List of Illustrations

(Photos 2-6, 11 and 14 by Toni Shapiro-Phim. All others by James Wasserman. All pictures taken in 2004. Copyright remains with photographers.)

1. A stone carving of a celestial being on an ancient temple in the Angkor region of Cambodia. Court dancers modeled some of their costuming on images such as these.

2. The pin peat ensemble of the Department of Arts during a pre-performance ceremony. The pin peat orchestra accompanies shadow puppet theater, classical dance, all-male masked dance-drama, and temple ceremonies. The ensemble generally consists of large and small gong circles (kong vong thom; kong vong touc), high- and low-pitched xylophones (roneat ek; roneat thung; and sometimes a roneat dek), a double-headed barrel drum (sampho), a large pair of barrel drums (skor thom), small cymbals (chheung), and a quadruple-reed hardwood or ivory instrument akin to an oboe (sralai).

3. A multi-tiered beysey fashioned from a banana trunk and banana leaves. Beysey are presented to the spirits and teachers of the dance in a ritual of respect, called sampeah kru, in both classical dance and all-male masked dance-drama traditions.

4. Mural painting on the inner walls surrounding the Temple of the Emerald Buddha at Cambodian’s Royal Palace compound. The painting depicts an episode from the Reamker, the Cambodian version of the Ramayana epic. Note the dancers performing to entertain the royalty.

5. It takes many people, and sometimes more than a month, to complete one costume for either classical dance, or the all-male masked dance-drama. Patterns specific to certain character types are embroidered bead by bead, sequin by sequin.

6. A detail of #5.

7. Muong Danida being dressed by Sin Samatikchho, herself a former dancer with the royal troupe. It can take three hours or more for a troupe of dancers to get ready to perform, as each one must be sewn into costume.

8. Pen Sokhun, one of Muong Danida’s teachers, places flowers on her crown.


10. A love duet with the lead characters, danced by Chap Chamroeun Mina and Meas Phirum. “Preah Sothun Neang Monorea,” Royal University of Fine Arts troupe, Royal University of Fine Arts Theater.
11. A *lakhon khol sampeah kru* ceremony altar. This one was prepared for a ceremony prior to a performance of the Department of Arts *lakhon khol* troupe in the capital city.

12. A close-up of a *lakhon khol* dancer being sewn into costume.


14. A scene from the *Reamker* mural painting in the Royal Palace compound depicting the enlarged Hanuman with Preah Ream in his mouth.

15. Preah Leak speaking to Preah Ream in front of the enlarged Hanuman, as the monkey waits to protect the prince. “Vey reap’s Battle,” Department of Arts *lakhon khol* troupe, Royal University of Fine Arts Theatre.

16. Hanuman and Machanub engage in a fight, not realizing they are father and son. “Vey reap’s Battle,” Department of Arts *lakhon khol* troupe, Royal University of Fine Arts Theatre.

17. The giants prepare for a confrontation with the monkeys. “Vey reap’s Battle,” Department of Arts *lakhon khol* troupe, Royal University of Fine Arts Theatre.


19. Sophiline Cheam Shapiro has returned to Cambodia as a teacher and choregrapher, and is shown respect from those learning from her by the presentation of incense.


22. Realizing a state of inner equilibrium, the dancers strike poses of content and balance. “Seasons of Migration,” Royal University of Fine Arts troupe, Royal University of Fine Arts Theatre.