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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SOAS Food Studies Centre Partners with Award-Winning International Food Journal *Gastronomica* on Distinguished Lectures Series

London and Oakland, CA — On November 12, 2014, famed chef and cookbook writer Yotam Ottolenghi will speak as part of the **SOAS Food Studies Centre Distinguished Lecture Series**, inaugurating an exciting, new partnership between the SOAS Food Studies Centre and the interdisciplinary food journal *Gastronomica*.

Launched in 2007, **The SOAS Food Studies Centre Distinguished Lecture Series** provides a forum for leading scholars, students, journalists, practitioners, and members of the public to engage in critical conversations about the nature of food, the interconnectivity of contemporary food systems, the role of food in daily life, emerging trends in food studies, and contemporary food concerns. *Gastronomica* is pleased to be joining SOAS as a cosponsor of this prestigious lecture series.

The idea for the partnership arose out of a mutual commitment to the value of translational scholarship and the shared goal of bringing critical research and policy discussions into general, public discourse. Consciously designed, the lecture series invites accessible presentations by speakers, followed by discussions with audience members, the content of which is archived on the SOAS website for broader consumption. These lectures—and/or adapted and enhanced versions of them—will be published in forthcoming issues of *Gastronomica*.

“At a time when many of the most pressing issues around the world involve food, and when established ways of approaching food-related issues have proven inadequate, innovative thinking—grounded in rigorous scholarship—is much needed. The **SOAS Food Studies Centre Distinguished Lecture Series** is committed to providing a prominent forum for the most exciting scholarship in Food Studies today, and we are delighted that the lectures will be published in *Gastronomica*, the leading journal worldwide for Critical Food Studies,” says Harry G. West, Professor of Anthropology and Chair, SOAS Food Studies Centre.

Gastronomica editor Melissa Caldwell adds, “The Food Studies Centre at SOAS is an international leader in the kind of cutting-edge scholarship on food that challenges and inspires scholars, practitioners, and enthusiasts alike to rethink what they know about food and its significance in the world both past and present. This partnership is an extraordinary opportunity to highlight the most innovative, rigorous, and fascinating research on food and bring it to the *Gastronomica* readership.”

The next lecture in the series, and the first within this new partnership, will be “From Arak to Za'atar: Jerusalem and Its Many Culinary Traditions,” presented by Yotam Ottolenghi, an Israeli-born cookery writer and chef-patron of the Ottolenghi delis and NOPI restaurant. This will be followed by “How Grains Domesticated Us,” on December 11, 2014, presented by speaker James C. Scott, Sterling Professor of Political Science and Professor of Anthropology and Co-Director of the Agrarian Studies Program at Yale University. Both of these lectures will be available on the SOAS website and the Ottolenghi lecture, as well as a question and answer symposium with Scott, will be printed in future issues of *Gastronomica*.

Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies (University of California Press) is a peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, international journal that publishes critical, translational studies on food. Within its pages, readers will find examinations of historical trends and transformations in food and eating; analyses of the political, economic, and social dimensions of food production and consumption; research briefs on emerging issues in fields related to food research and innovation; and interviews with key figures in the world of food (scholars, activists, producers, and consumers).

SOAS Food Studies Centre

The SOAS Food Studies Centre is an interdisciplinary center dedicated to the study of the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of food, historically and in the contemporary moment, from production, to exchange, to preparation, to consumption. The Centre's primary purposes are to promote research and teaching in the field of food studies at SOAS and to facilitate links between SOAS and other individuals and institutions with an academic interest in food studies. The Centre also convenes the SOAS Food Forum. While the center draws upon the regional expertise of its many members in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, it also engages in its teaching and research activities with other regions, such as Europe and the Americas, as well as with issues of global dimension. The Centre is chaired by Professor Harry G. West, Professor of Anthropology. The Deputy Chair is Dr. Jakob Klein, Lecturer in Social Anthropology.

University of California Press (Publisher of *Gastronomica*)

University of California Press is one of the most forward-thinking scholarly publishers in the nation. For more than 100 years, it has championed work that influences public discourse and challenges the status quo in multiple fields of study. At a time of dramatic change for publishing and scholarship, we collaborate with scholars, librarians, authors, and students to stay ahead of today's knowledge demands and shape the future of publishing. Each year, UC Press publishes approximately 175 new books and 32 multi-issue journals in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Forthcoming Events

From Arak to Za'atar: Jerusalem and its many culinary traditions

Yotam Ottolenghi (Chef and Cookery Writer)

12 November 2014

Modern Jerusalem is unique: it is one of only very few cities where ancient history and recent events constantly interact—with great intimacy and intensity—and thus shape every aspect of the daily realities of its citizens.

I grew up in Jerusalem and left it more than two decades ago. More recently, I returned to the city to look at it through a chef's eyes and try to understand its food. This turned out to be a very tall order: the city's culinary cultures are so complex and intricate, and also so sensitive and politically charged, that I had to make do with descriptions and stories that are either very private or rather arbitrary.

In my lecture I will talk about stuffed vegetables and rice casseroles, about hummus wars and various other culinary skirmishes, and about pork shrewdly dressed as turkey. Through these I will try to give a general view of Jerusalem, its tapestry of people and some of the foods they celebrate and fight over.

Yotam Ottolenghi is an Israeli-born cookery writer and chef-patron of the Ottolenghi delis and NOPI restaurant. He writes a weekly column in *The Guardian's Weekend* magazine and has published three bestselling cookbooks: *Plenty* (his collection of vegetarian recipes) and, co-authored with Sami Tamimi, *Ottolenghi: The Cookbook* and *Jerusalem. Jerusalem*. *Jerusalem* won the James Beard "Best International Cookbook" award and the *Observer Food Monthly* "Best Cookbook" award, amongst others. Yotam has made two "Mediterranean Feasts" series for More 4, along with a BB4 documentary, "Jerusalem on a Plate." His new cookery book, *Plenty More*, has just released for publication. www.ottolenghi.co.uk

How Grains Domesticated Us

James C. Scott (Sterling Professor of Political Science and Professor of Anthropology / Co-Director of the Agrarian Studies Program, Yale University)

11 December 2014, Brunei Gallery, 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

How is it that Homo sapiens came, only in the last 5% of its long career on the planet, to live in concentrated heaps of people, grain, and domesticated animals and, later, governed by units we call states?

How were these earliest states structured and governed? How did they persist (or perish) and how did they change the landscape and people they controlled? It is surely striking that virtually all classical states were based on grain, including millets. History records no banana, cassava, sago, or sweet potato states. Why are the grassy grain crops—typically barley, rye, wheat, rice, maize, and millets—so closely associated with the earliest states? My guess is that only grains are suited to concentrated production, tax assessment, cadastral surveys, storage, and rationing.

James C. Scott is the Sterling Professor of Political Science and Professor of Anthropology and is Co-Director of the Agrarian Studies Program, Yale University. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His research concerns political economy, comparative agrarian societies, theories of hegemony and resistance, peasant politics, revolution, Southeast Asia, theories of class relations and anarchism. His publications include *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, Yale University Press, 1985; *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, Yale University Press 1980; *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, Yale University Press, 1998; *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, Yale University Press, 2008; and *Two Cheers for Anarchism*, Princeton University Press, 2012.

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[Previous Distinguished Lectures:

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/foodstudies/forum/lectures/?showprevious=1>]

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