

The Film Seminar

17.4.2025

17:00 CEST

Lecture Hall, Audi 2

Von-Melle-Park 4, 20146 Hamburg

A film by Rithy Panh

Rendez-vous avec Pol Pot



Photo credit: <https://social.cabay.com.kh/article/1357152>

is the latest film by renowned Cambodian director Rithy Panh. The film is partially based on the harrowing true story of Elizabeth Becker, a well-known American journalist and the first foreign reporter who undertook the perilous journey to Cambodia to meet and interview the leader of the genocidal regime, Pol Pot.

The film depicts the adventurous journey of three foreign journalists to Cambodia, who were invited by the Khmer Rouge to visit Democratic Kampuchea and have a personal interview with its leader, Pol Pot.

What the Khmer Rouge showcased to the three foreign journalists and presented to the world appeared progressive but did not reflect reality in any way. The entire country of Cambodia became a battlefield from April 17, 1975, to January 7, 1979, during which nearly 2 million innocent Cambodians lost their lives, leaving survivors with pain and psychological trauma that persists to this day.

The film will be shown on April 17, 2025, by the Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asian at the University of Hamburg, on the 50th anniversary of the start of the Killing Fields regime. The screening will be supervised by Prof. Dr. Jörg Engelbert, a German historian and Southeast Asia scholar, and Mr. Savuth Prum, a survivor and witness, as well as Dr. med. Sady Keat, who personally experienced the genocide. Following the film, they will answer questions and engage in discussion with the audience together with Prof. Dr. Jan van der Putten, a scholar known in the fields of Southeast Asian studies and for Austronesian Languages at the University of Hamburg and Mr. Vannavuth Khieu, a nephew of Pol Pot's wife, who personally lived with Pol Pot before the genocide.

5:00 PM to 6:00 PM:

Welcome and social gathering before the program.

6:00 PM to 6:05 PM:

Blessing dance.

6:05 PM to 6:15 PM:

Presentation on the history of Cambodia before the Pol Pot regime.

6:15 PM to 8:00 PM:

Film screening "RENDEZ-VOUS WITH POL POT"

8:00 PM to 8:10 PM:

Interview with journalist Elizabeth Becker about her journey and personal interview with Pol Pot in Cambodia.

8:10 PM to 8:15 PM:

Song "Oh Phnom Penh!".

8:10 PM to 9:00 PM:

Questions and discussion with the audience.

The Department of Languages and Cultures of Southeast Asian at the University of Hamburg sincerely thanks the French film production company Playtime in Paris for their support, which enabled the department to obtain the special permission of the producers and director Rithy Panh to allow the free screening of the film "RENDEZ-VOUS AVEC POL POT" at the University of Hamburg.