

Next Stage Theatre Company  
presents

# A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

by TENNESSEE WILLIAMS



# PROGRAMME

## About the playwright and the play



**Thomas Lanier Williams (1911 - 1983)** was born in Columbus, Mississippi in 1911. He assumed the name "Tennessee" in 1938 because, he said: *"The Williamses fought the Indians for Tennessee, and I had already discovered that the life of a young writer was going to be something similar to the defence of the stockade against a band of savages."* Indeed, it has been repeatedly pointed out by critics, biographers and Williams himself, that his plays were very much an exploration and a working-out of his own life.

Tennessee Williams's first major success was *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), his second was *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947). Between 1947 and the early 1960's he produced a large number of highly acclaimed plays, including: *The Rose Tattoo* (1951), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955), *Orpheus Descending* (1957), *Suddenly Last Summer* (1958), *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959), and *The Night of the Iguana* (1961) - considered by many to be his last great play. Although his reputation declined in subsequent years, he continued writing until accidentally choking to death on a bottle top in 1983.

Tennessee Williams' masterpiece, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, is a powerful and iconic look at love, lust and loneliness. Central to the play is Blanche DuBois, her sister Stella and Stella's husband Stanley. When Blanche arrives unexpectedly to stay with them in their small apartment in the Elysian Fields district of New Orleans she is shocked at the cramped and impoverished conditions in which they live and by the fact that her younger sister has married someone that Blanche regards as brutish and uncultured. Despite this, Blanche can not resist flirting and taunting Stanley in equal measure, lighting a slow-burning fuse of anger and frustration in her brother-in-law that erupts in Scene 10 of the play. Mitch - Stanley's friend - is the fourth person drawn into this explosive mix and perhaps suffers the most.

The characters in *Streetcar* are often portrayed as "heroes" or "villains", but Tennessee himself said:

*"I've never met anyone that I couldn't love if I completely knew him and understood him, and in my work I have at least tried to arrive at knowledge and understanding. I don't believe in 'original sin'. I don't believe in 'guilt'. I don't believe in villains or heroes - only right or wrong ways that individuals have taken, not by choice - but by necessity or by certain, still uncomprehend influences in themselves, their circumstances, and their antecedents. I know I am a minor artist who has happened to write one of two major works. I can't even say which they are. It doesn't matter. I have said my say. I may still say it again, or I may shut up now. It doesn't depend on you, it depends entirely on me, and the operation of chance or Providence in my life."*  
*London Observer April 1957*

## Director's notes



I last directed *A Streetcar Named Desire* at The Mission Theatre in 2006. It has been a joy revisiting, what is for me, one of Tennessee Williams' finest plays - exploring, as it does, the complex life and loves of Blanche Dubois. Blanche's life has been punctuated with tragedy and when she arrives in New Orleans to stay with her sister, the fragility of her mental health is exposed, along with the web of lies Blanche has spun around herself in her vain attempts to rewrite and disguise her tangled personal history.

The challenge for me in this 2023 production is ensuring that the play works successfully in both our indoor setting at The Mission Theatre and then outdoors at The Minack Theatre on the cliffs at Porthcurno. Luckily our versatile space in Bath allows me to almost recreate Rowena's Cade's magnificent amphitheatre and by so doing provide the space needed for the Kowalski's two roomed apartment, the bustling street life of New Orleans and the jazz bar of The Four Deuces. The latter is important in this production since, underscoring the storyline, is the very specific sound-scape Tennessee Williams has interwoven throughout his play.

So, jump on our streetcar, ride it to Elysian Fields, soak up the sounds of jazz and blues, and, for a short while, drift back in time to post-war New Orleans as our talented cast breathe life into this iconic play.

Director Ann Ellison BEM



Rehearsal Photographs

<b>Cast</b>	<p><b>Stanley Kowalski ..... Mayur Bhatt</b></p> <p><b>Stella Kowalski - his wife ..... Perrine Maillot</b></p> <p><b>Blanche DuBois - her sister ..... Hayley Fitton-Cook</b></p> <p><b>Harold Mitchell (Mitch) ..... Jonathan Taft</b></p> <p><b>Steve Hubbel ..... Lucas Sunderland</b></p> <p><b>Eunice Hubbel ..... Claire Rumball</b></p> <p><b>Pablo Gonzalez/Young Collector..... Kes Joffe</b></p> <p><b>Doctor/Street Vendor/Porter ..... Brian Fisher</b></p> <p><b>Matron/Courtesan/Lady ..... Judy Brett</b></p> <p><b>Woman/Flower Seller/Singer .....Tiana James</b></p> <p><b>Pianist ..... Christine Anderson</b></p> <p><b>Guitarist &amp; Vocalist ..... Martin Allsop</b></p>
-------------	---

<b>Production Team</b>	<p><b>Director ..... Ann Ellison</b></p> <p><b>Stage Manager/Tour Manager ..... Andrew Ellison</b></p> <p><b>Assistant Stage Manager (Minack) ..... Alexa Garner</b></p> <p><b>Assistant Stage Manager (Minack) ..... Barbara Ingledew</b></p> <p><b>Lighting Designer/Operative ..... Kris Nuttall</b></p> <p><b>Sound Researcher/Operative ..... Toby Lewis-Atwell</b></p> <p><b>Costumes ..... Vanessa Bishop and Bristol Costume Services</b></p> <p><b>Fight Choreographer ..... Nicky Wilkins</b></p> <p><b>Set Design ..... Ann Ellison</b></p> <p><b>Set Construction ..... Brian Fisher</b></p> <p><b>Photography ..... Michael Stevens</b></p>
------------------------	--

<b>Setting</b>	<p><b>The play takes place in New Orleans in the late 1940's. It is set inside Stanley and Stella's ground floor apartment, on the balcony of Eunice and Steve's first floor apartment, on the street and in The Four Deuces.</b></p> <p><b>The action of the play takes place from Spring to Autumn.</b></p>
----------------	---

<i>Slow Blues in C, Back Street Blues</i> .....	Tim Richards
<i>Barrelhouse Blues, Slow Blues in G</i> .....	Tim Richards
<i>Bourbon Street Parade</i> .....	Paul Barbarin
<i>Spanish Music</i> .....	Martin Allsop
<i>Blues</i> .....	M. Seiber
<i>Paper Doll</i> .....	Johnny S. Black
<i>Varsouviana</i> .....	Traditional
<i>Paper Moon</i> .....	Harold Arlen
<i>How Long Blues</i> .....	Leroy Carr
<i>From the Land of the Sky Blue Waters</i> .....	Charles Wakefield
<i>Wein, Wein Nur Du Allien</i> .....	Hans Moser
<i>One, Two, Three, Kick (Rumba)</i> .....	Xavier Cugat

Our grateful thanks go to:

**Brian Fisher (Bath & Minack) .. Screen/Railings design and construction**  
**Tony Brett (Minack) .....Set Construction**  
**Bristol Costumes.....www.bristolcostumeservices.com**  
**Enlightened Lighting .....www.enlx.co.uk**  
**Front of House (The Mission) .....Next Stage volunteers**

**Zoe Curnow, Simon Hutchings, Vanessa and Phil Jackson and all the team at The Minack Theatre**



**Next Stage Theatre Company** is a non-professional theatre company based in Bath. Since its inception in 1994, it has achieved a reputation for delivering challenging and innovative productions of modern 20th and 21st century plays to a professional standard. The company has performed throughout Bath and the South-West and has toured to Scarborough (2000, 2001), New York (2008) the West End (2009) and, since 1998, to The Minack Theatre in Cornwall.

Since 1994 **Next Stage Youth** has provided training in performing arts' skills for thousands of 11-18 year olds. Next Stage frequently includes members of the youth theatre in its adult productions. Over the years many of our youth company have gone on to train and work professionally in the arts.

**Next Stage Theatre Company** is supported by luminaries of the theatre world: **Sir Alan Ayckbourn, Sir David Hare, Dame Harriet Walter and Robert Lindsay.**

We are grateful to all of them for their ongoing support and encouragement.

Patrons:

*Sir David Hare, Dame Harriet Walter and Robert Lindsay*



Patron: *Sir Alan Ayckbourn with Next Stage Artistic Director Ann Ellison BEM and Director Andrew Ellison.*



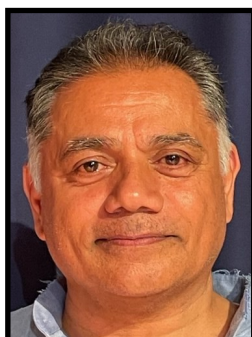
### **Martin Allsop - Musician**

Martin has appeared mostly in acting roles at The Mission Theatre but, more recently, has composed music for three productions and is the guitarist in the jazz band that play at The Four Deuces bar. He says: *"The music has an important role in the play both as part of the background sounds of the bustling city of New Orleans and also in heightening the tension and drama of Williams' modern classic."*



### **Christine Anderson - Musician**

Christine says: *"Tennessee Williams leaves instructions for the 'blues piano' to feature as background music throughout the play. We played several pieces from Tim Richard's wonderful collection, 'Improvising Blues Piano,' and aimed to create a dramatic backdrop to the action with Martin on guitar, myself on piano, Tiana on vocals and Kes on the cajon. It's been such an amazing experience to work together on this project."*



### **Mayur Bhatt - Stanley Kowalski**

Mayur has previously performed a variety of roles in several genre of plays, and this is his fifth play with Next Stage. He is delighted to be in this production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. He says: *'Stanley is one of Tennessee Williams' iconic characters. He's brutally honest and an alpha male with an animalistic rawness. Williams leads the audience through a roller-coaster ride from Stanley's loyalty to his friends, his proneness to violence and to his cunningness to weed out the truth. This is a great role to be playing alongside a very talented cast!'*



### **Judy Brett - Nurse/Courtesan/Lady**

Judy Brett has been with the Company since 2014 when she performed in *Oh, What A Lovely War*. She says: *"I have been lucky enough to have had roles in wonderful plays over the years with lovely people which has been a joy. I have had the privilege of performing on this stage twice before and this play will be my last at the Minack making it all the sweeter. It's been a pleasure to work with such a lovely cast and wonderful Director and crew."*



### **Brian Fisher - Doctor/Street Vendor/Porter**

Brian has been with Next Stage since 2018 and most recently played Lionel in David Hare's *Racing Demon*. He says: *'Having played a number of major roles in some outstanding productions in the short time I've been with Next Stage, I'm delighted to be involved in this classic play supporting such a great cast. The opportunity to act without learning so many lines is something to be cherished!'*



### **Hayley Fitton-Cook - Blanche DuBois**

Hayley is delighted to be returning to the Minack stage this Summer having previously performed there as Caterina Cavalieri in *Amadeus* (2009) and as Isabelle in *Birdsong* (2017). Hayley has always loved Tennessee Williams, having studied him and then taken the role of Laura in *The Glass Menagerie* with Next Stage (2019). She says: *"Blanche is a wonderful character to embody. She is self centered, seemingly narcissistic and just a touch overdramatic but there is also something so fragile and endearing about her; she is difficult to loathe. It has been a pleasure to work with such a talented team both on and off stage."*



### **Tiana James - Woman/Flower Seller/Singer**

This will be the first time Tiana has performed at The Minack. She is extremely excited to be part of this wonderful cast and to be singing in such an iconic show. She will be training to become a professional actor from September, and says: *"Next Stage is more than an acting company, we're one big family! It has brought me so much joy to be able to work with these people and I couldn't be happier that my last show with Next Stage will go with a bang!"*



### **Kes Joffe - Pablo/Young Collector**

Kes says: *"It's a real honour to work with such a friendly, committed and talented group of people for this challenging but rewarding play. The laid-back, close-knit yet chaotic atmosphere of the Quarter, richly detailed by Tennessee Williams and brought to life by the dedicated work of the director, fellow actors, musicians, technicians, costume designers and more, makes for a unique experience that I will certainly treasure for a long time, and I hope will leave an impact on the audience as well."*



### **Perrine Maillot - Stella Kowalski**

Stella is often portrayed as a bridge between Stanley and Blanche and as someone who is constantly in their shadows. However, the more Perrine has got to know her, the more she has realised how complex she is and the more empathy she has for her. She says: *"Stella is more than Blanche's sister or Stanley's wife. She is someone who is trying to find herself and build a future while clinging on to a past that didn't allow her to fully blossom. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to bring this play to life and take it to the Minack this August."*



### **Claire Rumball - Eunice Hubbel**

Claire is thrilled to be playing Eunice, Stella and Stanley's neighbour, particularly because of the opportunity to perform at the Minack - a dream come true for her. She says: *"It is interesting to perform in this passionate, iconic play for the second time. I played Stella in Next Stage's 2006 production of A Streetcar Named Desire. Seventeen years of life experience and seeing the story unfold from a different character's view point is fascinating. I hope you enjoy the production."*



### **Lucas Sunderland - Steve Hubbel**

Lucas is a writer and actor whose recent play 'An Evening of Dark Matters' debuted at The Mission Theatre's partner venue - Burdall's Yard in May this year. He is excited to be joining Next Stage to play Steve Hubbel in *A Streetcar Named Desire* - a play that he has idolised since his teens. He says: *"I'm enjoying the playfulness of Steve and how he brings humour amongst the dark themes in the piece."*

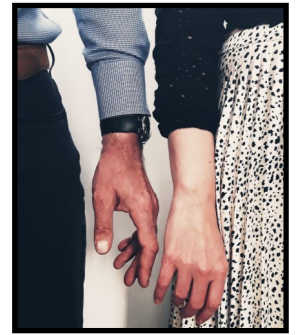


### **Jonathan Taft - Harold Mitchell (Mitch)**

Jonathan studied Theatre and Performance Practice at the University of Salford where he also had the opportunity to be an extra on TV in *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale* and many other shows being created around Manchester. He says: *"A Streetcar Named Desire is a such a symbolic play, and it gives me enormous pleasure to bring the part of 'Mitch' to life alongside the rest of the cast. The major themes in this play remain as important today as they did when the original play was written, and I hope that we do them justice. Enjoy the show!"*



Next Stage Theatre Company  
presents  
***Beginning***  
by David Eldridge  
Weds 6th - Sat 9th September 7:30pm  
Sat 9th September Matinee 2:00pm



At the end of Laura's house-warming party, all the guests have left – except Danny. Both have been drinking, both have a past, and they have been looking at each other all night... one more drink?

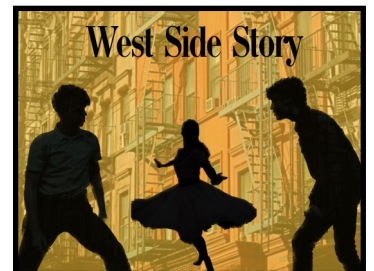
Laura has a successful career, her gym membership, a Tuesday Book Club and an expensive flat in Crouch End – but there's emptiness despite her comfortable lifestyle. Danny has given up online dating, likes to cook but has a ketchup stain on his shirt, and loves his nan and Strictly - but there's loneliness in spite of his busy social media.

In the early hours of the morning, they talk and dance and slowly start to find the courage they need to trust themselves. But, as they each understand what the other is looking for, can they also reach out towards the beginning of something new? This funny, uplifting, and at times heartbreaking play by David Eldridge takes an intimate look at the first fragile moments of risking your heart and taking a chance. Every story starts somewhere... don't miss this one's Beginning.

**This show contains strong language and adult themes. Age guidance 16+**



Next Stage Youth Theatre Company  
presents  
***West Side Story***  
by Stephen Sondheim  
Tues 26th - Sat 30th September 7:30pm



West Side Story will be Next Stage Youth Theatre Company's first full musical. And what a musical! It's jammed full of some of the most well-known and loved songs of the 20th century: *Tonight, Somewhere, America, One Hand, One Heart*. It is cast mainly from our talented youth theatre, so that all parts are appropriately aged and played. This is a must-see show for all the family. Directed by the company's Artistic Director, Ann Ellison BEM, this entrancing tale of young love and its tragic outcomes, stars Fin Hancorn as *Tony* and Miranda Webb as *Maria*.

We advise early booking for what will inevitably be a sell-out production. Come along, see the show, and realise that: ***"Tonight, tonight the world is wild and bright!"***

Based on a conception of **Jerome Robbins**.

Lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim**, book by Arthur Laurents, music by **Leonard Bernstein**.  
Entire original production directed and choreographed by **Jerome Robbins**.

**This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International  
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI: [www.mtishows.co.uk](http://www.mtishows.co.uk)**

**All tickets:  
£16 / £12 Concs (Students, NHS, Universal Credit)  
Next Stage Box Office - [www.missiontheatre.co.uk](http://www.missiontheatre.co.uk)  
Call 01225 428600 or Email [nextstagebath@aol.com](mailto:nextstagebath@aol.com)**