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### NEWS FROM THE O'NEILL

#### EUGENE O'NEILL THEATER CENTER TO HOST GATHERING OF FRENCH POETS AT MONTE CRISTO COTTAGE

PERFORMANCES JUNE 19 AND 20, 5:00 – 6:30 PM  
MONTE CRISTO COTTAGE, 325 PEQUOT AVENUE, NEW LONDON

Waterford, Connecticut – The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, in collaboration with the French American Cultural Exchange, presents two evenings of English and French language poetry, to be performed at the Monte Cristo Cottage, 325 Pequot Avenue, New London. The evening will be a remarkable cultural moment for the region, bringing some of the most illustrious and current French poets to New London, in their only appearance in America.

The Poets on (an) Exchange Mission (POEM) Festival is an experiment in translation and performance of innovative contemporary French and English poetry. The performances will be bilingual, with the authors reading their own works.

The leading and remarkable French poets performing their work at the Monte Cristo Cottage, boyhood home of playwright Eugene O'Neill, will be **David Lespiau, Sabine Macher, Michèle Métail, Anne Portugal, Pascal Poyet, and Sébastien Smirou**. American poets will read from their work in a similar performance in Cassis, France at the Carmago Foundation on June 26 and 27.

"I am enormously excited by this opportunity," said **Preston Whiteway**, Executive Director of the O'Neill. "Thanks to the contacts of our founder **George C. White**, the O'Neill and the Monte Cristo Cottage will play host to a very special night of literary exchange, and I hope those in the region will join us. This is an event that makes this region special, as these poets have chosen this to be their only American venue."

Admission to the performances is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be provided. For further information, contact the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, (860) 443-5378 or [theaterlives@theoneill.org](mailto:theaterlives@theoneill.org).

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POEM is a program of FACE (French American Cultural Exchange), a non-profit organization chartered by the state of New York; and a co-production of Fish Drum, Inc of NYC and Double Change of Paris.

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, founded in 1964, is the pre-eminent center for the development of new works and new voices for the American theater. It has been home to more than 1,000 new works for the stage and 2,500 emerging artists. Scores of projects developed at the O'Neill have gone on to full productions at other theaters around the world, including Broadway, off-Broadway and major regional theaters. The O'Neill itself is the winner of a special Tony Award, the National Opera Award, the Jujamcyn Award for Theater Excellence and the Arts and Business Council Encore Award. The O'Neill's programs include the National Playwrights Conference, National Music Theater Conference, Puppetry Conference, Cabaret Conference, National Critics Institute, and the National Theater Institute, which includes semester-long, fully accredited intensive theater training programs in Waterford and Moscow and a six-week accredited summer program, Theatermakers. In addition, the O'Neill owns and operates the Monte Cristo Cottage, a National Historic Landmark and the childhood home of Nobel Prize-winning and four-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, Eugene O'Neill. For more information regarding the Center, please visit the O'Neill website at [www.theoneill.org](http://www.theoneill.org) or call 860-443-5378.

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