A VILLAGE WALK

HEALING RITUAL



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This morning, a passing villager stopped and offered two candles, which is the customary announcement for the ancient healing ritual unique to this corner of southern Isaan known as ra maemod, or witch dance.

Today's village walk explores this fascinating tradition.

With Khmer roots that run centuries deep, ra maemod is believed by locals to cure illnesses and ailments where conventional treatments have failed.

Both male and female maemod (witches) uniquely possess access to ancestors with healing powers. Highly respected and revered, they serve as portals during these rituals – channeling their ancestors to provide healing and protection to the afflicted. The ritual generally focuses around one or two individuals whose family has requested healing.

The process begins early in the morning, with villagers cooking and preparing the ritual space throughout the day. The ceremony is usually held at the home of the afflicted person. The setup often spills into the street. Neighbors know to take a different route.

As the witches summon their ancestors, music and chanting build, ringing throughout the village – often to a fever pitch – late into the night and frequently through the next morning.

This edition of A Village Walk offers a glimpse into this sacred cultural practice.












กิตติชัยมาลัย


บว 766















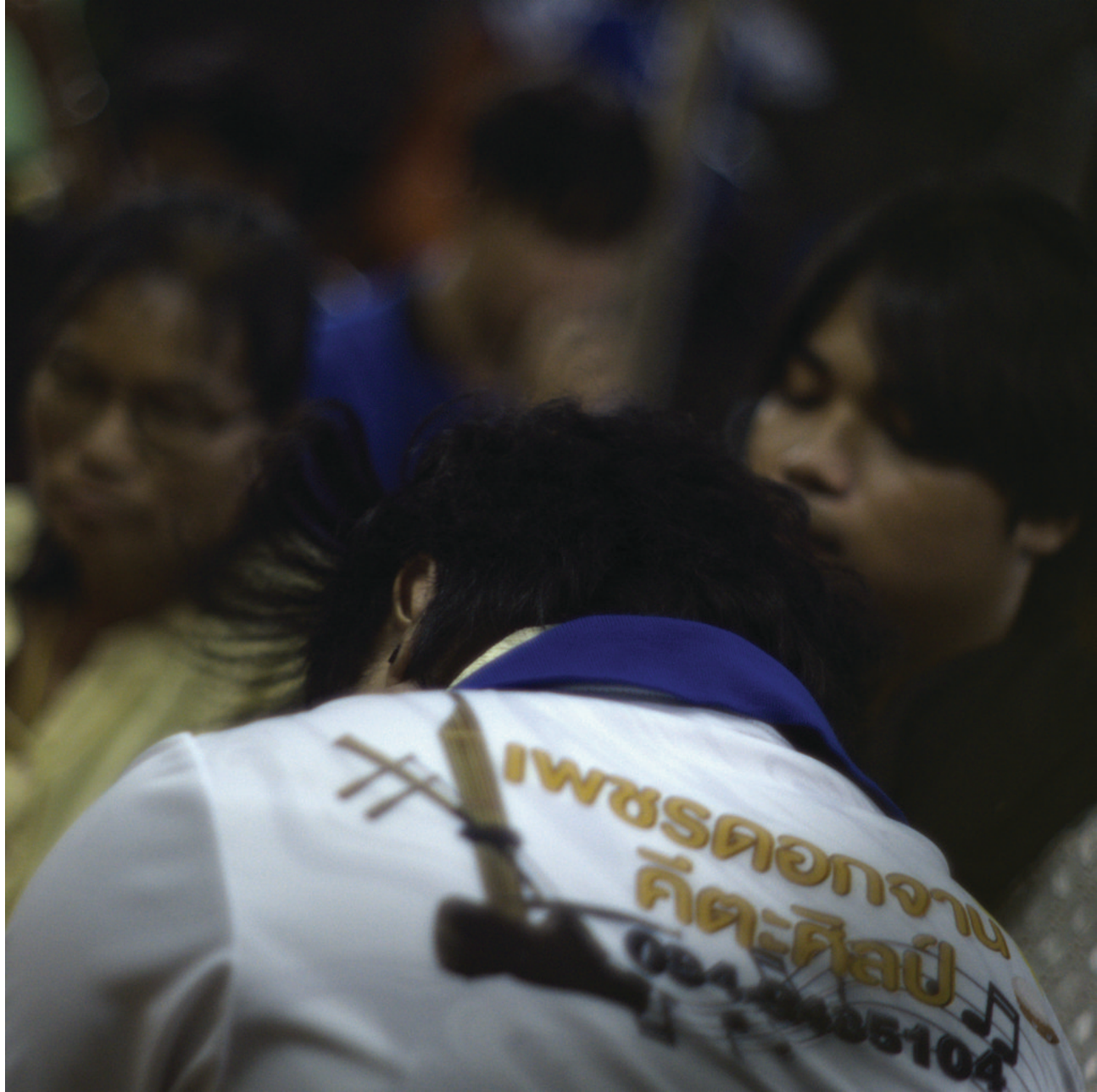











เพชรดอกจาน
คีตะศิลป์
















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Thank you to my friends and neighbors for graciously allowing me to blend in like family. And thank you, dear reader, for sharing this walk with me. I hope you enjoyed it.

All images were made with vintage lenses from the 1960s retrofitted to a modern professional camera, creating an intentional, unique, and authentic aesthetic.

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