



OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ASEM CULTURAL FESTIVAL

AT THE ASEM 13 SUMMIT

Asia & Europe: Cultures Connect

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

22-26 November 2021

PROGRAMME(tentative)

Title for the Opening Ceremony: Colourful Cambodia

I. Opening Session

1.1. Opening remarks

- 1.1.1. Remarks by ASEF representative
- 1.1.2. Remarks by MFAIC representative
- 1.1.3. Remarks by the EU representative
- 1.1.4. Welcome Remarks by the Minister of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia

1.2. Art Performances

- 1.2.1. Victory Drum and Apsara Blessing Dance (8 mns)
- 1.2.2. Good Crops Dance of the ethnic groups from Northeast Cambodia (9 mns)
- 1.2.3. Magic Flute (15 mns)
- 1.2.4. Gum-Lacquer Pounding Dance (7 mns)
- 1.2.5. Rice (5 mns)
- 1.2.6. ASEM Flag Dance (8 mns)

❖ *See the appendix for the seven performances' synopsis*

II. Closing Session (26 November 2021)

- 2.1. MC Introduces the Dances
- 2.2. Thank you note by Minister of Culture and Fine Arts (2mn)
- 2.3. Tep Monorum Dance (8 mns) This dance is for the closing ceremony

Note:

- There will be an MC to introduce the different items
- Total duration for performances: 60 mn
- Will there be any word of thanks (with applause) at the end of each item

Appendix:

Performance synopsis for Opening and Closing Show for ASEM Cultural Festival through virtual platform Phnom Penh, Cambodia 22-26 November 2021

1. Victory Drum and Apsara Blessing Dance (8 mns)

In the glorious Angkor period drums accompanied the armies to the battlefield. They served to awaken and uplift the army's soul and spirit towards victory over the enemies. This dance presents the gathering of drums, the apsara dance and the blessing dance played together to wish our honoured guests from near and far for success, happiness, and prosperity.

2. GOOD CROPS DANCE OF THE ETHNIC GROUPS OF NORTHEAST CAMBODIA (9 mns)

In agricultural tradition, the ethnic groups of northeast Cambodia, inhabiting the hilly plateaus of Ratanakiri and Mondul Kiri provinces practice cyclical slash and burn agriculture.

This dance depicts the traditional spirit-worship ceremony of rice-planting and harvesting of the ethnic groups in the northeastern region of Cambodia.

3. Gems from Mozart at Angkor – A Cambodian Magic Flute (15 mns)

Mozart at Angkor is a seven-year collaborative project between dancers and musicians representing the great traditions of Cambodian performing arts, and European musical theatre. The story from *Die Zauberflöte* by Emanuel Schikaneder set to the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart shares common themes with the Reamker. The two great performative traditions will be brought together on the stage in its final setting of Chau Say Tevoda Temple in the Angkor Archaeological Park with a stellar cast of singers, dancers and musicians from Europe and Asia.

4. GUM-LACQUER Pounding Dance (7 mns)

The old Khmers adhered to the ancient tradition of black teeth. Khmer women, particularly old ones, chewed betel nuts and leaves to make their teeth shiny black. This tradition is still practised in some regions of the country as shown in our wedding ritual, in a dance called Bokk Leak or Pounding the Gum-Lacquer.

The dance is divided into three episodes.

In the first, dancers, in a sampan, search for the gum-lacquer.

In the second, they collect gum-lacquer and then grind it in a mortar.

In the third, dancers display their joy after the completion of the task.

This dance express love, for the man is in search for gum-lacquer for his beloved one so that she can make her teeth black.

5. RICE (5 mns)

Rice in Khmer tradition symbolizes motherhood, a source of life, which is soft, flexible but very strong, nurturing, and humble. The dance depicts the encounter between rice and wind creating a very pleasant scenery and sound. The invisible wind represents light, fun, and energy, in perfect balance with the grounded and flexible rice. Through this contemporary dance piece, the choreographer creates room for the classical dance motif to be exposed with a new creative approach.

6. ASEM FLAGS DANCE (8 mns)

The theme of the ASEM Flags Dance depicts ASEM solidarity. Dancers waive the ASEM flags to sing and dance, celebrating the ideal and noble cooperation of ASEM while working together in friendship, collaboration, and solidarity.

Closing Performance

7. TEP MONORUM DANCE (ASEM Friendship Dance) 8 mns

Robam Tep Monorum or Happiness of the Gods and Goddesses Dance is one of the most popular and beautiful dances in the court repertoire. It has been performed as a dance of blessing to end a performance. The distinctive interweaving floor patterns of the Tep Monorum, as well as the complementary relationship of male and female, in which the male is always on the female's left, all reveal the importance of balance in Khmer social interaction. The chorus describes the erotic pursuit of the heavenly maidens by the male celestials as well as their harmonious union.