



BIO: LOUNG UNG is a bestselling author, activist, and co-screenplay writer of **First They Killed My Father**, a 2017 **Netflix Original Movie** directed by Angelina Jolie based on her memoir, now streaming on Netflix in 190 countries.

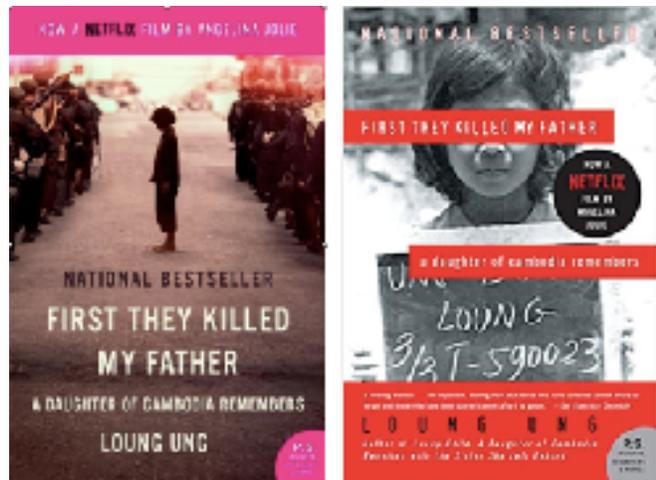
Loung Ung was only 5 years old when the Khmer Rouge soldiers stormed into her native city of Phnom Penh. Four years later, in one of the bloodiest episodes of the 20th century, some two million Cambodians – out of a population of seven million – had died at the hands of the infamous Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge regime. Among the victims were both of Loung’s parents, two sisters, and 20 other relatives. In 1980, Loung, her older brother Meng and his wife, escaped by boat to Thailand, where they

spent five months in a refugee camp before relocating to the United States in Vermont.

BOOKS: Loung’s bestselling memoir, *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers*, was a 2001 recipient of the Asian/Pacific American Librarians’ Association award for Excellence in Adult Non-fiction Literature, and is widely taught and selected for community read programs in high schools and universities across the U.S. and internationally. *First They Killed My Father* has been translated into 15 languages, including Khmer, German, Dutch, Norwegian, Danish, French, Spanish, Italian, and Japanese. Loung’s other books include *Lucky Child*, and *Lulu in the Sky: A Daughter of Cambodia Finds Love, Healing and Double Happiness*, both of which are widely taught in high schools and universities.

CAMBODIA/NOW: Since 1995, Loung has made over thirty trips back to Cambodia and has devoted herself to helping her native land heal from the traumas of war. She has worked as an activist to end violence against women, child soldiers, and the Campaign for a Landmine Free World, serving as its spokesperson from 1997-2005 before leaving to focus more on her writing and restaurant business. Today, Loung and her husband Mark Priemer, are co-owners in three successful restaurants and two microbreweries (www.marketgardenbrewery.com) in Cleveland, Ohio.

WRITING: In 2013, Loung expanded her activism reach as one of the writers for *Girl Rising*, a groundbreaking documentary film directed by Academy Award nominee Richard Robbins. *Girl Rising* tells the stories of 9 extraordinary girls from 9 countries and their stories of forced marriage, domestic slavery, sex trafficking, and gender



violence and the power of education to change their worlds. In 2015, Loung co-wrote the screenplay of *First They Killed My Father* with Angelina Jolie, and served as an executive producer on the film..

RECOGNITIONS: The World Economic Forum selected Loung as one of the “100 Global Youth Leaders of Tomorrow.” Among the publications, television and radio shows she has been featured on are; *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *People Magazine*, *CNN*, *Nightline*, the *Diane Rheme Show*, *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*, and *The Today Show*. In addition, she has been the subject of documentary films for German ARTE, Japanese NHK, and the New England Cable Network (NECN).

SPEAKER: Loung has given keynote addresses at numerous forums in the U.S. and internationally, including, National Cambodian Heritage Museum, Stanford University, Dartmouth College, Philips Academy, Taipei American School, Hong Kong American School, *Facing History and Ourselves*, American Library Associations, Women in the World Summit, Omega Institute for Women & Leadership, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Mexico 1 Million Youth Summit, Young Presidents Organization, UN Conference on Women in Beijing, UN Conference Against Racism and Discrimination in South Africa, and UN Conference on Child Soldiers Summit in Nepal.

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SPEAKING TOPICS:

FIRST THEY KILLED MY FATHER; AN EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE KHMER ROUGE GENOCIDE THROUGH THE EYES OF A GIRL

(Themes: Cambodia, Genocide, War, Children in War, Refugees)

From 1975 to 1979, 1.7 to 2 million Cambodians, a quarter of the country’s population, died under the Khmer Rouge regime. One of seven children of a high-ranking governmental official, Loung Ung was only five when the soldiers stormed into her city, forcing Loung’s family to flee and, eventually, to disperse. Orphaned, separated from her siblings, Loung was trained as a child soldier in a work camp for orphans where she was taught to hurt and hate. Harrowing, yet hopeful, Loung’s powerful story is an unforgettable account of a family shaken and shattered, yet miraculously sustained by courage and love in the face of unspeakable brutality. From an innocent chatty girl to a silent child soldier to a bewildered refugee in America, Loung Ung shows that your past does not have to predetermine your future. Through her work, writing and activism, Loung shares how she was able to reclaim her voice, redeem herself, and help many others learn of their own stories.

FIRST THEY KILLED MY FATHER; FROM PAGE TO FILM

(Themes: Movies, Arts, Cambodia, Genocide, Trauma, Healing)

A writer writes, Loung Ung believes, hence, she was happy for her books to be books. But then, in 2015, her close friend of fifteen years, humanitarian-actor- director Angelina

Jolie called to say, 'let's make a film together'. Thus begins Loung's journey of learning to write a screenplay (she co-wrote the screenplay with Angelina Jolie for *First They Killed My Father*, now a Netflix Original movie streaming in 190 countries), make a movie (she was on set for the four month-shoot in Cambodia), and understand what an executive producer does on a film (help with whatever's needed). Using film clips, photos, and storytelling, Loung takes the audience through her sometimes-traumatic experience and other times hilarious, inspirational, spiritual but always heart-healing-lifting journey of turning her life into film.

RESILIENCE; HOW WE CAN BOUNCE BACK FASTER AND CLIMB HIGHER TOGETHER

(Themes: Motivational, Inspirational, Overcoming Adversities, Leadership)

We know that in life, we all sometimes fall. Loung Ung confesses to having fallen many times (she tried out for her middle school cheerleading team and was not picked, all of her top college choices rejected her, and when her agent submitted her first book, *First They Killed My Father*, to twenty-five publishing houses, twenty-four sent back their regrets) and each time, she gets back up and never gives up. Using her personal narrative of life as a war child, a refugee, an activist and writer, Loung explores this theme and how it led to her understanding that being 'resilient' isn't something one accomplishes alone. That in fact, each time we fall, there are usually caring individuals – past, present, and future – there to help us rise, bounce back faster, and climb higher in our work, life, and love.

WRITING TO CHANGE THE WORLD & HEAL YOURSELF

(Themes: A Writer's Life, Writing, Activism, Healing, Storytelling)

As a child, Loung Ung never dreamt that she would one day become a writer. After all, English was her 4th language, which she did not learn to read, write, or speak until she was ten years old. Still, Loung loved to read and write, and dutifully recorded her thoughts and dreams in her diaries. Many years later, while working in Washington D.C., on the Campaign to Ban Landmines, she heard the news that Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge leader had died, and in his last interview, he said that all that he did in Cambodia, he did for love. Loung became enraged. Love, she knew, did not commit genocide or kill 1.7 - 2 million Cambodians. That night, Loung began to write with a new passion – to negate Pol Pot's vision of love and to tell the story of real love – the love of family, culture, and nation. A journey that ultimately restored her faith in love, courage, and our humanity.

LEADERS ARE MADE, NOT BORN; FIVE LESSONS ON HOW TO LEAD WITH MORE IMPACT AND HEART

(Themes: Activism, Volunteerism, Student Activism, Leadership)

There is a Cambodian Proverb that says; 'You cannot claim heaven as your own if you are just going to sit under it.' Today, there are over 1 Million charitable organizations registered in the US, not counting the thousands of international agencies or millions of

citizen leaders doing extra-ordinary things on a daily basis to make our world a better and safer place for all. This translates into a lot of people doing good work. People who know that peace is not a wish. Peace is not something you want, dream, or wait for others to deliver. Peace is an action. Many, many actions. Whether in one's heart, community, or world, peace requires our daily actions. With over three decades of experience as a student activist, a professional agent of change working on campaigns to end violence against women, landmines, and the use of child soldiers, and a writer-citizen-restauranteur, Loung shares her five lessons of what it means to lead with impact and heart in our daily lives to make a difference in our world.

LUCKY CHILD; ONE REFUGEE'S STORY OF TRANSFORMATION AND A SECOND LIFE

(Themes: Refugees, Trauma, Activism, Volunteerism)

At the age of eight, Loung Ung was an orphan living on the streets, eating out of garbage cans, hating the world, and wondering why the world hated her. At age ten, Loung, 'the lucky child' was selected by her adult brother, Meng, and his wife, Eang, to emigrate to America as refugees and start their second life. To do this, they had to leave behind Loung's beloved sister and two brothers, who she would not see again for fifteen years. From a child soldier to a warrior for peace, Loung weaves stories of how the community in Vermont came together to help her refugee family overcome dislocation, trauma, cultural and language barriers to build a successful new life in America. In a world where leaders and heroes are often people with well-known names, fame, and fortune, Loung's personal heroes are the ordinary people who do extraordinary things on a daily basis. They are the teachers, social workers, counselors, first responders, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, and friends who change our world one person, one action at a time.

OTHER TOPICS FOR WORKSHOPS:

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP: changing the world through activism, volunteerism, and travel

THE ART OF MEMOIR WRITING; six techniques to make your story come to life

TURNING LIFE INTO BOOKS; All the things this author wishes she knew before she published her three memoirs

A writer writes; a published writer has his or her work published. In this workshop, Loung explores with the audience the reasons why and when one may desire to turn his or her life into books. Avid reader and author of three critically acclaimed memoirs, *First They Killed My Father*; *Lucky Child*, and *Lulu in the Sky*. In this workshop, Loung explores the pros and cons of writing memoirs – and shares the tools of when, why, and how to turn a life into books.