



August 19, 2019
Press release #1781

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:
Marita Meinerts Albinson,
612.225.6142
maritaa@guthrietheater.org

Allie McCurnin, 612.225.6196
alliem@guthrietheater.org

**GUTHRIE THEATER OPENS 2019–2020 SEASON
WITH TENNESSEE WILLIAMS' POETIC MEMORY PLAY
*THE GLASS MENAGERIE***

**Previews begin Saturday, September 14; Opening on Friday, September 20;
Playing through Sunday, October 27 on the Wurtele Thrust Stage**

(*Minneapolis/St. Paul*) — The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, artistic director) today announced casting for the iconic drama ***The Glass Menagerie***, one of the most notable pieces of work from Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Tennessee Williams**. To launch the 2019–2020 Season, **Joseph Haj** will direct this poetic memory play for the first time.

The Glass Menagerie will run September 14 – October 27, 2019, on the Wurtele Thrust Stage. Single tickets start at \$15 for preview performances (September 14–19), and regular ticket prices start at \$25. Tickets are on sale now through the Box Office at 612.377.2224, 1.877.44.STAGE (toll-free) or online at guthrietheater.org. Post-play discussions and access services (ASL-interpreted, audio-described and open-captioned performances) are available on select dates and by request.

From her cramped St. Louis apartment, Amanda Wingfield dreams of her days as a Southern debutante while worrying about the future of her aimless son Tom and unmarried daughter Laura. With their father absent and the Great Depression in motion, the siblings find comfort in their foibles — alcohol, movies and writing for Tom and a collection of glass animals for Laura — which only heightens Amanda’s anxiety. When a gentleman caller arrives for dinner, the Wingfields are flooded with hope. But it’s unclear if his presence will change things for the better or shatter their fragile illusions.

At first rehearsal, Haj shared, “*The Glass Menagerie* is not to be counted among the American naturalism plays written during and after World War II. The miracle of Tennessee Williams is that he wrote for an audience who was being fed a steady diet of those plays. And while he obeyed most of those rules, he bent the form to create the ‘memory play,’ and *The Glass Menagerie* became one of the most lyrical and poetic plays in American theater.”

Haj added, “The creative team and I are interested in the idea of how memory works. What do we choose to remember? What, despite our very best efforts, do we find impossible to forget? Making a play on the thrust stage gives us countless opportunities to expand beyond the realism of the play because it is not, strictly speaking, realistic. It’s made up of shards — the bits and pieces of memory.”

The Glass Menagerie is rich in bittersweet nostalgia for the past; it explores relationships that may have been sources of pain yet also provided emotional involvement and a sense of belonging. The play is a masterpiece of compassionate insight and distinctive theatrical vitality. Williams’ script is said to be a semiautobiographical sketch of his early home life during the Great Depression, and the character of Tom Wingfield is frequently identified with Williams himself.

The Glass Menagerie established Williams’ reputation as a playwright, running 561 performances in its 1945 Broadway run and instantly becoming a commercial and artistic success. The play has frequently been revived around the world, including several times on Broadway. The Guthrie’s upcoming production will be the fifth time the theater has produced the play, with previous productions in 1964, 1979, 1988 and 2007.

The cast of *The Glass Menagerie* includes **Remy Auberjonois** (Guthrie: *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Noises Off*, *Sense and Sensibility*; Broadway: *The Assembled Parties*, *Death of a Salesman*, *White Christmas*, *The Country Girl*, *Frost/Nixon*) as Tom Wingfield, **Carey Cox** (Guthrie: debut; Broadway: *The Glass Menagerie*, Laura u/s) as Laura Wingfield, **Grayson DeJesus** (Guthrie: debut; Broadway: *War Horse*, first national tour) as Jim O’Connor and **Jennifer Van Dyck** (Guthrie: debut; Broadway: *Hedda Gabler*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Two Shakespearean Actors*, *The Secret Rapture*) as Amanda Wingfield.

The creative team for *The Glass Menagerie* includes **Joseph Haj** (director), **Mikiko Suzuki MacAdams** (scenic designer), **Raquel Barreto** (costume designer), **Christopher Akerlind** (lighting designer), **Darron L West** (sound designer), **Jack Herrick** (composer), **Maija García** (movement director), **Carla Steen** (dramaturg), **Jill Walmsley Zager** (resident voice coach), **Timothy Markus** (stage manager), **Kathryn Sam Houkom** (assistant stage manager) and **Tracey Maloney** (assistant director).

Tennessee Williams (playwright) is generally regarded as one of the great American playwrights, frequently placed alongside Arthur Miller and Eugene O’Neill in the American canon. He wrote more than 100 poems, more than 60 short stories, at least 25 full-length plays, many short plays, two novels (*The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* and *Moise and the World of Reason*) and a memoir (*Memoirs*). His most celebrated works include *Summer and Smoke* (1947), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), *The Rose Tattoo* (1951), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955) and *The Night of the Iguana* (1961). He won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for both *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and received a Tony Award for *The Rose Tattoo*.

Joseph Haj (director) is the artistic director of the Guthrie Theater where he has directed *Cyrano de Bergerac* (his own adaptation), *Romeo and Juliet*, *Sunday in the Park With George*, *King Lear*, *South Pacific*, *Pericles* and *West Side Story*, which was the highest-grossing production in Guthrie history. Prior to joining the Guthrie in 2015, he served as producing artistic director at PlayMakers Repertory Company.

As a director, Haj has worked at theaters across the U.S. and directed projects in a maximum-security prison, rural South Carolina, the West Bank and Gaza. He received an M.F.A. from The University of North Carolina before beginning a career in acting and working with many internationally known directors. He was named one of 25 theater artists who will have a significant impact on the field over the next quarter-century by *American Theatre* magazine, and he is the recipient of the 2000 NEA/White House Millennium Council Grant awarded to 50 American artists, 2014 Zelda Fichandler Award (SDCF) and 2017 Rosetta LeNoire Award (AEA).

THE GUTHRIE THEATER (Joseph Haj, artistic director) was founded by Sir Tyrone Guthrie in 1963 and is an American center for theater performance, production, education and professional training, dedicated to producing the great works of dramatic literature and cultivating the next generation of theater artists. Under Haj's leadership, the Guthrie is guided by four core values: Artistic Excellence; Community; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Fiscal Responsibility. The Guthrie produces a mix of classic and contemporary plays on three stages and continues to set a national standard for excellence in theatrical production and performance, serving nearly 400,000 patrons annually. In 2006, the Guthrie opened a new home, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel, located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Open to the public year-round, it houses three state-of-the-art stages, production facilities, classrooms, full-service restaurants and dramatic public lobbies. guthrietheater.org

###