

Arts Review: A Streetcar Named Desire

October 13, 2016 - Theatre



A timeless classic that thrusts us into a sensual world of desperation, violence and desire, La Boite Theatre Company presents Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Roundhouse Theatre from 15 October 2016.

Fading southern belle Blanche DuBois arrives unexpectedly on the doorstep of her sister, Stella, searching for solace from a life undermined by romantic delusions and the vicissitudes of life. But the sultry New Orleans summer proves too much for the former beauty whose brutish brother-in-law, Stanley, cruelly exposes Blanche's genteel façade and brings her last gasp at meaning to a tragic end.

A Pulitzer winning masterpiece, *A Streetcar Named Desire* is one of the stages' most iconic pieces, and an absolute staple in modern theatre. The complexities of relationships are presented in such a manner that the play resonates as strongly today as it did in 1947.

Directed by Artistic Director Todd MacDonald, and starring Bridie Carter as Blanche DuBois and Travis McMahon as Stanley Kowalski, this production will be staged in-the-round, promising a truly unique take on this bitter-sweet classic.

"Streetcar is a monster of a work. It's bold and vibrant- nuanced and savage... Tennessee Williams takes no prisoners and constantly challenges who you are feeling for and how," says MacDonald.

This new La Boite production sees the hothouse tragi-drama bursting with a distinctive New Orleans cultural blend and will feature some of Brisbane's finest performers and musicians. The multi-faceted cast is comprised of local actors and musicians, including Ngoc Phan as Stella, Colin Smith as Mitch, and Alex Forero as Steve. Composer and sound designer Guy Webster (*Dracula*, *The Tragedy of King Richard III*) appears onstage, leading the band with Kristal West and Parris Rose.

"Music and atmosphere is so essential in Streetcar and I am so excited to be working with some of Brisbane's finest musicians to create this world – it will be eclectic, emotive and totally of today," said MacDonald. "We have also purposefully brought together a cast that reflect the diversity and complexity of the world we live in... from South America to Asia and first nations people of Australia"

Tennessee Williams was a master playwright of the twentieth century, and his plays *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* are considered among the finest of the American stage. At their best, his twenty-five full-length plays combined lyrical intensity, haunting loneliness, and hypnotic violence. Williams is widely considered the greatest Southern playwright and one of the greatest playwrights in the history of American drama.

Image: Ngoc Phan, Bridie Carter and Travis McMahon feature in *A Streetcar Named Desire* – photo by Dylan Evans