

**Hanuman Spaceman
aka Cosmic Cambodia**

**The Cambodian Space Project
produced by Intimate Spectacle**

A trippy tropical rock opera. A psychedelic sci-fi fairytale.



Contact

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Production Credits

Creative Team

Conceived by	Julien Poulson & Channthy Kak
Director & Designer	Carlos Gomes
Producer	Harley Stumm (Intimate Spectacle)
Video & Animation	Samuel James
Sound Design	Mute Speaker (Rob O'Hara)

Performers: The Cambodian Space Project

Vocal	Channthy Kak
Guitar	Julien Poulson
Bass	Bun Sophea
Drums	Yus "Bong" Sak
Dancers	The Spacettes (Khen Vanthy, Khen Vanthurn)
Chapei Dong Veng	Master Kong Nay
Young Channthy (on film)	Isabella Nagatsuka

Production Team

Lighting Design & Production	Mark Haslam
Sound Engineer	Phil Downing
Master Kong Nay footage	Marc Eberle

Acknowledgments

This project was assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and by Creative Partnerships Australia, through the Match initiative. It was developed with the support of Khmer Cultural Development Institute in Kampot, Cambodia; Khmer Community of NSW Inc.; Casula Powerhouse, and Arts Centre Melbourne.

Marketing Materials & Documentation

Video Documentation

This footage shows an earlier draft of the work, presented at Casula Powerhouse in May 2015. The show has developed since then, with some new video material, on screen "chapter heading" style signposts, and further work developing narrative, performance sequences and choreography.

This draft also shows a Khmer community dance group in some scenes, and traditional musicians with the band. It's possible to recreate this larger version of the work, eg through a residency collaborating with local Khmer artists/communities; however unless requested we are assuming the smaller ensemble of 6.

2015 Showreel (5 min 45 sec) & stills <http://intimatespectacle.com.au/production/hanuman-spaceman/>

2015 Full length (1 hr 7 min) <https://vimeo.com/129884281>

2016 Showreel (2 min 14 sec) <https://vimeo.com/160984060>

(2016 showreel shows the work in a range of venue styles and contexts, eg Spigel tent for Sydney Festival, bar/cabaret set-up for World Theatre Festival, rock gig style Castlemaine Festival & BrisAsia Festival)

Marketing Materials – Images & Audio in Dropbox Folder

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zc5yu9ha38wcjgf/AAAKSp4quiD8psA4NTy7QpAUa?dl=0>

Folder contains high resolution production shots, and other images from the band; plus audio files of the band's recordings (four complete albums; a selection of radio-friendly tracks; and a compilation of contemporary and older Cambodian music)

Short Marketing Copy, 250 words

Blast off and rock out with The Cambodian Space Project, in *Cosmic Cambodia*: a trippy tropical rock opera... a psychedelic sci-fi fairytale fusing ancient epic tales with a funky, feisty take on contemporary Cambodia.

This extraordinary band has been at the forefront of an astonishing cultural revival in Cambodia, since singer Channthy Kak and musician Julien Poulson teamed up, to sing back to life the lost divas and rock legends of Cambodia's golden age of rock'n'roll, all but wiped out by the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime.

But CSP's sound is definitely for the 21st century, mashing tradition with psychedelic rocknroll, rare groove, soul, and trippy visual spectacle. Come see why the mix has wowed audiences in bars, rock festivals and theatres across Asia, Europe and Australia, from MOFO to the Hebbel, from Sydney Festival to BBC WOMAD.

Cosmic Cambodia tells the story of brilliantly charismatic singer Srey Channthy Kak, tired of selling pancakes in the village. Channelling the trickster monkey god Hanuman, she builds a rocket to travel to the moon.

In *Cosmic Cambodia*, CSP has teamed with theatre makers Carlos Gomes, Samuel James & producer Intimate Spectacle to make a story in song, images and dreams, drawing on all our artforms: Khmer pop, rock'n'roll, epic tales both east and west, classical Khmer dance, sixties go-go, science fiction, shadow puppetry & digital image. A story of escape, adventure, of dreaming big things, and most of all, celebrating life.

Take a trip to the moon, via a Phnom Penh karaoke bar. And bring your dancing shoes!

Production History

January 2016 Sydney Festival (Parramatta Riverside Theatre & Magic Mirrors Spigelent)

February 2016 World Theatre Festival, Brisbane Powerhouse

Earlier drafts were presented at Khmer Cultural Development Institute, Kampot Cambodia (October 2014) and Casula Powerhouse, Sydney (May 2015)



Program Copy, 525 words

Suitable for Program/Daybill use, for briefing colleagues internally, or media backgrounding.

Welcome to *Hanuman Spaceman*: a trippy tropical rock opera... a psychedelic sci-fi fairy-tale fusing ancient epic tales with a funky, feisty take on contemporary Cambodia.

Hanuman Spaceman tells the story of singer Srey Channthy Kak, tired of selling pancakes in the village. Channelling the trickster monkey god Hanuman, she builds a rocket to travel to the moon.

It's also a re-imagining of the haunted 'Golden Era' of Khmer rock 'n' roll in the liberal 60s and 70s of Prince Sihanouk, when waves of popular sounds washed through the music scene: French chanson, soul, surf guitar and psychedelia, as young Khmer danced to stars like Pan Ron, Ros Sereysothea & Sinn Sisamouth, and their hundreds of records, some of which you'll hear reinterpreted tonight.

But this creative explosion ended with the Khmer Rouge takeover. They killed the artists, they broke the records, but they couldn't stop the music. Songs persisted in memory, and eventually resurfaced after three decades of civil war.

Hanuman Spaceman has come from an extraordinary six year creative relationship between Cambodian and Australian artists. The story begins in 2009, when singer Channthy Kak and guitarist Julien Poulson met in a Phnom Penh karaoke bar, and formed the band The Cambodian Space Project, to sing the lost divas and rock legends back to life – and write new songs for a 21st century Cambodia

They were soon touring Cambodia, Asia, Australia and Europe, with a sound spanning Khmer tradition, psychedelia, and soul, and a trippy tropical spacejunk visual aesthetic. Dancers, The Spacettes, are regular collaborators, fusing their very precise Khmer classical dance with the exuberance of 60s go-go.

For *Hanuman Spaceman*, CSP has teamed up with Australian theatre makers, producer Harley Stumm, director Carlos Gomes, and audio-visual artist Sam James, to make a show telling a story in song, images and dreams. It draws on all our traditions: classical dance, epic tales both east and west, Khmer pop, rock'n'roll, science fiction, blaxploitation films, shadow puppetry and digital image. A story of escape, adventure, dreaming big things, and most of all, celebrating life.

The show has been made in two stages, between Kampot in Cambodia, and at Casula Powerhouse in southwest Sydney. In late 2014, we were privileged to work in a wonderful cultural exchange with Khmer Cultural Development Institute in Kampot, a school teaching traditional music and dance to orphaned and disabled children.

We were also fortunate to work with Master Kong Nay, one of 17 artists designated as intangible treasures by the Royal Government of Cambodia, for his lifetime devoted to the Chapei Dong Veng (long-necked two-string guitar). He wrote and recorded two characteristically witty, growly songs especially for this production, duets performed with Srey Channthy, with Kong Nay seen on screen.

Last year, we were hosted in residency by Casula Powerhouse, and welcomed warmly by Khmer Community of NSW Inc and the Khmemara Angkor Dance & Traditional Music Group, who contributed much to the show you see tonight.

So this show spans Phnom Penh to Sydney, Kampot to Bonnyrigg, Pray Veng to the moon! And all via Detroit. We hope you enjoy the show as much as we have enjoyed making it.

Songs

Songs composed by The Cambodian Space Project unless stated

Big Bang (composed by Mute Speaker)
Rom Rom Rom (Pan Ron)
Morning Light
Lullaby for Makara
Where I Go
Selling Diamonds on the Moon (Master Kong Nay)
Kosmic Karaoke KTV Theme Song
Longing for the Light Rain (Ros Sereysothea)
Saravan Rap
Whiskey Cambodia
Space Flight, Doors Closing
Nightmare (TCSP with the musicians of KCDI)
I told you space travel is not for the faint hearted
(Master Kong Nay)
Wash (Mute Speaker)
Sva Rom Monkey (Pan Ron)
Moon Dream
House of the Rising Sun (Traditional, Khmer lyrics by Sinn Sisamouth)
Here Comes the Rain
I'm Unsatisfied
I'm Sixteen (Ros Sereysothea)
Laisse Tomber Les Filles (Serge Gainsbourg)



Artist Biographies

The Cambodian Space Project (CSP) is recognized as one of the few truly Aussie Asian hybrids in contemporary music. Since 2009, it has been at the forefront of an astonishing cultural revival in Cambodia, since singer Channthy Kak & musician Julien Poulson teamed up in Phnom Penh, to sing back to life the lost divas & rock legends of Cambodia's golden age of music, all but wiped out by the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime. The Cambodian Space Project sound is definitely for the 21st century, mashing tradition with rock'n'roll, rare groove, soul, & trippy visual spectacle. They perform re-imagined Khmer classics, alongside originals speaking of Cambodia today like *Not Easy Rock'n'roll*, *Have Visa No Have Rice*, and *Whisky Cambodia*.

The band has released 5 albums & 4 singles, most recently *Electric Blue Boogaloo*. Its third album *Whisky Cambodia*, was recorded in Detroit with legendary producer Dennis Coffey, famed as the guitarist in Motown's Funk Brothers. Other collaborations include with Paul Kelly on *The Boat*, and Channthy's collaboration with The Herd MC Ozi Battla in *Astronomy Class*.

For six years CSP has toured bars, rock festivals and theatres across Asia, Europe and Australia, including, in Australia: Bluesfest, MONA FOMA, Womadelaide, Castlemaine State Festival, & Robyn Archer's *The Light in Winter*. In 2014 CSP partnered with Belgian theatre director Michael Laub & Cambodian arts NGO Phare Ponleu Selpak to present *Galaxy Khmer* at the prestigious Hebbel Am Ufer Theatre (HAU) in Berlin. In 2015 CSP toured the UK including Jazz Café & headlining the Charlie Gillet Stage at WOMAD London, broadcast live on BBC3. That live recording was described by BBC Music as the "Top unmissable moment on BBC radio right now".

Srey Channthy Kak was born in Prey Veng province and spent the first ten years of her life moving around war zones with her father, an army tank driver. She recalls falling in love with 60's Cambodian music as a child, when she could listen to songs on a little transistor radio or hear the songs her mother would sing to her. She worked from a young age to support her family and in her teens she joined a Cambodian wedding band travelling much of her country while building a large repertoire of songs. Channthy eventually moved to Phnom Penh and met Australian music producer Julien Poulson with whom she founded *The Cambodian Space Project*. Channthy's unique voice as well as her ability to pen very original songs, titles such as *Have Visa No Have Rice*, quickly earned her a strong reputation amongst an international audience. In 2010, Channthy was invited to sing and speak at the Ubud Readers & Writer's Festival where her performance attracted the attention of Paul Kelly with whom she collaborated to record *The Boat* a song about asylum seekers for the *Key of Sea* project. She has also collaborated with leading Australian hip-hop group The Herd, recording an album and touring as 'Astronomy Class'.

Julien Poulson is an Australian musician, producer, writer and visual artist based between Phnom Penh and Tasmania with a focus and track record in working with South East Asian music. As a guitarist and songwriter, he is best known for his work in founding and producing The Cambodian Space Project – a Phnom Penh based psychedelic rock'n'roll band at the forefront of an astonishing cultural revival. Over the past decade, Poulson has received support from Arts Tasmania, The Australia Council and Asialink and has worked to create highly original arts projects delivered across a diverse range of forms and styles. Poulson's creation of limited edition poster designs for the CSP led him to establish Sticky Fingers Art Prints Cambodia to train and teach local designers and crafts persons print making techniques with a focus on pop culture iconography. In 2010, Poulson was awarded the Alcorso Foundation Italian Artist Residency and travelled to live and work in Venice, Italy where he wrote the libretto *Muskito* - a psychotropic Western based on Italian films and operas and influenced by the spaghetti western soundtracks of Ennio Morricone.

Carlos Gomes is a director, designer and dramaturg and the Artistic Director of Theatre Kantanka. Known for creating diverse cross-cultural performance works, he has collaborated in Australia with Legs on the Wall, Salamanca Theatre, Urban Theatre Projects, Sidetrack, Ensemble Offspring and others. His work has been presented by: Performance Space, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney Opera House, Blacktown Arts Centre, Museum of Art of Sao Paulo (Brazil), and the Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Recently, Carlos has collaborated with the contemporary music group Ensemble Offspring bringing a strong sense of theatricality to their work. Carlos worked with the Ensemble on the opera *Rinse Cycle* (composed by Moya Henderson) and on the program of music, *Sounds Absurd*. Carlos (and Theatre Kantanka) collaborated with Ensemble Offspring on the remarkable performance *Bargain Garden*. Most recently he directed the performance elements of Ensemble's critically acclaimed *Secret Noise* (composed by Damien Ricketson), engaging dancers and performers.

Kong Nay is a master of chapei dong veng (long-neck 2 stringed guitar). With his distinctive witty, raspy voice, he co-writes and sings a series of satirical songs with Channthy. He is one of relatively few great masters to have survived the Khmer Rouge era, and is known as the "Ray Charles of Cambodia", and his music as "Mekong Delta Blues", the title of an album he recorded with Ouch Savy in 2007. He was forced to perform songs praising the Khmer Rouge, and only managed to survive being executed when the Vietnamese overthrew the regime. Blind and in his 60s, he is one of the last chapei masters and one of 17 artists designated as Intangible treasures by the Government of Cambodia.

Khen Vannthy & Khen Vanturn have worked as dancers in Cambodia and internationally for the past 5 years. In Cambodia, Vannthy also manages and teaches in her own dance company. Vanton is an exceptional Apsara dancer and is a protégé and student of Bopha Devi – Cambodia's most revered ballet dancer. Both Vannthy & Vanton are graduates of the Royal University of Fine Arts. They have been collaborating with The Cambodian Space Project for two years, as "The Spacettes", including to devise, rehearse, perform and tour *Galaxy Khmer*, to Siem Reap, the Hebbel Theater in Berlin, and to Bergen.

Samuel James is a filmmaker and projection designer for performance. Since 1995, he has been a collaborator on over 200 performance projects developing integrated, paradoxical languages with video

projection. His approach to the moving image is to be equivalent to the live body, encompassing space, rhythm and time with the use of video. He has a background in Architecture and worked as a stage designer from 1995-2003. In 2012 he completed an MFA Research at COFA, UNSW on Digital Animism. He has collaborated regularly with companies and artists including: My Darling Patricia, eRTH Physical and Visual Theatre, de Quincey Co., Hans Van den Broeck and Julie-Anne Long. He has been commissioned to make video works for Campbelltown Arts Centre, Performance Space, Artspace and Reeldance Festival of Dance on Screen.

Harley Stumm is the founder of independent performing arts producer **Intimate Spectacle** www.intimatespectacle.com.au. Established in 2012, the company works across genres, from contemporary theatre & music theatre to live art and interactive performance. In its first three years, the company has produced works including: Branch Nebula's *Artwork* commissioned by Carriageworks, August 2015, and Melbourne tour of *Whelping Box* (2013); The Cambodian Space Project's rock opera *Cosmic Cambodia* aka *Hanuman Spaceman* in Kampot Cambodia, Casula Powerhouse, Sydney Festival and World Theatre Festival Brisbane (2014-6); Vicki van Hout's *Long Grass* for Sydney Festival and Dance Massive 2015; Sam Routledge and Martyn Coutts' *I Think I Can* at Art and About Sydney, Perth International Arts Festival, Festival of Live Art Melbourne and Casula Powerhouse 2013-14; Erth's MFI commission *Murder* at Sydney Festival, Adelaide Festival and Ten Days 2013; Lenine Bourke's *The Walking Neighbourhood* in Art & About Sydney, and Anti Festival Finland (2014).

Harley has worked as a producer since 1994. Prior to establishing Intimate Spectacle, he was Producer at Performing Lines 2005-11, managing the Mobile States contemporary touring program, and producing six major new works, including commissions by MFI and Sydney Opera House, and more than 15 national tours by artists such as Splintergroup, Tanja Liedtke, Branch Nebula, Chamber Made, version 1.0, Dancenorth, and Marrugeku. Previously, he was Executive Producer and joint CEO at Sidney Myer Award winning Urban Theatre Projects 1995-2003, producing more than 20 new works, a body of work honoured with the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award, 2002.

