

May 9, 2025

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For information regarding the 2025 season: [www.ChanceTheater.com/2025-season](http://www.ChanceTheater.com/2025-season)

**Chance Theater proudly presents the OTR Staged Reading of...**  
***and thou shalt be healed***  
**A new play from our 2025 Resident Playwright!**

**ANAHEIM, CA** – Chance Theater is thrilled to announce the staged reading of *and thou shalt be healed*, written by 2025 Resident Playwright **Benjamin Benne** and directed by **Jeremy Cohen**. This event is part of Chance Theater's acclaimed "On the Radar" (OTR) New Play Reading Series, highlighting innovative and impactful works in progress. The reading will occur on **Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 7:30 PM** and **Sunday, June 8, 2025, at 7:00 PM** on the Cripe Stage at the Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center.

*and thou shalt be healed* follows siblings Mary and Johnny were raised in the same Christian cult. Now in their 40s, the still religious Mary is having a crisis of faith and is in need of a miracle. Her now secular brother offers a controversial solution. When reunited on a remote mountain in New Mexico, surrounded by energy vortexes, rumors of aliens, and a golden eyelash palm pit viper named Daisy, they wonder: Did they ever know the same God?

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**About Our 2025 Resident Playwright: Benjamin Benne**

**Benjamin Benne** (he/him) is Chance Theater's 2025 Resident Playwright, a Playwrights' Center '23-26 Core Writer, and was named part of "LA Vanguardia: The Latino innovators, instigators, and power players breaking through barriers" by the Los Angeles Times. His produced plays include *Alma* (Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre, American Blues Theater, ArtsWest, Curious Theatre, Central Square Theater, The Spot, Chance Theater, Passage Theatre), *In His Hands* (Mosaic Theater, First Floor), *Manning* (Portland Stage), and *What / Washed Ashore/ Astray* (Pillsbury House Theatre). Additionally, his work has been developed at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, The Public, Roundabout, Playwrights Realm, Denver Center, The Old Globe, Boston Court Pasadena, Two River, New Harmony Project, and SPACE on Ryder Farm, among many others. He has been awarded the Orange Curtain Award for Best Writing, Ojai Playwrights Conference's Dr. Kerry English Award, Portland Stage's Clauder Competition Grand Prize, American Blues Theater's Blue Ink Playwriting Award, Arizona

Theatre Company's National Latinx Playwriting Award, and KCACTF Latinx Playwriting Award, among others. He has been commissioned by South Coast Repertory and Seattle Repertory Theatre. MFA: David Geffen/Yale School of Drama. [www.benjaminbenne.com](http://www.benjaminbenne.com)

From the playwright:

"I wrote this play at a time when I—and so many around me—were asking questions about our relationship to faith and spirituality. The play is an attempt to explore the balance between our search for answers and certainty with an acceptance/embrace of mystery, the inexplicable, the ineffable."

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### **About the Director: Jeremy Cohen**

**Jeremy Cohen** (he/him) is a nationally renowned director, playwright and leader in the field of theatre. He has served for 13 years as producing artistic director at Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis and will continue in that role until 2024. Previously he served as associate artistic director/director of new work at Hartford Stage (2003-2010), where he also directed several premieres. As founding artistic director of Naked Eye Theatre Company in Chicago, Cohen developed/directed more than 15 plays, including several premieres. Other Regional/NYC directing credits include productions at Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alley Theatre, Alliance, Baltimore Center Stage, Dorset Theatre, The Duke on 42nd Street, George Street Playhouse, Goodman, Kansas City Rep, McCarter, Mixed Blood, New Victory, Olney Theatre, Open Fist, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Royal George, Steppenwolf Theatre, Theater J, Theater Latté Da, Victory Gardens and Workhaus Collective; workshops at O'Neill Playwrights' Conference, New York Stage and Film, Pasadena Playhouse, Denver Center, Portland Center Stage, A.C.T./New Strands, New Harmony, Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Woolly Mammoth. He has received numerous directing awards, an NEA/TCG Directors Fellowship, and a commission on a co-written play (with Dipika Guha) for "Malicious Animal Magnetism" at A.C.T./ZSpace in San Francisco. His Off-Broadway production (at The Duke on 42nd Street) of singer/songwriter Jonatha Brooke's "My Mother Has 4 Noses" recently finished touring the U.S., and he's currently writing the book for "Playing With Fire" with music and lyrics by JC Chasez and Jimmy Harry, and developing the musical adaptation of the award-winning documentary "The Gospel of Eureka" with Emily Saliers (of Indigo Girls).

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### **About Chance Theater's On-the-Radar New Works Program**

On the Radar consists of a new script reading series, a playwright's residency, and a commissioning program, all geared towards supporting the creation of diverse new stories by emerging U.S. playwrights. The goal of OTR is to create a deep and long-term commitment to playwrights by offering them access to a community of artists and audiences, a supportive environment, and the freedom to explore their boundaries and interests.

This year's resident playwright is Benjamin Benne. Past Resident Playwrights include Dustin H. Chinn, Keiko Green, Exal Iraheta, B.J. Tindal, Krista Knight, Jessica Huang, Joanna Garner, Ted Malawer, Jenny Connell Davis, Lauren Yee, Nick Jones, Marshall Paillet, Zayd Dohrn, and Adam Szymkowicz.

## About the Two-Night Reading Format

Unlike Chance's one-night-only staged readings, this reading will have two presentations of the same play within one week. This unique format gives the playwright the opportunity to hear the work read aloud, receive immediate feedback from the audience, and then return to the rehearsal room to revise the script in real time. The second presentation later in the week allows the artist to test new material, respond directly to specific feedback, and continue the creative process in a highly responsive and collaborative environment. It's a rare chance for audiences to witness a new play evolve before their eyes—and to play a role in its development.

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## Tickets and Additional Information

Join us for the staged reading of *at the very bottom of a body of water* on **Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 7:30 PM and Sunday, June 8, 2025, at 7:00 PM** on the Cripe Stage at the Bette Aitken theater arts Center, located in Anaheim, CA.

Tickets are available now at [ChanceTheater.com](https://chancetheater.com) or by calling the box office at **(888) 455-4212**, Monday through Friday, 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

For press inquiries, photos, or to schedule interviews, please contact **Shinshin Tsai**, Producing Associate, at **(949) 346-2374** or via email at [Shinshin@chancetheater.com](mailto:Shinshin@chancetheater.com).

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## ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

As one of Southern California's leading ensemble-driven theater companies, Chance Theater is proud to have received the National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing for "nurturing a community of artists in ways that strengthen and demonstrate the quality, diversity, and dynamism of American theatre." The Chance has earned 42 OCTG Theatre Awards, including Outstanding Production of a Musical for *Jane Austen's Emma, The Musical* and *Fun Home*, Outstanding Production of a Play and Outstanding New Play for *Matinicus: The Story Of Abigail Burgess* (A Chance Theater Commission) and *Cry It Out*, as well as 6 Orange Curtain Review Awards, with Best Musical for *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. The theater's achievements also include eight Ovation Awards (four for Best Production of a Musical - Intimate Theatre) and four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award

for Outstanding Season. In 2014, the Anaheim City Council designated Chance Theater as “the Official Resident Theater Company of Anaheim,” and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as an “Outstanding Arts Organization.” Known for using bold, personal storytelling to foster dialogue and connection in Southern California, the Chance remains committed to building a more compassionate, connected, and creative community. As a member of Theatre Communications Group, Theatre Producers of Southern California, OC Theatre Guild, and ArtsOC, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

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## CALENDAR LISTING

**WHAT:** *and thou shalt be healed* by **Benjamin Benne**

Siblings Mary and Johnny were raised in the same Christian cult. Now in their 40s, the still religious Mary is having a crisis of faith and is in need of a miracle. Her now secular brother offers a controversial solution. When reunited on a remote mountain in New Mexico, surrounded by energy vortexes, rumors of aliens, and a golden eyelash palm pit viper named Daisy, they wonder: Did they ever know the same God?

**Performance:** June 4, 2025, 7:30 pm, June 8, 2025, 7:00 pm.

**PRESS** are invited to attend either showing, with a special pre-reading reception on June 4th.

**RUNNING TIME:** 1 hour, 15 minutes with no intermissions.

**WHERE:** Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Cripe Stage  
5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

**TICKETS:** \$20

**MORE INFO:** [www.ChanceTheater.com](http://www.ChanceTheater.com) or call (888) 455-4212

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