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rdam Film Festival NETPAC Award



The International Film Festival Rotterdam 2019 (IFFR) awarded the NETPAC Award for Best Asian Film to '[Last Night I Saw You Smiling](#)' by the Cambodian filmmaker Kavich Neang. The jury called this documentary about the inhabitants and last days of the White Building, an iconic site in Phnom Penh scheduled for demolition: "a brave attempt at revealing the collapse of a society undergoing drastic transformation."

"You'd think a house is nothing but walls, windows and roof. But now we have to leave, it's breaking my heart." Filmmaker Kavich Neang's father is one of the hundreds of residents who must leave the iconic White Building in Phnom Penh. This apartment block saw the rise and fall of the Khmer Rouge and then housed a lively artistic community. Now the once radiant walls are grey and damaged. Demolition looms.

Neang, who was born here, once dreamed of shooting a fiction film here, but reality overtook his plan. It's now the location for his first full-length documentary. In calm, fixed shots, he registers the activities, worries and emotional moments of his parents and other residents who have to leave. It's reminiscent of the evacuation under Pol Pot, one woman remembers. "But now we have removal trucks." A singer sings a song in her empty room. When the demolition men come, this beautiful world is just a memory.

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Read more from Southeast Asia Globe about Cambodia's new generation of filmmakers: [Cambodia / filmmakers are daring to reinvent the industry](#)

[Last Night I Saw You Smiling](#) - Winner NETPAC Award, IFFR 2019.

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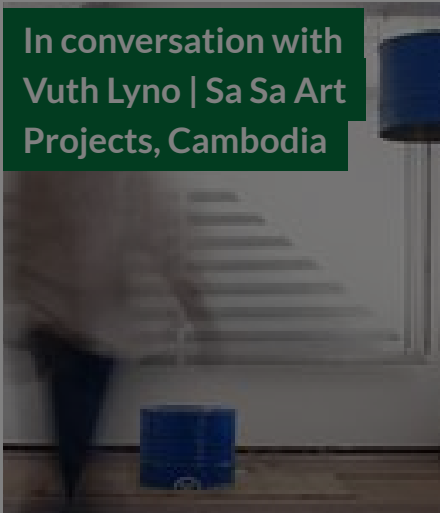
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