

TEATRO CARIGNANO | MAY 30TH - JUNE 4TH

# AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY



BY TRACY LETTS  
TRANSLATED BY MONICA CAPUANI  
WITH GIULIANA DE SIO, MANUELA MANDRACCHIA  
FILIPPO DINI, FABRIZIO CONTRI, ORIETTA NOTARI  
ANDREA DI CASA, FULVIO PEPE, STEFANIA MEDRI  
VALERIA ANGELOZZI, EDOARDO SORGENTE  
CATERINA TIEGHI, VALENTINA SPALETTA TAVELLA  
DIRECTED BY FILIPPO DINI  
DRAMATIST AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CARLO ORLANDO  
STAGING GREGORIO ZURLA  
COSTUMES ALESSIO ROSATI  
LIGHTING PASQUALE MARI  
MUSIC ALEPH VIOLA  
SOUND CLAUDIO TORTORICI  
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT ELEONORA BENTIVOGLIO  
COSTUMES ASSISTANT ROSA MARIOTTI  
TEATRO STABILE DI TORINO – TEATRO NAZIONALE

The world premiere of August: Osage County was staged in June 2007 by the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago, Illinois (Martha Lavey, artistic director; David Hawkanson, executive director). It made its Broadway debut at the Imperial Theatre on 4th December 2007. Produced by Jeffrey Richards, Jean Doumanian, Steve Traxler, Jerry Frankel, Ostar Productions, Jennifer Manocherian, The Weinstein Company, Debra Black, Daryl Roth, Ronald Frankel, Marc Frankel, Barbara Freitag, Rick Steiner and Staton Bell Group. Authorisation granted by A3 Artists Agency, 350 Fifth Avenue, 38th Floor, New York, NY 10118 USA

Duration:  
Act One 1 hour and 25 minutes - interval  
Act Two 1 hour and 10 minutes

TEATRONAZIONALE

**TEATRO  
STABILE  
TORINO**

I fell in love with this piece for its violence, after seeing the film; then I read the play and realised that it held even more possibilities than cinema could fully develop. The film is a Hollywood production, a dramatic film: it leaves little room for comedy. However, I thought the text had this grotesque, tragi-comic potential, which intensifies the violence in it. Furthermore, whereas the film was almost obliged to recount Oklahoma and American society, I thought it possible to extract the story, transport it to a less realistic setting, push it to become a tale about what families are today. This text is the final link in a wonderful chain, that of Ibsen, Chekhov, Pirandello, and Eduardo De Filippo: bourgeois dramas that focus on family dynamics. However, Tracy Letts gives us contemporary society, and therefore can permit herself a crudeness unknown to Chekhov. But even in this context poetry plays a role. Poets are quoted, especially by Beverly, the father, himself a poet. The citations are highbrow: Eliot, in particular *The Hollow Men*, allows us to feel the "noble" past, in a spiritual sense, of the family while underlining the state of degradation in which it finds itself. I identified three periods in the Weston saga: prehistory, history and present. The first stage is that of the origins, the parents' childhood: a brutal prehistory followed by a noble history, the moment in which Beverly and his wife Violet elevate themselves thanks to their hard work, or at least try to. Beverly, who lived in great poverty as a child, becomes an award-winning poet. But then the present enters. The only inheritance waiting for their three daughters, after so many years, is one of hatred and violence. But... and there is a but. Letts opens the play with a poem by Howard Starks, which serves as a dedication: I interpret it as an invitation to read this story with a benevolent gaze. The poem, from which the play takes its name, recounts a family gathered around an old lady suffering on her deathbed. Everyone speaks to her sweetly, paying the sweetness of her life back to her. It is a reference we are called upon to heed. It presents us with the chance to look at the characters in the play with the same compassion as shown by the characters in the poem, despite the burden of violence and hatred that Violet (and Beverly, in a more passive way) has dumped on the Weston family. It is thanks to this compassion that *August: Osage County* places itself alongside the works of Ibsen, Chekhov, Pirandello and Eduardo de Filippo. And, in this way, we are able to forgive the characters for all the violence and frustrations they project onto us.

Extract from Ilaria Gaspari's interview with Filippo Dini,  
in *Agosto a Osage County* | *I Quaderni del Teatro Stabile di Torino*