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QUESTIONS? Esther Gross | 401-277-7250 | egross@providencejournal.com



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## ENTERTAINMENT ONLINE

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# 5

## THINGS TO DO THIS WEEKEND

**1 Gallery Night in Providence**  
Gallery Night Providence returns on **Thursday** from 5 to 9 p.m. Free bus tours highlighting the local art scene will depart from 1 Regency Plaza. Stops include the United Cerebral Palsy Adaptive Arts Exhibit at URI's Feinstein Providence Campus, 80 Washington St., which will hold a Gallery Night reception. The exhibit is on through April 26. [gallerynight.org](http://gallerynight.org), [uri.edu/ceps/prov/arts](http://uri.edu/ceps/prov/arts).

**2 Browse local arts, crafts**  
More than 75 local artists and makers will take part in the first WaterFire Art & Craft Festival, on **Saturday** from noon to 6 p.m. at the WaterFire Arts Center, 475 Valley St., Providence. Works for sale will include everything from fine art and photography to handcrafted bath and beauty products, as well as food. Performances by local artists. (401) 273-1155, [waterfire.org/art-festival](http://waterfire.org/art-festival).

**3 Time is running out**  
It's the last weekend to see "The Claggetts of Newport - Master Clockmakers in Colonial America." The exhibit, at the Redwood Library & Athenaeum, 50 Bellevue Ave., Newport, features 35 clocks from public and private collections. Hours are **Thursday, Friday** and **Saturday** from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and **Sunday** from 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10. (401) 847-0290, [redwoodlibrary.org](http://redwoodlibrary.org).

**4 Poetry of color**  
"Poets on Fire," an evening of works relating to the experiences of black and brown men and women, takes place on **Friday** and **Saturday** at 7:30 p.m. at Mixed Magic Theatre, 560 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket. Performers include Rudy Ru, Chachi Carvalho, Cole Rodriguez, Greg Roy, Artist Named Flizz, Joe Wilson Jr., Jeannie Carson, April Brown, Sara Ashley, Jay Walker and Ricardo Pitts-Wiley. Tickets are \$10. (401) 305-7333, [mmtri.org](http://mmtri.org).

**5 Earth Day for kids**  
Celebrate Earth Day with special activities at the Providence Children's Museum, 100 South St., on **Friday** from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., **Saturday** and **Sunday** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and on **Monday** from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is \$12, babies under 12 months are free. (401) 273-5437, [childrensmuseum.org](http://childrensmuseum.org).

— Esther Gross



A silk crepe dress once worn by Doris Duke is on display at Rough Point, in Newport, as part of "Beyond Fortune," a new exhibit exploring the life and legacy of the tobacco heiress. [COURTESY OF THE NEWPORT RESTORATION FOUNDATION]

## Newport's Rough Point takes an honest look at the life of the very private Doris Duke

By Alexander Castro  
The Newport Daily News

Who was Doris Duke? The tobacco heiress died at age 80 in 1993, and her Newport home Rough Point continues to attract tourists parading Bellevue Avenue. Since her death, her neighborhood has been protected, kept pristine, by the Newport Restoration Foundation, which Duke founded in 1968.

This is the basic, most locally relevant tidbit of the official story, one now expanded with Rough Point's exhibit for its 2019 season. Duke funded historically black colleges and Russian studies in times of the civil-rights movement and the Red Scare. In World War II she worked undercover as a news correspondent in Italy. She wore many fabulous outfits, and clearly had good taste. Yet most images that survive of Duke were taken by paparazzi.

I wouldn't have known any of that, if not for attending a preview of "Beyond Fortune:

SEE DUKE, C4



An undated portrait of Doris Duke. [COURTESY OF THE DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION ARCHIVES]

## THEATER REVIEW

# 'True West' soars with gritty dialogue, inspired cast



Anthony Goes, left, as Lee and Steve Kidd as Austin in "True West," at The Gamm Theatre in Warwick through May 5. [PETER GOLDBERG]

Anthony Goes and Steve Kidd play mismatched brothers in Sam Shepard's classic American play

By Channing Gray  
Special to The Journal

There's got to be something in Warwick's drinking water, because ever since The Gamm Theatre set up shop just south of the airport, it's been knocking one show after another out of the park.

The latest home run? A bare-knuckle staging of Sam Shepard's "True West," with Steve Kidd and Anthony Goes giving the performances of their careers as warring brothers who spend one of the more riveting evenings you're

likely to experience exploring the badlands of the soul.

Goes, the archetypal, tattooed tough guy, was a Stanley Kowalski so heartless, brutal and cruel that we'll never forget The Gamm's remarkable "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Now he's back as Lee, the beer-swilling misfit who has crawled out of his hole in the desert to pay a visit to his but-toned-down brother, Austin, with his Ivy League diploma, wife and kids, and promise of

SEE GAMM, C4

## Reflections - Bringing Hearts Together

A Spring Gala to Benefit Adoption Rhode Island

Thursday, May 2, 2019 - 6:30pm

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# DUKE

From Page C1

The Life and Legacy of Doris Duke," at the Rough Point Museum through Nov. 17. Curator Kristen Costa said she's been organizing shows at Duke's famous digs for a decade, but this is the first exhibit with a truly biographical scope.

"This is really just her and her life story ... People might hear her name, but they may not know anything about her," Costa said. "She was a woman with money that kinda did what she wanted. It's a little problematic sometimes, but she is who she is."

Past exhibits have shown Duke's globetrotting, her "sporty style," and Islamic art imported from her (other) mansion in Honolulu. One memorable exhibit in 2015 balanced Duke's own attempts at teacup repair with contemporary ceramic art from Boston to China. This year's season returns to Rough Point's leading lady.

"It's an honest look without glossing over any details," Costa said.

Important corrections are made, like one concerning Duke's pet camels, Baby and Princess.

Wikipedia maintains they were a gift from a Saudi Arabian arms dealer, but here the truth emerges: the camels came from the less-glamorous-sounding upstate New York. Small moments of humor like this abound, such as a paragraph explaining Duke's many lovers that begins: "In addition to her official marriages ..."

The presentation doesn't depart from serious matters, like the story of Bernard Lafferty, the butler who assisted Duke in her final years until her death. His treatment is left open-ended, the wall



Curator Kristen Costa says this season's Rough Point exhibit took shape as she learned more about the Native American dress, circa 1958, custom made for Doris Duke by the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota. [COURTESY OF THE NEWPORT RESTORATION FOUNDATION]

## If you go ...

**What:** "Beyond Fortune – The Life & Legacy of Doris Duke"

**Where:** Rough Point Museum, 680 Bellevue Ave., Newport

**When:** Through Nov. 17. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, until 7 p.m. on Wednesday.

**Tickets:** \$20, \$10 students with ID, free children 12 and under. Tours offered daily at 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Included with admission. Newport County residents are free every Wednesday, 5-7 p.m.

**Information:** (401) 847-8344, [newportrestoration.org](http://newportrestoration.org)

text explaining that, "[It's] difficult to know the extent to which Lafferty affected her life."

At the same time, a photocopied ledger enumerates Duke's philanthropic contributions to the dollar. Indeed, central to this show is the idea that, while Duke was absurdly rich, she donated often and generously to numerous causes, many of which would be considered progressive even today.

Philanthropy aside, a socialite's retrospective would be incomplete

without some closets thrown wide open. Viewers are treated to a wide sampler of Duke's outfits, from occasions dressy to highly specific (belly dancing).

"Because we have a huge fashion collection of Doris's, it was another way to show off her life through her things," Costa said.

Duke's "things" are one of the few means available to better understand her, given the gossipy nature of books on her life.

"The works that document Doris Duke tend to be sensationalist and they lack any sort of serious study," Erik Greenberg, the new director of museums for the Newport Restoration Foundation, said in his opening remarks at the preview reception.

But was Duke targeted more than any other wealthy scion? Isn't extreme wealth sensational in and of itself? Duke's destiny was de facto public; she was born with the nickname "the richest little girl in the world." When she died, the New York Times clung to that lifelong narrative. The paper's obit sported a weirdly moralistic headline, declaring Duke an

"Heiress Whose Great Wealth Couldn't Buy Happiness."

Duke predated our Kardashian Epoch, in which the rich and famous have opened up their lives into vistas of pettiness. She was a private woman. Should her want for quiet stretch past her death? What would she think of Rough Point's annual show-and-tells of her stuff?

"I often wonder: when she left all this stuff, did she think, 'My dresses are gonna be on display?'" Costa said. "If she was alive now ... I don't know, she might just think, 'Why do people think I'm so interesting?'"

Would Duke think there are better things to do than gawk at other people's possessions? I admit I couldn't help but linger at a painting she won at auction in 1971, displayed at Rough Point though unrelated to the exhibit.

Ferdinand Bol's "Portrait of a Young Girl" is obviously marvelous, but I wonder what specifically caught Duke's eye. The clutched handful of blue gown? The painter's mastery of lighting, or the woman's pearl bangles? Maybe it's the way she stares at us, eyes all ambiguity, pushing her hair back gently, revealing only what she chooses.

*Alexander Castro is an award-winning freelance writer who covers the arts in and around Rhode Island. Follow him on Twitter at @OhNoCastro.*



Anthony Goes, left, as Lee and Richard Donnelly as Saul Kimmer in Sam Shepard's play "True West." [PETER GOLDBERG]

## GAMM

From Page C1

a hit screenplay.

Put these two mismatched siblings, this odd couple on steroids, together in the same space and you've got the makings of two hours of searing, intense theater. But it's not just the explosive mix of opposites that makes this play an American classic. Shepard suggests that we're all more complicated than we appear, that even guys with an Audi and kids in prep school harbor a desire to live among the cactuses.

And he points this out in a somewhat improbable but absurdly funny reversal of roles.

When Lee appears on the scene – dirty, loud and downright scary – he finds preppy Austin at the kitchen table, pecking away at a screenplay. Austin's housesitting for their mom, who has flown Southern California to cruise the coast of Alaska.

After months of nursing his writing project, Austin is now about to meet with a producer. Perhaps, he suggests, Lee, whose main line of work is stealing neighborhood TVs, could get lost for a couple of hours.

True, Shepard reaches into his bag of stereotypes to paint these two characters. But the kind of resentment and anger Lee has toward a world where he doesn't belong rings so

## If you go ...

**What:** "True West"

**Where:** The Gamm Theatre, 1245 Jefferson Blvd., Warwick

**When:** Through May 5. This weekend's shows are 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Sunday.

**Tickets:** \$44-\$60

**Information:** (401) 723-4266, [gammtheatre.org](http://gammtheatre.org)

true, that Shepard takes us way beyond the predictable.

Goes not only knows how to bark out his lines, he's also a master at the moves, at tearing up the set with his frustration and giving a barb twice the bite with a scowl, while thinking nothing of scrubbing a sweaty armpit with a dish towel.

But just as you get comfortable watching this smackdown, in which Austin spends his time between batting out paragraphs calmly deflecting Lee's blistering threats, Shepard deftly turns the tables on us.

It turns out that Lee, carrying a hot TV, just can't help but butt in when big-time producer Saul Kimmer, played by a cool, if unctuous, Richard Donnelly, shows up to close the deal with Austin. What he lacks in college credits Lee makes up for in street smarts, and soon has Saul backing his own harebrained tale for a Western.

As Act One comes to a close, we find Lee at the typewriter, hunting for keys, as Austin grabs for the whiskey and mimics his brother's more grotesque gestures.

Again, what follows may be absurd and improbable, but it's also riotously funny, laced with sharp-edged glimmers of truth. There's one heck of a show-stopping monologue from Austin, as he tells Lee about how their alcoholic father left his teeth in a doggie bag full of chop suey while bar-hopping.

What makes the Gamm's "True West" a true winner, though, is the perfect blend of Shepard's gritty dialogue, an inspired cast at the top of their game, and the sure hand of director Tony Estrella, who knows better than most how to rev a script up to red-line levels.

Even the play's two minor roles pack a punch – the appearance by Donnelly and the moment when mom returns from her Alaskan cruise to find her home in shambles. Rae Mancini does the honors with the latter scene and is fabulous in the way she tempers her annoyance with a generous dose of loquaciousness.

And kudos to veteran designer Michael McGarty for an airy, well-appointed ranch house that is among one of The Gamm's more memorable sets.

If you've enjoyed The Gamm's season so far, you're going to love "True West."

— Channing Gray can be reached at [tsangpo47@gmail.com](mailto:tsangpo47@gmail.com).

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