



THE UMBRELLA PRESENTS NEW ENGLAND PREMIERE OF “WHERE WE BELONG”

Indigenous Theater-Maker’s Journey Grapples with Geographic Borders and Cultural Legacies in a Universal Search for Belonging



CONCORD, MA— February 5, 2025 – The Umbrella Stage Company is thrilled to mount the New England Premiere of Mohegan theatre-maker Madeline Sayet’s ground-breaking one-woman show, *Where We Belong*.

Performed for the first time by an artist other than Sayet herself, it is helmed by fellow Indigenous director and playwright Tara Moses and stars GiGi Buddie. This brand new staging in Concord, MA during the Semiquincentennial of the beginning of the American Revolution raises timely questions of whose histories are told, how, by whom, and in what language.

With great humor, insight, and imaginative storytelling, the autobiographical play weaves together Indigenous history, Shakespeare, cultural legacy, the power of language, and legend. It recounts Sayet’s 2015 journey to England to pursue a PhD in Shakespeare in the shadow of the Brexit vote. Moving between nations that have failed to reckon with their ongoing roles in colonialism, she grapples with what it means to remain or leave her own home as a Mohegan, but discovers comfort in mirroring the footsteps of her ancestors who traveled to England in the 1700s.

“Madeline’s story is uniquely personal, but universally relatable. Following the completion of the original tour with Madeline at the center,” says Brian Boruta, Umbrella Stage Producing Artistic Director, “we wanted to explore how the play could evolve, be adapted for other performers, and reveal a continuing relevance for future productions and new audiences. Sayet originally developed the play in partnership with Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in

association with The Folger Shakespeare Library, and is engaged with the Umbrella team on this next evolution.

The show runs Feb. 28-Mar. 23 (press opening Sunday Mar. 2, 3:00PM), including a special Student Group Matinee Wed. Mar. 12 at 4PM, and select performances will feature engagement opportunities.

- Dinner & A Show packages are available for all Thursday night performances
- Talk Backs scheduled following performances on March 12, 16 and 20
- Childcare with art activities for youth ages 5-12 is available through The Umbrella's Kid Care program for parents interested in attending the March 16 matinee

Planned community engagement activities will also highlight art and experiences of Concord's native Nipmuc and Massachusetts tribes, including a concurrent gallery exhibition of work by Nipmuc photographer Scott Strong Hawk Foster.

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/WWB> for more information.

Special Note to Press: We ask our friends in the press to please respect the request to avoid reproducing Mohegan language words in their coverage, including those in the script, as this is a language under active reconstruction and reclamation.

ABOUT MADELINE SAYET

Madeline Sayet is a member of the Mohegan Tribe in Connecticut, where she was raised on a combination of traditional Mohegan stories and Shakespeare. Both of which have influenced her work as a playwright and director.

She has been named a Forbes 30 Under 30 in Hollywood & Entertainment, a NCAIED Native American 40 Under 40, a TED Fellow, MIT Media Lab Director's Fellow, and a recipient of the White House Champion of Change Award from President Obama. She is the Executive Director of the Yale Indigenous Performing Arts Program (YIPAP). Her directorial work has been described by critics as effervescent, enchanting, magical, insightful, and fearless. As a performer she was nominated for a Jeff Award for best Solo Performance for her run of *Where We Belong* at The Goodman Theatre.

ABOUT TARA MOSES

Tara Moses is a director, multi award-winning playwright, co-Founder of Groundwater Arts, and a citizen of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

As a director, her work has been seen in Santa Fe, NM; Kansas City, MO; Boston, MA; San Francisco, CA; Kyle, SD; Vermillion, SD; Providence, RI; Seattle, WA; New York, NY; Tulsa, OK; Washington, D.C.; Bethesda, MD; Oklahoma City, OK; Palmetto, GA; Edmond, OK; and Hartford, CT. Also a prolific playwright, her plays have been produced and/or developed with Company One Theatre (Boston, MA); AlterTheatre Ensemble (San Rafael, CA); Kitchen Dog Theater (Dallas, TX); Geva Theatre Center (Rochester, RI); Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, OR); American Indian Community House (New York, NY); Safe Harbors Indigenous Collective (New York, NY); among many others nationwide.

She is an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society; and Dramatists Guild member. She holds an MFA in Directing from Brown/Trinity Rep and a BA in Theatre from the University of Tulsa.

ABOUT GIGI BUDDIE

As an activist, GiGi Buddie's (she/her) (Tongva and Mescalero Apache) professional and personal pursuits converge at the intersection of art and climate justice. In 2021, she helped to bring frontline climate stories to Glasgow at the United Nations Climate Summit. Her debut single "Ursa Major," a love letter to the Iroquois story of the Celestial Bear, is available on all platforms. As an actor, singer, songwriter, and activist, she creates and contributes to stories of creation, resilience, and beauty from frontline communities. GiGi received a B.A. from Pomona College in Theatre Performance and Environmental Analysis. Previous credits include: *Auntie 2 (Antíkoni, World Premiere)*, *Anna (if Nobody Does Remarkable Things)*, *Feste (Twelfth Night)*, *Ruby (Daphne's Dive)*, and *Marty (Circle Mirror Transformation)*.

CALENDAR LISTING & PRESS OPENING DETAILS

Theater | Performing Arts | America250

WHAT

Where We Belong

WHO

By Madeline Sayet, Directed by Tara Moses. Featuring GiGi Buddie.

WHEN

PREVIEWS: Feb. 28 & Mar 1, 2025

REGULAR RUN: Mar 2-23, 2025

PRESS OPENING: Sunday March 2, 2025 at 3:00PM

Thursdays & Fridays 7:30PM; Saturdays 8PM; Sundays 3PM

WHERE

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

ABOUT SUMMARY

New England premiere of acclaimed one-woman play about an Indigenous theatre-maker who journeys across international borders, personal history, and cultural legacies in search of a place to belong.

Tickets \$48 regular adult

Discounts for students, seniors, groups, Card-to-Culture eligible attendees

Group Discounts: Groups of 10 – 14 save 10%; groups of 15 and up save 15%. EBT, WIC, ConnectorCare Card-to-Culture discounts available. Contact the Box Office for more details.

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

ACCESS

The Umbrella is wheelchair accessible. Marked all-gender bathrooms available. Find additional accessibility info at <https://TheUmbrellaArts.org/tickets>

BOX OFFICE & PRESS TICKETS CONTACT

John@TheUmbrellaArts.org or 978-371-0820 x204

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