

Xiao Han

April 15

Professor Granshaw

Theatre Seminar

Lobby Display for Cambodian Rock Band

The lobby display for *Cambodian Rock Band* should be an informative one. It will have three major parts. First part will be seen when the audience walks into the theatre. It will just be some cassettes of music from the 1960s-1970s. They don't have to be all about Cambodian music. They can be from genres that have influenced Cambodian Rock, such as garage rock and blues. They will be hanging from the ceiling of the lobby. The rest of the lobby display will appear for intermission and after. I assume most of the audience are not familiar with this history and may not know what they are about to see, so I don't want the lobby display to give them a preconceived idea about the performance. That means the rest of the display will be set up during Act One. It will consist of a part about the history of Cambodia during the 1950s - 1970s as well as another part about the Cambodian Rock in the 1960s -1970s and its legacy. Each part will be by the wall of each side of the lobby.

The history part will include a timeline of major events related to how the Khmer Rouge rose to power and its aftermath and descriptions of the Khmer Rouge regime. The timeline itself will be in the shape of a huge crack in the ground. Though the timeline will focus on the Khmer Rouge regime, it should also cover other events that might be indirect reasons that affect the rise of Khmer Rouge regime. Each event will have a brief description with historical pictures. The descriptions of the Khmer Rouge regime will include the ideology, the leaders, S-21 prison and the survivors.

The other side includes a description of Cambodian psychedelic rock music in the 1960s-1970s, famous artists, and its legacy. The display of this section will be in the shape of a tree. Each part will be at the end of a tree branch. There will be an explanation of the unique style of Cambodian Rock, along with short biographies of disappeared artists during the Khmer Rouge regime, including Ros Serey Sothea, Sinn Sisamouth, Pen Ran, etc. There will be the story of how members of Dengue Fever discovered the genre while traveling in Cambodia and formed Dengue Fever dedicated to music of this style. There will also be a short video clip talking about the relations between music and Cambodia. The video will be muted to be not distracting.

All the pictures and words in the history section will be in black and white. In contrast, the pictures and words in the music section will be colored. The choice of color and the shape of the display aim to build a contrast between the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime and the livelihood of art.

The timeline should include but is not limited to the following events:

Cambodian ended its colonization by France/ Independence day of Cambodian: Nov 9, 1953

Vietnam War: Nov 1, 1955 – Apr 30, 1975

Cambodian Civil War: Mar 11, 1967 – Apr 17, 1975

- Operation Menu: Mar 18, 1969 – May 26, 1970
- Operation Eagle Pull: Apr 12, 1975
- Khmer Rouge Captured Phnom Penh: Apr 17, 1975

Democratic Kampuchea was promulgated by the Khmer Rouge: Jan 5, 1976

Vietnamese Army invaded Cambodia: Dec 1978

Khmer Rouge regime ended: Jan 7, 1979

Materials that could be used for lobby display

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ipg4FefX5Ps>

This video is the trailer of *Don't Think I've Forgotten: Cambodia's Lost Rock and Roll*, a documentary about Cambodian Rock in the 1960s. It will be set up with the music side on a screen. It shows how important music is to Cambodian people and includes footage of people singing and dancing in the 1960s-1970s. It will help the audience to visualize what Cambodian people and Cambodian music are like out of the fictional context of the show. This video will be muted for lobby display, so it won't too distracting.



This is a cassette of music by Frank Sinatra, an American musician who was very popular at the same time as these Cambodian musicians. People also compare the stage presence of Sinn Sisamouth to Frank Sinatra. This is an example of the cassettes that could be used for the first part of the lobby display. These cassettes aim to build loose connections between Cambodian music and music from the rest of the world in the 1960s-1970s. It will give the audience a first impression about the music and the time of the show without revealing other important themes.



This is an image of the mugshots of S-21 prisoners. It shows how many people could be imprisoned in S-21 by the Khmer Rouge and how young they were. It will be set by the descriptions of S-21. The photos for the lobby display will be graphic but not triggering.

Questions to engage audiences

Pre-show

1. Has there been a moment when music impacts your life? What was it?
2. What is an interesting family story of yours?
3. What do you think of when you hear the name *Cambodian Rock Band*?

Post-show

1. Has your opinion changed about Cambodia after you've seen the show? If so, what has changed?
2. Chum stayed in Cambodia to finish recording with the band knowing the country was going to be taken over. Would you have done the same? What are some other things that you think are worth taking the risk for?
3. If you were Chum, would you have done the same and kept the secret from Neary for so long?