



Tuesday, March 19, 2002

'Cat On A Hot Tin Roof' playing at MBT

Secret passions ignite in the sultry southern night when Tennessee Williams' Pulitzer Prize-winning drama "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" opens Wednesday, March 20, on the stage of **Meadow Brook Theatre**. The classic American tale of desire and greed runs through Sunday, April 14, at Michigan's largest professional theatre company, based at Oakland University.

"Cat On A Hot Tin Roof" takes audiences to a steamy Mississippi evening where colorful characters maneuver their way through lies, seductions, revelations and disappointments. The play centers on a most fateful family gathering held in celebration of patriarch Big Daddy Pollitt's 65th birthday. The fiery characters are shocked to discover Big Daddy is dying of cancer. Son Brick and his wife, Maggie "the Cat," chase each other and the truth about their relationship, all the while, they and the rest of the family posture for the patriarch's inheritance. Seemingly alone, even when surrounded by his extended family, Big Daddy must face the meaning of his own life and the true costs of his power over others.

Playwright Tennessee William's masterpiece opened at the Morosco Theatre in 1955. The New York Times called the production "a stunning drama." Directed by the legendary Elia Kazan, the play received that year's Pulitzer Prize for Letters, Drama and Music as well as the New York Times Drama Critics Award.

The **Meadow Brook Theatre** production of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" is directed by Edward Smith, associate professor of theatre in the Department of Communication, Fine and Performing Arts at Wayne State University. The head of WSU's Black Theatre Program, Smith is recognized for his acclaimed work with Detroit Repertory Theatre and the Hilberry Theatre. This is his directing debut at Meadow Brook Theatre.

Acclaimed Detroit actor David Regal stars as Big Daddy. An audience favorite, Regal has appeared on the Meadow Brook Theatre stage 18 times, most recently as Lyman Felt in last season's "The Ride Down Mt. Morgan." Artistic director at the University of Detroit-Mercy for 27 years, Regal has received numerous professional accolades, including the Detroit Free Press Theatre Excellence Award for Best Actor and The Oakland Press Drama Award for Best Actor.

Big Daddy's "better half," Big Mama, is played by Laurie V. Logan. Also a veteran of the Meadow Brook Theatre stage, Logan has performed in the MBT productions "Lend me a Tenor" and "To Kill a Mockingbird." She has acted on virtually all the area stages and appeared in feature films, including "Absence of Malice" and "Polish Wedding."

Dana Green makes her Meadow Brook Theatre debut as the stunning Maggie. A graduate of the University of Iowa and U of I's Summer Rep program, she has received the Joseph Jefferson Citation Nomination for Best Supporting Actress at Eclipse Theatre Company.

Also making his Meadow Brook Theatre debut is Ryan Kitley, who makes things simmer as Brick. With a Master of Fine Arts from The Theatre School at DePaul, Kitley has honed his skills at Second City Training Center and ImprovOlympics.

Detroit audiences will recognize Cecilia Foreman, who plays Sookee, from her many appearances at Detroit Repertory Theatre, Plowshares and the Purple Rose theatres. She has received the Detroit Repertory Theatre's Subscriber Award for Best Supporting Actress.

Joseph Haynes, who plays Doctor Baugh, appeared in the film "Polish Wedding" and Meadow Brook Theatre's "Merry Wives of Windsor" and "The Three Musketeers."

Andrew Huff, playing Gooper, graduated from Wayne State University and holds a Master of Fine Arts in acting and musical theatre from the Mountview Theatre Conservatory in London, England.

Paul Riopelle, playing Reverend Tooker, has appeared at Meadow Brook Theatre in the acclaimed "The Diary of Anne Frank." He has played off-Broadway and many roles in classical Shakespeare productions.

Kimberly Vanbiesbrouck plays Mae. She has participated in national tours of "A Chorus Line" and "Sweet Charity."

Joseph Wheeler II plays the role of Lacey. He has trained at Oakland University, Meadow Brook Theatre and Second City Detroit.

Tickets for "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" are on sale at the Meadow Brook Theatre Box Office by calling (248) 377-3300. New this season are "Couples Nights" discounts on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings that entitles theatergoers to buy one ticket and get a second ticket at half price. Group tickets are available by calling (248) 370-3316.

"Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" is sponsored by Lear Corporation. Meadow Brook Theatre is supported by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Promotional support for the 2001–2002 season is from the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

For more information, visit the [Meadow Brook Theatre](#) Web site.

SUMMARY

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