



Curt Columbus, Artistic Director, • Kate Liberman, Executive Director
201 Washington Street • Providence • Rhode Island 02903 • www.trinityrep.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 8, 2023

CONTACT: Laura Weick, Communications Associate • (401) 453-9226 • lweick@trinityrep.com

EUGENE LEE, TRINITY REP RESIDENT SET DESIGNER AND TONY WINNER, DIES AT 83

PROVIDENCE, RI: Eugene Lee, resident set designer and Tony Award-winner, died at age 83 on February 7, 2023 in Providence, RI. Lee had served as a resident artist at Trinity Rep since 1967 and designed sets for more than 100 productions.

“Eugene Lee was a once-in-a-generation theater artist, one of the greatest minds to ever answer the question ‘What is theater?’” artistic director **Curt Columbus** said. “He was simultaneously playful and profound, childlike and rigorous, a genius who sees the world in ways that others only dream. Every time I worked with Eugene as a designer, my work as a director became more bold, more expansive, and more true. It is one of the greatest honors of my life in the theater that I could call Eugene Lee my collaborator and my friend. Words cannot express how much he will be missed.”

Eugene Lee arrived at Trinity Rep in 1967 and made his Trinity Rep scenic design debut with *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Most recently, Eugene was scheduled to co-design the set for this spring’s production of *Sweeney Todd* with Patrick Lynch. Other notable design credits at Trinity Rep include *Billy Budd* (1969), *Peer Gynt* (1974), *Tom Jones* (1975), *King Lear*, (1977), *American Buffalo* (1978), *The Cherry Orchard* (1988 and 2006), *School for Wives* (1991), *Homebody/Kabul* (2002), *Twelfth Night* (2010), *The Fantasticks* (2007), *Camelot* (2010), *Oliver!* (2014), *The Glass Menagerie* (1992 and 2015), *Ragtime* (2018), *Marisol* (2019), *A Tale of Two Cities* (2020), and several productions of *A Christmas Carol*.

Lee was an acclaimed designer nationally, having been inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 2006. He won Tony Awards for his work on Broadway, including Best Scenic Design for *Candide* in 1974, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* in 1979, and *Wicked* in 2004. He was also nominated in 1998 for *Ragtime*. Additional New York credits include *Agnes of God*, *Amazing Grace*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Bright Star*, *Bounce*, *A Number*, *The Normal Heart*, *Ruby Sunrise*, *Show Boat*, and *Uncle Vanya*.



Lee was the production designer on *Saturday Night Live* from the show's premiere until his death. He also led the production design for *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, *Late Night with Seth Meyers*, and the 2000 television movie *On Golden Pond*, among others. For his work in television production design, Lee was nominated for 18 Emmys, winning six.

Lee's death comes days after that of Trinity Rep's founding artistic director **Adrian Hall**, Lee's lifelong friend and longtime artistic collaborator. Together, Hall and Lee developed what has become known as the Trinity Rep aesthetic. Their approach to performance, design, and direction remains an important part of Trinity Rep today and has led the audience to expect the unexpected from the company's work. The unique interconnection between artist and audience that is experienced at Trinity Rep was developed thanks to the visionary work of Hall and Lee.

"I've been lucky to experience Eugene's brilliance first as a young audience member at Trinity Rep, and for the last 22 years as a friend and working partner," Eugene's longtime co-designer and assistant **Patrick Lynch** said. "His contribution to the arts and our culture, at both a local and national level, is massive and he will forever be remembered as one of the giants of the field. The loss is tremendous, but his enormous and varied body of work will stand as a reflection of a life lived to the fullest."

Lee is survived by his wife, Brooke, and their two sons.

TRINITY REPERTORY COMPANY

Rhode Island's Tony Award-winning theater, Trinity Rep has created unparalleled professional theater for and with its community since its founding in 1963. Trinity Rep strives to facilitate human connection and has been a driving force behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region for more than 50 years.

Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally stimulating live productions that range from classical to contemporary and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities. Its annual production of *A Christmas Carol* has brought families together for more than four decades and made memories for nearly two million audience members.

Trinity Rep's 2022-23 Season runs through June 2023, and includes productions of *The Inheritance*, *A Christmas Carol*, *By the Queen*, *The Inferior Sex*, and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. For more information, visit Trinity Rep's website at www.trinityrep.com.