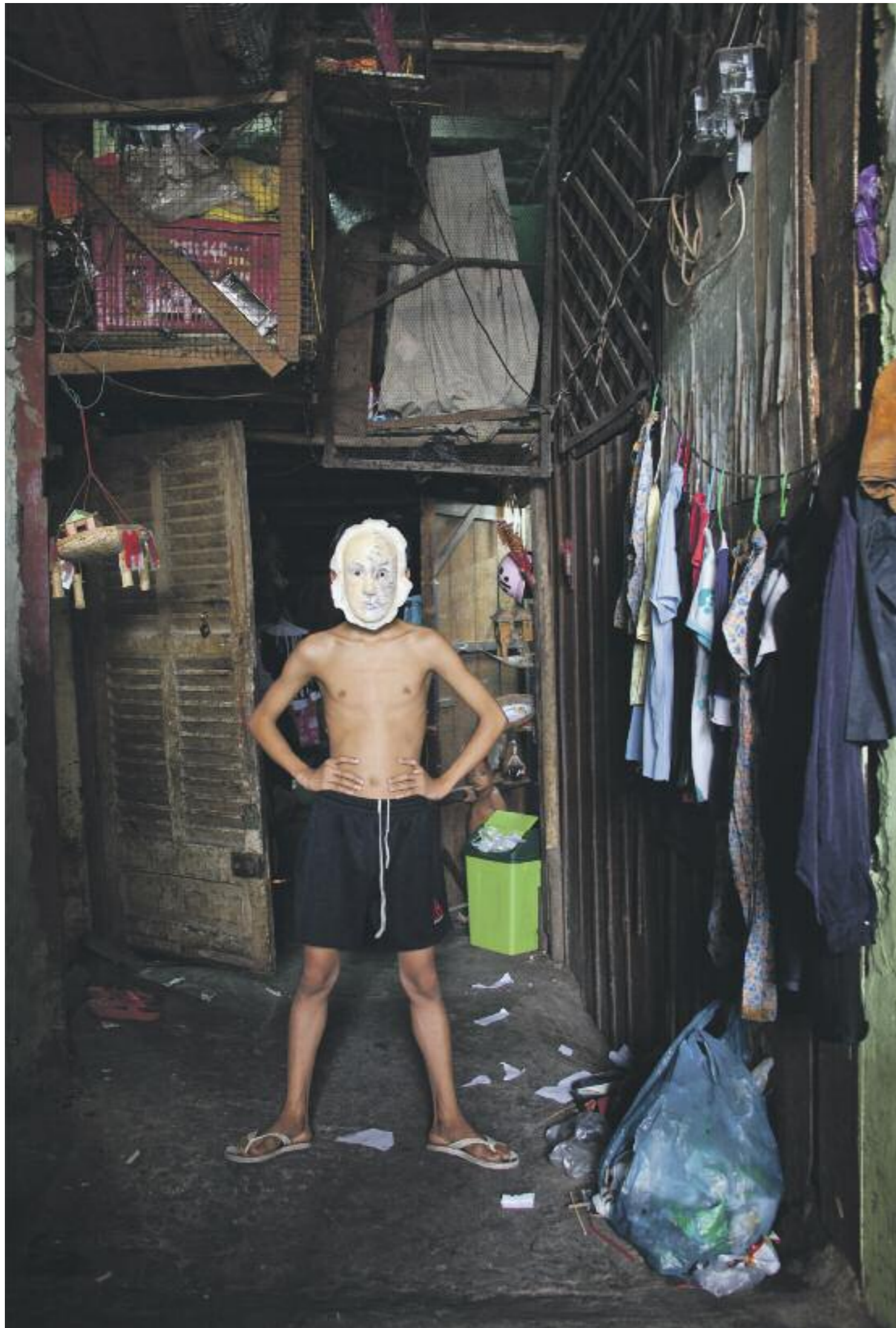


A photograph of a room with a person in a mask and pajamas standing in a doorway, a bicycle leaning against a wall, and a collage of photos on the wall.

Staging Cambodia

Video, Memory & Rock 'n' Roll

HAU 16.-19.1.2014



Staging Cambodia – Video, Memory & Rock 'n' Roll

In the collective memory, Cambodia is inseparably tied to the torture and murder of 1.7 million people, which was committed between 1975 and 1979 during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. To this day this small Southeast Asian country is one of the poorest in the world. But the art scene, which is increasingly attracting international attention, the pulsating nightlife and a glitzy musical subculture attest to the efforts being made to look to the future and to get beyond the memory of the horrors of the past.

Certain signs of this awakening have been captured by Michael Laub in the latest manifestation of his "Portrait Series". Since 2002, the director and choreographer has been implementing this format in various places. In the context of a long weekend he is now showing – for the first time in Europe – the work that he created in Battambang and that he realized in the medium of video. Shots of young circus artists, dancers and visual artists, but also security guards, farmers, vegetable sellers and beggars add up to a panorama that is sometimes sad and disturbing, but is also poetic and highly vibrant. All the performers come from the circle around the Phare Ponleu Selpak, an NGO that uses the art to pursue the cultural redevelopment of Cambodia and under whose auspices the "Portrait Series" was made.

Directly following the premiere screening of this work, there will be a concert, staged by Michael Laub, by the internationally celebrated band The Cambodian Space Project, including musicians and dancers from Phnom Penh and Battambang. The performance will also feature visuals by the documentary filmmaker Marc Eberle, who lives in Cambodia. They are oriented toward the style of psychedelic light shows, but they also show footage of the musicians' everyday lives. Entitled "Galaxy Khmer", this will be a flamboyant rock 'n' roll circus with its tent set up right next to trauma.

The Cambodian Space Project reconstructs the pop music that emerged in Cambodia during the '60s, successfully transferring the glamour of that era and the tradition of the 'diva' to the present. The original protagonists of this cultural heyday, along with other artists and intellectuals, were persecuted and eliminated by the Pol Pot regime.

Under the title "Clips on Cambodia", Marc Eberle will show selected clips from his extensive archive in a discussion event with Margarita Tsomou. These additional clips document the connections between the cultural and political history of the country. Two days later, the cultural scholar and journalist Tsomou will moderate a panel discussion with Michael Laub about the creation and conception of "Staging Cambodia", where important figures from his project will get a chance to speak: Xavier Gobin, producer of the Phare Ponleu Selpak Association, Srey Chanthly and Julien Poulson, the two founders of the Cambodian Space Project – and Khvay Samnang, an internationally renowned video and performance artist, who will open an exhibition of selected works at the beginning of the thematic weekend. Photos from his series "Human Nature" and "Newspaper Man" will be shown.

The present publication can be understood as an introduction to a thematic area that is as disturbing as it is fascinating, and that has a great deal to do with the painful processes of decolonisation, of the questionable political role of the west in Southeast Asia and of the way we view the cultures of the Far East. We hope that the interviews, articles, and additional materials on the artists and programme points printed here will arouse your curiosity to visit the four-day event at HAU Hebbel am Ufer.

*Annemie Vanackere
and the team of HAU Hebbel am Ufer*



Photographs
in this publication:
Khvay Samnang, "Human
Nature" series (2011).
We are grateful to the artist,
Erin Gleeson and the
Galerie SA SA BASSAC
in Phnom Penh.
www.sasabassac.com

“I did not look for the trauma. It came to me.”

Michael Laub on the difficulty of bringing real living people on stage and screen, his “Portrait Series Battambang” and the thematic weekend “Staging Cambodia – Video, Memory & Rock ‘n’ Roll” at HAU Hebbel am Ufer.

Christoph Gurk: When we hear the term “portrait” we usually think of pictures—paintings or photos—of people. For over a decade now you’ve been interpreting this genre as a form in which people are shown under the conditions of the theatre, and you’ve developed a series from this that you then realize at various locations through the world.

Michael Laub: It’s not that I’m looking to be compared to Federico Fellini. But after I had staged the first version of the series as a commissioned work in Hamburg, I got the idea from his film Roma that it might be interesting to continue it in different cities. At the time I was working in the Italian capital on a portrait of Marina Abramović and her work. From the beginning I considered it a trap to try to represent a whole metropolis in this way. And it would have been equally presumptuous to claim to be portraying just one person. What interested me most about this format is quite the opposite:

how something can be shown and framed that itself has escaped my own attention. How does that get into the image? The longer I sit with this series, the clearer it is to me that the people I work with, on stage or in film, are not so much a picture – an image – from which they project who they are, but who they would like to be. One of the most interesting challenges of my “Portrait Series” is that in the process of bringing people on stage, I very quickly run up against the restrictions of theatre. The same person that had turned in a perfectly believable performance the night before can have great difficulties at the next performance in developing an integrity with exactly this process – quite simply because in the meantime the mood of the person concerned has changed. These are all the possibilities and uncertainties that we have to work around when thinking about the situation of acting. We need, to give just one example, a text that still remains valid, even if it is spoken in different ways.

CG: You recently did the “Portrait Series” at Burgtheater in Vienna. Why now in Battambang?

ML: One of the central features of this project is that everything about this work and the conditions under which it is created are the product of a large number of random factors. When I was in Bangkok I met a friend who knew that I had spent some time in Phnom Penh in the ‘90s. The atmosphere there at the time was quite different than it is today. There was a very special and odd community of foreigners who regularly travelled there or even lived there. This was all very fascinating to me. I made several attempts at the time to create work in Phnom Penh, but I soon had to abandon my plan because it turned out to be impossible to get people or institutions interested in this project. This friend in Bangkok, who for obvious reasons had had to leave his homeland,

Cambodia, at the age of nine, told me about a former dancer from the Maurice Béjart Company. He had left everything behind in Europe to work for an NGO in a city that I was unfamiliar with at the time, Battambang. The friend in Bangkok suggested that maybe I should go visit this dancer, who later turned out to be a thoroughly charming person. So we travelled to Battambang, wandered about in the complex of buildings that houses the Phare Ponleu Selpak Association, and realized that there was a circus school there, a music school, an art school.

CG: As far as I know, the goal of this NGO is to use the means of art to revive the cultural traditions that were almost completely wiped out in Cambodia during the Pol Pot regime.

ML: Yes, the organisation was built up little by little in the ‘90s by eight people who had met in a refugee camp. If you go to this place today, you hear wonderful music from one area. In another building you see circus artists, doing stretching exercises in preparation for their rehearsals. It’s a magnificent cacophony of sounds and activities. Actually, I hate the world of showmanship. Every

time that I was taken to the circus as a child, it depressed me so much that I ended up in tears. But this, in Battambang, was something else. After I had visited the Phare Ponleu Selpak several times, I thought, why don’t I just do a workshop here? It was clear that even the technological infrastructure there wasn’t nearly sufficient for me to produce the kind of work here that I’m otherwise known form. You know, I’m a perfectionist. Nonetheless, I like doing such projects now and again, because they give me the chance to experiment, without the pressure that comes with an international production. I like to create situations in which you don’t know ahead of time the direction the work will take. During the preparations I came more and more into contact with the community surrounding the NGO. There was someone who cooked for the people, then there was a security guard, people from the surrounding villages. For the workshop itself I brought some blue paper along, which I also use as a background in the episodes of my “Portrait Series”. Strange things suddenly started happening. As soon as some of these people appeared on my improvised stage, they started to cry, right out of the blue, without my even asking them a question, and they did this in a language that I don’t understand at all. I saw that they were highly emotionalized. But the reasons were left to my imagination until later someone translated what they had said for me. One man kept talking and crying even after the power cut off, the light went out and my camera stopped. We couldn’t see anything in the dark and only he-

ard his voice. It got more and more interesting. So in time I came to the idea of working on my next “Portrait Series” exactly at this location.

CG: Why did you decide not to produce this episode for the theatre stage, but instead to record everything on video?

ML: Every other solution soon turned out to be completely unworkable. Most of the people involved were simply not mobile enough. It would even have been a problem to bring them to Phnom Penh, not to mention a journey to Europe.

CG: Some of the people that can be seen in the video seem traumatized in the extreme. Wouldn’t it have been impossible, just for this reason, to put them on a theatre stage every evening? If this, as you said at the beginning, is already a problem for all non-professionals, how unpredictable would the results have been in this case, quite apart from the ethical problem that would have accompanied it?

ML: When you watch the video of my “Portrait Series Battambang”, you see, right in one of the very first scenes, a woman bursting into tears because her husband drinks and he beats her. I had to deal with similar stories in my “Portrait Series Istanbul”. Unfortunately, domestic violence seems to be a widespread sport all over the world. It is not in any way limited to Cambodian society. In one of the next sequences of my video a lady comes on stage who has been exposed to more or less the same situation. Maybe her husband doesn’t beat her. But instead he takes a week off work and goes on a drinking binge, leaving his wife and five children behind with no money. After the first recordings I brought some of the performers back on the set, partly because I didn’t really understand or I wanted to hear what they were telling us again. I found it incredible that they were capable of returning to trauma, bursting into tears

every time that they appeared before the camera. Some of them three days in a row. That was the point at which I had to ask myself what I was actually doing here. I was looking at these women crying, and also at some of the men in the same way, I started developing empathy for them – but just what was I actually up to here? For this reason I decided for a sequence in which I show five women, orchestrate them, who simultaneously and in part for different reasons start bawling. The performers didn’t find that odd or strange, what I was doing, because they also had a good sense of humour and the possibility of getting a bit of distance from themselves and to what they were doing, and to put their scene on stage in the same way every time.

CG: In the video footage, people speak not only about domestic violence of course, but also

“As soon as some of these people appeared on stage, they started to cry.”

“Domestic violence seems to be a widespread sport all over the world.”

about the horrible crimes that they experienced in the second half of the '70s under the dictatorship of the Khmer Rouge, and which they – in part – only survived by pure chance. Some of these scenes reminded me of "Shoah", the magnificent film by Claude Lanzmann about the Holocaust. Is this a meaningful comparison for you?

ML: Yes. But I have to think more of Riti Pahn's film "S-21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine" – or of "The Act Of Killing", a documentary in which three members of a death squad in Indonesia replay their horrible acts. As for Claude Lanzmann, the difference between his work and mine in Battambang is that he sought out his object. "Shoah" is the result of research among perpetrators and survivors of the Holocaust...

CG : ...which Lanzmann filmed because he knew that these people might not live much longer and therefore a piece of the memory of what happened then would go irretrievably lost. He made the film with the idea that it was up to him, and no one else, to take on the historical task of documenting these speeches.

ML: Claude Lanzmann sought out the trauma. In the case of my work it came to me, without me having decided anything ahead of time. My first impression of the social world of the NGO was that there were people there who come from many different generations and who pursue a wide array of activities. As I said, it was a lively hustle and bustle. I'd never expected that they would send me people who would suddenly burst into tears. Some of them are simply reacting to the situation that they are experiencing in the present. And in my video you also see young, trendy people, who talk about why they want to get a job as a model in the fashion industry or want to be a movie star. You could find exactly such people in Rotterdam. What I was most interested in with my "Portrait Series" was the question of what happens when you approach people from completely different generations and milieus in the same way.

CG: Could one say that the setting itself is a constant theme in your "Portrait Series"? Not only do you provide the performers with the blue paper and background. The format as such is like a screen that the people can appear in front of. They become visible in their variety, in the fact that the same process is deployed every time. Your works make this process self-reflexive, perhaps in a similar way to Andy Warhol's series "Screen Test".

ML: That's absolute correct. For reasons that I won't go into here, I do indeed use different colours as backgrounds, but the blue plays an important role. It is not true that I constantly repeat the same for-

mula. By using the same form, more or less identical scenery, and transferring it to a particular material, the setting itself becomes meaningful. The results that are achieved in each case are radically different – and I mean really radically different. My work consists in allowing precisely these differences to emerge, and in occupying me with the implications and possible consequences of what thus occurs. At this point the collaborative character of the "Portrait Series" becomes important. Basically it is about an interaction between the performers, the setting, and me. The people on stage or on screen have the final decision as to what material is to be used and what not. If they raise an objection, the scene is cut.

Without any discussion. During shooting in Battambang there was a woman who spoke downright badly about her direct social surroundings. Before I took the work to Europe, I showed it to the people there in a public screening, to see what kind of reaction it would cause. For this reason I asked the performers if they really wanted to have these negative comments in the video, since the people that they are speaking about could very well be sitting in the same room where it was shown, and that could have unpleasant consequences for them. I was surprised that they all wanted to have it as we see it now.

CG: Is it due to the setting that the people suddenly express or act out something that they would never do in their familiar environment?

ML: I remember that I was once at a university in Berlin and I was speaking to students there. As soon as I had built up the setting for the "Portrait Series", there was an abrupt change in what they said and how they moved. I said to the students: You see how important this paper behind your backs is.

CG: I assume that the psychic reality of people in Cambodia cannot be readily perceived when you're just walking through the streets in the cities.

ML: When I first went to Phnom Penh in the '90s, the trauma was palpable everywhere, wherever I went. Of course, that could just have been my projection, but that's how I experienced it. Today the past is much less present. You see children laughing, children who didn't have to live through all that.

CG: Would you in fact say that the young people that appear in your video are exactly like young people everywhere else in the world?

ML: People who want to be fashion designers or movie stars do in fact come into contact with me all the time, in the most varied locations. But there

are also people in the video who are simply satisfied with what they're doing here and with the opportunities that the Phare Ponleu Selpak is providing them – incidentally, without charging for it.

CG: You are surely aware that traumas, such as those that arise from war or genocide, for example, can be transmitted over generations, without those effected necessarily being conscious of this themselves.

ML: Yes. Although the figures in my videos are quite ordinary young adults with desires and longings, like those you can find everywhere in a globalised world, there is certainly also the dimension of the post-traumatic here. What really distinguishes them from others, and in a quite palpable way, are the reasons that they give for wanting these careers. For them it's about earning enough money to support their entire family. I'd never heard that in this form before.

CG: The same is said, incidentally, by the sex workers in your video...

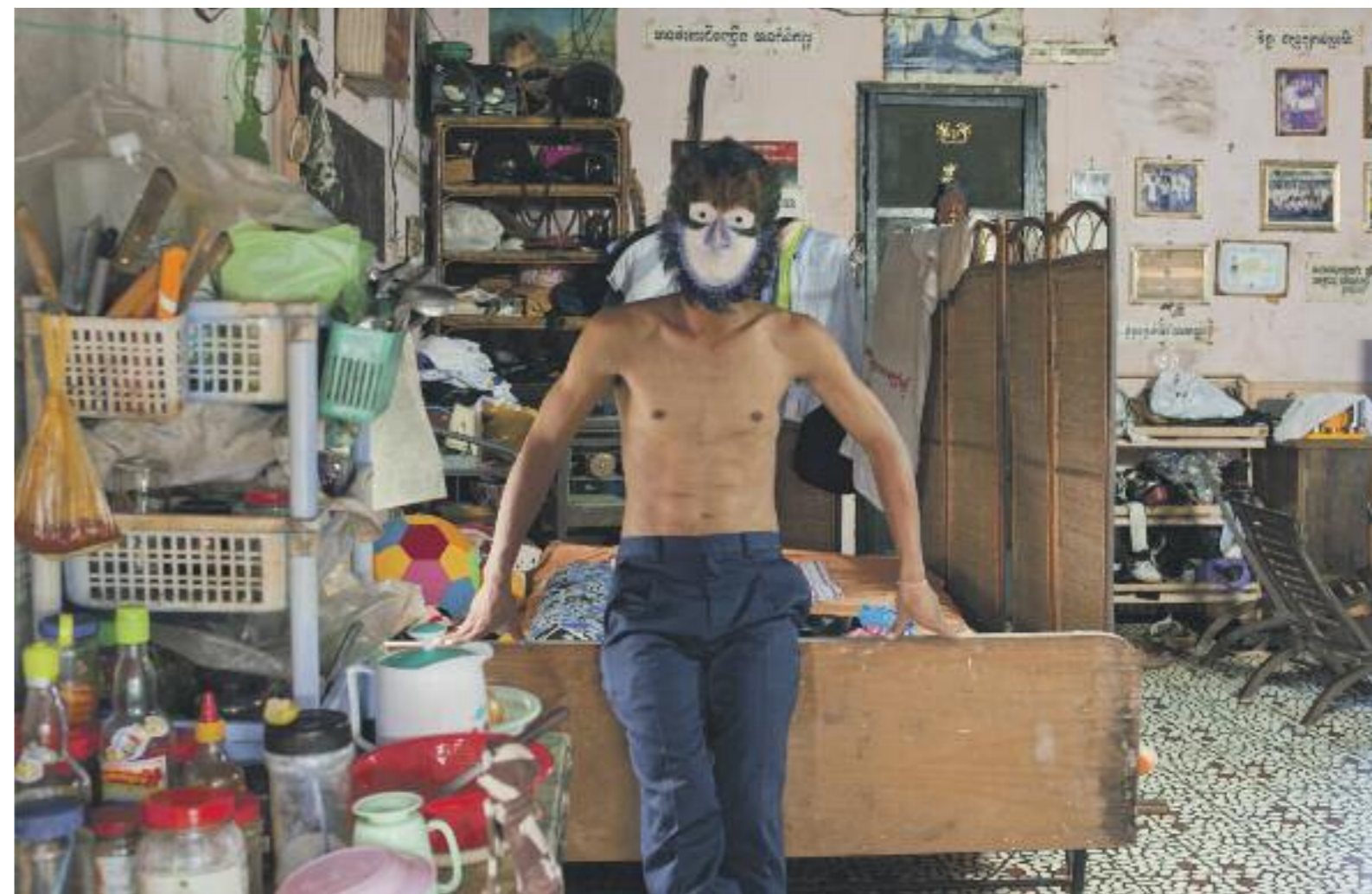
ML: ...and also goes for the young artists. They have been trained as professionals at the NGO, and can then join the circus troupe that it runs. By now this is a well-respected company in all of Southeast Asia. Showmanship is one of the central activities within the Phare Ponleu Selpak Association. It keeps the community together. If you want to go by bus or car from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap, one of the most important travel destinations in Cambodia, with a beautiful landscape, then Battambang, being the third largest city in Cambodia, is practically the only stopover. For this reason, night after night many tourists come to the facilities of the NGO. At this time of day there's in fact nothing else that you can do. So you go to the circus. The Phare Ponleu Selpak supported me in my work on the "Portrait Series" as much as they could. But the people in charge also told me, what you're doing, we can't actually show it here. These people are looking for distraction and entertainment, and it would depress them like hell.

CG: What about the visual artists who are being trained as the Phare Ponleu Selpak?

ML: It's basically the same economic model. The NGO enables them to support themselves with their art. There is a group of artists that not only show their work in Battambang or in Phnom Penh, but also internationally, abroad. The sex workers, which you mentioned before, of course have a problem with their jobs. They are ashamed of them. And sure, the artists here, like everywhere else in the world, sometimes have conflicts with their parents, because they want their children to pursue a "proper" occupation. But of course it's completely different than in the case of the sex

"People would suddenly burst into tears."

"There is certainly the dimension of the post-traumatic."



workers. What they do is also disreputable in Cambodia.

CG: In your video you work with highly heterogeneous materials, which you get from your shootings. To what degree are they the result of staging?

ML: Well, in the case of older and obviously traumatised people we occasionally stuck with the first take, because we wanted to spare them the experience of having to live through it all again as much as possible. For this reason, some of the shots appear somewhat unfinished. They are fundamentally different from those that I generally tried to achieve. We decided to include them in the work anyway. The alternative would have been to show nothing of the suffering of these people. On the other hand there are recordings, such as the choreography of the five crying women, for example, that are completely staged. These performers worked hard and rehearsed a great deal to be able to bring that on stage. To put it simply, this "Portrait Series" is a mixture of the two. I like raw material just as much as I do highly artificial material. Since I was restricted to working with video technology, the result is a compromise anyway. I have learned how to combine music and dance on stage for 40 years, and I feel confident working in this medium. But a video shoot is another matter. There I'm largely a non-professional, and you can see this in the finished work. It's all a jumble.

CG: Alongside the "Portraits" of people, who predominantly seem to be in the same space, there is some footage shot outdoors in Battambang that has found its way into the video. How did you come to that artistic decision?

ML: Basically, I think that we live in post-exotic times. For relatively little money, people can end up at practically any location in a matter of hours. There is actually no need any more for postcard views of dream destinations if you can travel there

"A video shoot is another matter. There I'm largely a non-professional."

yourself. At a certain point while working on the "Portrait Series", however, I had the feeling that this is all very claustrophobic. When it gets too stuffy, you also have to leave a space now and then in order to be able to enter into it again. The exterior shots were meant to give me and my spectators a kind of relief. But only so the "Portraits" can keep going. That's why the exterior shots only account for 3 minutes of the entire length.

CG: One might call it a little walk through the neighbourhood, before returning to your desk.

ML: Exactly. A shot of the inner city of Battambang, then the way from there to the NGO, finally the door that leads to the studio where we were doing

the shooting.

CG: How would you position the political dimension of what you're doing? What relationship do you have to documentary approaches, which currently play such an important role in both theatre and the visual arts?

ML: You must know that I absolute do not see myself as a sociologist when I'm going through a city and attempting to give a certain visibility to the people that live there. And I'm also not taking a historical approach. I don't even see myself as an educator, instead I'm always speaking from the position of the artist. At the same time, of course,

it's clear to me that I'm making things too easy on myself when I describe it that way. Let's say I have a problem with militant art, which hands out evaluations and stakes claims to political validity. A series such as Andy Warhol's "Electric Chair" is

in my eyes an infinitely more productive statement against the death penalty than a pamphlet – precisely because the artist is not taking any position toward what he's showing. I'm interested in the point, the borderline, at which reality turns into fiction, without causing the social reality that the material generates, and that I'm concerned with, to disappear. Someone once said about my work that what I show is so real that it stops being exactly that. Perhaps that's the real reason that I'm so interested in raw footage, such as we see in the video, and on the other hand the artificial shots. Obviously there's a conflict there. I have a strong desire for authenticity, and an equally strong wish to get away from reality. I need both. When something gets too real, I start to discern an impulse to escape in myself – but that's also

the case when something is too beautiful. This confusion is perceptible in the finished work in a way that is almost painful for me, much more so than in my works for theatre. They are essentially slicker, a completely different world. I like that, and

it's easier for me to bear.

CG: I'm sure that you've grappled with the danger that you might be exploiting the people that you show.

ML: Of course, and we did everything we could to rule that out. As I already mentioned, the people were given the right to veto anything in the selection of scenes, and we were also intensively involved with them outside the shooting work as well. Friendships were established. I hope that it's clear in the video that what we have before us are not people who are too dumb to understand what they're doing. Some of them travelled great distances on foot to be able to come to us and tell their stories.

CG: I never had the impression that your people in the video were simply repeating their role as victims, simply continuing to write their partly distressing stories. On the contrary, it seems to me that they gain a tremendous dignity in the process of the performance.

ML: I'm relieved to hear you say that, and that's exactly what a local newspaper wrote after the screening in Battambang.

CG: After the screening of "Portrait Series Battambang" there will be a second part of the event on the same evening. You're bringing a concert by the band Cambodian Space Project on stage. In this way you're broaching a thematic circle that only comes up in the margins in the video: the history of rock 'n' roll in Cambodia, the appropriation of this

"I'm interested in the point, at which reality turns into fiction."

Anglo-American form of expression by the Khmer, the cultural heyday that the country experienced in the '60s, the almost complete eradication of its protagonists during the Pol Pot regime, the rediscovery and continuation of this line of tradition by the later generation of musicians.

ML: This collaboration came to be from the fact that three members of the group work for the NGO. For the organisation it is not just a question of reproducing what happened in the "Roaring Sixties", but also of reviving the Royal Ballet of Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge pursued the insane plan of destroying the culture of the country altogether. Among the first people to be killed were the artists and the Buddhist monks. Basically they went after anyone who had something to do in one way or another with preserving memory. In the milieu around the Phare Ponleu Selpak there is a particularly fascinating musician. His name is Vanthan and he can adopt any possible style with amazing speed. Carlos Santana is his greatest musical model. But he is just as capable of playing traditional Khmer instruments. The Pol Pot regime attempted to get rid of these cultural achievements as well. You know, my interest in Cambodia and its history started with my fascination for film, above all "Apocalypse Now".

CG: This film, directed by Francis Ford Coppola, deals with the convergence of the counterculture of the '60s and the devastations brought about by the North American military forces on the Viet Cong, told as the story of a rock 'n' roll war.

ML: I always loved the soundtrack, and couldn't help but watch the film over and over. During my first trip to the Southeast Asian country in the late '90s, someone gave me an album entitled "Cambodia Rock". I'd never heard such music before. Rock music in the style of the '60s, marked by a

connection with local traditions and styles. I gave the record to my son, who was a DJ at a student radio station. He played it and it obviously attracted a great deal of interest. Much later I came into contact with this music a second time, when I ran across Dengue Fever, a trailblazing band that combined California Sound and Khmer Rock and who lived on the West Coast of the United States. The band consists mainly of Americans who had travelled to Cambodia. When they were back in Los Angeles, they met the future singer of their group at a karaoke bar in a neighbourhood called Little Phnom Penh. She is actually the only member of the band who comes from Cambodia. I got to know the Cambodian Space Project when going back and forth to the capital during my stay in Battambang. Everybody was talking about the band. I looked up their internet site and was lucky enough that the group was giving a concert on one of the evenings in a small bar. They had to play with a terrible sound system. Really dreadful sound. But it was fasci-

nating to watch how the music served the purpose of getting the people to dance. The more familiar I became with the band, the more a highly interesting microcosm opened up before my eyes. Julien is obviously as drawn to "Apocalypse Now" as I am. The singer, Srey Chanthy, adores the culture of the diva that existed in the '60s. All of them are very concerned with design. They design their own posters and t-shirts, there's also a context within the visual arts that they're connected with, and of course they're interested in science fiction. There there's Marc Eberle, who's a filmmaker from Germany, and who I met at the same concert by the Cambodian Space Project. As it turns out, he was not only making a documentary about the Cambodian Space Project, but he had also contributed a part of the video material that the group showed on the walls at their concerts. They're projections in the tradition of neo-psychedelic light shows. I found out that Marc had access to archival material that I had never seen before, also about music groups from the '60s. This was all extremely weird and fascinating stuff. So we got the idea of a rock 'n' roll circus with the Cambodian Space Project, with musicians and dancers from Phnom Penh and the scene around the NGO with

"It hit me like a bolt of lightning."

video material from Marc and me.

CG: Do you see this concert format as an extension or continuation of the method that you follow with your "Portrait Series"?

ML: When I had finished the shooting in Battambang, I realized that the result had a thoroughly more depressing effect than I had originally planned. My friends from the NGO wanted to screen it at their facilities anyway, although not to the tourists who visit the city. Then they suggested that I organize a concert for afterwards, so that the people in the audience could indulge in a little entertainment after what they'd seen. The first was made up exclusively of musicians from the circle around the Phare Ponleu Selpak. It turned out that

I was not only doing a favour for the people at the NGO. The packet makes sense as a whole. When we were considering doing another screening, I got the idea to bring these musicians on stage together with

the Cambodian Space Project. I like this combination of screening and concert, since it shows two aspects, two faces of the same issue at hand, and that's why we also brought it to Europe.

CG: It seems to be important for you that works by the visual artist Khvay Samnang are also shown in the context of the event in HAU Hebbel am Ufer, which takes place over several days under the motto "Galaxy Khmer". Why is that?

ML: This acquaintance is another one of the results of my trips to Phnom Penh. When I was walking through the city, I saw a poster announcing the "International Photography Festival". One of the photos was shown on the poster. It hit me like a bolt of lightning. When he shows masked people in their home environments, the effect on me is like the Khmer version of a scenario such as those we know from the "Texas Chainsaw Massacre", another film that I admire greatly. Frankly, I like his photos so much more than my own portraits – and since I'm already so envious of his work, then the pictures should also be seen in the context of our little festival.

→ **Christoph Gurk** works as a curator on behalf of HAU Hebbel am Ufer and as an independent journalist.

→ **Michael Laub**, born in Belgium, is a director and choreographer of contemporary dance. His works have been seen at the 1984 Venice Biennale, at the Universal Exhibition in Seville in 1992 and at the Festival d'Avignon in 2005. He has often been described as a minimalist and "one of the founding fathers of anti-illusionist theatre". Michael Laub's artistic career began in the mid '70s in Stockholm, where he founded and directed Maniac Productions with Edmundo Za. They were considered innovators, above all due to their combination of performance art and video installations. With the founding of Remote Control Productions in 1981, Laub brought his work closer to theatre. He has staged more than 20 plays to date as director of this company. With his "Portraits 360 Seconds" (2002), the director and choreographer expanded his work to include the idea of collective performance, and then to a concept of the serial. In 2004 he produced a portrait of Marina Abramovic and her work ("The Biography Remix"). Starting in 2007, the concept was extended to various locations, giving rise to "Portrait Series Berlin" (2007), "Portrait Series Istanbul" (2010), "Portrait Series Rotterdam" (2010), "Burgporträts Wien" (2011) and most recently "Portrait Series Battambang". Alongside his stagings, Michale Laub has held guest professorships at the University of Giessen, the Free University in Berlin, and the Norwegian Theatre Academy. He was a DAAD grant recipient in 2006/07. Since 2011 he has been teaching at the Karlsruhe University for Art and Design.

→ **Die Phare Ponleu Selpak Association (PPSA) – Arts for Human Education** is a Cambodian non-governmental organization, founded in 1994 by eight young Cambodians who had returned to their country after spending their childhoods in refugee camps at the Thai-Cambodian border. The organisation provides children, young adults and their families with social, emotional, and cultural support as well as organizing educational programmes. Through its initiatives, it seeks to contribute to the reconstruction of the country and to foster the culture and art of the Khmer people. In 2012, the centre's public school had 762 students, the art school had 270, and a school for performative arts had 245. In all, the PPSA currently reaches 801 families in the area surrounding their base in the village of An Char. The programmes have been recognised by the Ministry of the Interior and the Council for the Development of Cambodia; PPSA is a regular member of the Cooperation Commission for Cambodia. It maintains partnerships with the Philippine Educational Theatre Association, the Theatre du Soleil, the Music for One Foundation (Korea) and in Germany with the ufaFabrik and interCult GmbH.



The End Of The Road Or: How real is reality?

Our perception of Southeast Asia is marked by images produced by the culture industry. But how can we cut through projections of the foreign and the exotic? The documentary filmmaker **Marc Eberle** reports on his journey into the “heart of darkness”.

L It must have been in the early '90s when I first got interested in Cambodia. The mother of my brother Tom said that she'd like to go to Angkor, but it wasn't possible because there was a war going on there. I rummaged out my Diercke World Atlas and looked up where it was. In northwestern Cambodia there were three rings arranged in a triangle. Next to that was the name Angkor in italics, designated in the legend as an “archaeological site”. It must be really big and important, I thought. I had no idea that it was the largest temple complex in the world.

Even before that, in the '80s, there were the Dead Kennedys, a fabulous American punk band around the singer and the brains of the operation, Jello Biafra. Their song “Holiday in Cambodia” is about the hypocritical and arrogant ignorance of Americans and the western world, about consumer bliss at others' expense. The track was part of my record collection. I only recently figured out some parts of the text.

After that came the real Dead Kennedy – but in the film JFK by Oliver Stone. I wrote about the “crisis of representation” and cited a photographer who was an eyewitness at the assassination. He explained that he had discovered an important piece of evidence in his picture. A reflection in the mirror of a parked car. He enlarged that part of the negative more and more until everything got so grainy that you couldn't recognize anything anymore. The limit of the material was exceeded, the boundary of what can be represented. Oliver Stone could only show the main proof his line of argument by taking the famous film by the eyewitness Abraham Zapruder and running it backwards, finally stopping it to point out the movement of John F. Kennedy's head when he was shot. Once again the limit of the medium. According to laws of physics and anatomy, the president must have been shot from the front—but the window from which Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin, purportedly had shot, was located behind him.

I wrote about conspiracy theories. What is crucial is not the facts, but their connection with one another, the small connecting lines in between. “Painting by numbers”, their editing and sequence. The representation of facts is always also their interpretation. I wrote about how Oliver Stone conveyed his version of a conspiracy theory with film. By using super-8 footage of John F. Kennedy as a romanticized “King of Camelot” he lent his fictional film a “truth claim”. Time and time again, he purposefully deploys the documentary film as style. My text was also about the assassination as an event staged by

media, as a socio-political watershed in American society. Everyone knew where they were when they heard about the shooting. Nothing was like it had been before. A date, a trauma.

II. I've seen a lot of Vietnam movies. One of the central messages of Oliver Stone's epic was that Kennedy supposedly wanted to deescalate the situation in Vietnam and thus ran up against resistance from conservative powers, one motive for the assassination. I already knew about Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now. The nightmare of the Vietnam War, too mad, surreal, perverted to be true. And yet! Often fiction can dive deeper into real life than a documentary film can.

More than almost any other film from the dream factory, Apocalypse Now troubles the distinction between 'good' and 'evil', with which Hollywood makes it possible for people to describe and evaluate the world in a simple way, dissolving it in a clearly ambivalent way. Willard (Martin Sheen), an American captain, is sent to hunt down Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando), who's gone AWOL (absent without leave) and has disappeared into the Cambodian jungle. Kurtz rebels with seemingly random, brutal violence against what he calls the vile, sleazy double standard of the USA, which uses war-mongering violence under the cloak of liberal, democratizing motives to bring the Vietnamese freedom from communism – or to force it on them depending on the perspective – and completely destroying the country in the process. The story is based on historical facts. There were indeed a handful of high-ranking American military officers who had disappeared in the jungles of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and were proceeding on their own initiative. According to their own rules.

Of course, the literary basis of Apocalypse Now is Heart of Darkness, the famous novella by Joseph Conrad from 1898. Here the author is coming to terms with his own experiences in the Belgian Congo. The story functions on two levels, as an analysis of oppressive European colonialism and as a journey into the protagonist's unconscious. Marlow sails up the Congo and recognizes that the 'savages' in the jungle are like he is, ignorant, curious and afraid of foreigners, strangers, of himself. He meets Kurtz, the white chief of a horde of Africans who worship him as a god. For Marlow he represents the good and evil in people, the best and the worst that the white man is capable of. Ambiguity, the dark side of the soul. Marlow witnesses Kurtz's death, and when he is confronted with his

relatives back in Europe, he says nothing about the darkness that he had come to know in Kurtz so as not to destroy the relatives' illusion, nor his own.

In Apocalypse Now Marlow is replaced with the character of Willard. His vision of the American war in Vietnam is so idealized from the surreal perversion of the conflict that he is no longer capable of even assessing Kurtz's excesses, much less of judging them.

Nonetheless, he does finally kill him, not in order to carry out orders, but to liberate his unconscious in the face of total anarchy, of the stranger, the Other. So he himself becomes a devious murderer, becomes Kurtz. Coppola ends with a citation from Conrad's book, the magnificent closing words “The horror! The horror!”

The complex where Kurtz and his savage warriors have entrenched themselves is modelled on various Angkor temples – the faces of the Bayon temple, the Nagas and shells on the stairways, reliefs in the Angkor style. In a metaphorical sense it is Angkor. The complex of temples in the exotic twilight, savage, mysterious and intoxicating. The stuff that films are made of.

Looking into how Apocalypse Now was made, one quickly notices how fine the line is between reality and fiction, and how strong the interdependence of both poles of perception is. The film is set in Cambodia, but was shot in the Philippines. At the time that Coppola was working on it, 1975-1979, Pol Pot's reign of terror was prevailing in Cambodia. The film shooting in the Philippine jungle took more than a year, and the madness of the imagined war began more and more to carry over to the crew. Coppola himself was close to complete exasperation and madness several times. Martin Sheen suffered a nervous breakdown followed by a heart attack. It almost seemed as if the characters from the script were taking on a life of their own and had authority over their creators. The helicopter squadron of the Philippine army flew in for the film shoot, and then directly afterward flew back into the real war to shoot with real weapons.

I ran across Sideshow – Nixon, Kissinger and the Destruction of Cambodia, a book by William Shawcross. I read there about how these politicians managed for years to extend an illegal shadow war into Cambodia, and to keep it secret both from their own military and from the world public. At a conference in Geneva in 1954, King Sihanouk declared his country neutral with respect to the catastrophe in Vietnam. In 1971, three years after the secret bombing began, the illegal shadow war was exposed in the Pentagon Papers, and Nixon's madness was brought to an end by the ensuing Watergate affair. Kissinger, the brains of the operation, threw the American president to the wolves and was rehabilitated. He remains a distinguished po-

“The madness of the imagined war began to carry over to the crew.”

“Often fiction can dive deeper into real life than a documentary film can.”

litarian to this day. An airline company advertises with him in English television. He received the Nobel Peace Prize. For his merits in Southeast Asia!



I had returned from India and was sitting in the editing room when Tom went to Cambodia to research a couple of ideas. I'd been wanting to go there for some time. Now it was finally possible. The war was over, and I had got a foothold as a filmmaker. Cambodia, with all its facets and fates. Under every stone there is a story to tell. The extreme contrasts there – but also to us – possess a peculiar energy and suspense. Everywhere you look, something incredibly interesting is happening. I'm a voyeur. Interested, not salacious! For me, Cambodia was a dream and a nightmare all at once, hard, raw, and magnificently beautiful. The e-mails that my brother sent me with the Wild East stimulated my imagination and confirmed my clichéd ideas about Cambodia – no laws, total absence of morality, war-torn, traumatized country. I got talking to Ulrike Becker from the SWR. I proposed a few things, including a film about the Khmer New Year's celebration in front of Angkor Wat – the emblem for the country in general, representative of the land, the culture, the politics, the religion, the past and the future, the New Year's celebration as a new beginning, an awakening. But I was more interested in concentrating on the country and the people, and not so much as Angkor as architecture. Tom had found a protagonist in Battambang who was perfect for the project: Sombat, a young tour guide. He represented the new, aspiring Cambodia.

January 2002, research trip. When we start to land over Phnom Penh, the sun is just setting. We descend into the pall hanging over the capital. Smog? Not likely, there are no cars to be seen anywhere.

It's all dust. The streets are not tarred. I frantically look for the lights of the big city. Nothing doing, there are no lights. As we drive through the decaying French colonial buildings, I start to feel more and more like I'm in

“Cambodia was hard, raw, and magnificently beautiful.”

a Spaghetti Western. On the way from the airport we ride past an accident, two men are lying motionless next to their mopeds. Lo, our driver, says: “Oh, bad accident, don't look, don't look!” A crowd has gathered around the two victims and looks on in concern and shock. Ambulance? No chance. On some of the street corners there are men with AK47s. Some dressed in plainclothes.

At dinner we sit next to a disgusting, slimy fatso wearing a slobbery t-shirt and a baseball cap and his friend, a tall beanpole of a guy without any personality to speak of. The fatso throws his cell phone on the table and screams aggressively in German: “Go on, call the slut up!” The other does

what he's ordered. Two children come to the table begging. The fatso smacks one of them on the head and tells him to piss off. A little later the 'slut' shows up, a young girl, pretty as a picture, maybe 15, 16 tops. She seems shy, but she smiles the whole time. The fatso can hardly speak any English, neither can she. He shamelessly grabs her between the legs and on her breasts. “This won't take long,” he says to the guy with no personality and trots off with the girl. His hand has her neck in a chokehold, he pushes her into the car.

Cambodia is a country where anything goes. A burned-out country, shattered from 30 years of war and genocide. Without streets, hospitals, laws. A country where everyone is still always fighting to survive, and often still with guns. This 'moral wilderness' is exploited by many people, by the tourists, the expats, the sexpats, and those who've gone underground, who got life in Europe and of course also by the Khmer itself.

But Cambodia is also something else entirely. I meet many heartbreakingly dear people, countless others help us without expecting anything in return. Many of the Khmer are happy that the war is finally over and they're doing better now than before. In Siem Reap, a city next to Angkor, things are different, a bell jar, safe, clear, Disneyland. We buy a 3-day pass for the temple complex. The price is 40 US dollars – a teacher, a policeman and all other officials earn 20 US dollars a month on average.

So here we were, in the thick of it. Cambodia has cast its spell over me. Don't get too close to the fire! We go to look at a temple in the jungle that is just now being cleared of mines. After a while I notice that the skulls on the warning signs are pointing in the other direction – we've ended up on the wrong side of the fence! Just don't make any

wrong moves! The reality in the middle of all this unreality was like a shock. The film is my head had gained the upper hand. We rush through streets full of holes, mine fields, killing fields scouting out stories and locations. In the evening we sit there in our sensory overload gawking at the jungle or the river – speechless. Brain damaged. The end of the road? No chance! Maybe the end of the day.

We ride through this magnificently beautiful country, but appearances are deceptive. Lurking just below the surface lie evil, death, the mines, the mass graves. Often enough the horror rises up to the surface as well. I look into many traumatized faces – most of them smiling. Many people tell me their stories without my even asking, they are all comparable. Everywhere I look all I see is the war, the bullet holes in the houses, the cripples, the scarred souls of the people there. When we wrote

“We sit there in our sensory overload gawking at the jungle.”

the script, we started with a citation from William Shawcross: “To travel through Cambodia was to travel through a land that had been cast into the outer reaches of hell and only barely retrieved” (Si-deshow, 1993).

Even if most people in the west don't know much about Cambodia, it is still an incredibly media-saturated country. Angkor, and above all Angkor Wat, even more so. In France anyway. The colonial exhibitions in Marseille and Paris at the beginning of the '30s, all the advertising campaigns, for refrigerators, clothing for the colonies, munitions, for Lincoln cars. In Germany Tabac uses image of Angkor

Wat to advertise for the perfume Culture. There are countless feature films and documentaries. I had read and seen so much that at some point, in the middle of this Cambodian surrealism, in the savage hinterlands of the Far East, it was no

longer possible for me to separate the experiences that I had invented or read about from the true ones.

The text by Marc Eberle printed here stems from the year 2002. In his conversation with Margarita Tsoumou on January 17 in HAU1 he will also report on his current experiences in Cambodia.

→ **Marc Eberle**, born in Heidelberg in 1972, studied American studies, history and media culture from 1993 to 1998 at the University of Hamburg with a focus on documentary film. In addition, he completed a Master of Arts in film studies at the Royal Holloway College of the University of London. Since 2001 Eberle has been a documentary filmmaker in South and Southeast Asia. He makes films for international broadcasters such as VPRO, BBC, HBO and various Discovery Channels from Oman, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Laos, Vietnam and Burma. His documentary “The Most Secret Place on Earth – The CIA's Covert War in Laos” has been nominated for numerous awards, including the German Film Award, the History Makers' Award (New York, USA) and the Golden Panda at the 12th Sichuan TV Festival (China). As producer, director, and coach for local staff he helped set up Cambodia's first private TV station, Cambodian Television Network. In addition, he is currently teaching documentary film at the Goethe Institute in Phnom Penh.



California Uber Alles

Is there a right life in the wrong one? **Jens Balzer** tells the story of the punk rock hymn “Holiday in Cambodia”, pointing out the contradictions and conflicts that were already emerging in the ‘70s when pop culture tried to make a protest against capitalism.

Who wouldn't have already had this feeling while strolling through Berlin-Mitte, Kreuzberg or Neukölln? Doesn't it make you wish for the same thing that Jello Biafra wished for, when you see all these hipsters carrying Jutebeutel tote bags, all these spoiled good-for-nothings from all over the world, all these uniform wanna-be individualists with their peach-fuzz beards and their men's and ladies' hair buns? Don't you also think that it's high time to send the spoiled youth of the whole western world to a proper re-education camp? “So you been to school for a year or two / and you know you've seen it all”, sings Jello Biafra of the Dead Kennedys about this species in the song “Holiday in Cambodia”, “in daddy's car thinkin' you'll go far / back east your type don't crawl”, ranting and raving even more virulently in the chorus, amid a swarm of hornets made up of guitar crescendos, finally coming to the conclusion: “What you need my son / is a holiday in Cambodia / where people dress in black / a holiday in Cambodia / where you'll kiss ass or crack”.

The Dead Kennedys, founded in 1978 in San Francisco, were not only the punk rock band name of all time. At the end of the '70s they were to a great extent the first band to replace the usual glamorous-irresponsible playing around with political symbols with straightforward leftist radical agitation. In classic fast-paced howlers like “Kill the Poor” or “Let's Lynch the Landlord”, they called for revolution against capitalism, militarism and the Christian religion; the Dead Kennedys also emphatically warned – in the song “California Uber Alles” – of what they considered the immediately impending Zen fascism in California. Songs like “Chemical Warfare” and “Nazi Punks Fuck Off” soon became part of the musical canon among squatters and in self-run political cafés; while the songs that dealt more with everyday life, such as “Too Drunk to Fuck”, also spoke to the apolitical wing of the scene.

Their masterpiece, however, was unquestionably “Holiday in Cambodia” from 1979. With his own brand of misanthropy, which he maintains to this day, Jello Biafra rails against the indifferent white American youth who have never had to work for their prosperity. And these arrogant ones, lacking in empathy, look down at all those who are worse off than they are despite their hard work – not least at the ‘niggers’, whose ‘ethnicky jazz’ they loved to listen to on their ‘five grand stereos’, but who otherwise should please stay where they belong: in the ghetto. The only thing that helps against this prosperity crap shoot – according to the chorus – is real, hard work as a slave in a country where “people are one” and “people dress in black”: “it's tough kid, but it's life”.

In way that delights as much as it agitates, this song fosters the proletarian hate for those who are better-off but also – and this is what's interesting – it shows the horror image of the real dictatorship of the proletariat to be the ultimate punishment for the white hipster. This means, however: the only thing that appears even more barbaric and stupider than capitalism in this anti-capitalist song is the consummate anti-capitalism of the Pol Pot regime; the only thing that seems more contemptible than the prosperous white youth is the proletariat that has achieved total domination. Smoothly crass, the song eludes the common opposition of left and right, provoking both sides at once – especially if you remember that substantial parts of the western left at the end of the '70s still viewed the regime of the Khmer Rouge as an interesting social experiment and as part of the international anti-imperialist movement. Some were still trying to downplay the number of Cambodian victims as late as the '80s; including the linguist Noam Chomsky, who later released political spoken word records on Jello Biafra's label Alternative Tentacles. (In Germany, then chairman of the Communist League of West Germany and later Joschka Fischer's chief clerk, Joscha Schmierer, sent a message of solidarity to Pol Pot in 1980.)

“Holiday in Cambodia” is a masterpiece of political dialectics; an ideological puzzle that otherwise rarely succeeded in traditional punk rock; and to this day it is a particularly bizarre, but also interesting moment, when Jello Biafra would get the crowd chanting “Pol Pot! Pol Pot!” at his concerts.

Today he does this as a solo artist, accompanied by like-minded bands such as the Melvins or in his current ensemble Guantanamo School of Medicine. As for the Dead Kennedys, they had already broken up by 1986; since then Biafra and his former bandmates maintain a relationship of cordial animosity. In the middle of the '90s they went to court against one another for the first time because Biafra had prevented the music of “Holiday in Cambodia” from being used in a commercial for Levi's jeans; this caused the rest of the band to lose out on 200,000 dollars. Biafra maintained that it was incompatible with the anti-capitalist spirit of the Dead Kennedys and especially of this song. By chiselling them out of the proceeds from the commercial deal and thus out of the fruits of their labour, countered his former colleagues, Biafra was also behaving no differently than those exploiters that are dealt with in the song: those who got rich from ‘black’ music, all the while refusing royalties to the true creators.

Even in its legal aftermath, “Holiday in Cambodia” tells of the difficulty of leading an anti-capitalist life in capitalism. In this aspect as well, a dialectic can be seen, but this inevitably leads us – unlike what leftist radical punk rock once touted – into a spiral of negation.

→ **Jens Balzer** is a pop critic and acting feuilleton director at the *Berliner Zeitung*.



Rendezvous in the Cosmos of Crossing Cultures

During the '60s Cambodia experienced a brief heyday, which produced an idiosyncratic interpretation of western rock music. The band The Cambodian Space Project thinks back to a pop culture that was wiped out by the Khmer Rouge and brings it back to the present.

By Stefanie Alisch

They have a penchant for the catchy. But the cultural techniques that they use in their music are complex. In their song "Kolos Srey Chaom (Love God)", The Cambodian Space Project do a take on the hit "Venus" by Bananarama, interpreting it in a Cambodian style of reading surf rock, refined with an "Aahahaa hahaaaha-ahaa". It sounds, and not just remotely, like "Lady in Black" by Uriah Heep. An almost identical adaptation, somewhat older and rougher, goes with a trailer for the Indonesian sex-crime-fantasy-thriller "The Snake Queen" from 1982. So The Cambodian Space Project cover a cover and enrich the arrangement with another instrument – presumably a two-stringed fiddle. It takes over the solo part where normally a surf guitar is used. Officially, the group is making reference to the golden age of Khmer pop, the "Roaring Sixties" in Cambodia. But in practice, the musicians also

refer to Indonesian rock from the '80s, diving into a neighbouring space-time continuum. On their website they call their musical odyssey a "Cosmic Cross-Culture Rendezvous Featuring Space Trippers From Various Planets".

The melodies by The Cambodian Space Project can easily be hummed along while doing the shimmy, a dance that arose from the ballroom dance the foxtrot. In interviews the members broach thoroughly serious topics. They speak of mass killings, mutilations and rapes carried out by the Khmer Rouge. While on tour in Australia, the home country of the band's founder, Julien Poulson, Cambodian Space Project gave a concert for asylum seekers. They made music in front of the camp fence. Beforehand they had conversed with those interned over this demarcation line. It's all docu-

mented in a short video statement that the group posted on Facebook. The speaker is Srey Channthy, the singer for The Cambodian Space Project. Since September 2013 she herself is Australian.

How does such a combo come to be? Srey Channthy grew up in one of the poorest provinces of Cambodia. The dream of becoming a vocalist was something she had inherited from her mother, who sang at parties, while doing the laundry and while cooking. Little Srey Channthy joined in. Together with her father she went by tank through the borderzone to Vietnam in the '80s. In the background there was a radio playing. In her whole life Srey Channthy has only gone to school for one week. Since she was four or five she has actually only worked; first in the rice fields, at nine on the rubber plantation. Even at this age she had to help her

pregnant mother flee bullets. As a teenager she migrated to the capital Phnom Penh, getting by with odd jobs. The promise of a job in a beauty salon was meant to lure her into the red light milieu. Srey Channthy was tied to a bed screaming for a whole day. She would have been sold if another woman hadn't helped her to escape. In the karaoke bars of Phnom Penh she established herself as a charismatic solo singer. She quickly figured out that the audience gave the most lucrative tips in response to the golden Khmer pop hits.

It was in one of these establishments that she met Julien Poulson. That was in 2009. The guitarist had previously worked as a media producer for the truth and reconciliation commission in East Timor and had received financial support for a music project. When troubles broke out again in the crisis zone, he used the money to revive pop culture in Cambodia. When he invited Srey Channthy to form a band with him, the two could already fall back on this basic funding. Their first gigs were played at the small Mexican restaurant Alley Cat Café in Phnom Penh.

In the following two years, The Cambodian Space Project toured through the provinces, playing in villages and temples, for orphanages and for a socially disadvantaged audience. At a concert in the singer's hometown the band was received with a banquet. In the noise hymn "Whiskey Cambodia" Srey Channthy sings the praises of the ample courses of the meal. In 2011 Julien Poulson produced the debut album. This was followed by appearances in Australia, France, Great Britain and the USA. A few months ago a second album was released, entitled "Not Easy Rock 'n' Roll".

In "Chnam Oun Dop Pram Mouy (I'm Sixteen)" Srey Channthy chortles the intervals like hiccups, as is familiar from some of the classics of rock 'n' roll. The piece was originally interpreted by the Khmer pop diva Ros Sereysothea. A large part of the band's repertoire consists in reminiscences of singers such as Meas Samons, Sinn Sisamouth, Chea Savoeun or Mao Sareth. Their songs came out of a time when Cambodia was an Independent Kingdom and the society was meant to be converted into a Buddhist socialism. At first these stars sang traditional ballads and duets. Much like in Turkey, the production of local pop music went along with the production of fantasy films.

But how did rock 'n' roll come to the Southeast Asian country? Since 1955 the US Army had been stationed in neighbouring Vietnam. A decade later saw the outbreak of the military conflict that the New York Times would later call "our first rock 'n' roll war". The sound spilled over into neutral Cambodia; stations like "Voice of America" or "United States Armed Forces Radio" were broadcasting non-stop in South Vietnam.

The wealth of overtones in Southeast Asian xylophone and gong orchestras proved to be highly compatible with the tremolo of surf guitars. The meandering melodies in half-tone steps and smaller intervals opened up the interface to the blues. Domesticated dances of Anglo-American provenance, presented in suits and sequined dresses, went along in a charming fusion with the most meaningful hand gestures of the classical Khmer tradition. The voices of the stars sang their way into the hearts of the rural population over the countrywide radio broadcasters.

Shortly thereafter the catastrophe took its course. Pol Pot declared 1975 year zero and proclaimed a communist-Maoist peasant state. The Khmer Rouge evacuated all of Phnom Penh in just a few days. Families were torn apart and their members were carried off to remote regions. Forced labour, abolition of money, and destruction of hospitals was meant to lay the groundwork for a classless society. The use of the death penalty became the order of the day. Like countless others, Srey Channthy's grandparents were also murdered by the Khmer Rouge. To escape ethnically motivated persecution, her mother died her face. She cut her hair, wore a Maoist uniform and stopped singing. In interviews Srey Channthy had talked about how Houy Meas, the most beloved female radio DJ in Cambodia was raped by several soldiers and then murdered.

Many questions remain unanswered to this day: How could Pol Pot, a below average student, get a grant to study in Paris? How did he manage to become the leader of a state, lead a massacre of his own people and then maintain his seat at the UN? How is it possible that amnestied Khmer Rouge once again hold high offices today in Cambodia?

Brutal mass killings in the name of communism or in the name of its eradication were no rarity in the '60s and '70s in Southeast Asia. Indonesian death squads, the "machetes", murdered 80,000 people that they considered communists in two weeks in Bali alone. In Joshua Oppenheimer's documentary "The Act of Killing", aging professional killers cited the influence of Hollywood mafia movies as an inspiration for their crimes against humanity. The connections between globalised Anglo-American popular culture and the violent regimes in Southeast Asia, everything in the wake of a process of decolonisation, are many. Iconic photographs from the Vietnam War have not only burned themselves into the memory – they also functioned as catalysts for the US hippie movement and the emergence of counterculture in the broadest sense.

"The people in Phnom Penh lived out their variation of the Swingin' Sixties."

Like the photo of nine-year-old Kim Phúc, the Vietnamese girl fleeing from a Napalm attack, rock 'n' roll became a universal cultural asset at the beginning of the '70s. The people in Kabul, Phnom Penh or Luanda lived out their variations of the Swingin' Sixties. By referring back to this time, Cambodian Space Project pose bigger questions: What effect does popular music have in traumatised societies that are slowly coping with the aftermath of colonial dominance and wars? How are the conflicts in Southeast Asia and Anglo-American popular culture entangled with one another? How can we understand the global characteristics of modernity with all their opportunities and risks as a specific phenomenon?

The Cambodian Space Project invite their listeners to position themselves in a historical continuity, which reaches well beyond the trauma of the Killing Fields and the genocide in Cambodia. They rely on the power of memory to shape history and on the healing effects of music.

→ *Stefanie Alisch is a musicologist and DJ in Berlin.*

→ *The Cambodian Space Project was founded in 2009 by Australian guitarist and keyboard player Julien Poulson, with the extraordinary Cambodian singer Srey Channthy as lead singer. The band covers songs from the '60s, the golden age of Cambodian pop music, contributing equally to its preservation and to the creation of a wonderfully idiosyncratic Cambodian psychedelic rock. While the musicians have by now appeared all over the world, they are particularly proud of their shows in remote Cambodian villages. In 2011 their debut album "A Space Odyssey" was released. The cover songs on it include pearls of Cambodian pop music, which were originally performed by stars such as Pan Ron, Sinn Sisamouth and Ros Sereysothea. In commemoration of the genocide of the Khmer Rouge and the murdered musicians, they use instruments such as the tro, mixing this with the inventory of western rock music to create a sound that makes feet start dancing on their own.*



Human Nature

Die in "Human Nature" dargestellten Personen werden in der intimsten denkbaren Umgebung gezeigt, ihrer Wohnung. Entspannt posierend, bewahren die Porträtierten entschieden ihre Persönlichkeit, obwohl sie (selbst ausgewählte und vom Künstler entworfene) Masken tragen. Zu jedem der facettenreichen und seltsam beunruhigenden Porträts gehört eine umfassende Lebensgeschichte, die nur Khvay Samnang selber bekannt ist und an deren Erzählung er sich noch bis ins Detail erinnert – Details, die er uns vorenthält.

Ursprünglich wollte Samnang die Gesichter der Bewohner zeigen, änderte aber seine Absicht, als der Ehemann der ersten Porträtierten Angst vor dem Indexikalischen der Fotografie offenbarte – dass der Gezeigte erkannt oder sogar verurteilt werden kann. Die Vorsicht der Bewohner ist sowohl kulturell

bedingt als auch durch politische Aspekte. Argwohn begleitet den ständigen Strom an Journalisten und auch Touristen, die durch die Flure wandern und in die Zimmer schauen. Wie andere Bewohner von plötzlich wertvollen Immobilien, fürchten sie sich vor Investoren. Wie Samnang sagt: „Selbst wenn wir unschuldig sind, brauchen wir womöglich eine Maske.“

In "Human Nature" geht es darum, ein Kambodscha jenseits der historischen Schatten zu zeigen. Ohne seinen dokumentarischen Impuls oder die seltene Vertrautheit mit den Porträtierten zu opfern, steht Samnang mit seinem Ansatz für einen kulturellen Wandel in Kambodscha, der Presse, Postkarten und polizeilichen Porträts die visuelle Deutungsmacht im Land entreißt.

Erin Gleeson, Phnom Penh, 2012

Interview: Nora Taylor & Khvay Samnang

Nora Taylor: Ihre Arbeit wird oft als Verbindung von Performance und Fotografie beschrieben, nicht als fotografische Dokumentation von Performances. Wie sehen Sie die Überschneidungen zwischen diesen beiden Ausdrucksformen in Ihrer Arbeit?

Khvay Samnang: Ich habe ursprünglich Malerei studiert. Die Fotografie nutzte ich zum ersten Mal im Jahr 2006 als Ausgangspunkt für meine Malerei und betrachtete sie bald darauf als eine eigenständige Form. Mit Performancekunst beschäftige ich mich erst seit kurzer Zeit, nämlich seit 2010, als ich während eines Stipendiums am Kunstzentrum Tokyo Wonder Site an einem Workshop des japanischen Künstlers Seiji Shimoda teilnahm. Damals begann ich meinen Körper als Medium zu begreifen. Mein Wunsch, Bilder zu produzieren, blieb jedoch bestehen. Ich frage mich eher selten, ob das, was ich mache, Performancekunst ist oder nicht; ich mache einfach, was ich für notwendig halte. Der Körper und die Aktion stellen für mich Formen oder Kompositionen dar. Die Fotografie einer Performance ist eine eigenständige Arbeit und nicht bloß ihre Dokumentation; denn die Art und Weise, wie eine Aktion im Bild erinnert wird, ist von ebenso großer Bedeutung wie die Handlung selbst. Das Bild erzählt eine Geschichte, die anderen mitgeteilt werden kann. Bei der Reihe "Ohne Titel"/"Untitled" (2011), für die ich mich in den Seen Phnom Penhs fotografierte, waren keine Zuschauer anwesend – mein Publikum ist die Zukunft, all jene, welche die Fotografien von dieser Aktion sehen werden.

NT: Sowohl Fotografie wie Performance zeigen Aktionen, damit ein Publikum sie wahrnehmen kann. Wie Sie gesagt haben, besteht der einzige Unter-

schied in der zeitlichen Verzögerung. Mich würden auch die Orte dieser Bilder interessieren, insbesondere aus der Reihe "Untitled", die größtenteils im Wasser aufgenommen wurde. Könnten Sie etwas zur Landschaft sagen?

KS: "Untitled" (2010) und "Luft"/"Air" (2011) sind die beiden einzigen Fotoreihen, bei denen ich in der Natur gearbeitet habe. Meine anderen Arbeiten entstanden in Innenräumen, sie zeigen Menschen bei gesellschaftlichen Anlässen wie etwa Hochzeiten in "Hochzeit"/"Wedding" (2009) oder in eher privaten Situationen wie Wohnräumen in "Menschliche Natur"/"Human Nature" (2011). Doch eigentlich verstehe ich alles als Landschaft – was ich durch den Sucher sehe, sind Szenarien, Kompositionen. Was den Ort anbetrifft, folge ich realen Geschichten und reagiere auf sie, wenn ich dies für notwendig halte, als aktiver oder betroffener Bürger und Künstler. So habe ich mich zum Beispiel in "Untitled" mit der Geschichte einer Zwangsäumung beschäftigt. Daraus ergaben sich als Orte der Arbeit die Seen von Phnom Penh. Diese großen und wichtigen Gewässer werden derzeit mit Genehmigung der Regierung von Privatfirmen mit Sand aufgefüllt, wodurch tausende Menschen aus ihren Häusern und Wohnungen vertrieben werden. Bisweilen ist dies sehr gewaltsam abgelaufen. Die Entwicklung schädigt damit die Menschen selbst. Ich verfolgte die Berichterstattung über die Bevölkerung, die gegen die Räumungen Widerstand leistete und protestierte, sowie über andere, die ihre Häuser niederrissen. Es war eindrucksvoll, wie der Sand sich in die Häuser ergoss, sie buchstäblich ausfüllte. Wenn die Menschen nicht weggehen, dann würden sie sterben. Für die Performance habe ich meinen Körper eingesetzt und einen

symbolischen Eimer Sand über mir ausgeschüttet – so wie der Sand die Häuser zum Schaden der Menschen und der Umwelt ausfüllte. Bei "Air" bin ich einer anderen Geschichte gefolgt – ich lief durch verschiedene Bezirke in der Präfektur Fukushima in Japan, wo die schöne und mannigfaltige Landschaft zwar unversehrt aussah, tatsächlich aber stark verstrahlt war. Bei der Beschäftigung mit diesen Geschichten wähle ich Orte mit einer ausgeprägten Charakteristik aus. Mich interessiert der Konflikt zwischen Entwicklung und Natur. Derzeit verbringe ich viel Zeit an den Flussufern in Kambodscha, um die Erosion zu dokumentieren.

NT: Die Szenerie in "Human Nature" ist eine andere. Sie enthält Porträts von Menschen, die nicht nur von sich aus Masken tragen. Könnten Sie den Kontext dieser Bilder näher erläutern?

KS: In dem Wohnblock, wo die Bilder entstanden sind, unterrichte ich Kunst. Häufig stehen die Türen offen, so dass ich in die Innenräume schauen kann. Sie wirken sehr dramatisch auf mich, fast wie Gemälde in schweren, vielschichtigen Farben. Die Fotografien dokumentieren den Raum genauso, wie er war; ich habe nichts an ihm verändert. Als ich die Menschen besuchte, saßen sie manchmal auf einem Stuhl oder auf dem Bett, und ich bat sie, dort sitzen zu bleiben, um sie so zu fotografieren. In anderen Fällen forderte ich sie auf, sich an einen bestimmten, mir geeignet erscheinenden Punkt des Bildausschnitts zu begeben. Was die Masken betrifft, so hatte ich eine große Auswahl dabei; die Leute suchten sich die Maske aus, von der sie dachten, dass sie am meisten mit ihnen zu tun habe.

The subjects of "Human Nature" are found in the most intimate setting possible: their homes. In each image, the sitters pose comfortably, maintaining a staunch sense of individuality even while wearing masks (of their choice) created by the artist. Contained within each colorful and vaguely unsettling portrait is a rich biography, parts of which only the artist is privy to, and which he can recall in detail from his conversations with the subjects. However we the audiences are not offered these details.

Khvay originally planned to show the residents' faces. This changed when the first sitter's husband indicated his fear of photography's indexical nature – its ability to identify, or even convict. The resident's reticence is both culturally derived and polit-

Interview: Nora Taylor & Khvay Samnang

Nora Taylor: Your work is often described as intersecting performance and photography rather than photographic documents of performance. How do you conceive the overlaps between performance and photography in your work?

Khvay Samnang: I trained as a painter. It was in 2006 that I began using photography as a source for my painting, and I quickly considered it a form of its own. I was only recently introduced to performance art. It was in 2010, during my residency at Tokyo Wonder Site, at a workshop with Japanese performance artist Seiji Shimoda. I began to think about my body as a medium. But my desire to make images remained present. I don't think very much about whether this is performance art or not; I do as I need to do. I think of the body and action as a form, as a composition. The photograph of an action is a work itself, not simply documentation; the way it will be remembered as an image is equally as important as the action itself. It tells a story that can be shared. In the "Untitled" (2011) series where I photographed myself in Phnom Penh's lakes, there was no live audience present; my audience is the future, those who would see the photographs of that action.

NT: Photography and performance share that feature of displaying actions for audiences to witness. The only difference, as you noted, is the time delay. I am also interested in the locations of these images, especially the "Untitled" series which is mostly shot in water. Can you talk about the landscape?

KS: "Untitled" (2010) and "Air" (2011) are the only photographic series in which I worked outside in the natural landscape. My other series are shot indoors, with people, in social situations like weddings ("Wedding", 2009), or more private situations like domestic interiors ("Human Nature", 2011). But I consider everything a landscape actually – what I see through my lens is scenery, compositions. In terms of location, I follow existing stories and respond to them when I feel I must,

ically informed. They may be wary of the steady stream of journalists or even tourists walking the hallways and peering into their homes, or, like others on newly valuable property, watchful of developers and prospectors. In Khvay's words, "even though we are innocent, we may also need a mask." "Human Nature" strives to document Cambodia beyond its historical shadow. Without sacrificing his documentary impulse or the rare intimacy he has cultivated with his subjects, Khvay's photographic practice exemplifies a nascent cultural turn in Cambodia – wherein the press, postcards and evidentiary portraits may no longer dominate the country's visual discourse.

Erin Gleeson, Phnom Penh, 2012

either as a way of being an active or concerned citizen and artist. For example, in "Untitled" I was following an eviction story. The story determined the location of Phnom Penh's lakes. These large and important lakes are being filled with sand under government and private sector concessions, which is forcing thousands of people out of their homes. It has been at times very violent. It is development at the cost of people's lives. I followed the news coverage about the people who resisted eviction and were protesting, and others who were dismantling their houses. Strikingly, sand was pouring into houses, literally filling them. If the people didn't leave, they would die. I used my body in the performance, dumping one symbolic bucket of sand over myself – like the sand filling into the houses at the expense of the people and the environment. For "Air", I also followed a story – walking through various districts of Fukushima prefecture in Japan, the beautiful and diverse landscapes that look intact but are violently affected by radiation. As I follow and investigate these stories, I choose places that have a strong identity. I'm interested in the conflict between development and nature. Currently, I am spending time on the riverbanks in Cambodia documenting the erosion.

NT: The scenery in "Human Nature" is different. It also consists of portraits of people other than yourself and they appear to be wearing masks. Can you talk about the context of those images?

KS: I teach art in this apartment complex. The doors are often open and I can see the interiors. I find them very dramatic, like paintings with deep, complex colors. The photograph documents the room as it was; I did not move things. When I visited people, sometimes they were sitting on a chair or bed, and therefore I asked them to stay where they were and took a photograph. In other cases, I requested people to be in particular spot in my frame where I saw fit. In terms of the mask, I had many to choose from; they chose the one they felt closest to.

→ Erin Gleeson is a curator, writer and expert in the contemporary art of Cambodia. She is artistic director and co-founder of the gallery Sa Sa Bassac in Phnom Penh.

→ Nora Taylor is professor of South and Southeast Asian art history at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago.

→ Khvay Samnang, video and performance artist, born in Svay Rieng in 1982, lives and works in Phnom Penh. In his subtle and humorous works, he uses different media to examine various aspects of Cambodian society and to pose questions about their effects and relevance today. In 2006 he completed his studies in independent art (painting) at the Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh, and shortly thereafter expanded his spectrum to include sculpture, photography, video and installations. In addition he works as a teacher at a high school in Cambodia. He has taken part in numerous group shows, such as "Human Nature: Unlike Reminder", NIU Art Museum, 2011; "Inside", Sa Sa Art Gallery, 2009; "Art of Survival", Metahouse, 2008; "Surfacing and Anon", Sala Art Space, 2007. "

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Staging Cambodia

Video, Memory and Rock 'n' Roll

Performance, Film, Dialog, Musik / 16.–19.1.2014 / HAU1, HAU2

Uraufführung: 16.1., 20:00 / HAU1
Weitere Vorstellung: 18.1., 20:00 / HAU1

Michael Laub

Portrait Series Battambang

Kamera / Schnitt: Ebru Karaca

Khmer mit englischen Untertiteln

&

The Cambodian Space Project

Galaxy Khmer

Mit Tänzerinnen und Musikern von Phare Ponleu Selpak / Konzept: Michael Laub / Visuals: Marc Eberle

Sind wir alle wirklich so individuell, wie wir glauben? In seiner Reihe "Portrait Series", die er an verschiedenen Orten auf der Welt realisiert, beschäftigt sich Michael Laub mit der Frage, was geschieht, wenn er Menschen innerhalb eines immer gleichen Settings inszeniert – unabhängig von den geografischen und kulturellen Unterschieden, in denen sie sich jeweils bewegen. Seit längerer Zeit reist er in Brüssel ansässige Regisseur und Choreograf regelmäßig nach Kambodscha. Im Rahmen seiner Recherchen im Umfeld der Phare Ponleu Selpak – einer NGO, die nach dem Ende des Pol-Pot-Regimes den kulturellen Wiederaufbau in dem südostasiatischen Land unterstützt – ist nun die "Portrait Series Battambang" entstanden.

Im Vergleich zur letzten Folge dieser Reihe, die er am Burgtheater in Wien produzierte, könnte das Ergebnis kaum unterschiedlicher sein. Anstatt sie auf einer Bühne in Szene zu setzen, hat Michael Laub seine Darsteller diesmal auf Video festgehalten. Die Aufnahmen fügen sich zu einem traurigen und poetischen, aber auch höchst vitalen Mikrokosmos einer Gesellschaft, die sich von Fesseln und Folgen des Kolonialismus befreit und über die Erinnerung an die Schrecken der Vergangenheit hinaus einen Blick auf die Zukunft gewinnen will.

Das Schicksal Kambodschas versinnbildlicht sich in der wechselhaften Geschichte, die der Rock 'n' Roll hier durchlaufen hat. Während der 60er Jahre entstand in dem Land eine einzigartige und höchst originelle Lesart genuin westlicher Stile wie Garage, Surf, Space oder Psychedelic Rock. Ihre Protagonisten wurden unter der Schreckensherrschaft der Roten Khmer verfolgt und eliminiert. Eine neue Generation von Bands hat diese fast vergessene Tradition aufgearbeitet und führt sie nun künstlerisch wie kommerziell höchst erfolgreich weiter. Im zweiten Teil des Abends, direkt im Anschluss an die Aufführungen der "Portrait Series Battambang", zeigt Michael Laub ein Konzert der in Phnom Penh ansässigen Band The Cambodian Space Project. Das Ensemble wird verstärkt um Musiker und Tänzer aus Phnom Penh und Battambang. Darüber hinaus kommen eigens für dieses Projekt entwickelte Visuals des Dokumentarfilmers Marc Eberle zum Einsatz.

Es entsteht ein seltsam unwirklicher "Rock 'n' Roll Circus", dessen Formsprache von den psychedelischen Multimedia-Performances der 60er Jahre inspiriert ist. Unter dem Titel "Galaxy Khmer" bringt Michael Laub so seine persönliche Vision einer Konvergenz von "Video, Memory & Rock 'n' Roll" auf die Bühne.

Are we really all as individual as we think? In his "Portrait Series", which he has realized in various places all over the world, Michael Laub is concerned with the question of what happens if he stages people in a setting that always remains the same – independent of the geographical and cultural differences in which they circulate.

For some time now, the Brussels-based director and choreographer has been regularly travelling to Cambodia. His research in the milieu surrounding the Phare Ponleu Selpak – an NGO that promotes cultural reconstruction in the Southeast Asian country after the end of the Pol Pot regime – formed the framework for the "Portrait Series Battambang".

In comparison to the last instalment in this series, which was produced at the Burgtheater in Vienna, the results here could not be more different. This time, instead of placing the performers on stage, Michael Laub has captured them on video. The recordings add up to a sad and poetic, but also highly vital microcosm of a society that is liberating itself from the shackles and consequences of colonialism, and seeking to get a clear view to the future beyond the memory of the horrors of the past.

Cambodia's fate is epitomized by the chequered history that rock 'n' roll has undergone in the country. During the '60s, there emerged a unique and highly original way of interpreting genuinely western musical styles such as garage, surf, space or psychedelic rock. The key figures were persecuted and eliminated during the Khmer Rouge's reign of terror. A new generation of bands has brought back this almost forgotten tradition, and is now pursuing it to great success, both artistically and commercially.

In the second part of the evening, directly following the screening of the "Portrait Series Battambang", Michael Laub presents a concert by the Phnom Penh-based band The Cambodian Space Project. The ensemble will be joined by other musicians and dancers from Phnom Penh and Battambang. In addition, there will be visuals by the documentary filmmaker Marc Eberle, made especially for this project.

What this all amounts to is a bizarre, surreal "rock 'n' roll circus", the formal language of which is inspired by the psychedelic multimedia performances of the '60s. Under the title "Galaxy Khmer", Michael Laub brings to the stage his personal vision of a convergence of "Video, Memory and Rock 'n' Roll".

16.–19.1. / HAU2

Khvay Samnang

Newspaper Man / Human Nature

Khvay Samnang ist ein international renommierter Künstler, der sich überwiegend durch die Medien Video, Fotografie und Performance artikuliert. Zu Beginn des Themenwochenendes wird er eine Ausstellung mit ausgewählten Arbeiten eröffnen. Seine Installationen "Newspaper Man" und "Human Nature" sind vom 16. bis zum 19. Januar im 2. Stock des HAU2 und als großformatige Projektionen in den Fenstern der HAU2-Büroräume zu sehen. Mit subtilem Humor unternimmt Khvay Samnang als Vertreter einer Generation jüngerer kambodschanischer Künstler den Versuch einer Neuinterpretation der Geschichte seines Landes. Seine Werke greifen umstrittene aktuelle Ereignisse und traditionelle kulturelle Praktiken auf. Khvay Samnang arbeitet aus der Perspektive eines Beteiligten, erforscht das Alltagsleben und macht Probleme sichtbar, die aus seiner Sicht eine Intervention verlangen – und sei es 'nur' eine symbolische.

Khvay Samnang is an internationally renowned video and performance artist who will open an exhibition of selected works at the beginning of the thematic weekend. His installations "Human Nature" and "Newspaper Man" can be seen on the 2nd floor of HAU2 and as large-format projections in the windows of the HAU2 offices from January 16 to 19. Using subtle humour and containing messages that can't be deciphered at first glance, Khvay Samnang is one of a generation of young Cambodian artists who are attempting to reinterpret their own history, contentious current events, and traditional cultural practices. Khvay Samnang works from the unabashed perspective of a participant, searching through everyday life for unresolved problems that he thinks require an intervention, even if it is only a symbolic one.

17.1., 20:00 / HAU2

Clips On Cambodia: Perspektiven eines Dokumentarfilmers

Perspectives of a Documentary Filmmaker

Margarita Tsomou im Gespräch mit Marc Eberle / Deutsch

Der seit 2001 in Südostasien lebende deutsche Dokumentarfilmer Marc Eberle initiierte neben seiner Tätigkeit als Regisseur, Redakteur, Produzent und Ausbilder den Aufbau des ersten Privatsenders im Land. Das Ergebnis ist das Cambodian Television Network. Gegenwärtig arbeitet Eberle an einer Dokumentation über The Cambodian Space Project. Sie rekonstruiert das Phänomen der Khmer-Rockmusik der 1960er Jahre, ihre Wiederentdeckung und erfolgreiche Überführung in die Gegenwart. Am 17. Januar lotst die Kulturwissenschaftlerin Margarita Tsomou den Regisseur durch sein umfangreiche Archiv: "Clips On Cambodia" zeigt ausgewählte Ausschnitte aus eigenen und fremden Filmen, die sich mit der Geschichte Kambodschas beschäftigen – von den 60er Jahren über die Verfolgungen und Eliminierungen des Pol-Pot-Regimes bis heute.

German documentary filmmaker Marc Eberle, who has been living in South Asia and Southeast Asia since 2001, is active as a director, editor, producer and educator. In addition, he initiated the formation of Cambodia Television Network, the first private broadcasting channel in Cambodia. Currently Eberle is working on a documentary about The Cambodian Space Project, a band that both reconstructs the phenomenon of Khmer rock music from the 1960s and sees to its successful transition into the present. On January 17, cultural theorist Margarita Tsomou will accompany Marc Eberle on a journey through his extensive film archive: "Clips on Cambodia" shows selected footage from his own and other films dealing with Cambodia's (music) history, from the '60s – through the persecutions and eliminations of the Pol Pot regime – to the present.

19.1., 17:00 / HAU2

Aufbruch und Wandel nach der Diktatur der Roten Khmer

Awakening and Transformation after the Dictatorship of the Khmer Rouge

Mit Michael Laub, Xavier Gobin, Khvay Samnang, Julien Poulson und Srey Chanthly /

Moderation: Margarita Tsomou / Englisch und Khmer mit englischer Übersetzung

Margarita Tsomou moderiert eine Gesprächsrunde mit Michael Laub über die Entstehung und Konzeption von "Staging Cambodia". In diesem Rahmen kommen auch zentrale Protagonisten zu Wort, darunter Xavier Gobin von Phare Performing Social Enterprise, Srey Chanthly und Julien Poulson von The Cambodian Space Project, und der Bildende Künstler Khvay Samnang.

Margarita Tsomou moderates a discussion with Michael Laub about the emergence and conception of "Staging Cambodia". It will also provide a chance for central figures from the scene to speak, including Xavier Gobin from Phare Performing Social Enterprise, Srey Chanthly and Julien Poulson from The Cambodian Space Project, and Khvay Samnang, a video and performance artist.

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Adressen:
HAU1 – Stresemannstr. 29, 10963 Berlin
HAU2 – Hallesches Ufer 32, 10963 Berlin
HAU3 – Tempelhofer Ufer 10, 10963 Berlin

Kasse:
T. +49 (0)30 – 259 004 -27
Tageskasse HAU2: Mo-Sa 15-19 Uhr
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