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# The Glass Menagerie

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by Tennessee Williams

## Artistic Staff

Director ..... Lindsay Weitkamp  
 Assistant Director/Dramaturge ..... Bianca Gordon  
 Assistant Director..... Kevin Crowe  
 Scenic Designer ..... Phoebe Mattoon  
 Lighting Designer ..... Erin Thibodaux  
 Costume Designer ..... December Mathisen  
 Sound Designer ..... Forest Fowler  
 Dialect Coach ..... Tammy Meneghini  
 Stage Manager ..... Christin Woolley  
 Assistant Stage Manager ..... Bryce Cooper

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## University Theatre Building, University Theatre

Sept. 25, 26, 30 and Oct. 1-3 at 7:30 p.m. | Sept. 27 and Oct. 4 at 2 p.m.

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Presented by The University of Colorado Boulder Department of Theatre & Dance

# The Glass Menagerie

## Cast

**The Mother** *Casey Dean*  
**Her Son** *John Wittbrodt*  
**Her Daughter** *Keana Cowden*  
**The Gentleman Caller** *Chas Crawford*

## About the play

**Setting:** An alley in St. Louis  
Part I: Preparation for a Gentleman Caller  
Part II: The Gentleman Calls  
**Time:** Now and the Past

*This performance includes one fifteen-minute intermission*

## A note from the director

*“The play is memory.”*

It is Tom’s memory—he is “attempting to find in motion what was lost in space,” yet he is pursued by key recollections of time with his family.

It is the story of four human beings—each one is struggling under the weight of unmet expectations, haunted by a difficult past that they cannot accept...or a past that transforms into myth.

In the opening notes of *The Glass Menagerie*, Williams provided detailed meditations on how to construct this memory. He hoped to end an era of plays that presented a “photographic likeness” and instead searched for a deeper truth found not through realistic details, but rather through symbolism and a poetic use of music and lighting. Williams structures this play as a series of episodes, as if gliding us through the state of memory itself and

with the same sense of fragility as one of Laura’s glass figurines. In Williams’ own words: “Poetry’s poetry. It doesn’t have to be called a poem, you know.”

This play, this poem, begs us to reflect. It calls upon each of us to confront our perception of the key moments in our lives. How do these moments shape us, live with us, and perhaps, even haunt us? Tom guides us through the predominant moments in his past that pervade his present. Although the “escape” in this play is quite literal, it is also a working symbol. It is the place where dreaming occurs; it is the place where the past is confronted and what we know is challenged. It is longing. It is heavy. It is hope.

We take you back to an alley in St. Louis. Thank you for joining us.

*—Lindsay Weitkamp, director*

## Dramaturgy Notes

As Tennessee Williams’ character Tom guides the audience through his recollection of American life in the 1930s, the complexities of his family, and the events surrounding the Gentleman Caller, *The Glass Menagerie* also echoes pieces of the playwright’s own past, anxieties, and regrets.

Tennessee Williams was born in Mississippi in 1911, named Thomas Lanier Williams, to Edwina and Cornelius Williams. He had an older sister, Rose, who struggled with schizophrenia, and a younger brother as well, Walter. The Williams family moved to St. Louis from Mississippi when Williams was eight. The economy of St. Louis was still recovering from The Great Depression, as the manufacturing output had decreased by more than the national average.

Williams’ father was an alcoholic traveling salesman and his mother was left in charge to raise the children. As a young adult, Williams wrestled with depression. He had been coerced by his father into dropping out of college and working in a shoe factory. He still managed to steal away and write in his spare time. At 28, Williams moved to New Orleans, changed his name to Tennessee, and began more consciously exploring his homosexuality.

While *Menagerie* is not directly autobiographical, many of the details and sentiments in the play reflect Williams’ own experience. Most notably is the connection between Williams and his sister, Rose. Rose was given a lobotomy after Williams had left his family, and he never forgave his mother for allowing the procedure. Williams’ relationship with his mother was complex for many reasons, including the effects of Edwina’s Southern upbringing and overprotective parenting.

In some accounts, Williams argues that this play is only a dream or memory, rather than displaying his personal story. However, in a 1975 interview with *The New York Times* regarding the publication of his memoirs, Williams expressed that he “found it difficult to write about writing. Some people write about it. I just do it. I thought my plays exist for people to see. My life is more or less expressed in them.”

Despite the murkiness around the extent to which *Menagerie* is autobiographical, like Tom, Williams certainly displays a “poet’s weakness for symbols.” Both Williams’ and Tom’s stories invite audiences into a delicate waltz with nostalgia, longing, and loss.

*—Notes by Bianca Gordon*

## Technical Staff

**Technical Director** ..... Jake Siekman  
**Props Master** ..... Amy Richman  
**Draper** ..... Connie Phillips  
**Dyer** ..... Sasha Georges

## Run Crew

**Lightboard Operator** ..... Josiah Morgan  
**Sound Board Operator** ..... Jake Siekman  
**Deck Crew/Props** ..... Amber Hoeffner  
**Wardrobe Head** ..... Samantha Paul  
**Dressers** ..... Ayla Le-Cochran, Quiana Torres

**Special thanks** to the incredibly supportive faculty, staff, and graduate student community. In particular, thank you to Dr. Bud Coleman, Dr. Beth Osnes, Connie Lane, Dr. Cecelia Pang, Dr. Oliver Gerland, Kevin Crowe, Jenna Bainbridge, and to the faculty advisors, Jason Banks, Bruce Bergner and Kerry Cripe, who mentored the student design and technical team.

## Scenery and Electrics

### Technical Assistants

Ashley Arvola, Greg Baker, Caleb Bay, Bryce Cooper, Chas Crawford, Forest Fowler, Jordan Hammer, Phoebe Mattoon, Zach Porteous, Amy Richman, Laura Sandler, Jake Siekman, Brandon Smart, Erin Thibodaux, Ryan Winchester, Jared Wold, Christin Woolley

### Tech Studio Students

Dillon Colagrosso, Nellie Conboy, Keana Cowden, Keilani Fuqua, Eddy Jordan, Phoebe Mattoon, Jack Menzies, Anna-Marie Monzon, John Wittbrodt, Samantha Yoho

## Costumes

### Costume Shop Employees

Keana Cowden, Casey Dean, Olivia Dwyer, Zoe Garrison, Sasha Georges, Conor Mead, Paige Olson, Reba Todd, Liz Williamson, Mary Willingham, Connie Phillips, Hannelore Roling, Kate Tara, India Wanebo

### Costume Practicum Students

Hayden Bebber, Mary Elliott, Eddy Jordan, Maddie Levin, Jack Menzies, Connie Phillips, Jake Siekmann, Birdie Plank

## Dance Production Technical Crew

Taylor King, Kaitlyn Lawrence, Caroline Rhoads, Lorien Russell, Brandon Smart, Vanessa Weingarten, Gabrielle Whitcomb, Christin Woolley

## Dance Production Practicum Students

Sasha Alcott, Sheridan Bernstein, Kyla Boyd, Molly Delahunty, Shelby Fuentes, Mora Gluskin, Leigh Salamon, Ryan Sinton, Taylor Sullo, Caroline T Wilson

## Theatre & Dance Department staff

**Department Chair** ..... Bud Coleman  
**Director of Dance** ..... Erika Randall  
**Production Coordinator** ..... Connie Lane  
**Theatre Technical Director** ..... Kerry Cripe  
**Director of Dance Production** ..... Iain Court  
**Lighting, Sound & Projections Advisor** ... Jason Banks  
**Costume Design Advisor** ..... Markas Henry  
**Scenic Design Advisor** ..... Bruce Bergner  
**Scene Shop Foreman** ..... Stephen Balgooyen  
**Costume Shop Manager** ..... Ted Stark  
**Business Manager** ..... Stacy Witt  
**Program Coordinator** ..... Sharon Van Boven  
**Graduate Program Assistant** ..... Patricia Paige  
**Receptionist** ..... Cass Marshall  
**Outreach Coordinator** ..... Peg Posnick  
**Academic Advisor** ..... Kyle Neidt  
**Costume Stock/Rental Manager** ..... December Mathisen  
**Costume Tech Lab Assistant** ..... Amanda Herrera  
**Dance Costume Coordinator** ..... Shelby Fuentes  
**Dance Events Coordinator** ..... Rosely Conz  
**Dance Video Recording/Archivist** ..... Rachel Dodson  
**Loft Production Coordinator** ..... Will Lewis  
**Front of House Manager** ..... Hadley Kamminga-Peck  
**House Managers** ..... Nathan Ellgren  
Samantha Salters  
India Wanebo  
Samm Wesler