

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



TENNESSEE  
WILLIAMS

田纳西·威廉斯

MATTHEW C. ROUDANÉ 编



外教社

上海外语教育出版社  
SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS

剑桥文学指南

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CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

田纳西·威廉斯: 英文 / (美) 罗达尼编. —上海: 上海外语教育出版社, 2000

(剑桥文学指南)

ISBN 7-81046-988-6

I. 田… II. 罗… III. 威廉斯-文学研究-英文 IV. I712.065

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2000) 第74708号

图字: 09-2000-521号

出版发行: **上海外语教育出版社**

(上海外国语大学内) 邮编: 200083

电 话: 021-65425300 (总机), 65422031 (发行部)

电子邮箱: [bookinfo@sflep.com.cn](mailto:bookinfo@sflep.com.cn)

网 址: <http://www.sflep.com.cn> <http://www.sflep.com>

责任编辑: 汪义群

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印 刷: 深圳中华商务联合印刷有限公司

经 销: 新华书店上海发行所

开 本: 889×1194 1/32 印张 9.375 字数 367 千字

版 次: 2000 年 12 月第 1 版 2000 年 12 月第 1 次印刷

印 数: 5 000 册

---

书 号: ISBN 7-81046-988-6 / I · 112

定 价: 18.70 元

本版图书如有印装质量问题, 可向本社调换

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK    www.cup.cam.ac.uk  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA    www.cup.org  
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia  
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain

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First published 1997  
Reprinted 1998, 1999

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in Sabon 10/13 pt. [CE]

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress cataloging in publication data*

The Cambridge companion to Tennessee Williams / edited by Matthew C. Roudané.

p. cm. – (Cambridge companions to literature)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 49533 4 (hardback). – ISBN 0 521 49883 x (paperback)

1. Williams, Tennessee, 1911–1983 – Criticism and interpretation.

2. Southern States – In literature. I. Roudané, Matthew Charles, 1953–. II. Series.

PS3545.15365Z614 1997

812'.54–dc21 97–40036

CIP

ISBN 0 521 49533 4 hardback

ISBN 0 521 49883 x paperback

This edition of *Tennessee Williams* is published by arrangement with  
Cambridge University Press.

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仅供在中华人民共和国境内销售。

## 出版前言

《剑桥文学指南》是上海外语教育出版社从海外引进的一套研究、介绍外国文学的丛书，内容涉及作家、作品、文学流派、文学史等诸多方面。作者均为在该领域有着较深造诣的专家、学者。

《田纳西·威廉斯》是该丛书中的一本。

田纳西·威廉斯是美国当代最著名的剧作家之一，被公认为第二次世界大战以来美国最杰出的戏剧大师。他不但作品优秀，而且极其多产。他的戏剧创作生涯长达 50 年之久，其作品受到了人们的热烈称颂和赞誉，也多次在评论界引起激烈的争议。由于威廉斯本人的南方背景，他的作品在题材上与同时代其他关注社会问题的剧作家很不相同，更接近于 20 世纪美国南方小说家。他善于表现小人物，尤其是妇女的形象。他所关心的主题是现代社会中人与外界的隔绝，人与人之间的缺乏沟通，以及在一个混乱的世界中人们如何孤独地寻求自身价值等问题。在《玻璃动物园》、《欲望号街车》、《热铁皮屋顶上的猫》等剧中，他以细腻、委婉而又饱含同情的笔触，刻画了一群孤独、失意、怯懦而心灵扭曲的女性形象，揭示了这批旧南方遗留下来的“最后的贵族”在社会制度更迭时无所适从的心理。这些旧式人物，既难以忘怀种植园时代的生

活方式，无力摆脱旧南方所奉行的一整套虚伪、严格而又充满矛盾的道德观念，又无法适应工业化社会那种残酷的生存竞争和赤裸裸的金钱关系。作者深刻地表现了商业化对于人性和人情的腐蚀，以同情的笔触刻划了工业化社会的逃遁者和反叛者的形象，唱出了一曲曲旧世界没落的挽歌。

本书收入了当代西方著名学者撰写的 14 篇关于田纳西·威廉斯的文章，涵盖面相当广泛，不仅论述了威廉斯创作的主要戏剧，而且还涉及到他的短篇小说和诗歌。有的介绍了田纳西·威廉斯的早期生活以及家庭对他的影响；有的结合作者本人的生活经历和作品，分别分析了欧美文学对他的戏剧创作的影响以及他性格和思想形成的深层原因；有的阐述了威廉斯对电影艺术的看法，以及他的戏剧作品改编成电影后对美国好莱坞的影响。本书还辟有专论，分别介绍了他的主要作品和有关威廉斯研究的主要文献。

本书的读者对象为大学外语教师、外国文学研究人员、外国文学专业的研究生、博士生，以及具备了较高英语阅读能力的外国文学爱好者。

上海外语教育出版社  
2000 年 12 月

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS P. ADLER is Professor of English and Interim Dean of Liberal Arts at Purdue University, where he has taught dramatic literature and film since receiving his PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1970. He has written widely on both modern and contemporary British and American playwrights, including especially O'Neill, Albee, and Pinter. His extensive work on Williams includes a monograph, *"A Streetcar Named Desire": The Moth and the Lantern* (1990), and two lengthy chapters in his most recent book, *American Drama, 1940-1960: A Critical History* (1994).

JAN BALAKIAN is an Assistant Professor of English at Kean College of New Jersey. Her essays on Arthur Miller and Wendy Wasserstein are forthcoming in the Cambridge Companions to those writers. She is currently writing a book about Wendy Wasserstein's plays.

CHRISTOPHER BIGSBY is Professor of American Studies at the University of East Anglia. He has published more than twenty books on British and American culture, including *Confrontation and Commitment: A Study of Contemporary American Drama 1959-1966* (1967), *Albee* (1969), *The Black American Writer* (1969), *The Second Black Renaissance* (1980), *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama* (1982-85), *David Mamet* (1985), *Modern American Drama 1940-1990* (1992), and, as editor, *Contemporary English Drama* (1981), *Arthur Miller and Company* (1990), and *The Portable Arthur Miller* (1995). He is also the author of three novels: *Hester* (1994), *Pearl* (1995), and *Still Lives* (1996).

JOHN M. CLUM is Professor of English and Professor of the Practice of Drama at Duke University. He is the author of *Acting Gay: Male Homosexuality in Modern Drama* (1992; revised edn. 1994) and other books and numerous essays on twentieth-century British and American drama, gay drama, and musical theatre. He is the editor of *Staging Gay Lives* (1996) and co-editor of *Displacing Homophobia: Essays on Gay Literature and Culture* (1989). Professor Clum has also directed over sixty dramatic and operatic productions

and five of his produced plays have been published by Dialogus Play Service and Publishing. He is currently at work on studies of twentieth-century musical theatre and bodily mutilation in American drama.

RUBY COHN, Professor Emerita at the University of California (Davis), has written and edited several books on modern drama and on the work of Samuel Beckett.

GILBERT DEBUSSCHER is Professor of English and American Literature at the University of Brussels in Belgium. He is the author or editor of books and articles on Edward Albee, Tennessee Williams, Jack Richardson, Edward Bond, Willy Russell, and avant garde drama.

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ALLEAN HALE, Adjunct Professor of Theatre at the University of Illinois, is a specialist in Tennessee Williams studies. Her many publications in literary and theatre journals include "Tennessee Williams" in Gale's *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, volume 45. She was an opening lecturer at the Twentieth-Century American Playwrights Exhibit at the University of Texas in 1994 and has participated in scholarly panels nationwide. A consultant for two PBS television documentaries, *Tennessee Williams – Orpheus of the American Stage*, and *Tennessee Williams' Dragon Country*, she is also a contributing editor of the *Tennessee Williams Literary Journal*. In progress is a book with Nancy Tischler on Williams's late plays.

FELICIA HARDISON LONDRE is Curators' Professor of Theatre at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, and dramaturg for Missouri Repertory Theatre, Nebraska Shakespeare Festival, and the Heart of America Shakespeare Festival. In 1993 she was a Visiting Foreign Professor at Hosei University in Tokyo, and in 1995 she held the Women's Chair in Humanistic Studies at Marquette University. Her first book was *Tennessee Williams* (1979). Her books since then include *Tom Stoppard*, *Federico García Lorca*, and *The History of World Theater: From the English Restoration to the Present*. *The History of North American Theater: The United States, Canada, and Mexico from Pre-Columbian Times to the Present* is a book in progress, with Daniel J. Watermeier. She currently serves on nine editorial boards and is Vice-President of the American Theatre and Drama Society.

BRENDA MURPHY is Professor of English at the University of Connecticut and the author of *Miller: Death of a Salesman* (1995), *Tennessee Williams and Elia Kazan: A Collaboration in the Theatre* (1992), *A Realist in the American Theatre: Selected Drama Criticism of William Dean Howells* (1992), *American Realism and American Drama, 1880-1940*, Cambridge Studies in American literature and culture (1987), and with George Monteiro, *John Hay-Howells's Letters* (1980). Work in progress includes *The Cambridge Companion to American Women Playwrights* and a study of dramatic representations of the House of Committee on Un-American Activities in American theatre, film, and television.

JACQUELINE O'CONNOR is Assistant Professor of English at the Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas, where she directs the graduate program and teaches courses in American and modern drama, women's literature, and advanced writing. She has published essays on David Rabe and Anna Cora Mowatt, and her book, *Tennessee Williams Dramatizes Dementia*, is forthcoming from Bowling Green University Popular Press.

R. BARTON PALMER is Calhoun Lemon Professor of Literature at Clemson University in South Carolina and also serves as Executive Director of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association. As a medievalist, he has edited and translated six volumes of the narrative poetry of Guillaume de Machaut, Chaucer's most famous French contemporary. Two of these have been selected by *Choice* magazine as "outstanding academic books." As a film scholar, he has published two books on the American film noir, *Hollywood's Dark Cinema: The American Film Noir* and *Perspectives on Film Noir*, and edited a collection on film theory, *The Cinematic Text: Methods and Approaches*. Current film projects include *Screening Modern Literature: W. Somerset Maugham and the Cinema* (with Robert Calder) and *Joseph L. Mankiewicz: A Critical Guide* (with Cheryl Lower).

MATTHEW C. ROUDANÉ is Professor of English at Georgia State University in Atlanta, where he specializes in modern drama. He has published *Understanding Edward Albee* (1987), *Conversations with Arthur Miller* (1987), *American Dramatists* (1989), "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?": *Necessary Fictions, Terrifying Realities* (1990), *Public Issues, Private Tensions: Contemporary American Drama* (1993), *Approaches to Teaching Miller's "Death of a Salesman"* (1995), and *American Drama since 1960: A Critical History* (1996). Roudané is editor of the *South Atlantic Review*.

NANCY M. TISCHLER is a Professor of English and Humanities at the Pennsylvania State University and Director of Summer Sessions. She has also taught at the University of Arkansas, the George Washington University, and Susquehanna University. She wrote the first dissertation on Tennessee Williams under her maiden name, Nancy Patterson, and also wrote the first full-length critical study, which was reviewed favorably by Brooks Atkinson in the *New York*

*Times Book Review*. She has written books and articles on various other subjects – Southern literature, modern drama, religion, and women, but has continued to work on Tennessee Williams. She has been a member of the editorial board for the *Tennessee Williams Newsletter* and *Journal*, and has contributed to a number of collections and studies of Williams. Currently, with Albert Devlin, Professor of the University of Missouri, she is editing the “Collected Letters of Tennessee Williams” for publication by New Directions in 1999.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1911     26 *March*   Born Thomas Lanier Williams in Columbus, Mississippi to Cornelius Coffin and Edwina Dakin Williams. Sister Rose Isabel born on 17 November 1909.
- 1911-18   Tom and Rose live with their mother and her parents, the Rev. and Mrs. Walter Dakin, in the Episcopal rectory of various Southern towns, as Tom's father is often absent as a traveling salesman. At five, in Clarksdale, Tom has diphtheria with complications that leave him an invalid for two years.
- 1918     *July*   Family moves to St. Louis, Missouri to live with father who has been made branch manager of International Shoe Company. Tom fears father, who taunts him, calling him "Miss Nancy."
- 1919     21 *February*   Brother Walter Dakin born.
- 1924-26   Writes first story, "Isolated," for junior high-school newspaper, and later, travel articles for the high school-paper, finds his first girlfriend in Hazel Kramer.
- 1927     Wins third prize (\$5) from the magazine *Smart Set* for his answer to the question "Can a Good Wife Be a Good Sport?" and published there. Also wins a prize for a movie review of *Stella Dallas*.
- 1928     *July*   Short story "The Vengeance of Nitocris" is published in magazine *Weird Tales*. Tours Europe with his maternal grandfather.
- 1929     Enters the University of Missouri in September and joins a

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fraternity. Becomes the first freshman ever to receive honorable mention in a contest, for his play *Beauty Is the Word*.

- 1930     Earns money during summer vacation by selling *Pictorial Review*.
  
- 1932     Father withdraws him from the university after the winter semester, presumably for failing ROTC. Begins working at International Shoe Company and spends his nights writing.
  
- 1934     Story "Stella for Star" wins first place in amateur contest.
  
- 1935     *Spring*   Claims he has a heart attack, and recuperates at his grandparents' home in Memphis.  
               12 July   First production of his one-act play *Cairo! Shanghai! Bombay!* by Memphis Garden Players.
  
- 1936     *Autumn*   Sees Alla Nazimova perform in Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* and is inspired to be a playwright. Enrolls in Washington University, St. Louis, where he published poetry in the college magazine, *Manuscript*, and wins top prize in a poetry contest. "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" is later adapted into two plays and a film.  
               Begins his literary association with Clark Mills. Receives an acceptance letter from Harriet Monroe of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* for "My Love Was Light," a poem. This is the first hint of a national career in the making.
  
- 1937     First full-length plays are produced, *Candles to the Sun* and *Fugitive Kind*, by the amateur group the Mummers in St. Louis, whose director, Willard Holland, became another early influence of Williams. Transfers to the University of Iowa, where he studies playwriting and production. Has several short plays produced.
  
- 1938     *August*   Graduates with BA degree in English from the University of Iowa.
  
- 1939     Lives briefly in several places in the Midwest, South, and West, including New Orleans in the French Quarter, and it may have

been here that he has his first extended homosexual experience. First uses the name "Tennessee" as the author of "The Field of Blue Children," published in *Story* magazine.

Four plays under the title *American Blues* win \$100 in a contest organized by the Group Theatre. His plays are sent to literary agent Audrey Wood. Travels to Taos, New Mexico, where he visits Frieda Lawrence, and returns to St. Louis, where he works on *Battle of Angels*.

*September* First meeting with Audrey Wood, who becomes his agent.

*December* Awarded a Rockefeller Foundation grant of \$1,000.

1940 *January* Moves to New York to enroll in an advanced playwriting seminar taught by John Gassner at The New School for Social Research. In February, students stage his one-act play *The Long Goodbye*, the first of his plays to be seen in New York. Leaves New York for travels to Memphis and Provincetown, on Cape Cod, where he has his first sustained homosexual affair.

30 *December* *Battle of Angels* opens in Boston but quickly closes after a censorship controversy; is revised as *Orpheus Descending* in 1957.

1941-42 Lives in a variety of locations, including Key West, Florida, and New Orleans, and works at a variety of jobs. Starts the story "Portrait of a Girl in Glass," which will be developed into *The Glass Menagerie*.

1943 *Spring* Returns to St. Louis. His sister Rose is institutionalized for schizophrenia and undergoes prefrontal lobotomy.

*April* Audrey Wood gets him a job as a scriptwriter for MGM and he moves to California.

*May* While writing a film script for Lana Turner, develops "Portrait of a Girl in Glass" into a screenplay, "The Gentleman Caller."

*October* Loses his Hollywood job. *You Touched Me!* opens in Cleveland.

1944 6 *January* Grandmother dies.

*April* Awarded \$1,000 by the National Institute of Arts and Letters for *Battle of Angels*.

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- July* *The Purification* is produced in Pasadena, California, under the direction of Margo Jones.
- 26 December* *The Glass Menagerie* premieres in Chicago.
- 1945 *January or February* Starts working on *A Streetcar Named Desire*.  
*31 March* *The Glass Menagerie* opens on Broadway and wins the New York Drama Critics' Circle, Donaldson, and Sidney Howard Memorial awards.  
*25 September* *You Touched Me!* opens in New York.
- 1946 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton and Other Plays* published.  
*January or February* Starts living with Pancho Rodriguez y Gonzalez.  
*Summer* Beginning of friendship with Southern novelist Carson McCullers. May begins work on *Summer and Smoke*.  
*October* May begins drafting *Camino Real*.
- 1947 *8 July* *Summer and Smoke* opens in Dallas.  
*3 December* *A Streetcar Named Desire* opens in New York starring Jessica Tandy, Marlon Brando, Karl Malden, and Kim Stanley. It wins the Pulitzer Prize for drama and the Donaldson and New York Drama Critics' Circle awards, the first work ever to win all three.  
 Meets Frank Merlo.
- 1948 Visits Europe, including London, where John Gielgud is preparing a production of *The Glass Menagerie*. A first collection of fiction, *One Arm and Other Stories* and *American Blues: Five Short Plays*, published.  
*6 October* *Summer and Smoke* opens in New York. This same month, Frank Merlo moves in with him, the beginning of a fourteen-year relationship. He moves Rose to a private clinic.  
 Meets Maria Britneva, the Lady St. Just.
- 1949 *April* Goes to London, where *A Streetcar Named Desire* is about to open.  
*Winter* Works on *The Rose Tattoo*.
- 1950 A novel, *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* is published, and the film of *The Glass Menagerie* is released.  
*29 December* *The Rose Tattoo* opens in Chicago.

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- 1951     3 February    *The Rose Tattoo* opens in New York, and wins a Tony award. Film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* released.
- 1952     *A Streetcar Named Desire* film version wins the New York Film Critics' Circle Award. Elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.
- 1953     19 March    *Camino Real* opens in New York.  
Works on *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.
- 1954     Publishes *Hard Candy: A Book of Stories* and continues working on *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.  
October    Starts filming *The Rose Tattoo*.
- 1955     14 February    Maternal grandfather dies.  
24 March    *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* opens in New York, where it runs for 694 performances, winning the Pulitzer Prize, and the New York Drama Critics' Circle and Donaldson awards.  
Film version of *The Rose Tattoo* is released.
- 1956     Film *Baby Doll* opens in New York. A first collection of poems, *In the Winter of Cities*, published.  
Spring    Relationship with Frank Merlo deteriorating.  
Summer    In Rome, verging on a nervous breakdown.
- 1957     21 March    *Orpheus Descending* opens in New York.  
May    Father dies.  
June    Starts psychoanalysis with Dr. Lawrence Kubie.
- 1958     7 January    *Garden District (Suddenly Last Summer and Something Unspoken)* opens off-Broadway and (16 September) in London.  
30 January    *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* opens in London. The film version starring Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman is released.  
June    Breaks off analysis with Dr. Kubie and leaves for Europe.  
29 December    *Period of Adjustment* opens in Miami.
- 1959     15 January    *The Rose Tattoo* opens in London.  
10 March    *Sweet Bird of Youth* opens in New York.  
April    Goes to Cuba, where he meets Ernest Hemingway and Fidel Castro.

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- Screen version of *Suddenly Last Summer* starring Elizabeth Taylor, Katherine Hepburn, and Montgomery Clift, is released.
- 1960    10 November    *Period of Adjustment* opens in New York. *The Fugitive Kind* (the movie of *Orpheus Descending*) is released.
- 1961    28 December    *The Night of the Iguana* premieres, and he later wins his fourth New York Drama Critics' Circle Award.
- 1962    11 July    *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* opens at the Spoleto Festival in Italy.  
Film versions of *Sweet Bird of Youth* and *Period of Adjustment* released.
- 1963    16 January    *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* opens in New York.  
September    Frank Merlo dies of cancer. Williams enters period of depression.
- 1964    Film version of *The Night of the Iguana* released.
- 1965    Receives Brandeis University Creative Arts Award.
- 1966    22 February    *Slapstick Tragedy* (*The Mutilated* and *The Gnädiges Fräulein*) opens in New York. *The Knightly Quest: A Novella and Four Short Stories* published.
- 1967    First version of *The Two-Character Play* produced in London.
- 1968    27 March    *Kingdom of Earth* (*The Seven Descents of Myrtle*) opens in New York.  
*Boom!*, the film version of *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* opens.
- 1969    January    Baptized as a Roman Catholic in Key West.  
11 May    *In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel* opens in New York.  
September–December    Enters Barnes Hospital, St. Louis, for psychiatric care.