

EPIC ARTS CAFÉ– OUR STORY

How did a group of deaf teenagers looking for a regular place to meet up in Kampot lead to a successful charity that has supported, impacted and changed thousands of lives in Kampot and beyond?

It all started in 2003 when one of the founders from Epic Arts in the UK set up a small office in Phnom Penh. This was followed 2 years later with another project in Kampot due to contacts with the Deaf Development Programme (DDP) and with the deaf community itself who wanted a space where they could meet, spend time with each other and practice the newly developed Khmer sign language.

The idea for a café staffed with deaf helpers began to emerge!



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Epic Arts Café officially launched in 2006. The downstairs running as a café and the upstairs a workshop space offering inclusive dance and art classes.



Soon the number of people turning up for the classes started growing and the café began attracting visiting tourists who wanted a coffee and to support a local social enterprise.

It was soon clear that a bigger space was needed to make more impact.

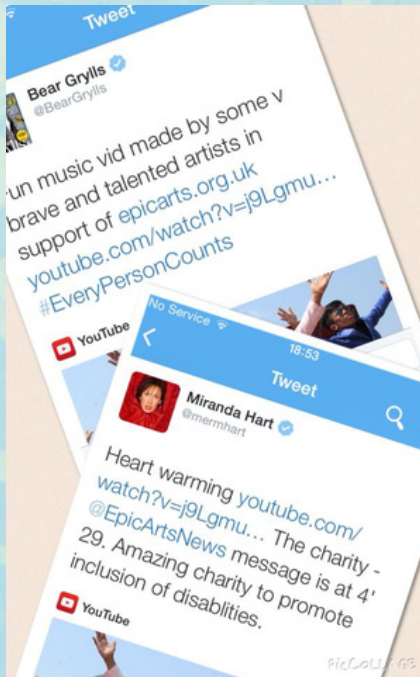


After a major fundraising drive the Epic Arts Center was opened in 2009 with a large professional dance floor, classrooms and a new special education programme.

Epic Arts then launched our Inclusive Arts Course, a two year vocational training course providing young people with arts, dance and hospitality skills.

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Next we started Epic Arts Dance, an inclusive group of talented dance and theatre performers from Cambodia who perform all over Cambodia and internationally entertaining and inspiring audiences of all ages and advocating for disability.



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Epic Arts established a community outreach team with a focus on supporting people with disabilities, changing the perception of disability and inspiring change.

In 2022 Epic Arts Café relocated to our current location in Kampot, and upstairs we run our creations shop.



A lot of wonderful careers, memories and great times have been created since Epic Arts first opened our doors in Kampot empowering individuals with disabilities to reach their full potential.

Epic Arts Café stands as a model for an inclusive working environment within Kampot, providing employment for people and raising funds that go towards the important work carried out by the Epic Arts organisation.



AS KAMPOT'S ONLY SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CAFÉ
WE ARE DELIGHTED YOU CHOSE
TO SUPPORT US TODAY AND HOPE YOU
CONTINUE TO FOLLOW US ON OUR JOURNEY!





NATIONAL

Through Dance, a Journey Through Cambodia's Recent Past

BY KUCH NAREN
AND MICHELLE VACHON
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Having weathered the political storms of the past six decades, Cambodia's arts scene has grown vibrant in recent years. A product of that transformation, the Kampot-based organization Epic Arts, will tonight stage a new dance performance that attempts to capture various eras of the country's past.

Since 2003, Epic Arts has run a performing-arts program as part of its efforts to help physically handicapped people better integrate into society. Beginning tonight, the 60-minute show "Come Back Brighter," will be performed every Friday through May 6 at the Old Royal Cinema.

"This show is very special," said dancer Po Sakun, who will perform from his wheelchair.

"This is a show about Khmer culture, Khmer arts and Cambodian history. When people come to see the show, they will be entertained, learn about four eras of Cambodian history, and, especially, they will see people with disabilities perform



Hayley Holden

From left: Epic Arts dancers Bunroath Tov, Mary Yeom and Sopha Sut rehearse in Kampot City in December.

"Come Back Brighter" will begin with a 15-minute dance performed by young students from the Kampot Traditional Music School and accompanied by Khmer classical music. A 45-minute contemporary number performed by Epic Arts' eight dancers will follow.

The show has been choreographed around music and video clips that illustrate the events of

Narim of the contemporary dance company Amrita Performing Arts, who was brought in to choreograph the show.

"Since it's three separate concepts with different styles...I needed to create moves for each segment, but also had to connect them with each other."

—NAM NARIM,
AMRITA PERFORMING ARTS

"Since it's three separate concepts with different styles...I needed to create moves for each segment, but also had to connect them with each other," Ms. Narim said.

The performance is also hard work for the dancers, who must switch between rhythms and moods, she said.

"I see professional artists. They are deaf or with other physical handicaps, but they are such strong



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EVERYONE AT EPIC ARTS ♥