

Program

**Second International Thornton Wilder Conference**  
**June 11-13, 2015**  
**Salve Regina University, Newport, RI**

All program events, except the Thursday and Friday evening receptions, will be held at the Young Building of Salve Regina University, 514 Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI.

**Thursday, June 11**

**Welcome**

**9:00 am**

**Scott Zeman**, Provost, Salve Regina University  
**Jackson R. Bryer**, President, Thornton Wilder Society

**Session 1: Thornton Wilder and Newport**

**9:10-10:15 am**

Moderator: **Jackson R. Bryer**, University of Maryland, College Park

**Sarah Littlefield**, Salve Regina University:

“‘Soon you too will rest’: The Lure of Newport for Thornton and Theophilus”

**John Quinn**, Salve Regina University:

“The Enduring Gilded Age: Images of Newport in Wilder’s *Theophilus North*”

**Daniel Titus**, Salve Regina University:

“Through the Eyes of Theophilus: Vintage Images of the Nine Cities”

**Coffee Break**

**10:15-10:30 am**

**Session 2: Wilder’s Textuality**

**10:30 am-12:00 pm**

Moderator: **Robert M. Dowling**, Central Connecticut State University

**Howard R. Wolf**, SUNY, Buffalo:

“The Letters and Journals of Thornton Wilder: A Subjective Context for Understanding his Plays”

**Samuel W. Perrin**, Pepperdine University:

“Spatial Form and *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*”

**Antje Brackemann**, Thurgau University (Switzerland):

“*Theophilus North*: Artistically Manipulating Perception Through Latent Semantic Maps”

**Lunch**

**12:00-1:00 pm**

**Session 3: Roundtable: New Directions in Wilder Studies**

**1:00-2:45 pm**

Moderator: **Leonard Cassuto**, Fordham University

**Judith P. Hallett**, University of Maryland, College Park

**Lincoln Konkle**, The College of New Jersey

**Matthew Maguire**, Fordham University

**Bus Tour of Newport**

**3:00-5:00 pm**

**Reception at Redwood Library**

**6:00-8:00 pm**

Featuring a performance of readings from Wilder’s drama and fiction.

Friday, June 12

**Session 4: Wilder In Production 1**

**8:30-9:45 am**

Moderator: **Christopher J. Wheatley**, The Catholic University of America

**Edyta K. Oczkowicz**, Salem College:

“*Nasze Miaso*: The Eastern European Premiere of *Our Town*”

**Susan C. W. Abbotson**, Rhode Island College:

“Producing *The Skin of Our Teeth* by the Skin of Their Teeth: The Changing Dynamic of Wilder’s Apocalyptic Play”

**Terryl W. Hallquist**, Vanderbilt University:

“The Urge to Push: Wilder and Kazan’s Working Relationship on *The Skin of Our Teeth*”

**Yvonne Shafer**, St. John’s University:

“Working With(?) Director Jed Harris”

**Coffee break**

**9:45-10:00 am**

**Session 5: Thornton Wilder and the Wilder Family:  
In Memory of Penelope Niven**

**10:00-11:15 am**

Moderator: **Edyta K. Oczkowicz**, Salem College

**David Roessel**, The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey:

“Thornton Wilder and his Critics on the Left”

**Caroline Cherie Maun**, Wayne State University:

“Charlotte Wilder: A Writing Life”

**Marcus J. Merritt**, Wayne State University:

“The (In)Complete Poetic Work of Charlotte Wilder: *Phases of the Moon* and the Limits of Poetic Experimentation”

**Susan D. Thomas**, Independent Scholar:

“Wilder as Celebrity”

**Session 6: Lesser-Known Wilder**

**11:30 am-12:45 pm**

Moderator: **James Barcus**, Baylor University

**Dianna Pickens**, University of Naples:

“‘Villa Rhabani, Capri’ An Unfinished Play by Thornton Wilder”

**Brian Rowe**, University of Nevada, Reno:

“Thornton Wilder, Uncle Charlie, and Homosexuality: Alfred Hitchcock’s *Shadow of a Doubt*”

**Felicia Hardison Londré**, University of Missouri, Kansas City:

“Welcoming the Menace: Wilder’s *Alceste* and *Shadow of a Doubt*”

**John Grote**, Baylor University:

“Wrestling with ‘The Right Way’: Wilder’s Struggle to Create *The Emporium*”

**Lunch: Roundtable : Wilder in the Marketplace:**

**12:45-2:00 pm**

**A Discussion with Thornton Wilder’s Literary and Dramatic Agents and Principal Managers**

Moderator: **Tappan Wilder**, Wilder Literary Executor

**Alan Brodie**, Wilder Dramatic Agent

**Barbara Hogenson**, Wilder Literary Agent

**Ryan Pointer**, Marketing Director, Samuel French

**Rosey Strub**, Programs Director, The Wilder Family

**Session 7: Roundtable: Directing Wilder****2:30-3:45 pm**Moderator: **Terryl W. Hallquist**, Vanderbilt University**Gordon Edelstein** (*Our Town*: Long Wharf Theatre)**Taibi Magar** (*The Skin of Our Teeth*: Trinity Rep)**Timothy K. Vasen** (*Pullman Car Hiawatha & Other Short Plays by Thornton Wilder*: CenterStage)**Coffee break****3:45-4:00 pm****Session 8: New Perspectives on *Our Town*****4:00-5:15 pm**Moderator: **Park Bucker**, University of South Carolina Sumter**Wesley Longacre**, University of Colorado:“‘Something is Eternal’: The Cosmopolitan Nature of *Our Town*”**Glen W. Swanson**, Independent Scholar:

“The Power of Dreams: Legend-Reality”

**Macy R. McDonald**, Oklahoma State University:“Thornton Wilder: America’s Existential Playwright: An Examination of Existential Themes in *Our Town* and Sartre’s *No Exit*”**Lincoln Konkle**, The College of New Jersey:“*Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth*: Pre-postmodern Drama”**Reception at Salve Regina Library****6:00-8:00 pm**

With illustrated talk by Tappan Wilder, Thornton Wilder’s nephew and Literary Executor of the Wilder Estate:

“Ups and Downs of Managing Thornton – A Twenty-Year Perspective”

**Saturday, June 13****Session 9: Wilder in Production II****8:30-9-45 am**Moderator: **Jan Balakian**, Kean University**Anthony Gunn**, Florida State University:“The Universe Within Four Walls: Performance Space in *The Long Christmas Dinner* and *Pullman Car Hiawatha*”**Laurie McCants**, Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble:“*Pullman Car Hiawatha*: An Ideal Vehicle for High School Performance”**Gabriel Nathan**, Independent Scholar:“Our Norristown: The Staff of a Crisis Psychiatric Hospital Creates a Life-Changing Experience, Their Production of *Our Town*”**Emilio Méndez**, National Autonomous University of Mexico: “‘It takes a lotta people to make a world’ (and Even More to Stage it): *Pullman Car Hiawatha* Pulls Into Mexico City”**Coffee break****9:45-10:00 pm****Session 10: Roundtable: Global Wilder****10:00-11:15 am**Moderator: **Edyta K. Oczkowicz****Antje Brackemann****Hansong Dan****Mohammad Ali Dabiri****Emilio Méndez****Edyta K. Oczkowicz****Dianna Pickens**

**Session 11: Wilder as Classicist****11:15 am-12:45 pm**Moderator: **Richard Gilder III**, The Wheeler School**Stephen Rojcewicz**, MD, University of Maryland, College Park:“*Lacrimae Rerum*: Wilder, Vergil and the Tears of the World”**Robert Gurval**, University of California, Los Angeles:

“Playing Caesar: Thornton Wilder, Julius Caesar, and Rex Harrison”

**Judith P. Hallett**, University of Maryland, College Park:“Re-envisioning World War I as America’s Trojan Conflict: Wilder as Homeric Bard in *Theophilus North*”Respondent: **Willard Spiegelman**, Southern Methodist University**Lunch****12:45-1:30 pm****Melissa Barton**, Beinecke Library, Yale University:

“New Wilder Resources in the Beinecke Library”

**Session 12: Intertextual Wilder****1:30-2:30 pm**Moderator: **Anne Zahlan**, Eastern Illinois University**Joshua Mann**, Stanford University:“Falling Down: Disaster, Research and *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*”**Christopher J. Wheatley**, The Catholic University of America:

“Thornton Wilder and the Humanist Tradition”

**David Radavich**, Eastern Illinois University:

“Reference Works: Strategic Allusion in Thornton Wilder’s Theatre”

**Session 13: Playwrights on Wilder: A Roundtable****2:30-3:45 pm**Moderator: **J. Wynn Rousuck****Paula Vogel****Matthew Burnett****Will Eno****Coffee break****3:45-4:00 pm****Session 14: International Wilder****4:00-5:00 pm**Moderator: **Michael Greenwald**, New York, NY**Mohammad Ali Dabiri**, Shiraz University (Iran):“A Close Study of Power Relations Discourses Based on Foucault’s Terms Applied to *The Skin of Our Teeth*”**Thierry Dubost**, University of Caen Basse-Normandie (France):“What’s For Dessert? Feeding Actors and the Audiences in *The Long Christmas Dinner*”**Hansong Dan**, Nanking University (China):

“On Translating Wilder to (Post-)Modern China”

**Meeting of the Thornton Wilder Society****5:00-6:00 pm****Cash bar followed by Banquet****7:00 pm**Readings from Thornton Wilder by **Maria Dizzia**Paula Vogel introduced by **J. Wynn Rousuck**Presentation of the Thornton Wilder Award to **Paula Vogel**