

Crying in H Mart: Michelle Zauner of Japanese Breakfast

Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 6 p.m. PT
Live via Zoom
University of Southern California

WHAT TO KNOW

- Michelle Zauner is an author and musician who makes music under the name Japanese Breakfast.
- Her best-selling memoir, *Crying in H Mart* (2021), builds on her viral 2018 *New Yorker* essay and explores growing up Korean American, losing her mother to cancer, the relationship between food and identity, and forging her way as an artist.
- In this event, Zauner will read from her memoir and engage in conversation with USC professor Karen Tongson, who writes about pop culture (among many other things).

MICHELLE ZAUNER ON FOOD AND FAMILY

“In many ways, food was how my mother expressed her love. No matter how critical or cruel she seemed—constantly pushing me to be what she felt was the best version of myself—I could always feel her affection radiating from the lunches she packed and the meals she prepared for me just the way I liked them.”

“I wonder how many people at H Mart miss their families. How many are thinking of them as they bring their trays back from the different stalls. Whether they’re eating to feel connected, to celebrate these people through food.”

—excerpts from the essay “Crying in H Mart,” published in *The New Yorker* in 2018

MICHELLE ZAUNER ON GRIEF

“Sometimes my grief feels as though I’ve been left alone in a room with no doors.”—from the essay “Crying in H Mart”

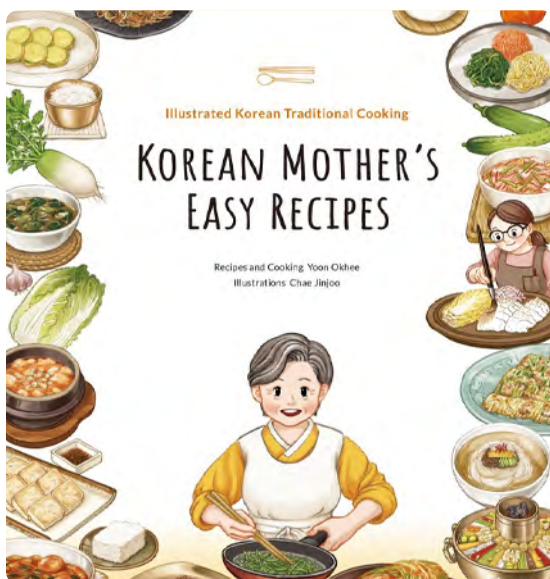
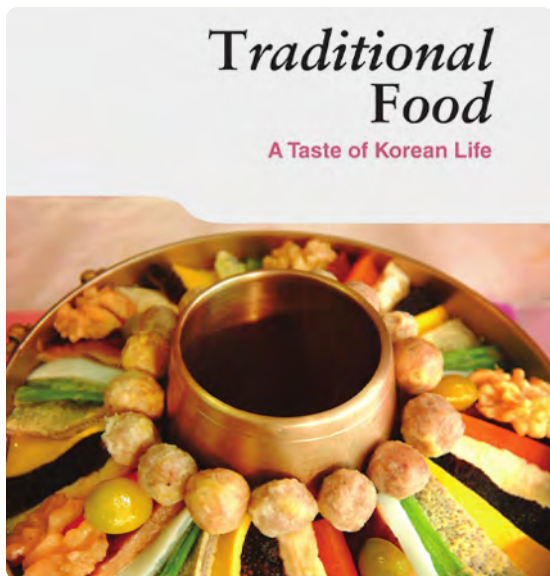
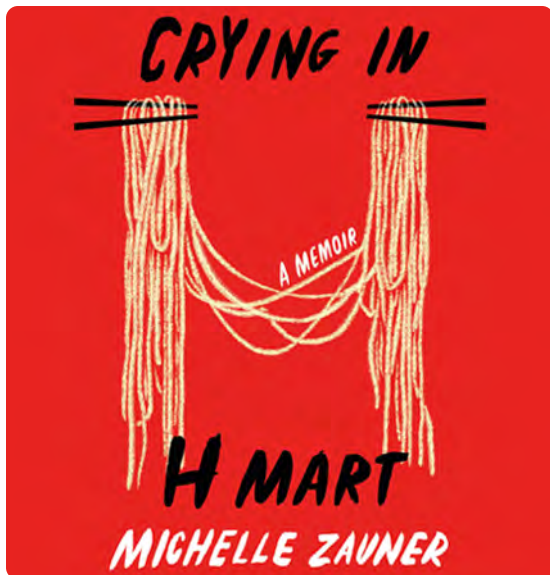
JAPANESE BREAKFAST DISCOGRAPHY

- Psychopomp* (2016)
- Soft Sounds from Another Planet* (2017)
- Jubilee* (2021)

SOME CHEFS MICHELLE ZAUNER LOVES

- Maangchi**
[youtube.com/user/Maangchi/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/Maangchi/videos)
- Sohui Kim**, chef and co-owner of the Brooklyn restaurant Insa
[instagram.com/chefsohui](https://www.instagram.com/chefsohui)
- Robin Ha**, author of *Cook Korean! A Comic Book with Recipes*
twitter.com/robinhaart





FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ⦿ How do Michelle Zauner's creative practices as a writer and as a musician interrelate? How are they different?
- ⦿ What is the relationship between food and identity in your life?
- ⦿ How do gender roles affect Zauner's relationship with her mother? With food?
- ⦿ How has grief shaped Zauner's life and art?
- ⦿ What conflicts arise for Zauner around trying to be "normal" versus experiencing and doing things differently?
- ⦿ If you're from somewhere else, is there a place in L.A. that reminds you of home?
- ⦿ If you're from L.A., what stores would you miss the most if you moved somewhere else?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- ⦿ Japanese Breakfast Online japanesebreakfast.rocks
- ⦿ Michelle Zauner / Japanese Breakfast on Instagram [@jbrekkie](https://www.instagram.com/jbrekkie)
- ⦿ H Mart in L.A.
621 S. Western Ave., LA, CA 90005
- ⦿ The *New Yorker* essay that preceded the memoir [newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/crying-in-h-mart](https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/crying-in-h-mart)

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

Bree Russell of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS

- ⦿ Michelle Zauner, *Crying in H Mart: A Memoir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2021).
- ⦿ Mary Francis Kennedy Fisher, *The Gastronomical Me* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1943).
- ⦿ Robert Koehler, *Traditional Food: A Taste of Korean Life* (Seoul: Seoul Selection, 2011).
- ⦿ Cherl-Ho Lee, "Korean Foods—History, Culture, and Characteristics," in *Korean Functional Foods* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2018), 1–22.
- ⦿ Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006).
- ⦿ Okhee Yoon and Jinjoo Chae, *Korean Mother's Easy Recipes: Illustrated Korean Traditional Cooking* (Carlsbad: Hollym, 2019).

DATABASES

- ⦿ [Food Studies Online](http://www.foodstudiesonline.com)
- ⦿ [Korea History & Culture Research Database](http://www.koreahistoryandculture.com)

JOURNALS

- ⦿ [Inter-Asia Cultural Studies](http://www.interasiastudies.com)
- ⦿ [Gourmet](http://www.gourmet.com) ⦿ [The Review of Korean Studies](http://www.koreastudies.com)