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The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter

WINTER 1986

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Princess Kukachin (Elf Fairservis) bids farewell to her grandfather Kublai, the Great Kaan (Brock Putnam) in the Sharon (CT) Playhouse's 1978 mounting of Marco Millions adapted and directed by Walter Fairservis. Photo by Martha B. Porter. The Newsletter's first illustration (in the January 1979 issue) returns to mark the completion, with this issue, of the publication's first adventurous decade.



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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

With this issue the Newsletter concludes its first decade of publication. Ten years, thirty issues, and more than 1,150 pages! I must admit that I hadn't expected such growth and longevity when I sent out the 16-page, looseleaf, pictureless and corner-stapled "preview issue" in January 1977. Nor could I have guessed that the Newsletter, by providing a vehicle for communication among O'Neill lovers around the world, would inspire the formation, a few years later, of a Eugene O'Neill Society. The Newsletter now has subscribers in 20 countries and 41 of the United States; and if congratulations are to be distributed on this tenth anniversary, it is they who deserve it. Their (your) loyalty, letters, articles, reviews and news items have permitted it to survive its salad days without, so far, overstaying its welcome. I wish I could thank each contributor by name, but the names are too many. So I have chosen, instead, to include in (or with) the next issue a cumulative index of this and all previous issues. That, if I can manage it, will be a service to scholars as well as a tribute to the many who have made my first editorial decade such an enlightening adventure.

I mentioned that the Newsletter has subscribers in 41 states, and that reminds me of one goal for its second decade: to increase that number to 50. Michael Manheim was surely right to salute O'Neill as "America's national playwright" (Summer-Fall 1985, pp. 17-23); and there must be individuals and institutions with an interest in him in Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico and Wyoming. If you know of any, send me the names and addresses and I will rush them a sample issue.

No new pictures this time: none were received! Which gave me the chance, on the cover, to reprint the very first photo that ever appeared in the Newsletter--on page 19 of the January 1979 issue, in which I reported on the exciting and moving performance of Marco Millions at the Sharon Playhouse in Connecticut the previous summer. The picture is offered, not only as a reminder of the Newsletter's rich past, but as a pre-centennial assurance that the allegedly unwieldy and unmanageable works of O'Neill's middle years are, if imaginatively treated, eminently playable, economically feasible, and just as capable of wowing an audience as the late works on which theatre companies continue to concentrate. Even more capable, in fact, in the case of Marco, because it requires no stars, abounds in comedy and satire, and (as the Sharon production proved) lends itself to a "story theatre" approach that permits doubling of roles and minimal sets and props.

The present issue concludes the reports of the 1986 Boston conference; features reviews of two important new books; continues the coverage of the recent Broadway revival of Long Day's Journey Into Night with Sheila Hickey Garvey's interview with Peter Gallagher, its Edmund, and Trudy Drucker's reassessment of the play's text and characters in the light of that production (that saga will conclude with a Spring survey of English critics' reactions); and begins with Ronald Wainscott's detailed study of Philip Moeller's direction of the Dynamo premiere in 1929. Professor Wainscott's essay was first presented as a part of the Competitive Panel in Theatre History during the August 1985 American Theatre Association convention in Toronto. The unpublished materials by O'Neill that are quoted in it are printed with the kind permission of the Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University [copyright (c) 1986 Yale University]. The news section is one of the richest yet: word of an exciting 1988 conference in Belgium, abstracts of doctoral dissertations, reports and reviews of recent O'Neill productions and publications, etc.--even a gaffe in the almost-never-faulty New York Times Crossword! All that's missing is the traditional "Society Section": there was nothing new to report in the short time since the last issue. But the news section ends with details of the Society's triple-header at the MLA Convention in New York City on Tuesday, December 30--a triptych that assures us a substantial Society section in the Spring issue.

Thanks for an exciting decade. With your help, the second will be even greater!

HARNESSING O'NEILL'S FURIES: PHILIP MOELLER DIRECTS DYNAMO

Eugene O'Neill's Dynamo is usually remembered as one of the playwright's intriguing follies in which a young man throws over the god of his family and ends up on his knees praying to an electrical dynamo at the local power works; or as a spectacular vehicle for an imposing powerhouse setting by Lee Simonson; or even as a memorable opportunity for enticing Claudette Colbert to flaunt her "tingling, invigorating femininity."¹ Dynamo, however, was also a magnificent achievement in stage direction by Philip Moeller. For seven years this director demonstrated repeatedly an unusual sensitivity to the themes and styles of O'Neill's always changing experiments. Not only were all five of Moeller's O'Neill productions faithful presentations; they were also exciting and dynamic in his use of space and enhanced by intense acting performances. Despite the fact that O'Neill asserted only three months after opening night that "Dynamo doesn't count,"² Moeller's production brought the play very close to success.

Even in the failure of Dynamo, Moeller with his designer Lee Simonson created dramatic moments and bold stage pictures as provocative as any other in the theatre of New York. Moeller's simultaneous staging in confining houses and his economical use of the limited playing space on the four levels of a towering, majestic powerhouse provided O'Neill's play with a stunning production. The commitment of director, designer and actors to Dynamo kept the audience interested and often fascinated despite what many critics both then and in retrospect found to be tedious events and stilted language.

In his positive review of Dynamo, which opened on February 11, 1929,³ Brooks Atkinson observed that O'Neill had clearly "cut loose from the realistic drama, perhaps for all time."⁴ An overwhelming majority of reviewers, however, lamented the squandering of such an astonishing production on poor dramatic material. Richard Skinner, for example, called Dynamo "a case of immense talent in playwriting, acting and production all being wasted on the immature profundities of a man whose intelligence cannot catch up with his chaotic and intense feelings."⁵ As with the successful Strange Interlude of the previous season, Moeller and the Theatre Guild served O'Neill well with powerful, perceptive direction of problematic material; but Dynamo appeared to be a dramaturgical blunder.

At age forty-eight the talkative, inordinately sensitive but sophisticated, somewhat mannered and romantic director had been staging productions for the Theatre Guild and Washington Square Players since their inception. Before beginning with O'Neill, Moeller was associated primarily with comedy such as Arms and the Man and Mr. Pim Passes By. He had, however, also staged important experiments in Processional and The Adding Machine. Educated at New York University and Columbia, the articulate Moeller was a sometime playwright who displayed a strong interest in all the fine arts which attracted him to European plays and methods, and led him to an eclectic and almost cavalier directing style.⁶

"There are no excuses in the theatre,"⁷ Moeller was fond of saying, always willing to accept the responsibility for failure, but adamant in striving for just the right approach to a play. Yet he set about each directorial task rather casually and romantically, as if the assigned play were a sweeping piece of music which could be best appreciated and produced if interpreted intuitively rather than analytically.⁸ "I consider myself the orchestra leader,"⁹ he said, "who must blend all the tones so that they become parts of one composition."

After his triumph with Strange Interlude Moeller was suddenly regarded by critics and journalists as a very serious theatre artist. In an interview which appeared the day before Dynamo premiered, for example, Moeller was now described as "this intense and deeply mystical interpreter of O'Neill's tragedies."¹⁰ Subsequent reviews of Dynamo, after expressing bitter disappointment with O'Neill's work, praised Moeller's effectiveness, imagination, picturization, resourcefulness and clarity.¹¹ Robert Garland, for example, wrote that Moeller's direction was "so skillful . . . so fortissimo with the good spots, so piano with the poor, that Mr. Moeller's mind would be interesting

to read."¹² Intending praise, Atkinson remarked that the committed performance and its direction were "as broad and audacious as [O'Neill's] story."¹³

Although in retrospect O'Neill blamed himself entirely for rushing the play to production and failing to attend any rehearsals because he had left the country with Carlotta Monterey,¹⁴ his absence may have helped to keep Moeller dedicated to the script, which needed much cutting and nursing. O'Neill began composition of the play in 1927, and it was not completed until the fall of 1928;¹⁵ yet he immediately submitted it to the Theatre Guild by mail and was never present to work on cutting or revision with Moeller.¹⁶

Cutting and revision were necessary, however, and O'Neill's notes and guidelines which accompanied his script gave Moeller and the Guild no specific instructions about cutting.¹⁷ As Lawrence Langner later wrote, "we greatly missed Gene at rehearsals for clarification and cutting, and had to do the best we could."¹⁸ Moeller, as always, tried to be as faithful as practical to O'Neill's intentions; but without the playwright for conference and approval, Moeller was forced to revise on the basis of his own predilections and with the endorsement of the Theatre Guild Board.¹⁹

While he made extensive cuts throughout the long play for streamlining, the promptbooks are much longer than the first edition.²⁰ The most significant changes which affected staging, however, occurred in Act III. Moeller and Simonson eliminated the exterior of the powerhouse and created a large open construction which revealed all areas of the plant at once. As a result, O'Neill's two exterior²¹ and three interior scenes of Act III were played continuously with no scene changes.

Moeller became obsessed with the ideas of Dynamo and managed to infect not only the cast but the production team with his enthusiasm and commitment. "Phil seemed almost to hypnotize himself with the mood of the play," Theresa Helburn recalled. "He became possessed by the unreal, mystic values."²² During preproduction preparations in December, and throughout rehearsals in January and early February, Moeller took Simonson and his stage manager Herbert Biberman on numerous field trips to power plants all over New York and Connecticut. (Stevenson, Connecticut was the specific site O'Neill had had in mind when writing the play.) In the first week of February Moeller even took the principal actors to Connecticut to get a first hand sense of a modern electrical power plant.²³ The director clearly wanted to pursue all available preparatory avenues in O'Neill's absence.

As an experimental work, Dynamo used extensive asides as in Strange Interlude and simultaneous staging as in Desire Under the Elms; but the effects of these devices were considerably different here. In addition, the use of sound, especially non-musical sound, was more extensive than in any previous O'Neill play. The production's "continuous and generous use of sounds and noises"²⁴ was specifically desired²⁵ by O'Neill as recurring dramatic motifs intended to enhance the onstage action. He even considered sound a significant structural device for the play and stressed in his instructions to the Guild that the sound effects were "not incidental noises but significant dramatic overtones that are an integral part of . . . the whole play."²⁶ Moeller and Simonson responded enthusiastically to O'Neill's plea by creating an impressive network of sound devices beneath and above the stage.

Throughout Act I, O'Neill wanted occasional thunder and lightning warning of a brewing storm which finally broke at the end of the act. His notes said the thunder should have "a menacing, brooding quality as if some Electrical God were on the hills impelling all these people."²⁷ In production the thunderstorm was properly managed and effectively executed,²⁸ for Moeller and Simonson responded with a five by five foot thunder drum mounted beneath the stage and amplified with a microphone.²⁹ In addition they used a motor-driven wind whistle below and a rainbox at stage level. All sound effects were manipulated from a control panel³⁰ and executed periodically at special, often ironic points within the script.³¹

More impressive in the theatre, however, was the manipulation of the powerhouse sounds in Act III. Although Moeller introduced the ominous dynamo sound early in Act I ("its whirring rhythm sets the pace for all the proceedings"),³² the most dynamic uses of this sound occurred when the powerhouse setting was onstage. Seeking a background of rushing water and the "harsh, throaty, metallic purr of the dynamo,"³³ O'Neill found this special sound "symbolic and mysterious and moving."³⁴ Furthermore, he wanted the powerhouse sounds not only to provide an aural environment, but to seem to control or incite much of the onstage action.³⁵ Moeller reported that the results provided "an unconscious accompaniment to the dialogue,"³⁶ a device which was not only continuously at work in the background, but varied in intensity to accent the action of Act III.

These numerous sound cues were marked throughout the promptbook and became much louder and more frequent as the play built to a climax in the final scene.³⁷ The effects were manipulated by adjusting the amplifier from the control board since the dynamo and water sounds were created by a small generator and a low pressure vacuum line, each equipped with its own microphone.³⁸ Furthermore, the speakers for the dynamo's "siren hum"³⁹ were mounted inside the onstage dynamo,⁴⁰ thus enhancing the immediacy of the effect.

O'Neill gave all characters asides, usually initiating scenes with interior monologues and often inserting back-to-back asides in a manner similar to Strange Interlude. This time, however, the asides were less provocative, less vital and, most significantly, less contradictory with their spoken words. As Euphemia Wyatt noted, "the two families in Dynamo are very simple folk, their words and their thoughts usually tally." Consequently, she found the device "dull and repetitious."⁴¹ Likewise, Littell found that the asides "served rather more as necessary autobiography than as illumination of the secret places of the heart."⁴² Dynamo, unfortunately, lacked the individualized "subjective responses" of intelligent people which had made Strange Interlude so fascinating.⁴³

O'Neill himself eventually realized the unsuitability of asides to Dynamo, recognizing that they were a "special expression for a special type of modern neurotic, disintegrated soul . . . [and they were] quite alien to essential psychological form of Dynamo's characters."⁴⁴ This, more than production problems, seemed to O'Neill a chief failing of the play.

Moeller, however, admired the structure of Dynamo, whose asides served as "a sort of contrapuntal melody" to the dialogue.⁴⁵ His method for delivery of the asides was similar to his use of arrested motion in Strange Interlude; but according to his description in the promptbook the method was more obvious and abrupt than before. "Whenever a thought is being said," he wrote,

all other people are static . . . and the person beginning the thought has the liberty of movement. When a person finishing a thought begins a speech to the others, all move out of their held positions simultaneously and the person speaking begins with an attack to emphasize the change in character of his or her speech. The held positions are not only normal repose, an extended hand or a gesture is held thru another persons [sic] thought.⁴⁶

Furthermore, the actors were spread all over the stage on different levels, and thus the simultaneous reanimation seemed more pervasive.

As in Desire Under the Elms, O'Neill wanted simultaneous exterior and interior action, often in three or four different areas of the stage; but this time he needed a pair of two-story houses on stage at once with a playable area between. He even sent sketches of possible settings which clearly demonstrated what he had in mind--a removable wall scheme--but Moeller and Simonson constructed a very different environment while maintaining in principle the basic arrangement submitted by the playwright.⁴⁷

Always more interested in setting designs as architecture than as painting--in designs which achieved "the balance of structural surfaces and the play of light upon them"⁴⁸--Simonson produced a pragmatic but stunning design which offered Moeller more freedom to manipulate and arrange onstage action than would have been possible in O'Neill's scheme. With Dynamo Simonson and Moeller harmoniously complemented one another's conceptions by producing and using a space which expressed the play's essential rhythms and moods.

Mounted in the four-year-old Martin Beck Theatre, a standard house with a shallow stage on the then "unfashionable" side of Eighth Avenue,⁴⁹ Dynamo had two basic settings which varied markedly according to the selective lighting incorporated. Although O'Neill's suggested plans were realistic in appearance, he wrote the Guild that it would not be necessary to maintain a realistic format. Taking the playwright at his word and following his own principle of elimination of detail to heighten scenic effect, Simonson produced a constructivist design which served Moeller quite well,⁵⁰ but troubled the playwright when he saw photographs. In retrospect O'Neill believed that Dynamo was too dependent upon director and stage designer to be effective as drama.⁵¹

Critics, however, were impressed by the settings and Moeller's use of them. He and Simonson boldly employed "a full stage--height and breadth"⁵² to create an environment which was "half symbol, half real,"⁵³ but sweepingly effective, inventive and imaginative.⁵⁴ Most significantly, Moeller created "many unforgettable pictures"⁵⁵ utilizing the variety of levels provided by Simonson and the frequent simultaneous activity suggested by O'Neill.

Given the demands of the settings, Moeller needed the actual stage and finished sets earlier than usual, so the Martin Beck was made available by about February 3 or 4 (a week before opening). Although Simonson had the two set houses ready before the move, the power plant came late. In order to get the four levels and unusual height necessary to rehearse the scenes of Act III, Moeller and Simonson stacked additional platforms on top of one of the flat-roofed houses and connected the levels with rehearsal stairs while the complicated setting was being constructed.⁵⁶

For the first two acts Dynamo needed two houses in contrasting styles, houses which could be opened to reveal upstairs and downstairs interiors that suggested very different life styles and value systems. Seeking a few details to suggest the whole, Simonson built what Robert Benchley labelled "erecto-houses,"⁵⁷ outlines of homes with "skeletonized walls but practical doors."⁵⁸ Neither house was shown in its entirety, as each unit was slightly raked with the offstage end of the house closer to the proscenium line. Each house disappeared right and left into the wings, suggesting that more lay beyond.⁵⁹

Although the houses, at first viewing, seemed to offer little differentiation in their uniform incompleteness, matching door, stair and window placement, and identical color (a nondescript grey-brown),⁶⁰ closer examination reveals that the Fifes' house at stage-left was flat-roofed with a curving, pseudo-Spanish facade along the downstage and stage-right roof lines. By contrast, the Lights' house, stage-right, had a peaked, gabled roof. Furthermore, the furnishings were very distinct in style and color. Dark Victorian furniture in the Lights' house was upholstered in grey, black and dark red; while the Fifes' furniture was of modern design, primarily wicker, colored in green, brown, pink and flowered patterns. Most significant, however, were the oil lamps of the Lights that contrasted to the electric lights of the Fifes.⁶¹ Overall, David Carb found that the houses expressed "the temperament of the people who live in them exactly, were excellent for the purpose, and pictorially effective."⁶²

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this setting was the open space below and between the houses contrasted by the tiny, confining, low-ceilinged rooms inside the houses. Only two set properties appeared on stage outside the houses: a thin, low, grey picket fence running perpendicular to the curtain line and defining the property line,⁶³ and a

tall telephone pole up left-center strung with power lines and watching over the Fife house. Otherwise the stage was bare and backed by a transparency for daytime scenes, and for nocturnal scenes a dark blue cyclorama. The transparency was lit from behind with the projection of a powerhouse in the distance, and the entire stage picture was outlined by black drapes just inside the proscenium arch.⁶⁴

The greatest service such a set provided for the play was the capability of simultaneous staging and scene changing by simply raising and lowering light intensity instead of shifting panels. Therefore, the scenes of Act I which O'Neill meant to be played as if no time lapsed between them were done with no interruption.⁶⁵ Atkinson verified that the action in the four rooms moved "in quick succession";⁶⁶ indeed, here were the smoothest scene transitions in an O'Neill play to date.

One of Moeller's biggest staging problems with this setting was creating interesting compositions despite the small confining rooms of the houses: the possibilities for significant movement or interesting composition seemed all but impossible. Therefore, Moeller gave very specific movement directions to actors when inside the houses, but allowed them his usual freedom when outside. For example, a typical direction of Moeller's in another O'Neill promptbook will read, "cross right," whereas in Dynamo the direction may read "cross 3 steps right."⁶⁷

Of course, this problem was mollified by Moeller's ability to display action simultaneously in different rooms and houses as well as outside. Moeller not only followed O'Neill's indications of simultaneous action, but by showing all areas at once, continued with additional domestic action which would have been unseen if O'Neill's wall scheme were utilized. Production stage directions indicate that actors in both houses were always on stage and in view. Lights were brighter on the scenes with dialogue and asides, but no area was entirely extinguished.⁶⁸ Consequently, when characters or a family were not in the written scene, they assumed "a semblance of living naturally in their quarters,"⁶⁹ or as the promptbook states, "small business may be engaged in by those in the dimmed areas." When a character began an aside, however, all characters in all parts of the stage froze.⁷⁰

Moeller often had actors at work in all parts of the setting at once. In the first scene, for example, Reverend Light was in his house downstairs while Mrs. Light was upstairs, Reuben was outside at the fence, and the Fife family were in their house both upstairs and down. Asides were delivered from three different locations, so the freezes moved about the stage.⁷¹

Simonson's powerhouse setting of Act III remains one of his most memorable achievements. Barrett Clark called this design and Moeller's use of it "a remarkable piece of stage setting and directing."⁷² Nearly all critics echoed these sentiments, finding the three-dimensional metal, glass and wooden structure which extended high into the air beyond the proscenium arch imaginative and accurate, modern and beautiful, clean and gleaming, "satanic and awesome" in its reality as the literal was heightened to an impressive stage symbol.⁷³

The setting had four different acting levels which Moeller and Simonson called "A," "B," "C," and "D." Stage level ("A") had a large grey dynamo stage-right, backed by a high wall with narrow windows extending up to the proscenium arch. The stage-left side was filled with a tri-level switch gallery ("B," "C," and "D"). "B" could be reached by stairs from "A" or a door on the upstage wall of "B." Another staircase rose from "B" to "C" and a third stairway rose from "C" to "D." The playable space grew progressively smaller as the performers climbed, and actors could leave the performance area from "D" and exit upstage to the unseen water dam. Nearly all construction was metal pipe and aluminum sheeting, or wood painted to resemble metal. Everything was painted grey, black or white except for a green plate-glass floor for "C," the underside of which could be seen by much of the audience.⁷⁴ When working on these upper platforms, Moeller found again that he had to be specific with movement directions, especially since areas were

often isolated with lights.⁷⁵

The two most dynamic moments in the staging of Act III occurred with Ada's seduction of Reuben, and Reuben's suicide. In a volatile moment which led to a "scarlet interlude hidden by a virtuous curtain" (as Percy Hammond would have it),⁷⁶ Ada, a young Claudette Colbert who was costumed provocatively "in a leggy red dress,"⁷⁶ first distracted Reuben before growing frightened as he grabbed and kissed her passionately and bent her backward toward the floor, ending on top of her just before a blackout. The action took place high on level "C" and was accentuated by the green glass through which much of the audience could watch the couple sinking to the floor. This was the only point within the act where Moeller interrupted the action briefly and discreetly with a curtain.⁷⁷

At the play's climax Reuben killed himself by climbing on top of the dynamo and thrusting his hands into the open top in a "vivid . . . exhibit of electrocution."⁷⁸ Critics found this representation graphic and realistic, "a blue, sparkling suicide"⁷⁹ which required the careful and imaginative coordination of several special effects. The head of the dynamo was equipped with a spark-gap mechanism with two points just visible on top. An eight-inch spark jump was created at this point and was heightened by red and blue strip lights mounted inside the dynamo, which had many openings through which the colored light could stream. When Glenn Anders as Reuben seemed to shove his hands into the dynamo (his hands were actually about a foot or so away from the two rods), a bluish-white spark was fired for approximately ten seconds. At the same time the dynamo's red and blue lights came up, the regular set lighting dimmed to below half, and the dynamo's humming sounds stopped abruptly. When the spark ended and Reuben fell dead, all was deathly quiet for about one page of dialogue and action. Then the dynamo sound started up again,⁸⁰ lights were restored, and the dynamo built to a very loud humming which ended the play.

In general the acting was highly praised for believable, human characterization even if it sometimes became rather rhetorical and homiletic in vocal delivery.⁸¹ This was especially true in Act III,⁸² when the play suddenly became more mystical and hysterical. "Charged with a mad fury,"⁸³ the characters relentlessly pursued their devastating goals as the actors performed "in bold, free strokes and booming voices."⁸⁴ Moeller had inspired his actors and carried "the cast with him on a wave of enthusiasm"⁸⁵ which resulted in powerful and dedicated performances.

Two performances especially demonstrated the verve of the production and the freedom granted the actors by Moeller. Claudette Colbert's young flapper was distressing to a few reviewers, who found her displaying self-consciously her vibrant, flippant energy and alluring physical charm;⁸⁶ but Moeller achieved useful contrast in mood by essentially leaving the actress to her own devices except for basic movement and compositional placement. She imbued the role with vivacity, and she often posed in a straightforward and vivid manner which bespoke a commonness of character and lack of sophistication which was not only appropriate for the role but simultaneously enticing.⁸⁷ Fittingly described by Wyatt as a "Gee-but-you're-a-peach young woman,"⁸⁸ Colbert's characterization served to set in stark relief the religious and fervent depiction of Reuben Light.⁸⁹

Glenn Anders, by contrast, created a sincere, passionate, confused young man. His Reuben, who was alternately powerful and lachrymose, commanding and whining, frequently brooded, cried and tore his hair and remained intense and defiant throughout,⁹⁰ with "sweeping earnestness" and "extraordinary fiery passion."⁹¹ Ultimately, the role was the devastated product of obsession and religious adoration which theatregoers usually found admirable for the actor's stirring commitment, but absurd within the world of the play.⁹² Littell, for example, wrote that Anders played "with a fine, cutting sincerity and passion . . . in a part which seemed to me often quite foolish,"⁹³ but the critic went on to say, "I do not see how it could have been played better." Despite the leading actor's ardor and zeal in the midst of spectacular staging, O'Neill's hero and his dramatic situation were deemed by many as silly and ridiculous.

Stark Young complained that both play and production attempted to make too literal a story and conflict which should have remained ethereal and mystical.⁹⁴ Most critics, however, rightly or wrongly agreed with Ernest Boyd's assessment: "neither the excellent acting . . . nor the fine production could conceal the essential shallowness and adolescent pretentiousness of the play."⁹⁵ Moeller, nevertheless, remained "blind," in Helburn's words, "to the obvious faults of the play"⁹⁶ while in production and managed to mount an impressive, trenchant spectacle. Perhaps O'Neill cast his material in the wrong dramatic form and Moeller was close to the truth when he said that Dynamo "would make a magnificent modern opera."⁹⁷

--Ronald H. Wainscott

NOTES

¹David Carb, "Seen on the Stage," Vogue, March 30, 1929, p. 102.

²Eugene O'Neill (May 1929) in Horst Frenz, Eugene O'Neill, trans. Helen Sebba (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1971), p. 65.

³"Theatrical Notes" and advertisement, New York Times, February 11, 1929, p. 27; first reviews appear on Tuesday, February 12, 1929.

⁴Brooks Atkinson, "God in the Machine," New York Times, February 12, 1929, p. 22.

⁵R. Dana Skinner, "The Play," Commonweal, 9 (February 27, 1929), 490.

⁶Theresa Helburn, "Staged by Philip Moeller," Theatre Guild Magazine, May 1929, p. 27; Lee Simonson, Part of a Lifetime: Drawings and Designs, 1919-1940 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943), p. 83; George Middleton, These Things Are Mine (New York: Macmillan, 1947), p. 39; Who Was Who in the Theatre: 1912-1976, vol. 3 (Detroit: Gale Research, 1978), p. 1723.

⁷Moeller in Simonson, Part, p. 83.

⁸Elizabeth Borton, "Philip Moeller Discusses Bridge and the Staging of Plays," Boston Herald, December 31, 1933, p. 28; Helen Ormsbee, "Philip Moeller, Director, Hollywood and Here," New York Herald-Tribune, September 9, 1934, Sec. 5, p. 3.

⁹Moeller in Ormsbee, p. 3.

¹⁰Howard Barnes, "Moeller of the Theater Guild," New York Herald-Tribune, February 10, 1929, Sec. 7, p. 5.

¹¹Robert Littell, "The Land of Second Best," Theatre Arts, 13 (April 1929) 246; Benjamin De Casseres, "Broadway to Date," Arts & Decoration, April 1929, p. 72; Barrett H. Clark, "O'Neill's 'Dynamo' and the Village Experiments," Drama, 19 (April 1929), 222; Percy Hammond, "The Theaters," New York Herald-Tribune, February 17, 1929, Sec. 7, p. 1.

¹²Robert Garland, "Eugene O'Neill's 'Dynamo' Displayed in 45th Street," New York Telegram, February 12, 1929, in Jordan Y. Miller, Playwright's Progress: O'Neill and the Critics (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1965), p. 63.

¹³Atkinson, "God," p. 22.

¹⁴Eugene O'Neill letter to Guild in Lawrence Langner, The Magic Curtain (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1951), pp. 241-242; O'Neill letter to Benjamin De Casseres in Arthur and Barbara Gelb, O'Neill (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 689.

¹⁵Virginia Floyd, Eugene O'Neill at Work: Newly Released Ideas for Plays (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981), pp. 127, 141; Jordan Y. Miller, Eugene O'Neill and the American Critic, 2nd ed. (Hamden, Connecticut: Shoestring, 1973), p. 28; Egil Törnqvist, A Drama of Souls: Studies in O'Neill's Super-naturalistic Technique (New Haven: Yale University, 1968), p. 262.

¹⁶When O'Neill left for Europe in February 1928 he thought that the Guild could "very well put on my stuff for a couple of years without me." He later changed his mind. O'Neill letter to Kenneth Macgowan, February 22, 1928 in Jackson Bryer, ed., "The Theatre We Worked For": The Letters of Eugene O'Neill to Kenneth Macgowan (New Haven: Yale University, 1982), p. 171. See also George Jean Nathan, "The Theatre," American Mercury, 63 (October 1946), 463; Louis Sheaffer, O'Neill: Son and Artist (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), pp. 305, 324.

¹⁷Eugene O'Neill, Manuscript notes, outline and drawings for Dynamo, September 1928 in Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

¹⁸Langner, p. 241.

¹⁹After the production's failure O'Neill severely cut and reworked the material for publication. Consequently, the first edition (October 1929) is considerably different than the produced play. Helburn, "Staged," pp. 27-28; Langner, pp. 241-242; Jennifer McCabe Atkinson, Eugene O'Neill: A Descriptive Bibliography (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1974), p. 219.

²⁰Eugene O'Neill, Dynamo bound promptbook, Theatre Guild Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University; Eugene O'Neill, Dynamo bound promptbook, Theatre Collection, Performing Arts Center, New York Public Library, copyrighted 1929 by Yale University; Eugene O'Neill, Dynamo (New York: Horace Liveright, 1929).

²¹For publication O'Neill changed Act III to one exterior and two interior scenes. O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale); "Scene Designs of Latest Art Used by Guild," New York Herald-Tribune, February 24, 1929, Sec. 7, p. 2.

²²Theresa Helburn, A Wayward Quest (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960), pp. 184-185.

²³"The New 'Dynamo' as Seen by O'Neill," The World (NY), January 27, 1929, p. M-3; "Mr. O'Neill and the Audible Theatre," New York Times, March 3, 1929, Sec. 8, p. 4; photograph, New York Herald-Tribune, February 3, 1929, Sec. 9, p. 15.

²⁴"Mr. O'Neill," p. 4.

²⁵O'Neill letter to Guild in Roy S. Waldau, Vintage Years of the Theatre Guild: 1928-1939 (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University, 1972), p. 46.

²⁶O'Neill in Lee Simonson, The Stage Is Set (New York: Dover, 1946), pp. 117-118.

²⁷O'Neill in Simonson, Stage, p. 118.

²⁸Francis R. Bellamy, "The Theatre," Outlook and Independent, 151 (February 27, 1929), 331.

²⁹"Sound Effects" plot in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL).

³⁰"Mr. O'Neill," p. 4.

³¹O'Neill's directions for thunder cues were generally followed with occasional

additional cues. O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale).

³²Moeller in Barnes, p. 2.

³³O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), pp. III, 1-2.

³⁴O'Neill letter to Guild in Waldau, p. 46.

³⁵O'Neill in Simonson, Stage, p. 118.

³⁶Moeller in Barnes, p. 2.

³⁷O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), pp. III, 55-56; Robert Littell, "The Theatre Guild Presents 'Dynamo,'" New York Evening-Post, February 12, 1929, p. 12.

³⁸"Sound Effects" plot in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL).

³⁹Percy Hammond, "The Theaters: Dynamo," New York Herald-Tribune, February 12, 1929, in Miller, Playwright's, p. 64.

⁴⁰"Mr. O'Neill," p. 4.

⁴¹Euphemia Van Rensselaer Wyatt, "The Drama," Catholic World, April 1929, p. 81.

⁴²Littell, "Land," pp. 246-247.

⁴³Moeller in Barnes, p. 2; Atkinson, "God," p. 22.

⁴⁴Eugene O'Neill, "Working Notes and Extracts from a Fragmentary Work Diary," in Barrett H. Clark, ed., European Theories of the Drama (New York: Crown, 1947), p. 534.

⁴⁵Moeller in "Mr. O'Neill," p. 4.

⁴⁶"Production note," O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), before p. I,1.

⁴⁷O'Neill, "Manuscript Notes," Yale; "Scene Designs," p. 2; Floyd, pp. 141-148.

⁴⁸Simonson, Stage, p. 16; Simonson, Part, p. 47.

⁴⁹Mary C. Henderson, The City and the Theatre (Clifton, New Jersey: James T. White, 1973), p. 257; Irving Pichel, Modern Theatres (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1925), p. 64.

⁵⁰"Scene Designs," p. 2; Walter Pritchard Eaton, The Theatre Guild: The First Ten Years (New York: Brentano's, 1929), p. 189.

⁵¹O'Neill letter to Macgowan, June 14, 1929, in Bryer, p. 191.

⁵²Brooks Atkinson, "Concluding a Dramatic Cycle," New York Times, February 17, 1929, Sec. 9, p. 1.

⁵³Hammond, Feb. 17, p. 1.

⁵⁴De Casseres, p. 72; Bellamy, p. 331.

⁵⁵Littell, "Land," p. 246.

⁵⁶"What 'Dynamo' Looked Like During Rehearsals," clipping with drawing by Eugen Fitsch, Dynamo folder, Theatre Collection, Museum of the City of New York; "New 'Dynamo,'" p. M-3.

⁵⁷Robert Benchley, "Dynamo," Life (NY), March 8, 1929, in Oscar Cargill, et al., ed., O'Neill and His Plays: Four Decades of Criticism (New York: New York University, 1961), p. 188.

⁵⁸"Scenery Plot," in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL), p. 3.

⁵⁹Two photographs, Theatre Guild Collection, Beinecke, Yale; two photographs, Theatre Collection, Dynamo folder, Museum of the City of New York; two groundplans in O'Neill Dynamo prompt (Yale).

⁶⁰"Scenery Plot," in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL), p. 3.

⁶¹Two photographs, Yale and MCNY; "Property Plot," pp. 1-2, and "Scenery Plot," p. 3, in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL).

⁶²Carb, p. 102.

⁶³O'Neill asked for a hedge.

⁶⁴Two groundplans in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale); two photographs, Yale and MCNY; "Scenery Plot," p. 3 and "Property Plot," p. 1, in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL); Wyatt, p. 81.

⁶⁵"Scene Designs," p. 2.

⁶⁶Atkinson, "Concluding," p. 1.

⁶⁷Moeller's stage directions in the promptbooks of Strange Interlude, Mourning Becomes Electra and Days Without End are much more generalized with regard to movement. Only in Ah, Wilderness!, a comedy, does Moeller get very specific again; his purpose here, however, was to fine tune comic bits of stage business which of course never arise in the other O'Neill plays. The other promptbooks are held by Beinecke Library, New York Public Library, and the Museum of the City of New York.

⁶⁸"Production Note" and playtext in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale); Arthur Ruhl, "Second Nights," New York Herald-Tribune, February 17, 1929, Sec. 7, p. 5.

⁶⁹"Scene Designs," p. 2.

⁷⁰"Production Note," in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale).

⁷¹O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), pp. I, 15-20.

⁷²Clark, "O'Neill's," p. 222.

⁷³Padraic Colum, "The Theatre," Dial, 86 (April 1929), 349; De Casseres, p. 118; Skinner, p. 490; Bellamy, p. 331; Carb, p. 102.

⁷⁴Seven photographs, Yale and MCNY; groundplan and isometric drawing in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale); "Scenery Plot" in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (NYPL), pp. 3-4.

⁷⁵E.g., O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), p. III, 7; "Light Plot," in O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), pp. 8-11.

⁷⁶Hammond, "Theaters," Feb. 12, 1929, pp. 64-65.

⁷⁷Charles Brackett, "The Theatre," New Yorker, February 23, 1929, p. 27; O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), p. III, 46.

- ⁷⁸Hammond, "Theaters," Feb. 12, 1929, p. 65.
- ⁷⁹Brackett, "Theatre," p. 27.
- ⁸⁰O'Neill, Dynamo prompt (Yale), pp. III, 56-58; "Sound Effects" and "Light Plot" in O'Neill Dynamo prompt (NYPL); photograph, Yale; "Mr. O'Neill," NYT, p. 4; Littell, "Theatre," p. 12.
- ⁸¹De Casseres, "Broadway," p. 72; Brackett, "Theatre," p. 28.
- ⁸²Hammond, "Theaters," Feb. 17, 1929, p. 1; De Casseres, "Broadway," p. 72.
- ⁸³Atkinson, "God," p. 22.
- ⁸⁴Atkinson, "Concluding," p. 1.
- ⁸⁵Helburn, Wayward, p. 185.
- ⁸⁶Nathan, "Theatre," p. 463.
- ⁸⁷Carb, "Seen," p. 102; Littell, "Land," p. 246; Colum, "Theatre," p. 349; Atkinson, "God," p. 22.
- ⁸⁸Wyatt, "Drama," p. 82.
- ⁸⁹Brief lines of doggerel by Arthur Guiterman (misquoted in several secondary sources) captured a popular response to Dynamo and Colbert: "Eeny, meeny, mynamo,/ I have boon to 'Dynamo.'/ All except that girl in red,/ It is worse'n what you said." New Yorker, March 9, 1929, p. 19.
- ⁹⁰[Jack] Lait, "Dynamo," Variety, February 13, 1929, p. 56; Ruhl, "Second," p. 1; Carb, "Seen," p. 102; De Casseres, "Broadway," p. 72.
- ⁹¹Atkinson, "God," p. 22; Littell, "Theatre," p. 12.
- ⁹²Garland, "Eugene," p. 63; Ruhl, "Second," p. 1; Littell, "Theatre," p. 12.
- ⁹³Littell, "Land," p. 246.
- ⁹⁴Stark Young, Immortal Shadows (New York: Hill and Wang, 1958), pp. 85-86.
- ⁹⁵Boyd, "Eugene," p. 180.
- ⁹⁶Helburn, Wayward, p. 185.
- ⁹⁷Moeller in Barnes, "Moeller," p. 2.

RETHINKING O'NEILL

Peter Gallagher was born in 1956, the year of the landmark productions of The Iceman Cometh and Long Day's Journey Into Night, directed by José Quintero, in New York City. Thirty years later, in 1986, Gallagher was to perform Edmund in Jonathan Miller's "controversial" but critically acclaimed revival of Long Day's Journey Into Night on Broadway. His characterization of the young Eugene O'Neill in that production was described as one that "blazes" (Watt, Daily News) and was declared "brilliant" (Henry, Time Magazine). In the New York Times, Frank Rich said that Gallagher's performance "gives us the poet as well as the consumptive; his intelligence and sensitivity flare so

dangerously in his big dark eyes that, in his nihilistic reveries of the sea, we see the birth of O'Neill as an artist."

Gallagher's own dangerous side surfaced on the day I interviewed him at the Broadhurst Theatre during the production's New York run. When I presented myself to him as an "academic" who writes historical documentations of O'Neill revivals, he bristled and became edgy. And I soon discovered why: my presence reminded him of a recent letter to the New York Times from Bernard F. Dick, a professor of English and comparative literature at Fairleigh Dickinson University. The letter had been a strong criticism of director Jonathan Miller's interpretation of the play. Dick had negatively compared Miller's three hour and ten minute, fast-paced structuring of the text to José Quintero's four hour and forty-five minute, leisurely, measured version of The Iceman Cometh which played in New York the previous fall. Dick accused Miller of not trusting the audience's attention span and claimed that it had been manipulated to play "the fool."

As Gallagher and I spoke I could sense this dark haired, intense young Irishman sizing me up as he sought to ascertain my position on artistic license. While he shot spirited responses to my queries, I was reminded of descriptions of the brash and youthful champion that was Eugene O'Neill. It was clear from the beginning that Gallagher had decided to use our interview as a vehicle to respond to Dick and any other "academics" who might object to tampering with O'Neill. In referring to the Fairleigh Dickinson Professor, Gallagher wryly commented, "I hate to think of the young minds he's warping."

I explained to Gallagher that José Quintero had expressed frustrations similar to Dick's and had cited the laudatory reviews of Miller's production and their repeated approval of its shortened length as a particular source of angst.¹ Gallagher snorted,

What's he upset about? We all² saw The Iceman Cometh last fall and loved it. Does he think that this production is a financial success? We're closing in three weeks. Roger [Roger Peters, Long Day's Journey's producer] is losing his shirt on this. He'll lose \$100,000 to \$200,000. There aren't many people who are going to put up the hundreds of thousands of dollars it takes, to do a cavalier production of Long Day's Journey, because it doesn't make money. The people who do it are going to be doing it because they care about this play. O'Neill is just death, that's all. I don't think O'Neill has ever run more than six months on Broadway.

The subject of the producer's motives initiated a discussion of the origins of this particular production. Since it was well known that Jonathan Miller had given up directing for the theatre and was instead concentrating on opera, I asked how the very British Miller had met up with the very American O'Neill. Gallagher responded:

Well, Roger Peters was in a hotel lobby. Roger saw Jonathan and went up to him and said, "Dr. Miller, you don't know me but I'm an aspiring producer and I just want to ask you a question. Is there any play you would like to direct?" Jonathan said, "Long Day's Journey Into Night. I love that play. I've always wanted to direct that play." Roger said, "If you could direct that play, who would you want to star in it?" Jonathan said, "Jack Lemmon. In fact if you can get Jack Lemmon to do it, I'll direct it." And that's how it happened.

Gallagher recounted that Miller's positive response amazed Peters because he had long been trying to produce that particular play but had forsaken the idea because of numerous obstacles. Many leading actors and actresses had, for example, turned down Tyrone and Mary because of the difficulties associated with the roles.

¹ José Quintero, Suffolk University, Panel "O'Neill on Stage," 1 June 1986.

² The cast of Long Day's Journey Into Night: Jack Lemmon as James Tyrone, Bethel Leslie as Mary Tyrone, Kevin Spacey as James Tyrone, Jr., and Peter Gallagher as Edmund Tyrone.

Once Miller agreed to do the show, however, there were still problems. The O'Neill estate made it difficult to attain rights, and negotiations were slow. This meant that as the pressure built and the wait dragged on, the cast Peters had lined up for Miller could potentially be lost to other projects. As Gallagher put it, "It got to the point where being allowed to do the play became a success in and of itself."

Added problems were the inevitable comparisons which would be made with previous productions. A film version starring Ralph Richardson and Katharine Hepburn was now readily available on videotape. Laurence Olivier's production from the National Theatre in Great Britain aired frequently on public television. Also, José Quintero's famous 1956 American premiere of Long Day's Journey, coupled with his unsurpassed reputation for directing O'Neill's plays in America, made the undertaking formidable.

A further obstacle was the fact that the most important review would come from the New York Times, whose editor, Arthur Gelb, holds the scepter as one of the world's foremost O'Neill historians. Gallagher recalled that when the cast and director agreed early on in the rehearsals that they were willing to reinterpret the play, "we just knew that there were people that revered the play, what Jonathan called the 'custodians of O'Neill.' We didn't know how they would respond because we were doing it slightly differently." Because of these pre-show qualms, Miller insisted that the production rehearse out of town. No reviewers were permitted to attend during its initial try-out period at Duke University. The first opportunity came when the show opened at the National Theatre in Washington, to mixed reviews. As the play neared its New York opening, Gallagher mused over the ironies of which he became aware.

What's incredible is that the play is so much about forgiveness and about the tragedy of living your life in remembrances. In the play Tyrone talks about Booth and the highlight of his life. As a 65 year old man he says that his life has gone down hill steadily since he was 27. Mary says that the convent, her wedding day and playing the piano were really "it". And the tragedy is that these people do not let go of the past and forgive themselves for what they are in the present. So it's ironic that that's what the play's about. The play is much greater than anybody's petty kind of attacks. It's a terrible expression of the worst in us that we can't allow these plays to live. No one is diminished by a production of this play.

Gallagher's comments recall the difficulties Quintero faced while remounting The Iceman Cometh in 1985. Overcoming the myth of his own historic 1956 production had proved impossible. His new production was forced to close after a brief and unprofitable two-month run. Oddly enough, rebel and trend-breaker Eugene O'Neill had become such a revered icon that shaking up preconceived notions about the proper ways to realize his work was tantamount to robbing a sanctuary.

Gallagher says that he didn't worry about any of these deterrents, because other cast members were taking care of that problem for him. He recollected that late one night his friend and fellow actor, Kevin Spacey, called him up in a state of "terror and panic" and said, "Peter we're missing something. This is going too well. I don't know what's wrong. I know I'm ... we're missing something big." To which Gallagher responded, "Kevin, maybe we are, but we're not going to find out what it is if we get all panicked about it."

Despite these moments of extreme doubt, Gallagher felt that rehearsals for the production were "joyous":

I never laughed so much. You tell people you're rehearsing Long Day's Journey and they say, "Oh God, you must be in a great mood." And I was! I was having the best time of my life. We were like a SWAT team. We'd try to figure out the problem with this, or how to do that better, and boom--we'd figure out a

way that we could do it.

Gallagher recalls that one image Miller maintained of the play was that it was similar to a string quartet, in particular Beethoven's Grosse Fugue, "where you have a first violin on top and then the resonance of the viola and the cello underneath." Miller invited Zubin Mehta to attend rehearsals to see if the play would conjure the same musical response from the Indian conductor. Since Mehta and Miller frequently collaborate in staging operas, Miller trusted Mehta's intuitions. Gallagher states that Mehta's response was that the play was "like a piece of music--solos, duets and trios."

In seeking to discover a new interpretation of the play, Miller assigned the cast copies of the script from which all of O'Neill's original stage directions had been deleted. Even notations for entrances and exits were removed. As Gallagher put it:

I'm glad O'Neill saved his bad writing for his stage directions. A lot of them are nonsense. The good writing is in the play, in the dialogue. Thank God Shakespeare's stage directions are so scanty because that's what's enabled those plays to take off--freedom--because no one has the definitive word.

When we contemplate the problems which ensued during the rehearsals for the 1946 production of The Iceman Cometh, Miller's decision to bypass O'Neill's directorial voice is understandable. Actors from that production's cast claim that its eventual failure stemmed partly from the fact that director Eddie Dowling was seriously inhibited by O'Neill's insistence on attending and commenting on every rehearsal.

During rehearsals with Miller, the actors went to extremes to avoid falling into what they considered the traps of O'Neill's dictates. In a scene that calls for Mary to slap Edmund on the face during an argument, every other possible option was tried before Miller conceded that a direct hit was required. Coincidentally, on the particular day the decision was made to retain O'Neill's bit of business, a storm was brewing outside. Gallagher laughingly recalled that the cast was dumbstruck when a clap of thunder was heard the instant the big moment occurred.

Gallagher credited Miller with inventing the idea of having the cast overlap their lines at crucial moments, thus accelerating the pacing of the dialogue. They began trying the technique the first day of rehearsals:

It was a little too much at Duke when we first were trying it out. We were so proud of ourselves in doing it that at times--it was not a question of overlapping anymore but of responding when the time was right. The repetition in the script was so enormous that no information is lost. We found that the information was not that precious. In fact we found it more truthful in a way, for us, just for us, that they weren't listening to each other. Everyone was a little too afraid. What held everyone together was the love, not the bitterness and the hatred.

As result of the criss-cross of responses--reminiscent of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne's technique of completing each other's sentences, and indeed, of operatic ensemble--the production's length was shortened. Miller explained his reasons for not stylizing the play in an interview for the Christian Science Monitor:

I suppose I was reacting in some sense against previous productions which have emphasized the dark dignities of the piece and the poetic drama. And it seemed to me this was a misconception of the genre, of the work. I don't think it's a poetic drama. I don't think it's an epic.... Even if O'Neill conceived it as epic, it really is not an epic. It goes on for a whole day--remember it has the traditional Greek tragedy's unities of time and place--but it's not the house of Atreus; it's not Agamemnon. And if for some misguided reason O'Neill thought of it as one, he really did misconceive his own best intentions.

Because what it is, is a great play, because of the accuracies with which it recaptures the quality of family life.

Gallagher was pleased at Miller's choice not to "romanticize" the play and present it as a "museum piece." In discussing potential artistic intentions for doing Long Day's Journey, Gallagher used the example of possibly presenting the play "to show what life was like in 1912." Still, he rejected this as a useless interpretation, believing it would keep the audience at "arm's length." I mentioned the fact that critics of O'Neill refer to his dialogue as stilted but that in Miller's production the critics praised the accessibility of the language. Gallagher replied:

If you say something and if it's truthful, you go with the truth and don't wrestle with the antiquity of the language. One of the things that I like about O'Neill is that I always get the impression that he was a great listener. He'd go on these ships and just insinuate himself among these hearty and rough guys and just listen, and never judge.

Miller's unromanticized hand was laid on the production in another provocative manner. As a licensed physician, he was able to give the cast valuable knowledge of the four Tyrone's medical conditions. Gallagher felt that Miller's professional background gave the cast confidence that the suggestions he made were not "capricious or had to do with a cooked up concept of the play." He gave them clinical observation that could be documented. Instead of staggering, as Gallagher quipped, "like a Tennessee Williams heroine," Miller encouraged Bethel Leslie to interpret Mary's drug obsession as riddled with tension resulting in a demeanor which seemed terse and strident. Miller worked with Leslie to help her keep Mary's drug habit from becoming caricatured. Instead, he encouraged her to maintain behavior truthful to clinical observation. Gallagher claims that a neurosurgeon who attended one of the performances verified that Leslie's portrayal did indeed convey "morphine addiction."

Gallagher did considerable research on his own to learn about tuberculosis. He pored through medical books and discovered the numerous medieval kinds of cures which were used during the 1912 period. Two of the most ghastly were (1) puncturing one lung to deflate it, and (2) crushing the nerve which controls diaphragmatic breathing. Miller aided Gallagher by explaining that, because of the abscesses which have formed on the lungs, tuberculosis causes considerable pain to the patient when shifting positions. Gallagher then used this information to show the character's discomfort by coughing at crucial moments in the play, as when he becomes overexcited during arguments with his parents, or in Act IV when he is drunk and exhausted and breaks into a frightening fit of chills. Gallagher derived further insight into tuberculosis after reading in Dickens' Nicholas Nickleby the description of the illness as "being dead alive." These windows on the horrors of the disease helped him to understand why Edmund was so terrified of being sent to a state farm.

Although the text does not specifically call for Tyrone to have any physical ailments, Miller decided that the father should also be ill. Knowing that James O'Neill died of stomach cancer, Miller worked with Lemmon to establish a gnawing pain in Tyrone's stomach. Lemmon then showed this side of Tyrone during moments when the character was under stress, especially during arguments with his sons. Gallagher spoke with admiration about the fact that Miller had found this in the play:

One of the first things out of Tyrone's mouth is, "I've the digestion of a young man of twenty if I am sixty-five." James O'Neill was proud of two things, his voice and his digestion. And they are the two things he lost. O'Neill said the stench in his room when he was dying was unbearable. It was as if his insides were rotting. And his voice was reduced to a barely audible whisper. It gives me chills that O'Neill--it's incredible when you know the real story.

Miller's interpretation of the elder Tyrones varied in other ways as well from preconceived notions. He saw Mary as the central character around whom the three male characters revolved. Gallagher confirmed this by stating that Irish Catholics maintain a matriarchal society and that the men run around "in fear of mama." In Miller's interpretation, Leslie's Mary became a fierce and punitive woman, compelled to destroy everyone within her reach including the household's maid whom she coyly invites to drink knowing it will earn the servant a reprimand from Tyrone. Gallagher characterized Leslie's performance by saying, "she's this midwestern small town girl. I hear her voice and it has this dry, bitter quality. She could be standing on a prairie somewhere."

Miller believed that Lemmon should play Tyrone as a man who "sold out his soul at the age of 27. What remains is an empty, sad old man." Instead of playing Tyrone as the grand actor at home, in a manner similar to Fredric March's original rendering, Lemmon was rather an equal with his sons, who were also striving unsuccessfully to gain Mary's love and respect. Gallagher believes that the most "harrowing" line in the play is uttered by Jamie, who best describes the despair enveloping the "sleighride to Hades" on which the family rides. Late in Act IV, after it is clear that Mary has returned to her morphine habit, Jamie stares wistfully up the stairs towards her sitting room and says, "I'd begun to hope, if she'd beaten the game, I could, too."

Casting comedian Jack Lemmon in the role of James Tyrone enabled Miller to shift the emphasis of the play and place Mary at the center of the dramatic action. In a sense Miller abandoned Tyrone, who was left to scramble along with his sons for the crumbs of Mary's affections. Lemmon's casting was a risky twist and the most questionable choice Miller made in reweaving the play. It recalls José Quintero's equally surprising choice of Jason Robards, Jr. for Hickey in The Iceman Cometh, even though the actor was totally unlike O'Neill's description of that character. Quintero later described the realization which occurred to him when he was debating with himself whether to cast Robards: "it's inside where the reality lies." Michael Feingold clarified Miller's casting intentions in his Village Voice review:

Lemmon's likable softness, which is his "quality," keeps him from fulfilling the part of Tyrone just as it would have kept him from having James O'Neill's career.... Bethel Leslie is the most un-Irish of Marys.... Kevin Spacey uses his large body well, to suggest a drunkard's flabbiness, but misses the Broadway strutter's tinselly grandeur. Peter Gallagher is the victim of the eternal tendency of producers to cast handsome young matinee idols as Edmund.... Yet these four lesser elements make up an infinitely greater whole, which works organically as I've never seen a production of Long Day's Journey work. Though not precisely the O'Neill or Tyrone family, it is demonstrably a family, its member colliding with or wandering away from each other ... in their efforts not to listen to the endless feuding, not to face the perpetual crisis. He has made me feel the force of Long Day's Journey more strongly than ever before.

A common decision both Miller and Quintero had to face in doing the play was whether to recreate the exact floor plan of the Monte Cristo Cottage in Connecticut as O'Neill details it in the script. And both directors opted to evoke atmosphere rather than authenticity. David Hays, the designer of Quintero's 1956 version, never visited the New London cottage.³ He chose instead to create a realistic provincial living room which one

³It is interesting to note that Hays eventually lived in the Monte Cristo Cottage several years following his design of the 1956 production and after he became a member of the O'Neill Foundation. In Virginia Floyd's book, Eugene O'Neill: A World View (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1979), actress Florence Eldridge, who played Mary in the 1956 production of Long Day's Journey, described the Monte Cristo Cottage: "I was surprised to find it full of attractive possibilities and charmingly situated looking out on the sound."

reviewer of that production described as "sombre, bleak and sparsely furnished." For the 1986 production, designer Tony Straiges veered from O'Neill's precise descriptions by creating a minimalist set and using George Segal's modern art sculptures as a source of inspiration. The result was four tall, undecorated and isolated areas of wall which loomed over the play's characters. To fill in the crevasses between the sections, Straiges used a backdrop called "magic black," an extremely dark black velvet. Gallagher describes the ensuing metaphorical effect:

It gives the feeling of being disconnected. I have the feeling that if I get too close to one of those things I'll get sucked into the void. It's tenuous. It's not at all solid.

Straiges did, however, choose to copy the furnishings of the Monte Cristo Cottage, which ideally complemented his purpose for the large vertical elements. He found that the chairs and other set pieces were typical of those found in a summer residence. They were comfortable although unmatched, a reflection of the family's tenuous hold on stability.

Lighting designer Richard Nelson was instructed by Miller not to gell the lights. Since gells are used to soften the effect of the powerful theatrical lights, Dr. Miller seemed to want an enforced feeling of cleanliness and sterility. His intention was to create a harsh and, again, "unromanticized" effect on stage. Costumer Willa Kim dressed each actor entirely in white. Because of the direct white light bouncing off their bleached attire, the Tyrone family seemed to glow, in an intentional contrast to their exaggeratedly dark surroundings. Miller's aim to emphasize the family was clearly highlighted by his designers' craft.

Rumors abounded that one of the reasons Miller's production played so quickly was that the text has been considerably cut. I mentioned this to Gallagher, who seemed shocked. Showing me a copy of his script, he assured me that only two pages of O'Neill's original text were deleted--changes that had to do with the two Baudelaire poems which Edmund recites to Tyrone in Act IV. Gallagher explained why parts of both poems and the transitional dialogue between them were cut:

We worked very hard to keep the poetry in the fourth act, but the way we were doing it made it very, very hard to play. We had to try it many, many different ways. We found that where we had the intermission, those two long recitations were unnecessarily repetitive of the sentiment.

Gallagher noted that dialogue was added to the play immediately after the deletions. Edmund and Tyrone have a discussion about a bet they made to see whether Edmund could memorize Shakespeare. Miller had Gallagher recite sections of Macbeth which O'Neill did not include. Miller had Gallagher use the lines to taunt Tyrone. Thus, despite the fact that there were minimal cuts and even an addition of dialogue, the Miller version ran a full fifty minutes shorter than Quintero's 1956 production. The fast pacing and overlapping of dialogue accounted entirely for the show's shortened playing time.

I mentioned to Gallagher that there were precedents for cutting O'Neill. While discussing the 1956 production of The Iceman Cometh, Jason Robards had once complimented José Quintero for making cuts "so well that the author's representative didn't realize it." As a response Gallagher cited Virginia Floyd's book, Eugene O'Neill at Work, in which the author states that O'Neill estimated that Long Day's Journey Into Night would "take about 131 minutes" to stage. O'Neill worked out a schedule for its start and conclusion: "8:30-10:41," a breathtaking two hours and eleven minutes.

Gallagher's ready knowledge of Floyd introduced the issue of his personal research into the role of Edmund. He pointed to a shelf above the sofa in his dressing room which turned out to be a solid library of books about O'Neill. Many of the major works were there--the Gelbs, Floyd, and Sheaffer's two-volume biography. He told me that after he had learned he would be playing the role he had taken a job acting at the Long Wharf

Theatre in New Haven specifically for the purpose of being closer to the O'Neill summer home in New London. He made pilgrimages to the Monte Cristo Cottage and was befriended by a native of New London who gave him an old print of James O'Neill playing the Count of Monte Cristo on film. Thinking that he had made a precious discovery, Gallagher went to great pains and expense to have the film transferred to videotape, only to find later that it could be ordered from a catalog for \$24.95!

To further aid in his understanding of the youthful artist, Gallagher turned to Nietzsche, in particular Thus Spake Zarathustra. Gallagher empathized with O'Neill's fascination with the philosopher, noting that a former papist would feel a refuge in Nietzsche's writing. Gallagher quoted from the play:

Edmund: Did you pray for Mama?

Tyrone: I did. I've prayed to God these many years for her.

Edmund: Then Nietzsche must be right. "God is dead: of His pity for man hath God died."

Being an Irish Catholic, Gallagher could readily understand O'Neill's struggles with Catholicism. "So many Irish Catholics live their lives in a state of penance," he said, and quoted the words of a Catholic in the confessional: "Bless me father for I have sinned. I am not worthy to receive you. But only say the word and my soul shall be healed." Gallagher described Catholicism as being a "subjugated state" where one expends "so much energy drinking and running" from the "stamp" of original sin:

So I can understand the rage O'Neill had about that awful power and how it affected him as a child and his parents--just their total lack of real forgiveness. How can you forgive when you can't be forgiven? You spend your whole life asking to be forgiven for something you didn't even do.

Gallagher's interpretation of Catholicism as delineated in Long Day's Journey Into Night is comparable to the thrust of many Greek tragedies. O'Neill's efforts to give modern American drama a mythic grandeur is recalled as he sets the "haunted Tyrones" in motion to play out their lives on a fated landscape. Gallagher's insights challenge Miller's cryptic statement that Long Day's Journey is not comparable to the house of Atreus; and Miller's direction of the play refutes his personal comments. He structured the production so that it began at mid-sentence and ended in a way which implied that the family's arguing continues. By directing Long Day's Journey in this manner, Miller realized a cyclical quality inherent in the play. At the end of the evening's performance the audience leaves the theatre with the impression that the characters are doomed eternally to replay the nightmare of their lives. This could also clarify O'Neill's decision to immortalize his family during the worst period of its existence, ignoring the fact that his mother finally recovered from her addiction and that he and his father were eventually reconciled. A more optimistic ending, one truer to life than art, would turn the play into a domestic drama, even a melodrama. O'Neill used his family to accomplish a more universal artistic goal. Taken in this light, the play's international popularity can be attributed to its more "catholic" underpinnings.

In June, just before Miller's production closed in New York after a disappointing two month run, it was invited to play in London. After its stay in Britain it would then tour in Israel. Gallagher stated that both countries were eager to welcome the production and had expressed "unbridled enthusiasm. They don't hold O'Neill in the same kind of reverent position that a lot of Americans do." As our interview ended, Gallagher said that he was looking forward to a foreign run which would be unhampered by critical bias and prejudice, one where the Tyrones' story could live and speak honestly to families everywhere. As I bade him farewell, I sincerely hoped he was right.

THE RETURN OF O'NEILL'S "PLAY OF OLD SORROW"

If Eugene O'Neill had had his way, Long Day's Journey Into Night (New Haven: Yale, 1956) would have remained sealed until twenty-five years after his death. Carlotta Monterey, his third wife, chose to release the play, written in 1940 and set in 1912, three years after he died in 1953, and thus last season's revival at the Broadhurst came to us burdened with its history of three decades of countless productions and intense critical scrutiny. Few would doubt that Journey is the greatest work of America's greatest playwright, and director Jonathan Miller must have scratched his head many times over the numerous problems of somehow finding something new to do with such an encrusted work. Some of Miller's innovations are clearly justified, but at least one is ludicrous and inexplicable.

The play was produced first in Stockholm before coming to New York on 7 November 1956. Fredric March made an imposing, oratorical James Tyrone but Florence Eldridge was not outstanding, so it was not immediately obvious that this is in fact Mary Tyrone's play. Jason Robards, fresh from his triumph in the revival of The Iceman Cometh, advanced his great career as an O'Neill interpreter in the role of James Tyrone, Jr.; Bradford Dillman was Edmund. The film version, a masterpiece, gave us the definitive Mary in Katharine Hepburn, with Ralph Richardson as the posturing and histrionic father. Jack Lemmon, Bethel Leslie, Kevin Spacey as Jamie, and Peter Gallagher as Edmund (the O'Neill character) must have felt they had a number of tough acts to follow. Fortunately, they weren't daunted.

The laurels clearly go to Lemmon; I think he was the best of all the fine actors I have seen in this punishing role. Lemmon was more rumpled, more Irish, more American, and less self-conscious than his predecessors. Miller let his star keep familiar mannerisms (the ten splayed fingers; the rising "uh-huh-huh") untouched, and they fit. Lemmon avoided the English-theatre speech that other actors usually use, and gave us a voice we could easily hear.

The problems with Ms. Leslie were caused by her director. She was allowed to give her third-act speech to the maid Cathleen much too quickly and rationally, which is wrong for someone already deep in a narcotic haze. The worst mistake occurred at what should be the high point of the play: Mary's walk down the stairs for her final journey into night. O'Neill stipulates that Mary comes downstairs "neglectfully, trailing on the floor, ... [her] old-fashioned white satin wedding gown" (p. 170). Miller put Mary in the dress, thus losing a masterful visual effect: the dress should seem an ectoplasm of her own ghost. Besides, while many allusions are made to Mary's lovely slim figure as a girl, the Mary of 1912 is described as, and actually is, quite fat. How did she get into that dress? It isn't a speculation one wants to be bothered with during the closing minutes of America's most tragic play.

Miller's decision to have some of the dialogue spoken simultaneously was disliked by most of the critics, and yet the device is true to the spirit of the play. The four Tyrones have nothing new to say to each other; they don't listen to each other because each has heard everything many, many times. Each deeply fears to be confronted again with his knowledge; every revelation is anticipated; through the four acts, the voices of the four Tyrones are a medley: "What's the use of talking?" "I know it's useless to talk." "Stop talking." "For God's sake, stop talking." "Hold your tongue." "What's the good of talk?" "Hold your foul tongue." "Please don't talk about things you don't understand." "Stop talking, Mama." "Papa, shut up!" "Shut up, Papa!" "Oh, stop talking crazy, can't you, Mama?" "But let's not talk about it." "Be quiet!" "Shut your mouth right now." "Oh, shut up, will you?" "Keep quiet, can't you?" "Shut up, Jamie."

In the night, when three of the Tyrones have closed themselves in the cages of their silences, only Mary's voice goes on in grooves well worn by her narcotic reveries. But has the talk served for release or resolution? By no means. We know that this day has brought no change to the life of the Tyrones; the interior if not the actual events will

recur next day and the day after that. The sun will rise again tomorrow morning; the protective mechanisms will be briefly in place again; there will be concealing chatter and careful silences.

Long Day's Journey is the most incontestably autobiographical of O'Neill's works, enabling him to "face [his] dead at last." Carlotta described for an interviewer the harrowing period of its composition:

When he started Long Day's Journey, it was a most strange experience to watch that man being tortured every day by his own writing. He would come out of his study at the end of a day gaunt and sometimes weeping. His eyes would be all red and he looked ten years older than when he went in in the morning. I think he felt freer when he got it out of his system. It was his way of making peace with his family--and himself.

However, the play's importance extends far beyond its autobiographical revelations. O'Neill's vision of human nature greatly exceeded all he could learn from direct experience, and his dramatic achievement was never more than partly attributable to any personal memory that went into its making. In this play, O'Neill has universalized the particulars of the family; he has raised the curtain on the common stage where each of us lives out the first and major drama of life. Relentlessly, he has included everything: the chafing under dependence, the love which imperfectly protects us from its opposite, the tormenting fact that we have an infinitely greater capacity to hurt our kin than to help them, and the weight of an inheritance that is rarely salutary.

The dichotomies in this play are the central ones of life: love and hate. The hate would be bearable if one were not at the same time confronted with the terrible facts of love. The urgency of love is to give one's spirit into the keeping of another, but in the very act of giving, the soul is struck cold with fear and anger over its vulnerability. Out of this anger, people become cruel or capricious to those they love, as if they would assert their power over the other in recompense for the power taken away. In the unassailable separateness of the other--parent, sibling, spouse, child, friend, lover--one must somehow seek some kinship in solitude. The search for tolerable attachment goes on against all the forces that are allied against it.

There is infinite pathos in the moments when some pair of the family group seems only a breath away from understanding and communicated affection. The viewer, knowing better, is nevertheless caught up in the hope of that moment. But kinship can bring more grief than its absence, and no Tyrone feels safe enough to stop probing for another's sensitivities.

The major symbolic device in Long Day's Journey is time: the single day of the play is a lifetime. The day moves from the sunshine of the morning, to the overcast noon, to the deepening shadows of twilight, to the night's deathlike blackness. The weather outside is analogous to the climate of the souls within. For sight-and-sound point-counterpoint, there is the fog seeping through the window and the wailing voice of the foghorn. Miller must be faulted for not having taken full advantage of these elements: the foghorn was not sufficiently obtrusive, the stage was too bright at the end of the play, and one wonders why Miller chose off-stage music when an on-stage phonograph could have been used to bring the music into the play.

To paraphrase Bierce: in this play there are four victims and four victimizers, making, in all, four. In the mercilessly precise bookkeeping of the emotions, one becomes a torturer as the inexorable consequence of one's victimhood; the capacity to hate is in implacable relation to the capacity to be enslaved by love. The special poignancy of this play derives from the fact that each of the four family members deeply loves each of the other three.

Mary moves this play as surely as Antigone, Electra and Medea move theirs. It is she

who speaks its theme: "The past is the present, isn't it? It's the future, too. We all try to lie out of that but life won't let us." It is she who binds the others to her in chains of their enormous and needless guilt. Mary's addiction to narcotics is the tragedy that drains the lives of the Tyrones. Because Mary in her consuming self-pity can accept no blame, each of the family members must serve his time as sin-eater for Mary. This woman is so wrapped in herself, so trapped by her illusions of her superior past, that she can blame her husband and young son for the terrible fact of her thralldom to drugs, and accuse her older son as the seven-year-old murderer of his brother. True enough that Mary has troubling intimations, from time to rare time, that she might have had some share in her tragic destiny; but these glimmerings are pushed away as quickly as they come. Mary's only possible role is that of martyred accuser, and the drug upstairs serves not only as an anodyne for her agony (we need not doubt that there is agony) but as a weapon to hold over the bowed heads of her family.

Edmund reveals the essence of the matter with his comment that Mary loses herself in drugs deliberately, "to get beyond our reach, to be rid of us, to forget we're alive! It's as if, in spite of loving us, she hated us." She does indeed.

Tyrone's sturdy belief that the addiction is "a curse put on you without your knowing or willing it" is charitable, and indicates how sad it would be for him to absorb the hard fact of her hatred. Only when he is "stung" can he blurt out to Mary the truth that "you want to blame everyone but yourself!"

The failings of the father are so obvious that their bite is weakened. He is a posturing, miserly actor, too fond of his tippie, but with considerable gentleness of soul. It is interesting that his sons are not really in awe of him and that they do not have for him that twisted, possessing love-hate that they feel for their mother. Tyrone at least has the virtue, rare in the others, of being able to take some portion of blame for his own shortcomings. His love for Mary is never destroyed by her addiction. He has lived with the illness longer, and knows its roots better, than either of the sons; in his heart there is a greater measure of understanding and forgiveness. This can only be possible because he has not accepted the burden that Mary would thrust on him if she could. The persistence of this man's love for his wife, his "hopeless hope," gives him a grandeur he would not otherwise possess.

Jamie is that traditional character, the humorous and dissolute older brother, until his particular agony is revealed almost at the end of the play. Jamie, we learn, has encouraged Edmund's failings out of massive jealousy. Jamie's love for his mother is the strongest (for which read, in O'Neill, the most destructive), and therefore it is he who brings the words "dope fiend" and "hophead" to the stage of the family. All but choked with his bitter disappointment at her return to drugs, Jamie can nevertheless admit that he's "even glad the game has got Mama again!" Jamie would rather lose his mother to drugs than to his younger brother.

Edmund is the most removed and least complex character in the play. He is newly returned from a soul-finding trip at sea, recently ill with tuberculosis, and vaguely moved to be a writer. Edmund has not perfected himself as a torturer; his role is to absorb his mother's cruelty and the shock of revelation from his adored older brother. Edmund's illness further stirs the cauldron of family horrors when Mary gently tells him that his birth has caused her addiction and his illness will perpetuate it. Little wonder that Edmund "will always be a stranger who never feels at home, who ... is not really wanted ... who must always be a little in love with death."

No progress occurs within the play, and the long dialogues do not produce the character-to-character communications and changes that one is taught to expect in drama. At the end of the play, the Tyrones do not know anything about each other that they did not know at the beginning. All of the revelations are to the audience. There is no tragic resolution. The curtain falls; the drama is endlessly repeated.

"EUGENE O'NEILL--THE LATER YEARS": CONFERENCE REPORT, PART II

[The last issue included recorders' summaries of all but three of the sessions at the May 29 to June 1 O'Neill conference at Suffolk University (pp. 3-23). The three reports that were then unavailable are printed below, and are followed by brief notes from two speakers who wish to correct inaccuracies in the summaries of their presentations. Such inaccuracies are not surprising: memory can deceive, hastily scribbled notes can prove hard to decipher, abridgement can introduce inadvertent distortion, and not all recorders had copies of the papers they were required to summarize. If other speakers wish to offer corrections, their notes will be printed in the next issue. --Ed.]

SESSION E: INFLUENCES AND ANALOGUES.

1. "In Ibsen's Back Room: Related Patterns in The Iceman Cometh and The Wild Duck," by Yvonne Shafer, Florida State University.
2. "'Daddy spoke to me!': Gods Lost and Found in Long Day's Journey Into Night and Ingmar Bergman's Through a Glass Darkly," by Thomas P. Adler, Purdue University.
3. "American Flowers of Evil: Long Day's Journey Into Night and Baudelaire," by Marc Maufort, University of Brussels.

Moderator: Jordan Y. Miller, University of Rhode Island.

Recorder: Bette Mandl, Suffolk University.

Going beyond earlier comparisons of The Iceman Cometh and The Wild Duck, Yvonne Shafer focused on three aspects of the plays: setting, theme and architectonic structure. First, she commented on the spatial patterns in both works, noting the parallel contrasting arrangement of the main room and attic in the Ekdal home of The Wild Duck, and the bar and back room of Harry Hope's saloon in Iceman. The main room and the bar are linked with the world outside and its activities; in the attic, as in the back room, however, time seems to have stopped. Moreover, like "the Bottom of the Sea Rathskeller," as Larry calls Hope's place, the attic, a simulation of a forest where the wild duck resides, is associated with "the depths of the sea."

A significant thematic contrast central to the plays is that between what Shafer terms the Conventional Life and the Self-Indulgent Life. Hjalmar, for example, longs to be a successful inventor who can enter the Conventional Life, but doesn't make an attempt to move beyond his fantasy. Like the habitués of Hope's saloon, he is immersed in a pipe dream. In their critique of the Conventional Life, both Ibsen and O'Neill focus on the problematic nature of marriage. The uncertainty regarding the paternity of Hedwig and Parritt is, Shafer points out, "one of the many thorns in the Domestic Life," as it is described by both playwrights.

At the conclusion of her talk, Shafer attempted to dispel "the myth of the grim Norwegian playwright and the somber American playwright" by drawing attention to the comic overtones in the plays. Ibsen had described the comic quality Hjalmar should have, and O'Neill had hopefully referred to the first act of The Iceman Cometh as "hilarious comedy." The parallels Shafer traces in her paper strengthen our sense of the influence of Ibsen's drama on O'Neill.

In his paper, Thomas Adler recalled having originally responded to the film, Through a Glass Darkly, as Ingmar Bergman's Long Day's Journey. The focus of his paper was on the theme of faith in both works, each a play with four main figures: three men shown in relation to each other and to a woman who is central to the drama.

Adler sees a crisis of faith as revealing itself in an anxiety regarding vocation shared by several of the characters. James Tyrone, for example, laments having yielded to the dictates of commercial success as an actor. David, in Bergman's film, though he is a well-known novelist, is painfully aware that he has failed to realize his genius. As Adler says, David "cannibalizes life for his fiction," making use in an unfeeling way of his daughter's mental illness as material for his art. Both Edmund and Minus are

young sons/artists who have begun to express themselves in art, but are as yet in doubt about their talent. Bergman's work, in which David ultimately convinces Minus of the power of love, seems less "deterministic in its outlook" than O'Neill's play.

Adler suggested that both for Karin, the troubled daughter of David, and for Mary Tyrone, "any image of God in which the notion of maleness inheres is suspect." Karen withdraws from her father, and her physician-husband, as well as from her brother Minus, whom she engages in an incestuous act of love, into a dark vision of a spider god who has assaulted her sexually. Mary, "failed by the men in her life," withdraws into a morphine fog from her family and, it would seem, from God, though she waits expectantly for a response from the Virgin Mary at the conclusion of the play.

In the third paper, Marc Maufort revealed that there are "Baudelairean echoes" throughout Long Day's Journey of The Flowers of Evil and Little Poems in Prose, which complement Edmund Tyrone's direct quotations from "Envirez-vous" and "Epilogue." While he did not make a claim for the influence of Baudelaire on O'Neill, Maufort traced patterns of "confluence" in their work and their vision: resemblances and affinities.

Maufort discussed the concern of both O'Neill and Baudelaire with the artist-poet figure who is alternately characterized as dissolute or innocent. Jamie and Edmund Tyrone, for example, represent the two facets of the artist-poet in Long Day's Journey. O'Neill describes Jamie's "habitual expression of cynicism" which "gives his countenance a Mephistophelian cast." Maufort suggested that Edmund, on the other hand, resembles "Baudelaire's innocent poet in 'L'Albatross,' who feels exiled in our bourgeois materialistic society." The protagonists of both works distance themselves from the God of Catholicism and "revel in the evil pleasures of the city, whether Paris or New York." The women in the lives of these artist-poets tend to be "symbols of prostitution or purity."

Maufort linked O'Neill and Baudelaire further in their treatment of such themes as the horror of and longing for death. Both writers are also equally concerned with man's desire to escape from the world of reality into the realm of dream and the imagination. The sea, a recurrent motif for both artists, is for them, at times, a "dream-like shelter against the corruption of modern civilization." Maufort argued persuasively that O'Neill achieved in Long Day's Journey a "searing vision of American flowers of evil."

SESSION F: FAMILY RELATIONS IN THE LATE PLAYS.

1. "A Crutch of the Poet," by Albert Bermel, City University of New York.
2. "The Melodys and the Hogans: Fathers and Daughters in the Later O'Neill," by Jean Anne Waterstradt, Brigham Young University.

Moderator: Michael Manheim, University of Toledo.

Recorder: Frederick C. Wilkins, Suffolk University.

In his analysis of A Touch of the Poet, Professor Bermel suggested that the title's words refer less to the would-be "artist" upstairs, Simon Harford, than to the four major on-stage characters, the three Melodys and Deborah Harford, and that the phrase "denotes a yearning on all their parts to be what they are not. In other words, it just about coincides with what O'Neill would later call a pipe dream." Just about, but not entirely, because of a valuable distinction that Professor Bermel went on to draw between pipe dreams and dreams: "A dream looks to the future, the attainable. A pipe dream ... looks to the past, the irrecoverable. A dream is an ambition; it may or may not come to fruition. A pipe dream is a yearning to go back to an earlier point in one's life for a fresh start, to rebecome oneself, maybe, on a higher plane of achievement and prestige."

Looked at in this light, the elder Melodys and Simon's mother are pipe dreamers. Con "tries in vain to recover his past [castle life and Talavera], which he gilds with nostalgia." Nora's pipe dream, similarly backward-looking and futile, is "to undo her premarital conception of Sara or take her marriage back into a remoter past when she was still a virgin, and so win the tacit approval of God and the Church." And Deborah's pipe

dream, the most extreme of the three and one that "verges on a psychosis," is set in "a seventeenth century France in which she did not exist." Con is revealingly compared to Monsieur Jourdain in Molière's Bourgeois Gentilhomme. Both are snobs ("Snobbery means looking upward with longing rather than downward with disdain") who are lavish with money and language and behave tyrannically toward their families, and both have ambitions. But Monsieur Jourdain, because his ambition is forward-looking and feasible, is a dreamer, unlike pipe dreamer Con, "an arrogant prig who turns pathetic." Con is closer, at the end, to Jean in Strindberg's Miss Julie, "who displays only a few trappings of a gentleman and reverts in the final scene to a state of humility."

Sara and Simon, in contrast, are dreamers rather than pipe dreamers. Simon's goal to become a poet is plausible though unrealized; and Sara's, "to wed Simon and become a great lady, is not merely plausible; it comes true." That both renege on their ideals in the next play, More Stately Mansions, opting for greed and mercenary rapacity, is part of the cautionary side of the parable that O'Neill was constructing for his fellow Americans, as are Con's bullying aggressiveness and the support it receives from a hand-wringing, self-abnegating wife who stifles, except for once, the bitterness and resentment she really feels. Considering more recent events in America's international affairs, Professor Bermel concluded that "A Touch of the Poet has about it more than a touch of the prophet."

Professor Waterstradt's comparison of the father-daughter relationships in A Touch of the Poet and Moon for the Misbegotten showed how two very similar situations can lead to drastically different results because of the nature of the father. In both plays the daughter is in love with a man "outside her own class"; in both a "bed-trick" is suggested or contemplated; in both a volatile Irish father does battle (or mock battle) with a strong-willed daughter; and in both the daughter has an enriching nighttime rendezvous with her beloved. These are the similarities, but they are far outweighed by the differences--differences which suggest that, in O'Neill's eyes, "disaster follows weakening of the family bonds; emotional maturity grows out of the strengthening of those bonds."

"Sara Melody, though seemingly self-sufficient and capable, is, in reality, grasping and immature. Josie Hogan, though apparently scheming and wanton, is, in reality, understanding, forgiving, and loving." And this "psychological difference" Professor Waterstradt attributes to "the role of the father in each daughter's life." Melody, whose Roman name Cornelius suggests imperiousness, is tyrannical, arrogant, self-absorbed and disdainful; and he fails in the traditional paternal roles of protector and provider. Phil Hogan, whose first name means love, is a fatherly provider with a deep love for his daughter, a love that will sustain her after she sends Jim Tyrone off to die. "She does not have to bear her grief alone. A loving father-daughter relationship stands strengthened; and Josie has reached new understanding, new maturity."

Professor Waterstradt surveyed Sara's twenty-two and Josie's twenty-one uses of the word "Father," and found a telling contrast in each's last use of the word. "Sara calls out 'Father' in Con's last angry, desperate moments with her, but he does not stay.... When Josie, however, addresses Phil as 'Father' in her final sad moments, the term reaffirms their relationship. Father and daughter stand together at the end of the play; there is no separation." "This final contrast between daughters Sara and Josie has been made inevitable," Professor Waterstradt concluded, "by the enduring contrasts between fathers Con and Phil."

SESSION I: PATTERNS IN THE DRAMATIC CARPET, I.

1. "'Native Eloquence': Multiple Voices in Long Day's Journey Into Night," by Jean Chothia, Selwyn College, Cambridge University.
2. "Edmund's Triptych: The Fusion of the Lyric and Dramatic in Long Day's Journey Into Night," by Péter Egri, University of Budapest.
3. "O'Neill and the Marionette: Über and Otherwise," by Lowell S. Swortzell, New York University.

Moderator: Marcelline Krafchick, California State University, Hayward.
 Recorder: Frederick C. Wilkins, Suffolk University.

The subjects covered in Session I were as diverse as the widely-scattered homelands of the speakers. (Why else would the conference director have devised such a grab-bag title?) But the first and second papers did focus, not only on the same play, but on the brilliance of O'Neill's language, which is still inadequately appreciated; and all three attested to his genius in assimilating diverse elements in his intricate "carpet." Few of the conference sessions were as rich in insight and implication, and few are as difficult to summarize without considerable loss.

Professor Chothia, in her survey of the "linguistic delicacy and complexity" in Long Day's Journey Into Night, suggested that the frequent and unjustified critical attacks on O'Neill's "linguistic clumsiness" may be a result of the critics' excessive attention to the words on the page, rather than to their resonance in performance. "Good dramatic dialogue," she noted, "is written to be heard in a theatre in the context of the ongoing action of a play." Far from being tone-deaf, O'Neill had a marvelous ear, and that ear's "precision" and "subtlety" can only be realized in performance, when sight and sound combine to reveal its rightness.

O'Neill struggled through most of his career to achieve a viable dramatic language. Slang came early, and easy, as did dialect; and the polyphony, the "multitude of various and intercutting voices," of the early sea plays and The Hairy Ape was an apt preparation for The Iceman Cometh, in which "each of the characters ... has a particular idiolect, syntax, lexis, so that, even when imaging torpor, the stage teems with life; and these idiolects are so varied and interwoven that, besides creating character, they contribute at every utterance to the ongoing action of the play." Early attempts at plain, everyday speech and heightened language came harder: "even the most loyal O'Neillian has squirmed before some of the verbal encounters of Welded [and] the exclamatory declarations of The Fountain." But even those works, however flawed themselves, were "important experimental stages in the development toward the seemingly natural but, in reality, artfully composed texture of the mature writing."

The artfulness is clear in Long Day's Journey, which, despite its intimacy and tiny cast, "is also a polyphonic play. The Tyrones speak General American, like O'Neill and his audience, but they also have access to various registers which reveal the play of past experience within present existence." Mary's "gushing girlish speech" when under influence of the drug; Tyrone's sententious quotations from Shakespeare; Jamie's distorted parodies thereof, alternating with moments of melancholia and "coarse Broadway slang"; Edmund's echoing of his father's and brother's verbal patterns and his "attempts to express his mystic experience in poetic prose": these and many other "linguistic elements vary the surface of the play whilst creating a dense texture of implication." But beneath the variegated surface there are also linguistic evidences that they are a family. "O'Neill compels belief in their relationship by giving them a language in common which roots them in a shared past." The meaningful use of "keywords"; the fact that frequently "the intensity of feeling is in direct relation to the sparsity of the words"; even the "communication" conveyed by conspicuous silence; all attest to the linguistic brilliance in O'Neill's greatest play. "Using an unusually extensive range of registers and speech forms, O'Neill has found scenic and linguistic means to explore the themes of alienation, inarticulacy and dispossession, experienced by people striving for something more, which had occupied him since his earliest work." One hopes that American critics will heed the words of this English guest who has listened to O'Neill's words so carefully and so well.

The "triptych" of Edmund Tyrone that Professor Egri discussed in careful and illuminating detail is the three-part reminiscence, for his father, of the "high spots in [his] memories" on page 153 of the Yale edition of Long Day's Journey. The loving and close reading of one page of the play's text was particularly salutary, coming as it did at a time when Broadway boasted a slick, streamlined speed-reading of the work. By

breaking several parts of the page into actual poetic lines, and examining the mood, rhythm, alliteration, metaphor, sentence structure and increasingly heightened intensity of Edmund's "poetic experience," his "tripartite epiphany," Professor Egri revealed not only the infusion of the lyric into the very center of O'Neill's dramatic tragedy, but also the considerable poetic gifts that Edmund, like his creator, tended to deny. "The poetic form of Edmund's intuitive insight preserves and eternalizes the proof of his poetic sensibility and along with it the manifestation of his creativity." The paper, which is included in Professor Egri's new book, Chekhov and O'Neill (pp. 143-148), should be required reading for all critics, like those to whom Professor Chothia alluded, who deny the playwright any lyric or linguistic brilliance.

Lowell Swortzell, in a talk illustrated by a set of well chosen slides, discussed the early and late influence of marionettes on O'Neill and the contribution of that influence to such plays as Hughie and The Iceman Cometh. The early influence came from his Provincetown associates, Robert Edmund Jones, Kenneth Macgowan, Alfred Kreyborg (who wrote a number of short plays for marionettes that the Provincetowners performed), and Remo Bufano, the Players' staff puppeteer. O'Neill's renewed interest in the late 1930s was a result of successful marionette productions of his early plays--The Emperor Jones, The Hairy Ape, Marco Millions--by such artists as Ralph Chesse and Jerome Magon. Professor Swortzell showed the ubiquitous presence of marionettes or marionette-like figures throughout O'Neill's career: the formless fears, the fourth-scene gang of Negroes, and the crocodile in The Emperor Jones; the Fifth Avenue crowd and the gorilla ("a living Übermarionette") in The Hairy Ape; the wedding guests and the albatross in The Ancient Mariner; Loving, the masked alter ego in Days Without End; and onward to Josie in Moon for the Misbegotten, "who may be seen as the Übermarionette personified." He revealed O'Neill as "the ultimate puppeteer"; and subsequent discussion led to the suggestion that, if it is done in marionette form, there is still hope that Lazarus Laughed will reach the stage during the O'Neill centennial year of 1988!

NOTES FROM CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

1. From Travis Bogard, University of California, Berkeley:

On pages 5 and 8 of the Summer-Fall 1986 Newsletter, Michael Manheim writes that I said "O'Neill turned to Commins to help him try to make a break with Carlotta." O'Neill did no such thing, nor did I say he did. Commins tried to take O'Neill from Carlotta but O'Neill, as soon as he could move from the New York hospital, went back to her. There was never a question of his leaving her except in the minds of his friends whose loyalty exceeded their discretion.

2. From Bette Mandl, Suffolk University:

I want to thank Jean Anne Waterstradt for her summary of my talk, "Wrestling with the Angel in the House: Mary Tyrone's Long Journey" (Summer-Fall 1986 issue, p. 16). I also, however, wish to amend her report of remarks I made during the discussion period. I did not claim that "James is a poor provider," or that "Mary cannot give of herself." Rather, I pointed to these accusations, frequently levelled at the Tyrones, as revealing of cultural expectations regarding gender roles. Such attitudes now invite re-vision.

BOOK REVIEWS

1. DOROTHY COMMINS, ed., "LOVE AND ADMIRATION AND RESPECT": THE O'NEILL-COMMINS CORRESPONDENCE. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986. xxi + 248 pp. \$35.00, cloth. ISBN 0 8223 0668 9.

The quotation in the title of this moving and important book comes from O'Neill's

1946 inscription to his editor and closest friend, Saxe Commins, in a copy of The Iceman Cometh. It is an apt expression of the affection and esteem that each man felt for the other and revealed repeatedly in the letters here collected, many of them now published for the first time. Their association of more than thirty-five years was as personal as it was professional; and it is without question that, as Travis Bogard notes in his invaluable foreword to the collection, "no other person except Carlotta was trusted so completely or came so close to knowing the essential O'Neill" as Saxe Commins (p. xiv). Commins was with O'Neill on the night of the Hairy Ape premiere in 1922, when a drunken Jamie arrived at Grand Central Station with their mother's coffin and the despondent playwright, caring nothing for the response to his play, poured out "with the eloquence of bitterness ... his dark memories of his family" (p. 23). And their intimate friendship, already seven years old, was to last until near the end of O'Neill's life.

Yes, the title phrase is apt indeed. But let no newcomer to the "O'Neill saga" be misled by it into expecting a saccharine tale of idyllic fraternal camaraderie impervious to all obstacles. It is that, but it is more, and the more makes the imperviousness all the more remarkable. As Mrs. Commins says in her introduction, the book offers "a story steeped in human conflicts as dramatic as any the eminent dramatist ever wrote" (p. 1). What we have is essentially a triangle story whose third member, Carlotta Monterey O'Neill, eventually drove a wedge between the two friends and inflicted wounds that Commins never fully understood and from which he never completely recovered. There can be few episodes in the annals of American letters as harrowing as the eventual rifts between Eugene and Carlotta. The physical wounds that O'Neill suffered as a result of them--a broken arm in New York City and a broken knee in Marblehead--pale in comparison to the psychic traumas induced by "scenes that could have been written by Strindberg" (Mrs. Commins' words, pp. 187-188). And because Commins was in the very center of the battling--as participant, or eyewitness, or subsequent confidant--his letters, and his memoir that is divided up to link them, provide us with the fullest and by far the closest picture yet of the internecine warfare between the playwright and his third wife.

Commins himself remains largely in the shadows, partly because fewer of his letters have survived, and partly because he was so selfless in his dedication to O'Neill that his letters and memoir concentrate on the other players in the drama. There is ample evidence of his many services to O'Neill, as dentist, errand doer, protector of privacy during and after the divorce from Agnes Boulton, editor, typist and confessor. Sometimes he is forced to center stage, as when Carlotta accuses him of stealing her husband's manuscripts (p. 224), when he had merely been following O'Neill's instructions to secure them from actual theft. Even here, though, he concentrates on the accuser:

There followed a cascade of curses. The veneer of the lady had been rubbed off and the mind and the language of the show girl were exposed. The tirade became an outpouring of obscenities. (p. 225)

Ultimately he preferred to keep his distance but be available whenever needed. This is clear in his last letter to O'Neill (March 2, 1948), shortly before he was barred by Carlotta from his friend's presence forever:

I have been giving much tormented thought to the possibility that my frequent visits ... might have been causing you embarrassment. Nothing, as you must know, could be farther from my mind or heart. Yet if it will save you the slightest need of explanation, I shall stay away until you summon me. All I want you to know is that as long as I live I'll be available, when the chips are down or at any other time, on the moment of your call. (p. 227)

He signs the letter "with all devotion," and that is one of the two feelings that his contributions trace: an unwavering dedication to the playwright, and an inevitably

increasing hostility toward the playwright's wife.

Those feelings doubtless color the memoir whose episodes are such a valuable part of the book. The writing is brilliant, and the events are recorded with such exquisite and telling detail that it's easy to forget that, more often than not, the writer is reporting what he had been told and had not himself witnessed. Take a 1946 incident in the O'Neills' last New York City apartment:

Carlotta rushed into Gene's room and lifted the glass that covered his dressing table over her head and crashed it to the floor where it broke into hundred [sic] of splinters. Underneath this glass Gene had kept the only picture he had of his mother and himself as a baby. Carlotta, now at the summit of her frenzy, snatched the picture and tore it into bits, crying, "Your mother was a whore!" (p. 222)

What splendid narration, and what verisimilitude. No wonder the incident is indelibly etched into the O'Neill biography, even though the writer had left the apartment before it occurred and only learned about it, from the victim, the next morning. And the same is true of the most memorable and ghastly moment in the saga here recorded--the night in February 1951 when O'Neill had fled from a quarrel in the Marblehead house, fallen, and broken his knee:

He began to call for help. There was no answer. For an hour he lay on the roadway, helpless and unable to move, crying all the while for aid. With no coat on his back, he suffered from the severe cold and felt, besides the pain, fear of the consequences of long exposure. He continued to cry for help and finally the door of their house was opened. Carlotta stood framed in the small rectangular proscenium, her figure lighted by the vestibule lamp. After a long silence, she delivered in histrionic tones these lines:

"How the mighty have fallen! The master is lying low. Now where is all your greatness?"

Wherewith she closed the door. (p. 232)

Again, a brilliant account, even more vividly described and detailed than the first. But also, again, a second-hand account, whose teller (and re-teller) could not be accused of unbiassed objectivity. Could O'Neill, in his state, have recalled Carlotta's exact words? And don't the lighting effect and the references to proscenium and the delivery of lines smack as much of art as of life? Clytemnestra gloats again over the fallen body of Agamemnon--and in Marblehead no less! I certainly don't mean to question the essential accuracy of either event; nor to denigrate Commins's exceptional skill as a writer, which was easily the equal of many of his illustrious literary clients. This is the closest we will ever get to some momentous incidents in O'Neill's life, and it is hardly to Commins's discredit that the unadorned facts will never be known. O'Neill's was, he said in a 1951 letter to Oona, "the most meaningful friendship of my life" (p. 238), and he has served his friend admirably well.

As for O'Neill himself, the collection is an important complement to the biographies, though it does little to illuminate his thought or art. (For that, the Bryer-Bogard edition of the O'Neill-Macgowan letters is superior.) Although he is represented by 82 letters and notes written between 1920 and 1951, he has relatively little to say about his work. Aside from repeated references to the protracted Strange Interlude plagiarism suit, only four plays get substantial mention: Dynamo (pp. 50-51), Mourning Becomes Electra (pp. 68 and 84), Days Without End, and Ah, Wilderness! (pp. 136 and 138-139). However, the letters bring us as close to the man himself as we can ever get; and that man is far from the haunted olympian of popular legend. He is shy, gentle, sad, reclusive, sensitive, determined (as he notes in a

1929 letter to Commins) to develop his craft and not fall victim to the fate that ruined his father--

I'd rather fail at the Big Stuff and remain a success in my own spiritual eyes than go on repeating, or simply equalling, work I've done before. Life is growth--or a joke one plays on oneself! One has to choose. (p. 68)

--and frequently troubled, especially at the end, when illness, world conditions, his children's activities and his wife's antagonism combined to still his pen. But it's no tortured agonist (no "gloomy and brooding master-builder," in Bogard's phrase on the book jacket) who sends a special greeting to Saxe's son Eugene in 1932:

How's my young namesake? Grand, I hope. Tell him all he has to do to have a grand youth is not to have one like mine!... Much love to [Dorothy] and to you and to God's Chillun and kiss them both for me, and give my namesake an extra one, meaning no partiality against the young lady, but because he sort of starts off under a handicap and needs a break! (pp. 117-118)

Much torture was to come--physical, familial and international--and it took its toll. Witness a 1939 letter to Commins from Tao House: "A very, very amusing world, isn't it? And yet, when you laugh it leaves a taste of vomit in your mouth" (p. 185). But he never lost his simple, caring humanity, nor his love and need for Carlotta, even after she had erupted in obscene frenzy against him, his mother, and his friends from the past. "Try to understand," Saxe recalls him saying; "She's sick, terribly sick" (p. 226).

It is the portrait it provides of Carlotta that makes the book a truly essential document. Because more than 100 of the 242 letters, cards and telegrams are by her, the volume offers tremendous riches to anyone seeking to solve the enigmas in her nature. "I am one of those extremists," she wrote to Commins in 1929, "all for--or--against!" (p. 61). And her assessors have aligned themselves similarly. Heroine? or harridan? or "both of the above"? I'd opt for the last answer, straddling a fence on which Mrs. O'Neill herself declined to alight. There is no question that she dedicated her life to providing an atmosphere in which O'Neill could work without discomfort or distraction. To Commins from Casa Genotta in 1932: "I give him my entire existence, thought & energy to make things & conditions so as to help his working hours & keep him as well & happy as I can" (p. 121). And from the same site the next year: "I am house maid--personal maid, under gardener,--secretary,--nurse & what not! It's good for me--I haven't time to think.--My hands are ruined but what does that matter if Gene is at peace & comfy" (p. 148). And the woman who sends a "wee cheque" to the Commins children and secures a "wee tree" for her husband's Christmas is no steely virago. Nor is the woman who responded so sensitively to the news of sculptor Edward Quinn's suicide attempt in the summer of 1929: "One never knows what is deep within another's heart" (p. 62). But how to reconcile such sentiments with the heartlessness of her attacks on O'Neill's Provincetown associates, her obscene tirades and her deep-seated prejudices?

There is a curiously prophetic comment in a 1929 letter to Commins: "Life is an amazing series of experiences--of hurts--with just enough happiness thrown in to give us the courage to go on & search for more" (p. 74). In the end she must be said to have inflicted more hurts than she received. She was determined to separate O'Neill from all human vestiges of his Provincetown and Greenwich Village past, both because she considered them low-life parasites and hypocrites and because it was a past of which she was not a part. "Elimination," she called it in several early letters to Commins, urging him to do the same:

The process of elimination is necessary but difficult, dear child;--we must separate the sheep from the goats! (p. 40)

Try elimination Saxe-- it gives one more love for the few! And strength too!
(p. 45)

Somehow Commins himself escaped elimination, even though he too was a representative of the past, until she began to see him as her rival as intimate, confidant and friend of O'Neill. And then he had to be discarded with all the others.

Whatever one's conclusion about the Carlotta enigma, it can be supported in these revealing pages--in the letters themselves, in Saxe's extraordinarily dramatic memoir, in Mrs. Commins's introduction and headnotes to the book's four chronological sections, in the scrupulous annotation that accompanies the text, and above all in Professor Bogard's foreword, which provides, with a marvelous blend of affection and objectivity, the ideal perspective from which to judge the events, the persons, and their words. Thanks should also go to Louis Sheaffer, who gave Mrs. Commins much biographical assistance; and to Jackson R. Bryer, who aided immensely, though unofficially, in the preparation and organization of the manuscript. Their painstaking collaboration merits celebration. The story the book tells is a sad one, and a well known one, but it has never been as richly revealed as it is here.

--Frederick C. Wilkins

2. PÉTER EGRI, CHEKHOV AND O'NEILL: THE USES OF THE SHORT STORY IN CHEKHOV'S AND O'NEILL'S PLAYS. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986. \$18.00, cloth. ISBN 963 05 3651 X. Distributed in the U.S. by Humanities Press International, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716.

This is a rich and rewarding book, and if I begin with the comment that it is misrepresented by its title, I do so only to emphasize that Professor Egri's study extends considerably beyond its officially announced confines. Granted, it begins and ends with Chekhov's early and late influence on O'Neill--early in terms of the latter's reading, late in terms of his dramaturgy (though affinity would be a more accurate term than influence); and the development of both writers' use of short-story-derived elements in their one-act and longer plays remains as a leitmotif throughout. But there are frequent and fruitful digressions into the relations between O'Neill's work and that of other writers as well, especially Conrad, Gorky, Synge and Ibsen; and the author's deep familiarity with the whole course of social and cultural history permits him to broaden his canvas periodically and show the origins and intricate evolution of the literary genres he is discussing, as well as their "generic and genetic relationship." Readers interested in the interconnections of the two genres will be amply rewarded, far more so than those who seek an assessment of O'Neill's work in toto. But the five O'Neill plays discussed at greatest length--Hughie (pp. 24-28), A Moon for the Misbegotten (39-50), A Touch of the Poet (57-67), The Iceman Cometh (102-117), and especially Long Day's Journey Into Night (119-153)--are accorded far more than generic treatment, and specialists in those plays should not be deterred by the volume's title from acquiring or consulting it.

There are four ways that the short story--especially the genre's central structural component, "a conspicuous change in the course and direction of the action" (p. 9)--is incorporated into the dramatic works of Chekhov and O'Neill, and each is treated in a separate chapter. In the first and simplest, a short prose narrative is recreated in one-act dramatic form, the "epic turn of a short story" becoming "the dramatic climax of a short play" (p. 17), as in Chekhov's transformation of his 1887 story, "A Defenceless Creature," into the playlet entitled "The Anniversary" four years later. Many changes were entailed, including "a shift of emphasis from a funny incident to (or rather towards) a satirical comedy" (p. 14); but the play "constitutes a dramatic conflict which uses, extends, intensifies and modifies the incipient antithesis of the short story" (p. 17). Professor Egri's O'Neill example is particularly complex since the play, "Warnings," was probably inspired by another author's story, Conrad's "The

End of the Tether." But the choice is especially rewarding, since the Conrad-inspired play subsequently inspired a story by O'Neill himself ("S.O.S."), so Professor Egri can show both sides of the two-way street of narrative-dramatic evolution. And since "S.O.S." remains unpublished, his detailed description and analysis of it are most welcome. He concedes that there is little that is "Chekhovian" in the mood or atmosphere of O'Neill's short story-inspired one-acts, but he notes that Chekhov's short plays aren't what we would characterize as Chekhovian either. And he concludes this part of his discussion with an analysis of O'Neill's late one-act, "Hughie," in which "the integration of the generic features of the short story and the short play was coupled with a Chekhovian atmosphere" (p. 24, italics added).

The rest of the book discusses three ways in which "short-story-like dramatic cells" are incorporated into Chekhov's and O'Neill's longer plays. The first, which the author calls the "cascade connection," is "the technique of connecting in series story-like short dramatic units into a new, meaningful whole" (p. 34). That neither playwright mastered the technique immediately is shown in the contrast between Platonov (1881) and Ivanov (1887-89), and in the even more striking contrast between O'Neill's early Servitude ("which strikes the onlooker or reader as a combination of three one-act plays with three different types of conflict"--p. 36) and A Moon for the Misbegotten. While the later play shares with the earlier an organization dividable into separate narrative-dramatic units (Professor Egri delineates seven on pp. 44-48), Moon's units are "organically linked" (p. 43), largely by the "inner duality of the [three major] characters" (p. 40). And the brilliant discussion of those dualities is one of the many bonuses I mentioned when lamenting Professor Egri's choice of title.

Sensitively detailed analyses, separately and together, of Uncle Vanya and A Touch of the Poet highlight the discussion of the second use of the short story in Chekhov's and O'Neill's long plays--"shaping the peak of the dramatic structure by making use of a short-story-like culmination involving a sudden change in the direction of the action" (p. 51). This is, of course, much like the first use, except that the plays are longer and have no specific narrative antecedents. And rather than repeat what he has already discussed, Professor Egri turns to the genre that both plays embody--tragicomedy--and traces its evolution from the classical era, through the Renaissance, to Chekhov's and O'Neill's absurdist successors. His comparison of Vanya and Poet is a brilliant tour de force--one that reveals remarkable affinities without making any risky claims of direct influence. But it is, at the very least, arresting that the climactic, short-story-like "turn" in both plays involves a gunshot by the tragicomic protagonist--Voynitsky's shooting at Professor Serebryakov, and Con Melody's shooting of his mare. This "most conspicuous" parallel is also the most important because, in each case, "three things coincide: the bursting point of the tragicomic tension, the turning point of the short story embedded in the drama, and the culminating point of the dramatic action" (p. 66). If, as George Lukács has said, "O'Neill's tragicomedy has been through the school of Chekhov," that gunshot signals his graduation!

The final and "most intricate and refined strategy of composing a dramatic whole out of short-story-like units," which Professor Egri calls the "mosaic design," entails "a total integration of short-story-oriented elements, minor motifs, even fragmentary motives, into a dramatic pattern" (p. 68). Such a "unity created of seemingly accidental fragments" reaches its fullest brilliance for Chekhov in Three Sisters and The Cherry Orchard, the latter play being his crowning achievement because it also marks the apex in his development of "lyrical tragicomedy" (p. 76). The O'Neill equivalents, both revealingly dissected, are The Iceman Cometh and Long Day's Journey Into Night. Iceman's complex, even novelistic treatment of the conflicts between illusion and reality necessitated the abandonment of any traditional, unified "plot," and its replacement by the integration of many small elements into an interconnected mosaic design that provides a unity of its own. Professor Egri relates the play to its "literary antecedents"--Conrad's story, "Tomorrow" (1903), his reworking of it as a one-act play, "One Day More" (1905), and O'Neill's story,

"Tomorrow" (1917)); and he also compares it to Ibsen's The Wild Duck, Gorky's The Lower Depths, and Synge's The Well of the Saints. (Long-time Newsletter readers will remember the earlier appearance in this journal of this and several other sections of the book. It is a delight to note that those sections, as revised, reverberate even more richly in their new context, which is seamless in its construction. Professor Egri doesn't simply discuss "mosaic design": he demonstrates it!)

Long Day's Journey gets a final chapter of its own, which is perhaps the richest of all, though its riches can only be hastily sketched here. Again, as in Iceman, a single pyramidal plot is replaced by "a succession of dramatic scenes with short-story-oriented insights and turning points" (p. 120); and again "mosaic design" is the unifying structural solution. Professor Egri traces four strands, four "coordinated conflicts," in the dramatic carpet: the collision or opposition of material gain and spiritual loss, of illusion and reality, of love and hate, and of human aspiration and deterministic fate. He studies the various intra- and inter-character threads in each of the four strands, revealing the extraordinary complexity in all four of the haunted Tyrones, both individually and together. And the dissection is conducted with such careful attention to detail that moment after moment is revealed in a new and clarifying light. The pigs-in-the-icepond anecdote (pp. 118-119), Tyrone's putting out of the lights (p. 126) and the play's final line (p. 134) are three such moments about which I learned a great deal under Professor Egri's wise guidance.

Chekhov and O'Neill is not an easy book, either to read or to summarize. It defies immediate comprehension or glib recital. But the careful reader will, I know, share my gratitude to Professor Egri for adding a major volume to the O'Neill bookshelf.

--Frederick C. Wilkins

CALL FOR PAPERS

The November 1988 *Theatre Survey* will be a special issue devoted to "Eugene O'Neill and the Theatre of His Time." Scholars are invited to submit articles on O'Neill and his colleagues at the Provincetown Players, major productions of his dramas, the popular and critical reception of O'Neill's plays in this country and abroad, changing styles in O'Neill productions, and any related topics appropriate for a theatre history journal. The deadline for submissions is July 1, 1987. Please send articles to:

Professor Judith E. Barlow
Theatre Survey
 Department of Theatre PAC 266
 State University of New York at Albany
 Albany, NY 12222

NEWS, VIEWS AND REVIEWS

1. O'NEILL CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE IN BELGIUM. The Belgian Luxembourg American Studies Association will sponsor, in 1988, an international conference entitled "Eugene O'Neill and the Emergence of American Drama." This event, meant to celebrate the centenary of the playwright's birth, has been scheduled a few days before the O'Neill-Strindberg symposium at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, so international visitors will be able to attend both events. The conference will take place in Han-sur-Lesse, described by conference director Marc Maufort as "a lovely town in the Belgian Ardennes." Consisting of a series of plenary lectures by invited scholars, the conference will seek to explore the various facets of America's Nobel Prize-winning dramatist. For further information, please contact Mr. Maufort, c/o Professor Debusscher; Philologie Germanique C.P. 142; Université Libre de Bruxelles; 50, av. F.D. Roosevelt; 1050 Bruxelles; Belgium. Telephone: 02/642-3816.
2. CENTENNIAL PLANNING PROCEEDS. This fall has seen positive advances in the planning for the centennial of O'Neill's birth in 1988. On Saturday, September 20, the directors of twelve major West Coast theatres met at Tao House with José Quintero, Jason Robards and members of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation for a conference coordinated by Travis Bogard. Three weeks later, on Thursday, October 9, George C. White hosted and directed a similar gathering of New England scholars and theatre directors at the Monte Cristo Cottage--the transcontinental Mr. Robards attending half of that all-day session as well. And this month, at the 1986 Annual Meeting of the Eugene O'Neill Society (on Tuesday, December 30, from Noon to 1:15 p.m. in the Gotham Room on the 7th floor of the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City), the Society will formalize plans for its part in the year-long shebang that will commence (gasp) less than a year hence in the autumn of 1987. A report comprising the proceedings of all three aforementioned meetings will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter. The plans afoot are many, and one merits immediate announcement, though it is still in "the talking stage": a production of Ah, Wilderness!, directed by José Quintero and starring Jason Robards and Colleen Dewhurst, to open at the Guthrie Theatre and tour thereafter. More, as promised, in the Spring issue.
3. O'NEILL THEATRE FESTIVAL OFF AND RUNNING. I should say on and running, and the news will delight the many who so enjoyed the Festival's production of Hughie at the Boston O'Neill conference last May. Their base of operations is the Melrose Theatre in Los Angeles; and not only did their production of A Touch of the Poet open on October 16 (O'Neill's birthday), but Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley proclaimed that date "Eugene O'Neill Day" in the city! Their first fall season (October 16 to December 7) was divided between performances of Poet and a double-bill comprising Before Breakfast and Hughie. Stan Weston repeated his admired performance as Erie Smith and played Con Melody as well. (Michael McShane, the Boston night clerk, was replaced by Charles Bouvier.) Mary Wadkins appeared as Mrs. Rowland in Before Breakfast and Sara Melody in Poet, her mother in the latter being played by Jeanne Hepple. "This could be the start of something big," Polly Warfield noted in the Hollywood, CA Drama-Logue. We sincerely hope that it will be. To Artistic Director Tom McDermott, Executive Producer Judith Johnston-Weston, and star and Executive Director Stan Weston--indeed, to all concerned--our best wishes for many more exciting seasons. For information about the Festival's future plans and touring possibilities, write Tom McDermott, 2818 1/2 Waverly Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90039. Tel. 213-660-0406.
4. STATUE PLANNED FOR CENTENNIAL. A bronze statue of Eugene O'Neill as a boy will be erected in the harbor of New London, CT, and will be unveiled on October 16, 1988, the 100th anniversary of the playwright's birth. The statue, the work of Norman Legassie, was commissioned by George C. White, president of the O'Neill Theater Center in nearby Waterford, and was described in an October 13 report by Dena Kleiman in the New York Times: "Modeled after a well-known 1893 photograph of Mr. O'Neill seated on a rock near the city's lighthouse, the 250-pound bronze statue is to be

about three feet tall or about 50 percent larger than life-size. Plans call for it to be mounted on a rock and to measure about six feet in height in all."

5. AMERICAN DRAMA SOCIETY MEETING IN DECEMBER. That's not exactly accurate, as there isn't as yet an American Drama Society. But those who are interested in forming one are invited by Paul D. Voelker to attend an organizational meeting at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City at 3:15 p.m. on Monday, December 29, immediately following the MLA session (#468: "What Is American About the American Drama: Three Approaches") that Professor Voelker will chair. The site for the organizational meeting has not yet been chosen. MLA members can learn the location at the aforementioned session (1:45-3:00 p.m., Hart Room, Marriott); and others can call Professor Voelker at the Marriott, where he will be staying, early on the mornings of the 28th or 29th. (Tel. 212-398-1900.)
6. "VISIONS OF THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: THE O'NEILL-MELVILLE CONNECTION" is the title of the 1986 doctoral dissertation by Marc Maufort (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium; advisor, Professor Gilbert Debusscher). The author has kindly sent the following abstract of his work.

This dissertation proposes to shed light on aspects of Eugene O'Neill's American sensibility, through a comparison between his plays and the novels of Herman Melville. In the introductory chapter, "Eugene O'Neill and the American Literary Tradition," I explore the nature of O'Neill's admiration for the writers of the "American Renaissance," Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Walt Whitman. The second part of this introduction analyzes the relationship of influence and confluence linking O'Neill and Melville. It appears from my study that O'Neill was undoubtedly influenced by Melville during his literary career. Agnes Boulton, the playwright's second wife, affirmed that her husband was fascinated by Moby Dick. Moreover, O'Neill likened the hero of Diff'rent to a latter-day Ahab and commented on Melville's mystical vision of the sea in a hitherto unpublished foreword to Hart Crane's White Buildings. Finally, one finds an overt reference to Typee in Mourning Becomes Electra. In addition, one should bear in mind that O'Neill had befriended Carl Van Vechten, a renowned Melville scholar, and that the dramatist's library contained a copy of Israel Potter. The resemblances between O'Neill and Melville, however, cannot systematically be attributed to a phenomenon of direct influence. More frequently, these similarities testify to the confluence, the analogy of vision uniting the two artists. Melville's novels constitute as it were an observation post from which to describe the "Americanness" of certain O'Neillian motifs. Through their efforts to determine the quality of the American experience, O'Neill and Melville clearly deserve to be regarded as worthy representatives of the tradition of American realism in literature.

The various instances of literary convergence between O'Neill and Melville are examined at length in the ensuing chapters. In Chapter II, "Autobiographical Journeys," I have analyzed the influence of an analogous milieu on the two writers' literary output. Both transpose either in the novel or the drama memories of a sea-faring youth. In their early years, in Typee and Bound East for Cardiff, they adopt a sentimental tone in translating these episodes from their lives. In Moby Dick and Mourning Becomes Electra, however, they combine personal reminiscences with symbolic and mythic concerns. Finally, in Billy Budd and The Iceman Cometh, autobiographical allusions to the sea form a backdrop against which the authors' existential reflections are displayed. Melville and O'Neill also evoke childhood remembrances in emphasizing the psychoanalytical tensions existing between the members of their family units. Moreover, they demonstrate a profound familiarity with New England society through a skillful satiric thrust.

In Chapter III, "New England Legacy," I focus on O'Neill's and Melville's critique of American Protestantism, which they regard as responsible for the rise of American materialism. In "Benito Cereno" and Marco Millions, for instance, the two artists

deflate the shallow philosophy of the American merchant. In Moby Dick and Mourning Becomes Electra, they express contempt for the vengeful deity of Puritanism. Chapter IV, "An American Tragedy," investigates the innovative character of O'Neill's and Melville's vision of tragedy. Both create a tragic form celebrating the psychological woes of the American common man abandoned by God in an absurd universe. This tragic view culminates in Moby Dick and The Iceman Cometh, in which two protagonists, Ishmael and Larry Slade, find the strength to resist the horror of human existence.

In Chapter V, "Mariners and Mystics," I detail the novelist's and the dramatist's metaphysical concept of the ocean. The heroes of Redburn, White-Jacket, Anna Christie, and Long Day's Journey Into Night, in the course of their sea adventures, feel unified with the Absolute in a mystical communion. In this section, I also devote considerable space to an analysis of two undeniable instances of Melville's influence upon the works of O'Neill, i.e. the relationships between Typee and Mourning Becomes Electra and between Moby Dick and Ile. In this respect, emphasis is laid on O'Neill's ironical use of his model. Chapter VI, "O'Neill, Melville, and Poetic Realism," concentrates on the two-fold nature of the two authors' symbolism: whereas in Billy Budd and The Rope, O'Neill and Melville resort to the Abraham motif in a composition mode recalling Puritan typology, their symbolic rendering of the color white in Moby Dick and The Hairy Ape possesses marked romantic connotations.

A conclusion evaluates the extent of O'Neill's indebtedness to Melville. Certainly, O'Neill admired most European dramatists and philosophers. He nonetheless managed to reap original artistic effects in integrating in his dramas motifs borrowed from both the European and the American literary heritages. A more adequate understanding of such double confluence will undoubtedly contribute to more effective productions of O'Neill's plays.

7. "THE FOUNTAIN, MARCO MILLIONS AND LAZARUS LAUGHED: O'NEILL'S 'EXOTICS' AS HISTORY PLAYS" is the title of a dissertation (U. of Wisconsin-Madison, 1985) by Patrick E. Schmitt. The following abstract appeared in the June 1986 issue of Dissertation Abstracts International.

Three of Eugene O'Neill's plays of the Twenties--The Fountain, Marco Millions, and Lazarus Laughed--represent seeming anomalies in O'Neill's development of forms. These three, described by John [Henry] Raleigh as "historical exotics"--works removed temporally, spatially, and culturally from O'Neill's other works--are formal experiments that both convey O'Neill's vision of American history and shape the forms of his later history plays.

The "exotics" reflect O'Neill's developing view of the meaning of history for the interpretation of American experience. In each, a character drawn from the past is re-cast so as to represent the "American Adam"--the New World individual. Each undertakes a voyage, one both physical and spiritual. The Fountain chronicles both Juan Ponce de Leon's journey to the New World and his movement to a new and harmonious spiritual condition. Marco Millions describes Marco Polo's journeys East and West, as well as his unfinished spiritual voyage, ending not in harmony but in division. And Lazarus Laughed describes the spiritual voyage of the Biblical Lazarus--a voyage reflecting the vast distance between the world of the human and that of the transcendent. In each play, history is re-cast as myth--enhanced and enlarged images organized to form explanatory stories.

Each of these experimental history plays is built on principles that can be understood through consideration of their similarities to established models of form. Lazarus Laughed can be seen as an ironic comment on history plays shaped by both romantic dramatists such as Friedrich Schiller and realistic writers such as Ibsen. The Fountain is similar to the historical melodramas of the popular stage of the nineteenth century. Marco Millions has correspondences to the filmic treatments of

history developed by modern film directors such as Sergei Eisenstein.

The "exotics" represent the first phase of O'Neill's extended attempt to find a theatrical form for history consistent with the complex patterns of American experience. His efforts reached maturity in the critically acclaimed dramas of the latter part of his career. In such works as Mourning Becomes Electra and The Iceman Cometh, the playwright was to create forms capable of giving expression to the historical dimensions of American experience. The manuscripts for the plays in the unfinished Cycle, "A Tale of Possessors Self-Dispossessed," give further evidence that the experiments that produced the exotics were to play an important role in O'Neill's maturation as an interpreter of American history.

8. WARP AND WOOF. O'Neill's place in the tapestry of world drama is much in the mind of Normand Berlin these days. On November 14, he spoke on "The Beckettian O'Neill" during a session on Beckett and Modern Drama at the SAMLA conference in Atlanta. And he is in the early stages of a book entitled "O'Neill's Shakespeare," which he describes as "a kind of 'influence' study, but not quite. Shakespeare always seems to be there, in O'Neill, in one way or another. I'm trying to confront that idea, which will not be easy to verbalize."
9. CALENDAR A WOW. "Eugene and Carlotta O'Neill and the Animal Kingdom," the 1987 wall calendar of the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, is a corker--and a steal at the asking price of \$7.50 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling. It features photographs and excerpts from diaries and letters, some of which have never before been published. Various pets--dogs, cats and chickens--acquired during the O'Neills' years together in France, Georgia and Danville, California grace the monthly spreads, after the special January treat: a truly "precious" shot of the five-year-old O'Neill and his first puppy. Naturally Blemie, the O'Neills' beloved Dalmatian, figures prominently in the collection, which concludes with the complete text of the touching "Last Will and Testament of Silverdene Emblem O'Neill" that the playwright wrote after its death in 1940. For a copy, send payment with your name and address to The Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House, P.O. Box 402, Danville, CA 94526.
10. WHITE WINS MEDAL. George C. White, founder and president of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center in Waterford, CT, was the 1986 winner of the Eugene O'Neill Birthday Medal awarded annually by the Theater Committee for Eugene O'Neill. He was presented with the award by last year's winner, Colleen Dewhurst, at an October ceremony in New York City. Readers of the Newsletter will recall Mr. White's report in a previous issue of his adventures as director of a production of Anna Christie in Beijing.
11. AN INDIANA WILDERNESS. A report by James Fisher, Wabash College, of the Purdue University Theatre production of Ah, Wilderness!, November 6-9, 1986.

"The cast and I had to find ways of relating to these events [the plot of Ah, Wilderness!] in a way that makes sense to us in our contemporary world with its apparently greatly different values and mores.... The impulses and needs that the characters have are just as true in our time as they were in theirs. What is different is only the degree of manifestation, not the impulse," writes director Jim O'Connor in a program note for his production of Eugene O'Neill's touching "comedy of recollection." But perhaps instead of seeking relevancy, O'Connor and his cast should have spent their energy developing the sensitive ensemble quality and truth of feeling required by O'Neill's rose-colored, bittersweet play. Parallels between present-day values and mores and those of O'Neill's sepia-toned past will easily be made by an audience drawn close to the touching relationships of turn-of-the-century Centerville, Connecticut. But the cast of this Ah, Wilderness! struggled with a variety of styles, half-hearted accents and an abortive production concept that failed to make the simple desires and hopes of Nat Miller's family rise above the mundane.

The production, Purdue Theatre's entry in the American College Theatre Festival, mixed professional performers with students, and this created a problem of balance, but, oddly, not the expected one. The student cast members far outshone the Equity members of the cast including Steven Gilborn as Nat Miller, Patricia O'Connell as Essie Miller, Dale E. Miller as Sid Davis, and Mary Lowry as Lily Miller. Gilborn and O'Connell made bland caricatures of the ripe personalities of Nat and Essie, while Miller lacked both the expansiveness and the comic flair necessary for the boozy Sid. Lowry nicely captured Lily's old-maidishness, but she and Miller failed to create the sense of loss and painful heartbreak that separates the aging lovers.

On the bright side, Randy McPherson gave a well-honed and multi-dimensional performance as Richard. McPherson's exuberant and comically passionate performance elevated the proceedings, but with the exception of the sweetly naive Muriel of Rhonda Reeves, he was rarely matched in quality. Other good performances were given by Anne Sermon as a feisty Mildred, Erica Tobolski as Belle, and Keith Cavanaugh as Tommy.

O'Connor and scene designer I. Van Phillips placed the scenes normally set in the Miller family's parlor and dining room in the back yard of the Millers' house, which technically handicapped the dinner scene (the actors were forced to juggle plates on their laps), but more importantly diluted the sense of family that a warmly modest home scene would have supplied. Phillips' simple settings for the Pleasant Beach House and the waterside meeting place of Richard and Muriel were workable, but characterless. Glen Goodwin's evocative lighting effectively contrasted the tawdry brightness of the Pleasant Beach House and the romantic haziness of Richard and Mildred's secret meeting, while Colleen Muscha's costume designs adequately established the turn-of-the-century period.

But it was finally the hollow performances of the four mature characters, as well as O'Connor's search for "relevance," that crippled this production, distancing the audience from the timeless warmth of O'Neill's idealized view of life in small-town America, vintage 1906.

12. A MICHIGAN JOURNEY. Siena Heights College in Adrian, Michigan presented a production of Long Day's Journey Into Night from November 13 to 15. The Director was Trudy McSorley, the technical director Doug Miller. Cast: Doug Marquis as James, Elizabeth Klinker as Mary, Rodney Alexander Terwilliger as Edmund. Grant Neale as Jamie, and Mary Billings as Cathleen. Thanks to Michael Manheim, University of Toledo, for the following report.

"While performed by college students, this uncut production managed to hold audience attention throughout and to allow the essential values of the play to emerge. The direction was sensitive and intelligent, and the set design was superb. This production showed what can be achieved when the uncut play is done with confidence in the playwright's knowledge of what would work on stage."

13. ICEMAN ON THE THAMES. O'Neill is not new to the National Theatre of Great Britain. As Jean Chothia reminded us at the O'Neill conference in Boston last May, it was the smashing success, in the early 1970s, of Long Day's Journey Into Night starring Laurence Olivier and Constance Cummings that rescued the National from imminent financial collapse. So it is most appropriate that next year, when the National Theatre celebrates the tenth anniversary of its latest home on the south bank of the Thames with an international season of guest productions, one of those productions be of an O'Neill play. And the selected production is worthy of the grandeur of the occasion: the Broadway revival of The Iceman Cometh, directed by José Quintero, and starring Jason Robards, who will be making his first appearance on a London stage. It is scheduled to open at the National's Lyttleton Theatre on February 21. Interestingly, the same theatre will house, beginning on May 1, the Schaubuhne production of Peter Stein's version of The Hairy Ape. Both productions will be

reviewed in future issues.

14. FORTHCOMING O'NEILL PRODUCTIONS.

Hughie. East West Players, Los Angeles, June 11-21, 1987.

Long Day's Journey Into Night, dir. Barbara Rosoff. Portland (ME) Stage Company, February 7 - March 1, 1987.

A Moon for the Misbegotten. Victor Jory Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville (KY), January 6-24, 1987.

A Moon for the Misbegotten. George Street Playhouse, New Brunswick, NJ, January 14 - February 8, 1987.

A Moon for the Misbegotten. Seattle (WA) Repertory Company, March 21 - April 18, 1987.

A Moon for the Misbegotten. Theatre Virginia, Richmond, VA, March 18 - April 11, 1987.

15. THAT PORTRAIT. Readers who'd like a better look at Stuart Davis's 1914 painting, "Portrait of a Man," that was discussed by Louis Sheaffer in the last issue (p. 49), can see it until January 19 at the Brooklyn Museum, where it is part of an exhibit entitled "The Advent of Modernism: Post-Impressionism and North American Art, 1900-1918." (For information about directions and viewing hours, call 718-638-5000.) After the 19th, the painting will presumably return to its permanent home, the Regis Collection in Minneapolis. Mr. Sheaffer has proven quite conclusively that the subject of the portrait is not Eugene O'Neill, but if one is in the area it's worth a look for a' that.

16. MARY TYRONE REMEMBERED. Thanks to Gary Vena for pointing out the O'Neill reference in Peter Kerr's front-page story, "Anatomy of the Drug Issue," in the November 17 New York Times: "Over the decades that followed, most people forgot the nation's earlier brush with opiates and cocaine. Almost all that remained in popular memory were such cultural artifacts as Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey Into Night, set in 1912, which depicted the crushing effects on a family of a mother's drug addiction" (p. B6). "Who would have imagined," Professor Vena writes, "that Mary Tyrone's move to center stage would seem so strangely appropriate in the context of our contemporary drug crisis?" True, and a fitting tribute to the power of great art, if not to "make anything happen," at least to alert "popular memory" to facts best remembered.

17. A CROSS WORD; or, WHAT HATH EUGENE T. MALESKA WROUGHT? O'Neillians may have been diverted by item 3-down in the New York Times crossword for Tuesday, September 23 (p. C17): four spaces for "'____ Lucasta,' O'Neill play"! If Philip Yordan only knew!

18. DATES TO REMEMBER.

Tuesday, December 30: O'Neill Society triple-header at the MLA convention, Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York City.

8:30-9:45 a.m.: Meeting of officers and board in Suite 3748.

10:15-11:30 a.m.: Paper session, "O'Neill: The Composition Process," in Gotham Room.

Chair: Jackson R. Bryer. Speakers: Paul D. Voelker, Martha Bower, and Judith E. Barlow.

Noon-1:15 p.m.: Annual Business Meeting in Gotham Room.

April 2-4, 1987: Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association, Sheraton-Boston Hotel, Boston, MA.

O'Neill Session: "'The Games People Play': Family Relationships in O'Neill."

Chair: Frederick C. Wilkins. Speakers: Paul D. Voelker, Bette Mandl, Marc Maufort, and Stephen A. Black. (Date, hour and room to be announced.)

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN THIS ISSUE

TRUDY DRUCKER is Professor of English at Bergen Community College in Paramus, New Jersey. Two previous products of her forty-year "consuming interest in O'Neill" were an M.A. thesis on Greek influences in his work and an essay, "Sexuality as Destiny: The Shadow Lives of O'Neill's Women," that appeared in the Summer-Fall 1982 issue of the Newsletter (pp. 7-10).

SHEILA HICKEY GARVEY, who teaches acting, directing and theatre history at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and is an Equity member of the acting company at the Allenberry Playhouse in Boiling Springs, served as moderator of two sessions during the O'Neill conference last May. She is presently revising for publication her doctoral dissertation--a history of the Circle in the Square Theatre.

RONALD H. WAINSCOTT is Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts at Towson State University in Towson, Maryland. His doctoral dissertation at Indiana University comprised "A Critical History of the Professional Stage Direction of the Plays of Eugene O'Neill, 1920-1934." He presented a paper on Robert Edmond Jones' direction of The Fountain at the LSU Theatre Symposium in 1985, and a paper on Philip Moeller's direction of Mourning Becomes Electra at the Mid-America Theatre History Symposium in March 1986. The essay in this issue was presented on the Competitive Panel in Theatre History at the American Theatre Association Convention in Toronto in August 1985.

FREDERICK C. WILKINS, Chair and Professor of English at Suffolk University, is President of the Eugene O'Neill Society and editor of the Eugene O'Neill Newsletter. He organized and directed the 1984 and 1986 O'Neill conferences in Boston, and is preparing a collection of selected papers from the two conferences for publication (ere 16 October) in 1988.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

for the

EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY SPECIAL SESSION

at the

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TOPIC: Eugene O'Neill and the Orient

Papers may include discussion of influences on, interest in
or any aspect of O'Neill's attraction to Oriental thought and culture

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Submit proposals - papers (maximum length 10 pages), outlines, etc., to

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