

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

Chance Theater proudly presents the Orange County Premiere of
Seminar

**There's only one thing harder than writing your first novel...
Letting *him* read it.**

**The whip-smart comedy by Pulitzer Finalist Theresa Rebeck starts previews
September 23 at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center**



August 26, 2016... Anaheim, California ... Anaheim's official resident theater company, Chance Theater is pleased to produce the Orange County premiere of ... *Seminar*. Written by Theresa Rebeck, and directed by Elina de Santos, *Seminar* will preview from September 23 through September 30; regular performances will begin October 1 and continue through October 23 on the Cripe Stage at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center.

"Writers in their natural state are about as civilized as feral dogs" ... so says Leonard, an indiscriminately relentless teacher who believes he wrote the book on what makes an author great. When four aspiring novelists sign up for his private writing class, they have no idea that they are about to get the schooling of their lives. From Pulitzer finalist Theresa Rebeck, comes a provocative comedy with a vicious bite that uses unwavering wit to peel back the layers of a hopeful artist and reveal the scarred humanity beneath.

"Big laughs. An authentic rush of pleasure!" —*New York Times*

"Enormously entertaining." — *Variety*

"Sexy, savvy, uproarious." —*Time Out New York*

Seminar had its Broadway premiere on November 20, 2011, with an all-star cast that included Alan Rickman in the role of the egotistical writing teacher, Leonard. Critics hailed the production for its unwavering wit and provocative depiction of writers as they struggle to impress a literary mastermind. The hilarity and character
(more)

development intensifies when later decorum is thrown out the window and the true nature of the protagonists is revealed.

Chance Theater is excited to work with Elina De Santos for the first time. "Elina's extensive experience as a director and storyteller is inherent in the way she masterfully orchestrates her productions," proclaims Chance Artistic Director Oanh Nguyen. "The accolades she's earned over her career are a testament to that. I have the utmost confidence Elina will galvanize the cast and crew for a night of theater that will have audience's minds racing far past the performance."

Rebeck's dramatic comedy, acclaimed as one of her best, has not waned in popularity since the Broadway production (which was nominated for the 2012 Drama League Award for Distinguished Production of a Play and the Outer Critic's Circle Award for Outstanding New Broadway Play). It went on to a limited engagement in Los Angeles with Jeff Goldblum in the lead role, and is currently scheduled for productions in Budapest, Edmonton, and Rochester later this year. However, this will be the first chance OC audiences will have to see it in their area.

Theresa Rebeck (Playwright) has cultivated numerous works of literature over the course of her meteoric career. Many of her works have been produced in New York including *Dead Accounts* at the Music Box Theatre, *Seminar* at the John Golden Theatre, and numerous other plays in Off-Broadway productions. Rebeck has also written and produced for television programs such as *Canterbury's Law*, *Law and Order: Criminal Intent* and *NYPD Blue*, and for feature films such as *The Spy*, *Gossip*, and the independent features *Sunday on the Rocks* and *Seducing Charlie Barker*. Notable awards for her work include the Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Award, the Writers Guild of America Award for Episodic Drama, the Hispanic Images Imagen Award, and the Peabody, all for her work on *NYPD Blue*. She won the National Theatre Conference Award for *The Family of Mann*, and was awarded the William Inge New Voices Playwriting Award for another work -- *The Bells*. In 2011, *Newsweek* named her one of the 150 Fearless Women in the World.

Elina de Santos (Director) makes her Chance debut with this production. She is currently the Co-Artistic Director of the Rogue Machine Theater, which has been lauded for its ambition to present new works to the Greater Los Angeles area. Elina has directed at Pasadena Playhouse, Pacific Resident Theater, Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, the International City Theatre, Deaf West Theatre, and the Berkshire Theater Festival and Pittsburgh Public Theater. Elina is a recipient of the 2012 LADCC Career Achievement Award for Directing. Elina directed acclaimed productions including the LADCC Award-winning *Orpheus Descending* (Best Performance, Direction, and Production) at the Pacific Resident Theater and Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* at the Ark Theater (*LA Weekly* (more)

Award nominee for Best Direction). Other notable directing credits include Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*, Lyle Kessler's *Orphans* at the International City Theater, the West Coast premiere of David Mamet's *Speed the Plow* at the Odyssey Theater and the Ovation Award-winning *Dying City* by Chris Shinn. Elina is a member of the Actors Studio's Playwrights and Directors Unit.

In addition to Elina, the production team for **Seminar** includes costume and scenic designer Bruce Goodrich (*She Loves Me, Reborn*), lighting designer Leigh Allen (Chance debut), sound designer Jeff Polunas (*Samsara, A Bright New Boise*), stage manager Wade Williamson, and dramaturg Jocelyn L. Buckner.

The cast for *Seminar* includes Chance resident artist Casey Long (*A Bright New Boise, Passion Play*), returning Chance artist Karen Jean Olds (*A Bright New Boise*), as well as Ned Liebel, Christian Telesmar, and Asialani Holman making their Chance debuts with this production.

Tod and Linda White are the Executive Producers for this production, and Laurie Smits Staude is the Associate Producer. Bette and Wylie Aitken are producers for the entire 2016 Season.

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 won five Ovation Awards (including two for Best Production of a Musical--Intimate Theater for *Triassic Park -- The Musical* and *Jerry Springer: The Opera*). The Chance also received an LADCC Award for its reimagined revival of *West Side Story*. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater "the official resident theater company of Anaheim". Twice named "Outstanding Arts Organization" by Arts Orange County, Chance Theater is also a recipient of the LADCC's Polly Warfield Award for Excellence. Founded in 1999, Chance Theater is focused on its goal of being Orange County's premiere mid-size contemporary theater by contributing to a more compassionate, connected, and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, Network of Ensemble Theaters, and the LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

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CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: Seminar

"Writers in their natural state are about as civilized as feral dogs" ... so says Leonard, an indiscriminately relentless teacher who believes he wrote the book on what makes an author great. When four aspiring novelists sign up for his private writing class, they have no idea that they are about to get the schooling of their lives. From Pulitzer finalist Theresa Rebeck, comes a provocative comedy with a vicious bite that uses unwavering wit to peel back the layers of a hopeful artist and reveal the scarred humanity beneath.

WHEN: Preview Performances: September 23 - 30

Fridays at 8pm

Saturday at 8pm

Sunday at 7pm

Regular Performances

October 1 – 23

Fridays at 8pm

Saturdays at 8pm

Sundays at 3pm

Special performance on Wednesday, October 5 at 7:30pm

REVIEWERS and OTHER PRESS are encouraged to attend:

Opening Night on Saturday, October 1 at 8pm

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

TICKETS: \$25.00 - \$35.00. Call (888) 455-4212 or visit www.ChanceTheater.com.

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