

25<sup>th</sup>ANNIVERSARY  
of the Center  
for Khmer Studies

## IN FOCUS

The Center for Khmer Studies

*Shadow Puppet Performance on the lawn during the second CKS Mini Book Fair.*

Photo: CKS

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## Mission Statement

CKS is an independent non-profit corporation incorporated in Delaware, USA. A member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), it is supported by major international foundations, educational institutions, scholars, and individual philanthropy. It receives partial support for overhead and research fellowships from the U.S. Government. Its programs in the social sciences, arts and humanities are focused on Cambodia and the greater Mekong region.

### CKS seeks to:

- Promote research and support international scholarly exchange through programs that increase understanding of Cambodia and its region, both within Cambodia and at US universities.
- Strengthen Cambodia's cultural and educational structures and integrate Cambodian scholars into regional and international exchange.
- CKS's programs are administered from its offices in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

CKS is a member institution of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).

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*We are honored that His Royal  
Highness Norodom Sihamoni, King of  
Cambodia, is the royal patron of CKS's  
Library*

## Board of Directors

### Officers

- Jacques Hennessy, Chair
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*CKS Board and staff with Wat Damnak monks in front of CKS Reading Room.*



Jacques Hennessy



# Welcome to CKS

## The Center for Khmer Studies at 25!

After the ravages of the Khmer Rouge, the misery of Vietnamese Occupation, and the shaky peace of the United Nations protectorate, members of the World Monument Fund, visiting its ambitious Preah Khan restoration project in the early 1990s, wished to help young Khmers involved in its project become professionals. CKS eventually grew out of WMF's original intent to establish a center for conservation training.

Three years after its founding, under the energetic leadership of Dr. Lois de Menil, CKS took on a new mission as an independent American Overseas Research Center dedicated to the promotion of Khmer Studies. Olivier Bernier became an immediate supporter, and his friends became generous donors to CKS. A young French scholar, Philippe Peycam, was our first Director. He located CKS headquarters in Wat Damnak, a beautiful pagoda in the center of Siem Reap, began the CKS library, and established our first programs.

With seed funding by the Rockefeller and Luce Foundations, programs were established to support American, French and Cambodian scholars. Colleagues from academia joined the Board and established a committee to vet grant requests. A strong link was established with Cornell University that lasts to this day. CKS programs today continue their initial purpose: promoting Khmer Studies, fostering scholarly exchanges, and supporting Cambodian higher education.

Our work was recognized enough after a few years that, thanks to Counsel of American Overseas Research Centers Director, Dr. Mary Ellen Lane, CKS became the smallest AORC, the first in Southeast Asia. This put us in exalted but intimidating company, indeed. It also made us candidates for competitive US Government grant funding.

CKS's library is one of its main features. Originally established in a delightful pink colonnaded Pagoda building, we soon outgrew it. We commissioned a young Japanese architect to design a new building to house both our growing collection of books and our administration. The generosity of board members and other donors ensured it was funded, and thanks to meticulous supervision by our second Director, Mike Sullivan, the building was finished on time and within budget. Its opening was the occasion of a splendid ceremony, graced by the presence of King Sihamoni, who became the library's patron.

This June, once again, we made our donation of rice to Wat Damnak, the pagoda that opened its doors to CKS, and received a blessing

from the Ven. Chantha Lach, Ven. Dara Pech, Ven. Sony Han and the acolytes. I noticed that, aside from the Achar, none of those present were at the first of these blessings, 25 years ago. Throughout the years, CKS has been served by an incredibly loyal staff, has been made welcome by our host country, and benefited from the time, knowledge, and financial support of a wonderfully generous Board.

Hopefully, these conditions will continue, and, with a little help from our friends, as the song goes, we can look forward to the next 25 years. **Welcome to CKS!**

**Jacques Hennessy,**  
**Chairman**



*Chairman, Jacques Hennessy, speaking with Mr. Michael DeTar, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Cambodia.*





Dr. Eve Zucker

## Happy Anniversary CKS!

Greetings! As CKS reaches a quarter-century milestone, it is time to celebrate our growth, reach, and achievements. We have expanded our programs, audience, and the scope of our work, establishing ourselves as an Overseas Research Center with both physical and virtual presences. Our outreach has touched thousands of lives through our social media channels, digital library offerings, webinars, and programs. We have supported research for numerous publications that represent the core and forefront of Cambodian studies, and have introduced numerous young people to Cambodia and the region and the many fascinating dimensions of its history, culture, politics, and people.

CKS's development has been closely intertwined with Cambodia's own journey. In 1998, when CKS was established, Cambodia was undergoing significant political changes. The year before, the two-prime-minister government became a one-prime-minister government with the ousting of Prince Ranariddh. Power was now in the hands of the Cambodian People's Party leader, Hun Sen, who was up for reelection in 1998, in what would be only the second Cambodian national election since the UN-sponsored elections in 1993.

Several crucial developments occurred that year. Pol Pot, former leader of the Khmer Rouge, died in April 1998. In the second half of the 1970s, under his leadership, approximately 2 million Cambodians perished as the result of executions, overwork, malnutrition, absence of healthcare, and other staggering hardships. Though some of its leaders and many of its soldiers had already defected, the death of Pol Pot did not mean the Khmer Rouge movement itself was dead, however. The KR commander Ta Mok, who had tried and imprisoned Pol Pot before his death, reigned over the last Khmer Rouge settlement in Cambodia's Northwest, on the Thai border. Unwilling to surrender, as some of the other leaders had, he dug in. On the eve of the second election, the first election ever to be held in the remote Khmer Rouge stronghold, Mok led an attack on local villages, killing and injuring inhabitants to block the election process. His effort failed. Voting took place. The next day, I myself witnessed the ink-stained fingers of some of the former Khmer Rouge there. A few months later, Mok was captured and imprisoned, ending the civil war, and marking a major turning point for Cambodia.



CKS President Eve Zucker handing a Certificate of Appreciation to Ali Al-Nasani, Director of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI), and co-sponsor of the CKS Mini Book Fair 2023.



*CKS Board of Directors and staff during the blessing ceremony at CKS Conference Hall following June 2023 Board Meeting.*

Since then, both Cambodia itself and the newly founded CKS have evolved rapidly. In 2002-03, I was among the first group of "CKS Fellows," when completing my dissertation research. At that time, CKS had only a handful of programs and a very modest library. It has since grown significantly and expanded the reach of its initial programs, as you have seen year by year in In Focus. In Phnom Penh, the nation's capital, dirt roads were paved over and skyscrapers began to line the horizon. Simultaneously in Siem Reap, CKS's library and programs also expanded at a rapid pace. Internet access, which was thinly present in 1998, advanced rapidly, with internet cafes popping up here and there, only to be replaced a few years later with swanky coffee shops with free wi-fi. CKS offered free wi-fi and computers in its library reading room began digitizing its library collection, and taught other Cambodian archives and emerging libraries how to do it.

2023 marks another election year. The Khmer Rouge Tribunal has ended; the government is releasing a Khmer version of ChatGPT! And CKS is embarking on the next phase of its mission. We continue to form new partnerships, expand networks, and bring knowledge of Cambodia and its people to an ever expanding international community of students and scholars in Cambodia and the world. We are excited to embark on our next 25 years, and hope you are, too! We could not have come so far without your support, and hope you will accompany us. **Thank you!**



*Thmey Thmey journalist Sireyreaksa Luy interviews Dr. Zucker in CKS's Research Library.*



# New CKS Trustees

**P**rofessor Magnus Fiskesjö hails from Sweden. He has long been fascinated with Cambodia and its history, but he visited for the first time only in 2012. He was educated in Sweden, Denmark, China, and the US, where he completed a Ph.D. in Anthropology and Asian Studies at the University of Chicago. His doctoral research focused on the history and political anthropology of the Wa people of Myanmar and China. Before his PhD, he worked in Sweden's foreign service, and was stationed in Beijing and Tokyo. Later, he served as Director of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, in Stockholm, one of Europe's foremost museums in Asian art and archaeology. During this period, he began to take an active interest in the politics of heritage claims and the issue of repatriation from Western Museum collections.



*Dr. Fiskesjö (center) lectured students from Cornell University at CKS Conference Hall during the Winter Study Abroad Program in Cambodia, in 2023.*

**D**r. Darith Ea received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, in 1995; Master's degree from Kyoto University, in 2000; and doctoral degree from Osaka Ohtani University in Japan, in 2010. From 2000 to June 2021, he worked for APSARA National Authority, teaching the History of Khmer Ceramics at the Royal University of Fine Arts, and the History of Cambodia and World History at Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia. Since July 2021, he has been working for the National Authority for Preah Vihear as Director of the Department of Conservation and Archaeology.



*Dr. Ea lecturing on the history of Angkor Wat to CKS Junior Resident Fellows.*

## New Partnerships

At the end of 2022, CKS joined in four new academic partners: the University of Michigan's Center for Southeast Asia, in the U.S.; the Royal University of Fine Arts, Library of CamED Business School in Cambodia, and Sogang University in South Korea, by signing Memoranda of Understanding. We are excited to work with these new partners to enhance education, promote research on Cambodia and Southeast Asia, and increase student participation in Cambodian studies. CKS welcomes the opportunity to collaborate on projects with each of these important institutions.

# 2022-2023 Annual Fund Donors

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## Director's Circle (\$35,000 and up)

Lois and George de Menil  
Jacques Hennessy  
Louisa Stude Sarofim

## Patrons (\$20,000 - \$34,999)

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The Raoul Wallenberg Institute  
University of Chicago  
U.S. Department of State, Educational and Cultural Affairs  
U.S. Department of Education

## Support CKS

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**Support CKS's Library** -- Open to all, CKS's free library is the largest library outside Phnom Penh. It offers unparalleled educational facilities to the general public, students of every age, and scholars from all countries. Share our reading room.

- **Support acquisition of books** (\$15,000)
- **Donate a computer for our reading room: annual budget** (\$1,500).
- **Support free access to internet.** Connect the Library to the World Wide Web (\$1,500).

**Sponsor translation of essential books into Khmer**, Cambodia's native language. In the absence of university-level books in Khmer, CKS translates and publishes key texts. A contribution of \$10,000 will defray the cost for an average 300-page book and will be acknowledged in the publication.

**Sponsor a Cambodian-American undergraduate** to discover Cambodia's history and culture by attending our 6-week summer in-country Junior Resident Fellows Program (\$3,500 each).

**Support modest Travel Grants** to enable Cambodians to participate in regional academic conferences (\$500 each).

**Sponsor a young Cambodian's PhD thesis research** (\$5,000 each).

**Support CKS's public outreach:** regular in-country workshops, and lectures at US universities and community colleges. (\$ 5,000 each)

**Support CKS lecture programs** in honor of our late Trustee Dr. Benny Widyono and our late President Dr. Mary Ellen Lane, whose service we honor. (\$ 3,000)

## Support our Annual Fund

Sustains our annual budget and provides overhead for all CKS activities.

# CELEBRATION



*Former President,  
Dr. Lois de Menil*

## 25 Years: The CKS Adventure

CKS was incorporated in 1998. Over the next year, the World Monuments Fund wrestled with giving it a program. We elected a Board of Directors and obtained generous start-up grants from the Luce and Rockefeller Foundations-- WMF envisaged a center for the study of historic preservation initially since the temples were in dire need of restoration after the Khmer Rouge had used them for billeting soldiers. But scholars called to a large conference, in early 1999, gave it a different vocation-- rebuilding the field of Khmer Studies.

This was quite a departure from what WMF had in mind, but it went forward bravely. Hired a Director to find a location for the new Center and collaborate in defining a structured program for its reframed mission— to rebuild the field of Khmer studies-- to contribute to rebuilding Cambodian universities that had been deliberately destroyed by the Khmer Rouge, faculty scattered far and wide. Then, at the end of the 3-year start-up grants, WMF decided it could not carry forward this task. It would close CKS and concentrate on the preservation and interpretation of temples-- its own mission.

That was when Olivier Bernier, Selma Ertegun and I stepped forward, perhaps more enthusiastic than aware of all that building a new institution would actually involve. An art historian, a philanthropist and a scholar whose field was European history. We immediately added scholars to our Board of Directors. That adventure of ours is now 25 years old. We have invited a professional academic evaluator to take on the job of assessing the directions we chose and the programs we implemented in carrying our mission forward.

CKS would promote Khmer Studies, both in Cambodia and in the US. We joined France to that ambition because French academics had a long track record of studying Cambodian history. For every program we would conjure up, we also had to find the funds and the staff to support it. And keep reliable track of our budget. When we joined the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC),

that opened the door to US Government support grants, and gave us credibility with major foundations. But we soon realized that we also needed US undergraduates to study Southeast Asia. With few undergraduate courses or programs at major US universities, where would we find those graduate students? The Junior Resident Fellows Program was born. (See its description in these pages.) Great idea. Unfortunately, neither major foundations nor the Government would fund undergraduates. So we became proficient at the art of Buddhist monks tendering their begging bowls, and fundraised our friends and families until we were able to sustain this immensely popular program. We sponsored a Cambodian-led archeological dig at a site north of Phnom Penh for young Cambodian archeology students,



*The late Darryl Collins (centre) and Dr. Darith Ea of Apsara Authority in Siem Reap (right), examining some pottery that Eve Zucker (left), among the first recipients of a CKS research fellowship, brought, in 2003. Dr. Eve Zucker is currently CKS President and Lecturer at Yale University.*





*First room (from left) on the second floor was first CKS office. The building was renovated and handed back to Wat Damnak in 2010 and has been used for English classes taught by the Wat Damnak monks for local students.*

an annual summer program of intensive Khmer language study, we set about raising funds to support individual research, while running seminars to teach Cambodian students how to do critical analysis and pursue research. These programs met specific needs and were open to Cambodians, as well as graduate students and senior faculty in the US and France. We gathered the resources to put Cambodia back on the academic map. And early on, we set up a Society of Fellows, to gather the many participants in our programs and continue their involvement.

That was the beginning. Year by year, we added more programs to support the mission—an in-country intensive language program, a multi-year project to create a digital catalogue of the National Museum's collection and to post it online for researchers, an urban research program in collaboration with the University of Chicago, and programs to support community colleges. We grew and grew. After 20 years, we needed to identify the next generation of leadership, our successors, who would carry CKS forward as the vibrant institution it had become. Speaking personally, as the president and chair for all those years, I am very proud of our younger colleagues who have succeeded us. Prouder still that several are alums of our programs. We now await the academic evaluator, and will share the results with you when it is completed. *It has indeed been quite an adventure.*

**Lois de Menil, Ph.D.**  
**Honorary President and Chair Emerita**

**Lois de Menil holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University, where she taught International Law in the Department of Government and in the Honors Program in French History and Literature. She later served on multiple museum, school, philanthropical and business boards, including the World Monuments Fund.**



*Undergraduate Junior Resident Fellows in 2008 —American and Cambodian students. Theara Thun (second from left) obtained a PhD in History in a joint doctoral program of the National University of Singapore and the Harvard-Yenching Institute, in 2018.*





Olivier Bernier,  
Vice-President

## Old Times: A First Visit to Cambodia



Deep gaps in the sidewalks and what pavement remained; very few cars, hardly any traffic; telltale signs of decay everywhere and, just in case you had forgotten about the Khmer Rouge, men and women without an arm or leg. That was Phnom Penh, when I first visited Cambodia, in 1994. In Siem Reap, things were not much better. UN soldiers filled the hotel where I stayed; I was told never to go out at night because there were Khmer Rouge infiltrations; indeed, in the daytime, shooting could be heard in the middle distance just behind the archeological park. There were no birds; there was no wildlife.

And then there were the open-air markets. They had very little food for sale, and the people in the streets were thin, much too thin. The road to what eventually became the archeological park was unpaved and full of deep holes. As for the monuments, they stood unkempt and beautiful.

To see the glories of Angkor without crowds was an extraordinary thrill: not only were there none of the obstacles that came later, but the very solitude seemed to create an atmosphere in which the passage

of time no longer mattered: Angkor was just for me. Even so, access was not always easy. I wanted to go to Banteay Srei; “Impossible”, I was told; and when I insisted, it was explained that we would have to hire two policemen because the area was still so dangerous. The policemen, heavily armed, came. I will never forget the shock, the thrill of that masterpiece of architecture and sculpture. Abandoned once again, radiant in solitude, Angkor came back to life for a single visitor. These kinds of thrills bear a high cost. All through the years of the Khmer rouge, their slow collapse and the return to a degree of safety, the monuments had been left alone. Cambodia has a tropical climate; plants grow very quickly in the interstices between those ancient stones.

That decay might seem unimportant compared to the dimension of the human tragedies caused by the war and the Khmer Rouge genocide, but great sculpture, great architecture matter. In Cambodia, they bear witness to one of the world’s great cultures. Imagine a Western civilization in which Roman buildings, paintings and sculptures had completely disappeared, one in which the Gothic cathedrals had collapsed: if that had been the case we would be living in a different, much poorer world. In 1994, in a country still half dead --no schools, no hospitals, no roads and still, in part, highly dangerous- it seemed possible that there would soon be almost nothing left to remind us that the Khmer kingdom had once, over many centuries, produced masterpiece after masterpiece.

CKS did not yet exist in 1994. When, four years later, it came into being, it was a very small organization. The library eventually consisted of a shelf of books in its only building, in a room whose walls bore the pockmarks made by the Khmer Rouge bullets. The staff was minimal. The will, however, the hope, the hard work were already there. Twenty-five years later, the Library has more than twenty thousand items, and students come to it every day. Programs--lectures, research-- add to our knowledge of a country and a culture which have survived after all. Progress like this has taken a lot of work, a lot of education and the coming together of a skilled and devoted staff. Researchers, students of all kinds, from Cambodia and the United States and abroad add constantly to our knowledge. The beginnings were hard, the care and effort have been constant; but we have the right to say: **CKS has mattered.**



Phnom Penh in 1994 (Photo courtesy: Daveliot)



Prof. Andrew Mertha

## Choose CKS!

When I left Cornell and came to Johns Hopkins, I inherited the stewardship of the Pacific Community Initiative. This was an ongoing conversation between five US scholars of China and five Chinese scholars of US-China relations, with the goal of finding areas of agreement and mitigating potential conflict in the Asia-Pacific region. After two years of meetings in Hong Kong, Beijing, and Washington, DC, we took the show on the road to meet with our counterparts in Malaysia and Singapore. We discussed many things, but one refrain broke through everything: our Malaysian and Singaporean interlocutors – and, subsequently, those I have spoken with throughout Central Asia – have begged the Americans and the Chinese: “Don’t make us choose.” The more zero-sum our world appears, the less tenable this supremely reasonable claim becomes.

On this question, Cambodia has made its choice. While not completely sidelining its relationship with Washington, Phnom Penh has increasingly made its bed with Beijing. Although the situation is murky, it also remains fluid. Investments in real estate, the Sinification of Kampong Som and airfields of questionable intentions combine to support Dan O’Neil’s argument that authoritarian leaders are drawn to one another because they fundamentally understand each other.

And yet, as often happens, the ground is shifting with the advent of social media and increasing channels of communication that separate the younger generations from those who remain boxed in old norms, assumptions, and institutions. In the past three years, CKS has – like these young people – responded to the crisis by increasing by an order of magnitude the type of innovative programming that has made CKS visible and necessary. Now that some semblance of normalcy has returned, we are offering this programming alongside the courses, seminars, training programs, publications, and invited talks that put CKS on the map in the first place.

Young Cambodians are hungry for something more than would be available if CKS did not exist. How do we know? Because all one has to do is to go to Wat Damnak to the CKS compound to see dozens of Cambodian youths packed into our library, reading, taking notes, and interacting with one another in study groups. This is one of the magical things about CKS: seeing its extraordinary educational impact in real-time, all the time. This is, of course, a key part of CKS’s mission to help create the infrastructure that had been destroyed by the Khmer Rouge. We have achieved an extraordinary amount since our inception, and have expanded exponentially in recent years, but

we remain a small and committed organization faced with a daunting task. In a world where a simple academic tenure-track hire can take as long as five years, 25 years is a blink of an eye. In other words, to state it evocatively, CKS has had its nose to the grindstone for over two decades and is now moving with more favorable wind at our backs.

In a few years, I fully expect the Cambodian landscape to be dotted with unfinished buildings and infrastructure projects left behind by the Chinese. We don’t want the tertiary educational system in Cambodia to atrophy and collapse like one of those unfinished projects. We need your support, your attention, and your commitment to this vital project that CKS began 25 years ago. **Choose CKS!**

**Andrew Mertha, Ph.D. CKS Trustee**  
**Professor of China Studies**  
**School of Advanced International Studies**  
**Johns Hopkins University**



*H.E. Dr. HANG Chuon Narong, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport in Cambodia immersed in CKS rare book during his first visit in 2020.*



# HIGHLIGHTS



*Stuart Cochlin, founder and  
Project Director of the Giant  
Puppet Project*

## Giant Puppet Project 2023

Cambodia's largest Children's Community Arts Project, the Giant Puppet Project, returned proudly to the streets of Siem Reap in March 2023, after a three-year interruption because of the pandemic.

The project was founded in 2007 by artists Sasha Constable, Jig Cochrane, and Stuart Cochlin, a UK architect residing in Cambodia. With Stuart served as Project Director for over 14 years. Savann Oun, also with the Project since its inception, stepped up to Co-Director in 2023. An artist and teacher, he is also co-founder of the Made in Cambodia Market. Along with the team of puppet artists, they express

strong belief in the project's guiding principles:

- Art has the power to enrich children's lives.
- Art has the power to bring communities together.
- The process of creation is just as significant as the outcome.
- It should be fun.

The project has two components-- the Workshops and the Street Parade.



*Students learning how to make a giant puppet during workshop on the CKS lawn in Wat Damnak.*





*Tonle Sap Water Snake during the parade of the Giant Puppet Project. March 2023. (Photo courtesy: One Man Photography)*

## Puppet Workshops at CKS Wat Damnak Campus

Artists led a series of two-day workshops to create the Giant Puppets. More than 350 children from some 18 schools and NGOs participated in the puppet making workshops. Puppet artists are graduates of the Visual Arts School, Phare Ponleu Selpak, Battambang. Spirits are always high: pride and joy among the children reveling in their teamwork and self-expression.

CKS has been a longstanding supporter of the Puppet Project, contributing its campus for the children's workshops and Puppet Project HQ. The puppets reflect Cambodia's social, cultural, and natural environments. They include endangered animals such as the Sarus Crane, cultural figures such as Kong Nai, and mythical creatures in Cambodian folklore such as the Snake Goddess.

Following the workshops, it is all-hands-on-deck at CKS, as artists, electricians, and volunteers come together to prepare the puppets parade.



*Students learning how to make a giant puppet during workshop on the CKS lawn in Wat Damnak.*

## The Finale: The Street Parade

The project culminates in the much-loved parade, with throngs of people lining the streets to view the giant puppets, carried by hundreds of children, moving down the river road. Gathering together all the children and giant puppets for the first time radiates youthful energy and pride for which the parade is famous-- children showing off their achievements for all of Siem Reap to enjoy. This is the soul and heartbeat of the night. Always a spectacle and a night to remember, the parade stretches over 200 meters, filled with sound systems, live music, and performers. Over 10,000 spectators attended the parade. The project grows year by year in popularity.



*Students learning how to make a giant puppet during workshop on the CKS lawn in Wat Damnak.*





*Khmer classical dance performance in front of the Angkor Thom temple in the evening*

## 30th Anniversary of Angkor's Inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List

Three days of Remembrance were officially proclaimed December 14th-16th 2022 by Apsara National Authority, which oversees the Angkor site in Siem Reap, on the occasion of the anniversary of its inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List, in 1992.

As a partner of Apsara over the past 10 years, CKS took part in this special occasion by contributing to the Angkor conservation effort. Joining other local and international partners, CKS posted two big banners displaying our related achievements, as well as featuring our research library, to the audiences gathered in front of Angkor Wat.

The event was honored by the presence of H.E. Men Sam An, Deputy Prime Minister; Minister of National Assembly-Senate Relations and Inspection, as well as H.E. Dr. Phoeurng Sackona, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts; H.E. Dr. Hang Peou, Director-General of APSARA National Authority; and the Governor of Siem Reap province. In attendance were national specialists and international conservation

team members. A prayer ceremony was conducted in front of Angkor Wat at sunrise. This Buddhist religious ceremony included offerings to 108 monks and marked the official launch of the event.

The three-day celebration featured cultural heritage as well as artistic performances, including classical dance, Ayai singing, and shadow puppets. There were nearly 300 performers at Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom every evening.

The celebration attracted thousands of local and foreign visitors, who joined in this wonderful spectacle.



# CKS at 2023 Association for Asian Studies Conference in Boston

CKS made a strong showing at the recent Association of Asian Scholars Annual Conference in Boston, in March 2023. Deputy Director Samedy Suong and Head Librarian Sivileng Chhor joined CKS's President, Vice President, and Board Chairman, along with CKS Trustees, Fellows and associates. The conference provided an opportunity to participate in panels, including several featuring CKS Fellows, and to connect with friends and associates, both old and new. The CKS reception on the final evening of the conference is always a highlight for those interested in SE Asia.

The conference was just one part of a broader Cambodian staff outreach that included visits to cities with Khmer communities, such as Lowell, MA; Ithaca, NY; New York City and Washington, DC. CKS is grateful for the support of the U.S. Department of Education and the Council of American Overseas Research Centers that generously sponsored the visit of our senior staff in Cambodia.

The AAS Conference and the outreach that followed strengthened existing relationships and forged new ones, featuring CKS' role in promoting Khmer Studies and Cambodian culture. We look forward to continued engagement with our partners in the academic community.



*CKS Deputy Director (left) and Head Librarian (right) met a US Fellow in the AAS exhibition hall.*



*CKS Fellow Dr. Celia Tuchman-Rosta presenting her research on Cambodian Classical Dance at an AAS panel.*

# US Outreach 2023

During its visit to the U.S., Cambodian staff had the pleasure of meeting students, faculty, colleagues, and community members at several partner institutions in Massachusetts, New York, and Washington, DC. Accompanied by President Eve Zucker, they visited Middlesex Community College, MA; the University of Massachusetts in Lowell; Cornell; University Tompkins Cortland Community College in Ithaca, NY, and Columbia University in NYC; as well as visits to the Mayor's Office in Lowell, MA, and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. During these visits, the staff presented CKS programs and library, and had the opportunity to learn about the Southeast Asian and Cambodian collections at the libraries we visited. We are grateful to the librarians of Cornell University for their warm welcome and the opportunity the visits afforded to strengthen relationships with our partner institutions.

CKS would like to extend its gratitude, in particular, to Mayor Sokhary Chau of Lowell, MA, Virak Uy at Middlesex Community College, Professors Sue Kim and Cherry Lim at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, Dr. Thamora Fishel, Professors Tom Pepinsky, and Kaja McGowan from Cornell University's Southeast Asia Program (SEAP), Sreyneath Poole from the New York Southeast Asia Network, (NYSEAN), and Professor Hang Nguyen, Director of the Weatherhead East Asia Institute at Columbia University, as well as Dr. Angela Palumbo, John Troyer and his colleagues at Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) in Ithaca. We also thank the librarians at Cornell University, Columbia University, TC3, and the Library of Congress: Emily Zinger, Dr. Gary Hausman, Ryan Wolfson-Ford and Dr. Joshua Kueh, for sharing their exceptional collections and libraries with our staff.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the U.S. Department of Education, the Council of American Overseas Research Centers, Cornell University's SEAP, NYSEAN, and Columbia University's WEAI for their generous sponsorship and hosting of our senior staff's visit. The support of these organizations is instrumental in allowing CKS to continue its outreach efforts and promote a greater understanding of Cambodia and Southeast Asia.



*Touring City Hall in Lowell, MA, hosted by Mayor Sokhary Chau, (second from right).*



*CKS program and library orientation at Columbia University including 2022 CKS Junior Resident Fellow Bryley Williams, who shared her experience of the CKS program.*





*Vice-Rector Da Ya, accompanying us a tour of the RUFA campus.*

## CKS Program Presentation at the Royal University of Fine Arts

CKS and the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA) signed their first Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate in promoting education and research-related activities, in October 2022.

In January 2023, CKS and RUFA held an open house at which our Head Librarian, Sivileng Chhor, presented CKS's research Library. Program Assistant Sreyleak Pech then presented the Junior Resident Fellows Program, including application requirements and the deadline for application. A former JR Fellow, from 2022, now a 4th year student at RUFA, shared some tips for application, his experience in the Junior Resident Fellows Program, and some advice for the younger students. At the end of the presentation, the CKS staff were invited to tour the university to learn more about its facilities and courses. The event was attended by around 60 RUFA students and faculty members. This event was fruitful and rewarding.



*CKS Head Librarian Sivileng Chhor introducing CKS library and its access in the RUFA Conference Hall.*



# PROGRAMS



John Marston

## CKS Scholar-in-Residence: John Marston

Prof. John Marston, of the Center for Asian and African Studies of El Colegio de México in Mexico City, will serve as scholar-in-residence at CKS during the second half of 2023. John's association with CKS dates back many years-- he received CKS research funding through our Fellowship programs; and served as coordinator of a CKS capacity-building project. Marston's publications include *History, Buddhism, and New Religious Movements in Cambodia* (with Elizabeth Guthrie), *Anthropology and Community in Cambodia*, and *Ethnicity, Borders, and the Grassroots Interface with the State*. His articles have appeared in multiple scholarly journals and in edited volumes published by Cornell University Press, University of Hawaii Press, Edinburgh University Press, Palgrave, El Colegio de México, and Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Marston's research is multi-dimensional. For many years, his work was most closely associated with the study of Cambodian Buddhism-- first, with the new religious movements that appeared in the 1990s. These focused initially on projects involving a religious leader building a temple, typically a neo-Angkorean temple, as well as relic stupas at temples affiliated with Buth Savong, and the large stupa at Oudong. Over time, his interest turned to the historical transition in Cambodian Buddhism in the 20th century--particularly, the resurgence of Cambodian Buddhism following the Pol Pot period.

Field work on contemporary Cambodian monks and pilgrims in India and Sri Lanka led to his current project on the cohorts of Cambodian monks in India prior to 1975-- most of them students-- and the subsequent trajectories of their lives and careers over several decades. During his residency at CKS, Marston's primary focus will be turning his research on this topic into a book.

Marston has identified some 31 Cambodian and Khmer Krom monks, who were in India prior to 1975-- the earliest, Dharmawara Mahathera, arriving in India in the 1930s-- but the majority, going

to India as students, beginning in the early 1950s. Marston's work aims to put the entire group of monks into historical context, with special emphasis on the two most famous of them, Dharmawara and Maha Ghosananda. Dharmawara, a colorful figure, had been a French colonial official, who became a forest monk in the late 1920s, spending time in Siam and Burma before arriving in India in the 1930s, where his talent as a healer put him in contact with Indian elites such as the Nehru family. He would visit Cambodia regularly in the 1950s, when he was close to King Sihanouk. Maha Ghosananda, one of the first monk students in India in the 1950s, would stay there for over 15 years and identify with intellectual movements within Indian Buddhism. This was followed by a period in a forest monastery in Thailand, after which he came to prominence as an advocate for Cambodian refugees, and led a series of peace walks in the 1990s.



CONVERSION CEREMONY AT SARNATH IN 1959

*One of the few photos which shows Dharmawara Mahathera and Maha Ghosananda together in India. MG second from right, in top row. Dharmawara second from left, in the bottom row.*



Magnus Fiskesjö

## Winter Course in Siem Reap: Heritage and Repatriation

In January 2023, the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell University, in collaboration with CKS, reopened the annual winter course in Siem Reap. I was happy to volunteer to teach the group of 12 students from Cornell, Harvard and McDaniel College. The focus this year was Cambodian heritage: its past, how Cambodians see their heritage today, and the recent repatriation of looted ancient Angkorian artifacts. We also focused on dance, as an example of cultural heritage continuing into the present. Teaching assistant Brian Sengdala, a PhD student at Cornell and a specialist in Cambodian music and performance, helped explain our encounters with ancient and modern dance in Angkor temple stone reliefs, in tourist performances, and when the students themselves tried Cambodian dance at the Silver Belle Studio.

We also sought out avenues for exploring contemporary Cambodians' understanding of their country's heritage. We visited a series of neak ta shrines (of local spirits). We invited a group of Kuy ethnic minority, engaged in the Prey Lang Community Network, working to preserve their ancient forests in central Cambodia and their relationship to the land.

**CKS Trustee Magnus Fiskesjö, Ph.D., formerly served in the Swedish foreign service in Beijing and Tokyo, and later as director of Sweden's Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities before becoming a scholar. He has been on the faculty of Cornell University since 2005.**



*Two cheerful elderly ladies taking questions from our group during a visit to the neak ta shrine just outside Siem Reap, where they serve as caretakers. The conversation is facilitated by Tim Frewer, a Cambodia scholar focused on environmental issues.*



# CKS Library: Expanding Outreach

**K**nown for its rich collection focusing on the social sciences and humanities of Southeast Asia, CKS's Library began collecting from scratch in 2001. Located on our Wat Damnak campus in Siem Reap, the Library is now at the forefront of research, with over 20,000 catalogue listings, including both physical and online resources. It welcomes researchers and scholars from Cambodia and around the world. During a visit of a U.S. Embassy delegation, the US Cultural Affairs Officer and Deputy Chief of Mission found an article on the moon rock gifted to Cambodia by President Nixon in the CKS library collection. They were astonished to find a copy of this article, for which they had been searching for quite some time!

To make its collection accessible to a wider public, both in Cambodia and abroad, the Library introduced an online catalogue, enabling users to search for materials more easily. Eric Van Meeteren from the University of Groningen, in the Netherlands, commented with appreciation, "I have searched everywhere for these two books for of months, but I have not been able to find them. It seems that there are not many copies still out there, and I have been unable to find these two books in any library in Europe. I did find them available in your library." Another comment came from a Cambodian-Canadian, who owns a tattoo shop in Canada and was searching for a book on Khmer

art design. He came across CKS's online catalogue during an online search for that book. Sean Johnston, from the Lycée René Descartes in Phnom Penh, managed to find the book he wanted on the library's website by Googling. Comments from those who have been able to access our collections via our online catalogue have encouraged us to work harder to gather and preserve our collection. Our next hope is to digitize our collection for long-term preservation and ease of access.

Providing access to information and resources, supporting literacy and education, promoting life-long learning, and serving as a community gathering space is what we strive for. After two decades of operations, we observe that researchers, students, and visitors are more and more interested in our library's resources. We have reached out to donors to expand our core collection: we have just added two shelves to the 38 existing bookshelves, and 4 new wall bookshelves in the Reading Room. Now known for its rich and rare collections, with a focus on the social sciences and humanities of Southeast Asia, our Library is full daily. As we have watched the enthusiasm of young readers increase each year, we recently equipped the Children's Library with more chairs, a new bookshelf, a smart TV, and more children's books. Our mission continuously challenges our imagination.



*Children's Library Upgrades: new bookshelf, chairs, smart TV, and children's books.*



*New wall bookshelves were added in the Reading Room*





*Children eagerly reading books next to the children's book booth.*

## Read to Grow, Read to Innovate

From its inception, a mainstay of CKS's mission has been to foster a reading culture among Cambodian youth. CKS Library regularly organizes and participates in outreach events, providing a lively children's library, a reading contest, a book fair and many other events.

This year, CKS participated for the first time in the three-day National Reading Day in Phnom Penh. Organized by the Ministry of Education, the event had been canceled for three years because of the pandemic. CKS' participation broadened our network and brought us new ideas for developing events and activities to promote reading culture in the Siem Reap community. Last year, after successfully organizing our first Mini-Book Fair, amid overwhelming enthusiasm, both exhibitors and visitors pressed us to organize another, longer event. In response, this year, the CKS-sponsored Siem Reap Mini Book Fair returned for two full days, with even more activities, and with the theme "Read to Grow, Read to Innovate." The event was supported by the Council of American Overseas Research Center (CAORC), the U.S. Department of Education, the Australian Embassy in Cambodia, the Swedish Embassy, and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI). The event took place from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm, May 27th and 28th, on our campus at Wat Damnak. Thirty-seven institutions, hosting 42 booths, including research institutes, publishers, authors, libraries, museums, schools, and educational centers participated in the event. We also arranged a book-sharing booth, where all visitors could play a game to win a book at random. These books were kindly donated by several of our exhibitors.

This year's event was a great success. We received almost 5,000 visitors in total. Most of our exhibitors praised the variety of activities, which included book booths, panel discussions, Khmer traditional

games, and art performances. These activities added excitement to the Fair, while promoting our culture to new generations. CKS improved its outreach this year, as demonstrated by the wide variety of media outlets promoting the Book Fair. These included Thmey Thmey News, Cambodianess, Go Global TV, a tourist site named Check-in Siem Reap, and many more. Visitors, including young monks, took pictures and videos of the event and posted them on their own social media sites. Even independent photographers came and volunteered to take pictures of the event. Exhibitors and volunteers expressed their pleasure in working with our team. The volunteers particularly appreciated the opportunity to interact with individuals and institutions that would benefit them and reported how much they had enjoyed the experience of working together.



*Visitors enjoyed playing traditional Khmer games with our volunteers.*

# Lectures and Film Screening

Since its founding in 1999, CKS has put great effort into expanding knowledge about Cambodia and the Mekong region through its programs. Each year, after completing their research, Fellows share their research findings through public presentations at universities, and in CKS offices in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. During the pandemic, when Cambodia's borders closed, CKS adapted its lecture programs to provide for both virtual and in-person audiences. Inspired by the resulting worldwide audience, we have continued this model in hosting events. At least one webinar per month is organized as live streaming on CKS's Facebook page. While so much can now be done digitally, we have also continued to sponsor events in person or in a hybrid format to permit audiences to interact directly with speakers. In these past 25 years, CKS organized 256 public events, including lectures, workshops, training seminars, film screenings, and webinars, which benefitted approximately 15,000 research scholars, faculty members, students, and the public from Cambodia to the US and other countries.

Most of the online events are also recorded, and are available on CKS's website ([www.khmerstudies.com](http://www.khmerstudies.com)), YouTube, Facebook, and in our digital library.

## Public Film Screening and Discussion: “White Building” (Academy Award Film Entry)

CKS hosted a public screening of the film “White Building” and a discussion with its director, main actor, and assistant director in October 2022 at the CKS Conference Hall in Siem Reap. This film, in Khmer with English subtitles, received twelve nominations and won three Academy Awards. The CKS event was organized in collaboration with the Bophana Audio Visual Center, a research center in Phnom Penh.

The two-hour event began as a panel discussion moderated by CKS Deputy Director Samedy Suong, with the film's Director Kavich Neang, Assistant Director Sreylin Meas and main actor Piseth Chhun. The panelists shared the inspiration behind the film, the challenges

they faced in the filmmaking process, their favorite scenes, and advice for those aspiring to work in the film industry. After the thirty-minute discussion, the film was screened for an audience of 64.

The “White Building” depicts the life of a young man and his family living in an old building called the White Building, located in the center of Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital. His life and his dream of becoming a dancer were transformed by the demolition of the building. The event ended with another thirty minutes of Q&A, which gave the audience the opportunity to interact directly with panelists in a lively discussion.



*Panel discussion before the film screening.*



*Brochure*

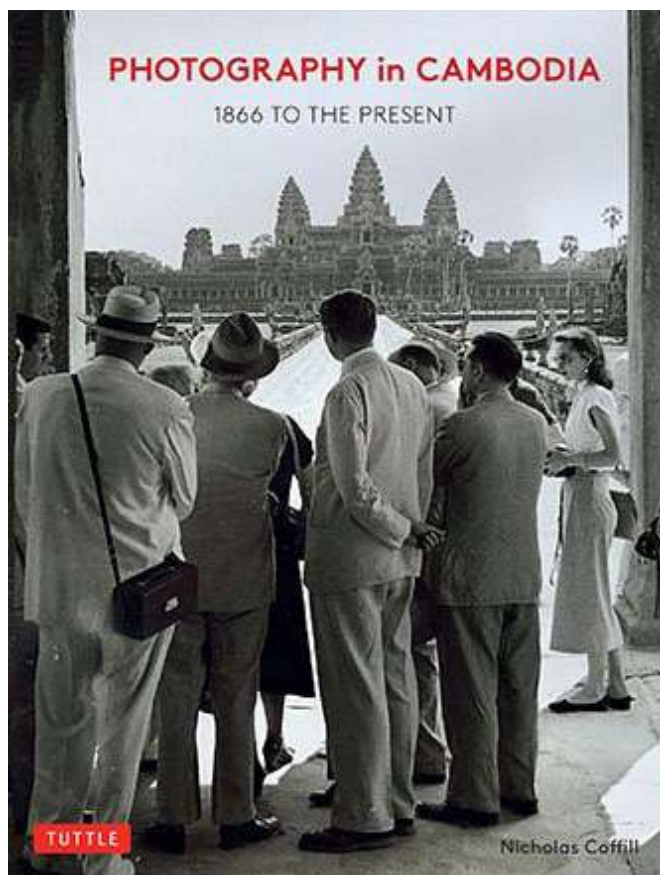


## Photography in Cambodia: 1866 to Present

CKS hosted a discussion of Nicholas Coffill's book *Photography in Cambodia: 1866 to the Present* in our Conference Hall in Siem Reap. The discussion was live-streamed on CKS's Facebook page.

*Photography in Cambodia: 1866 to the Present* is a treasure trove of more than 340 photographs sourced from international archives, libraries, galleries, and unseen private collections. The photographs and accompanying texts give a fresh perspective on Cambodia's emergence into an uneasy twenty-first-century peace. The photographs feature people's daily lives, Cambodian society, culture, and art throughout this time. The photographs were taken both by foreign visitors to the country—early explorers, travelers, photojournalists, the colonial elite, and tourists—and by Cambodians. This rich collection captures the essence of Cambodia's century-long journey.

Mr. Coffill dedicated several years to collecting these photographs from sources around the world, including CKS's Library. He shared his research methodology, challenges, and his favorite photo with the audience. Seventeen people attended this event in person, and twenty-three more participated virtually via Facebook. The event concluded with a lively discussion moderated by Deputy Director Samedy Suong.



*Photography in Cambodia: 1866 to the Present*

### CKS regrets the untimely passing of our former trustee Darryl Collins.



**Darryl** was an art historian and an expert in Cambodian architecture who came to Cambodia from Australia in 1994. He wrote a book on Modern, post-colonial architecture, but his great love was Cambodian wooden houses, several of which he lived in, restored, and even moved to Siem Reap. He became a trustee in 2011 and directed the inventory of the national museum in Phnom Penh, a seven-year CKS programme funded by Shelby White, that ultimately made the contents of the National Museum available to all on the internet.

He was also a generous donor to our library. Among his gifts is a quirky archive that documents daily life in Phnom Penh from the time he arrived. Restaurant menus, concert programmes, invitations, photographs paint a picture of a Phnom Penh that is already gone.

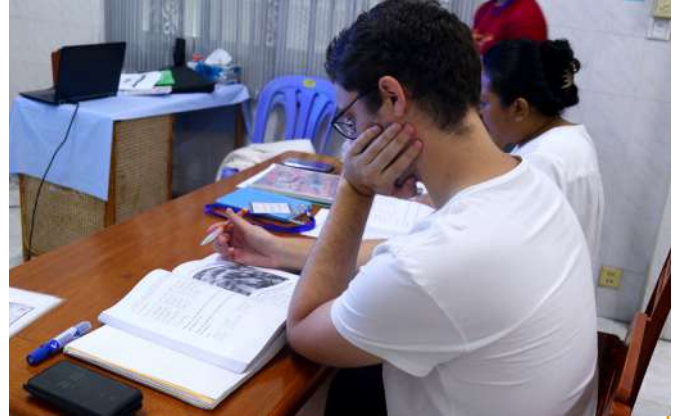
All of CKS, along with his friends and many students will miss Darryl, who contributed so much to Cambodian cultural life over nearly 30 years.

# Khmer Language and Culture Program 2023

## Learn Khmer in-Country!

CKS's introductory Khmer Language and Culture Program (KLCP) is a collaboration with the University of Hawaii's Advanced Study of Khmer (ASK) program. Both programs offer participants a unique opportunity for in-country linguistic training and cultural exposure. These intensive eight-week summer programs are equivalent to a year of academic credit.

There are daily four-hour intensive language classroom sessions every morning, plus two or three hours in the afternoon of applied practice and cultural exploration, ranging from visits to the central market in Phnom Penh, accompanied architectural tours, trips to museums and research institutes, as well as presentations of Cambodian culture, from Buddhism to the Khmer Rouge experience, recent Cambodian history. Visits to locations outside Phnom Penh, such as the temples at Angkor and Takeo, are coupled with engaging moments participating



*KLCP students learning how to read, write and speak at CKS office in Phnom Penh.*

in Cambodian living culture-- cooking, classical dancing and Khmer martial arts. Participants are regularly assessed in speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Both courses implement modules based on World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, and American Council on Teaching Foreign Language (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines.

CKS programs respond to the critical need for experts on Southeast Asia, fluent in the Khmer language. All participants have a direct academic interest in Cambodia, and some also have a personal interest in exploring their Khmer roots through the program's offerings. KLCP and ASK are devoted to supporting success within the program, as well as future research endeavors at the local, national, and international levels. Students return with the skills necessary for academic research, and career opportunities.

## Student Voices

"This experience has been grounding for me as I have been able to learn how to speak Khmer and learn about my culture in a deeply transformative and enlightening way. We have been able to explore art, culture, language, and most importantly build relationships with the people", KLCP student, 2023.

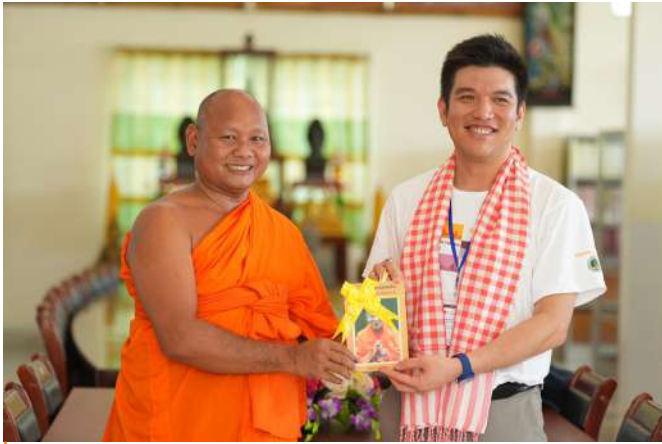
"I have spent nearly a decade studying Cambodian history and a couple of years learning the language during my Ph.D. The best way to learn is ...going to Cambodia. ASK pushed my language skills to an academic level conducive to archival research. This experience deepened my love for this country. The teachers patiently taught me to be a better learner every day- Language boot camp in paradise!", ASK student, 2023



*Both program students visited Kong Rei Mountain (located behind) in Kampong Chhnang and learned about its legend.*



# Junior Resident Fellows Program



*Napakadol Kittisenee meeting with a monk at the Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University in Battambang during the program field trip.*

Another successful year for the Junior Resident Fellows Program-- now Class of 2023. Thirteen passionate and talented undergraduates from Cambodia, France, and the United States spent six memorable weeks in Siem Reap, Phnom Penh, and -- new this year--Battambang. They have learned how to do research on contemporary Cambodia through readings, lectures, excursions, and hands-on experience. They are grateful for the warm hospitality extended by several institutions-- the National Archives of Cambodia, the National Museum of Art, Angkor National Museum, Angkor Conservation, the Documentation Center of Cambodia, Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University-- Battambang Branch, Cambodia Peace Gallery, Phare Ponleu Selpak art school, the École française d'Extrême-Orient and Bophana Audiovisual Center. They are also grateful to everyone who offered time and experiences in the guest lecture series.

Junior Resident Fellows have learned about contemporary Cambodia largely through an historical lens, from the times of glory and to those of grief. They were struck both by the immensity of the ancient Angkor archaeological park and by the visit to Ang Trapeang Thmor (the huge manmade reservoir, built in Khmer Rouge period).

After six weeks of the program, the Fellows turned their experiences into research projects, set forth at the JFTP public presentation. The topics ranged from water management in Angkor, Tantric Buddhism, Reamker mural painting, international development, Cold War history, to the changing role of women in 21st-century Cambodia, and Siem Reap's urban landscape. Their research was not limited to the conventional format of academic papers, but took form also in creative podcasts, drawing, and photo essays. This invites us to imagine the future of Khmer Studies beyond academia.

Gratitude, hospitality, and comfortable space are the three keywords heard throughout the program. As Instructor of the Junior Resident Fellows Program, I would like to extend our gratitude to those who have made this learning experience possible. Without their as well as the attentive care of the CKS staff, this excellent program could not have become an experience fellows say they will cherish for years to come.

**Napakadol Kittisenee, JRFP instructor, is a graduate student in history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has conducted field research in Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, and India. After a decade-long engagement with Dhammayietra, the peace walk held in the spirit of the late Maha Ghosananda, he is currently pursuing a Ph.D.**



*Jr. Resident Fellows at Phare Ponleu Selpak in Battambang.*

# Senior Fellowship Program 2023–2024

The CKS Senior Fellowship Program is a core CKS program intended to support academic research on Cambodia, including Ph.D. dissertation and post-graduate research. Supported by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Economic and Cultural Affairs (ECA) for American scholars; by the Scaler Foundation for French scholars; and contributions of the CKS Board of Directors for Cambodian scholars, awardees are chosen by scholars on the CKS fellowship Committee, headed by board member Prof. Peter Hammer. In the academic year 2023, CKS has offered fellowships to four US, one French, and two Cambodian Ph.D. and post-doctoral researchers.

## U.S. Fellows



**Lawrence Chua**, Associate Professor, School of Architecture, Syracuse University. Historian of architecture and Asia's built, imagined, and destroyed environments, author of “Bangkok Utopia: Modern Architecture and Buddhist Felicities” (University of Hawai'i Press, 2021). Former Fellow of the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles; Marie S. Curie FCFP Fellow at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Germany; Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, Japan; and the International Institute of Asian Studies, Universiteit Leiden, the Netherlands. Chua is also co-editor of “ArchAsia” books at Hong Kong University Press, member of the editorial board of the “Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians”; and co-chair of the Race and Architectural History affiliate of the Society of Architectural Historians.



**Taylor Coplen**, Ph.D. candidate in the History of Science Department at Harvard University. His current research interests include the movement of knowledge between China and Cambodia, and the co-production of political and scientific authority. His previous work examined the historical agglomeration of consumer electronics manufacturing in the Pearl River Delta region. With this geographical focus, his research strives to contribute a global reorientation of the history of science and technology.



**Jenna Grant**, Associate Professor at the University of Washington's research project, “How Does a Parasite Become Cambodian? An Ethnography of Global Health Sciences” traces forms of expertise and collaboration efforts to eliminate malaria in Cambodia and the Greater Mekong region. This inquiry focuses on 1) Techniques central to malaria elimination and the debates concerning these techniques; 2) How these techniques link drug-resistant parasite strains to particular places—forest edges, international border regions—and particular people, such as migrant laborers?



**Tara Tran**, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor of History at the American University of Phnom Penh. As a postcolonial and feminist scholar, her research and teaching focus on deconstructing histories of hospitality by examining how race, gender, and empire shaped the experience of border crossings on a global scale since the 19th century. Her book project, “Hospitality Engendered: Women's Bodies and Humanitarianism in French Colonial Cambodia” addresses in particular the roles that indigenous people and women played in humanitarian interventions across Cambodia during the French colonial period.



## Cambodian Fellows



**Many Norng**, Ph.D. candidate in linguistics, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO), Paris. Her research focuses on the unilingual Khmer dictionary of the Buddhist Institute of Phnom Penh -- a monument of Khmer lexicography, a standardization tool spanning the 20th century, and a valuable testimony to the history of lexicography in Cambodia. Her project essentially concerns lexicography with multidisciplinary openings since it touches on issues of linguistics policy and aspects of the history of Cambodia before and after 1953.



**Rosa Yi**, Ph.D. candidate in human geography, National University of Singapore, awardee of the NUS–Harvard-Yenching Institute Joint Ph.D. scholarship. His dissertation research, “Political Ecologies of Agrarian Commodification and Labor Migration in Cambodia” examines how capitalist development of agriculture transforms agrarian socio-natural landscapes, shapes rural livelihood trajectories, and produces different geographies of labor migration. Using a multi-sited ethnographic approach, examining the experience of smallholder farmers, he explores how commodity production and labor migration intersect under contemporary capitalism and transform socio-natural relations.

## French Fellow



**Stephanie Benzaquen-Gautier**, Associate Researcher, School of Humanities, University of Nottingham, England. Her research project, “Republican Visualities: Towards a New Archive of the Khmer Republic”, uses the theory of visual culture to reassess the republican period ‘on its own terms’, exploring a wide range of materials, including photos, newsreels, illustrated magazines, advertisements, movies, cartoons, and artworks. The objective is to produce a critical, multi-perspectival, interdisciplinary history of the Khmer Republic, and to map an expanded archive of that period, and the traces it has left in Cambodia.



### Professor Gérard Diffloth (1939-2023)

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Professor Gérard Diffloth on August 14, 2023, in Thailand. He was a leading expert in the Austroasiatic languages and was a library adviser to CKS. We all live up to his legacy. May his soul rest in peace.



Photo courtesy: One Man Photography

Masked Finfoot during the parade of the Giant Puppet Project. March 2023.

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