



Eugene O'Neill.
FOUNDATION, TAO HOUSE

EUGENE O'NEILL FESTIVAL 2025
PRESENTS

THE HAIRY APE

Written by Eugene O'Neill

Directed by Eric Fraisher Hayes

"I AIN'T GOT NO PAST, NOR
NOTHIN' THAT'S COMING, ONLY
WHAT'S NOW--AND THAT DON'T
BELONG."

Sep 5-7/11-14

(Thu-Sat 7:30pm, Sun 1:30pm)

Shows at Tao House with shuttle from
Museum of the San Ramon Valley

Sep 20 (Sat 7:30pm)

and Sep 21 (Sun 1:30pm)

Shows at the Village Theatre

www.eugeneoneill.org • taohouse.eonf@gmail.com

Other Festival Events

Prisontown by Lee Osorio

Aug 23, 24 (Sat 7:30pm, Sun 2pm)
Veterans Memorial Hall/Senior Center, Danville

Shop, Dine, See a Play

Aug 23–Sep 21
Downtown Danville
Get 10% off at participating businesses!

O’Neill’s “The Hairy Ape”

Sep 5–7/11–14 at Tao House
Sep 20 & 21 at Village Theatre

Seeking to Belong: Poetry & Paintings

Sep 5–30
Museum of the San Ramon Valley

Secrets of O’Neill’s Danville, A Historic Walk

Sat Sep 13 (10am)
O’Neill Commemorative Park

Whiskey Stroll

Wed Sep 17 (6–8pm)
Auburn Lounge
Whiskey tastes and live tunes around downtown Danville - \$25

O’Neill Birthday Tribute

Wed Oct 15 (6pm)
The Growler

View all Festival events:



The Eugene O’Neill Foundation, Tao House

in collaboration with the National Park Service,
the Town of Danville,
& the Museum of the San Ramon Valley welcomes you to

Eugene O’Neill Festival 2025
Seeking to Belong

Director’s Notes

A large part of the underlying power of Eugene O’Neill’s plays is rooted in a perpetual sense of restlessness. Like the playwright himself, O’Neill’s characters are plagued by doubts, fears, and a desire to find relief. Many of these fictional figures feel they do not belong and because O’Neill is a good dramatist, he sends his characters out into the worlds of their plays to wrestle and reckon with what is amiss. Often these characters, after reflection, choose retreat.

But one of O’Neill’s desperate misfits takes a different tack. Robert “Yank” Smith in *The Hairy Ape* finds himself equally out of place and in pain, but instead of manufacturing a private refuge, he barrels headfirst into the world around him seeking to prove how he fits, not how to escape the world. Driven by an unmatched desire to find where he belongs, Yank is O’Neill’s ultimate seeker.

Historically, *The Hairy Ape* gets attention for its commentary on social class, but with this production we are striving for a more personal journey. An ensemble of five actors will embody the imaginings of a single man as he struggles with who he is and where he is supposed to be. On the surface, the hard-boiled Yank seems very different from most of us, but through the experience of witnessing his desire to feel connected, audiences will immediately recognize something within themselves.

Eric Fraisher Hayes, Artistic Director, EONF

Dramaturg's Notes

Welcome to the "Seeking to Belong" Eugene O'Neill Festival! At first glance, the two productions of this festival, *Prison-town* and *The Hairy Ape*, could not be more different. These dramatic works differ wildly in terms of plot, characters, and setting. Yet, there are significant and compelling bridges between the two works. As you watch the powerful productions of this year's Festival, we invite you to consider how notions of belonging shape your experiences, your community, and your hopes for the future.

Beth Wynstra, Dramaturg
Associate Professor of English, Babson College

Thank You!

Our Festival 2025 headliner play *The Hairy Ape* took the time, talent, and energies of many to come together. Thank you to the Board of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, the Advisory Board, and Ali Bodden 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 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 also to Alphagraphics and D-Code Technology for assistance with printing and graphic design.



THE CAST OF
"THE HAIRY APE"
REHEARSING IN THE
OLD BARN



Special Thanks to our Partners the National Park Service

This year, we are especially grateful for your leadership, resourcefulness, and resolve as we continue to celebrate and promote the legacy of Eugene O'Neill together.



THE HAIRY APE

A Comedy of Ancient and Modern Life

By Eugene O'Neill

Directed by Eric Fraisher Hayes

CHARACTERS

Yank-----James Hiser
Paddy, ensemble-----Josiah Polhemus
Long, ensemble-----Willem Long
Mildred, ensemble-----Monica Rose Slater
Aunt, ensemble-----Rachael Richman
IWW Secretary, ensemble-----David Boyll

SCENES

Prologue: A Place of Safety.

Scene I: The fireman's forecastle of an ocean liner –
an hour after sailing from New York.

Scene II: Promenade deck, two days out – morning.

Scene III: The stokehole. A few minutes later.

Scene IV: Same as Scene I. Half an hour later.

15 minute intermission

Scene V: Fifth Avenue, New York. Three weeks later.

Scene VI: Blackwell's Island. The next night.

Scene VII: In the city. About a month later.

Scene VIII: In the city. Twilight of the next day.

Epilogue: A Place of Belonging.

Total run time 90 minutes

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director----- Eric Fraisher Hayes
Stage Manager----- Sara Harris
Set and Projection Designer----- Carlos-Antonio Aceves
Sound Designer/Music Director----- Rob Evans
Lighting Designer----- Jeff Beyer
Costume Designer----- Jeff Hamby
Movement Consultant-----Michele Apriña Leavy
Dialect Consultant-----Robin Taylor
Dramaturg----- Beth Wynstra
Assistant Director----- Chad Deverman
Lead Builder-----Eddie Orrego

Cast

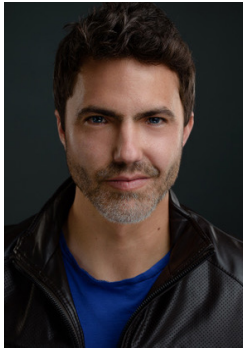


James Hiser (Yank) Regional theater credits include Capital Stage (CapStage), CenterREP, Shotgun Players, Marin Shakespeare Company, Town Hall Theatre, and the Elephant Theatre Company (Los Angeles). Film and television credits include national theatrical releases, CBS, Netflix, the Internet, and commercials.



Josiah Polhemus (Paddy/Ensemble) is an actor/writer/director/producer whose father grew up in Danville and was once called out by Carlotta Monterey O'Neill at age 2 for wearing no shoes in the local market. He played the role of Ezra Manon last year in the Festival's immersive *Mourning Becomes Electra*. He is an MFA Graduate of

the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. His films *First X*, *Pause*, and *Vision* won awards for Best Film(s) at various festivals around the country. Upcoming films: *The Falling* and *Office of Human Affairs* (2025). He is a disability rights advocate and is working to pioneer more inclusive casts and crews in the film industry. Want to donate? Ask him after the show. He thanks Eric and cast and crew for this experience.



Willem Long (Long/Ensemble) is proud to revisit *The Hairy Ape* with Eugene O'Neill Foundation, having been part of the previous production 15 years ago. Favorite roles with EONF include Rob in *Beyond the Horizon*, Dion Anthony in *The Great God Brown*, and Jack Arnold in *Shell Shock*. Other notable performances include Billy in *Tribes* (Phoenix Theatre AZ.) Caliban in *Tempest Redux* (Odyssey Theatre L.A.),

Young Salinger in *A Life in the Rye* (Theater for the New City N.Y.C.), Paul/Pete in *The Octaroon* (Capital Stage Sacramento), Man in *Tender Napalm* (Anton's Well Theatre Co.) Willem is a graduate of the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. He would like to thank his wife Isabel and son Ari who made his participation in this production possible, and to whom he owes so much of his happiness. Thanks also to his friends and family for supporting his passions.



Monica Rose Slater (Mildred/Ensemble) is a Brazilian-American singer, actor, and educator. Since moving from Virginia to San Francisco in 2021, she has worked with Oakland Theater Project (*Ghost Quartet*, BATCC nomination Best Principal Actor), Word for Word (*Annunciation*, *Stories* by Kevin Barry), 42nd Street Moon

(*She Loves Me*, *Falsettos*), Lamplighters (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Iolanthe*), Berkeley Playhouse (*Cinderella*) and Cinna-bar (*The Sound of Music*, *Oklahoma!*). She holds a Master of Music from the San Francisco Conservatory, where she studied opera, and teaches private voice as well as with Accompany, a nonprofit, community choir. As a producer and actor, Monica brought *Two Sisters and a Piano* (TBA CA\$H Grant) to the stage with Teatro de las Tias. Coming up, you can see her in *Hello Girls* at Ross Valley Players and swinging for *Into the Woods* at San Francisco Playhouse. Love and gratitude to her parents, Vovó e Vovô, Tia Liane, and Glennys.

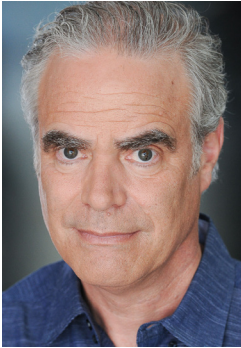
@monicaroseslater monicaroseslater.com



Rachael Richman (Aunt/Ensemble) is delighted to join *The Hairy Ape*. THEATER: *Innocence* (San Francisco Opera), *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (San Francisco Playhouse), *The Karamazovs* (New Ohio Theatre), *Funeral Game* (Potrero Stage), *Portrait of an Angel*, *a Lion*, *a Monster* (Central Stage, Theatrelab), *Aunt Leaf* (Hudson Opera, HERE Arts Center), *Body Drama* (Whitney

Museum), *Soulographie* (La MaMa ETC), *Offending the Audience* (Flea Theater), *The Speakeasy* (Palace Theater), and *Man of La Mancha* (Custom Made Theatre) for which she received SFBATCC Award for Principal Actress. FILM: *The Karamazovs* (NYC Indie Theatre Film Festival award winner), *Janelle's Baby* (Santiago Film Festival award winner). Co-created many works including immersive adventure *Private(i)* (Brooklyn Navy Yard/ BEAT Festival) and *Prime* (Art Monastery Project), which toured internationally.

@richman.rachael www.thekaramazovs.com



David Boyll (IWW Secretary/Ensemble) is deeply honored to be working once again on hallowed ground at Tao House. David is a past recipient of the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for his work in Bess Wohl's *American Hero* at Custom Made Theatre Company. In 2024, he portrayed Seth Beckwith in *Mourning Becomes Electra* at the O'Neill Festival. Recently, David portrayed Selsdon Mowbray in *Noises Off*

at Palo Alto Players and film legend Buster Keaton in *Chaplin and Keaton on the Set of Limelight* at The Pear Theatre. David is a working actor, voice-over artist, and photographer who lives among "the fog people" in San Francisco with Molly, his wife of 33 years, their two rescue cats, and his hard-working vintage cameras.

Production Team

Eric Fraisher Hayes (Director) has been with EONF since 2008. Over his tenure, the Foundation has become the leading producer of the plays of Eugene O'Neill in the world. He has directed 34 of O'Neill's 51 titles ranging from the much-heralded *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and *The Iceman Cometh* to the rarely produced *Days Without End* and *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. As a scholar practitioner, Eric is a frequent contributor to the Eugene O'Neill Review where he writes about his experiences directing the plays of America's greatest playwright. His productions of *Hughie*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Welded*, *Shell Shock*, "Anna Christie," and adaptations of the early O'Neill one-acts *Warnings*, *Before Breakfast*, and *A Wife for a Life* have been performed at the Eugene O'Neill International Festival of Theatre in New Ross, Ireland. Additionally, in 2024, he directed the world

premiere of *Teddy* by Irish playwright Sheila Forsey. This October he will be returning to Ireland to direct the premiere of Forsey's *The Memory Room* as well as remounting this production of *The Hairy Ape*. Thank you to Nikki and Michael Hayes, and Megan Amanda Miller for supporting Eric's artistic career. Without their help he would not be doing the work you see today.

Sara Harris (Stage Manager) is excited to be joining the Eugene O'Neill Festival at Tao House for the first time. They are a theater maker and educator based in San Francisco. Props and lighting credits include *Macbeth*, *Legends of Realism*, *Rocky Horror Show* (Las Positas College), *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*, *Next to Normal* (Yale Dramatic Association). Sara also plays saxophone and serves as the Production Manager for the San Francisco Pride Band.

Carlos-Antonio Aceves (Set and Projection Designer) is a multidisciplinary Designer and Theater Maker whose practice focuses on new works and social justice theater. Selected scenic and multimedia designs credits include: *Returning to Haifa*, Golden Thread Productions; *Yaga*, Marin Theatre; *The Displaced*, Crowded Fire Theater; *Breakdown*, San Francisco Mime Troupe; *PrEP Play, or Blue Parachute*, New Conservatory Theatre Center; *Dream Hou\$e*, Shotgun Players; *Justice*, Marin Theatre; *Carrie: The Musical* (projection design), American Conservatory Theater YC; *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, West Edge Opera; *Cyrano*, Aurora Theatre Company; and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, Shotgun Players. Carlos-Antonio extends his heartfelt gratitude to the creative and production team of *The Hairy Ape*, and the Eugene O'Neill Foundation for their unwavering commitment and tireless efforts. Explore more of Carlos-Antonio's past and upcoming work at: CarlosDesignsSets.myportfolio.com

Rob Evans' (Sound Designer and Music Director) work for the O'Neill Festival includes designing productions of *The Iceman Cometh*, *Desire Under the Elms*, *The Emperor Jones*, *Hughie*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, "Anna Christie", and *Mourning Becomes Electra*; and for staged readings: *Dynamo*, *Bound East for Cardiff*, *Days Without End*, *The Great God Brown*, *Warnings Before Breakfast*, and *A Wife For A Life*. Other credits include *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Good People*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Laughing Stock*, *Lend Me A Tenor*, *Copenhagen*, *Proof*, and *The Seagull*. Additionally, he has composed original scores for *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Twelfth Night*.

Jeff Beyer (Lighting Designer) is a Lighting and Effects designer from California whose work spans stages, attractions, and cruise ships across the United States and the Bahamas. Of all his projects, lighting the Old Barn stands out as his favorite; his first show there was *Chris Christophersen* in 2013. The lighting system has evolved under his direction, growing from a basic "2 lights on a pole" setup to today's advanced system. Blending artistry with technical skill, Jeff aims to craft environments that transport audiences and leave a lasting impression.

Jeff Hamby (Costume Designer) is a graduate of the San Francisco State University Theatre Design MFA Program. Originally from North Carolina, Jeff attended the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and History. Since then he has worked with companies such as Mountain Play Association of Marin, Children's Theatre of Charlotte, American Conservatory Theater, Pennsylvania State University, and The Lost Colony. Jeff is the Costume Shop Manager at Palo Alto Children's Theatre and teaches Costume Design and Technology at Solano Community College.

Michele Apriña Leavy (Movement Consultant) Regional choreography and acting credits include: American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Center Rep, and California Shakespeare Theater, among others. Farther afield: Theatre Key West (Florida), The Elephant Theatre Company (Los Angeles), and Theatre 167 (NYC). Michele is a faculty member with the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance.

Robin Taylor (Dialect Consultant) has worn many hats in a 50-year career in the theatre. Productions of the O'Neill Foundation provided rich opportunities for him to coach actor's dialects. *The Iceman Cometh* required 14 accents, including Dutch! He learned to teach dialects while mastering the International Phonetic Alphabet under the tutelage of Edith Skinner at the Juilliard School. *The Time of Our Lives*, by Deborah Felle, reveals the turbulence at the Juilliard Drama Department while Robin trained there as part of the infamous Group IV. His last performance in the O'Neill Festival was as director/singer in *A Kurt Weill Cabaret*.

Beth Wynstra (Dramaturg) is Associate Professor of English at Babson College. She is the author of *Vows, Veils, and Masks: The Performance of Marriage in the Plays of Eugene O'Neill* (University of Iowa Press, 2023) and is the Vice President of the Eugene O'Neill Society.

Chad Deverman (Assistant Director) is a former actor who crossed over to the dark side and now works in Tech. As a performer he was lucky enough to work with such companies as ACT, TheatreWorks, SF Playhouse, Aurora Theatre, CalShakes, and more. Chad also coordinated and taught education programs for the Eugene O'Neill Foundation from 2010–16. He'd like to thank Eric for the opportunity to tag along on this ride to the zoo.

O'Neill International Festival of Theatre New Ross, Ireland Oct 8–12

Join us in Ireland this October for what promises to be another unforgettable trip filled with theatre, music, and local New Ross highlights. The International Festival of Theatre will feature The Eugene O'Neill Foundation's production of *The Hairy Ape*, directed by Eric Fraisher Hayes, as well as *The Memory Room* by Sheila Forsey.

Tickets here:



Whiskey Stroll Sep 17 6–8pm

Join Irish shanty singers and Festival friends for a unique pairing of whiskey tastes with our downtown Danville *Shop and Dine* business partners. Advanced tickets \$25 donation (\$30 at door if not sold out). Check in at the O'Neill Festival concierge table (patio/back room Auburn Lounge) to receive a wristband and souvenir shot glass.



Tickets here:



Shop, Dine, See a Play Downtown Danville Aug 23–Sep 21

**10%
off!**



*View participating
businesses*

Festival patrons enjoy 10% discount at over 3 dozen local Shop and Dine business partners. Show your Eugene O'Neill Festival receipt email at participating establishments. Shop local and support the arts.

Seeking to Belong: Poetry & Paintings Sep 5–30



Join us for a display of poetry and paintings from local artists and makers and beyond! View creative works inspired by this year's "Seeking to Belong" artistic theme, on display at the Museum of the San Ramon Valley through September. View "Seeking to Belong" artistic works in the Museum "waiting room" during open Museum hours.

We welcome our New Ross Delegation:

John Fleming, Bridin Murphy, Eamonn Hore, and Alan Fitzhenry and from the Consul General of Ireland's Office Micheál Smith, Naoise Kenny, and Elizabeth Creely.

Thank You to Our Supporters

The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House board is most grateful to you, our supporters, for your generous contributions that enable us to provide artistic, library, and educational programs that celebrate and promote O'Neill's vision and legacy.

WE ARE HERE BECAUSE OF YOU!

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

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our valued
supporters:



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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