

Williams fest: Premieres, plays, unusual theater

By KATHI SCRIZZI DRISCOLL | Published: [JUNE 7, 2018](#) | [Leave a comment](#)



Marsha Mason (photo by Brian McDermott/Associated Press)

The Provincetown Tennessee Williams Theater Festival has set its “Wishful Thinking” theme and full program for the Sept. 27-30 event, which includes a never-before-published or performed one-act by Williams that will be directed by four-time Oscar-nominated actress Marsha Mason.

There will also be some unusual theater experiences, including a mashup of Saturday-morning cartoons and Williams, as well as audience members lying in a dark room for one event, and moving around characters in five ghosts stories for another.

The theme, announced at the festival gala last weekend with its guest star Amanda Plummer, is based on the idea of “anticipation” and includes works by Williams and other writers performed by companies from around the country.

The premiere to be directed by Mason (“The Goodbye Girl,” “Cinderella Liberty”) is Williams’ “Talisman Roses,” which he wrote while a college student based on his own sister Rose being taken to a state asylum after a mental collapse and doctors wanting to give her shock therapy. The play will be produced by The Collective NY along with several other world-premiere short plays on the theme of waiting by Charlene A. Donaghy and festival newcomer Joseph Paprzycki.

Among the other shows and experiences, according to festival information:

- “The Rose Tattoo,” a Williams romantic comedy about a Sicilian widow and her daughter, starring Irene Glezos and produced by Moon Lake Productions from New York City;
- “Dona Rosita the Spinster,” by Federico Garcia Lorca, a “poetic drama” about a woman waiting for her fiancé to return, produced with an ensemble of children and adults from Lubbock, Texas and including songs and dances with a harpist and guitarist playing classical Spanish music;
- A new translation of Chekhov’s “Uncle Vanya,” by Moscow Arts critic John Freedman, and produced by Arb Arts from Ann Arbor, Michigan as “environmental theater,” with live music;
- Samuel Beckett’s “Company,” adapted as a sound rather than sight experience by Lane Savadove and presented by Egopo Classic Theater from Philadelphia. Audience members will be asked to collectively become the story’s body lying in the dark by doing so themselves and listening, including to live violin music;
- “The SnagglePuss Chronicles,” a staged reading by Philadelphia company Die-Cast of Mark Russell’s “Exit Stage Left” comic-book miniseries released by DC Entertainment this year. The idea began with Russell sending tweets as Snagglepuss in the voice of Tennessee Williams and the series reimagines Hanna-Barbera’s classic Saturday-morning cartoon character – a pink mountain lion – as a discreetly gay playwright under attack by the House Un-American Activities Committee. Celebrity guest stars are due to appear in cameos as Huckleberry Hound, Marilyn Monroe, Lillian Hellman, Dorothy Parker and the Rosenbergs.

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- The premiere of a “first draft” of “Menageries of Angels,” a site-specific interweaving of ghost stories created by Brenna Geffers and presented by Die-Cast. The show will invite audience members to follow five tales featuring figures “that might be out of Tennessee Williams’ dreams” and who are all stuck between life and death. Audience members will be able to physically roam to follow characters that interest them in any order, or simply remain in one location and watch who passes through.

- Williams’ ghost story “Will Mr. Merriwether Return From Memphis?” by Pensacola Little Theater from Florida, about a landlady who misses her star boarder and fears him dead, so conducts a seance and conjures various ghosts, including Vincent Van Gogh.

- Williams’ “Some Problems for the Moose Lodge,” about parents whose son moves in with them, along with his pregnant, holy-roller fiance; paired with “Steps Must Be Gentle,” a fantasia about poet Hart Crane, both presented by Collective NY.

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