



THE UMBRELLASM
STAGE COMPANY

World Premiere Play Examines AAPI Experience and the American Dream

CONCORD, MA— February 21, 2023 — In the world premiere of an original play commissioned by The Umbrella Stage Company, Hortense Gerardo's **Middleton Heights** unravels a wry, charming and honest tale that follows Meena and her Filipino family as they assimilate to life in a fictional Midwestern suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. The play traces historical events from 1967 to 2014, examining transformative social moments from the Hough riots to the Robert Kennedy and MLK assassinations to the protests in the aftermath of the killing of Tamir Rice, refracted through the intersectional lens of the Asian American Pacific Islander immigrant experience and the pursuit of the American Dream.

A writer, choreographer, filmmaker, and anthropologist, Gerardo is a member of the Dramatists Guild of America and The International Center for Women Playwrights, and Director of the Anthropology, Performance and Technology Program UC San Diego. From 2018-2020, she served as the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's artist-in-residence, promoting creative placemaking and community resilience through art throughout MAPC's 101 cities and towns.

This production is directed by Michelle Aguillon, who has helmed several popular productions for The Umbrella Stage, including Kate Hamill's *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy*, *Really*, August Wilson's *Fences*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *True West*. Aguillon and Gerardo have collaborated frequently on recent pandemic projects, including *Incantation* for The Umbrella Stage @Home New Works series, *Scensation* for the Boston Theater Marathon XXIII, and multiple programs for the Boston Asian American Playwrights Collective.

Running March 31-April 2023, 2023 (press opening April 2, 3PM), this world premiere features Steve Bermundo, Justin Budinoff, Cheryl Daro*, Lisa Fermin-Granada, Jenine Florence Jacinto and Jude Torres. Special community engagements include moderated talkbacks, a Kid Care-option performance, and Filipino dance and music demonstrations by community partner school, Iskwelahang Pilipino of Boston.

The Umbrella is ADA accessible, a proud partner in the Massachusetts Cultural Council's EBT Card-to-Culture program, and provides free parking and free admission to its visual arts galleries.

See <https://theumbrellaarts.org/MH>

CALENDAR LISTING & PRESS OPENING DETAILS

Theater | Performing Arts

WHAT

Middleton Heights

WHO

By Hortense Gerardo, commissioned by The Umbrella Stage Company, Directed by Michelle Aguillon. With Steve Bermundo, Justin Budinoff, Cheryl Daro*, Lisa Fermin-Granada, Jenine Florence Jacinto, and Jude Torres.

WHEN

RUN: March 31 – April 23, 2023 (no shows on 4/1, 4/9)

PRESS OPENING: Sunday April 2 at 3:00PM

Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays 8PM; Sundays 3PM

ADJACENT COMMUNITY EVENTS

Friday, March 31	Iskwelahang Pilipino (IP) Rondalla Ensemble performs pre-show
Sunday, April 2	Trish Fontanilla (BosFilipinos) Post-show Talk Back with Playwright and Director
Saturday, April 15	Iskwelahang Pilipino (IP) Indigenous Dance Group performs pre-show
Sunday, April 16	Kid-Care Performance*, Post-show Talk Back with the cast
Sunday, April 23	Iskwelahang Pilipino (IP) Tinikling Dance Group performs pre-show

WHERE

The Umbrella Arts Center, 40 Stow Street, Concord, MA 01742

ABOUT SUMMARY

In this world premiere of an original play commission, playwright Hortense Gerardo's wry and darkly comic exploration of the Asian American Pacific Islander immigrant experience, and the raw, loving, laugh-out-loud honesty that is family and the pursuit of the American dream.

Tickets \$20-\$45

Discounts for students, seniors, Card-to-Culture eligible attendees. **Group Discounts:** Groups of 10 – 14 save 10%; groups of 15 and up save 15%. Contact the Box Office for more details.

Courtesy images available from Stewart@TheUmbrellaArts.org, 978-371-0820 x211, or [online here](#).

ACCESS

The Umbrella is wheelchair accessible. Large Print playbills and Assistive Listening Devices are available by advance request to boxoffice@theumbrellaarts.org or 978-371-0820 x204. Marked all-gender bathrooms available.

*The Umbrella's Kid-Care Show Program gives parents the opportunity to attend select performances while their child(ren) engage in art activities inspired by the production. This is a new pilot program aimed at providing better access to arts and culture events and creating a shared experience opportunity for families. Spaces are limited and can be reserved alongside ticket purchases.

BOX OFFICE & PRESS TICKETS CONTACT

boxoffice@theumbrellaarts.org | 978-371-0820 x204