

# Rising to meet a challenge

BY PHILIP BRANDES

## Into a 'Canyon' at the LATC

**The essentials:** Set in a newly gentrified Southern California neighborhood before the 2016 election, Jonathan Caren's new drama uses the aftermath of a home remodeling accident to expose the socioeconomic fault lines in our melting pot ideals. An affluent white couple expecting their first child, a crusading black public defender and his career-sacrificing wife, and a father-son team of Mexican day laborers all find their values tested and falling short as best intentions give way to mistrust, prejudice and self-interest. Without resorting to heavy-handed rhetoric, Caren's play humanizes the hidden tensions underlying policy debates over immigration and equality.

**Why this?** With its insight into local demographics and implicit call for understanding and perspective to transcend fear and bridge differences, Caren's script is well suited to this collaborative fusion of innovation and tradition between the up-and-coming Iama Theatre Company collective and the well established Latino Theater Company. Brooklyn-based director Whitney White places the audience around and practically on top of the performers, bringing the action up close and personal.

**Details:** An Iama/Latino Theater co-production at the Los Angeles Theatre Center, 514 S. Spring St., Los Angeles. Opens Thursday. Performances 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays, 4 p.m. Sundays, through March 24. \$38. (866) 811-4111, [thelatc.org](http://thelatc.org)