

20th CENTURY
Classics



COMPANY THEATRE
Presents...

CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF
BY TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
Love, Greed, Loneliness and the Lies We Tell

DIRECTED BY SIAN DAVIS



15-29 MAY 2021





WELCOME

from *Stephen Hood*

PRESIDENT OF COMPANY THEATRE

After managing – on our third attempt – to get one of our scheduled plays on stage in 2020 (Gary Henderson's *Peninsula*), Company Theatre welcomes you to the start of its 2021 season! Originally scheduled for August 2020, we're very proud to present to you Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* – a slice of dysfunctional, repressed family and personal life from the mid-Twentieth Century Mississippi Delta: Crafted by director Sian Davis. Later this year, Kathy Gent will be directing Company Theatre's

August production – *Neville's Island* by Tim Firth – and Suzy Sampson is directing Yasmina Reza's *God of Carnage* in November: It would be great to see you there!



Steve Wright as Rev. Tooker shot by Kathryn Nobbs



Diana & Ian

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We'd love to hear from you.....



Harcourts Cooper & Co

THE CAST

Maggie	<i>Amalia Schroeder</i>
Brick	<i>Aleksandr Staprans</i>
Big Daddy	<i>Paul Norell</i>
Big Mamma	<i>Lynn Webster</i>
Mae	<i>Tessa Ellis</i>
Reverend Tooker	<i>Steve Wright</i>
Dr. Baugh	<i>Max Golding</i>
Gooper	<i>Steve Buys</i>
Trixie	<i>Jemima Park</i>
Dixie	<i>Madeleine Park</i>
Buster	<i>Arlo Brodie</i>
Sonny	<i>Arlo Collins</i>

Please Note...

THERE WILL BE TWO INTERVALS

Act 1

40 minutes length

15 Minute Interval

Act 2

55 minutes length

15 Minute Interval

Act 3

30 minutes length



Vintage radiogram on loan for production from Devonport Historical Museum

THOUGHTS ON THE PLAY

from Sian Davis

DIRECTOR OF CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

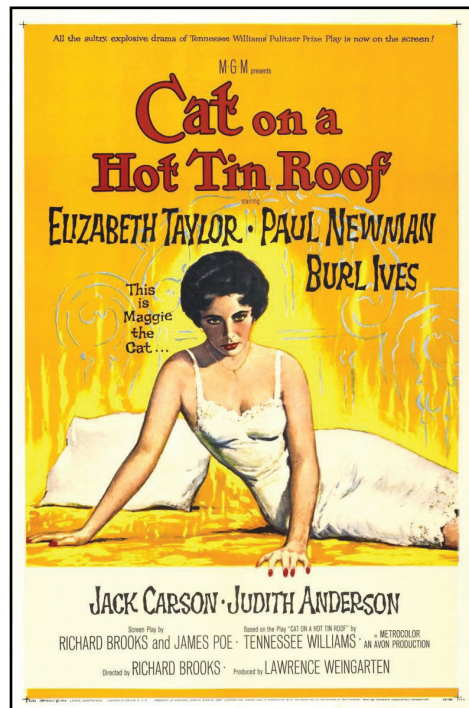


The Script: When Tennessee Williams first submitted the play, Elia Kazan (the play/film director) prevailed upon him to make significant changes (more especially to Act 3) for its first Broadway production. The ending was made “more gentle”. That gentle version is the one the world is most familiar with, and made famous by Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman in the lead roles. For his own good dramatic reasons, Tennessee Williams later expressed a preference for the original and, having first read three variant versions, and with respect for, and in agreement with, Williams’ thinking, I’ve settled for the original script.

The Structure: It is a 3 Act drama conceived in the classical Greek/Roman mode of tragedy. Ruled by the unities of time, place, and action, the time of acting is the elapsed time in the world of the play. All the events take place in the bed/sitting-room occupied by Brick and Maggie, whilst sounds and references conjure the world immediately adjacent. Although the play is tragic in its outlook it is assuredly lightened by its comedic elements.

The Setting: It is the mansion on the Pollitt cotton plantation in the Deep South’s Mississippi Basin; the early 1950s. It is Big Daddy’s 65th birthday! Brick is an alcoholic ex-football player who drinks his days away and resists the affections of his wife. The play examines the relationships among members of Big Daddy’s family, primarily between his son Brick and Maggie the “Cat”, Brick’s wife.

My Cast: It was a huge pleasure to work with, they have so very well fulfilled my expectations. Thank you, troops! And, of course, many thanks to the selfless myriad of workers in the wings and beyond.



The Different Versions of the Play

With the changes that Elia Kazan, (director of the first Broadway production, in 1955), recommended, the original ending was compromised. The 1950s were a time in history when society did not want to acknowledge or talk about homosexuality.

The production tonight, uses Tennessee Williams original ending. It implies, as Williams believed, that Brick would never be able to compromise who he was, to meet Maggie's expectations.

MARGARET: ... I told a lie to Big Daddy, but we can make that lie come true. And then I'll bring you liquor, and we'll get drunk together, here, tonight, in this place that death has come into! What do you say? What do you say, Baby?

BRICK: I admire you, Maggie.

MARGARET: Oh, you weak, beautiful people who give up with such grace. What you need is someone to take hold of you -- gently, with love, and hand your life back to you, like something gold you let go of -- and I can! I'm determined to do it -- and nothing's more determined than a cat on a tin roof -- is there? Is there, Baby?

[She touches his cheek, gently.] **[CURTAIN.]**

And below, Tennessee Williams' Original, and the one in this production.

MARGARET: And so tonight we're going to make the lie true, and when that's done, I'll bring the liquor back here and we'll get drunk together, here, tonight, in this place that death has come into. . . -- What do you say?

BRICK: I don't say anything. I guess there's nothing to say.

MARGARET: Oh, you weak people, you weak, beautiful people! -- who give up. -- What you want is someone to take hold of you. Gently, gently, with love! And --I do love you, Brick, I do!

BRICK : Wouldn't it be funny if that was true?



All Programme photo credits: Kathryn Nobbs

MEET THE CAST



AMALIA SCHROEDER

Maggie

This is Amalia's first community theatre production, having performed since school only with the University of Auckland's Stray Theatre Company in annual short plays, the devised cabaret-style show *Speakeasy* (2017), and Agatha Christie's *Witness for the Prosecution* (2018). It has been exciting for Amalia to work in the wonderful Rose Centre with such a varied cast outside of her usual student demographic. Amalia loves beautifully written, highly dramatic roles, particularly when they come with a glamorous look and an accent,

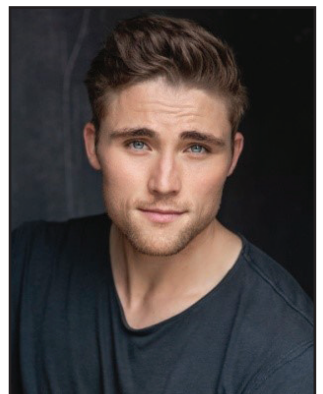
and so she was thrilled to take on the iconic Maggie.



ALEKSANDR STAPRANS

Brick

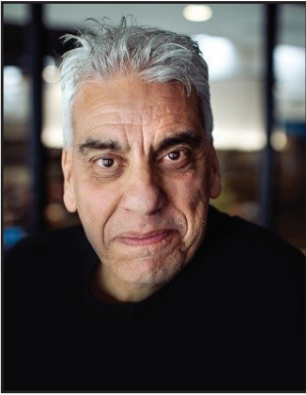
Aleksandr Staprans is making his New Zealand stage debut. After having taken part in several productions at the Sacred Heart Theater in California including *Death Takes a Holiday* (2011), *Shakespeare in Hollywood* (2011), *The Martian Chronicles* (2010), and *Jungle Book* (2010), and having trained at the American Conservatory Theater (2011), Aleksandr pivoted to focus on sport, notably rowing, during University. After graduating he spent a year traveling South America, South East Asia, and Europe. He is now excited to be back on stage in the role of Brick in this production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.



PAUL NORELL

Big Daddy

Paul Norell has worked professionally in Theatre, Film and TV for forty years. He first appeared at The Rose Centre in ***Murdered to Death*** (Company Theatre, 2010). Since then he has trod the boards at Dolphin Theatre (***The Mousetrap, That Woman!, An Inspector Calls, Goodnight Mr Tom***). Ellerslie Theatre (***History Boys, The Lion in Winter***) and Titirangi Theatre (***Sweeney Todd, Heroes***). He considers the current role one of his biggest challenges and would like to say a special thank you to Jacque Drew for her assistance in coming to grips with the dialect.



LYNN WEBSTER

Big Mamma

Lynn will be familiar to Company audiences from her portrayals of Kate in ***All My Sons*** by Arthur Miller (2016) and Trish in ***Last Legs*** by Roger Hall (2018). Originally from the US, Lynn moved to NZ in 1997 after a professional career in Chicago, Toronto, London and New York and quickly established herself in several of Auckland's community theatres: highlights include Dolly in ***Hello, Dolly!*** at Centrestage Orewa, Nurse Ratchett in ***One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*** at Ellerslie Theatrical Society, and ***The Importance of Being Earnest*** and ***84 Charing Cross Road*** at Pilgrim Productions. Big Mamma has been a challenge to portray and her thanks go to Sian Davis and Company



TESSA ELLIS

Mae

Since finishing drama school in London, Tessa has performed in several plays and musicals around the globe. These include the likes of Helene in ***Sweet Charity*** (Questors Theatre, London 2017), Ethel Peas in ***Thoroughly Modern Millie*** (Phoenix Players, London 2016) and Bunty Mainwaring in Noel Cowards ***The Vortex*** (Malvern Theatre, Melbourne 2015). This is Tessa's first show with Company and she is excited to take on the role of the conniving, money hungry and catty woman that is Mae.



STEVE WRIGHT

Reverend Tooker

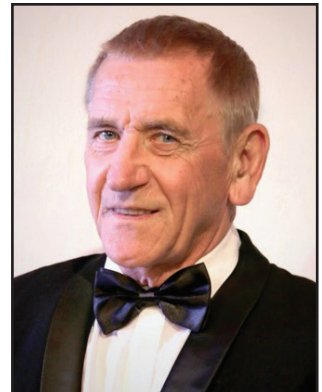
Steve has enjoyed playing a variety of roles over the last 25 years. He lists a spell in Oxford, England as the source of a few memorable roles including Stephano in *The Tempest*. Steve has been in three other plays directed by Sian Davis, those being Ray in *A Short Cut To Happiness* (Company Theatre 2014), Angus in *Last Legs* (Company Theatre 2018) and a play called *The Monkeys Paw* (Company Theatre 2003). Steve's favourite roles include Arnold in *The Boys Next Door* (Pilgrim Productions); George in *Humble Boy* (Torbay Theatre 2015) and Nevis in *Improbable Fiction* (Company Theatre 2011). He has also directed several

plays, with his most recent production *Quartet* by Ronald Harwood for Torbay Theatre (2020).

MAX GOLDING

Dr. Baugh

Veteran of a fair few plays at many venues, Max first performed with Company Theatre in *Habeus Corpus* (1992). He has performed in several of Sian's previous productions, including as Alan in Company Theatre's production of *Who Wants to be 100* and as Garry in *Last Legs*, both by Roger Hall. Max has also appeared as Reg in *Spreading Out*, as Adrian in *Four Flat Whites in Italy* as well as directing the 2016 production of *When Dad Married Fury* for Company Theatre.



STEVE BUYS

Gooper

This is Steve's first foray back into the world of the theatre in more than a decade, and his first production in New Zealand. Having mostly been involved with short skits, or university theatre (more moons ago than he cares to remember), this South African is really excited to be a part of a full length production. He is really looking forward to exploring the intricacies of his character, and to be a part of such an iconic play.





All Programme photo credits: Kathryn Nobbs

JEMIMA PARK

Trixie

10 year old Jemima has loved every minute of being involved in this production. Her last theatre experience was as Marta von Trapp in ***The Sound of Music*** (Harlequin Theatre 2019). She is also amidst rehearsals for ***Beauty and the Beast***, with NYT. Jemima thrives on the performing arts, and studies drama, screen acting, singing and dance. Highlights from last year were being involved in several short films and performing as a soloist in the ***Kids for Kids*** concert. Jemima is inspired working with a cast of such talented people.



MADELEINE PARK

Dixie

Madeleine is 12 years old and has loved being part of the Company Theatre family. This is her second live theatre experience, the first being ***The Sound of Music*** (Harlequin Theatre 2019). She is also currently performing in NYT's ***Beauty and the Beast***. Screen acting is another passion of Madeleine's and she has been fortunate to be cast in both short films and TVC's. She attends screen acting, drama and dance classes, and thoroughly enjoys participating in performing arts competitions.



ARLO BRODIE

BUSTER

Arlo Brodie is in year 4 at Belmont Primary School. He loves World War 2, building models of tanks and war planes, playing sport and reading.

Arlo is a budding actor who enjoys being part of Devonport Drama and has won his school speech cup 2 years running. Being part of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* has been Arlo's first time as part of a stage show and an experience he has really loved.



ARLO COLLINS

Sonny

Arlo is 8 years old and is excited to be taking part in his first stage production as Sonny. Arlo likes reading and learning about history (especially American Presidents!) and playing with his friends. This is his first theatre production, but he has always liked public speaking and taking part in the speech competitions at Belmont Primary School. He has enjoyed being part of the cast and taking part in all the rehearsals (especially the excellent afternoon tea!).



CREW FOR CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

Director	Sian Davis
Set Design	Sian Davis, Janet Williamson
Production Managers	Stephen Hood, Sherry Ede
Stage Manager	Sherry Berg
PA to Director	Stephen Hood, Sherry Berg
Lighting & Sound Design	Scott Thomas
Lighting & Sound Operator	Stephen Hood
Set Construction Manager	Tony Sandy
Set Crew	Tony Sandy, Stephen Hood, Scott Thomas, Sherry Berg, Sian Davis, Ron Reichs, Brett Marshall, Maureen Kenny, Caroline Parker, Alastair Fletcher, Kathy Gent, Robbie Ellis
<i>(A team effort including Set Construction, Props, Painting and Set Dressing)</i>	
Costume Design & Manager	Cathie Sandy
Wardrobe Assistants	Joanna Steele, Gail Carran
Props	Kathy Gent
Front of House Manager	Lesley Hawkey
Box Office	Kathy Gent, Sarah Dettwiler
Graphic Design	Hayley Atkins
Publicity/Group Bookings	Sherry Ede, Kathy Gent
Facebook/Newsletter	Stephen Hood
Instagram	Victoria Silvey
Billboards	Stephen Hood, Alastair Fletcher, Tim Ede
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher
Photography	Kathryn Nobbs
Backstage Manager for Children	Victoria Park

THANKS TO

A special thank you to the volunteers who look after front of house. Thank you to our major sponsors **Harcourts Devonport** and **Rowley Funerals**. Thank you to **The Rose Centre**, **Devonport Dry Cleaning**, **Devonport Historical Museum** and a big thank you to **Brett Marshall** and **The Claystore, Devonport**



*There will be **TWO INTERVALS** of 15 minutes. Refreshments, Ice Creams, Chocolates and a variety of drinks will be available*



CREW SPOTLIGHT

SCOTT THOMAS

Lighting and Sound Designer

Scott's first Company Theatre production was working as lighting crew for the show *Babes in the Wood* (1990) directed by Alastair Bibby at St Michael's Hall in Bayswater. This was followed up with *Music Hall* (1991). All the following productions he was involved with were at the Rose Centre starting with designing the lighting for *Money and Friends* (1998) then lighting *Take a Chance on Me* (2004).



Since then, he has been involved with one, two or three productions per year either doing lighting, sound, projection, set building or most often a combination of these. As Scott required drawings for his lighting, he also adapted these drawings for the set construction.

In 2020 for the 40th Anniversary he compiled a book containing most of the programmes, some newspaper cuttings and photos covering the years before Company moved into the Rose Centre. There were no records of these productions in the Company Theatre archive



TONY & CATHIE SANDY

Set Construction & Costume Design Managers

A huge thanks from Company Theatre for this dynamic husband and wife team. Tony joined Company in 1985 for *Music Hall* at St Michael's Hall, Bayswater, before our move to The Rose Centre. Cathie joined Company in 1983, and her first



involvement with Costumes was for *Charlie's Aunt* (1986). Since this time, she has been our Wardrobe Mistress, Costume Designer and Visual Creator! She has spent hours sewing, ably assisted, so many times by the incredible Gail Carran, another very valued, long time member. Cathie has an eye for colour and has helped with set dressing. Both Cathie and Tony enjoy singing and have been in many musical productions together.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Playwright of “Cat On a Hot Tin Roof”

Thomas Lanier Williams III (March 26, 1911 – February 25, 1983), known by his pen name Tennessee Williams, was an American playwright. Along with contemporaries Eugene O’Neill and Arthur Miller, he is considered among the three foremost playwrights of 20th-century American drama.

At age 33, after years of obscurity, Williams suddenly became famous with the success of *The Glass Menagerie* (1944) in New York City. This play closely reflected his own unhappy family background. It was the first of a string of successes, including *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955), *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959), and *The Night of the Iguana* (1961).

With his later work, Williams attempted a new style that did not appeal as widely to audiences. His drama *A Streetcar Named Desire* is often numbered on short lists of the finest American plays of the 20th century alongside Eugene O’Neill’s *Long Day’s Journey into Night* and Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*.

Much of Williams’ most acclaimed work has been adapted for the cinema. He also wrote short stories, poetry, essays and a volume of memoirs. In 1979, four years before his death, Williams was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame.



COMMUNITY CLAYSTORE WORKSHOP

Located at 127 Lake Road, The Claystore is a community workshop run on a voluntary basis by retired tradies who assist the Devonport community with guidance in everything from furniture making to car maintenance.

The workshop is well equipped for both wood and metal workings and is available to anyone who is interested from Monday-Saturday mornings, with only a small koha to cover costs asked in return. Contact (09) 445 8786 for more info!



Pictured: Brett Marshall of The Claystore creates a bedhead for the set of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof



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NEXT WITH COMPANY THEATRE

See companytheatre.co.nz for details



Company Theatre celebrated 40 years in 2020!



Neville's Island

A Comedy in Thick Fog



Neville's Island, by Tim Firth, is a play about four out-of-condition businessmen sent on a team-building exercise in England's Lake District - which becomes a muddy, bloody fight for survival when they become the first people ever to get shipwrecked on one of its inland islands. On at the Rose Centre from 14th to 28th August and directed by Kathy Gent, come along to see this perfunctory middle-class exercise turn into a hilarious carnival of recrimination, French cricket and sausages!

GOD of CARNAGE

A comedy of manners... without the manners.

Company Theatre's third show of 2021 - directed by Suzy Sampson - will be God of Carnage by Yasmina Reza: In which parents' attempts at a civilised discussion following a playground injury become increasingly childish and eventually devolve into chaos. This will be on stage from 13th to 27th November!