

UNIVERSITY OF GJAKOVA

FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY

Department of English Language and Literature



BA DIPLOMA THESIS

Characters and Symbols in Tennessee Williams's

“The Glass Menagerie”

Supervisor:

Prof. Asoc. Dr. Lirak Karjagdiu

Candidate:

Engjelija Muqaj

Gjakova, 2018

Declaration

I, Engjelija Muqaj, herewith pledge that I intend to work on my diploma paper/BA/ thesis fully respecting academic standards of the University of Gjakova “Fehmi Agani”. Therefore, any reference from published or unpublished work will be duly acknowledged through quotation, summarizing and paraphrasing.

Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Biography of the author	7
2.1 Life	7
2.2 Work.....	8
3. Significant information about the book	10
3.1. Historical background	10
3.2. The popularity of the book.....	10
3.3. The relevance of the book	10
4. Character analysis	12
4.1. Tom	12
4.2 Amanda	15
4.3 Laura.....	18
4.4 Jim	22
5. Conflicts in The Glass Menagerie.....	24
6. Symbols.....	26
Conclusion	30
References.....	31

1.Introduction

Tennessee Williams wrote some of America's most affectionate dramas. He was celebrated as a poet of the human heart. His work is characterized by a purely unique touch to human feelings, exhibiting the plays at his most personal. This is best illustrated by the play "The Glass Menagerie" which is crafted with autobiographical revelations.

The glass menagerie is a memory play produced in 1944. The author, Tennessee Williams, achieved the success he was longing for because of it. According to Heintzeman and Howard(2005), "with The Glass Menagerie, Williams was able to create a sort of 'PLASTIC THEATRE' - a highly expressionistic language of the stage that would replace what he saw as the stale conventions of realism"(p.92). In other words, he overturned the American theater. The play is centered around an unhappy family consisting of a young boy (Tom), who unconditionally supports the family which his father has abandoned years ago, a shy, socially and physically handicapped character, his sister Laura, whose obsession with a collection of glass menagerie keeps her away from reality. Both of the children live under the pressure of their mother Amanda who wants them to live in accordance with her rules.

It is a dramatic interpretation of the memories of the narrator. The drama revolves around different themes, such as the difficulty of accepting reality, loneliness, the power of memory, abandonment, the decline of the old south, the importance of books and movies, illusions etc. The play highlights mostly the urge of all the characters to escape from their present moment and their struggle with the past and the future. According to Murphy(2014), "each of the characters in The Glass Menagerie is entrapped in some way, and each has found some means of escape, the grinning father being the most successful"(p.57). William through this play showed how an artist can express his own mental and spiritual state through his art, making the reader have the same feelings.

Some of the books that will be used are: "Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Tennessee Williams" by Harold Bloom, "Bloom's How to Write About Tennessee Williams" by Jennifer Banach, "Critical Companion to Tennessee Williams: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work" by Greta Heintzeman and Alycia Smith-Howard, and "The Glass Menagerie" by Tennessee Williams.

This research paper intends to give some details and analysis of *The Glass Menagerie's* characters and also highlights some of the most important symbols. I will employ the process of deductive reasoning by providing a brief summary and a general perspective of the book and the life of the author. Then, I will narrow down this perspective by analyzing the plot through the experiences and feelings of each major and minor character, and by revealing in deeper detail the symbolism this book portrays. Finally, I will conclude by restating the amazing literary work the author accomplished; but mainly the ability and power this book possess to connect its characters with the readers at any time in history.

The whole paper will be divided into six chapters. The first chapter will be the introduction in which will be given an overall description of the book and a very short summary. The second chapter will show some relevant information about the book, including the historical background, popularity, and relevance. The third chapter will give information about the author life and work. The fourth chapter will analyze the major and minor characters. The fifth chapter will highlight the main conflicts of the characters. The sixth one will discuss the main symbols and their meanings. The final chapter will consist of the conclusion. Logically, it will summarize all that has been discussed in the paper. And the thesis's content will include the bibliography of the books and other sources that have helped to shape this Bachelor Thesis.

Working on this diploma paper was a great pleasure because the play is so captivating. It is sensitive and everyone can relate himself to one of the characters. The only difficulty was finding the books that would help me work on this paper with a critical point of view. Yet this problem was solved with the help of my colleges who study English and were willing to lend me their materials. My studies would have remained a dream had it not been for my family support. I cannot find words to express my gratitude for everything that they were willing to do for me, so here goes a special thanks to them. It gives me great pleasure in acknowledging the support and help of Professor Lirak Karjagdiu for the useful comments, remarks, and engagement throughout the whole process of this diploma thesis. Furthermore, I would like to thank the assistant Lorina Pervorfi who has willingly shared her time and knowledge with me, contributing with different materials used in this paper. Also, I would like to thank my colleague and friend Fjoralba Haxhaj, firstly for being there to support me as a true friend, and secondly for helping me in all the projects we worked for these four years of study. God Bless Everyone.

2. Biography of the author

2.1 Life

Tennessee Williams is widely known as one of the finest playwrights in American history. He was born to Cornelius Coffin Williams and Edwina Dakin Williams as Thomas Lanier Williams III on March 26, 1911, in Columbus, Mississippi. His childhood name was Tom, and he was the second of three children. His father worked as a traveling salesman and due to his occupations, he was most of the time absent. His mother worked as a music teacher. She was lovely to her children but somehow possessive (Bloom 2007). He attended Soldan High School, and at the age of sixteen, he published his first work. His essay “Can a Good Wife Be a Good Sport” appeared in “Smart Set” magazine in May of 1927 and in 1928, his story “The Vengeance of Nitocris” was published in *Weird Tales*. A year later, Tom began studying journalism at the University of Missouri at Columbia. As a freshman, he wrote his first play, entitled *Beauty Is the Word*, which received an honorable mention from the University Dramatic Arts Club. His father withdrew him from the university as he showed bad results, and found him a job as a typist for Continental Shoemakers, where he would work for the next few years. After he spent two years working all day and writing all night, he had a nervous breakdown and went to Memphis. During this time, the mental health of Tom’s sister, Rose, was rapidly failing. His inability to save his sister, coupled with the backdrop of his complex domestic situation, provided him with material that would appear again and again in his works (Anderson, 2010). Despite the distractions of a difficult home life Tom re-enrolled in college and graduated from the University of Iowa in 1938. After he graduated, Williams submitted some plays in order to compete in New York. Because the age requirement was twenty-five, he had to change his birth date to 1914, and his name to “Tennessee” Williams. He won a special \$100 prize in the competition. Williams then started traveling and during this period realized he was homosexual. Despite the fact that his play “*Battle of Angels*”, failed, he continued traveling constantly and working different jobs. Soon Williams’s fate changed with the production of “*The Glass Menagerie*” which was based on his own disturbed family. It opened in Chicago in 1944 and later ran in New York, where it won the New York Critics Circle Award.

Despite his success, Williams suffered emotionally throughout his life. He experienced the death of several loved ones over the years: his father, grandfather, his lover, (Frank Merlo), and finally his mother. Williams fought long battles with depression, alcohol, and drug abuse. Contrary to his confessed wish to someday pass away peacefully while sleeping in the brass bed at his New Orleans apartment, Tennessee Williams died tragically on February 25, 1983, at the Hotel Elysée in New York (Heintzelman & Howard,2005).

2.2 Work

Though not always immediately well-received, Williams went on to write some of the most important and dynamic plays in the history of American theater, including: “The Glass Menagerie”(1945), “A Streetcar Named Desire”(1947), “Summer And Smoke”(1948),“The Rose Tattoo”(1948), “Cat On A Hot Tin Roof”(1955), “Orpheus Descending”(1957), “Sweet Bird Of Youth”(1959), “The Night Of The Iguana” (1964). Other of his works include:“Camino Real”, “Sweet Bird of Youth”,“Summer and Smoke”,“The Milk Train Doesn’t Stop Here Anymore”, “The Eccentricities of a Nightingale”.According to Heintzelman and Howard (2005), “Each of Williams’s works challenges readers’ perceptions of style, structure, society, and the meaning of literature, drama, theater, humanity, and, ultimately, life itself”(p.ix). Additionally, he published several volumes of poetry, as well as compilations of original short stories. His major themes include loneliness, social isolation and the conflict between repression and release, homosexuality, substance abuse, and depression. Bannach (2009) stated: “Scholars and critics have cited Williams’s influences as William Shakespeare, Hart Crane, Anton Chekhov, D. H. Lawrence, Marcel Proust, and Jean-Paul Sartre, to name only a few; we also know that Williams was influenced by Greek mythology and romanticism”(p.77). His characters are complex and are often seen as representations of his family members. As Murphy(2014) emphasized, “Williams’s life was his writing and vice versa”(p.2). The American South, particularly the landscape or rural Mississippi, is featured prominently as a setting and background throughout his work. He writes using informal and formal voice depending on the aspect of the play. Tennessee Williams’ plays are characterized by a simple and clear structure. Tennessee Williams made changes in his plays many times before, during, and after their productions, consequently, readers can find three published versions of his plays(Murphy,2014). In cases like “Summer And Smoke”and “Battle Of Angels”, he reworked the scripts so

drastically that he considered them new plays and had them produced and published under new titles. “A Streetcar Named Desire” and “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” awarded him with the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Whereas “The Glass Menagerie” and “The Night of the Iguana” received New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards. “The Rose Tattoo” which he dedicated to Frank Merlo (his lover) also won the Tony Award for best play. Anderson(2010) said: “His emergence as a playwright initiated a period of renewed energy and excitement in the post–World War II American drama, inspiring theatrical artists with both the form and content of his plays”(p.253). Despite the eclipse of his reputation during his lifetime, in the 30 years since his death, Williams has continued to occupy his place as one of the three or four great playwrights the United States has produced.

3. Significant information about the book

3.1. Historical background

“The Glass Menagerie” refers to a specific time of change and contradiction in America when the working class struggled in the face of a newly industrialized economy. The play takes place during the 1930s, the era of Great Depression when 12,830,000 people were unemployed. The uneasy time period is symmetrical with the uneasy peace in Wingfield’s family. Time and place helped William to comply the plot of the book, highlighting many events. Jennifer (2009) noted that “they enabled Williams to use the advent of the radio and television and the magic of the cinema as tools to create a unique and powerful work” (p.92).

3.2. The popularity of the book

Although his work did not consistently receive the positive critical acclaim that Williams hoped for during his life, his plays have survived the test of time and are widely produced throughout the world today. “The Glass Menagerie” as the Tennessee Williams's first real success, was considered as a masterpiece from its first performance in Chicago during its tryout tour beginning on 26 December 1944, the Broadway production opened on 31 March 1945. It ran for 563 performances, establishing Williams as a major new voice in American theater. The play has been frequently revived and has been filmed four times (Anderson, 2010).

3.3. The relevance of the book

Although the book was written in the 1940s, it can surely be said that the story is still relevant today. Kubzansky (2014) pronounced: “It's about family pain, which never goes out of style”. She also added that “it's really astonishingly contemporary, about a family loving each other and torturing each other at the same time”.

Many of the themes introduced in the play still reflect today’s humanity issues. The reader can easily find himself into one of the characters’ actions or feelings. Amanda is a single parent, forced to raise two children on her own. As the marriage is recently in crisis more than ever before, many parents face tough challenges of raising their children alone. William used the imperious character of Amanda to show the persistence of parents to mold their children’s personality as they want them to be and not as the children really feel. A phenomenon which still

occurs in almost all families. “His essential truth— that families want to shape us in their image, and if we don’t break away, we’ll suffocate— still touches our hearts”¹. There always exist people who are different in the way they look and suffer because of their defect by becoming introvert and living a solitary life as Laura. Tom, on the other hand, is entrapped into his own family. Forced to win the bread for them, he has given up all his dreams. There are still people who work hard to survive in the harsh economic reality and cannot do or have things they always wanted because of their lower outcome. The theme of escape as one the main themes of the book is still current at the present day. The characters are all trying ways to escape their reality by going to movies or polishing glass figurines. The same can be said about everyone in the world. People are always trying to escape their current reality for different reasons and they do that using various ways. It seems that they are never happy with what they have, same as *The Glass Menagerie*’s characters because their reality does not meet their expectations. Murphy (2014) stated that “what made *The Glass Menagerie* unique as a play in 1944 was its overt presentation to the audience as a work of art, a play that made the subjective perception of memory into an aesthetic approach to truth” (p.59). To sum up, the play can still relate to everyone today because it presents truths about human nature. Human nature never really changes.

¹ See Fabbri, A.R. (2008, February 19). *The Glass Menagerie*’ at People’s Light. Broad Street Review.

4. Character analysis

As Tennessee Williams' first big success, "The Glass Menagerie" and its characters have been discussed by many critics. This play is known to have a very simple plot, but not a simple character list. Its characters are considered to be round and complex ones. They change and develop over the course of the play. The language they used, their dialogues with one another and their gestures, make them something greater than just ordinary personalities. They are characterized by strong feelings, deep thoughts, and sometimes with a strange behavior. There are three major characters: Tom, Amanda, Laura, and one minor character, Jim.

4.1. Tom

Tom Wingfield is given a double role in the play, as a narrator, and as a character. Everything is seen from his perspective. Williams used memory as a critical device in "The Glass Menagerie" and chose Tom to interpret it (Bloom, 2007). The entire play is based on Tom's memory belonging to the difficult period of his life while he was living with his mother and sister in St. Louis during the Great Depression. Heintzelman and Howard (2005) noted that "Tom Wingfield is Williams's most autobiographical character" (p.75). Tom's leave-taking mirrors Williams's own departure from his family's Saint Louis, Missouri, apartment and from his emotionally unstable sister, Rose Isabel Williams.

Tom lives in two realities, one is of the petty world of the Wingfield house and the shoe factory, whereas the other is full of poetries, movies, and adventures. Besides working at that hateful job as a consequence of the responsibilities because of his father's abandonment, he has his illusionary world composed of things he longs for- his independence and freedom to experience adventures (Banach, 2010). Tom's major conflict is between his imaginary world and the real world. He wants excitement, new experiences, new places; in short, the opposite of what he was getting working at the shoe factory and living at the apartment.

According to Murphy (2014), "he is trapped in the '2 by 4 situation' of the apartment, the result of his father's desertion, where he is the much-needed financial support of his mother and sister" (p.58). He has no time to have fun or to accomplish his dreams, and this makes him feel unfortunate. There is a lot going on inside him as he confesses to Jim: "I'm starting to boil inside. I know I seem dreamy, but inside - well, I'm boiling" (Williams, 1944, p.62).

All his obsessions contradict his mother's world, who criticizes everything he does. Being judged for even the smallest details leads him into the feeling of disappointment about the way his mother treats him. He even can't eat freely without any opposition by her, and points it out to her directly: "I haven't enjoyed one bite of this dinner because of your constant directions on how to eat it" (Williams, 1994, p. 6). Amanda wants him to be in accordance with her principles, without leaving him enough space to be himself, and this irritates profoundly Tom, who strongly confronts his mother: "What do you think I'm at? Aren't I supposed to have any patience to reach the end of, Mother? I know, I know. It seems unimportant to you, what I'm doing - what I want to do - having a little difference between them! You don't think that?" (Williams, 1944, p. 22). When she began confiscating the books he reads and tried to control how he eats and when he eats, how to quit smoking, what to read, and so forth their relationship becomes progressively worse.

Tom contended that "man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, and a fighter" (Williams, 1944, p. 34). These are qualities which her husband possessed and so she refused to recognize them as decent. She replies to him: "Instinct is something that people have got away from! It belongs to animals! Christian adults don't want it" (Williams, 1944, p. 34). The tension between them reaches the culmination when Amanda accuses him of being selfish, and he cruelly replies:

Listen! You think I'm crazy about the warehouse? [He bonds fiercely toward her slight figure.] You think I'm in love with the Continental Shoemakers? You think I want to spend fifty five years down there in that - celotexinterior! with - fluorescent - tubes! Look! I'd rather somebody picked up a crowbar and battered out my brains - than go back mornings! I go! Every time you come in yelling..... that God damn 'Rise and Shine!' - 'Rise and Shine!' I say to myself, 'How lucky dead people are! 'But I get up. I go! For sixty-five dollars a month I give up all that I dream of doing and being ever! And you say self - selfs' all I ever think of. Why, listen, if self is what I thought of, Mother, I'd be where he is - G O N E -. (Williams, 1944, p. 23).

All he feels is the desire to escape his own dull life. As Bloom (2007) noted, "one of the ways to counter his frustration he feels towards reality is by going to the movies" (p. 17). When Tom tries to make his mother see that they have different personalities, so that he is not an exact reproduction of her own ideas, Amanda rejects the things which Tom stands for. Despite going to cinema almost every night, nothing really satisfies him. He is a sad character, who hates everything around him. His words, "how lucky dead people are" (Williams, 1944, p. 23), indicate the grief inside him. What Amanda requests the most from Tom is security, which she is

convinced he is not advancing enough in offering it to her and to his sister. In her point of view, Tom is seen as a person who has lost direction. Among all other complaints, she says to him: “You are the only young man that I know of who ignores the fact that the future becomes the present, the present the past, and the past turns into everlasting regret if you don't plan for it”(Williams,1944,p.45).

While Tom and his mother's relationship is tense and full of conflict, Tom and his sister's relationship is portrayed as a sensitive one. He feels pity for her crippled sister and tries to maintain a close relationship with her. Her inner state is so important to him to the point that he reluctantly apologizes to their mother so that Laura would feel better. Yet he is so reasonable to see her condition and tries to make it clear to Amanda as well, “Mother, you mustn't expect too much of Laura /Laura seems all those things to you and me because she's ours and we love her. We don't even notice she's crippled any more”(Williams,1944,p.47). In his heart, he truly cares for his sister. He wants her to be happy although he is afraid that the world will turn her away because of her handicap. The relationship with Laura was the best thing of living in that family because it was the two of them against their possessive mother. Still, he finds himself trapped by his responsibility of taking care of her for the rest of her life. This would cost him with the destruction of his dreams to be free, a decision which he is not willing to make anymore.

Bloom (2007) noted that “Tom painfully recognizes that his sister is out of place in the world, ‘For nowadays the world is lit by lightning’—tragedy, desperation, and war”(p.44). After having long hard days, he has to come to their tinny apartment and to the sad reality of his critical mother and his poor helpless sister. Tom sometimes has a feeling like he is entangled, taking care of his family, when he could be somewhere else and living his own life instead. That's when he starts to feel the urge of going further with his life, leaving the current situation behind. Even the movies are not attractive to him anymore, as he concludes, “people go to the movies instead of moving”(Williams,1944,p.61). His desires to rid himself of familial bonds are complicated, though, by his affinity for his sister Laura, who he feels protective of. Williams writes in the character notes that “to escape from a trap he has to act without pity”(Williams,1944,p.xviii).

Responding to the persistent requests of his mother, Tom brings home a gentleman caller for his sister as a way to give up his responsibility and move on with his life. With the match being a disaster and failing to resolve anything, he decides to leave eventually. Amanda turns angrily on

Tom for what she considers his blunder, and they argue bitterly, leading to the realization of Amanda's deepest fear: Tom storms out the door, never to return (Bloom, 2007). He seems to be self-contradictory again because he hated what his father did, but decides to do exactly the same thing. He is quite aware of his act: "I'm like my father; The bastard son of a bastard"(Williams,1944,p.62).

Tom's rejection of his family was not an egocentric escape. Instead, Tom recognized that he must escape in order to protect the things he always loved. Yet this act does not come without remorse. As the play ends, Tom is again seen in the present, reflecting back with sadness and a deep feeling of regret for what he did(Anderson, 2010).He ends up by saying:"Oh, Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be"(Williams,1944,p.97).According to Banach (2010),"Tom's thinly veiled admission of guilt seems to indicate that memory is a powerful and overbearing force that cannot be conquered"(p.88).He ends up with his sister forever in his heart, despite the distance, proving to himself that he loved her more than he was aware of.

4.2 Amanda

Amanda Wingfield, Tom and Laura's mother is the most prominent and dynamic character in "The Glass Menagerie". Her character reflects an example of a complex individual whose communication and actions transmits a slightly infuriating and solitary mother. She is abandoned by her husband, whom she describes as "a telephone man who fell in love with long distances"(Williams,1944,p.5).Now she is forced to live in the gloomy lower-middle-class environment, she pulls herself back from reality into the illusory world of her youth. Amanda Wingfield was well raised as prominent Southern Belle, but her husband was an alcoholic and left her in bad economic conditions. In her opinion, less money meant a decline in societal class. Amanda, according to Williams's character notes, "having failed to establish contact with reality, continues to live vitally in her illusions"(Williams,1944,p.xviii)."She escapes the reality of having been deserted by her husband and scraping out a living in her dreary apartment by selling magazine subscriptions and working in department stores by means of her fanciful memories of days filled with jonquils and gentleman callers back in Blue Mountain".² She is obsessed not

² See Murphy,B. (2014). *The theatre of Tennessee Williams*, p.57

only with her memories but with the manners and customs of her youth, which are outdated in Depression-era and thus her behavior may seem inappropriate from time to time. She spends most of her time telling her children a hundred times stories of her girlhood. This is a common occurrence from the comments made by Laura and Tom. Tom says: “I know what’s coming”, and Laura replies: “Yes, But let her tell it”(p.7).

South forms are perceived by her as symbols of true love, purity and high-class values. The reality does not offer these ideals anymore, which is very devastating for her. In 2005, Heintzelman and Howard noted that “Amanda and her idealized Southern girlhood—grotesquely laden with jonquils and suitors—clash with the everyday contingencies of cold-calling, mastication, a disabled daughter, and an absconded husband in a way that is both painfully comical and brutally revealing”(p.91). Amanda fails in inspiring her children with new ideas because of her refusal to give up eventually the ways of a past that no longer exists. Although her stories seem endless, they have a limit. The starting point of her sufferings is the end point of her recollections and that is her husband’s picture hanged on the wall. According to Bloom (2007), “It is critical to note that Amanda’s tales of the past always end with the thought of her husband”(p.38). Faced with the consequences of her choice of husband, she will not allow her to take the memory forward because including a failed marriage would destroy the images she is so fond of recalling.

Struggling to live normally in a reality with little money and less hope, Amanda is still characterized by her ineffectual attempts at optimism. Bigsby (1997, as cited in Debusscher, 2000) affirmed that “in keeping with his socio-economic interpretation, feels that it is Amanda who bears the greatest burden in this play: ‘twice abandoned and left to watch over her daughter . . . she is allowed moments of touching vulnerability when she exposes the nature of her own pain’”.³

Even though Amanda has no money, she tries to portray herself as though she did. She likes to wear her best clothes from her past and wanted to keep her home clean and decorated to make the best impression for visitors. Her dresses are designed to maintain appearances in public because she was raised to be a woman of privilege. However, her attempts on stylish dressing are

³See Debusscher, G. (2000). Tennessee Williams’s Dramatic Charade: Secrets and Lies in The Glass Menagerie.

determined by her eyes which lack the objectivity to see herself as others see her. Banach (2010) indicates that “she is unable to abandon the romantic notions of a fading way of life”(p.19).

Amanda's complex character directly affects her action and dialogue with her children. Trying to fulfill her role as a mother in the best way possible, she unwittingly hurts them even though she means well. She has a strong desire to see her children to triumph in life and constantly repeats to them: “I've had to put up a solitary battle all these years. But you're my right-hand bower! Don't fall down, don't fail”(Williams,1944,p.30). She loves them too much--sometimes to a point of smothering which results in her attempt to push them towards her inspirations and away from anything that does not suit her ideal. According to Banach (2010), “Amanda recalls a better past obsessively and nags her children, thinking that it will compel them to be better people and, ultimately, help them to find the success that will help them all out of their current situation”(p. 20).The past experience with her husband has made her bitter, and that bitterness is what motivates her to make her children become something.

Her stubbornness makes her cruel to her children without the intention. Most of the time she escapes reality by fantasizing yet she doesn't tolerate her children to do the same, which makes her blindly hypocritical.She does not want to be cruel purposely, in fact, “she is simply doing her best to endure, and wants her children to escape a fate that she cannot”(Bloom,2007,p.17).Despite the fact that she is aware of her impulsive behavior, she still finds difficult to respect the differences between her children and herself. Amanda did not understand why Laura was not an outgoing type and did not attract young gentlemen as she once did. She does not see that Laura has inherited from her the daydreaming, unreal qualities showed by her obsessions with glass figurines.Tom notices that Amanda has irrational expectations of Laura ignoring her health problem blindly(Heintzelam & Howard, 2005).She wants to see perfection on Laura and is unwilling to accept the effects of her physical ailments, which lead her to live a quiet and reserved life. She cannot fathom a child of hers who is deathly afraid of people. Amanda fears that Laura will be dependent on the charity of others for the rest of her life. Amanda warns Laura that there is no future in staying home playing with her glass collection and her father's phonograph record (Heintzelman & Howard, 2005).In forcing her to go to business school, Amanda showed her concern for Laura, as she was trying to provide a bright future for

her. Fearing that her daughter might become an old maid who is not able to have stable life, she arranges the visit of a gentleman caller.

In dealing with Tom, Amanda's attitude is harsher than with Laura. She attempts to mold him according to her beliefs about his responsibilities as a man, sometimes treating him as a child. Amanda dreams of his advancement and encourages him to improve himself in order for him not to follow his father footsteps. Amanda is emotionally unstable for a mother figure. She becomes extremely happy after Tom apologizes to her. However, as soon as things don't go as smoothly as she was thinking she immediately changes her attitude towards him. She doesn't know when to stop complaining; which often results in the exhaustion of Tom's patience. She is unfair to him sometimes. Tom sacrifices his youth for her and Laura and she stills has the courage to accuse him, "Self, self, self is all that you ever think of"(Williams,1944,p.35).

Amanda is a combination of selfishness and selflessness. She honestly believes what is good for her is good for children. Sometimes Tom and Laura feel that they are trapped by her mother, but deeply they do have affection towards her. According to *The Feminist Spectator* (2013), "Tom and Laura might cut their eyes at one another and mimic Amanda's long-rehearsed speeches about her days as a debutante, but it's clear here that her children adore her nonetheless". She tries to control her children, without the awareness that they are completely unlike her, and they do not share the same aspirations. Amanda lives for her children, whom she loves fiercely. During a conversation with Tom, she confesses to him: "I'll tell you what I wished for on the moon. Success and happiness for my precious children! I wish for that whenever there's a moon, and when there isn't a moon, I wish for it, too"(Williams,1944,p.40).

Nevertheless her constant nagging, her uninterrupted storytelling of her girlhood, and her inability to face the reality she was living in, she stifles her daughter and drives away her son.

4.3 Laura

Laura Wingfield, is Tom's sister and the daughter of Amanda. Even though she is the center of many scenes, she has very little dialogue in the play and is mostly portrayed by the perceptions or dialogue of other characters. Although all these characters revolve around her, she is a complete standstill. A childhood illness has left one leg slightly shorter than the other, making her walk with a limp. Extremely shy because of this, she dropped out from high school and later

struggles with classes at Rubicam's Business College. Due to her problem, she is not willing to socialize with others so she's forced into the pleasure of having her own self for a company and does little but daydream and play with her glass menagerie, the only thing that seems to captivate her. The title itself refers to Laura's lovely collection that she carefully polishes and rearranges (Murphy, 2014).

As Tennessee Williams describes her, "Laura is like a piece of her own glass collection, too exquisitely fragile to move from the shelf"(Williams,1944,p.xviii).Laura herself is as delicate and otherworldly as her miniature animals. She escapes from the anxiety of social interactions and the pressures of daily life by slipping into a fantasy world populated with beautiful, immortal objects. In other words, as Bloom(2007) described:

This physically as well as emotionally fragile woman of almost twenty four escapes from her mid-twentieth century urban predicament in St.Louis, as someone of Romantic temperament would,through art and music through the beauty of her glass menagerie and of the records she plays on her Victrola. (p.65).

Throughout the play it is evident how important the glass menagerie is to Laura."Glass is something you have to take good care of"(Williams,1944,p.80),she states. She does not let anyone to touch her lovely glass collection. She keeps warning the others: "Oh, be careful - if you breathe, it breaks"(Williams,1944,p.83).

In front of her glass collections is the place where she can hide herself and be safe mentally and emotionally. As Tom says, she "lives in a world of her own—a world of—little glass ornaments"(Williams,1944,p.48).Laura is devastatingly timid and embarrassed because of her infirmity. She has no social interaction, and even her brother, Tom, who clearly cares for her, doesn't really break into her little world. Her personality is so fragile, which made her trap in her fantasy dreams, indicating that she is not only physically crippled but emotionally as well (Bloom, 2007).She is so sensitive and gets frightened and nervous when Tom and Amanda quarrel and so must serve as peacemaker between them. Seeing her mother nervous, distresses her and sometimes she announces it directly: "Mother, when you're disappointed, you get that awful suffering look on your face, like the picture of Jesus' mother in the museum"(Williams,1944,p.15).

Laura is in the maximum threat to her family. She lacks the strength of her mom, Amanda, and capability to getaway like her brother Tom. Both her mother and her brother are aware that she is not like them at all, but they don't have the same description of her. Tom judges Laura in a realistic way and warns Amanda: "Mother you mustn't expect much of Laura"(Williams,1944,p.47). He is sure that Laura is different from other girls, but Amanda objects him: "I think the difference is all to her advantage"(William,1944,p.47). Amanda wants to see beyond Laura's disability and encourages her all the time to change and to marry a rich man so she would not end up as she herself did, "Resume your seat, little sister, I want you to stay fresh and pretty for gentleman callers"(Williams,1944,p.7),she says to her daughter all the time but Laura has the same answer: "I'm not expecting any gentleman callers"(Williams,1944,p.7).As Heintzelman and Howard(2005) noted:"Laura's disability has shattered all self-confidence she ever had"(p.90).

When Amanda talks about the prospect of marriage, Laura cries out, "But mother -- . . . I'm -- crippled"(Williams,1944,p.17). Despite being fragile she has the strength to accept that she is lame. She does not want to pretend she is somebody else because deeply in herself she knows that there is something wrong with her (Banach, 2010). She suffers a lot under the pressure of her nagging mother who constantly pushes her beyond her limits. She rarely finds the courage to oppose her, instead, she gently tries to point out to her that she won't meet her expectations, "I'm just not popular like you were in Blue Mountain"(Williams,1944,p.10). Laura's oversensitive nature makes her think that everybody notices her limp; it becomes for her a huge stumbling block to normal living. She uses her physical difference as a shield from outside world (Heintzelman & Howard, 2005).

Laura does not want to feel different, but she knows she is. Even so, the desire to escape from a life without love and romance is deeply into her. When Amanda asks if she has ever liked a boy, Laura admits that she once did, demonstrating that she has romantic hopes as anyone else. Laura's crush on the high school hero, Jim proves that the feeling of love was always within her (Banach, 2010). Her declaration: "All I know is I couldn't sit at the table if it was him"(Williams, 1944, p.57) is pretty strange confession made by her since she rarely talks about herself to the others. The only time she truly opens up to anyone is when she meets Jim. For the first time, Laura's inner charm is revealed when Tom invites him to their house. Laura overcomes her

shyness when she felt comfortable talking to Jim. She completely opens up and telling him things from their past- that Jim used to call her “Blue Rose”, that she had a crush on Jim, etc. The living room was always functioned as Laura’s safe haven when she enjoyed being alone, and now her ability to eventually accept Jim’s presence in exactly this space is a signal that she started to change (Murphy, 2014). Jim is the only character to enter into Laura’s secret world. He attempts to convince her that her leg is not a burden and that she is wonderful the way she is. He delivers a speech to her, in a way that no one did before, touching her heart profoundly. Between too many things, he says:

The different people are not like other people, but being different is nothing to be ashamed of. Because other people are not such wonderful people. They're one hundred times one thousand. You're one times one! They walk all over the earth. You just stay here. They're common as - weeds, -but - you - well, you're – Blue Roses!”.(Williams,1944,p.87).

Laura is taken with Jim’s speech. There is a moment of true happiness for Laura when Jim, the gentleman caller, dances with her and kindly whispers to her: “Let yourself go, now, Laura, just let yourself go”(Williams,1944,p.85). Jim is sure that Laura has a unique personality which sometimes falls as a disadvantage to her. Bloom (2007) noted:

Jim’s mishearing for its part suggests the oxymoronic existence of Laura Wingfield, a young woman of this world who simultaneously, like the lovely but easily broken creatures of her glass menagerie, seems physically unfit for or unadapted to an earthly life. (p.68).

In a desperate attempt to invite Jim into her world, Laura gives him her favorite animal from her glass menagerie, a little unicorn. Murphy(2014) stated that the unicorn “stands as an objective correlative of her own difference transformed into uniqueness, value, and magic”(p.58).

Jim is careful with it at first, but once he admits that he already has a girlfriend, the glass figure falls to the floor. When Jim apologizes to her, she replies, “Now it is just like all the other horses”(Williams, 1944, p.101). Just as the unicorn, she won’t be considered special anymore.

According to Bloom(2007):

The implication is that no gentleman caller will ever enter her life again; none will ever be gentle enough among an American people so crassly materialistic to perceive her inner beauty, to

appreciate her love for beauty, to understand her unnatural, if not supernatural, place in a world ruled by science and technology instead of heart and soul. (p.74).

She's isolated again and fully broken now. Her mother couldn't save her from a bad leg and her brother couldn't save her from a broken heart. She retreats back into her world again convinced that she is born to watching things and opportunities pass by her while she sits in the middle, spinning in her own fantasy with her glass menagerie. In other words, the Gentleman Caller breaks her illusions and her spirit as easily and as casually as he has broken her glass unicorn (Heintzelman & Howard, 2005).

At the end of the play Laura herself blows out the candles that Jim had brought to their encounter, and she does this in recognition not only of her brother Tom's departure from her life, together with that of her father, but also that of the Gentleman Caller. She retreats to her world again, but this time with the awareness that she is no longer different from other people.

4.4 Jim

Jim O'Connor is the gentleman caller who is brought to the Wingfield residence by Tom. He works with Tom at the shoe factory and formerly attended high school with both Tom and Laura. The audience is familiar with Jim's character even before he makes his first appearance. Tom introduces him by saying:

I had known Jim slightly in high school. In high school Jim was a hero. He had tremendous Irish good nature and vitality with the scrubbed and polished look of white chinaware. He seemed to move in a continual spotlight. He was a star in basket-ball, captain of the debating club, president of the senior class and the glee club and he sang the male lead in the annual light operas. He was always running or bounding, never just walking. He seemed always at the point of defeating the law of gravity.(Williams,1944,p.50).

He now works as a shipping clerk for a shoe warehouse where Tom and Jim end up to become better friends. Tom describes him as follows:

He was the only one at the warehouse with whom I was on friendly terms. I was valuable to him as someone who could remember his former glory, who had seen him win basketball games and

the silver cup in debating. He knew of my secret practice of retiring to a cabinet of the washroom to work on poems when business was slack in the warehouse. He called me Shakespeare. And while the other boys in the warehouse regarded me with suspicious hostility, Jim took a humorous attitude toward me. (Williams, 1944,p.50)

He is the emissary from the world of normality thus plays an important role in the climax of the play. Jim is a cheerful, young man, who is determined to get ahead in life. Bloom(2007) noted, “he possesses an optimism that the other characters do not”(p.18). He believes he can achieve a great success in life. He is studying public speaking and radio engineering at night school, and he also wants to go into the fledgling television industry. He states, "I believe in the future of television”(Williams,1944,p.82).He believes that he can achieve his dreams and strives to make them a reality.

Jim is described by Williams as an “ordinary young man”(Williams,1944,p.XVIII). But Jim's role in the play is more important than being just an ordinary character. Since Laura lives in an unrealistic world full of illusions and dreams, Jim seems to Laura to be very exceptional. When he has dinner with the Wingfield family, Jim tries his best to get Laura out of her isolation. He ends up being the only character able to break through into Laura's secret world and make her feel she still has hope. Jim seems to be the most sincere person in the play. He says to Laura all he thinks about her, but in a very kindly way: “I judge you to be an old-fashioned type of girl. Well, I think that's a pretty good type to be”(Williams,1944,p.72).

Bloom(2007) pointed out: “He idealizes rather than reifies her by placing her on a pedestal and equating this young woman with a blue rose”(p.67). Laura remembers it in details:

When I had that attack of pleurosis – he asked me what was the matter when I came back. I Said pleurosis he thought that I said Blue Roses! So that's what he always called me after that. Whenever he saw me, he'd holler, 'Hello, Blue Roses! I didn't care for the girl that he went out with. (Williams,1944,p.17).

Jim is the only character who lives in the real world and has a reasonable perception of life. He is aware that nobody is perfect, and everybody has his own flaws. He repeats it to Laura:

And everybody has problems, not just you, but practically everybody has got some problems. You think of yourself as having the only problems, as being the only one who is disappointed. But just look around you and you will see lots of people as disappointed as you are.(Williams,1944,p.76).

The speech he delivers to Laura is a very mature one and makes her feel comfortable with the idea she is crippled. She no longer feels too different from the other girls. Jim was not aware of the emotions he was building up in Laura. He simply had an honest desire to help Laura overcome her shyness. He makes a mistake by kissing her, but he immediately recognized it as something he shouldn't do. By no means, he hasn't intentions to benefit anything from her nor to dominate her in any way (Bloom,2007). He shows a genuine affection for Laura and does manage to draw her out, but still, he was unable to create something long-lasting between them. Being engaged stops him from continuing the development of Laura. His presence there didn't serve enough to resolve the Wingfield family's problems (Heintzelman & Howard, 2005). However, he brought a reality light into the Wingfield's dark world, giving them reasons to change and move on with their lives.

5. Main conflicts of the characters

The Glass Menagerie is a play full of conflicts; The overall conflict in this short story arises from the fact that the characters tend to have the intention of living in both the real and fantasy world,

which is almost impossible. As a result, they find themselves entangled in their desires and are left desperate as they do not achieve all the things that they wish to achieve. Because of this, characters struggle and conflicts lie deep within themselves, but also with each other.

The first conflict is illustrated through Tom's desire to give up his job at the warehouse and flee himself from his responsibilities as the man of the house. He intends to join the merchant marine but he does not have enough money. Tom's dilemma is between his role as the main source of finance for his family, and finding a life away from his dull job, in search of adventures. Many times in the play his Amanda, stresses how important he is to the family. This creates an internal conflict within Tom, should he continue supporting his family thus leaving his dreams behind, or should he abandon his family just like his father did and search for adventures. Eventually, Tom leaves his family. His intention was to look after his mother and sister but his fantasy of leaving the job at the warehouse overtakes him. He leaves but later regrets having left his family. He is especially disturbed about the affection that he feels for his sister. He feels bad and is haunted by the thoughts of how he abandoned his family in order to fulfill his dreams.

His internal conflict of being torn between his desire to fulfill his dreams and his sense of responsibility to his mother and sister is essential to the play because it generates external conflicts between Tom and his mother. The barrier between the two characters grows due to their opposing viewpoints. Tom wishing to search for adventure, and his mother wanting him to stay and help the family financially causes constant quarrels between them. Oftentimes Amanda will begin a conflict with Tom because he spends time out and arrives at home drunk. Amanda never fails to repeatedly attack him about the way he eats, books that he reads, and the way he lives his life. . Tom sometimes tries to disregard the conflicts with his mother is constantly beginning, but by the end of the play, he cannot endure her pressure. The conflict between them it is never resolved(Murphy,2014).

Another conflict is illustrated through Amanda's obsessions with her gold old days and her desire to live the twilight years that she did not take advantage of during the past years. Amanda's inner conflict is her tendency to return to the days – when she felt herself worthy in society. She is nostalgic for the time period when she was desirable to many men. As a result, she has

conflicts with her daughter. She drags Laura into this fantasy by forcing her to do things that she does not desire to do. For instance, she enrolls her daughter in a business course so that she may have a chance to meet suitors who are successful in life. Amanda wants her daughter to have a life as she once did. She is sure that living as single made is a wasted life. This opinion is very contradicted to that of Laura's so they have constant conflicts during the course of the play. When she learns that her daughter has dropped out of school, she goes ahead to arrange a meeting with her and Jim. As if that was not enough, she even makes sure that her daughter has worn a new dress in order to impress him. However, Laura does not like the idea and refuses to join them at the dinner table. This is an indication that there was a conflict of purpose as Laura did not agree with her mother's idea(Heintzelman&Howard,2005).

The final conflict is the inner pain Laura feels because of her physical appearance. The state of her extremely low self-confidence she carries leads her to live a solitary life, surrounded by glass ornaments. Laura is physically and emotionally fragile so that she has constantly battled with herself. She does not find herself in the outside world. She is afraid that nobody accepts her for the way she is. She begins to understand that this could have made her feel secluded from the rest of the society. It is only after she warms up to Jim that she realizes how much her fear had cost her social life. This fear had made her not to be able to integrate with the rest of the society.

Laura's conflict seems to only have one resolution – which can only be solved by herself and a boosting of her self-belief. Laura's dim personality is given encouragement when she is finally able to speak with Jim in a way that she has never spoken before with anyone else. Before she met Jim, Laura's battle with self-confidence, mostly remained as an inner clash which she rarely exposed or expressed.

The inner conflict dissolves when Laura accepts to dance with Jim. For the first time, she finds the courage to ask, and to voluntarily do something she may enjoy in the presence of others. (Bloom, 2007).

6. Symbols

Tennessee Williams couldn't conform with the limitations of the 19th-century realism. So he decided to adopt the technique of symbolism to make that mode of realism more flexible.

Symbolism is a major aspect of the Glass Menagerie. On the surface the play seems to be a simple one, however there a lot of symbols that give it a deeper meaning. Each character is defined by a specific symbol. Aside from character symbols, there is an overall symbolism which is connected with the central themes of the play(Banach, 2010).There are some very noticeable symbols that make “The glass menagerie” enthralling and very interesting to be analyzed.

The glass menagerie- this symbol is of a great importance, since the play the play itself is entitled on the basis of this symbol. 'The Glass Menagerie' is an outcome of Laura's defected inferiority. Through the glass collection, she was able to transform her weakness into something creative. Her glass collection is her private world where she can hide from the reality. When Tom accidentally breaks one of her glass animals, she starts crying because her glass collection is of great value to her. This symbol also stands for the fragility of Winfield's family. Each of the characters' reality is in danger of being shattered. It also related to the characters' feeling of being trapped and unable to move like the glass animals (Odak, 2012).

Unicorn- In her glass Menagerie, Laura had manufactured a unicorn of glass which represents her directly. The unicorn is totally extinct on earth and also Laura's existence in the external world is virtually extinct. Laura told Jim that the unicorn is different and does not complain about it just as she is and does not complain either. The unicorn loses its uniqueness after Jim breaks it. It becomes a common horse same as Laura has shed some of her shyness and become more normal. The horn symbolizes an obstacle to be overcome. By the end of their conversation,she gives the unicorn to Jim, because she wants him to always remember her. By giving him the unicorn she is at the same timehanding over her broken love, as he is to be married to another girl(Heintzelman & Howard, 2005).

Jim O'Connor: The most realistic character Jim O'Connor, serves the same time as a symbol in the play. He served as an emissary of an external world. To Laura, Jim represents the reality which she fears and does not want to face. To Amanda, Jim is a reflection of her past as well as a symbol of the future. When he enters the apartment she is filled with hope that he will change Laura's life. To Tom, he is also a symbol of hope for two reasons. First, he wishes that one day he will be as famous and successful as Jim, and second he hopes that Jim will continue to support the family instead of him.

Blue Roses: The phrase is a nickname by which Jim called Laura in high school as the mispronunciation of “pleurosis”- Laura’s disease. The term is symbolic of Laura’s character. Roses are beautiful, different and unique. Laura also has a delicate beauty and is different from other girls. Just the roses bloom, she “blooms” only once in the play after Jim kisses her. Laura is based on the Tennessee William’s sister, Rose, who had a similar problem with Laura, and the nickname may be in tribute to her (Bloom, 2007).

Fire escape - The first symbol, presented in the play, is the fire escape. This represents the "bridge" between the illusory world of the Wingfield family members and the world of reality. This "bridge" seems to be perceived differently by each character. For Tom, the fire escape is the way out from the dreary atmosphere of the apartment and entrance into the world where he feels free. Tom uses the fire escape to release himself from the confines of his boring life. For Laura, the fire escape serves as a way to enter from the outside to her private world. She hates being outside and rushes to enter the apartment. Both examples can be seen as a way to escape from reality: Tom stands on the fire escape to smoke, showing that he does not like to be a part of the illusionary world inside. Laura, in contrast, thinks of the fire escape as a way in and not a way out, emphasizing how bound she is to live in the Wingfield world.

Movies- Another symbol presented deals only with Tom. Tom is the only one who has the most contact with the outside world, a thing which he enjoys a lot. He goes to movie night after night in order to live an alternate life. His habit of going to movies when things in the house become unbearable shows his desire to escape. Cinema is the place where he can find adventure he is obsessed with. Although temporary, movies provide to him a feeling of entertainment. He envisions himself as the hero of narratives, fulfilling his desire to experience adventures.

Mr.Wingfield photograph- Mr.Wingfield has abandoned his family years ago, but he is present throughout the play due to his photograph hanged in the wall of the apartment. Each of the characters has different feelings when they stare at it. Whenever Tom sees the picture of his father he wishes to have his courage to leave the family. The picture serves as a source of adventure if he only would be brave enough to follow his father footsteps. To Laura, the picture of the father is a symbol of sadness. By turning her eyes to the picture, she feels that she is

turning to her real dad for support. Whereas Amanda sees the picture of her husband as a mistake of her past. She regrets marrying him, instead of any of the rich boys that were in love with her. Mr.Wingfield portrait serves as a reminder to her terrible conditions she lives in as a consequence of his abandonment.

Candles- As candles represent for young girls hope and love and so did for Laura. Jim was his old 'flame' from high school. Seeing him again brought back those old flames for her. Blowing out the candles represents her hopes fading away after Jim leaves. Tom sees the candles as a reminder of his abandonment of the family. He had been unable to forget his sister and wishes she could forgive him. To Amanda, the candles present something terrific. Once they go out, she immediately thinks of their financial instability (Bloom, 2007).

Amanda's dresses- Amanda is stuck in the past, and the way she dresses represents the lost youth she wishes she could live in again. Her dresses remember her the time in her life when she was truly happy and a lot of gentleman callers liked her. She has the same aspirations for Laura as she had for himself, but both woman dreams for romance have failed.

The Victrola - Laura plays a record on it to release herself from the pressure of her everyday life. She does not use it just to add a mode to the room but music really comforts her. Whenever she is falling apart she goes to the Victrola to get lost within its melody. Victrola serves also to calm her down when Jim first arrives and she feels terribly shy and scared. Then, she also uses Victrola to calm herself after Jim leaves (Odak, 2012).

Conclusion

As Williams's breakthrough play, "The Glass Menagerie" has captured the imagination and heart of the American public when it opened in Chicago in 1944. Bloom(2007) claimed that "Tennessee Williams's elegiac masterpiece brought a radical new lyricism to Broadway and today the tragedy, fragility, and tenderness of this 'memory play' endure"(p.16).

In his play description, Williams writes: "The scene is memory and is therefore non-realistic. Memory takes a lot of poetic licence. It omits some details; others are exaggerated, according to the emotional value of the articles it touches, for memory is seated predominantly in the heart" (Williams,1944,p.3).The play has been able to defy the current time and still continues to evolve as it is produced year after year in adaptations around the world. The composition of the characters in The Glass Menagerie is incredibly interesting as their sufferings represent the truth about human nature. Although few in number, they are embodied with complex characteristics. Their relationships are sensitive but complicated and their dialogues are just hauntingly beautiful. The play also contains a lot of symbols which help in a better understanding of the character and their development.

"The Glass Menagerie" tells a tragic family tale of love, bitterness, and abandonment. The play begins with the main character Tom, recalling his memory of living in a tiny apartment in St.Louis while recovering from the Depression Era, with his crippled sister Laura and his compelling mother Amanda after the abandonment by his father. Amanda Wingfield, a Southern belle is long preoccupied with memories of gentlemen callers and a world that no longer exists. She is energized by the dilemma of how to save what remains of her family. Amanda's recurrent nostalgia for better times puts pressure on both of her children. She has constant demands over their everyday activities.

Her restless son Tom –an aspiring poet, and the narrator of the play is the one who works in the family, the same time is the one who is the most criticized. Tom has a strong desire to go on adventures but is stopped by his obligations to take care of his mother and sister.The physically and emotionally defective, Laura is the most sensitive character in the play. Characterized as an introvert type, she loves to stay inside and to take care of her lovely glass collection.The most prominent symbols such as the blue rose, the glass unicorn, and the entire glass menagerie directly represent her.

The gentleman caller, Jim, whose arrival spurs the play's climax, is a nice and ordinary man. He is the only character that is happy with his current lifestyle (Howard & Heintzelman, 2005). Though the story does not consist of many actions, Williams added a lot of symbols in order to highlight the way how the characters feel and interact. Each of the characters in *The Glass Menagerie* is somehow entrapped and isolated, and each of them has found some strategies to escape, including the missing father being the most successful. Symbols that indicate their need to escape are the fire escape, candles, the glass collection, and movies. Whereas symbols related to the personality of characters and the reason why they act in certain ways are: unicorn, Amanda's dresses, and Victrola.

According to Murphy (2014) "What made *The Glass Menagerie* unique as a play in 1944 was its overt presentation to the audience as a work of art, a play that made the subjective perception of memory into an aesthetic approach to truth" (p.59). As Williams wrote in the production notes, "Expressionism and all other unconventional techniques in drama have only one valid aim, and that is a closer approach to truth" (Williams, 1944, p.xix).

Containing many autobiographical relationships, "*The Glass Menagerie*" holds its appeal to modern audiences because it is authentic. Each character is represented by a symbol that is vital to the point of the story. In a story about the fine line between dreams and illusions, every character reveals his reality, fantasy, and hopes for the future in their own way.

References

- Anderson, G.P. (2010). *Research guide to American Literature: American modernism 1914-1945*. New York: Maple Press.
- Banach, J. (2010). *Bloom's how to write about Tennessee Williams*. New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Bloom, H. (2007). *Bloom's guides: Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie*. New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Bloom, H. (2007). *Bloom's modern critical views: Tennessee Williams*. New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Debusscher, G. (2000). Tennessee Williams's Dramatic Charade: Secrets and Lies in The Glass Menagerie. *The Tennessee Williams Annual Review*,(3). Retrieved from:
<http://www.tennesseewilliamsstudies.org/journal/work.php?ID=30>
- Fabbri, A.R. (2008, February 19). The Glass Menagerie' at People's Light. *BroadStreetReview*. Retrieved from:
http://www.broadstreetreview.com/theater/The_Glass_Menagerie_at_Peoples_Light
- Heintzelman, G. & Howard, A.S. (2005). *Critical companion to Tennessee Williams: A literary reference to his life and work*. New York: Checkmark Books.
- Kubzansky (2014). Glass Menagerie' set Tennessee Williams' play on family angst still relevant. *The free library*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.thefreelibrary.com/%27GLASS+MENAGERIE%27+SET+TENNESSEE+WILLIAMS%27+PLAY+ON+FAMILY+ANGST+STILL...-a0142169577>
- Murphy, B. (2014). *Critical companion: The theater of Tennessee Williams*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Odak, Sh. (2012, January 17). Symbolism in The Glass Menagerie. *Bright hub education*.

Retrieved from: <https://www.brighthubeducation.com/homework-help-literature/51210-symbolism-in-the-glass-menagerie/>

The Feminist Spectator (2013, September 29). The Glass Menagerie. Retrieved from:

<http://feministspectator.princeton.edu/2013/09/29/the-glass-menagerie/>

Williams, T. (1944). *The glass menagerie*. New York: A New Directions Paperbook.