

### **Abstract**

Tennessee Williams , the leading American playwright whose name is associated with Expressionism , and who comes with the so- called , plastic theatre, is mainly famous with his play, The Glass Menagerie, the play is mainly read analyzed as an expressionistic. Piece in which the playwright employs different expressionistic techniques and devices to convey his themes.

The present paper aims at analyzing expressionistic devices employed by Tennessee Williams in The Glass Menagerie it is divided into two chapters and a conclusion.

The first chapter introduction , is subdivided into two sections , the first section provides an introduction to expressionism aplastic theatre while the second one is a short biography of Tennessee Williams . Chapter Two is acritical analysis of the play in question subdivided into two section , the first Section provides a plot summary of The Glass Menagerie While the second Sheds light an expressionistic devices employed by Williams in the play in question .

The paper ends with a conclusion which sums up the whole findings

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# Chapter One

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## 1.1 Introduction

### Expressionism : An Introduction

Expressionism, as a literary movement, is given different definitions. It is defined by **(BOARD Notes, 66 – 67)** as a literary manner that attempts to communicate the qualities in an object or scene, rather than its physical appearance. Expressionist writers portray a highly personal vision, modifying or distorting an object or idea according to their own intellectual perceptions. Quantities, which are obvious to the writer, but not necessarily to others, are emphasized. Some of the works of T. S. Eliot and James Joyce exemplify expressionism. On the other hand, **(Abrams, 177-118)** defined Expressionism as a German movement in literature and other arts (especially the visual arts) which was at its height between 1910 and 1925. That is, in the period just before, during and after World War I. Its chief precursors were artists and writers who had in various ways departed from realistic depictions of life and the world by incorporating in their art visionary or powerfully emotional states of mind that are expressed and transmitted by means of distorted representations of the outer world. Among these precursors in painting were Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and the Norwegian Edvard Munch. Munch's lithograph *The Scream* (1894) depicts – a bleak and stylized background, a tense figure with a contorted face uttering a scream of pure horror, is often taken to epitomize what became the expressionist mode. Prominent among the literary precursors of the movement in the nineteenth century were the French poets Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud, the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky, the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, and above all the Swedish dramatist August Strindberg. In addition **(Thompson, n.d)** is defined as a modernist movement, initially in poetry and painting, originating in Germany at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its typical trait is to present the world solely from a subjective perspective, distorting it radically for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or ideas. Expressionist artists have sought to express the meaning of emotional experience rather than physical reality.

Expressionism developed as an avant-garde style before the first world war. It remained popular during the Weimar Republic, particularly in Berlin. The style extended to a wide range of arts, including expressionist architecture, painting, literature, theatre, dance and music.

And **(Marilyn Stokes Tad, n.d)** defined Expressionism as a reaction against the

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academic Standards that had prevailed in Europe since the renaissance , Particularly in France and German an- academics, Expression ism movement developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Expressionism was a tendency that strove to express subjective feelings and emotions rather than to depict the surface reality or nature objectively . Al though it is used as term to reference . there has never been a distinct movement that Called itself expressionism apart From the use of the term by Herwald walden in his polemic magazine “Der sturm” in 1912. The term is usually linked to Paintings and graphic work in Germany at the turn of the Century which challenged the academic traditions , Particularly through Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter . philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche played a key role in originating modern expressionism by Clarifying and serving as a conduit for Previously neglected currents in ancient art.

In the Birth of Tragedy Niet Zsche Presented his theory of the ancient dualism between two types of aesthetic experience , namely the “Apollonian” and the “Dionysian” a dualism between the Apollonian world of the mind , of order , of regularity and Polishedness and the Dionysian world of intoxication , chaos , ecstasy. The . Apollonian represented the rationally conceived ideal, whereas the Dionysian represented artistic Conception Proper , originating from man’s subconscious . the analogy with the world of the Greek gods typifies the relationship between these extremes : two godsons, in compatible and yet inseparable. According to Nietzsche , Both elements are present in any work of art characteristics of expressions are Dionysian: Blood clot destroyed it from painted and I careless man o' to Diamond sauna without perspective and basic on fillings the child reason irrational took (the adult)

More generally it refers to art that is expressive of intense emotion it is arguable that all. Artists are expressive but there is a long line of art production in which heavy emphasis is placed on communication through emotion .such art often occurs during time of social upheaval, and through the tradition of graphic art there is a powerful and moving record of chaos in Europe From the fifteenth Century on :

The protestant Reformation , peasants war, Spanish occupation of Nether lands , the rape, Pillage and disaster associated with countless periods of chaos and oppression are presented in the documents of the printmaker . often the work is unimpressive aesthetically, but almost without exception has the capacity to move the viewer to strong

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emotions with , the drama and often horror of the scenes depicted.

The term was also coined by Czech art historian Antonin Matějček in 1910 as the opposite of impressionism: “An Expressionist wishes , above , all, to express himself ..... (An Expressionist rejects)immediate Perception and builds on more complex psychic structures..... Impressions and mental images that pass through mental peoples soul as thorough a filter which rids them of all substantial accretions to produce their clear essence (..... and) are assimilated and condense into more general forms, in to types, which he transcribes through simple short – hand formulae and symbols “ (Gordon, 1987). By (**Gordon, n.d**)

Expressionism generally refers to a twentieth century art movement that began in Germany. Unlike the French impressionists , who were Primarily concerned with artistic technique to create a different effect , Expressionism is not primarily driven by technique but a desire to express emotion . Expressionism is the tendency of an artist to distort reality for an emotional effect , it is a subjective art form . Also, unlike Impressionism , which was limited Primarily to painting Expressionism spread to many art forms , including not only painting , but literature , film . architecture and music .The term may apply to any emotional expression , but it was particularly associated with the expression of angst works is relatively small.

In painting, influenced by the fauves , Expressionism worked with arbitrary colors as well as jarring compositions. It was not important to reproduce an aesthetically pleasing impression of the artistic subject matter , the expressionists focused on capturing vivid emotional reactions through powerful colors and dynamic compositions instead. Perhaps the quintessential expression work is Edward Munch’s the Scream. Painters such as Matthias Grunewald and Greco have sometime been called expressionist, and while their works bear some resemblance to those of expressionism, the term applies mainly to twentieth – century works. (**ipid, n.d** )

As for expressionist theater it seeks to display strong emotion . these plays often dramatize the spiritual awakening and sufferings of their protagonists, and are referred to as Stationendramen ( station plays ),

Modeled on the episodic presentation of the suffering and death of Jesus in the stations of the cross. They depict the struggle against bourgeois values and established

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authority , personified in the figure of the father. August Strindberg pioneered this form with his autobiographical trilogy to Damascus . ( **ipid, n.d** )

Expressionism is also used to describe other art forms, especially in early twentieth-century Germany There was also an expressionist movement in film, often referred to as German Expressionism, as many of the important examples of Expressionist film originate in German film from the early twentieth century. The most significant films include *The Cabinet of Dr. Cagliari* (1920). *The Golem*, *Metropolis* and *Nosferatu, eine Symphonies des Grauens* (*Nosferatu, a Symphony of Horror*

In literature the novels of Franz Kafka are often described as expressionist. Expressionist poetry also flourished mainly in the German speaking countries. The most influential expressionist poets were Gottfried Benn, Ernst Barlach or Alfred Döblin. ( **ipid, n.d** )

In the theater, there was a concentrated Expressionist movement in early twentieth-century German theater of which Georg Kaiser and Ernst Toller were the most famous playwrights. Other notable expressionist dramatists included Reinhard Sorge, Walter Hasenclever, Hans Henny Jahnn, and Arnolt Bronnen. They looked back to Swedish playwright August Strindberg and German actor and dramatist Frank Wedekind as precursors of their dramaturgical experiments.

Oskar Kokoschka's 1909 playlet, *Murderer, The Hope of Women* is often called the first expressionist drama. In it, an unnamed man and woman

struggle for dominance. The man brands the woman; she stabs and imprisons him. He frees himself and she falls dead at his touch. As the play ends, he slaughters all around him (in the words of the text) "like mosquitoes." The extreme simplification of characters to mythic types choral effects, declamatory dialogue and heightened intensity all would become characteristic of later expressionist plays .

Expressionist plays often dramatize the spiritual awakening and sufferings of their protagonists, and are referred to as *Stationendramen* (station plays), modeled on the episodic presentation of the suffering and death of Jesus in the Stations of the Cross. August Strindberg had pioneered this form with his autobiographical trilogy *To Damascus* .

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The plays often dramatize the struggle against bourgeois values and established authority, often personified in the figure of the Father. In Sorge's *The Beggar*, (*Der Bettler*), the young hero's mentally ill father raves about the prospect of mining the riches of Mars; he is finally poisoned by his son. In Bronnen's *Parricide* (*Vatermord*), the son stabs his tyrannical father to death, only to have to fend off the frenzied sexual overtures of his mother.

In expressionist drama, the speech is heightened, whether expansive and rhapsodic, or clipped and telegraphic. Director Leopold Jessner became famous for his expressionistic productions, often unfolding on the stark, steeply raked flights of stairs that quickly became his trademark. In the 1920s, expressionism enjoyed a brief period of popularity in the American theater, including plays by Eugene O'Neill (*The Hairy Ape*, *The Emperor Jones* and *The Great God Brown*), Sophie Treadwell (*Machinal*) and Elmer Rice (*The Adding Machine*). By (ipid, n.d )

eminently Franz Kafka abandoned standard modes of characterization and plot for symbolic figures involved in an obsessive world of nightmarish events.

Drama was Prominent and widely influential of expression writing . Among the better – known German Play wrights were Georg Kaiser ( *Gas, from morn to Midnight* ), Ernst Toller ( *mass man* ) , in his earlier productions, Bertolt Brecht .

Expressionist dramatists often represented anonymous human types instead of individualized characters , replaced plot with episodic renderings of intense and rapidly oscillating emotional states, fragmented the dialogue into exclamatory and seemingly incoherent sentences or phrases, and employed masks and abstract or lopsided and sprawling stages sets the producer max Reinhardt although not himself in the movement . directed a number of plays by Strindberg and by German expressionists , in them he inaugurated such modern devices as the revolving stage and special effects in lighting and sound .

This mode of German drama had an important influence on the American theater. Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* (1920) projected, in a sequence of symbolic episodes, the individual and racial memories of a terrified African-American protagonist, and Elmer Rice's *The Adding Machine* (1923) used nonrealistic means to represent a mechanical, sterile, and frightening world as experienced by Mr. Zero , a ting and

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helpless cog in the impersonal system of big business. The flexible possibilities of the medium made the motion Picture an important vehicle of German expressionism .

Robert wiener's early expressionist film the cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920)-representing in ominously distorted settings, the machinations of the satanic head of an insane asylum – as well as Fried rich Murnau's Nosferatu (1922) and fritz Lang's Metropolis (1926) are often shown in current revivals of films . by (Abrams, 117, 118)

In music , Arnold Schoenberg , Anton Webern and Alban Berg, the members of the second Viennese school, wrote pieces described as expressionist (Schoenberg also made expressionist paintings ). Other composers who followed them, such as Ernst Krenek, are often considered as a part of the expressionist movement in music. What distinguished these composers from their contemporaries such as Maurice Ravel, George Gershwin and Igor Stravinsky is that expressionist composers self- consciously used atonality to free their art form from the traditional tonality . they also sought to express the subconscious , the inner necessity, and suffering through their highly dissonant musical language. *Erawartung* and *Die Gluckliche hand*, by Schoenberg, and *wozzeck*, an opera by Alban Berg (based on the play *woyzeck* by Georg Buchner), are example of expressionist works. (**ipid, n.d** )

Williams's inclination towards experimentation became evident early on when he first in traduced the concept of “plastic theater” which heavily relied on expressionism and symbolism, but was also characterized by soft lyricism , leading some critics to identify William's dramas as lyrical.

Stage directions in the original script of *The glass menagerie* , his first commercial and critical success, called for some specific plastic elements, including dozens of slide projections, film – like sound track music, and dissolving and fading lighting.

We have two different editions of the play , one intended for reading, the other for staging .

Williams first introduced the term in the production notes to his play the glass menagerie (1944). Williams also wrote alternative endings for other plays of his , such as *cat on hot tin roof* (1955) or *the rose tattoo* (1951). For more information see parker , and Devlin and Tischler. ( **Michael , 96** )



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Williams concisely summarized the essence of his poetics by pointing out the importance of stage design since “deals with intangibles which need plastic expression far more than verbal.

Plastic theatre” is and to redefine theatre practices . in the “production notes” to he states those notes are “not meant as a preface only to this particular play .

They have to do with a conception of anew , plastic theatre which must take the place of the exhausted theatre of realistic conventions if the theatre is to resume vitality as a port of our culture”

It is obvious that Williams believed that realist theatre had lost its artistic strength to pre sent universal truths. ( **Blooms guide , 97** )

Expressionism and all other unconventional techniques in drama have only one valid aims, and that is a closer approach to truth. When a play employs unconventional techniques, it is not, or certainly shouldn't be, trying to escape its responsibility of dealing with reality .... But is actually or should be attempting to find a closer approach , amore penetrating and vivid expression of things as they are.

Although evidently in service of realism , the purpose of “plastic theatre”is to generate a theatrical experience greater than mere realism” combination of non-literary elements of stage production , such as the setting props , costume . lighting , sound and visual effects, or screen device , “ reality is an organic thing which the poetic imagination can represent or suggest, in essence , only through trans formation changing into other forms than those which were merely present in appearance”

Thus ,in Williams's mind , the plasticity was supposed to enhance the action , the theme the characters , as well as the language, closely approaching the poetic truth.

William's interest in painting and the pictorial is evident in most of his plays, sometimes even referencing the works of famous painters and paintings in stage directions in order to (poetically) describe the wanted effect. A good example is the reference to El Greco in *The glass menagerie* where the light that is supposed to fall on Laura is described as “ light in religious paintings, such as El Greco's “(Williams , production notes 231) For detailed analysis of the use of pictorial ) effects in Williams see maruejouis-koch.

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The purely visual things such as light and movement and color and design. He did not want language to be the principle medium of his theatre , merely supported by a picture – frame set and enhanced by music and lighting effects .

Language in theatre is the screen device that Williams introduced in the glass menagerie which combines verbal (legends ) and non- verbal (images) messages.(**glendyr sacks,98**)

### 1.2 Tennessee Williams : Short Biography

The Story Behind *The Glass Menagerie* opened on December 26, 1944 at The Civic Theatre in Chicago. According to Tennessee Williams, there were few reasons to think that this production would have better success than any of his other plays. Williams said as much to his agent, Audrey Wood, in a note that he submitted along with *The Glass Menagerie* manuscript. Although Williams did have some small successes, such as an award from The National Academy of Arts and Letters, he had been struggling for years. By 1944, Williams had already written at least six full-length plays, in addition to poetry, short stories, and other writings. He reworked the screenplay that had been declined by MGM and prepared it as the script for a stage production. Audrey Wood passed the work on to Eddie Dowling, an independent actor, director, and producer, who decided to co direct a production of the play with Margo Jones. Unable to quell his nerves about the ability of the play to succeed in New York, Williams made the decision to open it in Chicago first. As opening day approached, there were no indications that the play would succeed. In fact, the actors were having trouble memorizing their lines; they couldn't perform the required accents; and they fought with each other throughout rehearsals. (Bloom:14)

Thomas Lanier Williams III was born on March 26, 1911, in Columbus, Mississippi, to Edwina Dakin Williams and Cornelius Coffin Williams. He was one of three children including an older sister, Rose Isabel, and a younger brother, Walter Dakin. Due to Cornelius William's inability to adjust to a settled, domestic life, and in part because of his occupations, first as a traveling salesman and later as a manager, he was almost always absent. Edwina and the children relocated frequently, living in Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee. At the age of five, while living in Mississippi, Tom became ill with diphtheria, an experience that he would barely survive. He was temporarily paralyzed and did not regain full use of his legs for two years. As a result, Tom was significantly transformed. He kept more to himself and took to more stationary pursuits. This traumatic event proved fortunate for Tom, as these pursuits consisted primarily of reading and writing later in life. At the age of sixteen, Williams published his first work. His essay "Can a Good Wife Be a Good Sport?" appeared in Smart Set magazine in May of 1927 and in 1928. (ibid:11)

his story "The Vengeance of Nitocris" was published in Weird Tales. A year later,

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Tom began studying journalism at the University of Missouri at Columbia. As a freshman, he wrote his first play, entitled *Beauty Is the Word*, which received an honorable mention from the University Dramatic Arts Club. Motivated by the positive response to his work, or perhaps driven to receive more than an honorable mention, Tom began focusing more on his writing and less on other subjects. With his grades declining, Cornelius withdrew his son from the university and found him a job as a typist for Continental Shoemakers, where he would work for the next few years. During this time, the mental health of Tom's sister, Rose, was rapidly failing and by 1937 a prefrontal lobotomy was performed, leaving Rose incapacitated and requiring institutionalization. Tom heard this news only after the procedure was complete. His inability to save his sister, coupled with the backdrop of his complex domestic situation, provided him with material that would appear again and again in his works. Despite the distractions of a difficult home life and after failed stints at the University of Missouri and Washington University, Tom re-enrolled in college and graduated from the University of Iowa in 1938.(ibid:11)

Tennessee Williams ( 1911 - 1983 ) is considered as one of the great dramatists who reflect their own personal lives and experiences in their dramatic works. He and other great American writers, like Arthur Miller, have greatly contributed to the presentation of facts concerning the American life and society in their plays. Williams also deals with what troubles the American person in his life, not as an individual case, but as a general fact that can be seen in other countries. His plays reveal a universal tone. They show what he has experienced throughout his life and assert the realities many people may face in their lives as he has faced them. The present study aims at showing Williams' view about his personal experience, life, the American society and individuals in *The Glass Menagerie* . He shows that the characters live under difficult financial and spiritual situations, and instead of finding solutions for their problems, they isolate themselves in a world, out of their reality; it is illusion that becomes a shelter for them. This fact can be seen in the lives of the characters who are trapped in their miseries and try to find an escape through worlds that do not exist except in their imagination. These illusions are going to be discussed in this study.(Ali:37)

The name "Tennessee Williams" is believed to have first appeared on an application for a drama contest in 1937 and later made a more formal debut on "The Field of Blue Children" published by Story. Reborn as "Tennessee," Williams worked even

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more furiously on his writing, now venturing to construct full-length plays. Between 1941 and 1943, after taking time to study advanced playwriting with John Gesner at the New School of Social Research, Williams moved often, finding work in Provincetown, St. Louis, New York, Macon, and Jacksonville, and finally accepting a position as a screenwriter for MGM in Hollywood, California. It was during this time that he began work on *The Gentleman Caller*, which would later be renamed and given new life. *The Gentleman Caller* became *The Glass Menagerie*, the play responsible for making Williams famous—an affliction that he would refer to as “the catastrophe of success.” *The Glass Menagerie* opened in Chicago in 1944 and later ran in New York, where it won the New York Critics Circle Award. Though not always immediately well-received, Williams went on to write some of the most important and dynamic plays in the history of American theater, including *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Night of the Iguana*, and *Orpheus Descending*. Additionally, he published several volumes of poetry, as well as compilations of original short stories. Despite his success, Williams suffered emotionally throughout his life. This distress was exacerbated by the deaths of several loved ones over the years: his father in 1956, his grandfather in 1957, his lover, Frank Merlo in 1963, and finally his mother in 1980. Williams fought long battles with depression and alcohol and drug abuse. He sought help through psychoanalysis and through his conversion to Roman. (ibid:12)

Unable to overcome the problems that plagued him, he nevertheless continued producing work throughout the remainder of his life. Contrary to his confessed wish to someday pass away peacefully while sleeping in the brass bed at his New Orleans apartment, Tennessee Williams died tragically on February 25, 1983, at the Hotel Elysée in New York. Although his work did not consistently receive the positive critical acclaim that Williams hoped for during his life, his plays have survived the test of time and are widely produced throughout the world today. His most well-known works continue to evolve in new adaptations, and previously unreleased or lesser-known works are now being studied and produced posthumously. Williams has been honored for his achievements with several New York Critics Circle Awards, Pulitzer Prizes, a National Arts Club gold medal for literature, several honorary degrees, and countless other awards.(ibid:13)

Williams greatly recommends “creating imaginary worlds into which I can retreat from the real world because ... I've never made any kind of adjustment to the real world.”

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This fact is honestly applied to his characters, especially in *The Glass Menagerie*. The real world, for Williams and his characters, is a trap in which they are obliged to live; yet they try to be free of its obligatory pressures by living in worlds that take them away from their real lives to find peace. They retreat to them to find consolation and to prepare themselves to be back again to their real worlds to bear their hardships more. These worlds are either mythological or symbolic. Consequently, they are illusionary or remote, in all aspects, from the age in which they live. Such worlds do not push the characters to change what leads to their dilemmas. (Ali:39)

### **2.1 Williams The Glass Menagerie : Plot Summary.**

The Glass Menagerie was originally produced in Chicago in 1944 and then staged in New York on Broadway in 1945. The text was also published in 1945. This play was the first of Williams's to win the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, an honor he was given four times. Although The Glass Menagerie also received much popular acclaim, some critics believe that the thematic devices that Williams relies on, such as the legends on the screen, are too heavy-handed.

The Glass Menagerie is autobiographical in its sources. In some ways, this is a coming of age story, with both Tom Wingfield and Laura Wingfield negotiating their roles as young adults. Like many coming of age stories, the major conflicts in this play are both internal and external; Tom cannot choose both the future he desires for himself and the future his mother, Amanda Wingfield, desires for him and for Laura. Emerging through this major conflict between Tom and Amanda are the themes of alienation and loneliness, duty and responsibility, and appearances and reality.

Through its poetic structure and reliance on stage technology, The Glass Menagerie has had a significant impact on later twentieth century drama. Tom serves as both narrator and character, dissolving the present into the past; Williams signals this by exploiting lighting and sound, especially music technologies that were less available to earlier playwrights. In this sense, the themes of the play are inseparable from its production values. (zia'ee shamsa'ee,146,147,148)

Williams' play is set in St. Louis in the 1930's. All the action takes place in the Wingfield apartment. Amanda Wingfield lives there with her two adult children, Laura and Tom, both in their mid-twenties. Amanda is a disappointed ex-southern belle, who's been left by Laura and Tom's father, an alcoholic telephone repairman whose name we never learn. After Amanda gave birth to Laura and Tom, her husband left her to pursue a life of travel and adventure (except for one postcard, has not been heard from since). The family is clearly struggling with money, and they live in a small apartment in a sprawling building. The entrance is from the fire escape rather than through a hallway. The only interior rooms we see are the dining room, kitchen, and the living room, which doubles as Laura's bedroom, and in which she displays and tends to her glass menagerie, the collection after which the play is named.

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Tom narrates the play in a kind of retrospect (he calls it a "memory play") and he's also a character in it. He is an aspiring poet who toils in a shoe warehouse to support his mother, Amanda, and sister, Laura. The play begins with dinner at Wingfield's. Tom, Laura and Amanda are having what seems to be a typical conversation: Amanda is disappointed that Laura, who wears a brace on her leg and is painfully shy, does not attract any "gentleman callers," and she babbles endlessly about the good old days down south when she was a popular, young girl, receiving dozens of callers in a single day. Tom and Laura tease their mother (not particularly good-naturedly) about her neurotic repetitions of these scenarios, but they suffer through her tales.

She enrolls Laura in a business college (Rubicam's Business College), hoping that she will make her own and the family's fortune through a business career. Weeks later, however, Amanda discovers that Laura's crippling shyness has led her to drop out of the class secretly and spend her days wandering the city alone. She comes home and accuses Laura, who finally admits that instead of going to class she's been walking in the park or at the zoo. She says that she dropped out of business school at Rubicam's Business College after having thrown up in the bathroom due to nervousness. Laura's inability to attend classes and pursue a career throw Amanda's naturally high level of anxiety into overdrive. She insists that Laura either work at a job or try harder to meet a man to support her. Amanda then decides that Laura's last hope must lie in marriage and begins selling newspaper subscriptions to earn the extra money she believes will help to attract suitors for Laura. If Laura can't find a beau, Amanda says she fears that the two of them will have to appeal to their in-laws for money Amanda believes Tom can't support them forever. Amanda's anxiety about Laura's situation causes her to put more pressure on Tom, and she interrogates him about where he goes each evening. She's nervous that Tom wants to leave town, just like his father. Tom tells her he's been going to the movies, but Amanda finds this hard to believe because Tom is out every night and she can't believe anyone could go to the movies that often. They have a rollicking fight on his way out the door, and he rips his coat off and throws it, breaking some of Laura's glass. Amanda doesn't notice the damage and storms out, but Tom stays and helps Laura clean it, during which time we get a sense of how protective he feels of his sister.

When Tom arrives home later, he and Laura have an exchange about h whereabouts. He seems quite taken with the escapism of the movies, although in other moments he's quite critical of the way in which American culture revolves around going



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to the movies to watch others participate in action while the spectator sits still in the dark only to return to his or her uneventful life. Their conversation worries Laura that her brother is deeply unhappy living in St. Louis and working at the warehouse of Continental Shoemakers, which indeed he is. She expresses her anxiety to Amanda, who takes Tom aside and presses him again to find a man for Laura. She insists that he find Laura a gentleman caller before flying off to unknown shores. Surprisingly, when we next see Tom he's found someone to bring home to dinner and meet Laura. His friend Jim O'Conner who also works in the warehouse will be coming over the following night. Amanda is thrilled, but when she tells Laura about the impending visit, Laura becomes hysterical. She had had a crush on a boy named Jim O'Conner in high school. At Soldan, he had acted in all the plays and been quite popular. Even though Laura had few friends, they had a special relationship, and Jim had a nickname for her (Blue Roses) which was a mishearing of "pleurosis," a lung inflammation that caused Laura to miss school. She vows not to come to dinner if it's this Jimmy. When Jim and Tom arrive, Laura takes to the couch, ill and pale. Amanda eats dinner with the boys, during which time the lights go out. Tom's not paid the electricity bill that month, instead sending dues in to the Merchant Marines. He's hatching a plan for escape. Amanda sends Jim in to the living room with a candelabra. Laura is at first paralyzed by Jim's presence, but his warm and open behavior soon draws her out of her shell. She confesses that she knew and liked him in high school but was too shy to approach him. They continue talking, and Laura reminds him of the nickname he had given her: "Blue Roses," an accidental corruption of the word for Laura's medical condition, pleurosis. He reproaches her for her shyness and low self-esteem but praises her uniqueness. Laura then ventures to show him her favorite glass animal, a unicorn. Jim dances with her, but in the process, he accidentally knocks over the unicorn, breaking off its horn. Jim is chagrined, but Laura recuperates the incident, saying that now the unicorn will be like all the other hornless horses, and will be less lonely, since they'll accept him as one of their own, so offers him the broken unicorn as a souvenir (Jim then reveals to Laura that he'd like to pursue a relationship with her, but can't because he's engaged to be married to a girl named Betty. Amanda re-enters just after this conversation, bearing snacks, and Jim leaves hastily,

making his excuses. Amanda is baffled and furious. She accuses Tom of playing a cruel joke on Laura, but he says he didn't know Jim was engaged. The play ends shortly thereafter with Tom's closing narration. He says that he fled St. Louis soon after the

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dinner and did have the life of travel that he'd aimed for. He moved from city to city, as he had wanted. But he's felt haunted, he says, felt like something or someone was pursuing him, making him antsy. He finds that he's been unable to leave behind guilty memories of Laura. The play closes with him waxing melancholic about his sister. He passes store windows at night, he says, and glass trinkets catch his eye, reminding him .

### 2.2 Expression Devices in Glass Menagerie

The Glass Menagerie was purposefully created with the intention of introducing “plastic theatre” since it is a memory play, and because of this, Williams granted himself the poetic freedom he would not have had if this had not been the case. In the “Production Notes,” he confidently writes about the new role he has given to music and lighting, but his ideas are most concisely presented in the use of the screen device, the purpose of which is “to give accent to certain values in each scene. Each scene contains a particular point (or several) which is structurally most important” .(Williams:230)

Because it was an unconventional practice, the screen device was not used on stage in the early productions of The Glass Menagerie, nor has Williams employed it in his later plays. In the plays to come, the functions of the screen device were, however, “translated” and assigned to props, language, and sometimes music and lighting. During his later career, when Williams was under pressure to write “Broadway material,” (Wilson:344)

But still strongly symbolic pieces, he redefined “plastic theatre” into “selective realism,” which is defined as “a type of realism that heightens certain details of action, scenery, and dialogue while omitting others”. In this definition we find the exact same meaning Williams provided for the use of the screen device in The Glass Menagerie. Apart from the use of the screen, music, and lighting in The Glass Menagerie, the inventive introduction of a narrator, Tom, who is also a character in the play, strongly connects Williams with another branch of his tree of influences – namely that of the Brecht an epic theatre, and through it, the Russian formalists.(ibid)

In The Glass Menagerie , characters have a difficulty in accepting reality. Thus, they withdraw into a private world of illusion where they find comfort and meaning that the real world does not offer. None of them is capable of living entirely in the present. All retreat into their separate worlds to escape the brutality of life. They move on this to avoid reality, which is harsh and painful. So life, in the present, reflects a failure of those characters to cope with their real positions. It is a fact that they cannot accept since they are full of disappointments and miseries. Hence, the escape through different illusions, used by the characters, facilitate their living in the present. They provide them with a source of hope that nourishes their desire to continue though everything seems to be in vain. Yet, they create a sense of weakness inside the characters; leading to their

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incapability to change.(Williams:39)

Amanda has a desperate clinging to an illusion that Laura can be happy and successful if she goes to business college and learns to type .Her insistence, that her children deserve the best, is the one that gives hope and meaning to her children because without it, they will be lost in their real illusionary worlds. She tries to push each one of them by providing an insistence to change. Yet, she fails all the time since they have no desire to do so. She says: “So what are we going to do the rest of our lives? Stay home and watch the parades go by? Amuse ourselves with the glass menagerie, darling? Eternally play those worn – out phonograph records your father left as a painful reminder of him? We won't have a business career \_\_\_ we've given that up because it gives us nervous indigestion! What is there left but dependency all our lives?”.(Williams:18)

Dreaming of adventures, watching movies and writing poetry are the only things that provide Tom with a shelter from his life. It is an illusionary escape from his reality. Bigsly describes his escape saying that Tom's escape seems too much like his father's desertion of his family to seem like anything but abandonment. Williams emphasizes, through Tom, the significance of art as an illusion - both movies and poetry - by showing their ability to take him out of his miserable house and work. Tom says, "I go to the movies because \_\_ I like adventures. Adventures is something I don't have much of at work, so I go to the movies.(ibid:35)

This man describes his life as a life that lacks adventure which provides a sense of change. It is like a coffin that he wishes to escape from, but it is too difficult to do so.(Pishkar:640)

Tennessee Williams expresses his view of life and people's attitude that should be followed in it. Each one should live even if his life does not satisfy him. He describes life as being always in the process of change. Man is the one who brings this change into reality; yet if he cannot create that change, which will make his life better, he prefers to find consolation in another way, which is illusion . Hence, his characters are not really unique in their use of memories and tangible objects to escape from reality's unfortunate circumstances. By living the dreams of the past or hopes of the future, they squander the true validity of the single things that matters – the present.(Jordan:6)

Each one of them regrets the life he lives and the choices he has made that put him

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exactly where he is. Yet, living in the past or in the future does not do them any good. It keeps them from progressing in life; since the present is the only reality.(williams:2)

Tennessee Williams' characters, whose lives seem to be consisted in avoiding reality more than facing it, seem to separate them from the cruel realities of their lives. Their efforts to escape serve only to distract them from their problems. Thus, The play is filled with possible escapes.(ibid:1)

Hence, this drama is of a psychological and universal depth. It shows man's great sufferance on emotional, financial, social and psychological levels in his life due to internal and external forces inside him.(Ali:47)

The characters in *The Glass Menagerie* ... are not people who work to play their part in the great commercial enterprise of America ... They are damaged emotionally. They are hyper – sensitive to their surroundings. They frequently tread the boundary of insanity, driven towards his territory partly by the callousness of others ... and partly by their own preference for their active, the imaginary, the unreal.(pishkar:638) Illusion, which depends on imagination, represents the only way that Williams' characters use to go on living even if their lives have bitter facts and terrible sense of an unexpected end. They are attached to life, which they do not want to have, but they are obliged to live.(Ali:39)

Memory is, generally speaking, a storehouse of the past reminiscences, experiences, and events. It is rather difficult to imagine that man cannot free himself from the fetters of memory, which overlooks the lived reality. Much has been said and written on the role of memory and its significance in man's life. The controversy regarding memory still continues in the field of literary theory especially in phenomenology.(Saleh:29)

Memory is a brain - related process that includes the idea of retaining information and restructuring past experiences in a newly different way.(Gras:53) It is any gesture, ritualized or not, whose end is to recover, in the name of a collectivity, some being or event either anterior in time or outside time in order to fecundate, animate, or make a meaningful moment in the present.(Vance:374)

In this way, memory of the past cannot be dislocated from the current state of affairs, since man moves in the orbit of the never-ending cycle of time .It is interesting to

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observe here that memory has many ramifications and types. There exist certain varieties of memory such as propositional memory, habit memory, declarative memory, episodic or recollective memory.(sutton:24)

The last type of memory is the cornerstone of Tennessee William's *The Glass Menagerie*. When Laura was in high school and wore a brace on her leg, she believed that everyone used to watch her when she was late for chorus practice and had to go "clumping" to her seat in the back row of the auditorium. This memory greatly hurts her because it makes her noticed for her crippled less.. Laura says: "yes, it was so hard for me, getting upstairs. I had that brace on my leg \_\_\_ it clumped so loud! ... to me it sounded like \_\_\_ thunder!"(Williams:77) This crippled less represents a source of pain and embarrassment to Laura; it prevents her from moving on in her life and of having an opportunity to be happy by finding love. So, she leaves the courses of type – writing and refuses to be seen by others, retreating to her illusionistic world of glass animals and old records.(Saleh:47)

These glass animals and phonograph records, which are closely related to past times, refer to Laura herself. She is forgotten, neglected and invisible to the world as these things, which are not taken care of anymore by people in America. They are Laura's illusions that protect her from the harshness of modernity and the present. They are not anymore used in her time; so they are indications that she is not fit to her time like her illusions. She lives in a time, in which she is strange, unique and lonely. Laura "stands as a paradigm of the culture of which she is a part. The world of modernity, the dance hall and the typewriter, is outside of her experience."(Biggsby:31) Moreover, she seems to have accepted what she is and what life has offered her though she has illusions. She does not try to gloss over or deny the way things are as Amanda and does not project a happy and successful future for herself as Jim does, nor does she quarrel with the way things are, as Tom does. Like the animals in her glass menagerie, Laura remains delicate and vulnerable. In her own way, she is as glass, easily damaged if not protected, but also possesses beauty as fine glass does and an inner light of varying shades and colors. She is "trapped in psychosis or stranded in an imagined world. She won immunity from time only by stepping into an existence where there is no love as there is no ageing." (Pishkar:47) Laura chooses to live in a world, which completely differs from her real one. It is a world of myth, represented by the unicorn. The unicorn is a creature that exists only in myths. It has no relation to the modern times. It represents Laura herself, through

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its uniqueness and loneliness. By personifying the unicorn, Laura tries to show that she is that mythical piece of glass, because she is as strange, beautiful, different, lonely and delicate as he is. She has pretended to live in a world of the glass ornaments, which is a very delicate, fragile and calm one that provides her with tranquility, calmness and peace. " she chooses a world of myth, symbolized by the glass unicorn. It is factitious security broken as easily as the unicorn's glass horn."(Bigsby:31) She develops her illusion by saying that the unicorn loves the light, may feel lonesome being different from the other animals, but does not complain about it and get along nicely with the horses that do not have horns. Laura says: " Well, if he does, he doesn't complain about it. He stays on a shelf with some horses that don't have horns and all of them seem to get along nicely together." (Saleh:46)

he script, when I read it some time ago, I disliked – partly because it belongs to the current deliquescent-rococo type of theatre and even more because it seemed far from a brilliant example of the type. he genuine element in Tennessee Williams had always seemed to me to reside in his realism: his ability to make eloquent and expressive dialogue out of the real speech of men and his git for portraiture, especially the portraiture of unhappy women. here is also a spurious element. Sometimes it's his style that is spurious, for when he is poetic he is often luscious and highfalutin.(Eric:107)

Expressionism and all other unconventional techniques in drama have only one valid aim, and that is a closer approach to truth. When a play employs unconventional techniques, it is not, or certainly shouldn't be, trying to escape its responsibility of dealing with reality, or interpreting experience, but is actually or should be attempting to end a closer approach, a more penetrating and vivid expression of things as they are.(Williams:395)

Williams himself was considerably interested in the past; therefore, he interpolated autobiographical elements into the structure of *The Glass Menagerie*.(Saleh:11) He believed that the past is inaccessible in the sense that it cannot be recuperated, however hard man tries. Besides past, the future is rather gloomy and worse than expected. Such interest in past and future is shown accompanied with memory.(Saleh:12) The use of memory gives much space to explain Williams's past- future equation. Needless to say, the present is also a pivotal issue in the association of memorable ideas. In *The Glass Menagerie*, Williams pins down the significance of the functional role of memory.

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Memory is part and parcel of the human identity.(Hirsch:36)

Among the expressionistic devices is the use of symbol .

Tennessee Williams's deceptively simple play is able to address the whole of the human experience by symbolically broaching opposing concepts such as self and other, the internal or interior and external or exterior, duty and freedom, domestic experience, and religious experience. This is accomplished through the interplay of several unique strategies, some of which are discussed in Tennessee Williams's Production Notes, which precede the text of the play in the reading version of *The Glass Menagerie*. While these notes are brief, they provide essential information about the dynamics of the play. In his essay "Entering *The Glass Menagerie*," C.W.E. Bigsby points out the relevance of this text: All the key words of Williams' work are to be found in these introductory notes: paranoia, tenderness, illusions, illness, fragile, delicate, poetic, transformation, emotion, nostalgia, desperation, trap. These defining elements are to be projected not merely through character and dialogue. He envisages a production in which all elements will serve his central concern with those who are victims of social circumstance, of imperious national myths, of fate and of time as the agent of that fate.(Bigsby:33)

Williams states, (Scanlan:108)"A free and imaginative use of light can be of enormous value in giving a mobile plastic quality to plays of a more or less static nature." Furthermore, Williams actually emphasized this static quality, speaking in favor of a new "sculptural drama" or "plastic theatre" to replace the dramatic realism that was dominant at the time. It was Williams's belief that realism was no longer adequate to convey the complexities of modern existence.

The totality of experience could be better represented through symbolic implications, psychological action, and a lack of other distractions. In his Production Notes, he says :(Londre:19) The straight play with its genuine Frigidaire and authentic ice-cubes, its characters who speak exactly as its audience speaks, corresponds to the academic landscape and has the same virtue of a photographic likeness. Everyone should know nowadays...that truth, life, or reality is an organic thing which the poetic imagination can represent or suggest, in essence only through transformation, through changing into other forms than those which were merely present in appearance.



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When he wants a more ambiguous feeling, he dresses his characters all in white. Even the lighting takes on varied tones: ebony darkness in Scene Four, pale white moonlight in Scene Five, lemony-yellow light in Scene Six, artificially warm and rosy lamplight in Scene Seven.

The lighting works in tandem with the music, mimicking the actions and emotions of the play. The overall lighting of the play is dim, another reminder that the play is about memory. Williams is able to use light to symbolize a character's critical traits. For example, he directs that the light on Laura be distinct from the light shone on the other characters. Hers should be reminiscent of the light of a church or the light one would associate with a saint. Felicia Hardison Lóndre generously states that the symbolism embodied in these techniques makes it nearly impossible to convey a sense of the play through mere description or summary. "So tightly written are the scenes in *The Glass Menagerie*, so full of musicality and suggestive power are the lines of dialogue, so integral are the effects of sound and lighting—that a summation of what is said and done on stage cannot nearly convey a sense of the play."(ibid:47)

The structure of *The Glass Menagerie* might also be considered an expressionistic device. Lóndre suggests that the splitting of the play into multiple scenes is a reflection of the nature of memory.(ibid:47) "This fragmented quality is justified by the selectivity of memory," she says. In *Notes* he says, "In an episodic play, such as this, the basic structure or narrative line may be obscured from the audience; the effect may seem fragmentary rather than architectural." This structure also brings to mind not only the fragmented nature of memory, but more literally, the image of shattered or fragmented glass—the central symbol of the play, and certainly an appropriate symbol for the shattered Wingfield family.(Saleh:25)

In the next part of Scene Five, Amanda and Tom come together. In a moment symbolic of Amanda's attempt to reach out to her son, she steps outside to an area that clearly has belonged to Tom up until this point. Williams refers to this revelation as "the annunciation," and an ordinary event such as having a visitor is elevated to a level of spiritual significance. Like the Christian annunciation, this event is a reason for hope. With Mr. Wingfield absent and Tom's departure imminent, "it remains therefore for Jim to come as the Savior to the Friday night supper."(Stein:115)

In a pathetically humorous moment, Jim gloats, "Now I've never made a regular

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study of it, but I have a friend who says I can analyze people better than doctors that make a profession of it. I don't claim that to be necessarily true, but I can sure guess a person's psychology." Making new symbolic use of glass, Jim glances "unconsciously" (and narcissistically) in the mirror. Jim continues on—he is studying radio engineering because of his faith in the future of television. The situation in America doesn't seem to have affected him the way it obviously affects the other characters, and Jim is able to retain his patriotic and optimistic opinion of America.(Durham:123)

Music, with this first great artistic success ... Williams demonstrated how he could synthesize music, poetry, and visual effects into compelling emotional situations, (4)structurally underpinning them with symbolic moments so arresting that theatergoers depart the aisles—and readers turn the last page—enriched with an assortment of moments guaranteed to haunt the receptive mind .(Bray:xv)

The atmosphere in the play is moderated through the manipulation of music and lighting. Rather than play the music of the time, a single piece of music is predominantly heard throughout *The Glass Menagerie*. Williams describes it as being "like circus music" heard from a distance. It functions as an auditory symbol of the emotional states of the characters, evoking a feeling of sadness.

Other background music does occasionally manifest itself, changing with the events on stage. For instance, Jim and Laura hear a romantic piece of music like a waltz; when Amanda and Tom argue, the background music is heavy and ominous. The glass menagerie music can be heard in the background as Laura reminds her mother that there will likely be no callers. (Saleh:24)

The color blue is introduced in Scene Two in the projection of blue roses onscreen. When associated with roses, the color is an oddity. It is also the color traditionally equated with sadness and with the Virgin Mary and is therefore, an appropriate color to correspond with Laura.

The first instance of the screen device occurs when we meet Amanda. The words "ousont les neiges" appear on screen. They translate to "where are the snows?", words from a fifteenth-century French poem in praise of beautiful women. The text is puzzling, fragmented, and appropriately, it is foreign—projected in French rather than English. As

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our understanding of Amanda is only partial, so is our comprehension of this phrase.(ibid:29)

Despite Tom's sarcastic goading, Amanda continues on as if in another world. At this time, the second screen device appears. It is the image of Amanda as a young woman with her gentleman callers. The image draws further attention to the absurdity of Amanda's exaggerated tales and supports the audience's developing suspicions.

This is the "new plastic theatre" of which Williams spoke in his production notes, a revelation not through dramatic struggle but through the allusive power of the word, the accretion of symbolic clusters which bear the meaning, reinforced dramaturgically through lighting, music, the distancing devices of a narrator and, as originally planned, of screen images.(ibid:87)

"In the production, the name of the episode would be projected on a screen or be placed on a placard so that the audience can read it. The audience then knows what would happen in the particular episode" (Brecht:11). The exact same practice is implemented in *The Glass Menagerie*. The screen sometimes ironizes some events, as with the Gentleman Caller and the legend of "The Accent of a Coming Foot"<sup>15</sup> in Scene Six, gives hints of the future, as with the image of the Flying Jolly Roger, appearing in Scene Four when Tom wishes for a (sea) adventure.(Dickinson:200)

As a part of a plan to leave his family, Tom wishes to join the Union of Merchant Seamen and to become a sailor (a recurring symbol in literature). With this legend, Williams both ironizes and warns against this wish and Tom's "boiling" dissatisfaction, since the image of Jolly Roger is a flag of the pirate ships flown to identify a ship about to attack during the early eighteenth century. As Leathers Single observes, "the one image he [Tom] associates with his escape reflects the ambiguity he feels. . . . On one hand, the sailing vessel represents the freedom and movement of the open sea and the Union of Merchant Seamen. On the other hand, the vessel is a pirate ship whose Jolly Roger, the skull and cross bones, symbolizes criminality and death . . . since the memory play is Tom's attempt to lay the past to rest, the most telling of screen images is the one he chooses for himself: "A sailing vessel with the Jolly Roger" (Saleh:79)

## Conclusions

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Tennessee Williams . The Leading American Playwright Whose name is associated with Expressionism , and who comes with the so-called , Plastic theatre , is mainly famous with his play , The Glass Menagerie in this plays the play wright employ un conventional techniques of the so-called a plastic theater and expressionistic devices to convey his themes .

Dark and dim lights, working in coordination with the actors, the music and the other elements are what creates the unrealistic atmosphere and setting of The Glass Menagerie . The theme of memory is prevalent . To reinforce the concept the reference of “turgid smoky red glow” as well as “deep blue dusk” call forward the cloudy feeling that is Tom’s memory. The stage production of The Glass Menagerie reminds one of cinema. Where as in film , a close up can be used as replacement Tennessee Williams uses “shafts of lights” that are used to bring the illuminated center. It would is apparent that the frequent movie going character of Tom is based on Tennessee Williams, and as such has taken in cinematic concepts .The use of music to emphasize the dramatic moments on stage as well as the overall atmosphere reminds us of film. The screen is reminiscent of the dialogue in silent films, and then there is what viewed to be most obvious , it is the use of lighting, ”shifts of lights” , as Williams writes in his production notes “are focused on selected areas or actors , sometimes in contradiction to what is the apparent center” .