



PRESS RELEASE

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AURORA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2022/2023 SEASON

World Premiere of *COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS*

by Dustin Chinn

Dominique Morisseau's *PARADISE BLUE*

***CYRANO DE BERGERAC*, adapted by Josh Costello**

Madeleine George's *HURRICANE DIANE*

The 30-year-old theatre extended its current season due to COVID-19 cancellations, charges ahead with abbreviated new season

BERKELEY, CA (March 17, 2022) Berkeley's acclaimed Aurora Theatre Company (Artistic Director **Josh Costello**) announced today the plays that will comprise the theatre's 31st season.

Aurora announced in February that the World Premiere of **THIS MUCH I KNOW** from *Eureka Day* playwright Jonathan Spector, would be postponed until September 2022. Consequently, this show now closes out Aurora's 2021/2022 season.

Looking forward, November 2022 brings the start of Aurora's abbreviated 2022/2023 season. First up is the World Premiere of Dustin Chinn's **COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS**, a biting comedy that spans centuries, continents, and cultures. Aurora kicks off the new year with Dominique Morriseau's **PARADISE BLUE**. The spring will feature Edmond

Rostand's **CYRANO**, in an adaptation by Artistic Director Costello. The season closes with Madeleine George's bacchanalian eco-comedy, **HURRICANE DIANE**.

All shows will be presented live and in-person in Aurora's theatre in Berkeley.

"Aurora's 31st season offers a delicious mix of compelling plays," Costello said. "These four provocative stories look backwards to Detroit in the 1940s, Vietnam in the 1880s, Paris in the 1640s, and all the way back to the Greek gods, while simultaneously always speaking to our present moment and the new world we're building today. Running the gamut from world premieres to classics, these plays challenge us to learn from the past to forge a better future for us to live in together."

Continued Costello, "Dustin Chinn's **COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS** has its world premiere with Aurora in November. Dustin is a tremendously clever and insightful writer; I'm thrilled for him to work with Aurora to bring this hilarious and biting story to life on our stage. **PARADISE BLUE** by Dominique Morisseau is a modern classic, telling a timeless story of gentrification, complex relationships, and music -- it's sure to inspire our audience as much as our 2018 production of Dominique's *Detroit '67*. I've been working on an adaptation of **CYRANO** for the Aurora stage for years, and I'm thrilled to finally share it with you. You'll find all the passion, poetry, and panache of the original in an intimate package that will shine a light on Rostand's brilliant and beautiful language. Finally, Madeleine George mines climate change for comedy in **HURRICANE DIANE**, audaciously bringing Dionysus back to Earth to save humanity with the help of four real housewives of New Jersey."

"At Aurora, we strive to be the storyteller for our community. These four plays are vital stories for this moment, and just what we need as we look to the future."

Aurora's regular 2022/2023 season will run November 2022 through July 2023. In chronological order, show lineup – across seasons – is as follows:

2021/2022 SEASON

THIS MUCH I KNOW

By Jonathan Spector | WORLD PREMIERE

Directed by Josh Costello

September 2 - October 2, 2022 (Opens: September 8)

The writer of *Eureka Day* returns to Aurora with an explosively theatrical interrogation of agency and culpability. Through his all-too-personal lectures on psychology, Lukesh

attempts to unravel a mystery with his wife Natalya at the center. What happened to Natalya? The search for answers will launch us on a time-hopping fugue, weaving together the stories of Stalin's daughter defecting to America, the son of a white supremacist growing to doubt the beliefs he was raised with, and the secret despair of an accidental killer. How do we truly make decisions? How do we change our minds? And what does it mean to be complicit?

Jonathan Spector's writing is "lively, alarming, and entertaining... [Spector is] observant and empathetic."

– Ben Brantley, New York Times

2022/2023 SEASON

COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS

By Dustin Chinn | WORLD PREMIERE

Directed by Oanh Nguyen

November 4 - December 4, 2022 (Opens: November 10)

Taking 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 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. Beginning in 1880s Hanoi, the capital city of French Indochina, where a Vietnamese cook finds herself in the kitchen of aristocratic French settlers. Then in 1999, a century later, in Ho Chi Minh City, where American diners get their first taste of the local cuisine. Then finally, in present day, gentrifying Brooklyn, where the simmering argument around culture, ownership, and authenticity comes to a roaring boil.

"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

PARADISE BLUE

By Dominique Morisseau

Directed by Dawn Monique Williams

January 26 - February 26, 2023 (Opens: February 2)

Dominique Morisseau (*Detroit '67*) continues her Detroit Trilogy with *Paradise Blue*, a jazz-infused drama in which we meet Blue, a gifted trumpeter, who contemplates selling his once-vibrant night club in Detroit's Blackbottom neighborhood. Set in 1949 against a backdrop of urban renewal, Morisseau investigates the challenges of building a better future on the foundation left to us. If Blue sells, where does that leave his devoted Pumpkin, who has dreams of her own? And what does this mean for the club's house band? When Silver, a mysterious woman with a walk that drives men mad, comes to town with her own plans, everyone's world is turned upside down.

"Suspenseful noir and Detroit history converge in Dominique Morisseau's 'Paradise Blue'... Morisseau is extremely skillful in creating a fertile theatrical landscape."

– Los Angeles Times

CYRANO

By Edmond Rostand, adapted by Josh Costello

Directed by Josh Costello

April 7 - May 7, 2023 (Opens: April 13)

Aurora Artistic Director Josh Costello adapts the classic tale for the intimacy of Aurora's stage. Cyrano, the famed poet-soldier, loves Roxane, but has one fear: to be mocked by a lady for his enormous nose. Young Christian has a pretty face but lacks the wit to woo. Cyrano's words and Christian's looks combine to form a hero of romance – but does Roxane fall in love with Christian's face or with Cyrano's soul? This story of unrequited love, sacrifice, friendship, and poetry all at a time of war is brought into new focus in this world premiere five-actor adaptation.

"A tale of glorious theatricality, glittering poetry and heroic self-sacrifice..."

Cyrano de Bergerac [is] a hero for all time."

– The Guardian

HURRICANE DIANE

By Madeleine George

Directed by Jennifer King

June 16 - July 16, 2023 (Opens: June 22)

Carol just wants her house to have the kind of gardening magazine-worthy curb appeal that will be the envy of her New Jersey cul-de-sac. But then the Greek God Dionysus returns in the guise of a butch gardener named Diane, hell bent on reversing climate change and restoring earthly order by seducing a band of mortal followers. Can Diane win Carol away from her devotion to curb appeal? Pulitzer Prize finalist Madeleine George pens a hilarious evisceration of the blind eye we all turn to climate change and the bacchanalian catharsis that awaits us, even in our own backyards.

Madeleine George "whirls ancient myth, lesbian pulp, ecological thriller and The Real Housewives of Monmouth County into a perfect storm of timely tragicomedy."

– New York Times

Full-season (2022/2023), 4-play subscriptions are currently available (\$160-\$308) and offer priority seating, easy exchanges, missed performance and guest discounts, and more. New and returning subscribers can choose to upgrade to a 5-play subscription (\$200-\$385) by adding *This Much I Know*. Single tickets (\$40-\$78) go on sale for subscribers July 25, and on sale August 2 to the general public.

Current full-time teachers receive 20% off subscription prices, and active and retired military personnel also receive 20% off subscription prices through Theatre Communications Group's Blue Star Theatres program. Patrons 35 and under are eligible for half-price subscriptions, and deeply discounted subscriptions are available for full-time college and high school students.

For subscriptions or single tickets, the public can call 510.843.4822 or visit auroratheatre.org.

CALENDAR EDITORS

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SCHEDULE

2021/2022 Season

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Directed by **Josh Costello**

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2022/2023 Season

COLONIALISM IS TERRIBLE, BUT PHO IS DELICIOUS

By **Dustin Chinn** | **WORLD PREMIERE**

Directed by **Oanh Nguyen**

November 4 - December 4, 2022 (Opens: November 10)

PARADISE BLUE

By **Dominique Morisseau**

Directed by **Dawn Monique Williams**

January 26 - February 26, 2023 (Opens: February 2)

CYRANO

By **Rostand**, adapted by **Josh Costello**

Directed by **Josh Costello**

April 7 - May 7, 2023 (Opens: April 13)

HURRICANE DIANE

By **Madeleine George**

Directed by **Jennifer King**

June 16 - July 16, 2023 (Opens: June 22)

SHOWS

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m.

Saturday at 8 p.m.

Sunday at 2 p.m.

WHERE

Aurora Theatre Company | 2081 Addison Street | Berkeley, CA

TICKETS

For single tickets (\$40-\$78) or subscriptions (\$129-\$385), the public can

call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **www.auroratheatre.org**.

Subscriptions on sale May 12. Single tickets on sale for subscribers July 25, and on sale August 2 to the general public.

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. Aurora has an operating budget of \$2.2 million.

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