



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL  
FOLK ARTS & HERITAGE PROGRAM

## AUDIO TAPE LOG

Accession No.: KN-03-1-C1 and 2 Date(s): 2/25/03 interview, 3/3/03 transcribe

Fieldworker(s): Kathy Neustadt (also in attendance--and audible at any given moment--Roz Cummins, from Harvard's Center for the Arts; Nancy Selvage, director of the--formerly Radcliffe and now--Harvard Ceramics Studio; Janice Pokorski, who works with the Cambodian Volunteers for Community Development (CVCD); Samkhann Khoeun, a local Cambodian-American activist and spokesperson for the CVCD, his children, and a babysitter/relative)

Interviewee(s): Yary Livan, Cambodian master potter and artist (with translation by Samkhann)

Event: a tour of his studio and conversation about his life and art

Place of Recording: Brush Gallery and "The Magic Basement," [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
samkhannkhoeun@lhs.lowell.k12.ma.us)

Recording Equipment: Sony Walkman Pro Microphone(s): Realistic (external)

Recorded in: mono Tape Brand and Format: Cassette, 60 minutes

Amount Tape Used: Cassette: 2 (one 60 min, one 90)

DAT: ABS time:

Related Accession Numbers: KN-03-1-FN, KN-01-1-CS 1-42, KN-03-1-M1-6

Brief summary of tape contents: biography of Yary with translation/commentary by Samkhann

Counter/ABS	Contents
TAPE 1	Side 1
1	Intro of activities: exhibit at Brush Gallery and visit to his studio [46-82 blank]
82	[In the Magic Basement, at the home of Samkhann Khoeun, who is talking] ..plans for marketing plaster statues of traditional designs [in this case, the lions that guard Angkor Wat, the imperial temple-city of the Khmer Empire] to Cambodians in Lowell, discussion of techniques and use of concrete. Samkhann is pointing out that Yary's technique of making molds from ceramic out of latex is Yary's idea, not traditional in Cambodia (they do some molds, but not like this). "So in a way, it's a learning process for me and for Yary as well of how to transform these original pieces to the mold and from the mold into mass production."
147	Samkhann talks about visiting Cambodia and how it has allowed him and others to get the Cambodian arts and artisans visible again. Even today, artists can't express true political feelings without danger. Gives an example of a controversial work of art which made it impossible for a Cambodian artist in Canada to return to Cambodia.

- 187 Samkhann: Yary started making the molds last summer; before, he would have to make each new figure, one at a time (which, originally, Cambodians would have made out of stone and wood). In Cambodia, Yary's training would have included pots and figures from nature, using what was available (different clay bases and glazes), and a wood-fired kiln. The traditional "folk" pottery was overlooked, generally, because the temple artwork (stone sculptures, mostly) was privileged: the carvings of Angkor Wat, for example. People going to art school wouldn't tend to study ceramics but sculpture and painting. From Yary's generation of art students, there were only 3 ceramic artists alive after the Khmer Rouge: Yary and 2 in Cambodia in bad health; since these 2 have died, Yary is the only one left. There has been assistance from Japanese government and NGOs to revitalize Khmer arts, but there's so much to do. (There were originally 130 or 140 students in Yary's class.)
- 234 [Nancy Selvage: Any folk potters still alive?] Samkhann for Yary: Yes, in Kompong Chhnang there are lots making clay pots for cooking rice and food, but nothing decorative or sculptural. There are also people making large water-collecting jugs in Kandal Province [just south and east of Phnom Penh], along the Mekong and Tonle Sap River. Usually bigger pots are made for use in the temple.
- 261 S for Y: Yary's work is based on the traditional forms, similar to what common folk would use, only much more decorated. For the royal family, they elaborated the forms. The shapes are traditional, and the decorations Yary uses are traditional Cambodian forms: lotus leaves and flowers, fish, etc. [Nancy Selvage: When Yary studied ceramics in Cambodia, were they looking at other countries' styles?] S for Y: They saw works of France and one Cambodian who had been training in Japan, another trained in Italy. Usually it was in the form of handmade copies, not anything technologically complex. They didn't have much access to magazines articles or books for inspiration. Cambodians didn't produce that kind of documentation of their own work either and would have required help from other countries to do it.
- 309 [Nancy: What year were you in school when the Khmer Rouge arrived?] S for Y: It was April 1975. The story of how Yary survived the KR regime unfolds (as an educated person, he would have been automatically slated for execution): Yary's mother told a Khmer Rouge leader that he knew how to build a kiln to fire the tiles needed for housing, and that's what he did; that's how he survived. He was lucky that he was still in the middle of the project when the Vietnamese invaded in 1979 because he would have been killed off once it was finished. He worked on the project for 6 or 7 months; the kiln had been set up by another artist but they couldn't make tiles that would hold together. Yary's mother had been working with other women sewing the Khmer Rouge uniforms (the black uniforms) and told one of the soldiers. He was a student from 1971 until 1975, almost finished his training. After the Vietnamese takeover, the new government set the art school back up and Yary returned to complete his final project for the ceramic degree. Because the kiln was broken down and the materials were all spoiled and there was no teacher, he stayed in the art field but switched to painting. When he had started his training, he had been taught in many areas, including painting, sculpture, making molds, but his major, his specialty, was in ceramics. He's

interested in painting and ceramics and sees them connected with each other. His painting helped him to decorate ceramics, for example.

- 402 [Nancy: how did he survive before the kiln for the Khmer Rouge?] S for Y: He was in a young men's mobile team sent out to do projects like digging canals and farming. He was so skinny because there was no food, so that when his mother saw him, she felt so badly, that that was why she spoke to one of the leaders about his knowledge of kilns. It was her hope that he would at least get a stomach full of food; if he was killed, at least he would have had a chance to eat well first. Before that, he had tried to hide his identity.
- 433 [Roz: how did you go to art school?] S for Y: His mother was a clothing fashion designer; seeing her create clothes for people got him interested in the arts. It was through examinations, he did well on tests and was allowed to attend art school. There is an annual exam in Cambodia to find the best students; he was one of the top 10 who were allowed to join the ceramic program. Later, the top 5 or so were sent to study the traditional art forms, particularly the apsara [the celestial angel and dancer for the gods]. It's not usually up to the students to decide; whoever tests well in an area is lined up to do that work. The student then has choice to take other classes as well. Their major is traditional art or ceramics or wood sculpture or silversmiths, depending on what the talents would dictate. Nancy: other studies? They have other subjects, but art students mostly did arts, with minimal sciences and math and other subjects.

500 End of TAPE 1, Side 1

TAPE 1, Side 2

- 2 S for Y: About religion: it is taken care of by the parents. Can become a monk for a short time or longer. In old days, every boy was a monk for a time, a rite of passage. "In order to become a human being, in order to become civilized--acceptable member of the Khmer society--you had to become a Buddhist monk" for 3-6 months or a year; poor families sent sons to get fed, learn the cultural forms. Women had their own rites of passage: in old days, "staying in the shadow" which involves wearing covering and not living with men; intensive teaching during this time to prepare her for womanhood, to be a wife. Not much is written about it, that's why I [Samkhann] am curious about it.
- 89 S for Y: Mother trained as dress designer; mother's mother took her to a tailor's shop in Battambang and asked if she could apprentice for about a year; then sent to Thailand to study for another 2 years. When she came back, she opened her own shop. The clothing was traditional for weddings and special events; she also made contemporary clothes, looking at magazines to copy.
- 139 [Samkhann's children, 1 son, 2 daughters, join us]. [KN: at Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, I saw old pieces that students were taught to replicate; is this how you were taught?] S for Y: Observation and replication were the foundation: later on, allowed to experiment on their own. The ceramic teaching curriculum was introduced in the early 60s; before that it was only sculpture, painting, drawing, etc.

- 223 [Roz: what happened to the work you did while in school?] S for Y: Most were small pieces that were sold to supply food and clothing. The class project would be kept by the school, though taken away by the Khmer Rouge. Yary's class project was piece of pottery with a long neck, combining a traditional form and something new, with the decoration taking on a life of its own. [Nancy: in music, "in art, it's referred to as 'copying' the music, but in music, you are taught to 'perform' Beethoven; experiencing the performance of a master piece is great.] [Roz: it's a modern bias.]
- 273 [Samkhann: There has been more research--a new book--redocumenting the art forms during independence during the 50s and 60s under the royal government back then. New art forms during that time, including painting, moviemaking (which was taught by the Americans), radio production (also Americans). [Samkhann shows us some other pieces in the front area of the basement, amidst a gaggle of children.]
- 300 [I remain taking pictures with Yary. He shows some of the plaster copies he has been able to make with the latex molds. Some pieces can be extended indefinitely, since the fit together at either end of the mold. Yary demonstrates how one design piece can be used as outdoor decoration, a picture frame, etc.]
- 328 Samkhann showing some of the other pieces in the basement. Some discussion of techniques for casting pieces; might be easier to cast in two pieces? Yary and fellow artist Domnang Pin have worked on making large figures for outdoor use, painted or plain. Tryiong to make traditional forms that can be marketed in contemporary scene. A lot of interest in the community as more and more Cambodians are buying homes; they want traditional decorations--but they don't want to pay a lot of money. Another form is from the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the elephant being an almighty animal. Experimenting with kilns; the last one couldn't handle the pieces; the new one hasn't yet been used.
- 384 Samkhann showing one of the apsaras and a material they're working with that's supposed to be lightweight and resilient [Lomatrik?] Expensive material but worth trying. [Nancy's relative runs the company; maybe she can work out a deal.]
- 405 , Upstairs. Samkhann: he likes to let the artists use his basement to help promote the arts. When he was at the CMAA (Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association), he had some space and Yary got some stipends to help support himself. He shows us some artwork he has brought from Cambodia (particularly from a woman artist, which is unusual; he has thought they might do a exhibit on just women, showing them in all the aspects of their life). He shows us a picture of palm trees and explains that he survived the Khmer Rouge because he was taught to get the palm juice from the tree. A whole family (although not his family; he was by himself) worked from dawn to dusk, and he did it for a time. Everything in the process was done using bamboo wood, a knife, and a metal pan to boil down the sugar in. Samkhann has been in Lowell since February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1995, but in the States from November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1984, in Chicago.

- 456 There were two sisters working selling their artwork behind the Museum in Phnom Penh, and they ran away from him, but he ended up buying all their work: pictures of the traditional home ["no perspective," critiques Yary].
- 470 [Inside the house] Samkhann shows off the house, most of which he renovated, also indicating more art works. One is by Domnang Pin, who studied as a painter, but is also working with Yary. The lion in the basement is Domnang. Samkhann has no art training but lots of interest. When it was time to go to school, the war was going on. But he's in art and music (has a large collection of instruments, though he plays only one).

502 End of TAPE 1, Side 2

TAPE 2, Side 1

- 6 Samkhann showing more pieces from his house; collecting some things as ideas for Yary and other Cambodian artists to market (with Samkhann's help). Any new books on Cambodian art and culture, he buys. One is on the symbolism of the whole Angkor temple: the Khmer kinds thought they were the center of the universe. More about some of the artists he has bought from, a farmer who turned to art instead and has now taught his son to do the carvings. "I feel that most Cambodians have this artistic ability in their blood"--even those who cannot read. Another artist, who uses sculpture to tell people about the suffering--he knew of no other way to express it, now he's doing traditional subjects, like the carved heads at Bayon. Probably the only Cambodian artist in America who is making his living at art: painter, sculpture, stone restorer, poet, screen writer (he was in Lowell on the 29<sup>th</sup> reading his poetry) is Chanthou Oeur [see KN-03-1-M6]
- 136 Samkhann says of himself and Yary: We want to talk about revitalizing the arts. Want to introduce him to schools. There's a ceramics program at Lowell High School, and I want to get Yary involved, but there are so many financial constraints right now, it isn't the right time [suggestions by those gathered about getting Yary approved for artists-in-schools rosters; Yary suggests he will improve his English skills]. More touring of the art work in Samkhann's home: a hologram with the Buddha enchants everyone, cast alabaster powder figure that Samkhann is interested in [Nancy discusses other materials for casting.
- 233 Children coming and going; more art. One painting of the building of Angkor Wat leads Sankhann to share information he has studied about the imperial temple-city: that 37,000 artists worked on Angkor Wat, over 30 years (the Angkor complex was built from 8<sup>th</sup> thru early 13<sup>th</sup> century); the largest building surrounded by moat). A picture of the water festival catalyzes discussion: Samkhann started the Water Festival in Lowell (in August) about 6 years ago: reminds him of the Mekong River back home. So popular now: 60,000+ came last year for the one-day event; people coming from all oover the country and Canada. In Cambodia, it's a 3-day, 3-night celebration, but we did it one day, symbolic. Have 8 boats made and sent from Cambodia; 2 long boats--105 feet each--that were donated by government of Cambodia (so long, it had to cut into pieces; when put back together, couldn't use it because of leaking). Lots of arts and crafts

and food booths; artists had chance to showcase their work. Also highlights taking care of environment; water, particularly, as source of life. On Mekong, it's life for people; on Merrimack, a source of life for industrialization in Lowell and the country. Attracted lots of different people: celebration and protection of life as a commonality).

- 314 Samkhann points out a dulcimer called a khim, made by someone in Chicago. He mentions a group in Lowell that combines traditional music and hip-hop rap [Seasia]: new musical form that was very exciting. A piece from a border camp (piece was 50 cents; the frame cost more). More discussion of new musics: Samkhann mentions some people in Minnesota who put out a CD called "International Trio," where they use Cambodian instruments to play other musics. Kid bangings. The group moves to the dining room table [with much noise].
- 375 [Roz : when and where born?] S for Y: Yary was born in 1954 in Battambang, second largest city in Cambodia, in Battambang Province, well known as "pot of rice" ("the bread basket"). [Roz: what happened to Yary since the Khmer Rouge roof tile experiences and now?] S for Y: Roof tile building for the Khmer Rouge was what saved his life. After the war, when the new government was installed, Yary had the opportunity to go back and complete his education in 1980 and 81; also working with the newspaper company (that was run by the government) setting up pages, laying the type, also illustrating with cartoons and drawings. Ordered to do a lot of things in support of the Hun Sen government. Later on, because of his talent, Communist gov wanted to send him to Hanoi for training in communist ideology (to be a party official), but he refused to go because he remembered the Khmer Rouge (also communists). After he refused, he was accused of being part of the resistance movement (from along the Cambodian/Thai border). He heard from a friend that the government planned to arrest him and his family, so he and his wife decided to escape to the border camp, in late 1983.
- 487 S for Y: He was robbed by armed men along the way. His intention was to get into a refugee camp in Thailand called Kaw-wi-da [?], which was run by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), but because he had no money left to buy his way into the camp, they had to remain along the Thai border. He was in a Freedom Fighter Camp (along with Sun Sen, a former prime minister in Cambodia, now dead). At the border camp, that's when he started teaching through an NGO, a German foundation supporting Buddhist Institute for Development, working with a Buddhist monk teaching art: drawing, paintings, basic art with limited resources. In 1985, selected by camp leader to have an exhibit in Bangkok, Thailand, where he earned about 3,000 bat, about \$150—a lot of money back then; the most money you could make. With that money, he was able to get into the camp in Thailand in early 1986.
- 547 S for Y: By then, the camps were no longer accepting political refugees, so he was now living there as an undocumented alien. He received rations from the UNHCR and the NGO. By then, he had 2 children—one boy and one girl. As displaced person, he was treated badly—almost like the Khmer Rouge—particularly by the soldiers, who were supposed to be protecting them. There were beatings, prisons, and tortures. He struggled so much: during the daytime, he hid in a small hut doing paintings, and during the night, they hid in a hole in the

ground, covered with plastic, to avoid any random searches. The danger was that they could be sent back to Cambodia to a camp controlled by the Khmer Rouge. [Yary starts to choke up] By then, his wife was expecting their third child [Samkhann has to take deep breaths to continue the translation]: it was hard to hide with her pregnancy, they allowed themselves to be arrested. [Yary is now weeping; everyone suggests we stop, as they hug him, rub his back, and look on uncomfortably].

608 Samkhann [shaken]: I was also with my family in that camp, but earlier, just a few months after they opened it, so I know what it's like to be there. Yary continues [with shaky voice]: the third children was delivered in the prison. I was doing artwork, doing paintings to earn a living and to bail his wife out of jail. The Thai officials kept trying to get him to paint a portrait of the king in exchange for a lighter sentence and more food; he was forced to work all day and all night. In early 1989, he was released from prison and allowed to live freely in the camp with the refugees and others. At this point, given status of political refugee, maybe because of international pressure to recognize undocumented people and treat them better. When his status changed, he hoped for resettlement in a third country. Unfortunately, by then, there was a political settlement in Cambodia where people were being sent. There was the 1991 Peace agreement signed in France and the election supervised by the UN in 1993, which was all supposed to have normalized things, so he was again sent back to Cambodia.

666 He then decided to put together a program at the art school with another survivor (who died a few years ago). They were going to produce pottery--three kilns' worth--to display at one of the hotels in Cambodia, the Cambodiana [I had stayed there]. Lots of publicity about the exhibit, and they were about to make \$2,000 from the sale of the pieces bought by tourists and people staying at the hotel (the elephant pot was a specially popular piece). They had worked on this over several months, building and firing the kilns, getting the clay from the countryside, known as Kracheh/s Province. The school didn't recognize him as belonging to the school (since only recently repatriated and not having "a name"), so they wanted to kick him out..

735 End of TAPE 2, Side 1

TAPE 2, Side 2

1 S for Y: His friend continued to work with the support of a foundation, given a Fulbright to study ceramics in Australia and Japan, and returned to produce ceramics in Cambodia for several more years, until he died. From there, Yary went to work for an Japanese NGO, in charge of a ceramic program, a training program for people who had been sent back from the camps as a vocational skill, so they could make a living. This was in Battambang Province, in one of the small villages. He started the center from scratch and was lucky to be given permission by the provincial governor and had access to 5 acres of land to build the center and the kilns and put the program together with financial support. Had the opportunity to bring a Thai expert (Thai but of Cambodian descent, trained in Japan, who had worked with NGOs in Thailand and refugee camps) to help set things up. [Lots of scuffling with the microphone; Samkhann's daughter is playing with it]

- 126 S for Y: He set up lots of activities at the center, including trying to import original clay from Kracheh/s, where the clay was reputed to be "as white as paper," one of the best. When the expert from Thailand was there, he had a relative from Bangkok who was also in charge, and they disagreed about how the center would operate. Particularly about getting the clay; Yary continued to get it from Kracheh/s Province, which included paying for transport. The man from Thailand thought this a waste of money--he wanted to take it from Battambang. There was disagreement and jealousy, and Yary felt he couldn't continue to work this way and resigned. Yary knew from his training what clay was best in Cambodia; can't just take anything to make good pots; want a certain quality. After Yary left, the guy ended up using not the clay of Battambang but started buying it from Thailand so that he could make profit from it; he made so much money that later on, he was able to open up his own factory in Thailand.
- 234 S for Y: So Yary went around to Buddhist temples to work on small commissions drawing the life of Buddha on the walls and ceiling of the temple--the story from birth to enlightenment. This was for new temples. And that's how he made a living. Also working with political parties--opposition parties. Later on, some Europeans wanted to commission him to make pottery that they could export, but he had to come up with his own capital to build a kiln and set up a studio; he asked relatives and friends to see if they wanted to help, but there was no certainty, so they weren't forthcoming. He worked at that until July of 2001, when soldiers from the Cambodian Peoples' Party came to his home and threatened him (because he belonged to a different party). He consulted with his wife, and he applied for a tourist visa to get out of the country.
- 317 S for Y: When he first got to the country, he had no English. His nephew was here first; his nephew's mother [a distant cousin] had already gotten political asylum and was here in Lowell, so that's how Yary came here. He knew about the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Agency (CMAA), which is where I [Samkhann] worked [Samkhann takes over telling the story] and he came and met with me, and at the time I was looking for someone to help with the Cambodian New Year decorations [see KN-03-1-M3]. So that's how I got to know him and was able to give him some stipends, and then get him connected with others. Pretty much how we got here today. He left Cambodia in 2001, July 13<sup>th</sup>.
- 368 S for Y: By the time he left Cambodia, his wife was working in East Timor for the UN. Through her sponsorship, she was able to get the visa--otherwise he wouldn't have been able to get it. Afterwards, he applied for political asylum, since he had gotten a death threat from the government; he couldn't go back. Samkhann continues: Now he's going to get asylum (unusual to get it quickly and at all); had to pay a lot of money to the lawyer to get it. Nancy wrote a letter about his working for her; important with the IMS judge--he can live here and work, fully documented and with legal status. He has to be here for 3 to 5 years before he can apply for citizenship, but he has the ability now to sponsor his wife and family to bring his family here. His wife is a United Nations Volunteer, a job she's had for about 2 years.
- 420 [Roz: how is it to make artwork when you're sad and/or scared, here and before?]  
S for Y: Patience is key. It's not always a choice, since you have to survive--



supporting your wife and children--but it also helps to focus on art. It takes your mind away from other troubles, from fear and such, through art as a rescue. It has helped to focus on art and put other things aside. He's had a lot of worries about his wife in East Timor and his children in Cambodia--and his life here, as well--but through concentration and meditation, he's able to focus on artwork and not worry 24 hours a day. Otherwise, it could make him incapable of doing anything else. His artwork helps him compartmentalize his feelings so that he can continue to function. He can direct his feelings and control the temptation to give into it. When he was younger and in school, when he wasn't feeling well, he wasn't able to do his work. But because of the many difficulties that he has gone through, he has been able to train his mind and his feelings to be able to work no matter what when that's his job.

515 [Nancy: you've known many recent refugees--when you (Samkhann) compare Yary to them, is he distinctive?] Samkhann: he's patient. He's patient and gentle and really committed to his art and his belief. He wants to do something to benefit him and his community and his culture. In a way, he feels guilty that he's alive, that he's survived. So, in a way, he has to do this artwork to tell the world as a tribute. [Nancy: I don't understand the language, but he sounds very poetic] Samkhann: he's very articulate and poetic as well. As an artist, he's able to express himself well. I find this true myself, that so much suffering and so much pain cannot be easily spoken [Samkhann begins to choke up], but I find him to be more articulate but still emotional, more than most people that I come into contact with. He speaks very directly. He also uses metaphors, as part of his training as an artist.

555 [Roz: thank you so much for speaking of things that are sad.] Yary: thank you so much as well for the opportunity to speak with you. [Nancy: are things better in Cambodia now?] Samkhann: a little calmer, but we expect problems with the elections coming up in July. Recent riots with the Thai were used by politicians to divert attention from other activities. Samkhann: in Cambodia, the different parties fight amongst themselves. One party controls the judges, so if they accuse someone, he's automatically guilty. [Nancy: when will his family be able to come and how much will it cost?] Samkhann: According to the lawyers, his children might be able to enroll in school here by the fall, but it will cost quite a bit of money, he doesn't know how much: in the thousands. That's fast. [Kathy: why so fast?] Samkhann: Combination of lawyer and because his is a unique case: his talents but also he's a member of the opposition party. The lawyer can make the case that his wife and children are in danger. With his nephew, it only took 3 months. Nancy: still have to pay the lawyer? He's had to pay \$700 each just to start the case of sponsorship--he's got 4 children and his wife--then there's airfare on top of that, health screenings and checkups, etc. [Nancy: are there community resources to help with this?] Samkhann: I don't think so--it's going to depend on him; that's why he works any job he can get. The community has so few resources and they need to take care of themselves--unfortunately. Airfares are \$700 or \$800 for one way--depends on when and with whom. Samkhann paid \$1,300 through Singapore. We may be able to do some fundraising to pay for it; maybe an airline--there's always a possible way to do that.

645 [Roz: Any question you wish I had asked?] S for Y: Not that he knows of. [Nancy: he doesn't seem to sleep more than a couple of hours a night.] Yary

[speaking for himself]: I've been up since five o'clock this morning. I can sleep on the train [coming to Boston].

657 Info about and from Samkhann: he's no longer with the CMAA but is now at Middlesex Community College, since January, working with a new program called Student Connections, helping students to finish high school and go on to college. Promoting education for the first Cambodian generation to go on to college, but they have so much trouble in high school. He uses personal experience and background to teach them how to go about it. There are close to 4,000 students in Lowell High School, over 50% of whom are Cambodian. When the kids come from middle school, they get lost in the high school--by the time they get "discovered," they've already been absent so much that they fail. [I ask about Chath pierSath, another Cambodian activist.artist I have worked with on other projects, who also does educational outreach; see KN-03-1-M2] Chath has been working with Gear-Up, working with kids going from middle school to high school.] He's gone back to Cambodia to stay, at least with awhile. He agreed to work with a group Samkhann is involved with, the Cambodian Volunteers for Community Development (CVCD), a local NGO providing educational opportunity to street children in Cambodia, children from the slums, to give them some training in literacy, computer and other occupational skills; teaching young women to sew and such. A wonderful program that does so much with so little funding. They're working on establishing a center to consolidate all the different programs and allow them to provide more services. They serve over 60,000 kids with \$50,000--teaching under the mango tree--it's amazing. And it's run by young people: orphans, people who have been kicked out of society, prostitutes who are now being taught skills--"oh, there's so much suffering there."

700 [I suggest his getting in touch with Nyep and the foundation she's working for. Also about the film she wants to show; that they should work together. etc.] Samkhann: Middlesex Community College has a couple of projects in Cambodia already (one is paralegal). He wants to get them to expand and further develop programs. he head of CVCD, a young, energetic person, just got a full scholarship on how to run a non-profit. Samkhann is the contact person/spokespersons for CVCD. At Middlesex, he's trying to build a parallel with the youth here who have all the possible access they could possibly need (unlike those in Cambodia, who have almost no access to very limited opprtunities), and yet the American kids aren't making it. For lots of reasons: the poverty, lack of support from the family (parents working 2 or 3 jobs to get by), gangs, and violence. In Cambodia, it's also poverty--they have to help support their families--and lots of other things. Looking to have some sort of exchange program..

734 End of TAPE 2, Side 2