

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****SANDRA OH, STAR OF NEW NETFLIX SERIES *THE CHAIR*, AND SHOWRUNNER AMANDA PEET TALK CREATING CHARACTERS THAT REPRESENT THE ASIAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN *EMMY***

(**NOHO ARTS DISTRICT**, Calif. — Aug. 16, 2021) — During a bleak Pittsburgh winter, while the world was still in limbo, 12-time Emmy-nominee, SAG Award- and Golden Globe Award-winning actress Sandra Oh was hard at work producing and acting in Netflix's *The Chair*. Oh, along with show creator Amanda Peet and costar Jay Duplass, talks to *emmy* about the making of the six-episode comedy premiering Aug. 20. The award-winning official publication of the Television Academy hits newsstands Aug. 17.

The first time Peet saw Oh perform was in Diana Son's play *Stop Kiss* at Manhattan's Public Theater. "It was one of those seminal moments in my acting career because I couldn't understand how she was so real," Peet says. "How was she *doing* that? I was totally blown away." So when she was penning the series about intergenerational relationships on a college campus, she wrote Oh's character, Ji-Yoon Kim, with the actress at the top of her call sheet. She went as far as recruiting a mutual friend, actress Sarah Paulson, to nudge Oh to read the pilot.

Oh was immediately drawn to Peet's script; and after signing on to star in and executive produce the series, she entered the writers' room to help hone Ji-Yoon's character and journey. "I have felt that a few times in my career—and I think my sense of that is getting honed—where I'll get a piece of material and I will immediately understand the writer's voice," says Oh. "And I absolutely found that with Amanda's. Particularly the humor and the world that she was trying to build and that she gave a lot of space for Ji-Yoon and me to create a really fully fleshed character."

In the *emmy* cover story "**Pause and Effect**," *Emmy* talks to Oh about her role in *The Chair*—the first female chair of the English department and one of the few staff members of color at the fictional Pembroke University. Ji-Yoon is eager to change the world of academia and the realities of old, white and male dominance. But she and her best friend, Yaz (Nana Mensah), the only other woman of color in the department, diverge in their pursuits of equity, providing layers of conflict and nuance that make the story so captivating to Oh, Peet and the cast. "In some ways, when you have perspectives that are not white, they can be seen as a monolith," Oh says. "The African-American experience is not the same as the Asian-American experience and not the same as the Latinx experience; so when you finally see two characters of color coming at a subject from their different perspectives, it's very thrilling and very satisfying. This is the stuff that I'm interested in playing."

To accurately capture the world of Pembroke, Peet was committed to more representation in the writers' room and hired young writer Jennifer Kim for her first staff writing job. "Because I'm so old," Peet says, "and we had a fair amount of middle-aged people, it was really important to have someone who had graduated from college more recently." Kim, who grew up watching Oh on *Grey's Anatomy*, was enamored by the "icon." "I just stared at her while she was sitting across the room because I was so nervous," Kim says. "But I was happy to try to bring more specificity to a college-student perspective."

In the midst of the pandemic, Peet shares how vital Oh was in creating an inventive and welcoming atmosphere on set. "I love that [she and costar Jay Duplass] both recognized and shared the desire to make it feel like a company, especially during COVID," Peet says. "She is the sharpest knife in the drawer," Duplass adds. "She never misses a beat. She's extremely precise and fully emotionally available. She's a dream."

### **Additional feature highlights from the new issue include:**

When Indigenous filmmakers Sterlin Harjo and Taika Waititi began collaborating on FX's *Reservation Dogs*, they were firm on one thing: Unlike prior dramatizations of the Native American experience, this would be a comedy. In "**On Their Own Terms**," Harjo and Waititi talk to *emmy* about taking the reins on this trailblazing comedic series.

In "**The Perfect Pairing**," television legends Ray Romano and Phil Rosenthal discuss their roles in creating the masterful and iconic *Everybody Loves Raymond*, its values and legacy—and their 10 favorite episodes.

For Joseph Gordon-Levitt, understanding an artist's creative process and the spark that it ignites is a constant study—so he made a show about it. In "**Where the Art Is**," Gordon-Levitt talks to *emmy* about his new show, *Mr. Corman*, on Apple TV+ and the challenges of finding one's "creative spark."

### **About emmy**

*Emmy*, the official publication of the Television Academy, goes behind the scenes of the industry for a unique insider's view. It showcases the scope of television and profiles the people who make TV happen, from the stars of top shows to the pros behind the cameras, covering programming trends and advances in technology. Honored consistently for excellence, *emmy* is a six-time Maggie Award winner as Best Trade Publication in Communications or the Arts and has collected 52 Maggies from the Western Publishing Association. *Emmy* is published 12 times per year and is available on selected newsstands and at [TelevisionAcademy.com](https://www.televisionacademy.com) for single print and digital copies as well as subscriptions.

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