



ក្រុមបរិយោជន៍

ANGKOR

Dance Troupe

Khmer Classical and Folk Dance

Like all traditional arts, Cambodian classical and folk dance has been handed from one generation to the next. Since the Angkor Era, Cambodian dancers have preserved, cherished, and celebrated their art.

The Angkor Dance Troupe develops and teaches the traditions of Cambodian performing arts, promotes an understanding and appreciation of Cambodian culture, and provides a positive social and educational outlet for Cambodian youth.

Since the Angkor Era, Cambodian dancers have preserved, cherished, and celebrated their art.

The Troupe was founded in Lowell, MA, in 1986, by two teachers and a handful of dancers who learned traditional dance in refugee camps along the Thai-Cambodian border. Between 1975 and 1979, when Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge controlled Cambodia, most artists perished or fled the country. It was in the camps and later in places like Lowell that Cambodian dance was painstakingly resurrected.

Today, dance is one of the primary ways that Cambodian-Americans, split by politics and war, identify a common culture. For the people of Cambodia, art is the core of life, combining entertainment, tradition, religion, and social cohesion.



CLASSICAL DANCE

Classical dance has been connected to the sacred rituals of Cambodia for more than 1000 years.

During the great Angkor civilization, dancers performed blessing ceremonies in temples to bring prosperity to the kingdom. Once the exclusive domain of royalty, classical dance is now performed for audiences everywhere and has taken on new meaning for postwar Cambodians as they work to reclaim a treasured heritage.



In classical dance, we see highly-stylized gestures in concert with gentle movements. Dancers spend countless hours perfecting the intricate hand positions and controlled postures that create the elegant Khmer classical dance aesthetic.

Folk dance is rooted in rural Cambodia and reflects the life and spirit of peasants. Throughout Cambodia, after the harvest, it is time for music, song, and dance.

Dance motifs, commonly based on local legends, are inspired by themes of nature and the rituals of everyday village life. Distinctive, colorful costumes represent the traditional dress of peoples from the various regions within Cambodia.



Just as Court Dance is ruled by a strict form and a prescribed language of movement, folk dance is lively and spontaneous, created for emotional expressions.

The folk dances performed by the Angkor Dance Troupe were refined by the University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh. Researchers

collected dances and music from the countryside and choreographed dances that were suited to stage performances.

Folk Dance



The Angkor Dance Troupe

History and culture come alive through modern interpretations of lively folk dance from rural Cambodia and dazzling renditions of classical court dance, an ancient tradition dating to the ninth century A.D.

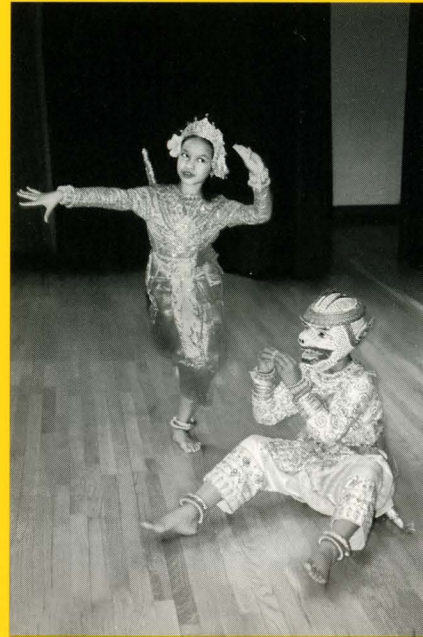
Based in Massachusetts, the Angkor Dance Troupe is recognized throughout New England as a leading Cambodian traditional arts ensemble.



The organization comprises several master teachers and more than forty students. The

Troupe's repertoire is drawn from a body of work developed at the University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, considered the artistic standard bearer of Cambodian performing arts.

The Troupe owns an extensive collection of richly-detailed, authentic costumes and dance materials. Angkor Dance has participated in workshops at Jacob's Pillow and has performed at numerous venues including First Night Boston, the Peabody Museum, and the National Folk Festival.



The Angkor Dance Troupe
P.O. Box 1553
Lowell, MA 01853

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Sources: *Khmer Folk Dance*, Sam-Ang Sam & Chan Moly Sam, Khmer Studies Institute, Inc., 1987; "The Dancer in Cambodia," Toni Shapiro, *Asian Art & Culture*, Winter 1995; "An Introduction to Khmer Traditional Dance," Phousita S. Huy, Seoul, 1995; "Cambodia's Royal Dance" Eileen Blumenthal, *Natural History*, 4/89; *Khmer Songbook*, Foreword by Sophiline Cheam Shapiro, 1992; *Dance and the Spirit of Cambodia*, Toni Shapiro, Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1994