Horton Foote's 'Orphans' Home Cycle' Arrives at Hartford Stage.

The Orphans' Home Cycle is a collection of nine plays by Horton Foote, written over a period of 25 years from 1976 to 2001. The cycle includes a range of settings and time periods, with characters that are often connected by family ties. The plays are known for their focus on ordinary people and their stories, often set in the American South.


The cycle begins with Roots in a Parched Ground, which follows the lives of a family in rural Texas during the 1930s. It introduces characters like Maggie and Teasie Smith, who are the central figures of the cycle. The play explores themes of family, poverty, and the effects of the Great Depression.

Convicts follows Maggie and Teasie's daughter, Janey, as she struggles to cope with the arrival of her father, who has been released from prison. Lily Dale follows Janey's daughter, Maggie, as she navigates her own challenges in a small Texas town.

The Widow Claire tells the story of Claire, a former slave who outlives her husband and must navigate the racial tensions of the early 20th century.

Horton Foote's work has been praised for its ability to capture the essence of Southern life and its people. His plays often explore themes of family, memory, and the passage of time. The Orphans' Home Cycle is considered one of his greatest works and a testament to his talent as a playwright.