The 19th Annual Eugene O’Neill Festival in Danville, CA

“Passing the Torch”

Aug. 31 - Sept. 30, 2018

We approach this fall with incredible anticipation as we usher in a couple of festival firsts. The 19th Annual Eugene O’Neill Festival sees the introduction, for the first time in our festival history, of an Arthur Miller play. Miller is responsible for some of America’s greatest dramas, like Death of a Salesman, The Crucible, and All My Sons. Additionally, this year’s Danville festival production of O’Neill’s Hughie will travel to Ireland to appear at the First International Eugene O’Neill Festival of Theatre in New Ross, Ireland, before touring Ireland.

Appropriately entitled Passing the Torch, this fall’s festival focuses on Eugene O’Neill’s influence on the generation of playwrights that followed in his wake and took up the mantle of the American Drama. “Playwrights like Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, and William Inge are the bridge between O’Neill, the father of the American Drama, and what we recognize as drama today,” says EONF Artistic Director Eric Fraisher Hayes.

The Tao House production of Eugene O’Neill’s Hughie will be paired with Role Players Ensemble’s production of Arthur Miller’s All My Sons at the Village Theatre this September. Rehearsals are underway, tickets are on sale, so don’t miss your chance to be a part of celebrating where the American Drama came from, how it grew, and where it may be going next.


For more information: www.eugeneoneill.org Tickets: www.villagetheatreshows.com

One Festival, Two Countries

The Inaugural Eugene O’Neill Festival in New Ross, Ireland

Eugene O’Neill International Festival of Theatre in New Ross, Ireland, will feature four plays and a film. The plays by O’Neill are Mourning Becomes Electra, the S.S. Glencairn Cycle of four one-act sea plays, and the Danville production of Hughie. The fourth play is My Real Life by Eoin Colfer and the film is The Count of Monte Cristo, 1913, starring James O’Neill.

For more on the New Ross Festival: www.eugeneoneillfestival.com

I Will Speak for Myself

The benefit for the Travis Bogard Artist in Residence Program July 7 and 8 was an amazing tribute to the work of the program. I Will Speak for Myself, written by Valerie Joyce, a recent fellow, was performed by a gifted actress, Kimberly S. Fairbanks, portraying 15 African-American women who lived from the 1600s through Emancipation. They varied in age, degree of literacy, and region of residence, yet Fairbanks’ portrayal of each was unique and unforgettable.

The reviews of Victor Cordell captured the special quality of the event: “I Will Speak for Myself is a powerful experience. Seldom told stories are supported by a scintillating performance. . . . My Real Life by Eoin Colfer and the film is The Count of Monte Cristo, 1913, starring James O’Neill.

For more on the New Ross Festival: www.eugeneoneillfestival.com

EONF welcomes these new board members and their experience and special skills in many fields:

After retiring as a managing lawyer for Fortune 500 corporations, Terry Sherman has been engaged in pro bono legal work and serving in leadership roles (including strategic planning) for nonprofit religious corporations. Charles Jarrett brings to EONF long experience in marketing and product development, as well as in theatre management, acting, drama criticism, set-building, and photography. Although a Danville-area resident for many years, Linda Grundhoffer did not learn about Tao House and the EONF until 2010. She now feels privileged to be using her accounting skills as part of a team dedicated to honoring the works and memory of such a great playwright. Marcia Harmon of Cottage Jewel Antiques is a veteran Danville merchant and event planner. Her marketing experience and passion for history, the arts, and community engagement make her a great partner for our Communications and Festival Committees. A longtime editor and O’Neill fan, Carolyn McGovern enjoys working on communications on behalf of all the great programs of EONF.

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Anne Fletcher, Travis Bogard Artist in Residence

The first artist in residence fellow to arrive in 2018 was Professor Anne Fletcher of the Department of Theatre, Southern Illinois University. A historian of stage design, she described her time at Tao House as extremely helpful to two projects on her horizon: a chapter of a book on Provincetown Playhouse designers and a full-length study on O'Neill's potential influence on American theatrical design. Working on the Tao House ground and in the archive in its library has contributed to both—for the first, to dig into the letters and other materials on the Provincetown era and O'Neill's later career, and for the second, to enjoy the serenity and the inspirational atmosphere of Tao House. She found a wealth of new information in the Foundation's library's research materials and also discovered a play of O'Neill's that she had not previously known. Anne's success in retrieving new information while at Tao House demonstrates the importance of the Travis Bogard Artist in Residence Program.

Superintendent's Message

As we preserve the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site over time, each year presents the National Park Service (NPS) with special funding opportunities, as well as facility shortcomings that define what we do in a given year beyond our regular operations. Here are some projects park staff is up to this year. The Tao House Guest Room landscapes, tonal paintings akin to visual poetry, were recently conserved and will be replaced with high-quality reproductions until we diagnose and fix moisture problems in this room. Also in the realm of museum management, we received NPS project funds to digitize materials from our manuscript collection, so that originals can be handled less and electronic versions can be shared widely. The work is done by a student hired through the NPS Diversity Internship Program, which contributes to development of a workforce more reflective of the American population. The young trees in pots that have been across from the Old Barn since early this year are almond and walnut trees that will be planted in fall as part of ongoing maintenance of the Tao House orchards and restoration to their O'Neill-period appearance.

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House is most grateful to you, our supporters, for your generous contributions that enable us to provide artistic and educational programs that focus on O'Neill's vision and legacy. Thank you to the following donors (through July 2018).

We'll see you at the Festival!
Paul Smaldar, Acting Superintendent

Visit the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site

Guided Tours Available Wed., Thurs., Fri. and Sun. 10AM & 2PM. Reservations are required.

Self-guided Tours “Sat/Sun Without Reservations” at 10:15AM, 12:15PM and 2:15PM. If hiking to the site on Saturdays, please be here before 3PM. The park is closed to visitors Monday and Tuesday.

Due to the location of this park, all visitors are required to take a free National Park Service shuttle to the historic home and grounds. Visitors are not permitted to drive their personal/private vehicles to the site. The shuttle meets at 205 Railroad Avenue in downtown Danville, outside of the Museum of the San Ramon Valley. Parking is available next to the museum. Admission to the site is free.

Reservation Line (925) 838-0249
Visit www.nps.gov/euon for more information.