Eugene O’Neill Festival 2021: Beyond the Horizon

The Eugene O’Neill Festival returns this fall with a combination of live and virtual events. The festival centerpiece will be a filmed production of O’Neill’s first great drama Beyond the Horizon. The play was the playwright’s first to appear on Broadway and won him the first of his four Pulitzer prizes. In addition to the film, there will be two live performances of Beyond the Horizon on the last weekend of September.

The festival will be rounded out with the premiere of EONF Artistic Director Eric Fraisher Hayes’ playful and informative theatrical lecture Eugene O’Neill: 51 Plays in 51 Minutes at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley, as well as a hike, a downtown walk, and a special storytelling campaign entitled “Tiny Horizon Stories.”

The play Beyond the Horizon calls for a combination of outdoor and indoor scenes, which have traditionally been difficult to represent. Our production will be filmed to highlight the natural beauty and farm-like qualities of the Tao House property. Additionally, two live performances of the play will take place with seating at reduced capacity. These special live performances will utilize a combination of outdoor and indoor settings which require some minimal walking.

**Beyond the Horizon, Live:** Sat Sep 25, 4pm and Sun Sep 26, 4pm

**Beyond the Horizon, The Film:** Sat Oct 2

Additional event details and tickets available at eugeneoneill.org

**“Beyond the Horizon” Sneak Peek**

Join us for a special virtual conversation with production dramaturg Beth Wynstra and director Eric Fraisher Hayes as they discuss the history and issues at work in Eugene O’Neill’s first Pulitzer-prize-winning play as well as the process of putting together our Tao House production. Wed. Aug. 18, 7pm

A special Beyond the Horizon engagement guide and video scholar commentary will be offered in support of our production.

**Eugene O’Neill: 51 Plays in 51 Minutes**

Eugene O’Neill is known for writing important plays, long plays, but what many do not know is he also wrote a lot of plays. 51 to be exact.

Eugene O’Neill: 51 Plays in 51 Minutes is a playful overview of the entire O'Neill canon from the perspective of a director who has staged 27 of the playwright’s 51 plays. Join EONF Artistic Director Eric Fraisher Hayes for a lively theatrical crash course on the plays of Eugene O’Neill. This event promises to be fresh, insightful, and entertaining. And less than an hour!

Written and performed by Eric Fraisher Hayes
Thurs., Sept. 30, 8pm and Fri., Oct. 1, 8pm, Museum of the San Ramon Valley. Tickets available at eugeneoneill.org

**Tiny Horizon Stories**

**IMAGINE** a future of new possibilities

**WRITE** your story in 100 words or less

**SEND** it in using this code or go to www.eugeneoneill.org/tiny-horizon-stories/

In Eugene O’Neill’s Beyond the Horizon, young Robert Mayo yearns to reach beyond his life on the family farm. As we begin to emerge from these historically challenging times, many of us imagine a future of new possibilities. In 100 words or less, share your story of what you long for just beyond the horizon. Tiny Horizon Stories can be about any theme that inspires you! Your story may be featured as part of our upcoming festival or on our website, newsletter, and other programming.

Breathing is for the living. Sure, I climb for myself - standing on a Fourteen-Thousand foot peak is as close to flying as we get. But I also climb for those that can’t climb any longer. So many I have known, who have passed on beyond ridges and peaks and summits, whose ashes are scattered in water, in air, and in earth. They have no more breaths to take. So I go on, for them. Step by step. Breathe by breathe. There’s always one more ridge to climb; another peak to summit. Until we all meet at the horizon.

Phil Kohlmetz, Lone Pine, CA

(L-R) Will Long, Adrian Deane, and Kyle Goldman. Photo: Eric Fraisher Hayes
Another Successful Studio Retreat!

We welcomed a group of young, dedicated actors and playwrights in person to Studio Retreat again this year! Thanks to Norman Gee, P.J. Brown, Natalie Rich, and the rest of our staff and volunteers, the ten-day intensive workshop was a huge success, and much creativity and frivolity surrounded the National Historic Site. Eugene O’Neill would have been proud of the short plays that were written and enacted, culminating in a performance for friends and family on the final day.

For more on our educational offerings, visit www.eugeneoneill.org/studio-retreat/

Thank you to the Dean & Margaret Lesher Foundation, and the Wood Foundation for supporting our FREE student programs.

Travis Bogard Artist In Residence Deadline:
Nov. 15, 2021 for 2022 Fellowships

Playwrights, scholars, critics, as well as established theatre artists who are changing disciplines, are eligible to apply. Applicants are required to submit a short curriculum vitae, three references, and a description of the proposed project.

For more, visit www.eugeneoneill.org/artist-in-residence-program/

Artist Day-Use Deadline Sept. 30 for Session C (Fellowships Dec. 1–March 31)

The Travis Bogard Day-Use Program offers Bay Area artists access to the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site five days a week, Wednesday through Sunday. Fellowships may work in scholarly or creative writing, playwriting, or the visual arts, including stage design. Artists may work alone or as a team. For more, visit www.eugeneoneill.org/artist-in-residence-program/

National Park Service News: Superintendent’s Message

Now that summer is in full swing, young voices and energy have returned to the site! While the Foundation has welcomed this summer’s Studio Retreat youth participants, the NPS has hired a Youth Conservation Corps crew, comprised of six local high school students, who have been diligently pruning the orchards and clearing along the fence lines. If you see them while you’re up at the site, please thank them for their hard work!

In addition to ongoing landscape and facility maintenance, the NPS and the Foundation are working on improving theater lighting in the Old Barn. The staging of plays in this historic open-air barn has been a challenge over the years with inadequate lighting and sound controls. This project, made possible by a generous donation from Fund for People in Parks, will result in a state-of-the-art lighting system that will allow audiences a more immersive and intimate experience of productions at the site. Equipment has been ordered, and installation is happening in the next few weeks. We look forward to welcoming our first audiences back to the Old Barn this September.

We’re excited to be hosting Carlotta O’Neill’s grandson, Gerald Eugene Stram and her great-granddaughter, Denise Doyle Stram-Youngblood for a visit to Tao House in a few weeks. Mr. Stram has donated many of Carlotta’s belongings to the Foundation, which in turn donated these items to the NPS museum collection. Many of Carlotta’s items are on a rotated display upstairs in Carlotta’s bedroom—one of the highlights of our tours.

On a more subdued note, with the uptick in Covid-19 cases in our region, the NPS is following County guidance, and requiring all visitors (regardless of vaccination status) to mask indoors. If you’re planning on joining us for one of our tours, remember to bring your mask. Tours are available Wednesday through Sunday at 1:00 pm or 2:00 pm. Please remember to check our website for the most current information about our operating status.

We hope that in the near future you will join us for a tour of Tao House. -Tom Leatherman, Superintendent

Please check www.nps.gov/euon for updates about access to the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site.

Thinking of volunteering? “Just do it”

On your next visit to Tao House, look for the Ghosts of Tao House posters which invite visitors, hikers, and dog walkers to pull out their phones, scan a QR code, and watch O’Neill’s characters come to life in short monologues filmed at Tao House. This compelling Ghosts of Tao House signage was produced by Foundation volunteer Sarah Seewoester Cain who responded to the call for volunteers in this Newsletter.

When asked what inspired her to raise her hand to help, Sarah shared, “I’ve always thought it was so cool that a Nobel-prize-winning playwright lived right here in Danville...and that his estate has been so impeccably preserved. The main draw for me was being able to contribute to something local, in my own community, while also being part of a larger cause—promoting the vision of O’Neill whose work is known and lauded by so many worldwide.” Sarah’s design and photography skill allow along with creatively working around nap time for her young sons is a perfect match. Sarah notes, “I have loved how personalized and easy the volunteer experience has been! Not only is it flexible based on my availability, but the board and Foundation staff took the time to learn about me. They found ways for me to contribute based on my unique background, skills, and volunteer interests.”

Working with the Foundation Sarah observed, “I knew that EONF hosted live performances at Tao House, but I had no idea of the breadth of EONF’s outreach. They not only produce plays for theatre enthusiasts, but they offer programs for theatre students, budding writers, academicians, and seasoned playwrights and artists.” With this variety comes needs for diverse ideas, talents, and interests. Skills in communications, consulting, design, website development, strategy, member development, event planning, and more can help contribute to the foundation’s vision.

If you’re considering helping out, in Sarah’s words, “Just do it...volunteer! I wish I had done so sooner. It’s easy and incredibly flexible. Whatever time or talent you can give will be genuinely embraced and appreciated.”

Thanks to Our Donors, Theatre Patrons, and Volunteers

Invest in the future of our theatre, education, and artist in residence programs.

Your donation helps cover production costs and enables us to continue bringing performances and programs that promote the legacy and vision of America’s greatest playwright. Thank you for supporting the Foundation! To make a donation to the Foundation, go to www.eugeneoneill.org/join-us/ or send your check to Eugene O’Neill Foundation, Tao House, P.O. Box 402, Danville, CA 94526-0402

Support our Foundation through AmazonSmile.

Go to AmazonSmile, shop online, and indicate that a percentage of your Amazon purchase is donated to the Foundation, at no cost to you.

Join us!

Would you like to be involved in the work of the Foundation? There are many opportunities for your talents or skills, or as a candidate for the Board of Directors. Email us at taohouse.eonf@gmail.com to see how you can become involved.

Be sure to check out our Instagram feed: eugene_oneill_foundation and like us on Facebook.