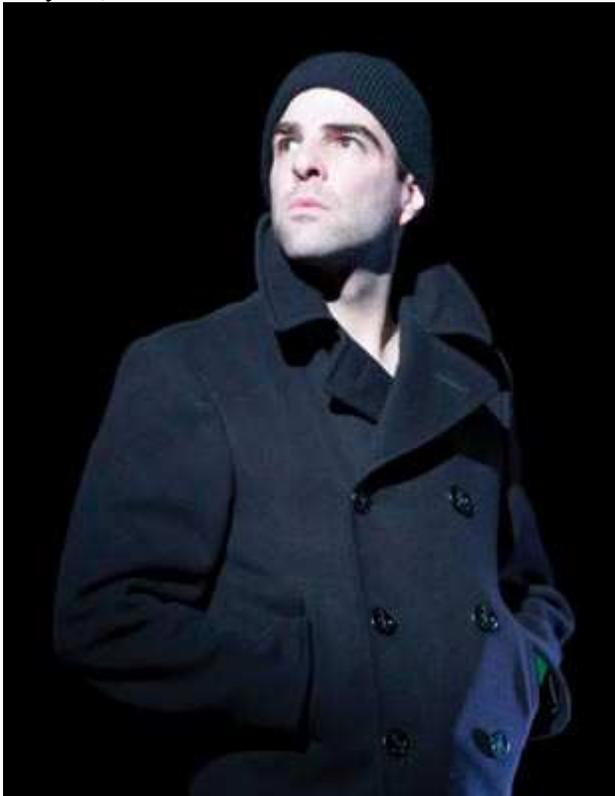


Heart of Glass

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Zachary Quinto the Broadway production of Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*.
Photo: Michael J. Lutch

Zachary Quinto Comes to Provincetown

by Steve Desroches

Each night Zachary Quinto took to the stage as Tom Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* he would adeptly traverse the obstacle course of emotions constructed by Tennessee Williams. The celebrated Broadway revival brought rave reviews for Quinto and his cast mates as they

performed to packed houses at the Booth Theatre, testament to their talents and the genius of the works of Williams. Woven throughout each of Williams' plays is a challenge for actors and audiences, with a parallel promise that those who invest their own passion will be invited into a whole new world with each performance.

"It was exhausting, but really rejuvenating and inspiring," says Quinto of performing in the Tony Award nominated production each night. "It's a gift to work with such an incredible play and this part, really."

The actor, who is also well known for his roles in *Star Trek* and *American Horror Story*, will be in Provincetown this weekend appearing at the Tennessee Williams Annual Dinner, a fundraiser for the Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival. Aware of the festival for years, Quinto says he is thrilled that the timing worked this spring to come to Provincetown to support the efforts of an event that does important work in promoting the legacy of Williams while also creating opportunities for fresh perspectives on American classics.

Quinto's journey with *The Glass Menagerie* began in New England, just across the bay from Provincetown at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge. Founded in 1980, the A.R.T. is considered by many to be one of the top theaters in the country, winning numerous awards, including two recent Tony Awards for their revivals of *Hair* and *Pippin*. The A.R.T. appears to have reversed the theatrical trend where shows are taken to a smaller city, like New Haven, for pre-Broadway runs. What the Cambridge theater has done is to produce work so strong that Broadway comes calling on its own, especially under the artistic direction of Diane Paulus.

The A.R.T. scheduled the production of *The Glass Menagerie* for a several-week run in early 2013 with cast mates Brian J. Smith, Celia Keenan-Bolger, and powerhouse actress Cherry Jones. And, Quinto adds, "for all we knew that was all it was going to be." The A.R.T. creates an incubator of creativity that allows for risk-taking and free expression without the constraints of commercial theater productions, says Quinto.

"It was a real gift for us," says Quinto. "It was a really special way to start and it made it all the more rewarding... We were a family and each of us looked forward to going to work each night. It was something I looked forward to each night."

Critics and audiences agreed that this production was something special. Nominated for seven Tony Awards, this adaptation became the most recent A.R.T. production to strike Broadway with a triumphant thunderbolt. Chief theater critic for the *New York Times* Ben Brantley wrote: "More than any interpretation I've seen of the 1944 drama that made Williams's name, this 'Menagerie'—which stars Cherry Jones and Zachary Quinto in career-defining performances—finds the brute force in a play often described, a bit condescendingly, as lyrical, wispy, elegiac. Yes, the tapered fingers of poetry shape 'The Glass Menagerie.' But when these fingers curl into a fist—and they do so again and again in this production, before you quite realize it—be prepared to have the breath knocked out of you."

This is really Quinto's first time to Provincetown, besides spending an afternoon here when he was eleven years old, "so it doesn't really count," says Quinto. The ability to support the festival

and also see the town where Williams spent those four summers that were so influential to him as well as where he largely wrote *The Glass Menagerie*. Just as Williams created a role that Quinto would go on to play, part-time Provincetown resident Ryan Murphy also created, wrote and produced the television show *American Horror Story* with Brad Falchuk. In the deliciously twisted and gothic series Quinto played murder victim Chad in season one and the psychiatrist/serial killer “Bloody Face” Dr. Oliver Thredson in season two. The wonderfully creative, nightmarish storytelling of the series was a dream for an actor, says Quinto.

“It was like a playground,” says Quinto. “They gave me so much to play with. It was really delectable to explore the secret caves both figuratively and literally.”

Quinto’s ability for emotional exploration has taken him from the world of clandestine counter-terrorism on *24* to the vapid realm of the wealthy and privileged Hollywood hipsters in *So Notorious* to outer space as Dr. Spock in *Star Trek* to the mind of a serial killer in both *American Horror Story* and *Heroes*, and of course, his interpretation of Tom in *The Glass Menagerie*. Stifled, frustrated, curious, sensitive, loving, thoughtful: the complex moving parts that make up Tom’s psyche are there for the taking for the actor willing and able.

“Any good playwright gives the actor everything they need on the page,” says Quinto. “It’s all there.”

The Tennessee Williams Annual Dinner with Zachary Quinto will be held on Saturday, May 31 is at Provincetown Town Hall, 260 Commercial St., with cocktails at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$125 for dinner, \$250 to be seated with Zachary Quinto, and \$1,000 for a table for ten. For cocktail party only is \$75. For tickets and information visit twptown.org.