

2017 Tennessee Williams Scholars Conference

Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street

Robert Bray, Director

9:15-9:30 **Opening remarks, Robert Bray**

9:30-10:45 **A Two-Way Street: Cross Currents and Influences**

A discussion of playwrights and other artists who influenced Tennessee Williams, as well as those whose work has been influenced by Williams.

John Patrick Shanley, playwright
Henry Schvey, Washington University
Raymond Jean Frontain, University of Central Arkansas
Will Brantley, Middle Tennessee State University (moderator)

11:00-12:15 **Williams and the Female Persona**

“There is no actress on earth who will not testify that Williams created the best women characters in the modern theatre,” wrote Gore Vidal shortly after Williams’s death. How did Williams create such psychologically complex and demanding roles? Join our discussion to find out.

Annette Saddik, City University of New York
Lisa D’Amour, playwright
Bess Rowen, City University of New York
Katherine Weiss, East Tennessee State University (moderator)

1:30-2:45 **The Mutilated: Williams’s Disabled Characters**

Williams’s plays are replete with characters who exhibit mental and physical disorders ranging from pathological shyness to alcoholism to dissociative breaks with reality. Think Laura, Brick, and Blanche, among others. Williams scholars discuss these issues and speculate why Williams featured these problems in many of his works.

John Bak, Université de Lorraine, France
Clay Morton, Middle Georgia State University
Michael Hooper, St. Albans School, England
Robert Bray, Middle Tennessee State University (moderator)

3:15-4:45 **St. Louis Stories**

Le Petit Théâtre, 616 St. Peter Street

A performance of seven Tennessee Williams unpublished short stories and narrative poems, adapted for the stage and directed by Tom Mitchell, University of Illinois. These pieces, written early in Williams's career, reveal his nascent ability to create complex and compelling characters from his own experience.