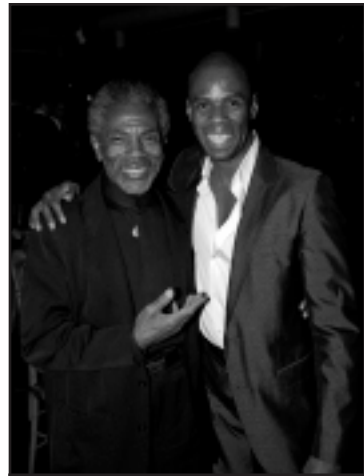


Kevin Spacey Honored with 2009 Monte Cristo Award



Andre de Shields and Colman Domingo were among those gathering to honor Kevin Spacey at the O'Neill's 9th Annual Monte Cristo Award event.



Brian Dennehy, O'Neill board member, addresses guests at the Monte Cristo Award dinner. In presenting the award, Dennehy praised Spacey for his commitment to the theater and for his extraordinary work in roles written by Eugene O'Neill.



Kevin Spacey accepts the O'Neill's Monte Cristo Award, named after the cottage in New London, CT where Eugene O'Neill summered with his family. Spacey recalled his mentor Jack Lemmon who he met while in high school and later played opposite in Long Day's Journey into Night.

O'Neill Celebrates American Theater Icon



Actress Eve Best and Kevin Spacey enjoy music from the Bobby Darin songbook and featured in the film "Beyond the Sea." Best and Spacey played lead roles in Broadway's recent revival of "A Moon for the Misbegotten."



Eugene O'Neill Theater Center founder George C. White and executive director Preston Whiteway greet guests at the recent Monte Cristo Award celebration.

For information on the Monte Cristo Award or the O'Neill, contact Maureen Wolyniec, Director of Institutional Development 860-443-5378 x213 email theaterlives@theoneill.org.

The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's 9th Annual Monte Cristo Award Ceremony was held at Bridgewater at the South Street Seaport in New York City on April 26. This year's ceremony celebrated **Kevin Spacey**, his dedication to O'Neill's work, and all of his accomplishments in the international theater community.

Expressing his love for the arts and concern about limited funding available to the arts, Spacey pointed out their importance, not only to people, but to the economy:

"The arts uplift, they challenge, they stimulate, they enter our conversations, they're part of our debates, they remain in our hearts. And I do not believe they are a luxury item, I do believe they are a necessity . . . Because even in a time when economics are dominating and some people are trying to frame culture as less important, even the President of the United States only needed to see the successes that we've achieved to say that culture should not suffer. So, the question is not what can the economy do for our arts, but what do the arts do for our economy? And the answer is: a lot."

Joining in the Monte Cristo Award celebration were directors **Robert Falls** and **Jerry Zaks**; producers **Manny Azenberg** and **Tom Viertel**; previous Monte Cristo Award winners **Brian Dennehy** and **Barbara & Arthur Gelb**; actor **Colman Domingo**, an instructor at the O'Neill's National Theater Institute and most recently seen on Broadway in *Passing Strange*; O'Neill trustee **Heather Henson** and puppetry innovator **Jane Henson**; and playwrights **Cusi Cram**, **Deborah Zoe Laufer**, **Donna DiNovelli**, **Emily Schwend**, **Jason Grote** and Pulitzer-winner **Nilo Cruz**, whose new play, *The Color of Desire*, will be developed during the 2009 National Playwrights Conference.

Performing scenes from some of Spacey's memorable roles were actors **Eve Best**, **André de Shields**, **Jason Butler Harner**, **Scott Cohen**, **Christopher McCann**, and **Jennifer Westfeldt**. Singer-songwriter **Matt Alber**, accompanied by **John Samorian** on piano and The Juilliard School Swing Combo serenaded the attendees with the music of Bobby Darin, who Spacey portrayed in the feature film *Beyond the Sea*.



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Summer Calendar Inside

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Preston Whiteway, Executive Director Tom Viertel, Chairman, Board of Trustees

PLAYWRIGHTS	MUSIC THEATER	PUPPETRY	CABARET
<i>In my fifth season as Artistic Director, I have selected plays that look into the soul of our national consciousness and represent the future of American theatrical storytelling.</i>	<i>It is our hope that the creators here this summer will find new muses, take as many risks as they possibly can, and leave with a fresh and deeper perspective of what still remains to be done.</i>	<i>Our hope is that you will join us in recognizing good puppet theater when you see it, and through your support, encourage all puppet and theater artists to gain access to their voices and artistic expression.</i>	<i>... "let yourselves go" and become a part of ... ten wildly eclectic and diverse evenings of the most innovative "cabaret theater" in America today.</i>
Wendy C. Goldberg	Paulette Haupt	Pam Arciero	Michael Bush



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O'Neill

Special Member pricing on summer conference tickets and gift shop purchases
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Admission to the Monte Cristo Cottage
Special Membership recognition in the Summer PLAYBILL
For Family Membership, Individual Membership Benefits are extended to all immediate family members

Edith - \$150

Edith Oliver, best known as theater critic for the *New Yorker*, was an institution at the O'Neill from the very beginning. The O'Neill's outdoor theater named in her memory sits beneath two Copper Beech trees and is where August Wilson's *Fences* was first performed during the 1983 National Playwrights Conference.

All of the above, plus
One commemorative O'Neill hat
Two complimentary tickets to any Puppetry, National Playwrights, or National Music Theater Performance

Blue Gene's - \$250

Since the 1970s, O'Neill Members have gathered with conference artists for conversation and libation during the busy summer months when Blue Gene's Pub is open to the public. After the performance of each Conference production, it's a tradition for a signed program to be posted in the Pub, where programs now on display go back to the 80s.

All of the above, plus: One commemorative hat
Two complimentary beverages at Blue Gene's Pub
One commemorative O'Neill t-shirt

Rose Barn - \$500

Named in honor of Margot and Rufus Rose, pioneers in the art of puppetry, the Rose Barn is one of three main performance spaces at the O'Neill and one of the most unique spaces available to artists. Maury Yeston's award-winning *Nine* was first performed in the Rose Barn.

All of the above, plus
Four tickets to Puppetry, Play or Musical performances
Four complimentary beverages at Blue Gene's Pub
One commemorative O'Neill t-shirt

The Dina - \$1000

"The Dina," one of the O'Neill's theaters, was named in honor of long-time supporter Dina Merrill, screen and stage icon, after extensive renovations to the space in the 1990s made possible by Ms. Merrill and her husband Ted Hartley. The Dina is an incredibly transformable space, used for Plays, Musicals, Cabaret and NTI performances, special guest speakers and events such as the annual Eugene O'Neill Celebration.

All of the above, plus
A special inside look: A day at the O'Neill during the Conference of your choice; attend rehearsals and share meals with the Executive Director, Artistic Director, and creative staff.
Two commemorative O'Neill sweatshirts

Monte Cristo - \$2500

James O'Neill, father of our namesake, was best known for his stage role as the Count of Monte Cristo. He enjoyed such great success, he named the family's summer home after the character. Owned by the O'Neill, Monte Cristo Cottage, setting for Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *Ah, Wilderness!*, is a Registered National Landmark open to the public for tours between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

All of the above, plus
Two season passes for admission to all Puppetry, Plays and Musicals
One table for two, with a bottle of wine, at one Cabaret performance
Use of the house seat reservation service for Broadway productions

Walnut Grove - \$5,000

The O'Neill's campus is located in the 40-acre site known as Walnut Grove Estate, named by its first resident, Revolutionary War general William North, for a grove of Walnut trees that once grew near the ledge overlooking Long Island Sound. It is said he became enamored of the property while yachting along the Sound in 1820.

All of the above, plus
Attend a private dinner with the O'Neill's Executive Director, Chairman of the Board, and select Conference artistic staff
Two tickets to one performance of any play or musical developed during the season that goes on to professional production in NY

Copper Beech - \$10,000

This, the highest level of O'Neill Membership, recalls the huge Copper Beech trees that dot the O'Neill campus. They shelter its theaters and programs and provide a green canopy for artists and guests come summer Conferences. The ancient trees stand tall and strong -- emblematic of the lasting vitality of Eugene O'Neill's work and of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's long tradition of theatrical excellence.

All of the above, plus
Cocktail party, for up to twelve, on the O'Neill grounds
Two tickets to the Monte Cristo Award evening in New York City
Lead Membership recognition in Summer PLAYBILL

DESIGN & LAYOUT BY MAUREEN WOLYNIEC / CONTENT BY TEAM O'NEILL

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