed for the Jungle Theater, Theater Mu, Full Circle Theater, Penumbra Theatre, and New Native Theatre. She has also worked on film and TV productions in Los Angeles, and designed scenery for theatres such as East West Players, Echo Theater Company, Lodestone Theatre Company, Company of Angels, Milagro Theater, Profile Theatre, and Northwest Children's Theatre Company.



CODY KOUR

Dramaturgy Fellow | *He/Him*

Cody is a second generation Khmer American writer, teacher, and scholar. A son of refugees, Cody is excited to work on *Cambodian Rock Band* as a dramaturgy fellow and is incredibly grateful to be a part of the sharing of this story. He enjoys working on projects that interrogate the distance between memory and truth, the relationship between artifice and "real life," and the boundaries that love always transcends. In his spare time, Cody likes to read graphic novels, write poetry, grill out with family, and go on night drives. In the future, Cody hopes to continue to collaborate with others to uplift Asian American stories through his work and art.



AMY ADELAIDE NGUYEN

Lighting Co-Designer | *She/Her*

Amy has designed for many shows and worked in many roles for the last 25 years, including touring with rock and roll bands internationally, leading creative projects for corporate brands, and serving as head house electrician for the historic State

Theatre for 10 years as well as production manager of Saint Paul's Fitzgerald Theater. Amid all that, she immensely enjoys traveling the world seeking experiences different than and not found at home. Amy is a University of Minnesota graduate based in the Twin Cities.

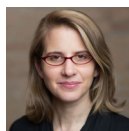


JOHN NOVAK

Stage Manager & Properties | *He/Him*

After graduating with honors from St. Olaf College in 1989,

John began a nomadic career as a stage technician and opera stage manager, crisscrossing the nation until he found a home at the Jungle Theater in 1997. Since then, he has collaborated on more than 100 Jungle productions as stage manager and/or properties manager. His other home is in the Central neighborhood of Minneapolis, which he shares with his spouse, the multi-talented creator and performer Bradley Greenwald.

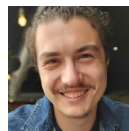


KARIN OLSON

Lighting Co-Designer | *She/Her*

Karin has been lighting performance for over 20

years, collaborating with design teams at the Guthrie, Penumbra, Mixed Blood, Artistry, Frank Theatre, Theater Mu, Full Circle Theater, and Ten Thousand Things, and with dance companies Threads Dance Project, Alternative Motion Project, Collide Theatricals and TU Dance. She designs regionally for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Syracuse Stage, and Trinity Rep. Recent designs include *Redwood* at the Jungle, *Oregon* with Skylark Opera, *Runestone* at the History Theatre, and *Antigone* at Cleveland Playhouse. | karinolsonlighting.com



JAKE SUNG-GUK SULLIVAN

Associate Director | *He/Him*

Jake is an actor, director, and educator from the Twin Cities metro area. He has recently directed [*title of show*] (Lyric Arts) and Disney's *The Little Mermaid* (Lakeshore Players Theatre). Acting credits include *The 39 Steps* (Lyric Arts), *Romeo and Juliet* (Classical Actors Ensemble), *Flower Drum Song* (Theater Mu/Park Square Theatre). Jake also leads classes in the Mu Explorations curriculum, as well as serving as the Creative Development Programs Director with the MN Opera. Upcoming projects include the world premiere adaptation of *A Different Pond*, at Stages Theatre Company.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



MANDRIC TAN

Music Director | *He/Him*
Mandric hails from Singapore with more than a decade's experience as well as a

reputation for being a widely known, multi-faceted music producer. Since graduating from the prestigious Berklee College of Music, he has played the role of a music arranger, recording engineer, and producer for numerous National Day Parades and Chingays in Singapore, and is serving as a touring musician for the Chinese king of pop, Wang Leehom.



MONGKOL TENG

Cultural and Language Consultant | *He/Him*

Mongkol is honored to serve as a cultural consultant and

language coach for *Cambodian Rock Band*. He is a native of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, but has called Minnesota home since 2008. He is a Cambodian history and language enthusiast, and previously has volunteered and served on the board of Cambodian Living Arts, a Phnom Penh-based arts nonprofit dedicated to reviving Cambodia's lost art forms and empowering and transforming individuals and communities in Cambodia through the arts. Mongkol is thrilled to be collaborating on this fantastic production with Theater Mu and Jungle Theater.



KHAMPHIAN VANG

Costume Designer | *She/Her*

Khamphian is a Twin Cities-

based freelance designer-artist with a background in fashion, theater, and costume design. She designs to elevate storytelling and engage the audience through meaningful visual composition. This is her third show with Theater Mu and her first show to be featured at Jungle Theater. Previous credits with Theater Mu are *peerless* and *Man of God*. She has designed for several productions with Full Circle Theater Company and a virtual show with Walking Shadow Theatre Company. Khamphian is grateful to have worked on *Cambodian Rock Band* with this team to give voice to the stories that reflect an important narrative in the Southeast Asian American experience.



ANNIE JIN WANG

Dramaturgy Advisor | *She/Her*

Annie is a first-generation Chinese American dramaturg

based in Brooklyn. She is delighted to support Cody, Lily, and the #MuSquad once again! In addition to serving as the production dramaturg on *Today Is My Birthday* and *peerless*, her work has recently been seen at the Civilians, Fault Line Theatre, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, Shotgun Players, Ferocious Lotus Theatre Company, and the Croatian National Theatre. Her writing has been incubated with Fresh Ground Pepper, and she is a member of the inaugural PlayGround-NY Writers' Pool. Annie is the associate director for programming and communications at PlayCo and the artistic associate at Theater Mu. MFA: Columbia University. BAs: Wellesley College. As always, for mom & dad. | wang-annie.com



CHRISTINA BALDWIN

Jungle Artistic Director | *She/Her*

Christina has directed and

performed in many Jungle productions. Her collaborations range from Shakespeare and contemporary plays, to musical theater and opera. An advocate of new work, she develops new plays, musical theater, and opera with the likes of the Ojai Playwrights Conference, the Playwrights' Center, Nautilus Music-Theater and The Moving Company. A collaborator with the Tony Award-winning Theatre de la Jeune Lune for nearly 10 years, Christina co-adapted and performed the title role in their critically-acclaimed touring production of *Carmen*. She writes, adapts, and directs operas. Christina has been a recording artist and vocalist with the Minnesota Orchestra, a writer/factor on NPR's *Wits* and *A Prairie Home Companion*, and has lent her voice to animated short films by the Dutch filmmaker Rostio A.D. (Cannes Film Festival award-winner).



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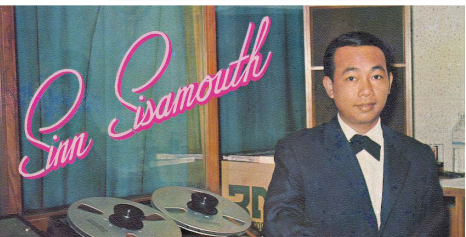
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FROM DRAMATURGY FELLOW CODY KOUR



In 1975, the Khmer Rouge, an extreme communist party led by Pol Pot, emptied Cambodia's capital city of Phnom Penh and took control of the country. The party's stated goal was to bring Cambodia back to a simple, agrarian society defined by social harmony, but the reality was a regime ruling through fear, distrust, and violence. By the time the Khmer Rouge was ousted by Vietnamese troops in 1979, the country had over 2.5 million dead, no infrastructure, and a traumatized populace. To this day, Cambodia and her people have yet to fully recover.

To share this history, Lauren Yee's play *Cambodian Rock Band* excavates the barrier between past and present as it jumps between 1978 and 2008. As it does so, the play mines a sort of remedy for the horrors of the past—a chance at reconciliation, redemption, and inner peace.

The wounds the Khmer Rouge wrought upon Cambodia in the name of progress not only affected the people but Khmer culture as well. From 1960 up until 1975, Cambodia was experiencing what has retrospectively been called "Cambodia's Golden Era of Music." Khmer musicians such as Sinn Sisamouth had crafted a unique sound by blending traditional Khmer music with rock and pop influences from Latin America, Europe, and the United States.

Once the Khmer Rouge took over, Pol Pot declared it was Year Zero and intended to "purify" Cambodia of its past in favor of a communist future. Anything having to do with the West, the past, modernity, urbanity, or individuality was considered a threat to their new utopia. Suspected or accused dissenters were taken away, imprisoned, and executed. This included creatives, intellectuals, religious leaders, teachers, musicians, artists, capitalists, monks, and anybody else deemed unnecessary or threatening to the new regime.

Families were torn apart and reassigned to villages or camps across the country because all of Cambodia was now considered one's family, a comrade. Marriages were arranged by the Khmer Rouge, and premarital sex was punishable by execution, as was dancing, painting, singing, writing, praying, and playing music. The uniform of the entire country was black clothing with a red krama, the symbol of the party. Food was heavily rationed, and the population was starved in the name of the "greater good." Khmer Rouge leaders were characterized by their greed, corruption, and hypocrisy. The only certainty during this time was death.

Still, the truth about how people were able to survive the genocide is often messier and harder to pin down, as shown by Chum's difficulty in facing his own past in the play. Similar to how one's actions may echo into the next life, he—and the audience—are haunted by the play's live band as it brings up memories of a happier time long past.

Ultimately, I find *Cambodian Rock Band* to be a journey toward acceptance. Buddhists believe in Karma: that our present and future lives are subject to the actions of our past lives. However, this idea can also create a sense of powerlessness, similar to how the Cambodian people were unable to stay out of an unwanted war, or how they couldn't save their country from themselves. From this seed of despair grows a melancholy acceptance—one rooted in futility, but also displaying the grace and beauty of defiance.

It's this beautiful melancholy that ultimately bears the fruit of resilience, one that beckoned the Khmer people to survive even when facing death daily. That spurs a child to search for a sliver of truth in the darkness. For a musician to play on, despite the world ending.



Left: photos of S-21 prison's victims at the Tulong Sleng Genocide Museum; Sinn Sisamouth, a leader of Cambodia's Golden Age, who died during the Khmer Rouge genocide.

Above: part of the Phnom Penh skyline

THE RISE & FALL OF THE KHMER ROUGE

Nov 9, 1953: King Norodom Sihanouk declares Cambodia independent from France.

Nov 1, 1955: Neighboring Vietnam begins a civil war that soon expands beyond its borders. Cambodia stays neutral.

Oct 4, 1965: Americans begin secretly bombing Cambodia, a neutral country, with 214 tons of bombs until 1968, targeting North Vietnamese supply lines and hidden bases. Cambodian civilians are killed.

1968: The Khmer Rouge, also known as the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), officially forms with the goal of fighting and replacing the Khmer government. It launches a guerrilla insurgency across the country, supported and supplied by Chinese and Vietnamese communist forces.

Mar 18, 1969: Americans begin Operation Menu, a covert carpet-bombing campaign that sent B-52s to drop 111,223 tons of bombs on Cambodia over a period of 14 months to keep Vietnamese forces at bay while Americans withdrew. Again, Cambodian civilians are killed.

Mar 18, 1970: Sihanouk, who abdicated his throne to become prime minister/chief of state, is ousted by U.S.-backed Prime Minister Lon Nol in a coup, and the Kingdom of Cambodia is newly proclaimed the "Khmer Republic." Lon Nol publicly declares allyship with the U.S. and South Vietnam and demands North Vietnamese forces leave the Khmer border. Over the radio, the exiled Prince Sihanouk beseeches the Khmer people that "still love him" to join the Khmer Rouge and topple the Khmer Republic. Thousands of peasants join the Khmer Rouge at his behest.

May 19, 1970: To support Lon Nol against the Vietnamese and Khmer communists, the Americans launch Operation Freedom Deal, another bombing campaign that dropped over 427,906 tons of bombs on the eastern half of Cambodia until Aug 15, 1973. Tens of thousands of Cambodian civilians are killed.

Mar 29, 1973: American forces withdraw from Vietnam but continue bombing Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge uses the destruction and death of the bombing runs to foster recruitment.

Apr 17, 1975: The Cambodian Civil War ends as Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, falls to the Khmer Rouge. They evacuate the city at gunpoint. U.S. nationals and Khmer Republic officials had fled the country days earlier. Year Zero begins. The Khmer Rouge enters into conflict with Vietnam for the next four years.

Jan 7, 1979: Vietnamese forces march into Phnom Penh and establish a pro-Vietnamese Kampuchean state. Khmer Rouge leadership takes refuge in Thailand.

Jan 14, 1985: Hun Sen is appointed prime minister of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

Sep 24, 1993: The monarchy is restored, and Sihanouk is reappointed as king.

July 1994: The Khmer Rouge is officially outlawed by the Cambodian government.

Apr 15, 1998: Pol Pot dies. The Khmer Rouge party is dissolved. In the years that follow, former Khmer Rouge leaders are arrested and put on trial for their crimes against humanity.

PRONUNCIATION

Khmer (kuh-MAI) -
Cambodian

Khmer Rouge (kuh-MAI
ROOJ) - a name given to the
CPK; those who say kuh-
MAIR ROOJ are using the
French pronunciation.

Phnom Penh (puh-NAWM
PEN) - Cambodia's capital

Pol Pot (pole paht) - prime
minister of Khmer Rouge-
controlled Cambodia

Duch (doik) - alias of Kang
Kech Ieu, director of S-21
prison

Chum (choom) - character
in the play

krama (KRAH-mah) - Khmer
garment used as a scarf or
bandana

cyclo (see-CLOE) - three-
wheeled cycle with pas-
senger bucket, common in
Southeast Asia

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A CREATIVE CONVERSATION WITH JUNGLE & MU ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

We sat down with Artistic Directors Christina Baldwin (Jungle) and Lily Tung Crystal (Mu) to discuss how this co-production of *Cambodian Rock Band* came together and the importance of Lauren Yee's work.



With *Cambodian Rock Band* originally planned to be part of the theaters' 2019/20 Season, much of our world has changed in recent years, including artistic leadership. Can you explain how the project has grown to embrace these changes as well as why Lauren Yee's words have kept their relevance today?

LILY: The groundwork was laid by Christina's predecessor Sarah Rasmussen and Mu's managing director at the time, Shannon Fitzgerald, as they forged the partnership to do this show together. I was thrilled to know that this was the season that I was going to inherit because I love this show; I love Lauren. Lauren and I go way back to days in the Bay Area where we did theater together, and we've just been in touch through the years.

So, I was thrilled that we were doing *Cambodian Rock Band*. Neither Theater Mu nor the Jungle could have done it without each other, which is always the beginnings of a perfect partnership.

Mu has always been a home for Lauren, giving Lauren her world premiere of *Ching Chong Chinaman*, which is one of her early pieces that happened in 2009. Lauren also

had a relationship with the Jungle and Sarah, in particular because they got their MFAs at the same school. It seemed like a good space for Lauren to entrust her beloved piece—and I say beloved, because it's a very important work for her as well as for the people who created it with her. And it's a beloved piece for the Asian American community and the national theater community at large.

So, that's the beginnings of this partnership; then, of course, everything stopped in March 2020. So, we put a pin in it, waiting to pick it up when we could. And we are so thrilled that happened.

You asked how we're bringing it into the present because life is so different now than it was in 2019 and 2020. For both our companies, as well as for a lot of the theater community in the Twin Cities and nationally, we don't want to keep doing things the way we did. There's a long history of traumatic behavior within the theater industry, and now we are in this racial reckoning during a pandemic.

I think a lot of theaters are trying to look at how we can do things differently, both from a workplace environment and from an EDI standpoint (equity, diversity, and inclusion). In terms of the latter, the Jungle has been amazing allies for us. We're of course a theater of color, and so our work is really focused on social activism work within theater; we cannot separate politics from our art.

We made some changes this time around. Our design team is larger and includes more Asian American designers, so the majority of our design team is Asian American. This was really important to us because we believe that the best people to tell Asian American stories are Asian American artists, both on stage and backstage.

We also are taking care of our audiences. We're doing some dramaturgy in the Jungle lobby and have information about the history of Cambodia, the genocide, and the *Cambodian rock bands*.

I don't want to make it sound like this show is all tragedy. It discusses a very tragic moment in history, but the beautiful thing about this play is that Lauren has taken the tragedy of the Cambodian genocide and paired it with the beauty of art and music. There's tragedy and grief, but there's also joy and resilience of the human spirit.

CHRISTINA: You're touching on something that I think is really hard to explain to folks, in that the work of theater is forever changed and should be forever changed. I also love that Theater Mu is a change maker in all of this, and the Jungle Theater is trying to follow along in those same steps to attend to the person who's doing the work, not just the work itself. And of course, the work is being held to a high standard. But what is that standard? Who are these people in this work? And who are the people who are in that room? I think we've both realized with this partnership that we are learning so much, and I love being able to work with all the amazing artists we have in our community. And we need to take care of each other.

In a piece like this, there's amazing rock music and some really amazing performances about some really traumatic events. But there's still this buoyancy to it. That cost is oftentimes on those people who are doing it, and that's a big thing, to be able to pull that off. I think an average audience member wouldn't see this cost because we have such great performers and people around this to make this a story that holds itself together with all of the pain, with all of the art, with the joy, with the humor, the darkness, and the music. It's hard when something is so 3D like that. It's hard to impart the fact that there's a lot of care that has to go into it behind the scenes.

If there was one thing you hope audiences get out of experiencing *Cambodian Rock Band*, what would that be?

CHRISTINA: I would say that what I love is that this isn't a play about victimhood, and it's not a play about voyeuristic trauma. This is a play about such survival and resiliency, and what we do out of love and how messy it gets. With that, I feel like I've always had a very love-hate relationship with musical theater in my life, and this play epitomizes to me this joy of seeing music when it has its little claws bared and it attaches to the drama of a piece and enhances it. And neither side is having to give anything up for the other.

LILY: I think Christina is totally right. Both the text and the music really work together, and neither is more important than the other. It really pushes the audience to embrace the entirety of the human experience.

In our work as a theater company and my work personally, as a director, I'm always interested in truth and authenticity. For us the universality of storytelling is through specificity. Because it's a Cambodian story, we want to respect what that reality is. And so, I hope that we've honored that experience for our Khmer/Cambodian community.

I hope that the Cambodian community, Asian American community at large, and Asian American artists will come and see themselves and their stories on stage. This story is so engaging and rich that non-Asian audiences can also see themselves in the story: the story of love, joy, trauma, resilience. Because again, only when we're telling the stories of Asian American characters that are rich and not generalized, not stereotyped, but complicated characters with complicated narratives, do we start emphasizing universality—what happens when all audiences can empathize and see themselves in these stories.

Answers have been edited for playbill length and clarity. To check out the entire interview, visit: jungletheater.org/CRB-conversations



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A photograph of a five-piece band performing on stage under spotlights. The band consists of a keyboardist, a guitarist, a drummer, a singer, and another guitarist. The singer is in the center, holding a microphone and a tambourine.

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ABOUT THEATER MU

Theater Mu (pronounced M00) is the second largest Asian American theater company in the nation, co-led by artistic director Lily Tung Crystal and managing director Anh Thu Pham. Founded in 1992, Mu celebrates and empowers the Asian American community through mainstage productions, emerging artist support, and educational outreach programs. Theater Mu is a member of the Consortium of Asian American Theaters & Artists as well as a member of the Twin Cities Theatres of Color Coalition, proudly standing alongside New Native Theatre, Pangea World Theater, Penumbra Theatre, and Teatro Del Pueblo.

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ABOUT THE JUNGLE THEATER

The Jungle Theater creates resonant theater, focusing on telling stories that matter, with deep care and attention to detail. The Jungle is deeply rooted in its LynLake neighborhood in Minneapolis and plays a vital role in the economic and cultural development of the area.

OUR MISSION

The Jungle Theater creates courageous, resonant theater that challenges, entertains, and sparks expansive conversation.

OUR VISION

To be a neighborhood theater with national impact, indispensable to our community and aspirational to the field.

OUR VALUES

STORIES MATTER.

ARTISTRY IS A HABIT OF ATTENTION.

A PLAY ISN'T COMPLETE WITHOUT AN AUDIENCE.

A GREAT THEATER CARES FOR ITS PEOPLE.

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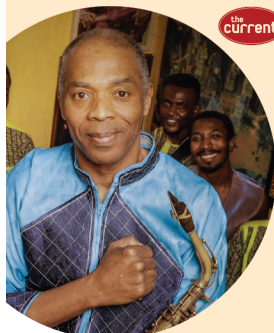
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