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Oliver Saria's *Inay Dalisay World Famous Lechon*
brings stories of Filipino American health from the kitchen to the stage

Premieres June 16-25 at Bindlestiff Studio, the epicenter for
Filipino-American performing arts in the Bay Area

April 22, 2022, San Francisco, CA—Bindlestiff Studio presents its first full-length theatrical production since the start of the pandemic - the world premiere of *Inay Dalisay's World Famous Lechon*. This is also Bindlestiff Studio's first in-person main stage production since November 2019 when the space closed due to maintenance, just after celebrating its 30th anniversary.

Director, Aureen Almario, states, "When I first heard Oliver's play, it felt like a homecoming--like a warm embrace when you see a loved one--something we've been missing during the pandemic. I thought it was the perfect play to welcome folks back into the theater because the characters, the themes, and the events resonated with me so much. It's a Filipino family party and everyone is invited, the more the merrier."

Inay Dalisay's World Famous Lechon is a raucous comedy about family, food, and fake meat. Set in the Labis family's extravagant backyard kitchen (a.k.a. "dirty kitchen") over a series of get-togethers, the characters hilariously navigate their complicated relationship with food - literally and figuratively.

Inay arrives at a time when Filipino food is gaining long-overdue attention in the American food landscape. While the play celebrates Philippine foodways, customs, and traditions, it also addresses the hard-hitting realities that Filipino-Americans experience some of the worst health metrics of any ethnic group in the country with some of the highest rates of diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. According to several studies:

- Filipino American men have the highest prevalence of diabetes among all ethnic groups in the United States. ([source](#))
- Filipinos have a greater prevalence of high blood pressure, asthma, heart disease and delayed medication usage compared to Asians in America overall. ([source](#))

Inspired by the untimely passing of several dear friends and his own health struggles, playwright Oliver Saria proffers possibilities on how to cook more healthfully without losing culinary or cultural flavor. Oliver wrote the play as his central project for his Individual Artist Commission from the San Francisco Arts Commission (2020). As a freelance journalist, Oliver has profiled celebrity chefs like Roy Choi and Kristen Kish. As an artist/performer, Oliver has been deeply involved with Bindlestiff Studio since the late-90s and has served as Managing Director since



2015. This is his first full-length stage production. His previous honors include: Grantee, SFAC's Individual Artist Commission – Theater (2018 and 2020); Fellow, California Presenters (2018); Finalist, New America Media, Best Reporting – Arts & Entertainment (2010); Finalist, Disney/ABC Writing Fellowship (2007); Finalist, Coalition of Asian-Pacifics in Entertainment New Writers Award – Television (2007). Oliver holds a BA in Sociology from UC Berkeley.

Aureen B Almario currently serves as Bindlestiff's Artistic Director. She is a part-time Asian American Studies professor at SFSU and Laney College, as well as a freelance teaching artist for K-12 schools. From 2015 to 2018, she toured in the international production of *Feathers of Fire: A Persian Epic* by Hamid Rahmadian, in collaboration with Shadowlight Productions. Aureen was named a YBCA 100 Honoree in 2020 and in February 2020 she co-directed *Shadows for Carlos Villa* with Larry Reed. She is a two time recipient of the SFAC Individual Artist Commission, and co-founder of Granny Cart Gangstas, an all-Asian American women sketch comedy troupe.

WHAT: *Inay Dalisay's World Famous Lechon* by Oliver Saria

WHEN: In-person June 16-25, 2022 (Thursday-Saturday) @ 8pm
+ 4pm matinee, June 18

WHERE: Bindlestiff Studio
185 6th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

HOW MUCH: \$30 General
\$20 Students and Seniors
\$40 Support the Artist

Tickets on sale May 2nd at www.bindlestiffstudio.org/inay-dalisay

About Bindlestiff Studio

Originally opened in 1989, Bindlestiff Studio - a 501(c)3 non-profit arts organization - became the only community-based performing arts venue in the nation dedicated to showcasing emerging Filipino American and Filipino artists in 2001. Bindlestiff Studio provides the often under-served Filipino American community access to diverse offerings in theatrical productions, music and film festivals, workshops in directing, production, acting, stand-up comedy, and writing, as well as arts education programs for youth and seniors.



Bindlestiff Studio cultivates artists who reflect and celebrate the diverse values, traditions, and histories of Pilipino and Filipino American cultures through bold artistic expression and community engagement.

Stay connected by visiting bindlestiffstudio.org and following us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

PRESS PHOTO INFO

- 1. Bindlestiff_Inay Dalisay_Playwright
 - Featured: Oliver Saria
 - Photographer: Paciano Triunfo
- 2. Bindlestiff_Inay Dalisay_nic feliciano
 - Featured: nic feliciano
 - Photographer: Paciano Triunfo
- 3. Bindlestiff_Inay Dalisay_Golda Sargento
 - Featured: Golda Sargento
 - Photographer: Paciano Triunfo
- 4. Bindlestiff_Inay Dalisay_Giancarlo Cariola
 - Featured: Giancarlo Cariola
 - Photographer: Paciano Triunfo
- 5. Bindlestiff_Inay Dalisay_reading1
 - Featured: Golda Sargento and Reg Clay
 - Photographer: Paciano Triunfo
- 6. Bindlestiff_Inay Dalisay_reading2
 - Featured: Giancarlo Cariola and Sunshine Roque
 - Photographer: Paciano Triunfo