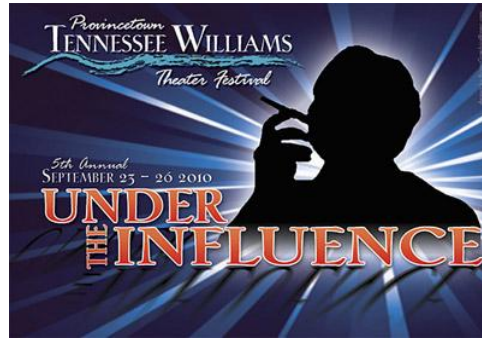


For Immediate Release
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Creative Fires Burn at UNDER THE INFLUENCE
The Fifth Annual Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival
Runs September 23-26, 2010 - with World Premiere and Productions from Across America
Special Discount Tickets On Sale Now

For me, personally, to hear the words of Tennessee Williams said aloud is to be in the presence of magic. Listening to his words we share his visions, traveling, as Orpheus did, on a path to the underworld and back. Under the influence of Williams and today's inspired artists, festival-goers will have a chance to travel their own paths to new visions.

-David Kaplan, TW Festival Co-founder & Curator

(Provincetown, MA, June 2010) – For **UNDER THE INFLUENCE** artists from Los Angeles to New York and Chicago to Florida will converge on Provincetown to celebrate the enduring influence of America's great playwright in performances of plays, dance, music, art, and special events throughout the seaside village that inspired the writer during his early years.

In this year's innovative program, performers will offer audiences a triple dose of inspiration in compelling performances that interweave:

- well-known and unknown plays by Tennessee Williams, including a World Premiere
- influences of music, films, theater, poetry and painting that ignited Williams' imagination
- new plays, dance, and visual art created by today's artists, sparked by the inspiration of Williams' life and work.

Highlights include:

From the inspired imagination of Tennessee Williams:

- **The World Premiere of "American Gothic"** – Taking off on icons of the 1930's, Williams imagines the famous couple in the Grant Wood painting as the stern **Mid-western parents of Bonnie and Clyde-style gangsters**. This never before seen play now joins the seven previous Festival premieres that have entered the repertory at other theaters across America and around the world. It will be produced by Boston's **Beau Jest Moving Theatre**, that brought us last year's acclaimed world premiere of **"The Remarkable Rooming House of Madame LeMonde."**
- **"Orpheus Descending"** – A boy-singer's descent into a hell of a variety store, staged as a morality play inside a Provincetown church. This play began as 'Battle of Angels,' an early Williams' play whose failed production affected him deeply. He continued to work on it for seventeen years because he said, "...nothing is more precious to anybody than the emotional record of his youth..." A 1957 production suffered from hostile critics who belittled its lyric speech as melodrama. This Festival production from **New York City's Infinite Theatre directed by Nick Potenzieri emphasizes the qualities that Williams intended to soar.**
- **"27 Wagons Full of Cotton"** – This Southern Gothic comedy recombines some themes from Orpheus Descending – **sexual liberation, innocence and corruption – with whip-cracking humor**. Set on a sweat drenched porch in the Mississippi Delta, and **staged on the porch of an historic sea captain's home**, the production, directed by Jeff Glickman, comes from **Big Finish Productions of Pensacola, Florida**. This famous one act was controversial for its erotic wit. The movie based on it, "Baby Doll" created a scandal.

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- **“Escape” – Two plays, two different Escapes:** One of them an event overheard in **“Orpheus Descending,”** when the sounds of a jailbreak interrupt a chain-gang’s nightly card game, directed by **Rick Corley** who staged the Russian premiere of Williams’ **“Small Craft Warnings”** in Moscow. In the other, a teenage boy swims to his death rather than return to the life his domineering mother has planned for him, directed by Festival favorite **Kate Mendeloff of Ann Arbor, Michigan.** Contemporary choreographer **Paula Frasz** has been inspired by these texts to create dances that her **DanzLoop Chicago Ensemble** will perform with the plays.
- **“Suddenly, Last Summer”** – This Williams one-act play is **in the form of a crime story told by a traumatized young girl.** A handsome doctor, tempted by a rich woman who might fund his research, must decide whom to side with: the witness or her hostile listeners. To create the offstage poet-hero of the story **Williams combined images of Orpheus in hell along with Hart Crane and his domineering mother.** A reading of the text will be staged by **Jodie Markell,** the director of the recently released film written by Williams: **“The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond.”**

Works that influenced Tennessee Williams:

- **“Diff’rent”** by **Eugene O’Neill** – Surprisingly, Tennessee Williams went to the theater in Provincetown only once. That was in the summer of 1940, when local actors performed, **“Diff’rent,”** O’Neill’s full-length play about a woman’s sexual repression and its consequences. **Exploring the connection between Williams and O’Neill, whose legacy as father of American theater can be traced to the heart of Provincetown, this production comes to us from the Provincetown Theater Company, directed by Festival Director Jef Hall-Flavin.** In keeping with the original Provincetown Players, it will take place overlooking Provincetown Harbor and will star **“Cape Cod’s answer to Meryl Streep,”** **McNeely Myers.**
- **Laughing In the Dark with Tennessee** -- In Tennessee Williams’ life and art, film going was a seminal experience. Williams savored an evolving range of **popular entertainment from the Mary Pickford silent films to the Paul Morrissey/Warhol films – all of which influenced his evolving aesthetic.** A selection of film clips will be screened, with host **John DiLeo,** author of the new book ***Tennessee Williams & Company, his essential screen actors.***

Works inspired by the life and art of Tennessee Williams:

- **“Bent to the Flame”** – The work of poet **Hart Crane** exerted a strong influence on Williams throughout his life. **Doug Tompos** brings his acclaimed one-person show from Los Angeles, in which he presents a young Tennessee Williams besotted by the poet Hart Crane. This riveting solo play explores the volatile nature of creativity and the intensely personal relationship between these two great American artists.
- **“The Jazz Funeral of Stella Brooks”** – Songstress **Stella Brooks,** **“The white Billie Holiday,”** was the hit of the 1947 Provincetown summer season, and a personal friend of Williams. This play imagines a **New Orleans-style funeral in her honor beginning in a storefront church with live music, testifying mourners, and an umbrella-wielding second-line dancing down Commercial Street.** **Written by Chicago’s Terry Abrahamson, directed by Priscilla Simple, produced by CTEK Arts,** this piece continues the Festival’s unrivaled string of innovative and unique theatrical presentations.
- **Orpheus in the Galleries** – This special visual arts event offers a path through three Provincetown Galleries to see **the work of six artists related to the myth of the poet Orpheus who journeyed to the underworld.** Paintings, sculpture, video and other media by artists **Varujun Baghosian, Sky Power, Jay Critchley, Jim Peters, Kathline Carr, and John Choly** will be installed at The Berta Walker Gallery, DNA and Artstrand.

The **Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival** takes place Thursday, September 23 through Sunday, September 26, 2010 at various venues in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Festival passes, including access to all shows, are available now online at www.twptown.org or through 1-866-789-TENN (8366). Audience members can also become patrons by purchasing a **Williams Pass,** which includes tickets to all performances as well as access to exclusive parties and events, and more. Single tickets will go on sale in August. For full details on Festival performances and events, visit www.twptown.org.