

Eugene O'Neill.
Foundation, Tao House



NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2013

“INSPIRED BY O’NEILL” - THE THEME OF JANUARY’S PLAYWRIGHTS’ THEATRE

For the fifth year in a row, the Eugene O’Neill Foundation is partnering with the Museum of the San Ramon Valley in presenting a January Playwrights’ Theatre on January 11 at 8:00 pm and January 12 at 2:00 pm. This augments the annual Playwrights’ Theater events held each May at the Old Barn at the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site.



The Foundation is offering a selection of short plays by Bay Area playwrights who have been inspired by O’Neill. Foundation program Vice President Eric Fraisher Hayes and his committee have chosen the best short works by writers from PlayGround Theatre, based in San Francisco, and Pear Avenue Playwright’s Guild, based in Mountain View.

“With this program we continue a theme started several seasons back. Last spring we looked at important works by Anton Chekhov and Henrik Ibsen, playwrights who had a great influence on America’s most notable playwright. At the O’Neill Festival in September we saw how O’Neill’s classic work, *Anna Christie*, was influenced by his earlier *Chris Christophersen*,” says Hayes. “With this program in January, we take a look at emerging playwrights who have been strongly influenced by O’Neill in the development of their works.”

Writers from PlayGround Theatre Company and the Pear Avenue Playwright’s Guild were given the very O’Neillian prompt “Haunted by the Past” as an inspiration for the creation of an original 10-minute play. From over forty submissions, a selection of the very best will be presented at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley.

“Both of these companies have done presentations at Tao House before,” says Hayes. “We want to encourage the fine work that they do.”



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Tickets for “Inspired by O’Neill” are available online at the Eugene O’Neill Foundation’s website, www.eugeneoneill.org. Tickets are \$20. each. Seating at the Museum is limited, so advance reservations are advised.

Pear Avenue Theatre Company seeks to nurture emerging writers through its Playwright’s Guild by creating a creative environment which is at the Company’s core. Each year an evening of short plays, “Pear Slices”, is produced featuring short works written by members of the Guild.

(Continued on page 3)

FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP - Look inside!

YES - I want to be a part of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation!

Include me among the supporters of the artistic and educational programs which promote the legacy of America's only Nobel Prize-winning playwright, Eugene O'Neill.

Join us right away! Please visit our website -- www.eugeneoneill.org and donate directly.

Or complete this form and send with your check to
Eugene O'Neill Foundation PO Box 402 Danville CA 94526

I have enclosed a check in the amount of \$_____ made payable to the *Eugene O'Neill Foundation*.

OR

Please charge my contribution in the amount of \$_____ to Visa, M/C, Discover, or AMEX.

Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CVC _____

Signature: _____

YES! I've included an additional \$20 to be an affiliate member of the *Eugene O'Neill Society* with full Foundation membership

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I am interested in volunteering for the Eugene O'Neill Foundation - Please contact me.



Eugene O'Neill.
Foundation, Tao House

October 16th "A Good Time to Remember" for Foundation Membership

In an effort to simplify membership procedures for the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, the Foundation Board has agreed to a new annual membership process. Beginning immediately all Foundation memberships will be renewed on October 16th of each year.

Why October 16th? That's easy - it's Eugene O'Neill's birthdate.

In the past, membership payments were for a twelve month period, regardless when they were submitted. The renewal date could be August, March, December or anytime. Now, to help both members and Foundation record-keeping, all annual memberships will expire on October 16, and dues will be payable at that time.

If a new membership is made in February, for example, it will expire in October. Conversely, if a new membership donation arrives in August, it will continue until October of the following year - a three month "bonus" time.

Current Foundation members will shortly receive renewal for membership dating from October 16 2013. "Contributing members are very important to the Eugene O'Neill Foundation. We want membership renewal to be as easy to remember for everyone. What better way to remember than on his birthday?" said Membership Chair Julie Millias. "Without a core of active and paid-up members, the Foundation would be hard pressed to maintain its programs and activities."

"Since it's renewal time, it's a good time to think about elevating your membership level," says Foundation President Robert Sehr. "If you're a Playwright's Circle member, please consider renewing as a Director's Circle member. It would definitely help us, and enable the Foundation to project its programs for the coming year."

Membership levels for the Eugene O'Neil Foundation are:

- **Crew: \$35-\$74** - Satisfaction of knowing you are keeping the legacy of O'Neill alive. Receipt of Newsletter
- **Actor's Circle: \$75-\$99** - Receipt of and recognition in the newsletter, and other Foundation publications.
- **Playwright's Circle: \$100-249** - All of the above, and reserved seating at Foundation events
- **Director's Circle: \$250-\$499** - All of above, plus recognition on the donor board at performances, and complimentary refreshments at performances
- **Producer's Circle: \$500-999** - All the above, plus two complimentary tickets to one performance a year
- **Executive Producer: \$1,000 and up** - All the above, plus credit on the title page of the program you choose to produce.

NEW ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM TO HONOR TRAVIS BOGARD

In September the Board of Directors of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation voted unanimously to name the Artist-in-Residence Program for noted O'Neill scholar and UC Berkeley professor Travis Bogard.

"It is a fitting tribute to Professor Bogard, as it was his vision that an AIR should be a significant component of the

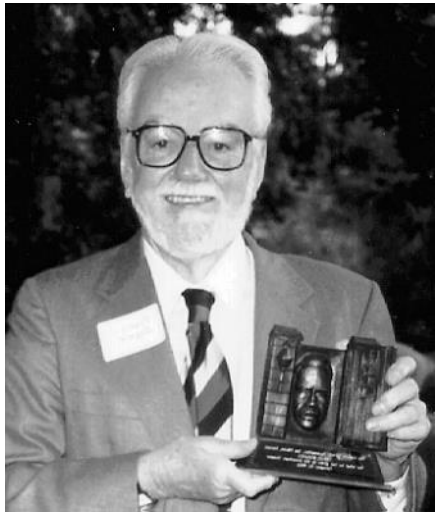
Foundation's artistic mission," said Florence McAuley, who is chairing the AIR Advisory group for the Eugene O'Neill Foundation. "From the first efforts to preserve O'Neill's home, there developed a commitment to eventually create such a fellowship at Tao House."

Numerous theatre luminaries—among them Katherine Hepburn, Sam Shepard and George White—were consulted in the past to offer their ideas on this program. Each of them suggested that O'Neill's home, his "final harbor," as he called it, could offer artists a uniquely inspiring atmosphere in which to work, making Tao House a living memorial to O'Neill.

This intent was clearly stated in early records: "Tao House would provide emerging or established artists, scholars and critics of the performing arts or fine arts an opportunity to work in the solitude and quiet that was for Eugene O'Neill the creative atmosphere in which he produced his master works".

The Foundation is planning to launch this long-intended program in 2014 with a three-year pilot program. After the trial period the program design will be evaluated and fine-tuned. Financial assistance to begin the program is still needed and most welcome. Donations or pledges can be sent to the Eugene O'Neill Foundation address (P.O. Box 402, Danville, CA 94526) earmarked "AIR".

Additionally, there is opportunity to directly sponsor a fellow, information for which can be obtained by emailing the AIR Committee at fbmcauley@comcast.net, which is also the address for any general questions about the program.



Travis Bogard receiving the Tao House Award in 1993

ARTHUR GELB, O'NEILL BIOGRAPHER

Arthur Gelb, O'Neill biographer and former cultural editor of the *New York Times*, has endorsed the new Artist in Residence program in this letter to the Foundation: "My wife, Barbara Gelb, and I, as the authors of two biographies of Eugene O'Neill, and a third now being readied for publication by Putnam, take special pleasure in embracing the Artist in Residence program at Tao House.... "Our hope is that those scholars chosen for the Artist in Residence program will carry on O'Neill's legacy."



Arthur and Barbara Gelb were 1996 Tao House Awardees

"Inspired by O'Neill" (Continued from page 1)

Several "Pear Slices" short plays were included in the O'Neill Foundation's Playwrights' Theater offering in May 2006.

The mission of PlayGround is to support the development of new voices for the theatre. Now in its sixteenth year, the organization provides an incubator environment that offers unique opportunities for the cultivation and development of early-career local playwrights. Monthly readings are held, along with the annual Best of PlayGround Festival. Many alumni have gone on to win not only local but also national recognition for their short and full-length work, including Lauren Yee, Aaron Loeb and Trevor Allen.

“O’NEILL VS. O’NEILL” GRABS AUDIENCE ATTENTION AT 14TH ANNUAL EUGENE O’NEILL FESTIVAL

The 14th annual Eugene O’Neill Festival held in September drew considerable attention from fans of O’Neill and avid theatregoers in the Bay area. The concept of comparing two of the playwright’s early plays was enthusiastically received by audience members who saw both productions.

It was “O’Neill vs. O’Neill” as the Foundation presented back-to-back productions of O’Neill’s *Anna Christie* (1921) and *Chris Christophersen* (1920).

“It was a wonderful idea to pair these two plays,” said Foundation President Robert Sehr. “*Chris Christophersen* reflected the romantic aura of 19th century melodrama while the rewritten *Anna Christie* emerged as a 20th century psychological drama.”

Foundation Program Manager Eric Hayes advanced the double bill as “One story; two plays; two starkly different worlds,” and that’s what audiences received.



Eden Neuendorf and Josh Schell in *Chris Christophersen*



Eden Neuendorf and Sally Hogarty in *Anna Christie*

“I give great kudos to the company of actors who appeared in both plays,” says Hayes. “They met the challenge of taking on similar characters, in different styles and situations, over the month-long rehearsal and production period. Eden Neuendorf, John Hale and Josh Schell and the full company of players came through with flying colors.”

Hayes directed *Chris Christophersen* at the Old Barn at the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site, while director George Maguire handled the duties for *Anna Christie* for the Role Players Ensemble presentation at the Village Theatre in downtown Danville.

The month-long Festival, honoring America’s most notable playwright, is an annual event sponsored by the Eugene O’Neill Foundation. Several other events rounded out the schedule.

The playwright’s 125th birthday was celebrated at a pre-show reception in the Courtyard of Tao House. A screening of the 1930 MGM Grete Garbo film of *Anna Christie* received avid attention, and a large audience viewed an enlightening panel discussion of “Modern Audiences/Classic Plays” coordinated

by Board member Eileen Herrmann, moderated by KQED’s Michael Krasny, and featuring a panel of Bay Area theatre directors and actors. (See separate story on Page 10)

SPEND A STANFORD WEEKEND WITH EUGENE O’NEILL

If you’d like to spend a weekend learning more about Eugene O’Neill, Stanford University’s Continuing Studies program has what you’re looking for. on late Friday afternoon and continues until mid-day on Sunday at the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site. Participants are encouraged to stay overnight in accommodations in the Danville area.

April 4-6, Stanford Continuing Studies, in cooperation with the National Park Service and the Eugene O’Neill Foundation, will host “Eugene O’Neill at Tao House: Gene, Carlotta and America’s Greatest Plays,” an in-depth look at the playwright, his home in Danville, and the impact of his plays. The weekend retreat seminar begins The three-day event will focus on “O’Neill and the Greeks,” discussing *Desire Under the Elms*, and *Mourning Becomes Electra*. Other sessions will discuss O’Neill’s theatrical legacy and the Tao House

(Continued on page 7)

STUDENT DAYS PLANS 23RD YEAR OF WELCOMING HIGH SCHOOLERS TO TAO HOUSE

For more than two decades the Eugene O'Neill Foundation has welcomed students from Contra Costa and Alameda Counties to the Eugene O'Neill National Historic site for the Student Days program.

Each spring sixty to eighty high school students spend full days at Tao House getting to know more about America's most notable playwright, and absorb the creative environment in which he worked. At the same time, students are given an immersion course in their area of creative endeavor – Writing, Drama, Art or Photography.

Applications are now being received for the March program. Students can download the application and program information from the O'Neill Foundation's website: www.eugeneoneill.org. Click on "Student Days." Deadline for applying will be in February. Applications can be submitted via email to taohouse@eugeneoneill.org. Upon acceptance to the program, students will be asked to submit an Emergency Information form and be given detailed instructions regarding pick-up and needed supplies.



Student Days drama students at work

~Photo by Tom Donahoe

The dates for 2014 Students have been set. Students focusing on Art and Drama will meet on Saturday March 8, while those interested in Writing and Photography will gather on Saturday, March 22. Students who benefit from active engagement in the artistic process with guidance and assistance from professionals are encouraged to apply. A short written application which outlines the student's interest, ability and motivation will be requested.

At each session students attend workshops led by practicing professionals in their chosen discipline. As students develop their own projects on site, the professionals are there as mentors to further student development. A special guided tour of the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site is provided by the National Park Service, and actors associated with Center Repertory Company in Walnut Creek provide scenes from O'Neill plays.



There is no cost to students for the day-long workshop. Transportation is provided by the National Park Service from Walnut Creek BART or downtown Danville. Snacks, beverages and lunch are provided for the day. Student Days is presented by the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, and supported by funding from the Dean and Margaret Lesher Foundation, and the Wood Foundation.

It's WOW at Lafayette Library in January

Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center have scheduled a talk about Tao House and the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site as part of their monthly docent lecture series, "Wonders of the World" (WOW). It's planned for Tuesday, January 14 at 2:00 pm in the Community Hall at the Library.

Tom Leatherman, Superintendent of the O'Neill NHS, and Gary Schaub, board member for the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, will review Eugene O'Neill's early days, the history of Tao House as Eugene and Carlotta's home from 1938-1944, and the community programs that take place at the site throughout the year.

The Lafayette Library and Learning Center is located at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. The presentation is open to the public.



REMEMBERING GLENN FULLER

He was a genial and gregarious kind of guy. He relished the outdoors, and always worked to protect our natural and historic treasures.



Glenn Fuller (1946 - 2013)

As the second Superintendent of the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site from 1993 to 2004, Glenn Fuller made his indelible mark on the Historic Site, and its relationship with the community. Glenn died at his Nevada County home on September 10.

Glenn was always proud to wear his grey and green uniform of the National Park Service. He helped to negotiate, after fourteen years, a settlement agreement with Kuss Road neighbors allowing access to the Tao House where playwright O'Neill lived from 1938-1944, and where he wrote his last and most important plays.

He supervised an upgrading of the site, and developed a program for public access and public tours. As a result, the Eugene O'Neill Foundation has been able to offer educational and community programs, including the annual O'Neill Festival and the Students Days program which has brought hundreds of high school students to the National Historic Site to learn about Eugene O'Neill and his works, and to be mentored by distinguished leaders in drama, art, photography and writing.

"Glenn worked closely with the Foundation and the Kuss Road neighbors which helped smooth the way for today's diverse programs and for early public access to the Site. His affable personality made a real difference. And the initial National Park Service/Foundation MOU was successfully negotiated while he was there, which was no easy feat," said Beverly Lane who was Foundation President and Board member during Glenn's tenure.

Beginning in 2001, Glenn was promoted to also supervise the John Muir National Historic Site, and the

Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial.

Glenn Fuller was an avid river rafter, who enjoyed bring outdoors, meeting people and sharing his knowledge of some of America's most inspiring landscapes.

"He loved to share the histories and the behind-the-scenes stories about places," said former NPS assistant regional director Holly Bundock. "He was absolutely music on water. He could read a river better than anybody I know."

Earlier in his NPS career Glenn worked at several national parks including as a back-country district ranger doing search and rescue at Grand Canyon National Parks, and as park ranger at Cape Cod National Seashore, and as site manager for John Muir National Park, among others.

Glenn retired from the NPS in 2004 after 31 years, and relocated to Nevada County with his wife Beverly. He immediately joined the South River Park Association Board and began working to support the rugged canyon, covered bridges and river habitat of the area. He continued as a part-time ranger at Folsom Lake while attending Cal State Sacramento.



Foundation members are invited to share memories of former NPS Superintendent Glenn Fuller's many accomplishments at an informal gathering at the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site on Monday, December 9, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.

Please RSVP to Beverly Lane at LaneBeverly@att.net by December 6, so proper arrangements can be made. Transportation to Tao House will be via NPS shuttles departing from the Museum of the San Ramon, 205 Railroad Avenue, Danville at 1:30 p.m.

PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR 9TH O'NEILL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

O'Neillians from many parts of the world will gather in June for the 9th Eugene O'Neill International Conference. The conference will take place June 18-21 in New London, CN.



Actor James O'Neill and his sons, Eugene and Jamie, on the porch at Monte Cristo Cottage.

New London played an important role in Eugene O'Neill's life. This is the site of Monte Cristo Cottage, the site of the O'Neill family's summer home, and where young Eugene spent his formative years. O'Neill's father, actor James O'Neill travelled around the country performing in *The Count of Monte Cristo*, but the family always returned to New London during the summers. The people and places of New London appear frequently in the playwright's writings, and two of his plays are set in the New London – *Ah, Wilderness* and *A Long Day's Journey into Night*.

In addition to Monte Cristo Cottage, the conference will also provide activities at the O'Neill Theater Center in nearby Waterbury, and at Connecticut College where considerable O'Neill material is housed at the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections. The O'Neill Theater Center, celebrating its 50th

anniversary in 2014, hosts the annual National Playwrights Conference, the National Theater Conference, and the National Music Theater Conference. The Center has nurtured the development of some of the nation's most important plays, musicals and playwrights over the past five decades.

New London is located at the mouth of the Thames River and overlooks Long Island Sound, halfway between New York and Boston. It was a thriving seaport town in the early part of the 20th century. Conference events will include tours of the area, a performance at the O'Neill Theater Center, visits to Monte Cristo Cottage, as well as presentation of scholarly papers relative to O'Neill, his work, and his compatriots.

Details on the 9th O'Neill International Conference and registration information are available from The Eugene O'Neill Society on their website, www.eugeneoneillsociety.org.



Monte Cristo Cottage in New London, CN

STANFORD (continued from page 4)



Park Superintendent Tom Leatherman visits with project consultant John Espedal, Rush Rehm of Stanford's Department of Theater and Performance Studies, and Charles Junkerman, Dean of Stanford Continuing Studies. ~Photo by Gary Schaub

masterpieces, including *The Iceman Cometh* and *Long Day's Journey into Night*. There will be opportunities to visit Tao House with the National Park Service, explore the National Historic Site nestled in the foothills above Danville, to socialize over lunch and dinner, and to see scenes from some of O'Neill's plays in the Old Barn at Tao House.

Sessions will be led by Stanford Professor of Classics and Theatre and Performance Studies Rush Rehm, artistic director of the popular Stanford Summer Theatre, and author of five books including *Radical Theater: Greek Tragedy in the Modern World*.

Information on the April 4-6 retreat is available from the Stanford Continuing Studies, Littlefield Center, 365 Stanford Mall, Stanford University, Stanford CA 94305 or a www.continuingstudies.stanford.edu.

Registration fee: \$195



National Park Service Report

By Tom Leatherman, Superintendent Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site

This year has brought many challenges our way, starting in the spring with budget cuts which reduced the number of days we were open to the public, to a government shutdown in the fall that stopped operations all together for two weeks. Through it all it has been great to see the steadfast support of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, and the hard work of the NPS staff, come together to put on another great year of programming.

Student Days in March and the O'Neill Studio Retreat in July provided another opportunity to pass on Eugene O'Neill's legacy to a whole new generation. Playwrights Theatre in May and the Eugene O'Neill Festival in September allowed us to welcome longtime supporters and provide another awe inspiring opportunity to experience O'Neill in the old barn on the hill.

I am hopeful that in 2014 we will be able to not only continue the youth programming and theater productions at the site, but will bring some positive change to the site in other ways too.

What better way to start than to add another day of tours back to the schedule! Starting in early October, just after the shutdown ended, we began offering Sunday tours again. Now both Friday and Sunday will be open

for tours by reservation and we will still have the Open Saturday's format with no reservations as well. This new schedule will continue year-round and we hope everyone, both local and visiting from around the world, will find some time to visit (or revisit) and experience the place that continues to share the legacy of Eugene O'Neill.

Special thanks again to the Eugene O'Neill Foundation for the support and programming provided at the site through these ups and downs.



Public Tours of the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site by the National Park Service are available by reservation on Fridays and Sundays.

Call (925) 838-02249 for details.

Access is by NPS shuttle from the Museum of the San Ramon Valley, 205 Railroad Avenue, Danville.

The site is also open with no advance reservations on Saturdays. Shuttles depart 10 am, 12 noon, and 2 pm.



Planting for the Future

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE MEANS NURTURING A \$EED NOW, AND LETTING IT GROW

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, established the O'Neil Legacy Endowment in 2007 with the purpose of ensuring the future of the Foundation and its educational and community programs in the years ahead. A contribution to the Legacy Endowment now helps perpetuate the legacy of Eugene O'Neill for future generations.

Working closely with the National Park Service, the O'Neill Foundation develops and presents a wide range of programs each year to attract visitors to the O'Neill National Historic Site, and to honor O'Neill's work at this quiet retreat set aside to celebrate theater and the performing arts. The Foundation receives no direct Federal funding for its ongoing work.

Gifts to the Foundation – cash gifts, IRA qualified plans, bequests, life insurance beneficiaries, and charitable annuities – are most welcome, and will help empower the Foundation to share and preserve the O'Neill legacy in perpetuity. Funds contributed to the Legacy Endowment are never spent – only the annual proceeds can be used by the Foundation Board to meet its mission and goals.

Your accountant or tax advisor is the best one to assess which type of gift will best serve you and you estate.

Further information is available from the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, P.O. Box 402, Danville, CA 94526 (925) 820-1818.



THE PLAYWRIGHT'S DESK - A GEM AT TAO HOUSE

A very special place for visitors to the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site is Eugene O'Neill's study on the second floor of Tao House. It was here that O'Neill wrote his last and most notable plays.

Visitors are surprised to hear that the desk to the left in the study is O'Neill's original desk. How it came back to Tao House after Gene and Carlotta left in 1944 is most interesting. We thought you'd like to know more about this "gem" that's returned

to its rightful place. The following is adapted from an article that NPS docent and former O'Neill Foundation board member Wendy Cooper wrote for our Newsletter in March 2000 --

Eugene O'Neill's desk was bought by Judy Bell's father 56 years ago. On March 16 {2000}, Judy and her husband Robert, donated it back to Tao House.

Eugene O'Neill's desk, where some of the world's greatest plays were penned, had been used for legal documents, atomic physic papers, a computer, and a child's fort in the 56 years since it left Tao House. The family which lovingly preserved the desk over the years donated it back to the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site.

In a ceremony in the living room, Dennis McDonald recalled how his father, John J. McDonald had purchased the desk in 1944 — when the O'Neill's left Tao House — and for 28 years had used it in his Oakland law office.



Eugene O'Neill at his desk in 1941 (Life Magazine Photo) Courtesy of Eugene O'Neill Foundation

"My father loved everything in the English language...and he loved O'Neill," he said. When John McDonald died, Dennis' sister, Judy Bell and her husband Robert built the desk into Robert's office.

"The fact that it had atomic physics reports on it probably had O'Neill rolling in his grave," Bob said, adding that "it feels really great to have the desk finally home." Son Terry agreed, while recalling how he used to build a fort and live inside the desk.

During the ceremony, [former] Superintendent Glenn Fuller noted how difficult it is to get original pieces back. "I nearly fell off the chair," he said when he received the call from Dennis. He was initially skeptical, but the story of John McDonald's purchase and a picture of the knobs on the desk confirmed that it was the original. Articles from the study were placed on the desk following a short ceremony during which Center Repertory actors Kerri Shawn and Richard James enacted a scene from ***A Moon for the Misbegotten*** which O'Neill wrote at Tao House.



O'Neill's Study today (National Park Service photo)

Finding original furnishings and memorabilia once owned by Eugene and Carlotta O'Neill is an ongoing effort by the National Park Service. If you know of any relevant items, please contact Paul Scolari with the National Park Service:

925- 838-0249 x 6411



Did you know that you can reduce your taxes for 2013 by making a charitable gift from your IRA to the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House?

As part of the tax legislation enacted earlier this year, individuals who are age 70 ½ or older can make a charitable gift of up to \$100,000 from their IRA to qualifying charities like the O'Neill Foundation.

Your gift to the Foundation will assist us in meeting our Mission – promoting the legacy of playwright Eugene O'Neill through our educational programs (like the O'Neill Studio Retreat and Student Days), community performance programs (such as the annual O'Neill Festival and Playwrights' Theater), the Artist-in-Residence program (bringing scholars to Tao House), and the maintenance and improvement of the Foundation Library and Reading Room (which holds the largest collection of O'Neill archives on the West Coast).

Your charitable IRA gift qualifies for your 2013 required minimum distribution (MRD), permitting you to lower your income and taxes while supporting your favorite charitable organization through the IRA Rollover.

Contact the Eugene O'Neill Foundation for additional information, at (26) 820-1818, or through our website at www.eugeneoneill.org.

DIRECTORS SPEAK OUT ON MODERN AUDIENCES/CLASSIC PLAYS



Michael Krasny, Joy Carlin, Rob Melrose, Trevor Allen, Jasson Minadakis and George Maguire

~Photo by Robin Taylor

visionary director and actors, preferably well-known to the public, who share that vision. Though O'Neill is known for his length, according to Trevor Allen, this should not present difficulties. Both he and Jasson Minadakis argued for the staying power of modern audiences.

Rob Melrose pointed out that playwrights writing non-realistic plays are also under-represented on the modern stage, due to the effects of television and movies lodged in realism.

How can theatre, a word-based medium, compete with a culture addicted to Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, etc.?

How concerned are directors about the "staying power" of their audiences--their ability to sit in their seats longer than 90 minutes, to stay with a work that challenges them in unaccustomed ways?

Do directors consider staging the tragic plays of O'Neill, Miller and Williams especially challenging?

These are just a few of the questions posed by KQED's Michael Krasny who moderated a wide-ranging discussion on Sunday, September 22 at the Old Barn at Tao House as part of the 14th Eugene O'Neill Festival. The panel included Jasson Minadakis (Artistic Director, Marin Theatre Company); Joy Carlin (actress and director); Rob Melrose (Director, Cutting Ball Theatre); Trevor Allen (Founder, "The Black Box Theatre"); and George Maguire (actor and director). The panel--"Modern Audiences/Classic Plays"--was organized by Foundation Board Member Eileen Herrmann in recognition of Eugene O'Neill's 125th birthday.

As Michael Krasny said, the discussion was "rich and delicious."

Some highlights: Joy Carlin pointed out that the Bay Area showcases contemporary writers more than those of yesteryear, although all agreed that classical playwrights and "modern" classical" playwrights--e.g., O'Neill, Miller, and Williams--are too infrequently seen.

However, as Jasson Minadakis stressed, staging O'Neill presents special challenges: the right director must be paired with the right script. Solid productions of O'Neill must have both a

George Maguire argued against "jazzing up" classical plays for modern audiences, and for keeping the purity of the dramatic language. Melrose believes that modern audiences derive more from the theatre if they are prepared through pre-show and post-show talks, and through notes and guides. The theatre has become more visual, noted Joy Carlin.

Minadakis argued that directors have "adapted" the classics to woo modern, younger audiences. Rob Melrose provided a penetrating analysis of adaptation versus interpretation. "Directors must show us something new about a script."

While George Maguire and Joy Carlin argued that it is vital for playwrights to be grounded in the classics, Trevor Allen spoke up for new playwrights who "play with the classics." Jasson Minadakis argued for the uniqueness of each playwright, saying dramatic genius is undefinable.

A recording of the discussion can be accessed on the Foundation website www.EugeneOneill.org, select the "Panel Discussion" link at the bottom of the home page.



Michael Krasny moderated the panel before a sold-out audience in the Old Barn

Thank You!

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House is grateful to its members and supporters whose generous donations allow us to continue to produce educational and artistic programs as a legacy to

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Playwright Circle

\$100—\$249

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Nancy Bartholomew
Ed & Linda Best
Anne C. Broome
Mark and Judith Cohen
Wendy and Tony Cooper

Roberta Eisel

Bill & Marianne Gagen

Mary Greco

Jo Harberson

Eileen Herrmann

Robert Kain

Barbara Kuklewicz

Bill & Nancy Lieber

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Rosalie Malatesta

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Marlan L. Shanks

Bette Smith

James Stevens

Gerald Eugene Stram

Tony & Diane Woodward

Dave & Carole Wynstra

Evelyne Zulueta

Actor Circle

\$75 - \$99

Camilla N. Ewing
Dr. and Mrs. Martin Jansen
Susan McEvilly

Supporting Crew

\$50 - \$74

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Crowe
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