

OPENING OF THE QUEEN MOTHER LIBRARY



HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
MOTHER SAMDECH
PREAH MOHA KSATREI PREAH
VOREAK REACH MEADA
CHEAT KHMER

NORODOM
MONINEATH
SIHANOUK

Graciously Opened The Queen Mother
Library of The Sleuk Rith Institute

DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF CAMBODIA

MON
SEP 21
2020 AT
9 A.M

A SPECIAL EXHIBITION

PHOTOS OF HIS LATE MAJESTY
THE KING FATHER NORODOM
SIHANOUK

AND DESIGN OF THE SLEUK RITH INSTITUTE
BY WORLD-RENOWNED ZAHA HADID



THE QUEEN MOTHER LIBRARY

The Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) has officially established the Queen Mother Library in order to pay homage to Her Majesty the Queen Mother NORODOM MONINEATH SIHANOUK, who has dedicated her life to serve Cambodia, His Late Majesty the King Father NORODOM SIHANOUK, and the people of Cambodia.

The Queen Mother Library comprises three archival collections: (1) The complete collection of books (over 3,000) and documents gathered by Ambassador Julio A. Jeldres during many years of work in documenting the Royal Family and the history of Cambodia; (2) The DC-Cam's archives, which include over 1.7 million pages about the Khmer Rouge, as well as documentary files that have been collected over the past two decades; and (3) DC-Cam's audio-visual media archive, which consists of over a hundred thousand hours of voice and visual recordings of interviews of Khmer Rouge victims. In addition, during Her Majesty the Queen Mother's visit, Her Majesty generously donated a number of priceless books, medals, certificates and honoraria of achievement, and other precious personal items for public viewing, study, and appreciation. Without question, the Queen Mother Library is a precious national resource for the education of today's public and youth, and countless generations in the future.

The establishment of the Queen Mother Library would not have been possible without the generous contribution and support of Ambassador Julio A. Jeldres. Ambassador Jeldres kindly donated this vast collection to the Documentation Center of Cambodia in late 2019. The collection comprises many books on the history of Cambodia, as well as at least 2,800 boxes of documents. In addition to books and documents, there are various other forms of media to include photographs, films, audio recordings in high-quality digitized formatting to ensure reliable preservation and convenient accessibility by the public.

The selection of photos from the collection of Ambassador Julio A. Jeldres, were gathered between 1981 and 2019. Most of the photos originate from the personal collection of His Late Majesty the King Father Norodom Sihanouk covering the period between 1950 and 1991. They portray the different activities undertaken by His Late Majesty the King Father, which includes everything from the King Father's crusade for independence to diplomatic activities, foreign trips abroad, and the activities and work of His Majesty, Her Majesty the Queen Mother and members of their family.

The Documentation Center of Cambodia is honored to establish the Queen Mother Library, which coincides with its work in establishing the new Sleuk Rith Institute (SRI), which will be the permanent successor to the Center in Phnom Penh. The SRI's purpose is to honor and commemorate the sacrifice of the victims of the Khmer Rouge Genocide (1975-1979), which will be reflected in SRI's design. Executive Director, Youk Chhang and the SRI Advisory Board endeavor to break with the traditional model of genocide memorial architecture. Whereas genocide memorial architecture generally emphasizes heavily institutional contours that are dark and angular,

deploying stone, metal, and glass, DC-Cam's vision is to honor the past, with a more positive, uplifting, and future-oriented experience, which will allow visitors to place the events precipitated by the Khmer Rouge regime into the larger context of Cambodia's lengthy history and why the importance of that context should inspire a positive outlook for the future.

The Queen Mother Library is more than simply a space for learning about the history of Cambodia. The DC-Cam is proud to dedicate this Library to the legacy of the Queen Mother and ALL women in Cambodia. Through their tireless struggle to rebuild, inspire, and recreate the country, through raising families, conceiving and ex-

panding upon economic opportunities, or preserving, protecting, and rekindling their communities, culture and Nation, Cambodian women represent the spirit of Cambodia. The Queen Mother Library is dedicated to this spirit in the past, present, and future.

The DC-Cam put public safety first, and in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, whereas education, culture, and national events must still go on, the DC-Cam believe they must be done safely and with the utmost consideration for the health and welfare of all. To this end, the DC-Cam is reserving public access to the Library to online visitors for the time being.

PHOTOS OF HIS LATE MAJESTY **THE KING FATHER** **NORODOM SIHANOUK**

This selection of photos from the collection of Ambassador Julio A. Jeldres, was gathered between 1981 and 2019. Most of the photos originate from the personal collection of His Late Majesty the King Father Norodom Sihanouk and they were copied in Peking in 1996 and 2004 before they were sent for archival preservation in France.

Most of the photos cover the period between 1950 and 1991. They portray the different activities undertaken by His Late Majesty the King Father, including from the time of the Royal Crusade for independence when His Late Majesty travelled around the country, sometimes by horse, explaining to the people why Cambodia needed independence from France.

Some photos also portray the period after independence when Cambodia was at peace and His Late Majesty the King Father led the national construction of Cambodia through volunteer work and other activities involving the people of Cambodia.

Other images show the different diplomatic activities of the King Father during the difficult years between 1970 and 1975, when he was forced to live outside Cambodia. They show his visits to Sudan (where His Majesty was invited to wear the traditional attire of the Sudanese warriors), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Liberated zone of Laos, which was a particularly dangerous trip given the fact that U.S. bombers frequently flew over the zones where His Majesty visited.

Further photos show His Majesty, Her Majesty the Queen Mother and members of their family relaxing in Peking. Some of these images show His Majesty playing badminton at the residence that he was provided by the Chinese government and others show His Majesty composing music, which was his favorite pastime.





DESIGN OF THE SLEUK RITH INSTITUTE BY WORLD-RENOWNED ZAHA HADID

In 2004, the late Dame Zaha Hadid, Principal of Zaha Hadid Associates, and Youk Chhang, Director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), jointly announced the retention of Ms. Hadid’s firm to design the new Sleuk Rith Institute (SRI), the permanent successor to the Documentation Center, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia to honor and commemorate the sacrifice of the victims of the Khmer Rouge Genocide (1975-1979).

The choice of Ms. Hadid’s firm, world-renowned for its ground-breaking and futuristic architecture, reflects a decision by Mr. Chhang and SRI Advisory Board to break with the traditional model of genocide memorial architecture. That model’s design emphasizes heavily institutional contours that are dark and angular, deploying stone, metal, and glass, to convey in stark and unyielding images the brutality of genocide and war crimes. DC-Cam’s vision honors the past, but looks primarily to ensuring a more positive, uplifting, and future-oriented experience. Although visitors to the Phnom Penh facility will experience the tragic legacy of the Khmer Rouge, remembering the victims as human beings caught in the vortex of war, extremist ideology, and irrationality, the new Institute will focus on what needs to be done to avoid a resurgence of those conditions through a variety of instructional programs. Visitors will learn how the values associated with knowledge, forgiveness, reconciliation and understanding provide a means for more productively



and positively engaging the future. They also will learn how to place the events precipitated by the Khmer Rouge regime into the larger context of Cambodia's lengthy history and why the importance of that context is worthy of celebration. The gracious but powerful architectural legacy of Zaha Hadid focuses on curvilinear as opposed to the harsher geometry of rigidly intersecting hard angles and their heavily industrial images; it has the potential to shift the dominant design approach of war-crimes commemorative architecture in an entirely new and more enriching direction. Moreover, because the innocent victims of war crimes always include significant populations of women and children, the time is long overdue for a woman to lead such a commemorative design effort to acknowledge and illuminate their collective loss.

Cambodia's cultural heritage includes the architectural wonders of Ancient Angkor, an internationally recognized symbol of Cambodia's rich legacy. The planners have made a strategic decision to link the design effort's connection to the past to a profound Angkor monument, Banteay Srei, also known as the "Citadel of Women." Because the level of artistic detail is so complex and comprehensive, Banteay Srei often is referred to as the "Jewel of Khmer Art" in the literature. The legacy of this small but important and incredibly artistic monument with its extraordinary assortment of mythological narratives in pediments and lintels is a fitting aspirational symbol for the memorial and museum design effort.

Virtually all organized religions include as a fundamental tenet of their theology and mythology, the existence and significance of a heaven and a hell. In no religious accounts are these narratives more complex and articulated by mythology and anthropological frameworks of gods, goddesses and their netherworld counterparts than in Asian Buddhism and Hinduism, Cambodia's primary religious traditions. The richness these two traditions offer is unprecedented by Western standards and dwarfs that of their younger counterparts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Buddhist and Hindu narratives of heaven and hell are of immense importance in recognizing and understanding how and why the Cambodian response to the tragic legacy of the Khmer Rouge era differs from the more punitive, retributive and vengeful Western orientation.

Ms. Hadid's firm and Mr. Chhang collectively anticipate a project whose functionality will serve to build upon and strengthen the work of the Documentation Center to increase public awareness and understanding of the tragedy and to pursue the social benefits of reconciliation through education, immersion and closure based on remembrance and commitment. Her design for the memorial is one of extraordinary beauty and symbolism.

For more information, please contact:

SAN BUNSIM

Mass Communication Officer
Documentation Center of Cambodia
t: +855 (0) 16 33 67 26
e: truthbunsim.s@dccam.org
w: www.dccam.org





Above: THE SLEUK RITH INSTITUTE (Source: Designed by world-renowned Zaha Hadid, 2014)

Below: ANGKOR (Source: Les Monuments du Cambodge: Etudes d'Architecture Khmere, Paris 1914)

