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**AURORA THEATRE COMPANY OPENS 31st SEASON
WITH WORLD PREMIERE OF
COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS
BY DUSTIN CHINN**

BERKELEY, CA (October 10, 2022) Aurora Theatre Company opens its 31st season with the World Premiere of Dustin Chinn's **COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS**, a 2022 recipient of the prestigious **Edgerton Foundation New Play Award**.

COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS will be presented in-person on Aurora's mainstage from **November 4 - December 4 (Opens: November 10)**.

Aurora will also offer a week of streaming **COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS** performances for audiences to enjoy in their homes. Streaming performances will run **Tuesday, November 29 - Sunday, December 4**.

Said Artistic Director Josh Costello: "In **COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS**, playwright Dustin Chinn explores questions of authenticity and cultural appropriation with great insight and abundant humor. We're honored to present the world premiere of this award-winning new play that puts delicious food and expert cooking at center stage."

COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS, by playwright Dustin Chinn, took its inspiration from two viral incidents around cultural appropriation and food (Chef Tyler Akin’s how-to video for Bon Appetit, “PSA: This is How You Should Be Eating Pho,” and Dan Pashman of the Sporkful’s suggestion that you could improve bibimbap by using a bundt pan).

Dustin Chinn says he “followed the rabbit hole” and wrote “a triptych about the ownership and authorship of food following the journey of Vietnamese noodle soup.” This biting comedy spans centuries, continents, and cultures in its three-part vignette structure that begins in 1880s Hanoi and ends in gentrified Brooklyn.

“Incisive, hilariously spiky, and delectable – Dustin Chinn’s *COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS* satisfies every appetite.”

— Mina Morita, *Artistic Director of Crowded Fire Theater*

COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS - Cast and Creative Team bios

Dustin Chinn (he/his) Playwright

Dustin H. Chinn is a NYC-based Seattle native who’s developed work with Ars Nova’s Play Group, A.C.T.’s New Strands Festival, the University of Washington via a Mellon Creative Fellowship, UC Berkeley, SPACE on Ryder Farm, UMass at Amherst New Play Lab, and Vampire Cowboys. Proud product of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab, the largest collective of Asian American playwrights in the history of recorded time. Eternal gratitude to Madeleine Oldham and Ground Floor at Berkeley Rep for taking a shot when it was merely a blurb and handful of pages, Mei Ann Teo, Ken Savage, and the 2018 Bay Area Playwrights Festival for its further evolution.

Oanh Nguyen (he/his) Director

Oanh Nguyen (Director) has been serving as Chance Theatre’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 the 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 Theatre, 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).

Anthony Doan (he/his)

Anthony Doan makes his Aurora debut. Born in Vietnam and having grown up in San Jose, Anthony Doan is overjoyed to make his debut at Aurora with such a deceptively poignant comedy. To share such a culturally personal story by playing characters of Vietnamese descent feels like a rare gift. Past credits include John Lee in *Porcelain* at Theatre Woks, Christian in *Cyrano de Bergerac: A Queeroic Comedy with Many Acts* at Island Shakespeare Festival, and Nhan, Playwright u/s in *Vietgone* at City Lights Theatre Company. Anthony is also a playwright, director, and anti-racist practitioner. He holds a B.A. in Drama from the University of California, Irvine.

Joseph Patrick O'Malley (he/his)

Joseph returns to Aurora having also appeared in *Creditors* and *A Number*. Other Bay Area productions: *War of the Roses*, *Macbeth* at Cal Shakes, *Ms. Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly* at Marin Theatre Co. *Spamalot!*, *Measure for Measure* at Marin Shakespeare Co., *The Liar* at Center Rep. Regional Theatre: Kennedy Center, La Jolla Playhouse, B Street Theatre, Motion Capture: NBA2K, Mafia: Definitive Edition, Star Wars: Tales from Galaxy's Edge. MFA: USC. Love to Roury (his daughter).

Elissa Beth Stebbins (she/they)

Elissa Beth Stebbins is a Bay Area based actor, teaching artist, and theatre maker. Recent regional credits include *Nan and the Lower Body* (TheatreWorks), *Becky Nurse of Salem* (Berkeley Rep), *Kings, Kiss, The Village Bike*, and *Caught* (Shotgun Players), *In Braunau* (San Francisco Playhouse Sandbox Series), *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again*, and *You For Me For You* (Crowded Fire Theater), *The Little Prince* (Marin Theater Company), and *Minneola Twins* (Cutting Ball), among others. She is also co-founder of Analog Theatre Company, which focuses on imaginative storytelling using masks, puppets, and physical theatre. She is a TBA Award winner, and a TITAN and CASH grant recipient. Elissa graduated from Santa Clara University, and has continued training with Shakespeare and Company, and Atelier Mask Movement Theatre in Italy.

Nicole Tung (she/hers)

Nicole Tung is thrilled to be making her Aurora debut and grateful to the *Colonialism is Terrible, But Pho is Delicious* team for bringing her on to be part of this world premiere. A proud AEA member and graduate of SCU, she has had the pleasure of working with American Musical Theater of San Jose, Magic Theater, Woodminster Theatre, San Jose Repertory, TheaterWorks, and 42nd St. Moon. Favorite roles to date: Linda Low in *Flower Drum Song*, Liat in *South Pacific*, Michelle in *Great Wall* (TheatreWorks New Works). Nicole can also be seen in various commercials for California Olive Oil, Slack, PagerDuty, and Stanford Children's Health. Eternal thanks to husband, Jason, and daughter, Kalana, for supporting her in this journey. Love you more.

The creative team for **COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS** includes **Cheryle Honerlah**--Stage Manager; **Saluja Siwokoti**--Assistant Stage Manager; **Mikiko Uesugi**--Scenic; **Michael Oesch**--Lighting; **Maggie Whitaker**--Costumes; **James Ard**--Sound; **Adriana Fleming (Chef)** --Culinary Consultant.

CALENDAR EDITORS

Aurora Theatre Company begins its 31st season with the **World Premiere** of **Dustin Chinn's COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS**, a recipient of the **2022 Edgerton Award**.

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DATES

Previews: Friday 11/04 and Saturday 11/05 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, 11/06 at 2 p.m.

Tuesday, 11/07 and Wednesday, 11/08 at 7 p.m.

Open: Thursday, November 10

Close: Sunday, December 4

Shows: IN-PERSON PERFORMANCES (Nov. 4 - Dec. 4):

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m.;
Sunday at 2 p.m.

STREAMING PERFORMANCES (November 29 - December 4).

A filmed performance for audiences to enjoy in their homes.

Each performance is available for 36 hours, from 12 p.m. on the
performance date to midnight the following day.

TICKETS For single tickets (\$20-\$75) or subscriptions (\$200-\$385), the public can
call **(510) 843-4822** or visit www.auroratheatre.org.

PHOTOS <https://tinyurl.com/2m36sfzb>

ABOUT AURORA THEATRE COMPANY

As the storyteller for our community, Aurora Theatre Company inspires new audiences and longtime theatre lovers alike with the visceral power of live theatre. Our venues, the most intimate professional stages in the Bay Area, highlight great acting, nuanced language, and an immediacy that makes for exhilarating theatre. By telling profoundly relevant stories, we're building a new culture of theatregoing in the Bay Area and contributing to a revitalization of theatre nationwide, challenging all of us to think deeper, laugh louder, and engage more purposefully and profoundly with our neighbors and our world. It has an operating budget of \$2.3 million.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges Executive Season Sponsors: Craig & Kathy Moody. Sponsors: Amy & Tom Worth. Associate Sponsors: Rosalind & Sung-Hou Kim, Ellen & Barry Levine.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges the following foundations and government

agencies for their support: Alameda County Arts Commission ARTSFUND, City of Berkeley Civic Arts Program, Bernard Osher Foundation, California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant, Edgerton Foundation,, Fleishhacker Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, the Shuttered Venues Operator Grant/American Rescue Plan, the Tournesol Project, and the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation.

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