

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

# Live Stream Reading of Dustin Chinn's *Colonialism is Terrible, But Pho is Delicious*

Chance Theater and Aurora Theatre Company team up to produce  
a special reading of the new play about food and cultural appropriation.

**ANAHEIM, CA:** Chance Theater is excited to be working with Aurora Theatre Company for the first time to produce a livestream staged reading of Dustin Chinn's *Colonialism is Terrible, But Pho is Delicious*. The show is being directed by Chance Theater's Artistic Director Oanh Nguyen and will have one performance on Saturday, February 13th at 5:00 p.m.

Dustin Chinn's *Colonialism is Terrible, But Pho is Delicious* took its inspiration from two viral incidents around cultural appropriation and food. [Chef Tyler Akin did a how-to video for Bon Appetit, "PSA: This is How You Should Be Eating Pho," and Dan Pashman of The Sporkful suggested you could improve bibimbap using a bundt pan.] Chinn says he "followed the rabbit hole" and wrote *Colonialism*; what he dubs "a triptych about the ownership and authorship of food following the journey of Vietnamese noodle soup."

This dark comedy spans centuries, continents, and cultures in its three-part vignette structure. Beginning in 1880s Hanoi, the capital city of 19th-century French Indochina, where a Vietnamese cook finds herself in the kitchen of aristocratic French settlers. Then 1999, a century later, in Ho Chi Minh City, where American diners get their first taste of the local cuisine. Then finally, a present-day, gentrifying Brooklyn, where the simmering argument around culture, ownership, and authenticity come to a roaring boil.

This live stream reading stars **Celeste Den** (Broadway: *M. Butterfly*; TV/Film: *WHAT/IF*, *The Blacklist*), **Elissa Beth Stebbins** (Theater: *Becky Nurse*, *Kings*), **Trieu Tran** (Theater: *Equus*; TV/Film: *Altered Carbon*, *Tropic Thunder*), and **Joseph Patrick O'Malley** (Theater: *MacBeth*, *Spamalot!*).

**Dustin Chinn (Playwright)** Native Seattleite, long-term Manhattanite. Collector of first/second-hand ghost stories. PADI-certified diver. Campfire enthusiast. Will brake for terrible hometown sports teams. His plays have been developed with the Ground Floor at Berkeley Rep Summer Residency Lab, A.C.T.'s New Strands Festival, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, the University of Washington via a Mellon Creative Fellowship,

Ensemble Studio Theatre, SPACE on Ryder Farm, and Vampire Cowboys. He's also written for the 52nd Street Project. Proud member of the Ars Nova Play Group and Ma-Yi Writers Lab.

**Oanh Nguyen (Director)** has been serving as Chance Theater's founding Artistic Director since 1999. Oanh is a recipient of TCG's New Generations Grant and the TCG Nathan Cummings Young Leaders of Color Fellowship. He was awarded the Outstanding Artist Award by Arts Orange County, profiled in *Orange County Register's* "Most Influential People" series and *OC Weekly's* People Issue, inducted into Anaheim High School's Hall of Fame and was a commencement speaker for Chapman University College of Performing Arts. Oanh was Producing Associate at South Coast Repertory for three years. He also served on the advisory board of the Anaheim High School Performing Arts Conservatory, the board of Network of Ensemble Theatres, LA's 99-seat Transitional Committee, and OC Theatre Guild, as well as panels and committees for Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Alternative Theatre Los Angeles, National Endowment for the Arts and Theatre Communications Group. Oanh is a proud member of SDC and SAG-AFTRA. His directing credits include productions at Chance Theater, East West Players, the J. Paul Getty Museum, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, South Coast Repertory, Chapman University, Azusa Pacific University, AMDA, CSU Fullerton, and served as the Associate Director for the international tour of David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish* (Berkeley Repertory, South Coast Repertory, Hong Kong Arts Festival). His selected film credits include *Two Brothers* directed by Jean-Jacques Annaude, *Rush Hour 3* directed by Brett Ratner, and *Lonely Boy* directed by Dale Fabrigar (Best First Feature Grand Jury Prize at the 2013 Louisiana International Film Festival and Audience Award Winner at the 2013 BolderLife Festival).

**Chance Theater** is proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, the Chance 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 was just nominated for five Ovation Awards for their intimate production of *Fun Home*, including Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre). 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, Orange County Theatre Guild, and LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

**Aurora Theatre Company** is known for work that invigorates audiences and artists through a shared experience of professional, intimate theatre. Aurora challenges itself and the broader community to do better, think deeper, laugh louder and cast wider nets of empathy toward the world. Through its productions of both classic and new works, it supports the Bay Area community by hiring local artists and artisans. It has an operating budget of just over \$2 million.

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## CALENDAR LISTING

**WHAT: Live Stream Reading of *Colonialism is Terrible, But Pho is Delicious***

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**WHEN:** Saturday, February 13th at 5:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Live Streaming event. Details are emailed out after you register.

**ADMISSION:** Free

**SIGN UP TO WATCH** at [www.ChanceTheater.com/pho](http://www.ChanceTheater.com/pho)

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