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For the program companion website, visit pbs.org/independentlens/newyearbaby

**“NEW YEAR BABY” TO PREMIERE ON PBS’S *INDEPENDENT LENS*
TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2008**

A Daughter’s Search for the Truth About Family Secrets

“If you preserve secrecy, half the battle’s won.” —Khmer Rouge principle

(San Francisco, CA)—What would you do if everything you knew about your life was turned upside down? If your sisters weren’t really your sisters and your mother was married to someone else before your father? In her personal and moving film **NEW YEAR BABY**, Socheata Poeuv finds that long-held secrets hide not only painful memories, but also love forged under inhuman conditions. **NEW YEAR BABY** will have its television premiere on the Emmy Award–winning PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Terrence Howard, on Tuesday, May 27, at 10:00 PM (check local listings).

Born in a refugee camp on April 13—the Cambodian New Year’s Day—Socheata Poeuv has always been called “the lucky one” by her family. Her parents, Ma and Pa, survived the Khmer Rouge, one of the cruelest political regimes ever documented, eventually escaping to Thailand and then moving the entire family to Texas. Once in the United States, Ma and Pa never talked about what happened in Cambodia, focusing instead on giving the kids a “normal American life.”

On Christmas Day 2002, with the entire family gathered together, Socheata’s parents reveal a secret they had kept for more than 25 years: Her older sisters weren’t really her sisters at all, and her brother was only her half-brother, the child of her mother’s previous marriage. While reeling from this new information, Socheata wonders what other secrets her parents might have left behind in Cambodia. She embarks on an emotional journey with Ma and Pa to their homeland, retracing the family’s path and picking up the lost pieces of her history along the way. She finds that to get to the bottom of her family’s story, she must understand what happened to her former country as well.

Using animation to illustrate family memories and the country’s history, **NEW YEAR BABY** intertwines the stories of Ma and Pa with those of millions of others who suffered under the Khmer Rouge. In fewer than four years, more than 1.7 million Cambodians—about one-fourth of the population—died from starvation, disease or execution.

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Taking Ma and Pa back to places filled with sadness, Socheata pleads, prods and pries, trying to get them to answer questions they have dodged so many times before. How did her parents, a mismatched couple with little in common, come to be together? What happened to them in the Khmer Rouge labor camps? How did they survive the genocide when so many others died? And why had they never told the truth? **NEW YEAR BABY** is the story of love that carried a family around land mines, across borders and across an ocean—a love so powerful not even the Khmer Rouge could destroy it.

To learn more about the film and the issues, visit the companion website for **NEW YEAR BABY** at *Independent Lens* online. Get detailed information on the film, watch preview clips, read an interview with the filmmaker, and explore the subject in depth with links and resources. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions. The **NEW YEAR BABY** companion website launches April 29, 2008 pbs.org/independentlens/newyearbaby.

NEW YEAR BABY is a featured May film for ITVS Community Cinema, the monthly screening series featuring upcoming selections from the *Independent Lens* season. Presented in partnership with local public television stations and leading community organizations, ITVS Community Cinema holds preview screenings in select markets across the country, making a real contribution on a range of current social issues by connecting communities with organizations and information and providing the opportunity to get involved. For more information, visit pbs.org/independentlens/getinvolved/.

About the Filmmaker

Socheata Poeuv (so-CHEE-tah puv) is the CEO of Khmer Legacies, an organization whose mission is to create a video archive about the Cambodian genocide. Khmer Legacies has a goal of videotaping the testimonies of thousands of Cambodian survivors by having children interview their parents. Poeuv was selected as a 2007 Echoing Green Fellow and is a Visiting Fellow at the Yale University Genocide Studies Program. She made her filmmaking debut with the award-winning film **NEW YEAR BABY**. She co-founded Broken English Productions in New York City; was on the staff at NBC News *Dateline*; and was previously with *ABC News World News Tonight Weekend* and NBC News *Today*. Poeuv graduated cum laude with a B.A. in English literature from Smith College in 2002 and studied one year at Hertford College, Oxford.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10:00 PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about unique individuals, communities and moments in history. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

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