

# LEARNING GUIDE

A Sheffield Theatres Production

# A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

BY TENNESSEE WILLIAMS



**SHEFFIELD  
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This learning guide is written to help students and teachers explore the Sheffield Theatres 2025 production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. In it, you'll find information, activities and discussion points to discuss the play for your work in Drama & Theatre, and English Literature courses.



**THIS SYNOPSIS IS DESIGNED TO BE READ BEFORE SEEING THE PRODUCTION OR AS AN AIDE MEMOIRE WHEN DISCUSSING THE PLAY ONCE YOU'VE SEEN IT.**

## SCENE ONE

In the street outside Stella and Stanley's apartment, Stanley and Mitch walk towards the building. They are both wearing work clothes. Stanley hollers up to Stella who is inside the apartment. She comes out onto the landing, and he throws a packet of red meat to her. Stanley tells Stella that he is going bowling with Mitch and that she should come along. Eunice comments that her husband Steve should get a sandwich as there is no food at home.

On the street, Blanche arrives, looking at a piece of paper for her sister Stella's address. Blanche is confused by the rundown nature of the area and she is over-dressed for her visit. Eunice explains that Blanche has found the right address and, because she owns the building, lets Blanche into Stella's apartment whilst Stella and Stanley are out bowling.

Blanche is shocked by how small, and poorly kept, the apartment is. She tells Eunice about Belle Reve - a plantation that the family once owned. Blanche tells Eunice that she is a teacher. Eunice leaves Blanche to rest, and Blanche immediately sees a whiskey bottle from which she pours herself a drink. She immediately washes up the glass afterwards to hide what she has done.

Stella arrives, and during their conversation, Blanche pretends to see the

whiskey bottle for the first time. Over drinks, Blanche tells Stella that she is shocked to see her living in what she considers to be poor conditions. There is tension between them and Blanche tells Stella that she is taking a leave of absence from her teaching job due to what appears to be a nervous breakdown. Stella describes her husband Stanley who is Polish, and proudly mentions that he was a Master Sergeant in the Engineer Corps in World War Two. She tries to prepare Blanche for the fact that Stanley is very different to the men they would court back at home. During the conversation, it is clear that Belle Reve has been lost to bankruptcy: Blanche is bitter that Stella has done nothing to help when family members died and the plantation was under financial threat.

Stella runs to the bathroom in tears. Whilst she is gone from the room, Stanley and Mitch enter and Blanche introduces herself. At the end of the scene, Stanley asks if it's true that Blanche was once married. Blanche confirms that she was married when she was very young but "the boy died". She is too emotionally overwrought to explain anything more.

## SCENE TWO

It is 6pm the following evening and Stanley is hosting a poker night in the apartment. Stella has arranged for her and Blanche to go to Galatoire's for drinks to avoid disrupting the poker party. Stella asks Stanley not to mention that they are expecting a baby.

Stanley is suspicious that Belle Reve has gone but Blanche does not have any official papers to confirm its sale. He suspects that Blanche is swindling them out of what might be rightfully theirs. He uses Blanche's extravagant clothing as 'proof' that she must have an income in addition to her teacher's salary to be able to afford such extravagance.

Blanche emerges from the bathroom and asks Stanley to do up the buttons of her dress. She fishes for compliments about her appearance, and admits to doing so. She asks Stella to go and buy her a drink at the drugstore and then playfully flirts with Stanley who accuses her of tricking them about Belle Reve. He finds papers in her trunk but they are love letters written by "one boy". Stanley eventually calms down and tells Blanche that he is only trying to protect his wife, who is going to have his baby.

Stanley's friends Steve and Pablo arrive for the poker night. Stella apologises to Blanche for Stanley's behaviour, and they leave for Galatoire's.

## SCENE THREE

In the apartment, Stanley, Mitch, Steve and Pablo play poker. Mitch is concerned



that he needs to go home to look after his frail mother. Mitch is the only single man in the group and he acknowledges that when his mother dies, he will be all alone.

Stella and Blanche return at 2.30am, and can see from outside that the poker game is still in full swing. Blanche asks if she can join in, to which Stanley says no, and he suggests that they go upstairs and sit with Eunice. Stella refuses because it's the middle of the night and asks them to curtail their poker game.

Blanche wants to have a bath to calm her nerves and on the way to the bathroom, she meets Mitch, who is immediately attracted to her. Blanche begins to undress for her bath, apparently aware that her silhouette can be seen through the curtain between the kitchen and the bedroom. Stanley gets annoyed that Blanche has turned on a radio. He turns it off.

Mitch goes through to talk to Blanche, who is now wearing a robe. She asks Mitch to place a paper lantern around the

naked bulb in the room. Blanche turns the radio back on, and she dances with Mitch who imitates her actions.

Stanley storms into the room and angrily turns the radio back off. Stella asks the men to go home, and Stanley starts towards her but the men restrain him. Stella cries “I want to go away!” and Blanche escorts her upstairs to Eunice’s flat.

The men all gather their belongings and leave Stanley who immediately starts calling for Stella, despite Eunice telling him not to. Eventually Stella emerges from upstairs - she has been crying. They disappear into the flat.

Mitch is on the street, and sees Blanche coming down from Eunice’s apartment. He invites her to have a cigarette with him.

## SCENE FOUR

The next morning, Blanche and Stella talk. Blanche has had a sleepless night, worrying about Stella who tries to downplay the violence of the previous evening. She blames the alcohol and poker for Stanley’s behaviour and says that whilst it’s not ok, it happens, citing an incident on her wedding night where Stanley smashed a lightbulb with her shoe. Despite Blanche’s concern, Stella tells her that she is “not in anything I want to get out of”. She has no intention of leaving Stanley, despite his violence and volatility. Blanche is horrified.

Blanche suggests that they contact Shep Huntleigh - an old flame who is now very

wealthy and whom she recently bumped into in Miami. Blanche sends him a telegram, asking for help.

Blanche tells Stella that she finds Stanley common, comparing him to someone who has survived the Stone Age. She does not realise that Stanley has arrived home and has

overheard everything that Blanche is saying. When Stella embraces him, Stanley smiles at Blanche, signalling that he knows that she is choosing him.

## SCENE FIVE

As Blanche writes a letter to Shep Huntleigh, Eunice and Steve can be heard arguing upstairs as she accuses him of cheating on her. Stanley arrives home from bowling.

Stanley asks Blanche if she knows anyone called Shaw and suggests that she has met him at a hotel called the Flamingo, in Laurel. Blanche is visibly shaken by his question and denies that she would go to an establishment like the Flamingo. Steve and Eunice walk past, clearly having made up after their fight. Blanche asks Stella if she has heard anything untoward about her, worried about “unkind gossip”. Stella says no, and tries to calm Blanche’s nerves.

Blanche is going out with Mitch that evening, and she tells Stella that so far he has only had a goodnight kiss from her - she wants to earn his respect. She is sensitive about her age and how she is perceived. Blanche is keen to leave Elysian Fields (the neighbourhood where Stella lives) and New Orleans: Stella



reassures her that it will happen.

Blanche dozes in a chair, and Stella goes out with Stanley, Eunice and Steve, leaving Blanche alone. A Young Man arrives, collecting for The Evening Star. Blanche flirts with the young man, telling him he looks like a character from The Arabian Nights. She asks him for a cigarette, which he lights for her, and talks to him about the rain and then kisses him. He is dazed, and leaves as Mitch arrives carrying flowers for Blanche.

## SCENE SIX

Blanche and Mitch return to the apartment at 2am, having been to an amusement park. Blanche is clearly exhausted, both physically and in terms of her nerves. She invites Mitch in for a nightcap, and they talk about how he had previously kissed her but she hadn't wanted to indulge in anything further than that. Mitch talks about how he looks after himself by going to the gym and he asks to lift her up to demonstrate his strength and Blanche puts on a show of being demure, asking him to remove his hand from her waist once he puts her back down.

Blanche and Mitch talk about Stanley, and Blanche tells him that Stanley is extremely rude to her. She only endures it because of Stella and the baby that she is expecting, and because she herself is struggling financially on her teacher's salary. Mitch asks Blanche how old she is, and reveals that he has told his mother about her. He tells Blanche more about his mother's frailty and how he will be alone once his mother dies. Blanche begins to tell Mitch about her own loss of Allan, the man who was briefly her husband, and whom she had discovered with another man. She and Allan had danced the Varsouviana polka together - during which Blanche had told Allan that he disgusted her - and shortly afterwards Allan had taken himself away and shot himself. Mitch soothes her distress by embracing her and kissing her gently, and suggests that, as people who both need somebody, they would be good together.

## SCENE SEVEN

Stella prepares celebrations for Blanche's birthday. Stanley complains about how much time Blanche spends in the bathroom and takes joy in telling Stella that he has found out more information about Blanche and her behaviour in Laurel. She has developed a reputation for promiscuity in the town, and has been asked to leave by the Mayor, and banned from the Flamingo Hotel. Stanley goes further and tells Stella that Blanche will not be returning to her teaching job: she was sacked for having a relationship with a 17 year old boy.

When Blanche emerges from the bathroom, she realises that Stella is upset about something. Stella tells Stanley that she doesn't believe any of what he tells her about Blanche, who has always been "flighty" as a result of things that had happened to her when she was much younger. Stella refers to Allan as a "degenerate". Stanley explains that Mitch will not be attending the birthday celebration because he now knows about Blanche's background and reputation. Stanley claims that telling Mitch this information was an act of loyalty to someone with whom he fought in World War Two, and now works with in the factory.

Despite Stella's concerns about Blanche's future, Stanley reveals that he has bought Blanche a bus ticket for the following Tuesday. Blanche emerges and asks Stella once again what is upsetting her. Stella pretends to be busy and will not meet Blanche's eye.



## SCENE EIGHT

The birthday celebration is a flop, and Mitch has not appeared. Blanche tries to make light of being stood up for the first time in her life, and attempts light conversation with Stanley and Stella. Stanley loses his temper and smashes a plate after Stella asks him to clean up. Stella goes out to the balcony to remonstrate with her husband, whilst Blanche tries unsuccessfully to telephone Mitch. Stanley is a little calmer and tells Stella that things will be better once Blanche leaves.

The telephone rings and Blanche thinks it will be Mitch, explaining why he has not arrived. Instead it is a friend of Stanley's, asking him to go bowling. As he leaves, Stanley offers Blanche a 'present' - it is the bus ticket. She is distraught and runs away from Stanley, into the bathroom. Stella criticises Stanley for being so heartless, telling him "people like you abused her, and forced her to change". As they argue, Stella suddenly realises that she has gone into labour. She tells Stanley to take her to hospital.



## SCENE NINE

Later that same evening, Blanche is in the apartment alone, listening to the Varsouviana and drinking. She is remembering Allan. Mitch arrives. He is in workclothes and looks quite unkempt.

Stanley storms into the room and angrily turns the radio back off. Stella asks the munkempt. Mitch storms into the bedroom, demanding that the fan be turned off. Mitch criticises Blanche for drinking all of Stanley's liquor and asks her why they can never meet in the afternoon - they always meet after 6pm, even on a Sunday when he is not working. Blanche is confused and startled by Mitch's unusual behaviour. He begins to tell her how much he knows about her previous life, what Stanley has told him and how it has been confirmed by people from work who travel to Laurel. Blanche claims that these are simply rumours made up by someone she had rejected but Mitch is not convinced and continues interrogating her about the Flamingo.

A blind Mexican woman enters, selling flowers that are traditionally used at funerals. This triggers Blanche to begin recalling deaths at Belle Reve, but not everything she says is coherent. Mitch tries to embrace Blanche, and she asks him to marry her. He says that he doesn't want to anymore, telling her that she's "not clean enough to bring in the house with my mother". Blanche responds by telling him to leave and then starts yelling "Fire! Fire!" to attract the attention of passers by. Mitch is stunned and leaves hurriedly. Blanche collapses onto the floor.

## SCENE TEN

A few hours later, Stanley returns to the apartment, where Blanche has continued drinking since Mitch left. Stella and the baby are still in the hospital and Stanley has come home to rest.

Blanche tells Stanley that she has had a surprise telegram and that a man from Dallas - an old admirer - has invited her to stay with him. As Stanley starts to change into some pyjamas from his wedding night, Blanche tells him that Mitch brought roses to the apartment to apologise for his earlier behaviour. None of what Blanche tells Stanley at this point is true, instead it is a flight of fancy. Stanley begins berating her, telling her she looks mad. As Blanche tries to call Western Union to send a telegram, Stanley appears in his pyjamas and starts to intimidate her, blocking her way. Blanche smashes a bottle to try and threaten him but he grabs her, telling her that perhaps he should "interfere" with her. He is much stronger than she is so easily overpowers her and carries her into the bedroom.



## SCENE ELEVEN

A few weeks later, Stella is packing Blanche's belongings. Mitch, Stanley, Pablo and Steve are all playing poker in the kitchen. Eunice is looking after the new baby upstairs, but goes down to see Stella who explains that they've told Blanche she's going for a rest in the country. In reality, Blanche will be taken away by a doctor and a nurse to an institution, as she has had a complete breakdown. Blanche is confused and thinks she is going to visit Shep Huntleigh.

Stella tells Eunice that she couldn't continue living with Blanche and believe the story that she has been told about what Stanley has done.

Blanche emerges from the bathroom. Mitch hears her voice in the kitchen and is visibly distressed by what is happening. Blanche continues her confusion, and when there is a knock at the door, Eunice and Stella must feign a casual response. The nurse is severe and wants to restrain Blanche, but the Doctor tells her not to. Instead he leads her away, removing his hat and walking with her as if taking her for a casual walk.

The men watch as Blanche is led away. Stella sobs, comforted at first by Eunice, but then by Stanley. Pablo, Steve and Mitch return to the table whilst Stanley watches Blanche leave, and attempts to soothe Stella.





## BLANCHE DUBOIS

Blanche is described as being five years older than her sister. Despite her various comments to the contrary, Blanche is an alcoholic. She is emotionally fragile, described by Williams in the stage directions as someone whose “delicate beauty must avoid a strong light”. She is manipulative and naive, lonely and vulnerable, but is also a snob who makes provocative comments. Towards the end of the play, she is raped by her sister’s husband, Stanley. Blanche spends a lot of time bathing and taking care of her physical appearance - she arrives dressed in clothes that mark her as different to the working class environment in which she finds herself - she lives on the memory of more prosperous times, with numerous mentions of the family plantation, Belle Reve.



## STELLA KOWALSKI

Stella is Blanche’s younger sister, married to Stanley, who has served in World War Two in the American military. Stella lives with Stanley in a two-room apartment owned by Eunice and Steve who live upstairs. Stella is pregnant at the beginning of the play, and gives birth shortly before the end of the play. Stella endures verbal and physical abuse from Stanley but will not leave him. Some critics suggest that her decision to have Blanche taken to a psychiatric institution is because she does not want to face the evidence of her husband being a sexual predator.



## STANLEY KOWALSKI

Stanley is a physically dominant man, whose size and presence are threatening and intimidating, particularly in the small apartment that he shares with Stella. He is a working class man who has come home from his role in World War Two, and expects his wife to fulfil all of his needs. He dislikes Blanche for her apparent snobbery, and has no compassion for her fragility. Stanley deliberately tells Mitch about Blanche’s turbulent past in Laurel and the reputation she has with people who have met her. He seems to take pleasure in her downfall, and the play ends with Blanche being taken to an institution shortly after she is raped by Stanley whilst his wife is in hospital giving birth to his baby.



## **MITCH (FULL NAME, HAROLD MITCHELL)**

Mitch is a friend of Stanley's and he meets Blanche shortly after her arrival in New Orleans. He is drawn to her and they go on several dates. Mitch mentions his elderly and frail mother several times, and he begins to envision marrying Blanche. However, Mitch calls a halt to their budding relationship when Stanley tells him about Blanche's behaviour in Lauren which has apparently led to her being banished from the town. Mitch cannot meet Blanche's eyes, or look at her, as she is led away at the end of the play. He is another man who has damaged and abandoned her, but he himself also has vulnerabilities and complexities in his character.



## **EUNICE HUBBEL**

Eunice lives in the upstairs apartment to Stella and Stanley, and owns the building. She is married to Steve and they have a tempestuous relationship which involves physical and verbal conflict. Eunice provides solace and safety to Stella when Stanley hits her, and also looks after the baby whilst Blanche is led away at the end of the play.



## **STEVE HUBBEL**

Steve is married to Eunice. He is also friends with Stanley, playing poker and going bowling with him.



## **PABLO GONZALES**

A friend of Stanley who attends a poker game in the Kowalskis' apartment.



## **A DOCTOR**

The Doctor arrives to collect Blanche, accompanied by the Nurse. He demonstrates more compassion than the Nurse, refusing to use the straitjacket that she suggests, instead taking Blanche's arm in such a way that she can believe he is a courteous gentleman caller.



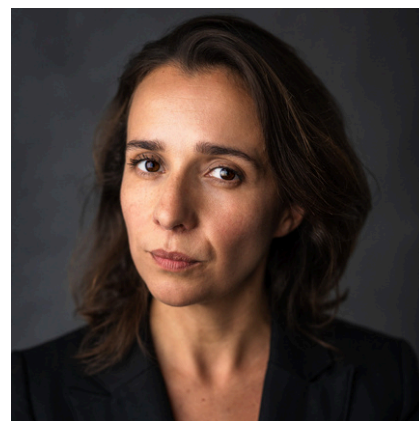
## **A NURSE**

The Nurse arrives with the Doctor at the end of the play to remove Blanche to an institution. She is stern and does not have any compassion.



## **A YOUNG COLLECTOR**

The collector arrives at Stella's apartment when Blanche is there on his own. She exploits the opportunity to flirt with him and kiss him.



## **A NEIGHBOUR**

The Neighbour is seen at the beginning of the play as part of the street action that sets the scene for Blanche's arrival. She gossips with Eunice and comments on Stanley's behaviour.

## APPEARANCE, REALITY AND ILLUSION

Blanche appears to have several versions of her own story, including her references to Belle Reve, the plantation that has been lost through bankruptcy. In one scene, Blanche can be heard singing the song 'Paper Moon' which is a symbol for something that is illusory and fragile. The paper lantern that Blanche insists is put over a bare bulb creates a different coloured lighting effect than the bulb on its own, and is itself fragile when Stanley rips it away from the bulb towards the end of the play.

Blanche's promiscuity, and her perilous financial situation, is masked by the stories that she tells about needing a break from teaching (she has been sacked for having a relationship with a 17 year-old student) and she uses her clothing (furs, costume jewellery and fairly formal outfits) to suggest a greater wealth than she actually has. It is revealed later that she has less than one dollar to her name.

## FEMININITY

By comparing Blanche, Stella and Eunice, it is clear that all of the women define themselves via the relationships they have with the men in the play.

Blanche uses her act of fragility mixed with a flirtatious act (you could argue that she is performative) to try to gain the interest and protection of men, to the point where she flirts inappropriately with the Paper Collector and kisses him on the mouth shortly before her date with Mitch. Blanche likes to pretend that

she is a romantic Southern Belle but it is revealed that her sexual promiscuity has given her a poor reputation in Laurel. Stella's version of femininity includes her own sexual passion for Stanley, but she conforms to the role of wife and expectant mother despite Stanley's treatment of her. Their relationship is highly volatile, but as Stella explains to Blanche, she is not looking to escape that situation. Whilst Blanche seems to deal in illusion, Stella has a much more pragmatic approach to the reality of life with Stanley.

Eunice is also a wife, and is seen as a friend and supporter of Stella - there is a sense of solidarity between them when their respective husbands are abusive towards them.

It is important to remember that the play is set in 1947 at a time when gender roles were shifting. During the war, women had taken on greater work responsibilities outside the home but when men returned from their wartime postings, it was assumed that women would go back to their traditional roles, mostly within the domestic realm. Not everybody wished for this return to the status quo. If we consider characters such as Stanley, we can see that he would not be comfortable in having his masculine status being reduced by an increased social status for women.

## MASCULINITY

The strongest image of masculinity is Stanley's tendency to remove his shirt in the house: he does this shortly after meeting Blanche for the first time. We might call Stanley an Alpha male, looking to dominate all those around him. Stanley's masculinity can also be seen in his magnetism to and for Stella. Despite his declaration of devotion to Stella, he is not what we might term a gentleman, particularly in the context of 1940s relationships and roles.

In contrast to Stanley, Mitch demonstrates his masculinity in very different ways. He tries to make advances towards Blanche, but she suddenly becomes scared and shouts "Fire!" to attract the attention of the neighbours. Both Stanley and Mitch dominate Blanche through their physical masculinity. Mitch sees Blanche as a potential comfort - particularly in the knowledge that his mother is likely to die in the near future - and she is keen to develop a relationship with him, again for security. Her attention then turns to Shep Huntleigh, a character we never meet, but for whom his financial status provides another version of masculinity and security.

## SEXUALITY

Within the play, the sexual nature of femininity and masculinity is emphasised. Blanche spends a lot of time bathing - and we can hear her singing in the bath, ensuring that everyone (in the play and the audience) are aware of her naked,

bathing state. Stanley keeps trying to get into his bathroom but is often stopped because Blanche is there. When Blanche changes her clothes shortly after arriving at the Kowalski apartment, she is very aware that she is visible to people in the other room - she uses her physical form as a way of asserting her femininity and desire.

As well as the heterosexual desire in the play, Blanche has also suffered the death by suicide of her husband, Allan, who was a gay man whom she caught with another man. The taboo of same-sex desire thus heightens the various heterosexual relationships in the play. Tennessee Williams's own sexuality saw him ostracised in some circles during his lifetime at a time when homosexuality was taboo and, in many places, illegal.



## THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL WORLDS

Williams wrote the action of the play as mainly taking place within the Kowalski apartment but there are moments where the action takes place externally, such as on the stairs on the outside of the building and in the street. This immediately gives the audience a sense of two different worlds - not only the version of our lives that goes on behind closed doors versus what we show in public, but also what happens psychologically in our own minds as well as our interactions with other people.

Blanche very much lives in a fantasy world, and constantly hides her true self in literal and metaphorical shadow. The music of the play also highlights this internal vs. external struggle: the sound of the Varouviana polka reminds her of the night that her husband shot himself. This music seems to haunt Blanche in a way that might be linked to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) now. The 'Blue Piano' music that is heard drifting down the street reminds the audience (and Blanche) of the harsh realities of the life these characters are now leading.





There are various symbols within the play, which you may see emphasised or heightened in this production. For each of the items in the left hand column, discuss what the significance of these might be:

<b>SYMBOL</b>	<b>POSSIBLE MEANING(S)</b>
A Streetcar Named 'Desire'	
A Streetcar Named 'Cemeteries'	
Belle Reve - French for 'Beautiful Dreams'	
Alcohol (consumed in particular by Stanley and Blanche)	
Light and shadow	

Once you have watched the production at The Crucible, are there symbols that particularly stood out to you?

# INTRODUCING THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM: INTERVIEWS WITH ...

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## FRANKIE BRADSHAW

Designer Frankie Bradshaw explains the set and costume design for *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

### CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE RESEARCH AND LEARNING THAT YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN FOR THIS PROJECT?

Every show I design takes me down a new path of research, that's the real joy of designing for theatre - investigating new places and unfamiliar eras. For this show I started by researching New Orleans, where the play is set, in the late 1940s and early 1950s. We knew however that we wanted to blend this time and location with a more contemporary conceptual space, so we started researching modern warehouse spaces, which represent Stanley, and lightbulb art installations which represent Blanche.

### WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF DESIGNING THE SET FOR THIS PLAY AND THIS SPACE SPECIFICALLY?

It's tricky designing an apartment with two main rooms for a thrust stage as deep as the Crucible stage, because if the two rooms are static, you would end up with some very tricky sightlines into each room from the side seating banks. This is why we ended up setting the apartment on a revolve, so that we could rotate the viewpoint, allowing us optimum view into each room when each are in use. We also made the choice to have the bathroom as a visible room onstage, setting this on an outer revolve, which allowed the bathroom to become another moving element to our set design, and quite a symbolic space in Blanche's journey through the play, being her place of escape.

# INTRODUCING THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM: INTERVIEWS WITH ...

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## **CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COSTUME DESIGNS FOR THIS PRODUCTION?**

### **IN PARTICULAR, THE WEARING OF A SIGNIFICANT COSTUME OR ITEM OF CLOTHING IS A PARTICULAR THEME IN THIS PLAY. HOW DOES THIS COME THROUGH IN YOUR DESIGNS?**

It was important that the costume design for this show really marked Blanche out in the space as an outsider, whereas Stanley and Stella should look at home in their environment. Therefore I decided to keep Stanley and Stella's clothing in the same colour palette as the set - a mix of blues and turquoises, with flashes of bold yellows, which sits very comfortably against the pale blue of the curtains, and deep blue of the floor. Whereas, Blanche is dressed in vivid reds, pinks and whites, so she immediately pops out in the space, in a way that is beautiful and striking, but also alienating. She is also the character who's wardrobe feels the most traditional to the 40s and 50s - she's a character who longs for the past, and for the airs and graces that went with that era, so that's very apparent in the cuts and silhouettes of her outfits, whereas the other characters feel more blurred between period and contemporary, and in the final scene are very definitely brought fully up to date with outfits you'd recognise in 2025.



## **HOW DOES YOUR SET DESIGN AID THE DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE PRODUCTION?**

My hope is that the design keeps the show light on its feet, and always allows the audience the best possible view of the apartment from all angles. I also think it enables us to switch between naturalistic staging and more abstracted direction, via the various revolves, and all of the practical lighting built into the set, such as the lightbulb installation overhead, the LED under the revolve and the strip lights on the structure and overhead.

# INTRODUCING THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM: INTERVIEWS WITH ...

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## TAYLA KOVACEVIC-EBONG

**Tayla Kovacevic-Ebong tells us about playing the role of Mitch in A Streetcar Named Desire.**

Mitch is an old friend of Stanley's, and they served together in World War II in the 241st Field Company of Royal Engineers. He lives with his sick mother, whom he cares for deeply. Mitch is different from the other guys; he's more sensitive and thoughtful, and he really values emotional connection. Like a lot of people, he's afraid of being alone. He's looking for love and a meaningful relationship but struggles with his own insecurities.

A lot of the answers about Mitch are in the script itself. By studying the text closely, you get a better sense of his background, like his job, his history in the war, and his relationship with his mother. I like to be off-book before rehearsals, so I'm not tied to the script. This way, I can really focus on reacting to what's happening in the moment, and I'm not thinking about the next line. When working in a play that requires accents, practice is everything. YouTube is a great tool for listening to real people speak with the accent you're working on.

If you can, working with an accent coach is really helpful. But the most important

thing is to practice regularly. The more you do it, the more natural it becomes. Get your reps in and don't be afraid to make mistakes!

There are many interesting moments for Mitch, but I think the biggest challenge for me is Scene 9. That's the moment when Mitch really starts to struggle, as he faces the truth about his relationship with Blanche. His emotions in that scene are intense, and it's tough because he realizes that everything he thought he knew about her is a lie. It's a heartbreaking moment for him.

There are quite a few specific moments that are significant for Mitch but I think it's important to pay attention to his story overall. Mitch offers a way to examine the societal pressures placed on men during this time, especially around vulnerability, strength, and morality which I think are issues that continue to resonate in today's society.

# INTRODUCING THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM: INTERVIEWS WITH ...

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## NUHAZET DIAZCANO

**Nuhazet Diazcano plays Pablo. He tells us more about how playing the role of one of Stanley's friends.**

Pablo is one of Stanley's poker friends. He's a young and married army veteran who served in World War 2. Pablo is a proud American of Mexican heritage - a third generation immigrant, raised in New Orleans. He now works at the same plant (factory) as Stanley and Mitch.

The major part of my research for playing Pablo centred around Mexican communities in New Orleans. The treatment of Mexican peoples and descendants who lived in the French Quarter and how they were affected by this during the war. Mexican soldiers were actually sent to the Philippines rather than to Europe.

One of the challenges of playing Pablo is the energy propulsion. He is involved in very highly emotional and energetic scenes, so keeping an accurate but palpable energy is very important. I've also been able to explore how a character like Pablo feels when he is so proud to be American but is treated like an outsider due to his heritage.

When you're working with accents, you need to immerse yourself in the sound:

find the flow and musicality, and allow it to change the shape of your mouth and sounds. Don't work too hard - allow it to wash over you and let yourself relax into it so that it doesn't sound overworked.

There are a couple of scenes that are important in the play that you might like to look out for. The first is the fight in scene 3. It shows the brotherhood and camaraderie between ex-soldiers. Out of violence, they have discovered a gentleness and intimacy of unspoken communication and support. The second is a beautiful, tender and haunting moments between Allan (Blanche's late husband) and Blanche display all of the trauma and difficulty Blanche has passed through as she slowly cracks. They also remind her of a more tender time: a blessing and a curse.

# INTRODUCING THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM: INTERVIEWS WITH ...

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## BRIDGETTE AMOFAH

**Bridgette Amofah plays Eunice, one of the first characters we see in the play.**

Eunice is a front-footed, honest and direct woman who is married to Steve. She is the owner and upstairs neighbour of Stella and Stanley. She loves hard, but is also protective and practical and is hyper-aware of the times she is living in and the dynamics that exist between genders at the time.

When I was preparing for the role, I read the play two or three times, to get a real sense of timelines. I have been fortunate enough to have visited New Orleans a couple of times, so I have an understanding of the buildings and the vibe (which has remained vaguely similar). I didn't want to do too much character work prior to rehearsals as much of it is dependent on the relationships between the characters.

It's important for me to avoid making Eunice one-dimensional, especially as a Black woman. Though she argues with her husband Steve, there is a great deal of love and passion towards her. On a practical note, it's quite difficult being offstage for parts of the show, and then having to come on in bursts of high energy or a high stakes argument.

It's a fun challenge working out how and where to generate energy offstage.

To get to grips with the accent, try and do the character work first. How you change emotions and tactics with the character will affect the pitch of your voice and so on which, in turn, affects accent. Listen to the accent in a 'remote' way if possible - for example, a podcast where the accent is just running passively through the speech you're hearing. It's also important to check vowel sounds!

Scene eleven is incredibly important for Eunice as she is driving Stella to accept that Blanche cannot stay here. She needs her to realise that life cannot continue if Blanche stays, which feels antithetical to Eunice as a woman. You could explore whether or not Eunice believes whether Blanche has been attacked and whether or not that matters in the scheme of the world. The play explores desire (it's in the title of the play!), power dynamics and, ultimately, what it means to be human.





Tennessee Williams was born in Columbus, Mississippi, in 1911 but moved as a child to St. Louis, in the state of Missouri. He attended Missouri University very briefly but his father pulled him out when Tennessee failed a military training course. Instead, he was sent to work in the same shoe factory where his father worked as a salesman. Tennessee's father was critical of what he considered a lack of masculinity in his son.

Tennessee Williams was born in Columbus, Mississippi, in 1911 but moved as a child to St. Louis, in the state of Missouri. He attended Missouri University very briefly but his father pulled him out when Tennessee failed a military training course. Instead, he was sent to work in the same shoe factory where his father worked as a salesman. Tennessee's father was critical of what he considered a lack of masculinity in his son.

Much of Williams's own childhood and family life is reflected in his work. His father was an alcoholic and his sister Rose lived with psychological conditions which were eventually treated with a lobotomy. The memory play *The Glass Menagerie* is one particular work in which Rose's influence on Williams can be seen, in the fragile character of Laura.

Tennessee Williams worked for MGM film studios for six months early in his career, but it was *A Streetcar Named Desire* which made his name and saw the beginning of great success for the playwright. His other plays include *The Rose Tattoo*, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Orpheus Ascending*. These plays, as well as *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* were adapted into films. In *Streetcar*, Stanley is played by Marlon Brando and Vivien Leigh played Blanche: Leigh won an Oscar™ for her performance, and Brando was also nominated for an award for his role in the film.

Although he achieved great literary success, Williams was beset by a range of personal, and psychological challenges which contributed towards his use of alcohol and drugs. In 1940, Williams had an affair with Kip Kiernan, who was a dancer. Williams was devastated when the affair ended because Kip married a woman. Kip died in 1944, aged 26. Williams had several other relationships, several of which were volatile. The death of his partner Frank Merlo, who died in 1963, deeply affected him, and he was treated for severe depression.

Williams died in 1983.



## PRE- AND POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS

Before your visit, you might like to predict the answers to the questions that follow. Then, once you have seen the production, revisit those predictions and compare what you expected with what you saw. Consider why the artistic decisions have been made for this particular version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and evaluate the impact and success of those decisions on your experience of the play.

- Chi-San Howard (the production's Intimacy Director) says, "This production of *Streetcar* really manages to distill itself down into the lives of the characters, so that they're under a microscope. You can feel the heat in the air." How have the actors, director and designers created a sense of the heat and humidity of New Orleans?
- How have the designers allowed the audience to see the external and internal locations in which the action takes place?
- What does Blanche look like when she first arrives on stage? How have the actor, director and designers created a sense of fragility in her appearance?
- How do the actors playing Stella and Stanley create a sense of their passionate but volatile relationship?
- Elysian Fields is a working class area, and does not meet the expectations of Blanche, who is still living within the memories of the family plantation, Belle Rive. How have design elements been used to create a sense of a tough, working class environment in both the external and internal locations?
- How have ideas about masculinity and femininity influenced the set design? Think particularly about shapes, materials and textures.
- There are a lot of references to sound in the script. How has the sound designer used live and/or recorded sound to create mood and atmosphere during key scenes?

# ANALYSING THE SHOW FOR LIVE PRODUCTION REVIEWS

26

## TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY

Depending on which aspect of the production you are going to write about, you'll need to make sure that you use appropriate and accurate technical terminology.

Taking the terms one at a time, work with a partner to say or write at least one sentence using that term, with a specific example of what you saw in the performance of *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Remember that not all of the terms may be relevant to this production: check with your teacher if you are unsure of the meaning of the terms. Exam board AQA provide an excellent glossary of theatrical terms, which can be found [here](#).

## SOUND

Amplifier, microphone, reverberation, echo, speaker, instruments, live and recorded sound, directorial sound, time, distortion, mixing, fade, soundscape, mood, period

## LIGHTING

Colour, filter, gel, gobo, projection, gauze, blackout, cross-fade, snap, intensity, angle, lantern, fresnel, profile, side light, strobe, birdies, rig

## ACTING

Pitch, pace, pause, projection, accent, diction, volume, body language, mannerism, gesture, facial expression,

## COSTUME

Colour, fit, fabric, texture, detail, accessories, shape, condition, mood, period, character

## SET

Entrances and exits, levels, scale, scene changes, cyclorama, floor, furnishing, projection, transitions, scene changes, drapes, flats

# ENGLISH LITERATURE PROMPTS FOR DISCUSSION

27

## BEFORE YOU SEE THE PRODUCTION

- Pay close attention to the stage directions that Williams includes throughout the text. How has Williams used light to suggest characters' fragility, the exposure or concealment of truth and the harshness of the existence led by some of the characters?
- As well as references to light in both the stage direction and dialogue, how do other senses (including references to sound, touch and taste) create the simmering, tense atmosphere of the play? Why has Williams chosen these particular details?
- Using the script to begin with, how does Williams suggest the passage of the time in the play? Once you have seen the production on stage, compare the way in which time was represented in this specific version, and Williams's original text. What do you notice?
- The way in which we read characters in a script can be very different to how we perceive them when watching a live performance. Which character(s) did you find most and least sympathetic when you watched the performance? Did your response surprise you?

## AFTER THE PRODUCTION

- Joanne Vanderham plays Blanche, and says, "She's incredibly complex, and I think, incredibly fragile. Blanche is made of glass. She has been forged in turmoil, and as the play progresses, she gets little dinks and nicks and cracks until,

essentially, she shatters and can't be put back together. That's who I'm trying to create, a fragile person that actually has so much strength."

## CREATE A TIMELINE OF WHERE THOSE 'NICKS AND CRACKS' HAPPEN. HOW HAS WILLIAMS CREATED THAT SENSE OF ONGOING DESTRUCTION?

- Director Josh Seymour says of *A Streetcar Named Desire* "I honestly believe it's one of the greatest plays ever written. Once you meet these characters, you will never, ever forget them". Why do you think *Streetcar* has become such an important play in American drama and literature?
- When staging a play that is over 70 years old, producers and directors must ask why it's important to direct this play, rather than any other. Joanne Vanderham explains, "It's about the struggle to connect with other human beings, and I feel like that's where we're at in daily life". To what extent do you agree with her statement?
- Josh Seymour describes the play as "an absolute fireball of emotion so audiences coming to see it can really expect to feel everything. It's incredibly funny. It's incredibly emotionally complicated." Which scenes do you think support these statements?

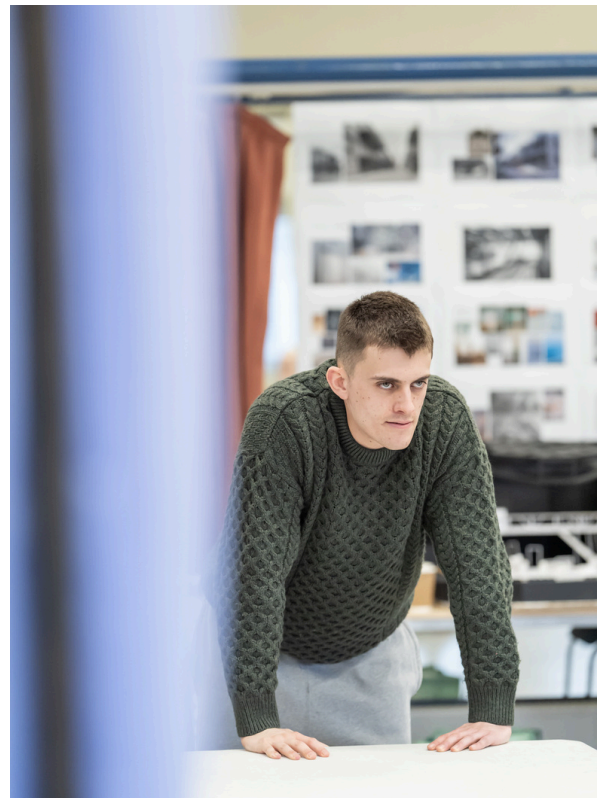
# RESEARCHING CONTEXT: TRUE OR FALSE?

28

Using your own copy of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and other research sources, identify each statement as either True (T) or False (F).

Answers are at the end of this section.

- Tennessee Williams's real Christian name is Thomas.
- Williams's most famous play is *Death of a Salesman*.
- Several of Williams's plays suggest themes of guilt and mental illness.
- The character of Stanley is inspired by a real man with whom Williams worked at a shoe factory in Missouri - the same factory that inspired some of the material in *The Glass Menagerie*.
- Williams won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize twice.
- There is an episode of *The Simpsons* in which Marge Simpson plays Blanche du Bois in a musical adaptation of the play.
- *A Streetcar Named Desire* takes place during World War II.
- Marlon Brando's performance of Stanley in the film of *A Streetcar Named Desire* made the line "STELL-AAAAAA" one of the play's most famous lines.
- Tennessee Williams was born in 1911 and died in 1983.



## **NOTE: PREPARING TO WORK WITH THE STREETCAR SCRIPT**

The play includes scenes of emotional and physical abuse. If you are working on extracts of the script, it is important that everyone feels safe and comfortable. Discuss with your teacher how you will ensure that you have a safe and inclusive rehearsal environment, including boundaries around touch and closeness, and the ability to ask to stop, have a break, or adjust blocking.

## **CHI-SAN HOWARD DESCRIBES HER ROLE AS INTIMACY DIRECTOR:**

“One of the biggest responsibilities of an intimacy director is to make sure that the whole company are happy and feel safe with the intimate content that they’re performing, particularly sexual content. Streetcar is so muscular and so impulse driven that the movement of the characters is so intrinsically tied with the physical contact that they make with each other.” Use Chi-San’s comments to guide your own discussions in the rehearsal room.

The page numbers in the activities below refer to the Methuen Student Edition of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. (ISBN - 978-1-350-10851-6)

## **SETTING THE SCENE: P.5-P.7:STELLA, EUNICE, STANLEY AND NEIGHBOURS/STREET VENDORS/SAILORS**

In this extract, the actors playing Stella, Eunice, Stanley and Neighbour must set the scene in preparation for Blanche’s arrival a few minutes later. The stage directions describe the area as “a cosmopolitan city where there is a relatively warm and easy intermingling of races in the old part of town”.

When staging this scene, consider the following:

The scene begins with noise and action on stage, and the audience needs to see the neighbourhood in action. However, you also need to ensure that when Stanley arrives on stage, the audience’s attention is immediately drawn to him.

How will you achieve this? Consider Stanley’s physicality and vocal skills, but also consider the use of the stage by other actors.

How can you block the scene to make sure the audience sees what you want them to see?

## BLANCHE'S ARRIVAL, P. 7

Looking only at the stage directions on page 7, work in pairs to create this scene. One person should play Blanche, and the other should direct the scene.

Before you begin working practically, consider all of the information that we learn about Blanche in the rest of the play. How does that knowledge inform the physical and facial expression that Blanche has? The stage directions tell us that “her delicate beauty must avoid strong light”. How can the actor playing Blanche put that into practice on stage?

Discuss the physical elements involved in Blanche’s journey to Stella’s apartment. It is hot, she has carried her luggage by herself, and she is dressed “daintily”, suggesting that her outfit is impractical for travelling with luggage in an unfamiliar place. She is probably wearing heels.

Once you have created Blanche’s first entrance on to the stage and communicated her thoughts and feelings (she is surprised to find her sister living in a place so different from Belle Reve), the person directing the scene can then read in/act out Eunice’s lines to help transition from expressing Blanche’s feelings visually and then through her use of voice as well. Finish the extract at the bottom of page 7.



## **BLANCHE'S DRINKING IN THE APARTMENT AS SHE WAITS FOR STELLA. P.10**

As you will know from reading the rest of the play, Blanche is dependent on alcohol. She drinks secretly, and always claims to other people that she barely drinks.

Working in pairs (an actor and a director) use the stage directions on page 10 to help create Blanche's first moments in the apartment as she finds a drink. Consider how you will communicate the following:

- Blanche is in an unfamiliar place. It takes her a while to relax a little (the stage directions tell us that "after a while the blind look goes out of her eyes").
- The unfamiliar sounds (such as cats screeching) make her jump: she is very sensitive to unfamiliar sounds.
- Seeing the whiskey bottle
- Taking a drink, but then immediately washing the glass and sitting back down. What does that tell us about i) her dependence on alcohol? ii) the importance of keeping up appearances? iii) her manners in someone else's home?
- How does her manner change when Stella arrives?

To extend the scene, the person who has directed can also play Stella, up to the end of page 10. We aren't given many stage directions for Stella at this point: what would you like to communicate to the audience about her reaction to Blanche's arrival?

## **BLANCHE AND STELLA'S RELATIONSHIP. P.10-18.**

Working on this longer extract, your objective is to communicate Stella's personality and emotions to the audience. Although Blanche speaks in much longer sections of dialogue, Stella's conflicting emotions need to be clear to the audience.

In order to prepare this scene, you may choose to hot-seat Stella and Blanche, and tease out all of the reasons for the tensions in their relationship. You could focus in particular on Stella's relationship with Stanley: how much of her response to Blanche is based on her fear of Stanley's reaction when he meets Blanche?

Another way of preparing this scene is to identify the changes within the scene. Change is the foundation of conflict in any drama and can appear in various forms: e.g. entrances and exits; change of subject; emotion; character objective; time of day etc. Identifying the changes also helps you deal with more manageable 'chunks' of text rather than trying to tackle the entire extract all at once.

## **BLANCHE AND STANLEY. P.19-21**

Stanley's masculinity is a sharp contrast to Blanche's fragility. Reading the stage directions on page 19, it is clear that Williams has created a character who is what we might refer to as an Alpha Male.

Whilst working pairs on this extract, apply some of the following 'rules' to the scene. Ask a third person to help direct, and to evaluate the way in which these rules might help communicate the tension between Stanley and Blanche.

- Blanche should try and stay as far away from Stanley at all times.
- Stanley should sit down at least twice in the extract. Each time Stanley sits down, Blanche should stand up.
- Stanley should try to maintain eye contact with Blanche all of the time. Blanche should try to avoid it all of the time.
- Blanche should look at Stanley whilst she talks to him, but look away when he speaks.
- Stanley pours himself a drink but does not pour one for Blanche. She looks at it longingly.
- Stanley pours them both a drink, and Blanche tries to pretend that she doesn't want to drink it very quickly.

Once you have evaluated the impact of those rules, use your findings to block and perform the scene.

## **STANLEY AND STELLA. P.78-80.**

In this extract, Stanley tells Stella about the truth of Blanche's existence in Laurel. Whilst they argue, Blanche can be heard singing 'Paper Moon' whilst she is in the bath. The song is about pretence, or appearance vs. reality, as well as the desire to be in love. Williams has created a juxtaposition between a popular, whimsical song, and the truth of Blanche's predicament.

Stanley clearly takes pleasure in telling Stella about the truth of Blanche's behaviour. However, the scene needs to create an emotional journey for the audience, and be nuanced in the use of vocal and physical skills.

A scene like this benefits from actioning. For each line, an actor uses transitive verbs to decide on the character's reason for speaking that line. Once everyone involved in the scene agrees with the objectives, the blocking and rehearsal of the scene becomes easier and clearer.



In this extract, Stanley tells Stella about the truth of Blanche's existence in Laurel. Whilst they argue, Blanche can be heard singing 'Paper Moon' whilst she is in the bath. The song is about pretence, or appearance vs. reality, as well as the desire to be in love. Williams has created a juxtaposition between a popular, whimsical song, and the truth of Blanche's predicament.

**For example:**

Stella: *What - contemptible-lies!*

Stanley: *Sure, I can see how you would be upset by this.*

*She pulled the wool over your eyes as much as Mitch's*

**To deny**

**To gloat**

**To undermine**

Objectives should be written in the form of a one-word verb, to make the objective as clear as possible.

During your rehearsal, you might need to adjust the objectives. The negotiation is part of the fun of the technique!



## BLANCHE, STELLA, STANLEY - THE BIRTHDAY PARTY. P.84-89

This scene requires a sensitivity to building tension. Blanche has been stood up by Mitch because Stanley has told him about Blanche's reputation in Laurel.

Working in a group of three or four, rehearse this scene in the following way:

1. Read the scene through, sitting down in a circle.
2. Before you begin blocking the scene, decide on the character's dominant emotion in the scene. Then, create a series of scales, one for each character's state of mind in the scene which will change throughout the scene. 1 is the lowest score, and 10 is the highest.

See the example below:

### Stanley's anger

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

### Stella's fear

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

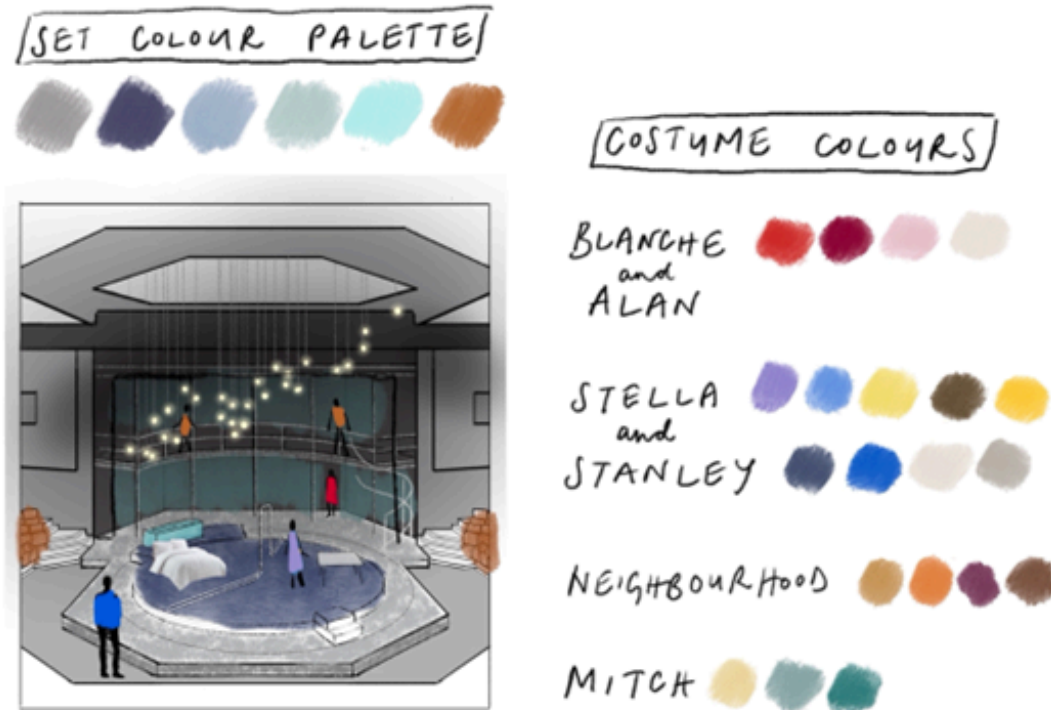
### Blanche's embarrassment

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

At key moments in the scene, plot each character's emotion on their scale. For example, Stanley smashing his plate might be 10 on his anger scale and Stella's fear is also 10, but Blanche's embarrassment is low at 2 because she is, instead, shocked at Stanley's violent outburst. When Stanley later tells Stella, "Stella, it's gonna be all right after she goes..." his anger might have diminished to 4 but Stella's fear might still be high at 9 because she doesn't want to provoke him anymore and she's scared for her safety, and that of her unborn child.

Use those moments to help you create the emotional intensity of the scene. Rehearse and then perform to your class, using their evaluative responses to help you refine your performance.

## DESIGN TASKS



A Streetcar Named Desire mood board  
© Frankie Bradshaw

1. Chi-San Howard describes *A Streetcar Named Desire* as “one of the most incredibly visceral, emotional, invigorating pieces of theater that is on stage today”. Design is incredibly important in helping to create this impact on audiences.
2. Frankie Bradshaw, the set designer for the production, created mood boards for the set and costume. She included the following as part of her research:
  - 1950s New Orleans
  - Rough vs. smooth
  - Softness
  - Lights
  - Bathroom
3. Create your own mood boards using these headings to inspire your own set design for *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Frankie’s designs include colour palettes for each character. The colours often match or complement other characters in the play. For example, Stanley and Stella’s colour palettes are highly co-ordinated. Blanche, as the outsider, has a very different colour palette to anyone else in the play.

## DESIGN TASKS

4. Using your mood boards from Task 1, and a colour wheel, create a series of colour palettes for the main characters in the play. Decide what pairings we have been given (which characters are couples, for example?) and which character(s) might need to stand alone in their costume colours, shapes and textures.
5. Tennessee Williams has written a play in which the audience need to see both external and internal locations. We also need to hear what is going on in one room, whilst watching action that is taking place in another (the bathroom, for example). Select either a thrust, end on or traverse staging configuration and design a set which allows the audience to see and hear the different action that often happens in different locations simultaneously.
6. Sound is hugely important in the play. Go through the script and note down all of the references to sound in the play. Create a playlist, using a platform such as Spotify, of sound cues to use in a production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Don't forget to consider sound effects as well as music.



1. Tennessee Williams's real Christian name is Thomas.  
**TRUE.** He later called himself Tennessee after the state where his father was born.
2. Williams's most famous play is Death of a Salesman.  
**FALSE.** Death of a Salesman is by fellow American playwright Arthur Miller. Other plays by Williams include The Glass Menagerie, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and The Night of the Iguana.
3. Several of Williams's plays suggest themes of guilt and mental illness.  
**TRUE.** As well as his own mental health struggles, which included alcohol and dependency on medications, Williams was haunted by guilt following his family's decision to have his sister Rose lobotomised. Although the modern-day diagnosis of her condition is unclear, Rose displayed significant challenging behaviours and needs. The understanding of the cause and treatment for psychological conditions was not as advanced as it is today, and Williams often felt that he should have done more to protect or advocate for his sister.
4. The character of Stanley is inspired by a real man with whom Williams worked at a shoe factory in Missouri - the same factory that inspired some of the material in The Glass Menagerie.  
**TRUE.** Williams worked in the same shoe factory as his father.
5. Williams won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize twice.  
**TRUE.** He won the award for A Streetcar Named Desire (1948) and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1955)
6. There is an episode of The Simpsons in which Marge Simpson plays Blanche du Bois in a musical adaptation of the play.  
**TRUE.** A Streetcar Named Marge was the second episode of series 4 of The Simpsons.
7. A Streetcar Named Desire takes place during World War II.  
**FALSE.** The play takes place in 1947 (the year it was written), following the return of the American military to the USA after the end of the war in 1945. Stella is proud of the photograph of Stanley in his military uniform which was taken during the war.

8. Marlon Brando's performance of Stanley in the film of *A Streetcar Named Desire* made the line "STELL-AAAAA" one of the play's most famous lines.

**TRUE.** The line is so famous that a yelling contest in which people scream the line, is held annually during the Tennessee Williams Festival that takes place each year. The line has also been lampooned in *The Simpsons*, which sees Ned Flanders deliver a version of the line in *A Streetcar Named Marge*.

9. Tennessee Williams was born in 1911 and died in 1983.

**TRUE.** Williams died from an overdose of the barbiturate drug, Seconal. (Reports that he had choked on a bottle top were revealed to be inaccurate.)



A Streetcar Named Desire features physical and sexual violence throughout the play.

You may wish to prepare your students to see the production in the following way:

- Explain the key relationships in which the relationships are violent and/or abusive (Steve and Eunice, Stanley and Stella, Stanley and Blanche)
- Agree a specific way of signalling the need for support or time out i) within an individual lesson ii) during the performance. Front of house staff at The Crucible can help you identify a safe meeting point or somewhere to take some time out[1] .
- Signpost sources of support, which can be found below. We've included particular resources for teachers and other adults who are working with young people to help them prepare any particular lessons or discussions around the topics of coercive control, physical and sexual violence, and emotional abuse.
- Work with your PSHE or wellbeing curriculum lead in your setting, to make links to prior learning, and sources of local support.
- Discuss any concerns you may have in your own setting with pastoral leads and your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Many of the pages listed below have a quick exit function which redirects the page to a neutral page such as Google or the BBC website. We've noted the pages that don't have that function: you may wish to ensure that you are in a safe place to access those pages.

It is important to remember that abuse can take many forms, in any relationship. Abuse can take place in any relationship, regarding age, gender, sexual identity or religion. It is vital that conversations about the topic are inclusive and age-appropriate.

[Reducing the Risk](#) provides helpful information for people experiencing abuse and anyone who is looking to support a victim. It is particularly helpful in providing information about the potential for abuse in a person's early years of being in an intimate relationship.

The [NHS](#) has a helpful page that signposts sources of information and support for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or supporting someone who is. Please note that this page does not have a quick exit function.

The [NSPCC Learning pages](#) have information about young people and abuse. The page is aimed at adults working in areas of safeguarding and child protection. This page does not have a quick exit function.

[Women's Aid](#) has a specific website called [LoveRespect](#) in which young people can explore key issues around healthy and respectful relationships

[Safe Lives](#) provides support for professionals working with young people, including a wide range of video, text and audio-based information. You can find some excellent resources to help you prepare for difficult conversations, or when preparing to tackle topics of abuse in PSHE or subject-specific lessons.



Ferguson, S. *A Streetcar Named Desire Learning Guide*. (London, National Theatre, 2021)  
[https://www.bloomsbury.com/media/vajmwkyp/nt\\_a-streetcar-named-desire-learning-guide\\_rs.pdf](https://www.bloomsbury.com/media/vajmwkyp/nt_a-streetcar-named-desire-learning-guide_rs.pdf)

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# WITH THANKS TO...

42

**Frankie Bradshaw**  
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**Otis Dowd**

Designer  
playing Mitch  
playing Pablo  
playing Eunice  
Education Project Manager  
Creative Engagement Manager  
Communications Assistant



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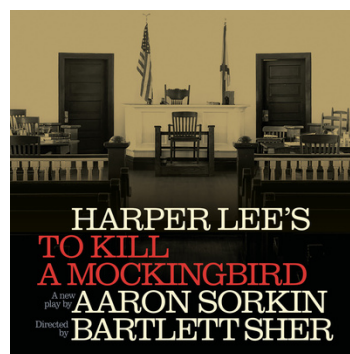
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27 Jan - 5 Feb 26



Tickets £15  
Mon 2 - Thu 5 Feb 26

## HOW TO BOOK

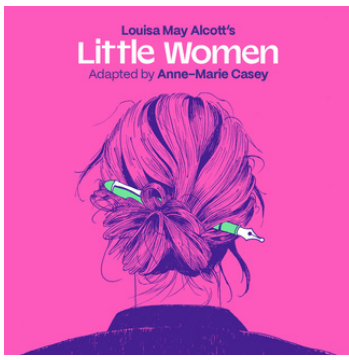
**To make your group booking for shows (and pre-order your ice creams), please call our friendly Box Office team on 0114 249 6000 and create a package that best suits you.**

You'll be given up to 2 months to pay once you've made your reservation. If you are booking closer to a performance, a payment date will be agreed when you reserve tickets.

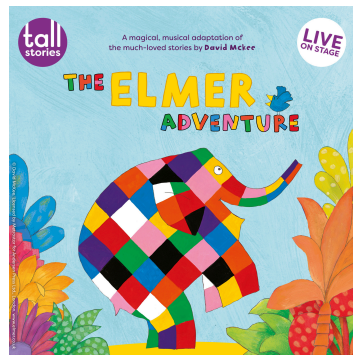
You can amend your booking free of charge any time before payment is made and no deposit is required!

**Ian Cauldwell**  
Sales and Groups Supervisor

**Box Office: 0114 249 6000**  
Email: [groupbookings@sheffieldtheatres.co.uk](mailto:groupbookings@sheffieldtheatres.co.uk)



Tickets £15  
Tue 6 - Thu 8 May 25



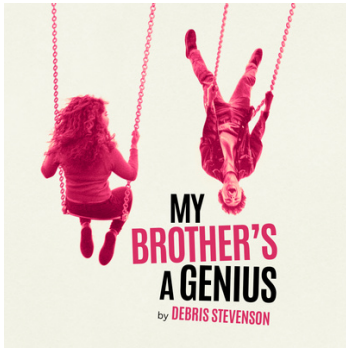
Tickets £13  
Tue 15 - Thu 17 Jul 25



Tickets £15  
Tue 14 - Thu 16 Oct 25



Tickets £15  
Tue 4 - Thu 6 Nov 25



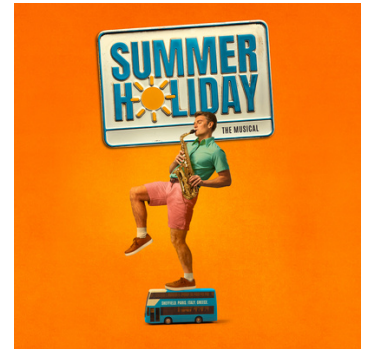
Tickets £15  
Wed - Thu Shows  
28 Jan - 12 Feb 26



Tickets £11  
Thu 19 - Sat 21 Feb 26



Tickets £15  
Mon - Thu Shows  
2 - 26 Mar 26



Tickets £15  
Mon - Thu Shows  
22 Jun - 16 Jul 26

## GET INVOLVED

### Your school on our stage!

**Unlocking (for Secondary Schools)** - free workshops on stage in the Crucible before selected matinee performances. Work alongside the creative team to demystify the theatre making process. To book your seats please contact the Box Office.

**Response Project (for Secondary Schools)** - over six weeks, develop a brand-new piece of theatre, supported by a professional director, to be performed on the set of a Crucible show.

**Behind the Magic (for Primary Schools)** - create your own version of the play in just one day! Available at Sheffield Theatres or your school.

### Key Dates

**Unlocking: Dancing at Lughnasa**  
Wed 24 Sep 2025, 10:30am – 12pm

**Behind the Magic: A Christmas Carol**  
Available Sep 2025 - Jan 2026

**Unlocking: Crown of Blood**  
Thu 5 Feb 2026, 10:30am - 12pm

**Response Project: Dancing at Lughnasa**  
Performance Date: Mon 29 Sep 2025

**Unlocking: A Christmas Carol**  
Wed 17 Dec 2025, 10:30am – 12pm

**Unlocking: The Ladies Football Club**  
Wed 11 Mar, 10.30am - 12pm

**Samuel Erskine**  
Education Project Manager

**Email: [learning@sheffieldtheatres.co.uk](mailto:learning@sheffieldtheatres.co.uk)**

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THEATRES**