

Dal Theatre's Glass Menagerie solidly done

by Peter Rans and Melvin Kenah

From Tuesday the 9th of February through till Saturday the 13th, Tennessee Williams' **The Glass Menagerie** is being performed in Studio 1 by the Dal Theatre Department. **The Glass Menagerie** is a play with four actors which explores the effect of the past on the consciousness of one of the central characters, and of his artistically necessary decision to flee his debilitating environment. It is a play expressing fragile passions, modes of imagination, self-deception and the ultimate realization by the narrator that he can never shrug off his past. The play refuses to be simply realistic but achieves its power through theatrical tricks which enhance the narrator's claim that memory is a faulty register of truth.

The Glass Menagerie is a very challenging play; and this particular production was, on the whole, one of the best that the Theatre Department has done in a long time. There were none of the uneven performances which marred, for me, the recent production of **The Birthday Party**. Mark Lutter, as Tom, captured the ambiguity of a character torn between selfishness and selflessness, arrogance and guilt. Nancy Krista's Laura was a convincing innocent tortured by

her own inadequacies and burying her immature emotions and need for affection in her glass collection. She did, however, overemphasize Laura's limp, which became obtrusive occasionally. Perhaps the most difficult role in the play is the mother, Amanda, played by Nora Sheehan. The temptation to allow the melodramatic aspects of this character to become the whole character must be enormous, but Miss Sheehan skillfully conveyed the essential kindness that lies behind Amanda's desire to improve things for her children,

parasitically on her own memories of a more elevated past. There are, however, instances where Miss Sheehan's grasp of the "southern drawl" falters momentarily. Michael Balsler plays Jim, the nice young gentleman caller, with a flair for the rational normal world which he inhabits, and which the other characters in the play do not.

The stage design breaks the audience up into two sections and emphasizes that the action and memory of the play, contained on the stage, are rooted in the audience as well as the actors. There are some nice touches achieved by lighting and design when a pattern of roses appears on the right

hand side of the stage, in juxtaposition to the fire escape representing the claustrophobic and depressed existence of the characters. One error in the lighting is the failure to focus on Laura in the scene where Tom and Amanda begin their quarrel.

Despite such minor reservations this is a play well worth seeing. The acting abilities of the Theatre Department finally seem to be catching up with the always provocative and stimulating stage designs and lighting techniques. Based on Monday's preview performance all the people associated with this production have a right to feel pleased.



Trivia Quiz - somebody cares, so do it, already

by Matt R. Afakt

- Who designed our Canadian flag?
 - Lester Pearson
 - George Stanley
 - Jonas Goldman
 - Betsy Ross
- Why are Caucasians called 'honkies' by their black brethren?
 - They are white as a goose.
 - To honk means to oppress.
 - They speak with nasal intonations.
 - They ride bicycles with a horn on the handlebar.
- The Thursday before Good Friday is known as...
 - Good Thursday
 - Holy Thursday
 - Maundy Thursday
 - Pre-four-day-weekend Thursday
- In the Bible, who endured a long and horrible bout of elephantiasis without issuing a derogatory remark against his inflictor, God?
 - Job
 - Jacob
 - Isaac
 - Maurice
- Who directed **Eraserhead** and **The Elephant Man**?
 - Stanley Kubrick
 - David Lynch
 - Joseph Levine
 - Mel Brooks
- Who starred in these cinematic classics: **The Maltese Bippy** and **Once Upon a Horse**?
 - Laurence Olivier
 - Dustin Hoffman
 - Burt Reynolds
 - Dick Martin
- Who was the Vancouver Canucks inaugural draft pick?
 - Josh Guevremont
 - Dale Tallon
 - Dennis Ververgaert
 - Adrian (Mutha) Facca
- Who assisted on Bobby Orr's famous Stanley Cup winning goal in 1970?
 - Phil Esposito
 - Derek Sanderson
 - Wayne Cashman
 - Gerry Cheevers
- Who tripped him as he scored?
 - Noel Picard
 - Bob Plager
 - Jim Roberts
 - Glenn Hall
- Lou Reed's **Sweet Jane** is a...
 - banker
 - clerk
 - hooker
 - groupie
- Slade's **Gudby T'Jane** was written about a...
 - banker
 - clerk
 - hooker
 - groupie

Last Week's Answers:

- large dildo; 2. E.E. Lawson; 3. orange; 4. Reds; 5. Mycroft; 6. Hell's Angels; 7. Agnes; 8. The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance; 9. Paul Lynde; 10. Garo Yepremian; 11. Nelson Skalbania; 12. Roger Taillibert.

DALHOUSIE DEPARTMENT of THEATRE PRESENTS

STUDIO 1

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS' THE GLASS MENAGERIE

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COSTUME DESIGNER: J. AMERILL

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: J. MORGAN

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