



Asem
Cultural
Festival
2021



PROGRAMME

Asia and Europe: Cultures Connect

Brussels, 15 – 26 November

Phnom Penh, 22 – 26 November

and online

www.asemculturalfestival.com



Asia and Europe: Cultures Connect

On 25-26 November 2021, the Royal Government of Cambodia will host the 13th Summit of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM13). On this occasion, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia (MCFA) in partnership with the European Union (EU) and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), will present the ASEM Cultural Festival 2021, the official cultural side-event of ASEM13 which celebrates the cultural diversity from and artistic exchange between Asia and Europe.

The ASEM Cultural Festival 2021 titled 'Asia and Europe: Cultures Connect' is a multidisciplinary arts festival taking place from 22 to 26 November 2021 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and online. This year, over 30 events featuring over 100 Asian and European artists will be showcase the rich cultural diversity and brilliant creative collaborations from Asia and Europe through theatre, dance, music, visual arts and interdisciplinary presentations.

A curtain raiser offering a slice of the festival programme to live audiences in Brussels takes place from 15-26 November 2021: an art installation featuring two giant, colourful inflatable heads inspired by popular Chinese masks with the addition of western elements and the screening of 'White Building', the debut feature film of Cambodian director Kavich Neang, which won the Best International Feature Film at the 94th Academy Awards as well as the Best Actor Award at the Orizzonti Venice Film Festival 2021.

The opening event on 22 November 2021 presents a special presentation titled 'Colourful Cambodia' featuring classical, folk and contemporary

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dances performed by exceptional artistes from Cambodia and ASEM Partner countries. The performances include a blessing dance as a traditional way to welcome our guests, a folk dance depicting the traditional spirit-worship ceremony of rice-planting and harvesting, 'Pounding the Gum-Lacquer' a dance that expressing love, Rice' a Khmer contemporary dance portraying a dynamic and positive drive of Cambodian youth, 'Gems from Mozart at Angkor' a performance piece highlighting Asia-Europe partnership through its artistic approaches and the ASEM flags dance.

During the 5 days of the Festival, from 22 to 26 November 2021, artistic events representing over 20 ASEM Partners, including dance and theatre performances, music concerts, visual arts and photography exhibitions, installations and conversations with artists, will be presented on the official website (www.asemculturalfestival.com). The on-site programme of the Festival includes 6 art exhibitions hosted at the magnificent National Museum of Cambodia and 4 film screenings at the Major Cineplex in Phnom Penh.

Over the last almost two years, the global uncertainties as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought about unprecedented challenges. These times of global change have underscored the importance of cooperation and mutual understanding between Asia and Europe. Under the theme 'Enhancing ASEM Partnerships through Arts and Culture', the Festival aims to promote people-to-people connectivity between Asia and Europe in the field of arts and culture, thereby enhancing ASEM partnership through connections and collaborations.

COLOURFUL CAMBODIA

Opening Ceremony of ASEM Cultural Festival

PERFORMANCE

Presented by: Ministry of Culture & Fine Arts, Cambodia, European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation Supported by Embassy of Italy, Bangkok and Embassy of Austria, Bangkok

KAMINAGAHIME

Princess of Long Tresses

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Sanriku International Arts Committee and Japan Foundation Asia, Phnom Penh

PHILIPPINES' DAYS OF CULTURE WITH NO BARRIERS

PERFORMANCE

Supported by National Commission for Culture and Arts (NCCA), Philippines and the Cultural of the Philippines (CCP)

KOSTROMA

PERFORMANCE

ROSCONCERT Company

A TALE OF TWO SHORES

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth, Singapore (MCCY) National Arts Council, Singapore (NAC)

MUSEUM OF ELSEWHERE

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy, Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism, Italy, Association LIS LAB Performing Arts, CROSS Festival, City Contemporary Dance Company, Cultural Association VAN, City of Verbania, Embassy of Italy in Bangkok, Asia-Europe Foundation and European Union.

THE MYTH OF DEMON, RAHOO AND THE LUNAR ECLIPSE

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Ministry of Culture, Thailand

PLI

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Arts and Theatre Institute, Czech Republic and PerformCzech

CONCERT CELEBRATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHINA-ITALY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Ministry of Culture & Tourism, China

THE PULSE

PERFORMANCE

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

PYTHIAN ORATORIO

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport, Poland and Region of Lubelskie

THE ROAD TO MOZART AT ANGKOR

PERFORMANCE

Supported by Embassy of Italy, Bangkok; Embassy of Austria, Bangkok and Asia-Europe Foundation and European Union.

WHITE GOLD PHARE

PERFORMANCE

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

ENCOUNTERING CULTURES

Group Exhibition featuring artists from Asia & Europe

EXHIBITION

Supported by Ministry of Culture & Fine Arts, Cambodia, European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

THE LONGEST VOYAGE

EXHIBITION

Supported by Casa Asia, Spain

SAHAKA PLAYGROUND

EXHIBITION

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

IL NODO: A SKETCH FOR HOPE

EXHIBITION

Supported by Embassy of Italy, Bangkok

THINGS THAT COUNT

EXHIBITION

Supported by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam

HAPPY HEADS

EXHIBITION

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

PARALLEL SPACE Meeting the Terracotta Warriors in Greece

EXHIBITION

Supported by Ministry of Culture & Tourism, China

TRANSCENDING ARTSCIENCE CULTURES

WEBINAR (LIVE ON 26 NOV)

Supported by Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia

AT HOME, BEING HOME A conversation with artists from Europe and Asia

WEBINAR

Supported by Casa Asia, Spain and Asia-Europe Foundation

FAR BUT CLOSE

WEBINAR

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

GUANG (光) by Asian Film Festival

FILM

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

DAFNE by Asian Film Festival

FILM

Supported by European Union and Asia-Europe Foundation

REWIND: GOETHE EXPERIMENTAL

FILM

Supported by Film Archive, Thailand

Programme Overview – Onsite Events

Brussels Flagey Cultural Centre

15 November 18.30
22 November 20.00
WHITE BUILDING

FILM

Supported by European Union

Brussels Gallery St Hubert

15-26 November
**HAPPY HEADS,
SONGS OF FREEDOM**

EXHIBITION

Supported by European Union

Phnom Penh Major Cineplex

22 November 10:30
24 November 18:00
THE GATE

FILM

Supported by European Union
and Asia-Europe Foundation

24 November 12:00
26 November 9:30
WHITE SOLDIER

FILM

Supported by European Union
and Asia-Europe Foundation

24 November 15:00
26 November 12:30
THE MISSING PICTURE

FILM

Supported by European Union
and Asia-Europe Foundation

24 November 9:00
26 November 15:00
THE LAST REEL

FILM

Supported by European Union
and Asia-Europe Foundation

Phnom Penh National Museum of Cambodia

22 November – 31 December 2021 Closing date extended for exhibitions

ENCOUNTERING CULTURES

A Group Exhibition featuring
14 artists from Asia & Europe

EXHIBITION

Supported by European Union
and Asia-Europe Foundation

THE LONGEST VOYAGE

EXHIBITION

Supported by Casa Asia, Spain

SAHAKA PLAYGROUND

Cambodian artist & International
artists residing in Cambodia

EXHIBITION

Supported by European Union and
Asia-Europe Foundation

IL NODO: A SKETCH FOR HOPE

EXHIBITION

Supported by
Embassy of Italy, Bangkok

THINGS THAT COUNT

EXHIBITION

Supported by Ministry of Culture,
Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam

HAPPY HEADS

EXHIBITION

Supported by European Union
and Asia-Europe Foundation

Brussels Flagey Cultural Centre

WHITE BUILDING

15 November 18.30

22 November 20.00

Duration: 1h 30

Twenty-year-old Samnang and two of his friends live in the White Building, a landmark tenement in Phnom Penh. In this fast-changing city, the three young men practice their dance routine, dreaming of television talent contests, while their parents lead more traditional lifestyles. But the White Building is going to be demolished, and Samnang finds that the stable environment he has always called home is on shaky ground.

White Building is the debut feature film of Cambodian director Kavich Neang and received much attention at major international film festivals. Selected as the Cambodian entry for the Best International Feature Film at the 94th Academy Awards, it also won the Best Actor Award at the Orizzonti Venice Film Festival 2021.

Phnom Penh Major Cineplex

THE GATE

22.11.2021, 10:30

24.11.2021, 18:00

Duration: 1h 35m

Cambodia, during 1971, while repairing Angkor Wat, François Bizot, a Frenchman, was captured by the Khmer Rouge. Bizot was detained in a camp in the woods and accused of being a CIA spy. The only chance for him to be released from captivity was to persuade Duch, the young leader of the camp, that he was not involved. As Francois discovers fact of enlistment in Khmer Rouge, ties between the prisoner and his captives were established.

The feature film is based on the best-selling biographical novel "Le Portail" (The Gate) by Francois Bizot, the first official French-Cambodian collaboration.

THE LAST REEL

24.11.2021, 9:00

26.11.2021, 15:00

Duration: 1h 46m

A lost film, buried beneath Cambodia's killing fields, reveals different versions of the truth. A contemporary story about love, family and the ghosts of Cambodia's past.

THE MISSING PICTURE

24.11.2021, 15:00

26.11.2021, 12:30

Duration: 1h 32m

Rithy Panh uses clay figures, archival footage, and his narration to recreate the atrocities Cambodia's Khmer Rouge committed between 1975 and 1979.

WHITE SOLDIER

24.11.2021, 12:00

26.11.2021, 09:30

Duration: 2h 26m

A muggy Saigon, late 1945. Stationed at a military camp in French Indochina, two young men --Robert and André--become close friends as they share the boredom and excitement of waiting for their first mission. But when they discover that instead of freeing Indochina from foreign aggressors, they will be fighting natives struggling for independence, their friendship is jeopardised. Andre is shattered, but Robert is unfazed. He'll fight any enemy of France, to death. While Robert is assigned to lead a commando operation against the VietMinh, Andre chooses to join the freedom fighters. They've chosen their sides, once friends they must now be enemies. Their paths diverge--until the day they come face to face again. At a detention camp for French prisoners, André spots a prisoner who looks a lot like Robert.

Brussels Gallery St Hubert

HAPPY HEADS, SOUND OF FREEDOM

15-26 November 2021

EXHIBITION

Benoit+Bo are a true international collaboration, the fruit of two cultures, two sensibilities and two pasts. Benoit is French and Bo Chinese. They met in Tianjin, lived in Paris, and had a studio in Shanghai for nine years. Since 2015 they live in Brussels. Using their combined heritage, knowledge and world views, they create hybrid, contemporary visions, which are a mix of Asia and Europe, China and France. Their work is autobiographical and concerns their experiences, feelings and thoughts as an artistic duo in an intercultural relationship. On the occasion of the ASEM Cultural Festival, they offer us an art installation that will most certainly put a smile on your face!

The installation features two giant, colourful inflatable heads inspired by popular Chinese masks used during the lunar calendar festivals. However, Benoit+Bo modified and modernized aspects of the masks, making them more contemporary with the addition of western elements. They also gave them a new identity that connects Asia and Europe through a globalized urban culture.

This is an art installation that celebrates freedom and aims to spread joy around the city.

Note: The installation soundtrack can be accessed by scanning the QR code available on-site with a mobile device.

Artists: Benoit (France)+Bo (China)

Phnom Penh National Museum and Online www.asemculturalfestival.com

HAPPY HEADS

22-31 November 2021

EXHIBITION

In 2015, Benoit+Bo began a new project: taking the photo portraits of people in their daily life settings with masks. The idea comes after the arrival of the two artists in Belgium. They realized that the masks used in carnivals of some European countries and the masks used in some Asian countries share several features in common: they both follow the lunar calendar, used in procession or ritual festive activities. Masks are like a symbol of links which reunite different populations. This project brought the two artists inside families and working places of the local people of Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, and Australia. By hiding the face of the participants, the details of the environment start to be revealed and the body start to talk. This series of art works has at the same time a social, artistic, and anthropological dimension.

Artists: Benoit (France)+Bo (China)

SAHAKA PLAYGROUND

22-31 November 2021

EXHIBITION

Sahaka Playground is a collective of three Asian and three European visual artists based in Phnom Penh, creating together a cross-cultural experimental collaboration towards unpredictable artworks. Each artist had the freedom to play, and have their artwork played, by the artists from the opposite continent, with different concepts and mediums being intertwined and explored.

These unforeseeable outcomes, and the visual documentation of the collective process, manifest the dialogues and the relationship built between all of the artists — two continents, six different countries, a variety of practices from painting to photography, illustration to embroidery. Beyond boundaries, cultural and otherwise, the only common denominator is the Kingdom of Wonders, which we all call home.

Artists: Rena Chheang (Cambodia), Syahrulfikri Salleh (Malaysia), Lolli Park (South Korea), Miguel Lopes Jeronimo (Portugal), Adana Mam-Legros (France-Cambodia), Olivia Hough (United Kingdom)

ENCOUNTERING CULTURES

22-31 November 2021

EXHIBITION

Encountering Cultures is a group exhibition which brings together 14 artists from Asia and Europe. All the featured artists live in Cambodia and are actively involved in the local arts scene. This group exhibition recognises the influence of different cultures on the artists and their practice. The various genres of art (abstract painting, photographs, digital art and figurative sculpture) showcased in this exhibition, intend to allow for exchange of knowledge and varied artistic perspectives as well as sharing of cultural diversity. Each exhibit presented in this exhibition celebrates the vibrance of cultural flows and encounters across established cultural boundaries. Through this exhibition, particular attention has been provided to the objectives of ASEM which is to continue to strengthen cooperation and connection between Asia and Europe.

Artists: Carlo Santoro (Italy), Chan Vitharin (Cambodia), Chhim Sothy (Cambodia), Douglas Beattie (Australia), Em Riem (Cambodia), Erick Gonzalez (France), Hour Soben (Cambodia), Leang Seckorn (Cambodia), Nout Daro (Cambodia), Nou Sary (Cambodia), Sous Sodavy (Cambodia), Takakazu Yamada (Japan), Tytaart (Cambodia) and Van Chhovorn (Cambodia).

THE LONGEST VOYAGE

22-31 November 2021

EXHIBITION

500 years ago, in Seville, a long-dreamed-of journey began, aiming to reach Orient, and the legendary Spice Islands, sailing Westwards, and crossing the unexplored side of the world. Ferdinand Magellan, in 1519, started this voyage, that would become the longest of its time: the first circumnavigation of the globe, concluded by Juan Sebastián Elcano and his men, on board of the Victoria, in 1522. The First Journey around the World is not only the greatest maritime adventure of all time, but a major milestone in the history of discoveries. A symbol of the exploratory nature of human beings throughout the ages, their attitude towards the unknown, their will to go further, over and over, constantly pushing forward the boundaries of knowledge.

Supported by Casa Asia

THINGS THAT COUNT

22-31 November 2021

EXHIBITION

“Things That Count” is an online collaboration between students from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, Belgium and young Vietnamese photographers, featuring important current topics in modern society with ten chosen values including family, safety, gender, heritage, humour, intimacy, freedom, power, knowledge, and faith.

In the times of COVID-19, existential questions were posed to young people who are now facing an uncertain future. Each week, the participants dealt with an assigned “value”, which they first discussed in pairs, then provided each other with inspiration, and finally expressed their personal opinion of the value in question in one single photograph. Photos and conversations between the photographers are posted online to spread perspectives on modern life and thereby form friendships between these photographers. The works have created hopes and bridges between the two cultures of Eurasia, expressing understanding and trust through the language of photography.

In the context of the complicated development of the COVID-19 epidemic, many places must implement social distancing. The photo exhibition “Things that Count” aims at conveying a positive message by creating an international network among young photographers to reflect on meaningful matters in this day and age.

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Viet Nam and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Viet Nam have jointly organised the photo exhibition “Things That Count” at the ASEM Cultural Festival (ASEMfest) hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia in collaboration with the European Union and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) within the framework of the 13th Summit of Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

Artists: Sarah Kirchner (Germany), Robert Sasarman (Romania), Daria-Ana Oprean (Romania), Catherine (Belgium), Ana Lucia Rincón (Spain), Moritz Broszat (Germany), Eduard Michalko (Slovakia), Nguyen Minh Hoang (Viet Nam), Hoang Minh Trang (Viet Nam), Cao Nguyen Huy Hoang (Viet Nam), Nguyen Phuong Van Nhi (Viet Nam), Tran Vinh Dat (Viet Nam), Nguyen Hoang Kien (Viet Nam), Pham Ha Huy Anh (Viet Nam), Nguyen Thanh Hue (Viet Nam)

Supported by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Viet Nam and Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Viet Nam

IL NODO: A SKETCH FOR HOPE

22-31 November 2021

EXHIBITION

A Sketch for Hope was born from the idea to involve our wide network of creative friends - architects, artists and designers - in the Bottega dell'Arte, Il Nodo Social Design school in Cambodia.

We asked them all for an idea, a sketch, a design of a jewel to be hand made by the students of the Phnom Penh school. The response was beyond expectations: a flooding of designs, almost a hundred from over 80 authors, a rich set of different creative stimuli for the students.

A collection of artifacts was born which, in addition to the educational value for the school, represents an important instance of synergy between different and distant cultures such as the Italian and the Khmer ones and above all between the expressive languages of design and crafts.

Mekong by Marta Laudani and Marco Romanelli, a stretch of the mother of waters made as a pendant, received a main Design Award, and is displayed in the Jewellery Museum of Vicenza.

This project is a happy experience of collaboration between two different and distant cultures, a fertile encounter between Design, as a creative discipline that provides design stimuli linked to the contemporary world, and the ancient Cambodian artisan tradition. This mix of design and craftsmanship represents the real (true) value of the products.

Artists: Bottega dell'Arte, Il Nodo Social Design school, Lon Phanna (Silversmith), Ry Sangha (Silversmith), Mant Samorn (Silversmith) and Vorn Chhiev (Silversmith)
Supported by Italian Embassy in Bangkok



The **Asia-Europe Meeting** (ASEM) is an intergovernmental process established in 1996 to promote dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe. There are currently 51 Partner countries, of which 30 are European and 21 are Asian, along with the European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat, which makes a total of 53 Partners.

The ASEM Cultural Festival takes place each year on the side-lines of ASEM Summits or Foreign Ministers' Meetings, as one of the official side events. It endeavours to explore the enormous potential and dynamic synergy of intercultural collaborations and artistic co-creations between the two continents, as a flagship cultural platform in the framework of the ASEM Leaders' Meetings. The Festival also aims to increase awareness about the ASEM Process among the arts communities of both regions and the general public. The Festival is a manifestation of the ASEM philosophy and value to enhance collaboration and development among ASEM Partners.

Locations

Brussels

Flagey Cultural Centre

Pl. Sainte-Croix,
1050 Brussels, Belgium

Gallery St Hubert

Galerie du Roi 5,
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Phnom Penh

National Museum of Cambodia

Preah Ang Eng St. (13),
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Major Cineplex

AEON Mall Phnom Penh (2nd floor),
Samdach Sothearos Blvd, Sangkat Tonle Bassac,
Phnom Penh (Aeon 1), Cambodia



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