

PHNOM PENH: RESCUE ARCHEOLOGY | THE BODY AND THE LENS IN THE CITY

Artist	About the Artist	Artwork Title	Year	Medium	Duration	About Artwork
Anida Yoeu ALI	<p>Anida Yoeu ALI Born 1974 Cambodia / Lives and works Phnom Penh</p> <p>Ali is an artist whose works span performance, installation, video, poetry, public encounters, and political agitation. She is a first generation Muslim Khmer woman born in Cambodia and raised in Chicago. Her works investigate the artistic, spiritual and political collisions of a hybrid transnational identity. After residing for over three decades outside of Cambodia, Ali returned to work in Phnom Penh and co-founded Studio Revolt, a collaborative media lab. Ali holds a B.F.A., Graphic Design, University of Illinois and M.F.A., Performance, School of the Art Institute Chicago.</p>	<i>Enter the Ruins</i>	2012	HD video, single-channel looped	4' 04"	<p>This suite of works are part of a series created during a 3-month residency period with JavaArts' Arts Lab in 2012 for Ali's first Cambodia-based solo exhibition titled "The Space Between Inside/Outside", a body of work united through the use of a red stool, a common object given a magnificent scale. Somewhere between performance, event, and object, these videos explore personal and poetic ruminations on loss and life. Seeking empty or abandoned urban spaces that held either a sense of construction or destruction in their vacancy, Ali, with her red fabric, intended to infuse them with a sense life. The site of <i>Enter the Ruins</i> is one of destruction at Boueng Kak; <i>Enter the Lot</i> was based in Stung Meanchey at a site being prepped for construction, and <i>Enter the Past</i> was staged in a colonial mansion. For the artist, these works "merge and linger as measures of time and space; between here and there, inside and outside, between the past and what will pass."</p>
		<i>Enter the Lot</i>	2012	HD video, single-channel looped	4'	
		<i>Enter the Past</i>	2012	HD video, single-channel looped	3'	
KHAVAY Samnang	<p>Khvay Samnang Born 1982 Svay Rieng, Cambodia Lives and works Phnom Penh</p> <p>With subtle humour and coded communication, Khvay Samnang offers new interpretations of history, contentious current affairs, and longstanding cultural practices. Working primarily in photography and performance practices, Khvay creates from the role of a participant, perusing everyday life for unresolved stories that he believes require intervention, even if only symbolic. Recent exhibitions include <i>Staging Cambodia</i> at HAU, Berlin (2014), the 4th Asian Art Biennale, Taipei, and 4th Singapore Biennale (both 2013).</p>	<i>Untitled</i>	2011	Single-channel video with sound	4'	<p>Throughout 2010, Khvay made nine precarious performances in five of Phnom Penh's largest lakes. He entered the lakes, among refuse, vegetation, or families dismantling their homes, searching for an unknown anchor to which he could tie his body. It is from these landscapes that <i>Untitled</i> begins and ends as Khvay pours one bucket of sand over his head. This quiet and succinct act was for posterity: a marker of urban change, and a gesture of solidarity for the increasing number of evictees country-wide.</p> <p><i>Samnang (Lucky) Cow Taxi</i> responds to locations and conditions where it is enacted. Wearing a set of buffalo horns sculpted from human hair – a reference to low-tech rural Cambodia, where cows remain essential for transport and ploughing - the artist tries to be helpful. ...<i>Moves Sand, Phnom Penh</i> was a humble effort to reverse the public to private flow of sand in Phnom Penh today. He journeyed 30 kilometers in 3 days, carting a growing collection of refuse dirt and sand from gutters and construction sites to deliver it back to the Mekong River, where severe erosion is in part due to increased sand dredging.</p> <p><i>Newspaper Man</i> calls attention to the Boueng Kak area's recent history, while critiquing the nature of journalism in Cambodia today. The artist – fully wrapped by Khmer newspapers, walks blindly and clumsily on the sand-filled former lake under the hot sun, tripping over remnants of houses as excavators move in the distance. In his words, "Since the local press ignored news about the lake, I used my body to write about it." Questioned on site by police, he replied, "I'm selling newspapers." Puzzled, they stated the space was empty. The artist responded, "Exactly, business people always think ahead. You are developing this lake, and I am here first!"</p>
		<i>Samnang Cow Taxi Moves Sand, Phnom Penh</i>	2011	Performance, single-channel video with sound	18' 29"	
		<i>Newspaper Man</i>	2012	Single-channel video (installation with sand) with sound	6' 22"	

KIM Hak	<p>Kim Hak Born 1981 in Battambang Lives and works Phnom Penh</p> <p>Kim Hak is a photographer and teacher of photography. His practice often intimately explores layered histories of specific places and events. Hak's serial work has been widely published and featured in exhibitions and festivals internationally including Photo Quai, Paris and Singapore International Photography Festival. He won the Artistic Creation Project at Branly Museum, Paris in 2011. Hak recently published his first book <i>Unity</i> about the funeral of former King Norodom Sihanouk.</p>	<i>Daun Penh</i>	2011	Digital photography / Slide show with sound	5' 57"	<i>Daun Penh</i> is a dedication to the urbanites who forcibly left Phnom Penh by the Khmer Rouge to never return. Shooting out the back window of a tuk-tuk, Kim Hak captured the city's monuments, streets, and people, often at night. Black frames above and below offer a sliver of vision, symbolically exposing the light where a strip of black cloth blindfold victims during transport and execution. To place <i>Daun Penh</i> in the context of performance and video is less explicit than the other works; it is not in fact a performance, nor clearly video. Carried through the streets unseen, the artist captured successive layers of the past and present with consideration to Phnom Penh as a whole, further expressed by his soundtrack. Also his video is a collection of still photographs presented in slide show format.
LEANG Seckon	<p>Leang Seckon Born in Prey Veng Lives and works Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.</p> <p>Leang Seckon studied design and painting at the Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh. In both playful and serious tones, his works in collage, sculpture, installation and video layer past and present myths and histories specific to the Cambodian Kingdom. Leang has participated in numerous international exhibitions including Kathmandu International Art Festival and Shanghai Biennial (2012), <i>Rescue Archaeology</i>, Berlin and Stuttgart (2013), and multiple exhibitions with Rossi and Rossi, London.</p>	<i>Goodbye Boeung Kak</i>	2010	Performance / Single-channel video with sound	10' 07"	Once a longtime resident at Boueng Kak, artist Leang Seckon choreographed a performance shortly before eviction from his home in 2010. <i>Goodbye Boeung Kak</i> documents the artist's poetic critique of the sand infilling at the lake. A group of men in a boat are try to save a large ceremonial flag designed as a fish. When they discover it is already dead, they begin to perform a traditional funeral procession and ritual in the artists home. Dressed in white, they proceed to 'dress' the fish and the soon-to-perish home in white. After enacting a calling of the souls with <i>popil</i> and candles they hold a cremation ceremony atop the sand.
LIM Sokchanlina	<p>Lim Sokchanlina Born 1987, Prey Veng Lives and works Phnom Penh</p> <p>Pairing a conceptual and archival impulse, Lim's practice in photography, video, and installation call attention to social, cultural, economic and environmental change in Cambodia. His recent works in performance and video approach similar themes through fantastical landscapes requiring laborious processes. Recent exhibitions include <i>Urban Street Night Club</i>, Art Stage Singapore (2014), <i>Wrapped Future at Triangle Park, Brooklyn</i> (2013), and <i>Phnom Penh: Rescue Archaeology</i>, ifa, Berlin (2013). He is a founding member of the artist collective Stiev Selapak (2007 -).</p>	<p><i>White Building (Rock)</i></p> <p><i>Urban Street Night Club</i></p>	2011	Performance / Single-channel video with sound	6' 15"	<p><i>White Building (Rock)</i> was created in response to the private encroachment on the historical Front du Bassac cultural district. Atop the White Building, Lim's performance forecasts the fate of the architecture and its residents. He struggles to remain standing, holding a heavy rock taken from a nearby construction site, while being pulled by people from all directions until he collapses. The artist silently asks what forces will determine the future of the White Building in a context in which many residents regard its destruction as inevitable, or even imminent.</p> <p>At the onset of heightened construction in Phnom Penh, Lim began to photograph fences as physical and psychological barometers of urban change. For <i>Urban Street Night Club</i>, he deftly approaches the latest fencing trends in which banal barricades are transformed into scripted urban spaces. Not considered a performance by the artist, rather a document from the roadside at night, he captured the 'performance' of street life at a kilometer-long fence surrounding Naga Casino and Buddhist Institute, which depict idealized images of Cambodia awash in a rainbow of light from suspended LEDs. Lim's non-narrative sequences stress observation as a way to address tensions between the imagery and its power to both fictionalize and disguise what it hides.</p>

Amy Lee SANFORD	<p>Amy Lee Sanford Born 1972, Phnom Penh / Lives and works Phnom Penh</p> <p>Sanford is a Cambodian-American, visual artist. Her work explores love, loss and internal evolution, including the lasting psychological effects of trauma, guilt, alienation, and displacement. In 2013, her performances were hosted by Governors Island, NYC, Asialink at University of Melbourne, and UCLA. Sanford is a recipient of the Bursary Award, for the PSI#19 conference at Stanford University (2013), and she was awarded the Hill End Residency, Australia (2014). Amy has a degree in the Visual Arts, from Brown University.</p>	<p><i>Building Again</i></p> <p><i>Break Pot Sketch: Tree Island</i></p>	<p>2012</p> <p>2012</p>	<p>Video documentation of performance, sound</p> <p>Performance, single-channel video with sound</p>	<p>14' 33"</p> <p>12' 55"</p>	<p>Walls of exposed clay bricks and cement are an everyday sight in today's Phnom Penh - visible on almost any street as a work-in-progress. With these vernacular materials, Amy Lee Sanford's <i>Building Again</i> was enacted in Sothea's Park, commissioned by Our City Festival. The performance consisted of people demolishing a freestanding 3 x 2 meter brick wall - built specifically for the performance - with sledgehammers and other hand tools. A large group of neighborhood children came and played with the rubble, and joined the second part of the performance. Collectively, the bricks were chiseled clean by hand, and used to rebuild the wall. The result was a wall approximately 25cm x 3m.</p> <p><i>Break Pot Sketch, Tree Island</i> is one of Sanford's performative iterations that speak to "keeping up appearances" when things are shattered - a phrase Sanford associates with the fabric of contemporary Cambodia. Alone on a traffic island during Phnom Penh's morning rush hour, Sanford films herself methodically dropping a traditional clay pot then calmly sitting down to the task of mending the sherds together.</p>
SOK Chanrado	<p>Sok Chanrado Born 1994, Phnom Penh Lives and Works Phnom Penh</p> <p>"Rado" is interested in the role of media, and in particular exploring concepts of freedom and transparency, as well as its influence on public opinion. He currently studies mixed media and video at Sa Sa Art Projects, and Media and Communication at Pannasastra University, Phnom Penh. His group exhibitions include <i>The White Building and the City</i>, The Carol Shen Gallery, NYC (2013). <i>The White Night</i> and Cambodian Youth Art Festival's <i>Snit Snaal.</i>, both 2012 at Sa Sa Art Projects, Phnom Penh.</p>	<p><i>Memory</i></p> <p><i>Sound Wave</i></p>	<p>2012</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>Single-channel video with sound</p> <p>Performance / Single-channel video with sound</p>	<p>2' 17"</p> <p>9' 23"</p>	<p>In Sok Chanrado's first video, he invites his childhood friend Rada to walk backwards through time and space to narrate memories from the site of their former home in the "Small Building". Both Rada and Rado's families lost their home in the Small Building during the Dey Krahom evictions of 2009, and relocated to live nearby in the White Building where they reside today.</p> <p>Made during his 6-week residency at Sa Sa Art Projects, <i>Sound Wave</i> documents Rado driving his bicycle around Phnom Penh, asking his fellow citizens about the media. After recording the responses, he immediately broadcasts over his bicycle's sound-system while riding off in search of another person to interview. This repeated, cumulative "wave" of community-driven views reflects the way citizens inform each other of news and opinions rather than relying solely on official sources.</p>
SVAY Sareth	<p>Svay Sareth Born 1972, Battambang, Cambodia Lives and Works Siem Reap, Cambodia</p> <p>Having lived through three violent regimes, Svay's work is deeply personal, however it refuses voyeurism into suffering. Critical as it is cathartic, his practices in sculpture and performance reference the experience of the refugee and survivor through acts of adventure and futility. Svay co-founded <i>Phare Ponleu Selepak</i>, an art school in Battambang, and holds an MFA, Caen (2009). Recent exhibitions include <i>Mon Boulet</i>, Our City, Siem Reap (2014), the 4th Singapore Biennale and <i>Rescue Archaeology</i>, ifa, Berlin (both 2013).</p>	<p><i>Mon Boulet</i></p>	<p>2011</p>	<p>Performance / Single-channel video with sound</p>	<p>8' 25"</p>	<p><i>Mon Boulet</i> documents a 5-day durational performance in which the artist dragged a cumbersome reflective metal sphere 250 kilometers from the ancient capitol of Angkor to the present capitol Phnom Penh carrying a few basic amenities on his back known to refugees worldwide. The public aspect of Sisyphean futility was intended to confront conditions of the artist's and 'audiences' pasts as a cathartic move into the future. In the artist's words, "The heart is marked forever by the atrocities of the war. The mind - the seat of the body's creative power - is a force of alchemy able to transform the difficulty, the fear, the suffering, the discouragement, into energy and creative freedom. And the body, finally, is used for resistance."</p>

THAN Sok	<p>Than Sok Born 1984, Takeo, Cambodia Lives and works, Phnom Penh</p> <p>Working with vernacular and ritual materials, Than Sok creates sculpture, installation, video, and performance. His work is rooted in the critical observation and investigation of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. Recent exhibitions: <i>Rescue Archaeology</i>, ifa, Berlin (2013), <i>Video: An Art, A History</i>, Singapore Art Museum (2011). Residencies include Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, NYC, (2013), S-AIR, Sapporo (2011), Tokyo Wonder Site, Aoyama (2005), and forthcoming in 2014, <i>Conscious Realities</i> at San Art, HCMC.</p>	<i>You and Me</i>	2011	Performance, video documentation with sound	1' 40"	As a part of a workshop with Japanese performance artist Seiji Shimoda in Phnom Penh, Than Sok was invited to perform in Wat Botum park, where he improvised a response to the public Vietnamese-Cambodian Friendship Monument. Sitting cross-legged in a meditation pose, he stretched his shirt over his head, then tried to adhere money to his body, without success.
		<i>Sorting Out</i>	2012	Performance, video documentation with sound	6' 53"	In traditional paddy production, farmers use a rattan sieve to separate wanted from unwanted grains of rice. In <i>Sorting</i> , Than Sok appropriates this process with grains of sand in reference to the in-filled Boeung Kak lake. Performed in sand-filled SA SA BASSAC for a performance event <i>Reclamation Recreation: An Urban Beach Party</i> , Than's repetitive action was contemplative of the lakeside residents' displacement, and of the few in power to choose.
TITH Kanitha	<p>Tith Kanitha Born 1987 in Phnom Penh Lives and works in Phnom Penh</p> <p>Tith Kanitha works across a range of media, including sculpture, installation and performance. Although her practices are distinct from each other – Tith's sculptures take form through a solitary practice that tends to value process and intuition, while her installation and performances are often participatory and driven by social issues – her thinking remains centered on the relationship between her memories and her present experience of life, as well as trying novel approaches to art making in the Cambodian context. In 2013, she was a resident at Transparent Studios, Bose Pacia, NYC, and exhibited in <i>Phnom Penh: Rescue Archaeology</i>, Berlin and Stuttgart.</p>	<i>Heavy Sand</i>	2012	Performance, video documentation	10' 58"	In a sand-filled SA SA BASSAC for a performance event <i>Reclamation Recreation: An Urban Beach Party</i> , artist Tith Kanitha staged a diurnal ritual: a shower as is taken in a humble household, manually, with buckets of water. Her only covering was a bikini and a clinical facemask normally associated with protection from pollution but also more recently used to conceal protestors' identities. Herself a resident of the lakeside, Tith brings to bear aspects of life experienced there since 2008, where people risked their lives to protest evictions; women and children at the front lines. Following her display of strength ascending the ladder with a heavy burden, her quiet and somber act of self-burial concluded the performance.