



UMS TO OFFER FREE LIVESTREAM OF PING CHONG + COMPANY'S *BEYOND SACRED: VOICES OF MUSLIM IDENTITY*

ANN ARBOR, MI (February 6, 2017) — The **University Musical Society** (UMS) will offer a free online livestream of **Ping Chong + Company's** performance of *Beyond Sacred: Voices of Muslim Identity* on Saturday, February 18. The performance will be streamed live from the University of Michigan's Power Center at approximately 8 pm EST at ums.org/beyondsacred and via Facebook Live at facebook.com/UMSNews. The livestream will include a post-performance Q&A with the artists. Viewers may register in advance at ums.org/beyondsacred in order to receive an automatic notification when the livestream begins. An archived version of the livestream will be made available for viewing at a later date.

Beyond Sacred, part of Chong's 25-year series entitled *Undesirable Elements*, intends to illuminate daily experiences of Muslims, and work toward greater communication and understanding among Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

The interview-based theater production explores the diverse experiences of five young Muslim New Yorkers who share the common experience of coming of age in a post-9/11 New York City, at a time of increasing Islamophobia. Participants come from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds and include men and women that reflect a wide range of Muslim identities, including those who have converted to Islam; those who were raised Muslim, but have since left the faith; those who identify as “secular” or “culturally” Muslim; and those who are observant on a daily basis.

This performance and livestream will be American Sign Language interpreted.

ABOUT PING CHONG + COMPANY

Ping Chong + Company produces theatrical works addressing the important cultural and civic issues of our times, striving to reach the widest audiences with the greatest level of artistic innovation and social integrity. The company was founded in 1975 by leading theatrical innovator Ping Chong with a mission

to create works of theater and art that explore the intersections of race, culture, history, art, media, and technology in the modern world. Today, Ping Chong + Company produces original works by a close-knit ensemble of affiliated artists, under the artistic leadership of Ping Chong. Productions range from intimate oral history projects to grand scale cinematic multidisciplinary productions featuring puppets, performers, and full music and projection scores. The art reveals beauty, precision, and a commitment to social justice. Ping Chong was awarded a 2014 National Medal of Arts.

ABOUT UMS

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan, presenting over 70 music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with over 100 free educational activities. UMS is part of the University of Michigan's "Victors for Michigan" campaign, reinforcing its commitment to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness.

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