Programme Notes for Streetcar Named Desire

The play is set in New Orleans, a hot steamy area of the United States with old French families who owned land and property and new working class immigrants who had little or nothing. The era is the late 1940s after the second world war.

**The Set**

The set is an open plan living area bounded by stairs and a balcony. The stairs lead up from the left with a landing and a bend to the right, half way up; while the balcony extends from the top of the stairs to the right hand side of the stage. This top right area leads to Steve and Eunice’s apartment. The stairs and balcony are both enclosed by wooden railings. On the far right of the stage the set is enclosed by a rattan-type slatted screen, through the loose struts of which some activity is visible.

Within the enclosed space two steps without railings lead up to the Kowalski’s apartment. Outside of these steps is the street and outdoor area. Inside there’s a living area with a table, with two beer bottles a plate and a glass on it and wooden crates for stools, on top of a faded rug. Behind this, to the left, in the nook formed by the bend in the stairs, there’s a couch with cushions. Further to the right, one step leads up to the bedroom area, with a brighter rug on the floor and a bedside table with a radio on top of it and a drawer alongside a stool, the lid of which lifts. Behind all this and up one further step is the bed itself, a cast iron bedhead and foot with blankets and sheets in disorder on it. At the back of the living area is a black wall with three or four pillars. This can be a closed space or other times people come through the space, arriving from a back entrance. Behind the slatted screen is the bathroom from which steam rises from time to time.

**The Cast**

Blanche Dubois is played by Aoibhean McCann. She is a tall, slender, attractive woman with a squarish face, mid length dark curly hair pinned back; dark brows and bright blue eyes, carefully emphasised by mascara. She has a cupid’s bow of a mouth, outlined with red lipstick. She is a well preserved forty plus woman. Blanche wears a variety of stunning 40s era outfits, accurately reflecting what moneyed people would have worn in the period. She first appears in a bright green satin suit with tight fitting jacket and figure hugging green skirt with a slit up it left side,which extends to her mid calf. Under it she wears a white blouse with a high neck. Her legs are adorned with sheer black stockings and she wears high heeled court shoes. Later she wears a sensual, full, long red satin robe which ties round the waist with a sash, and underneath it a satin slip with narrow straps. She also appears in a grey dress, tight-waisted with an full skirt and mid-length sleeves. It has a darker grey trim above the hem and edge of the sleeves and waist. Another outfit is a white pleated skirt worn with a fitted grey jacket, emphasising her narrow waist. She sets this off with bright red gloves. For her party she appears in another full grey dress with a low neck and elbow length sleeves. Grey seems to be her colour as she also wears a long, grey, translucent robe with huge wide sleeves. The hem and sleeves are trimmed in a darker grey. Her ‘mardigras carnival’ outfit is also grey. It’s a ball gown, long, and floaty and off one shoulder, She accessorises it with a tiara she wears in her hair. Finally she departs the scene in a smart but sensible tight navy skirt with matching jacket and a white patterned blouse.

Stella Kowalski is played by Megan Tyler. She is slender and youthful with an oval face. large brown eyes under fair brows and a wide full mouth. She has long, blonde, wavy hair and gives a strongly youthful impressions being probably in her late twenties or early thirties. and in contrast to her sister dresses in a selection of light, very informal, outfits. She first wears a pastel coloured light cotton dress with a contrasting bodice trimmed with the fabric of the skirt, it’s sleeveless with a very low back and ties at the waist with a sash. She is barefooted. Later, when obviously very pregnant, she wears another light cotton dress with a white jacket over it.

The part of Stanley Kowalski is played by Mark Huberman. He is a tall, well built man with a toned, muscular body which he is not shy of revealing. He has short dark hair, a broad forehead, narrow eyes under lowering brows, a large full mouth and a pointed chin. He frequently looks unshaven with a dark five o’clock shadow and is probably in his early thirties. He wears a variety of casual working men’s clothes, starting with a maroon summer shirt with a white stripe on the right hand side, with lack jeans rolled up at the bottom. Later he wears a grey checked shirt and later still a T shirt. On another occasion he’s dressed in grey trousers, and a vest with braces over. Then he displays himself in a pair of bright red pyjama bottoms and a naked torso.

Mitch, one of Stanley’s poker mates, is tall with a slender body and short, mid-brown curly hair. He has blue eyes and an oval face with a narrow mouth. Like Stanley, he is probably also in his early thirties. He first appears in a short sleeved light blue shirt over black trousers. He wears a variety of light shirts and T shirts and when he takes Blanche out on a date he scrubs up well in a dark brown jacket, with a brown shirt and tie and wide loose trousers. This part is played by Seamus O’Hara.

Eunice Hubbel is played by Abigail McGibbon. She is a slightly plump figure. Her hair is mid length and dirty-fair. She has an oval, slightly pudgy face, with large eyes and a neat mouth. She is in her late forties. She wears loose brown culottes with braces, over a rust coloured blouse and her black shoes have a mid height thick heel.

Sean Cairns plays Steve Hubbel. He is tall and powerful with a paunch, a balding head and narrow eyes, with protruding ears a square face and thin lips. He first wears black trousers with a summery shirt with short sleeves and black and red stripes. Later he wears a T shirt and later still we see him in his vest. He is in his mid fifties.

The young man, a paper delivery boy, is played by Christopher Grant. He is a slender, slight figure with short black hair, an oval face, bright blue eyes under finely arched brows and a full mouth. He is about eighteen or nineteen. He wears a bright green summer shirt with loose black trousers (bags) and carries a paper boy’s satchel.

The doctor is played by Richard Croxford. He has a square face with a broad brow, narrow eyes and a small mouth. Of average height, he appears to be in his fifties and is dressed in a very formal dark lounge suit.

The nurse, acted by Julie Maxwell, is a formidable figure, tall and strong looking with large dark eyes and dark hair, worn up under her hat. She wears a dark uniform suit in navy blue with a small navy hat perched on her head. It looks very stiff and unyielding.

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