

“Elephants” take over Phnom Penh!

“It’s phenomenal”, says John Burt, founding Chair of Cambodian Living Arts, a project of World Education. “Many say there’s never been a buzz like this about a show here, and this is even before the curtain goes up”.

Mr Burt is talking about *Where Elephants Weep*, the first ever Khmer/International rock opera to be staged in Cambodia which he is producing in association with Amrita Performing Arts. The World Premiere takes centre stage tonight at the Chenla Theatre, and features a company of over 70 award winning performers and crew from Cambodia and around the world.

The excitement surrounding this historic production really heated up in late October when 35 international cast and crew members arrived to continue rehearsals with nearly 40 Cambodian singers, musicians, dancers and crew.

VIP guests from government, diplomatic circles, business and NGOs will attend the glittering opening night, and guests are flying in from around the world to witness what is set to mark the turning point in this country’s creative and cultural revival.

“Cambodia’s magnificent cultural heritage was nearly lost during the Khmer Rouge regime and the war that followed”, says Mr Burt. “For years the world knew this country as one defined by conflict and human tragedy. But Khmer culture is rich, deep, transformational – and that could never be extinguished. Music, fine art, performance, literature, film: there’s a resurgence, a revival, and the momentum is taking over. *Where Elephants Weep* is a very real example of that.

Right here, right now, the world will change its view. Cambodia will be known for its creative heart and soul.”

For Dr Him Sophy, the opera’s composer, the whirlwind of interviews, grueling rehearsals, a glittering premiere weekend and the performances in the week that follows are just the start of an exciting new era in Cambodian cultural history. “It’s truly inspiring to see so many people come together, after so long, to see this all come to life. I hope it motivates other young creative people to follow their dreams, hone their craft, protect the country’s cultural legacy and inspire an exciting creative future.

We’re taking the show out to the world, to the international festivals, why not Broadway.– this is just the beginning”.

Tickets for *Where Elephants Weep* are selling out. , The first weekend is fully booked, though there are a few select patron tickets still available. The second weekend is waiting list only. There will be a taped live broadcast of the show aired later in December on Cambodia Television National (CTN).

For more behind-the-scenes information about the production go to Website:

www.whereelephantsweep.net Email: infor@whereelephantsweep.net Where Elephants Weep Hotline on 023 220 424 / 017 603 408.