

Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams Auditions

Auditions will be held in the auditorium on Thursday, Aug. 23. Callbacks will be on the stage on Friday, August 24. Please sign up for an audition time outside Mrs. Stuckey's room. Be at least ten minutes early for your audition. You will be expected to have memorized and to act the monologue. You will then read some short passages with a reader.

Callbacks will be listed on the website. If you come for callbacks, you will be reading with other possible actors for the play.

I strongly suggest that you read the play (or, at the very least, read some summaries of it) so that you will give an informed performance. This play is very intense and is semi-autobiographical. Tennessee Williams has been called "The American Shakespeare." (That means his plays are really good.)

Remember, I don't have preconceived notions of who should play these parts. I am looking for the person whose audition convinces me that he or she is the best person for that role. Please don't watch videos of the performances. I want to see your interpretation of the character without it being tainted by another person's interpretation.

Characters

Amanda Wingfield (middle-aged) – "A little woman of great but confused vitality clinging frantically to another time and place. Her characterization must be carefully created, not copied from type. She is not paranoiac, but her life is paranoia. There is much to admire in Amanda, and as much to love and pity as here is to laugh at. Certainly she has endurance and a kind of heroism, and though her foolishness makes her unwittingly cruel at times, there is tenderness in her slight person."

Laura Wingfield (twenty-four-ish) – "Amanda, having failed to establish contact with reality, continues to live vitally in her illusions, but Laura's situation is even graver. A childhood illness has left her crippled, one leg slightly shorter than the other, and held in a brace. This defect need not be more than suggested on the stage. Stemming from this, Laura's separation increases till she is like a piece of her own glass collection, too exquisitely fragile to move from the shelf."

Tom Wingfield (twenty-two-ish) – "And the narrator of the play. A poet with a job in a warehouse. His nature is not remorseless, but to escape from a trap he has to act without pity."

Jim O' Connor (twenty-something) – "A nice, ordinary, young man."

Amanda's Monologue (Amanda is speaking to her daughter after discovering that Laura has not been going to her business classes as Amanda thought.)

“ I stopped off at Rubicam’s Business College to speak to your teachers about your having a cold and ask them what progress they thought you were making down there. [Laura: Oh] I went to the typing instructor and introduced myself as your mother. She didn’t know who you were. ‘Wingfield,’ she said, ‘We don’t have any such student enrolled at the school!’

I assured her she did, that you had been going to classes since early in January..

‘I wonder,’ she said, ‘If you could be talking about that terribly shy little girl who dropped out of school after only a few days’ attendance?’

‘No,’ I said, ‘Laura, my daughter, has been going to school every day for the past six weeks!’

‘Excuse me,’ she said. She took the attendance book out and there was your name, unmistakably printed, and all the dates you were absent until they decided that you had dropped out of school.

I still said, ‘No, there must have been some mistake! There must have been some mix-up in the records!’”

And she said, ‘No, --- I remember her perfectly now. Her hands shook so that she couldn’t hit the right keys! The first time we gave a speed test, she broke down completely --- was sick at the stomach and almost had to be carried into the wash room! After that morning she never showed up any more. We phoned the house but never got any answer’ --- While I was working at Famous Barr, I suppose, demonstrating those ---[She indicates a brassiere with her hands.]

Oh! I felt so weak I could barely keep on my feet! I had to sit down while they got me a glass of water! Fifty dollars’ tuition, all of our plans --- my hopes and ambitions for you --- just gone up the spout, just gone up the spout like that.

Laura's Monologue (Laura is responding to her mother’s question of whether or not she has ever liked a boy. Don’t say Mom’s lines. Just respond to them as if she said them.)

“ Yes, I liked one once. [She rises.] I came across his picture a while ago. [Mom asks if he gave her his picture.] No, it’s in the yearbook. [Mom is disappointed that it’s a boy from high school.]

Yes, his name was Jim. [She lifts the heavy annual from the claw-foot table.] Her he is in the *Pirates of Penzance*. [Mom: The what?] The operetta the senior class put on. He had a wonderful voice and we sat across the aisle from each other Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the Aud. Here his is with the silver cup for debating! See his grin! [. . .]

He used to call me Blue Roses.

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. Emily Meisenbach. Emily was the best-dressed girl at Soldan. She never struck me, though, as being sincere. . . It says in the Personal Section --- they’re engaged. That’s ---six years ago! They must be married by now.

Tom's Monologue (Tom is explaining to Laura what he saw when he was out all night.)

“ There was a very long program. There was a Garbo picture and a Mickey Mouse and a travelogue and a newsreel and a preview of coming attractions. And there was an organ solo and a collection for the Milk Fund --- simultaneously ---which ended up in a terrible fight between a fat lady and an usher!

[. . .] And, oh, I forgot! There was a big stage show! The headliner on this stage show was Malvolio the Magician. He performed wonderful tricks, many of them, such as pouring water back and forth between pitchers. First it turned to wine and then it turned to beer and then it turned to whiskey. I know it was whiskey it finally turned into because he needed somebody to come up out of the audience to help him, and I came up ---both shows! It was Kentucky Straight Bourbon. A very generous fellow, he gave souvenirs. [*He pulls from his back pocket a shimmering rainbow-colored scarf.*] He gave me this. This is his magic scarf. You can have it, Laura. You wave it over the goldfish bowl and they fly away canaries. . . . But the wonderfulest trick of all was the coffin trick. We nailed him into a coffin and he got out of the coffin without removing one nail. [*He has come inside.*] There is a trick that would come in handy for me -- get me out of this two-by-four situation! [*He flops on to the bed and starts removing his shoes.*]

Jim's Monologue (Jim told Laura to think of herself as superior to others in some way and she has asked him in what way she should think herself superior.)

“ Why, man alive, Laura! Just look about you a little. What do you see? A world full of common people! All of 'em born and all of 'em going to die! Which of them has one-tenth of your good points! Or mine! Or anyone else's, as far as that goes --- gosh! Everybody excels in some one thing. Some in many! [*He unconsciously glances at himself in the mirror.*] All you've got to do is discover in what! Take me, for instance. [*He adjusts his tie at the mirror.*] My interest happens to lie in electro-dynamics. I'm taking a course in radio engineering at night school, Laura, on top of a fairly responsible job at the warehouse. I'm taking that course and studying public speaking. [. . .]

Because I believe in the future of television! [*turning his back to her*] I wish to be ready to go up right along with it. Therefore, I'm planning to get in on the ground floor. In fact I've already made the right connections and all that remains is for the industry itself to get under way! Full steam ---[*His eyes are starry.*] Knowledge ---Zzzzp! Money --- Zzzzzzp! --- Power! That's the cycle democracy is built on!