



MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristina Erwin

Assistant Director of Marketing

301-924-4485 ext. 105

kerwin@olneytheatre.org

**Regional Premiere of Mike Lew's *Tiger Style!* Closes 2018-19 Season at OTC
Double-Helen Hayes Award recipient Natsu Onoda Power directs satirical tale of
Asian-American identity and family**

OLNEY, MD – June 3, 2019 – *Tiger Style!* by Mike Lew, an outrageous and cutting satire of Asian-American identity, completes Olney Theatre Center's 81st season in the Mulitz-Gudelsky Theatre Lab (**July 17 - August 18, 2019**). The production is directed by the boundary-pushing director **Natsu Onoda Power**, who recently pulled off the rare feat of winning two Helen Hayes Awards (one for direction, one for design) in a single evening. Invited press night is Saturday, July 20 at 7:45pm.

"It's with great pride OTC presents the regional premiere of Mike Lew's hilarious and incisive satire, *Tiger Style!*" said **Artistic Director Jason Loewith**. "His play throws a stick of comic dynamite into the earnest conversations about identity politics that we're all obsessed with right now."

Lew's story concerns Jennifer and Albert, two Chinese-American siblings going through something of a late-adolescent identity crisis in which they vacillate between rejecting their Asian identity to go full-on American, and when that fails, physically retreat to China, where things go no better. Lew was inspired to write the play in-part to battle the stereotypes that proliferated in the discussions surrounded **Amy Chua's book "The Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother."** Speaking to the Boston Globe, about "tiger parenting" and the high expectations associated with Asian parents, Lew (a Yale graduate) said, "'It's something I have a lot of personal experience with, but I felt that it wasn't being represented [fairly] in the media. **I have a lot of perspective on this, having a lot of expectations placed on me but also being very tight with my family.** From there [the play has] really blossomed out into this rumination on: **Where are Asian-Americans in this country? After being here for so many generations, how far have we come in terms of race relations?**"

Director Natsu Onoda Power centers her vision for the production on the sibling protagonists, “Jennifer and Albert are third-generation Chinese Americans, but more importantly, they are millennials from an affluent family — entitled, self-obsessed, and quick to blame others for their own shortcomings. They are also hard-working, insecure, and, despite their bravado, care deeply about each other.” She continued, “Their journey is very much like Dorothy's in *The Wizard of Oz*. Their version of China is a fantastical land that consists entirely of things they already know and imagine.”

Regina Aquino, who also received a Helen Hayes Award for Best Actress at the recent ceremony, plays Jennifer and **Sean Sekino**, a Los Angeles-based actor seen on *Grey's Anatomy* and the Netflix series *American Vandal*, plays her brother Albert. **Eileen Rivera**, who worked with Director Power on Studio Theatre's *Vietgone* plays the siblings' mother, **Kurt Kwan**, a Minneapolis-based actor plays the father and OTC-veteran **Michael Glenn** plays a host of characters as the production's sole non-Asian actor.

Power is joined by her creative team including **Tony Cisek** as Scenic Designer, **Debra Kim Sivigny** as Costume Designer, **Sarah Tundermann** as Lighting Designer, **Roc Lee** as Sound Designer. **Katie Ciszek** is the assistant director and dramaturg for the production. *Tiger Style!* is stage managed by **Jack Riley**.

TIGER STYLE!

by Mike Lew

Directed by Natsu Onoda Power

Previews: July 17, 18 and 19

Invited Press: Saturday, July 20 at 7:45pm

Runs until August 18

Regular performances are Wednesday-Saturday at 7:45 pm; matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 1:45 pm; and a Wednesday matinee at 1:45 pm on July 24. There is no Saturday matinee on July 20.

There will be an Audio-described performance for the blind and visually impaired on Wednesday, July 31 at 7:45pm and a sign-interpreted performance on Thursday, August 8 at 7:45 pm. Audience members who wish to use these services should contact Julie Via, Patron Services Manager (jvia@olneytheatre.org) to confirm.

Tickets begin at \$54. Discounts available for groups, seniors, military and students.

ABOUT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER

Mission

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts produces, presents and tours extraordinary performances for a diversity of audiences, and educates and inspires the next generation of theater-makers.

Vision

We strive every day to unleash the creative potential of our artists and audiences, and in so doing, become a nationally-prominent destination for the most impactful theater performance and education.

History

Once a summer stock retreat in rural Maryland, Olney Theatre Center is now an award-winning, year-round regional theatre surrounded in a 15-mile radius by 1.6 million people representing three of the most ethnically diverse counties in America. Since our founding in 1938, some of the biggest names in theatre have appeared on our stages: from "Golden Era" stars like Helen Hayes and Tallulah Bankhead to contemporary artists like Sir Ian McKellen, Robin De Jesús, and many others. OTC welcomed Artistic Director Jason Loewith and Managing Director Debbie Ellinghaus in 2013 and 2014, respectively, who established a new artistic strategy to broaden programming with the goal of nurturing a diversity of voices and audiences. Olney Theatre Center now produces musicals and plays under the three rubrics of Classic, Contemporary and Family programming. Since 2013 Olney Theatre Center has twice won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production, the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play and presented six world premieres. Complementing this work, OTC fulfills its mission as a teaching theater with educational programs like the Our Play program in local 5th grade classrooms, a summer camp and a year-round professional apprentice program. National Players, now in its 70th Season, is the hallmark outreach program of OTC, a unique ensemble touring innovative theater to communities large and small across the United States.

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