

Engene O'Neill.
FOUNDATION, TAO HOUSE

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

PRESENTS

PRISONTOWN

DETENTION CENTER

Written and Performed by Lee Osorio
Directed by Richard Perez

**"HOW MUCH
OF AN ACTIVIST
ARE YOU?"**

PRISONTOWN

Sat Aug 23 7:30pm
Sun Aug 24 2pm
Veterans Memorial Bldg.
Downtown Danville

Prisontown

Cast

The Writer----- Lee Osorio

Setting

Lumpkin, Georgia

Time

What feels like a lifetime ago (aka 2017)



Lee Osorio is a past Foundation Artist in Residence who joins us as part of the 2025 Eugene O'Neill Festival as playwright and actor in his one-person play *Prisontown*. Lee is an acclaimed actor, director, educator, playwright, and audio-book narrator based in Atlanta and New York. As an actor, he is a seven-time Suzi Bass Award Nominee and won for Best Male Lead Actor in 2018 for *Richard II*. Lee is the recipient of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House Carey Perloff Fellowship which is awarded to an established theatre artist who desires to transition into a writer. Lee holds an MFA in Acting from Brown/Trinity Rep. He is a proud member of Actors' Equity and SAG-AFTRA.

About the Artist in Residence Program: The Artist in Residence program hosts artists and scholars from across the country and beyond to work in the beauty and quiet of the same hills that inspired Eugene O'Neill. Thank you to the San Damiano Retreat Center for providing accommodations for the Travis Bogard Fellows.

Director's Notes

Lee Osorio's *Prisontown* arrives at a moment when we are being forced to confront the moral and human cost of mass incarceration in America—particularly in California, where the prison system continues to disproportionately impact communities of color. What makes this play so urgent is not only its political relevance, but its emotional depth. Like the work of Eugene O'Neill, *Prisontown* grapples with the weight of inherited trauma, fractured family bonds, and the deep yearning for redemption in the face of systems that seem immovable.



O'Neill understood that the personal is always political—that the intimate struggles within a family are often reflections of a society in crisis. Osorio follows in that tradition, but with a 21st-century lens trained on the prison industrial complex and its far-reaching consequences. His characters are achingly human, caught in a web of injustice, love, and survival.

This play asks us not just to witness the truth—but to feel it, to reckon with it, and to carry it with us. I am honored to help shepherd this production of *Prisontown* and to share this powerful story that insists on our shared humanity.

Richard Perez, *Artistic Director, Town Hall Theatre, Lafayette*



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Bios

Milton Cordero (Projection Designer) is thrilled to be part of the *Prison Town* production. Cordero started his career in film and theater (actor and designer) at a young age. Eventually, he explored the use of multimedia in live performances, which led to a career in projection design. Cordero's projection designs have been seen on stages in New York, Atlanta, California and Puerto Rico. @mcorderodesigns miltoncordero.com Milton would like to dedicate this performance to the memory of his wife Sharon Estela.

Claudia Jenkins Martinez is a Sound Designer based in Dallas, Texas. Recent works include: A Dallas Hedda, Bishop Arts Theatre Center; H*llo K*tty Syndrome, Undermain Theatre; Cry it Out, Stage Door Theatre; Primary Trust, Dallas Theater Center; Natasha, Pierre and The Great Comet of 1812, Theatre Three; The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, Circle Theatre. Much love to Austin and Georgia.
@claud_jenkinmartinez

Richard Perez (Director) is a director, actor, educator, and playwright. He recently relocated to the Bay Area from Michigan where he has been a theatre professor for the last ten years. During that time, he was also active in the Chicago theatre and television industry. He has served as the Artistic Director, Associate Artistic Director, and Managing Director of the Bloomington Playwrights Project, Chicago Dramatists, and Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, respectively. His directing credits include *The Mercy Swing* (New York Fringe Festival) and *Nocturnal* (Kennedy Center). Stage roles include Gabe in *Dinner with Friends* and Evan in *Sweat*. Television appearances include *Chicago Fire*, *Chicago Med*, *Electric Dreams*, and the recurring role of Councilman Ortiz, on the second season of *Boss*.

“ One of the central questions of the play is **‘how much of an activist are you?’** and along with that question comes **‘what do I do?’**

The **easy way** is to give money. There are people that I give to monthly, and I always encourage people if you want to do something super simple, give however much you are able to give in this moment.

The **second thing** is to really reflect on where you can have the biggest impact, which really means who is closest to you, what can you do in your community, start small. There are conversations that we can have with people that we love that we know think differently than us.

Start small, but start in your own community, and start. Don't get paralyzed by how big these problems are.

The **impact you can have** is meaningful, even if it doesn't feel like you're solving the big, big problem.”

Lee Osorio; *Prisontown* playwright and actor

By Jeanita Lyman; “A Play for this Moment” *Pleasanton Weekly* Aug 8, 2025

Special Thanks



Our first 2025 Festival play *Prisontown* took the time, talent and energies of many to come together. Thank you to the Board of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House and Advisory Board for their dedication to celebrating and promoting the legacy of O'Neill with artistic, education, and library programs. We'd also like to thank our partners: the National Park Service for their leadership and resourcefulness, the Town of Danville for their ongoing support of Festival activities including this year's Shop, Dine, See a Play promotion, and the Museum of the San Ramon Valley for promoting and providing space for Festival activities. Thank you to Alphagraphics and D-Code Technology for assistance with printing and graphic design.

Special thanks to the following individuals: Ali Bodden, Joaquin Doyle-Matte, Artistic Director Eric Fraisher Hayes, Rev. Deborah Lee, Chuck Lewis, Ian Murdock and all of our volunteers and patrons. Thank You!

Thank You!

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House is most grateful to you, our members, for your generous contributions that enable us to provide artistic and educational programs that celebrate and promote O'Neill's vision and legacy. (Members as of mid-Aug 2025)

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And a big THANK YOU to all our valued **ACTOR** level members!

We'd also like to recognize the **Town of Danville** and the **Town Council** for its continued support of the Festival and its events throughout Town, as well as for establishing our Friendship City relationship with New Ross, Ireland.

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Eugene O'Neill.
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