

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Weekender: Spike Wong's star turn



BY **WALLACE BAINE** April 11, 2024

Into the 'White Sky'

It's a big month for longtime Watsonville playwright **Steve "Spike" Wong**. He'll be bringing his original play "White Sky, Falling Dragon" to Actors' Theatre in downtown Santa Cruz, debuting Friday, April 19. And it's a [rich drama](#), steeped in both the pathos of the American immigrant experience and the history of Watsonville as well.



Watsonville playwright Spike Wong, with a poster behind him for "White Sky, Falling Dragon," his play inspired by the life story of his late father. Credit: Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz

[“White Sky”](#) is inspired by the life story of Spike’s late father, **Ernest Wong**, a U.S. Air Force captain and well-known figure at his grocery store in Watsonville for decades before his death in 2014. The play zeroes in on a young Chinese American as he returns home to California after serving in World War II, and his struggles to balance his American sense of possibility with the traditional Chinese values of his family. Besides writing the script and directing the production, Spike Wong also performs as his own grandfather in the play.

It’s a beautiful and heartfelt story, with deeply meaningful resonance for those with a feel for Watsonville’s remarkable ethnic history, and for anyone interested in the “country of immigrants” ideals of America. Mark it on your calendar. “White Sky, Falling Dragon” opens April 19 and runs through May 5 at Center Stage at Actors’ Theatre. Get your [tickets](#) soon.