



For Immediate Release: Theatre

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Theatre Rhinoceros Presents

Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading

Gaysian Americans confront intra- and interracial identity crises in Boni B. Alvarez's latest
March 14, 2023

March 3, 2023, San Francisco - Acclaimed playwright Boni B. Alvarez's newest play *Sticky Rice* is his latest embodiment of "for us, by us" - "us," in this case, referring to gay Asian men who have struggled in silence with their body images, dating prospects, sense of self, community judgment, and the white gay male gaze (white male gay-ze?) as it uniquely affects gay men of the Asian diaspora. The play is also a twist on a fish-out-of-water comedy: a group of San Francisco gaysian friends splinters apart when one of them brings his new boyfriend into the fold; this new boyfriend is divergent and unexpected because ironically, he is *also Asian*, and in this friend group there is an unspoken, societally motivated rule that Asian men don't date each other.

Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading breaks a generally community-wide silence by introducing an impressive all-queer, seven-actor ensemble cast, five of them skillfully characterized, fully humanized Asian men. And perhaps most impressively, they talk amongst themselves, frankly and sometimes painfully, about their selves and their lives, moving together toward resolution. This is not just a play where everyone just happens to be Asian and gay - this is also a play *about* being Asian and gay, unfolded deftly and lovingly through dialogue between five human perspectives.

From the playwright: "In American media, Asian men have largely been depicted in an emasculated light – as the asexual nerd, the comedic foreign exchange student, the active yet sexless martial artist, the suffering gay butterfly. *Sticky Rice* features a group of San Francisco gaysian friends who have internalized such popular depictions and explores what happens when they are forced to confront their own self-hatred. Can these men embrace their masculinity and learn to celebrate the bodies they live in? *Sticky Rice* is about unwrapping sticky rice – about unearthing gay Asian beauty outside of the white gaze and beginning on the journey to self-love."

Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading is directed by Ely Sonny Orquiza and performed by a cast of Bay Area actors at Theatre Rhinoceros, the longest-running LGBTQ+ theatre in the world.

Calendar Editors

What: **Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading**

When: Tuesday, March 14 at 7pm

Where: Theatre Rhinoceros, 4229 18th St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Castro Street MUNI Station; F Market, 33 Stanyan, 24 Divisadero
Streetcar and Bus Lines

Tickets: Free

Info / Res: <https://therhino.org/> or <https://fb.me/e/2l2Buj3P3>

“No fats, no femmes, no Asians.” In acclaimed playwright **Boni B. Alvarez**’s (*Driven*) newest play, a group of San Francisco gaysian friends splinters apart when one of them brings his new boyfriend into the fold. *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading* is directed by artist, director, and educator **Ely Sonny Orquiza**, and performed by **Joseph Alvarado**, **Andy Alabran**, **Raphael Buenaventura**, **Christopher Juan**, **Nick Trengrove**, **Edric Young**, and **Jordan Ong**.

Hi-res Digital Images Available for Download at: <http://therhino.org/press-room/>

The Artists

Boni B. Alvarez is a Los Angeles-based playwright-actor. His plays include *America Adjacent*, *Bloodletting*, *Fixed*, *Nicky*, *Dallas Non-Stop*, *Dusty de los Santos*, *Ruby*, *Tragically Rotund*, *The Special Education of Miss Lorna Cambonga*, *Marabella*, *Driven*, *The Debut of Georgia*, *Emmylu*, and *Refuge for a Purple Heart*. His plays have been produced at Center Theatre Group - Kirk Douglas Theatre, Echo Theater Company, Coeurage Theatre Company, Skylight Theatre Company, and Playwrights’ Arena. His plays have been developed/given readings at Chalk Rep, Moving Arts, Artists At Play, The Vagrancy, Los Angeles Theatre Center, EST/LA, The Blank, Pork Filled Players (Seattle), Theatre Rhinoceros (San Francisco), Second Generation (2g, NYC), InterAct Theatre (Philadelphia), and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He has been a Semifinalist for the O’Neill National Playwrights Conference and a Finalist for the PEN Center USA Literary Award, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Aurora Theatre’s Global Age Project, and Clubbed Thumb’s Biennial Commission.

Ely Sonny Orquiza is a multidisciplinary Queer Filipino artistic director, stage director, and teaching artist based in San Francisco Bay Area. Through theater and the performing arts Orquiza explores the role of the Asian diaspora, Asian American experience, ancestral ghosts, and the politics of Queer/ness for the American stage. He is a Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director of The Chikahan Company, a new Filipinx theater company based in San Francisco.

Joseph Alvarado portrays “Wayland Lew” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Andy Alabran portrays “Heath Fowler” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Raphael Buenaventura portrays “Ricky Nguyen” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Christopher Juan portrays “Carlo Villanueva” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Nick Trengrove portrays “Mason Fielding” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Edric Young portrays “Louie Lin” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Jordan Ong portrays “Sampson Lumaban” in *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Theatre Rhinoceros was founded in 1977, and is the longest running LGBTQ+ theatre in the nation. We develop and produce works of theatre that enlighten, enrich, and explore both the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of our queer community. Our emphasis is on new works, works about under-represented members of the larger queer community, and revivals of lesser known queer classics. Over the years Theatre Rhinoceros has received many awards of recognition including: Theatre Rhinoceros Day in the City Proclamation from Mayor Gavin Newsom, State Assembly Certificate of Recognition from Senator Mark Leno, recognitions from Congressperson Nancy Pelosi and Assembly Persons Tom Ammiano and Carole Migden, numerous Cable Car, BATCC and TBA Awards and Nominations, and the GLAAD Media Award for Best LGBT Theatre.

Public Service Announcements / Radio

15 seconds

Theatre Rhinoceros presents *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading*.

Written by acclaimed playwright Boni B. Alvarez and directed by Ely Sonny Orquiza, *Sticky Rice* is the story of a group of San Francisco gaysian friends that splinters apart when one of them brings his new boyfriend into the fold. *Sticky Rice: A Free Staged Reading* plays March 14, 2023 at Theatre Rhinoceros, 4229 18th St. in San Francisco. Visit TheRhino.org for more details.

30 seconds

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1 minute

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