This is a volume of specially commissioned essays containing studies of Eugene O’Neill’s life, his intellectual and creative forebears, and his relation to the theatrical world of his creative period, 1916-42. Also included are descriptions of the O’Neill canon and its production history on stage and screen, and a series of essays on “special topics” related to the playwright, such as his treatment of women in the plays, his portrayals of Irish and African-Americans, and his attempts to deal in dramatic terms with his parental family culminating in his greatest play, *Long Day’s Journey Into Night*. One of the essays speaks for those who are critical of O’Neill’s work, and the volume concludes with an essay on O’Neill criticism containing a select bibliography of full-length studies of the playwright’s work.
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Eugene O'Neill at his player piano "Rosie" in the early 1940s
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Eugene O’Neill at his player piano “Rosie” in the early 1940s. (Reproduced by permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library)

1 Louise Bryant, George Cram Cook, and O’Neill in the 1916 Provincetown Players production of Thirst at the Wharf Theatre in Provincetown. (Reproduced by permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library)


3 Josie (Colleen Dewhurst) and Tyrone (Jason Robards) in the José Quintero production of A Moon for the Misbegotten, New York, 1974. (Photo: Martha Swope. Reproduced by permission of Time/Life Pictures)

4 Greta Garbo brooding over her whiskey and ginger ale in the 1930 MGM film of Anna Christie. (Reproduced by permission of the New York Museum of Modern Art film collection)

5 Four haunted Tyrones: Jason Robards (Jamie), Dean Stockwell (Edmund), and Ralph Richardson (James) watching Katharine Hepburn (Mary) in the 1962 Long Day’s Journey Into Night, Embassy Pictures. (Reproduced by permission of the New York Museum of Modern Art film collection)

6 Charles Gilpin as the Emperor Jones in uniform, smiling defiantly, from a 1920 production. (Reproduced by permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library)
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Companies and Festivals: An International Guide (1995), and numerous articles on American theatre and drama, as well as on contemporary Shakespearean production.

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CHRONOLOGY

1877  James, Sr. (father) marries Ella Quinlan O’Neill (mother).
1878  James, Jr. (brother) born.
1883  Edmund (brother) born.
1885  Edmund dies.
1888  Eugene Gladstone O’Neill born on 16 October in New York City.
1895  To Mount Saint Vincent Academy boarding school (NYC).
1900  To Betts Academy (Stamford, Connecticut).
1906  To Princeton University (leaves 1907).
1909  Marries Kathleen Jenkins, followed by gold prospecting trip to Honduras.
1911  Returns to United States. Takes up residence at Jimmy-the-Priest’s (tavern and room house in lower Manhattan, where he attempts suicide in 1912).
for tuberculosis on 24 December (where he stays for six months and writes his first one-act plays).

1914  To George Pierce Baker's class in playwriting at Harvard. Publishes *Thirst, and Other One-Act Plays.*

1916  To Provincetown, Massachusetts, where *Bound East for Cardiff* and *Thirst* are produced. *Bound East* also produced in New York later this year. *Before Breakfast* produced.


1918  Marries Agnes Boulton. *The Rope, Where the Cross is Made,* and *The Moon of the Caribbees* produced.


1920  *Beyond the Horizon* produced (wins Pulitzer Prize). Father, James O’Neill, Sr., dies. *The Emperor Jones* and *Diff’rent* produced.

1921  *Anna Christie* produced (wins second Pulitzer Prize). *Gold* and *The Straw* produced.

1922  Mother, Ella Quinlan O’Neill, dies. *The Hairy Ape* and *The First Man* produced.

1923  Brother, James O’Neill, Jr., dies.

1924  *All God’s Chillun Got Wings, Welded,* and *Desire Under the Elms* produced.

1925  *The Fountain* produced.


1928  *Lazarus Laughed* produced (in Pasadena, California). *Marco Millions* and *Strange Interlude* produced. (*Strange Interlude* wins third Pulitzer Prize.)
Chronology

1929  Dynamo produced. Divorces Agnes Boulton, marries Carlotta Monterey (in France).

1931  Mourning Becomes Electra produced.

1933  Ah, Wilderness! produced.

1934  Days Without End produced.

1936  Awarded Nobel Prize. (During the late 1930s and into the 1940s, O'Neill is at work on his eleven-play Cycle, “A Tale of Possessors Self-Dispossessed,” which includes the later-to-be-produced A Touch of the Poet and More Stately Mansions. See the essay by Donald Gallup in this collection.)

1937  Builds “Tao House” in Danville, California (where he writes his last plays).

1939  Writes The Iceman Cometh.

1940  Writes Long Day’s Journey Into Night.

1943  Completes A Moon for the Misbegotten.

1946  The Iceman Cometh produced.

1947  A Moon for the Misbegotten produced (in Columbus, Ohio).

1950  Son, Eugene O’Neill, Jr., dies.

1953  O’Neill dies (27 November, in Boston).

1955  The Iceman Cometh revived by José Quintero in New York (starring Jason Robards, Jr.).

1956  Long Day’s Journey Into Night produced in Stockholm, then New York. (Wins fourth Pulitzer Prize.)

1957  A Touch of the Poet produced.

CHRONOLOGY

1959  Hughie produced in New York.


1973  A Moon for the Misbegotten revived by José Quintero in New York (starring Jason Robards, Jr. and Colleen Dewhurst).

From the 1960s on, there have been numerous successful revivals of O’Neill plays on stage and screen. See the essays by Ronald Wainscott and Kurt Eisen in this collection.
PLAYS AND POEMS
(listed by year of publication)

Gold. NY: Boni and Liveright, 1921.
All God’s Chillun Got Wings, and Welded. NY: Boni and Liveright, 1924.
Desire Under the Elms. NY: Boni and Liveright, 1925.
Plays. 4 vols. NY: Boni and Liveright, 1925.
The Great God Brown, The Fountain, The Moon of the Caribbees, and Other Plays (the “other plays” being those included among the (Other) Six Plays of the Sea). NY: Boni and Liveright, 1926.
Strange Interlude. NY: Liveright, 1928.
Dynamo. NY: Liveright, 1929.
PLAYS AND POEMS


(Includes the following previously unpublished plays: *Bread and Butter, Now I Ask You, The Personal Equation, The Reckoning.*)