



Magical Muse: Millennial Essays on Tennessee Williams

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In this unique and engaging collection, twelve essays celebrate the legacy of one of America's most important playwrights and investigate Williams's enduring effect on America's cultural, theatrical, and literary heritage.

Like Faulkner before him, Tennessee Williams gave universal appeal to southern characters and settings. His major plays, from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *The Glass Menagerie* to *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Night of the Iguana*, continue to capture America's popular imagination, a significant legacy. Though he died in 1983, only recently have Williams's papers become available to the public, bringing to light a number of intriguing discoveries—letters, drafts, and several unpublished and unproduced plays. These recent developments make a reassessment of Williams's life and work both timely and needed.

The essays in this collection originated as presentations at the 27th annual Alabama Symposium on English and American Literature at The University of Alabama in 1999. The book addresses a wide range of topics, among them the influence of popular culture on Williams's plays, and, in turn, his influence on popular culture; his relationship to Hollywood and his struggles with censorship, Hollywood standards, and the competing vision of directors such as Elia Kazan; his depictions of gender and sexuality; and issues raised by recently discovered plays.

Anyone interested in American literature and drama will find this collection of fresh, accessible essays a rewarding perspective on the life, work, and legacy of one of the bright stars of American theatre.

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