

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

Chance Theater proudly presents a staged reading of
The Queer Couch

Be part of the development process of Chance Theater's 2021 Resident Playwright B.J. Tindal's new play that centers on three friends who want to return to high school and situate themselves at the top of the food chain.

ANAHEIM, CA: Chance Theater, Anaheim's official resident theater company, is delighted to present a staged reading of their 2021 Resident Playwright, B.J. Tindal's new play, *The Queer Couch* as part of the 2021 OTR New Works Series. This staged reading will be presented on Thursday, August 19 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, August 22 at 3:00 p.m.

The Queer Couch tells the complex story of three friends, Zayn, Nola, and Tia who are at Kennedy College and are each having trouble moving past the misery and humiliation of their high school experience. When the three get together and recount their own unresolved pain they decide to enact their revenge by returning to high school and situating themselves at the top of the food chain. However, when their differing objectives and desires start to run into each other, a power struggle ensues within the group itself.

"The idea of going back to high school for 'revenge' is both empowering and terrifying," B.J. Tindal said reflecting on their own high school experience, and where the roots of the play stem from. "A lot of us who grew up queer in high school (out or not) end up spending a lot of our time post-high school unpacking and unlearning the things we experienced at that time.. Now, as being queer in high school starts to look different, we reflect on that time differently, wondering how things would be different if we were to come out in high school now. I wrote and am writing this play to explore what that difference really is."

Tindal explains, "My friends had a designated couch in college called 'The Queer Couch.' We had a joke where we would point out a straight person we thought was cool and say, 'That person would be so much cooler if

they were queer. We should invite them sometime.’ I thought about what it would look like if this was a formal organization – it turned into a play about three college students who are still getting over their high school pain and wish queerness was the thing everyone aspired to be.”

ABOUT OTR NEW WORKS SERIES

Chance’s On the Radar (OTR) New Works Program 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 own boundaries and interests. Past Resident Playwrights include Krista Knight, Jessica Huang, Joanna Garner, Ted Malawer, Jenny Connell Davis, Lauren Yee, Nick Jones, Marshall Paillet, Zayd Dohrn, and Adam Szymkowicz. Our 2021 Resident Playwright is B.J. Tindal.

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT

B.J. Tindal (they/them) is a Black queer playwright, teaching artist, and sour candy enthusiast. They recently moved back to their hometown of Philadelphia after completing their MFA in Writing for the Screen and Stage at Northwestern University. Since moving back to the city, B.J. has been working with a number of organizations devoted to arts-Education, including Philly Young Playwrights and After-School Activities Partnerships as well as creating their own workshops designed to encourage writing-confidence for elementary school students. B.J.’s play *Goodnight, Tyler* received its world premiere in February 2019 at the Alliance Theater and has been published by Samuel French/Concord Theatricals in Fall 2020. Their other play, *What We Look Like*, had its inaugural production at Oberlin College’s new Irene and Alan Wurtzel Theater also in February 2019. B.J. is excited to be working with Chance Theater this season.

Chance Theater’s 2021 OTR Reading Series would not be possible without our incredible sponsors: National Endowment for the Arts, The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation, Elizabeth George Foundation, and Ashleigh Aitken & Michael Penn.

To schedule press interviews, request photos, schedule press comps or for any additional information, please contact Casey Long at (714) 900-3284 or by e-mail at casey@chancetheater.com.

ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER has 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 recently won the Ovation Award for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre) for the intimate revival of *Fun Home*. Previously, Chance Theater has won seven Ovation Awards, including three for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre) for its regional premiere of *Lizzie, The Musical*, the West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical*, and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the Official Resident Theater Company of Anaheim” in 2014, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization.” Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group and OC Theatre Guild, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: Staged Reading of *The Queer Couch*

Zayn, Nola, and Tia are three friends at Kennedy College who are each having trouble moving past the misery and humiliation of their high school experience. When the three get together and recount their own unresolved pain they decide to enact their revenge by returning to high school and situating themselves at the top of the food chain. However, when their differing objectives and desires start to run into each other, a power struggle ensues within the group itself.

WHEN: Thursday, August 19, 2021 @ 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, August 22, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Cripe Stage,

5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

TICKETS: \$13-15

Call (888) 455-4212 or visit www.ChanceTheater.com.

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