

# THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA



BY TENNESSEE WILLIAMS  
DIRECTED BY FRED SULLIVAN, JR.

## STUDY GUIDE

**GAMM**  
EDUCATION 

**GAM**  
theatre

SEASON  
2018 - 2019

# 34

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GAMMTHEATRE.ORG

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WARWICK, RI



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We thank the following foundations and corporations for their support of PLAY during our 34th Season: The Rhode Island Foundation, The Fain Family Foundation, The Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, The Mabel T. Woolley Trust, Collette/Alice I Sullivan Foundation, The John Clarke Trust, Nordson Corporation Foundation and The Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation.

This study guide was prepared by Beth Pollard, Kate Hanson, Susie Schutt, Tracy Morreo, and Jon Del Sesto

# ACT I

# WELCOME



Dear Educator,

The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre is pleased to offer you this study guide to prepare you and your students for our production of *The Night of the Iguana* by Tennessee Williams. In this guide you will find background information about the play and playwright, an inside look at our production, as well as activities for your classroom and questions for discussion. We recommend using this study guide before your visit to The Gamm, as well as after to debrief with your students.

We would like to offer a pre-show visit with your classroom/school before your visit to help prepare your students for the play. This will whet students' appetites for the performance and encourage them to question and explore the themes of the play. This visit will last about a half an hour and is offered to your classroom free of charge. Most student matinees are followed by a talkback with the production team and offer students the opportunity to debrief the performance immediately and ask questions of the actors, director, designers or playwright. Talkbacks range in length but we encourage you to stay and participate in the dynamic discussion.

We also offer longer workshops that will get students out of their seats and up on their feet engaging in the motifs and the language of the play. Kinesthetic engagement with language and literature ensures students deep comprehension and text-to-self connection that encourages students to invest in reading and literacy-learning.

Attending a production addresses several Common Core Standards in Theatre Arts Standards in Aesthetic Judgment, Cultural Contexts, and Communication, as well as many of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Below, we have included a list of standards that align with attending a performance and using our study guide.

We would love to hear from you about your experiences using this study guide. It is a great help to us as we build on our education program from year to year. We look forward to seeing you at The Gamm!

**Susie Schutt,**

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**Kate Hanson,**

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# THEATRE AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

What is so exciting about attending the theatre - especially in a smaller space such as The Gamm - is that it is live! Live theatre is different from other forms of entertainment; unlike film and television you are encouraged to pay close attention and actively engage your imagination.

You, the audience, are mere feet (and sometimes inches!) away from the actors; therefore, you play an active role in the experience. **The actors can see and hear any distracting behavior such as talking, text messaging, unwrapping candy, the ringing of cell phones, etc.** This can affect the actor's concentration, disrupt the performance, and ruin the experience for other audience members. So we ask that you refrain from talking or making any noise during a performance. *Thank you!*

## TIP:

*Discuss with your students the particular demands and benefits of attending a live performance. Perhaps have them brainstorm how theatre is different from film, television and sporting events.*

## COMMON CORE GUIDE. . . . .

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2] *See Themes and Questions for Discussion*

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3] *See Themes and Questions for Discussion*

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4] *See our Activity for the Classroom*

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7] *See examples throughout our study guide.*

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9] *See our Resident Scholar's essay.*

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3] *See our Activity for the Classroom*

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1] *See Themes and Questions for Discussion*

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2] *See examples throughout our study guide.*



# ACT II

## PLAY & PLAYWRIGHT

### TENNESSEE WILLIAMS



Williams (1911-1983) explored passion with daring honesty, and forged a poetic theater of raw psychological insight that shattered conventional proprieties and transformed the American stage. The autobiographical *The Glass Menagerie* (Gamm, 2010) brought what Mr. Williams called “the catastrophe of success,” a success capped by *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Gamm, 2015), one of the most influential works of modern American literature. An extraordinary series of masterpieces followed, including *Vieux Carre*, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Orpheus Descending*, and the classic *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Gamm, 2002). Williams dominated the American theater until 1961 with *The Night of the Iguana*, the last of his major plays. He also authored dozens of screenplays, poems, and works of fiction.

### ABOUT “THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA”

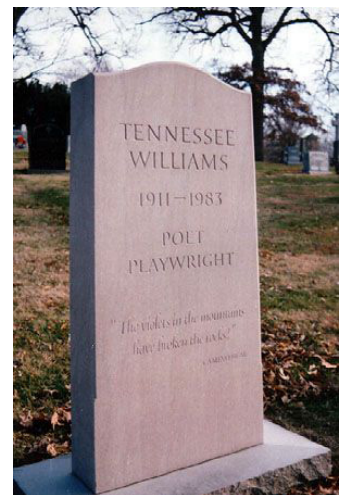
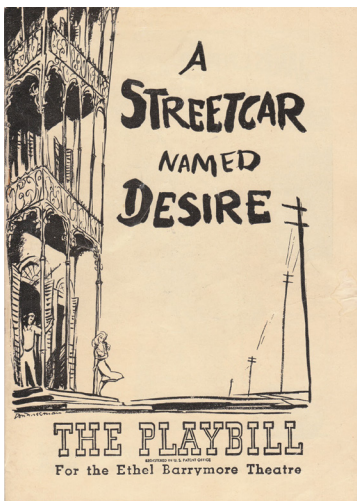
*The Night of the Iguana*, written by American playwright Tennessee Williams in 1959, is based off of a short story he wrote in 1948. *The Night of the Iguana* premiered on Broadway in 1962 and was soon followed by an Academy Award winning film adaptation starring Richard Burton and Ava Gardner. Additionally, the show has been performed in London’s West End, as well as three Broadway revivals and a recent production at the A.R.T. Although not one of William’s most popular plays, *The Night of the Iguana* has generally been received as insightful, though initially controversial for its location and characters.



The play follows Mr. Shannon, a former clergyman who now works as a run-down tour guide in western Mexico in the 1940s. He stops by a hotel, run by Maxine, seeking a place to land his tour, who is quite upset with him for his lack of professionalism. Maxine has her own share of problems to deal with. Her hotel is failing, and two travelling stray artists, Hannah and her geriatric grandfather Nonno, are trying to stay at the hotel for free. In the setting of this tropical hotel, these four main characters reveal secrets to each other about their past sins and current states that develop intricate relationships that all seem to beg the question: “why are you here?”

# THE LIFE OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

- 1911:** Tennessee Williams was born the son of a shoe company executive and a southern debutante in the state of Mississippi.
- 1918:** Williams is said to have had a happy childhood, but when his family moved to St. Louis, Missouri, Williams began to feel empty.
- 1929:** He attended three different universities and had a difficult time adjusting to his surroundings, turning to writing as an outlet for when he felt “life [was] unsatisfactory.”
- 1939-1947:** It was not until his move to New Orleans that he really found himself. There, he wrote *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Street Car Named Desire*.
- 1951:** *A Streetcar Named Desire* is made into a movie.
- 1951-1967:** Williams writes a number of plays that open on Broadway including *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *The Night of the Iguana*.
- 1969:** Williams suffers from a nervous breakdown and is committed to a psychiatric hospital.
- 1983:** After years of battling depression and stress, Williams dies in 1983. He is forever remembered for leaving behind a legacy of honest and thought-provoking writings that we still perform today.





# ACT III

## OUR PRODUCTION

### SETTING

The Costa Verde Hotel in Puerto Barrio, on the west coast of Mexico. Summer of 1940.

### THE COMPANY

Nonno	<b>Sam Babbitt</b>
Frau Fahrenkopf	<b>Maria Day</b>
Rev. T. Lawrence Shannon	<b>Tony Estrella</b>
Hank	<b>Tom Gleadow</b>
Charlotte	<b>Daraja Hinds</b>
Hannah	<b>Jeanine Kane</b>
Jake Latta	<b>Steven Liebhauser</b>
Maxine Faulk	<b>Deb Martin</b>
Pedro	<b>Luis Minaya</b>
Pancho	<b>Jose Luis Suazo</b>
Miss Fellowes	<b>Michelle L. Walker</b>
Herr Fahrenkopf	<b>Brandon Whitehead</b>

### CREATIVE TEAM

Director	<b>Fred Sullivan, Jr.</b>
Set Design	<b>Patrick Lynch</b>
Costume Design	<b>Jessie Darrell Jarbadan</b>
Lighting Design	<b>Jeff Adelberg</b>
Production Management	<b>Jessica Hill</b>
Stage Management	<b>Robin Grady</b>
Technical Director	<b>Max Ramirez</b>
Technical Production Supervisor	<b>DJ Potter</b>
Assistant Stage Manager	<b>Annalee P. Cavallaro, Jessica Hill*, Jessica Winward</b>
Music Director	<b>Milly Massey</b>
Sound Designer	<b>Alex Eizenberg</b>
Dialect Coach	<b>Candice Brown</b>
Electricians	<b>Kimberly Beggs, Mike Cline, Andrew Russ</b>
Construction	<b>Alex Eizenberg, Renee Fitzgerald, Christine Redihan</b>

### TIP:

*Before coming to the theater, discuss with your students the various professions in the theater. It takes more than just actors! When they arrive, ask them to notice evidence of those professions at work.*



# GAMM EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

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*While actors, directors, and playwrights are the most well-known, there are many jobs and careers that make theater successful. Each of our study guides focus on a different theater career by highlighting a Gamm employee.*

## **KIRSTEN DAVIS** | MANAGER OF INSTITUTIONAL GIVING AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

### **What does your job entail?**

I'm in charge of raising money for The Gamm from Corporations and Foundations. I write grant applications and meet with companies who might want to donate to The Gamm and support our programs. I also help manage projects like our move from Pawtucket to Warwick and help raise the money to pay for construction and moving costs.

### **Why is your job important to The Gamm's success?**

Ticket sales and fees only cover half of what it costs to run The Gamm. We have to ask for donations from the community to cover all the other expenses. Without donations there wouldn't be enough money to pay all of our artists and production expenses or our staff and programs.

### **What led you to your position at The Gamm?**

I have been working in the arts and in fundraising since I graduated from college. My professional career had mostly been with dance companies, but I was thrilled three years ago to join The Gamm and learn more about the theater world.

### **Why theater?**

I find that seeing a play at The Gamm is a truly immersive experience. The actors are so close that you forget everything around you and everything in your head and just feel all the emotions that the actors do... you can laugh, agonize, cry and rejoice all in one sitting! That experience makes me love working in theater.

### **What special skills does your position entail?**

My position requires a lot of writing and a lot of organization. I have to stay on top of grant deadlines and due dates for reporting on money that we've received. All those papers you write in school help prepare you for a job like mine.

### **What, if any, other professions are you curious about?**

I've always been curious about the job of the Stage Manager. They have to be so organized and alert and always paying attention to make a show run smoothly. They do so much to make everything happen, yet they don't get nearly as much acknowledgement or praise as the actors on the stage.

### **What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?**

Giffords Ice Cream makes a flavor called Campfire S'mores. It's a favorite of mine and my kids!



# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

BY FRED SULLIVAN, JR.



Three masterpieces. Three artistic homes. One great theater. One iconic American genius. Every eight years, I have been privileged to direct Tennessee Williams at The Gamm. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in 2002 in Providence, *The Glass Menagerie* in 2010 in Pawtucket, and now *The Night of the Iguana* here in Warwick. I had the great fortune of working with Sam Babbitt, Jeanine Kane and Tony Estrella as the leads in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, the first play produced under Tony as artistic director and the theater's last production in Providence. In Pawtucket, eight years later, Sam played Tom "Tennessee" Williams himself on a brilliant Patrick Lynch set (our first of 12 collaborations for The Gamm). Now, the whirligig of time allows us a continuum of artists returning to a beloved playwright in a wonderful new home.

I am especially grateful and pleased to be reunited with Sam Babbitt, whom I directed in 20 Gamm plays between 1996 and 2011 – from *Hamlet* to *Hamlet!*. This is our first collaboration in seven years. Sam plays "the oldest living and practicing poet on Earth" in this tender love letter to Tennessee's proud and influential maternal grandfather, Reverend Walter Dakin – the man to whom Tennessee dedicated this play. Following Tennessee's lead, I dedicate our production to Sam, with a full heart.

*The Night of the Iguana* started as a 1946 Williams short story in which a spinster and an older gay writer become close during a stay at a ramshackle Mexican hotel. Her predicament is mirrored by a captured iguana, and their relationship severs the "strangling rope of her loneliness." He returned to his story in an attempt to develop it into a play in 1959. He referred to the work on it as an expression of his immediate spiritual exhaustion and frustration, and often called it more of a dramatic poem than a play. Williams always housed within himself "a battle of angels" – a war raging between the impulses to create eternal works of beauty and his compulsion towards complete self-destruction. He sometimes referred to his writing as a "plea for the delicate people" and said that the theme of *Iguana* is "how to live beyond despair and still live."

I feel profoundly fortunate to be working on his complicated forms and complex characters during this time of extreme division, venal untruths and so much indefensible heartless ignorance. "Don't hang back with the brutes," Blanche Dubois famously pleads in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. John Lahr in his biography of Williams, writes about the time the play was set in: "The world is at a spiritual tipping point"

I leave you with a portion of Esmerelda's prayer from Williams' epic *Camino Real*: "Dear God, protect tonight, wherever they are, all hustlers and pitchmen who hawk their hearts on the street, all two-time losers who are likely to lose once more, The poet who wandered far from his heart's green country and possibly will and possibly won't be able to find his way back, look down with a smile tonight on the last cavaliers, the ones with the rusty armor and soiled white plumes and visit them with understanding and something that's almost tender and O, sometime and somewhere let there be something to mean the word honor again."

# DRAMATURGICAL NOTES

BY RACHEL WALSH



*The sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being.* - Carl Jung

"I think films should be seen on a big screen with an audience," declared Bette Davis in a 1984 interview. "You should go to the theatre to see great plays about great ideas, cast with people creating characters who are interesting and larger than life." Davis was speaking of her experience on the 1961 Broadway production of Tennessee Williams' *The Night of The Iguana* in which she appeared as Maxine, the lusty proprietor of a cheap hotel in a Mexican seaside town. In constant conflict with Williams and director Frank Corsaro, she infamously left the production after only four months.

Short on neither great ideas nor larger than life characters, *The Night of the Iguana* followed the triumphs of Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, and *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Epic, dark, and extreme, *Iguana* reflects a writer deeply confident in his craft and fiercely attending the "unlighted sides" of our darkest natures. The play's plot centers on defrocked Episcopal priest Larry Shannon, reduced to giving tours of Mexico to faint-of-heart tourists who seek only to tread the roads most traveled. They are blind to the "underworlds of all places" that Shannon longs to explore.

*Iguana* is not a comfortable play. It demands attention be paid to the less traveled contours of our most private selves. The play's complicated, even grotesque, assemblage of lost souls frustrate any attempt at spit-shining our savage, desperate natures. The writer and critic James Baldwin tangles with precisely these dark truths in his 1962 essay *The Creative Process*: "In the same way that to become a social human being one modifies and suppresses and, ultimately...lies to oneself about all one's interior, uncharted chaos, so have we, as a nation, modified or suppressed and lied about all the darker forces in our history."

*The Night of the Iguana* deals not only with one man's crisis of faith. It illuminates the "darker forces in our history." Sexual shaming, fascism, idolatry, oppression, and repression bubble and stew just beneath the surface of the story of Shannon, Maxine, Hannah, and dying Nonno – an elderly man desperately outrunning death in order to pen his last great poem. This grace note to make poetic order of the "uncharted chaos" from which Shannon so deeply suffers earns *The Night of the Iguana* its place in the American theatrical canon. Its difficult themes may keep it out of regular rotation on the nation's stages, but *Iguana* is an astonishingly brave play that looks directly into the void and refuses to blink.

It is the artist's responsibility to speak truths no one really wants to hear. The power of theater (as Davis rightly asserted) is to experience these uncomfortable truths in a public space, to emerge from behind our private screens to bear witness to revealing stories about ourselves. The ways in which we relate to Shannon and his atrocious (albeit very human) behavior reflects parts of ourselves and each other we are socialized to suppress. Plays like *Iguana* provide us with a rare, critical opportunity to cut loose the binds of polite society and really see each other, warts and all.

"Societies never know it," writes Baldwin, "but the war of an artist with his society is a lover's war, and he does, at his best, what lovers do, which is to reveal the beloved to himself and, with that revelation, to make freedom real." *The Night of the Iguana* is a harrowing, beautiful account of this unending war.

Rachel Walshe is a director, dramaturge and teaching artist whose work has been seen on stage at The Gamm and across New England, Chicago and the UK. She is a lecturer on contemporary drama at the University of Rhode Island.



# ACT IV

## THEMES AND QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITING



### TIP:

*Assign these questions for homework or in-class writing and then discuss your students' answers before and after the show.*

## THEMES AND QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR WRITING

1. How did the set design aid in the telling of the story? What would you change and why?
2. What sort of atmosphere was created with the lighting, sound, and music?
3. What does the Gamm poster (also the cover of this study guide) tell you about the play? What sort of poster would you design for this play and why?
4. Why do you think the playwright chose this title? How does the title relate to the story?

### **“MEXICO’S THE FRONT DOOR TO SOUTH AMERICA— AND THE BACK DOOR TO THE STATES”**

Tennessee Williams sets this story during World War II, when tensions between Germany and the United States were high. The Third Reich sought more global power, and Latin America became a target for this considering their mass resources in oil, metals, and populations. Additionally, Latin America, and Mexico specifically, share a very close proximity with the United States.

Mexico’s trade relations with Germany at the beginning of the war remained distant such that the German economy would not be in direct competition with the American economy in Mexico. However, Mexico changed their policy in 1938 when they nationalized their oil economy and started selling two thirds of their oil exports to Germany. This of course increased wartime tension with the United States.

As Germany gained power from Mexico, Mexico still maintained mostly open border policies with the rival countries. This created a space of opportunity where the US and Germany could create strategically subtle economic warfare, increase military tensions, or, as we see in *Night of the Iguana*, could vacation together.

Tennessee Williams wrote in a time when America had a different relationship to Mexico and Latin people. Though racism still played a significant role in social structures, there were less regulations and less stigma against immigration. However, at the height of American capitalism and free market wartime economic tactics, foreign exploitation of labor was rampant, especially in Latin American countries in close proximity to the United States.

## Questions:

- As an audience member, how is it important to understand the historical context of a show? Do you think it's necessary for either the enjoyment or analysis of a show? Why or why not?
- How are the local Mexican characters represented in the show? How is that different from modern Latin representation in media? What is the same? What does this reveal about the time that this play was written?
- How does the setting of tourism in Mexico affect the actions of the characters? What do they seek to experience in their foreign environment? What political effects or reflections does this reveal?
- The Americans are not the only ones inhabiting this Mexican space. Nazi German tourists are also staying at the hotel. How does their presence affect the mood and atmosphere of the story? What type of environment is Williams trying to convey to the audience? Why?
- Brainstorm and do a little research on current American exploitation within the Mexican tourism industry. Discuss in groups what foundations of the current Mexican-American politics exist in *The Night of The Iguana*.

## ESCAPISM AND PRESERVATION

Escapism is a tool often used in American literature to highlight cultural differences, especially in relationship to freedom and morality. Escapism is the tendency to immerse oneself in distractions in order to attain relief from present hardships. Normally, escapism involves leaving or “escaping” to a strange or new environment.

While none of the main characters in *Night of the Iguana* are Mexican, the story still takes place in this foreign and tropical location that seems to be somewhat removed from society. In these spaces of freedom, there is significant room for writers and characters to explore what it means to not be attached to or judged by a greater society. In the escapist realm of *The Night of the Iguana*, there is much to explore!

Though escapist spaces are most often used to explore what it means to live without consequence, judgement, or documentation, many characters in *The Night of the Iguana* have differing relationships with how they wish to preserve their work or legacy. Hannah creates art that preserves emotions, scenes, and people. Nonno has memorized and recited poetry for 97 years, but, as he is illiterate, will not be able to personally preserve that artistic legacy. Maxine is thinking about selling the hotel, which is both her work and the work of her late husband, to move to America and restart her life.

(Questions for discussion on page 12)



## Questions:

- Who in this show wants to escape and what do you think they are running away from?
- Who in this show wants to be remembered? How and why?
- Who is in control of the act of preservation? How does this affect self-image, power dynamics, and relationships in the show?

## THE ROLE OF GENDER AND WOMEN

Women's roles in society have been constantly changing, especially over the last century. During World War II, feminism took significant strides forward in allowing women into the workforce, providing for the war on the home front. Women were starting to be seen as capable of responsible labor. Although, women were allowed to work, they were frequently assigned to assisting roles, which could be quite demeaning. Additionally, the patriarchal view of women was that marriage and serving men were still their top priorities. Hence, the stigma surrounding marital status (single, married, divorced, widowed) was strong, specific, and omnipresent in American culture.

## Questions:

- Maxine, the hotel owner, loses her husband before the show even begins. What do Maxine's reactions to her husband's death (running the hotel, promiscuous activity, assertive leadership style) reveal about the women's roles in this context? How do the women and men in the show perceive or judge her actions differently?
- Hannah holds a caretaker's responsibility for her grandfather, Nonno. She believes in his poetry, and cares deeply for his aging body and mind. What does her commitment and servitude to her grandfather reveal about her character? Do you think it reinforces or critiques the general view of American women's roles in society at the time?
- Charlotte, the young singer on tour with the women, is at a turning point in her life in terms of independence, maturity and sexuality. That being said, her relationship with Shannon is ridden with complicated power dynamics. In the triangle of Shannon, Charlotte, and Judith Fellows (the tour leader of the women's college), discuss the roles of control and agency. Who has control or influence over their own actions? Who has control or influence over the actions of others? What do the roles of responsibility and autonomy reveal about gender dynamics within these relationships?

*The Night of the Iguana* (1964 film)



## DIALECTS

In order to make the play as authentic as possible, the actors worked with Candice Brown, a professional dialect coach, to perfect their accents. With characters from the Southern US, Nantucket, Germany, and Mexico, the actors had their work cut out for them. The way a person talks says a lot about their character, especially as they move between languages and interact with other dialects. For example, Maxine's first language is English, therefore her accent in Spanish is Americanized, which separates her from the locals. Additionally, Shannon and Hannah speak in different dialects, which is a constant reminder of their cultural differences.

Below is an example of one of the many guidelines that the actor's followed to ensure that their accents were as authentic as possible.

### German Dialect:

Largely because in German the /w/ consonant is pronounced in a manner rather closer to the English /v/ there is a strong tendency for the German, at first, to pronounce English [w] words this way.

Try it with these words: **west, question, aware, was, once, one, what, well, inquire, quick, welcome, swim, twins**

### Questions:

- How would this production have been different without the use of accents? Explain.
- What speech patterns, accents, or dialects do you notice in your own life?
- What do accents tell you about a person's social background?



# ACT V

# ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM



## BE A SET DESIGNER!

The setting of this story never changes. We remain in Maxine's run-down rural tropical hotel. This space informs the actions of every character in this show and drives the plot forward. The Gamm theatre has just moved locations to Warwick. In their new theatre, they have the opportunity to create a set that is two stories high with intricate construction details.

In small groups, create your own set design for this show. Think about how to display the hotel onstage. Think about what materials you'd use. Make sure you include important elements like the rooms, balcony, hammock, and space for the iguana. Use the questions below to make your design more specific. Then compare your set design to that of a peer. What did you do differently and why? What did you both include in your sets?

- What is the relationship between nature and the hotel?
- In your set design, how could you show the wind, rain, and moonlight? What does the prominence of the weather, the heat, and animals like the Iguana reveal about man's relationship to the wild and escapism?
- Have you included elements in your set design that are not explicitly outlined in the script? If so, what and why?

## BE A PLAYWRIGHT!

**Stage Direction:** (noun) an instruction in the text of a play, especially one indicating the movement, position, or tone of an actor, or the sound effect and lighting.

Tennessee Williams is known for his beautifully written and detailed stage directions. Here is an example of one of his stage directions :

Shannon looks down at her, dazed. Hannah is remarkable looking - ethereal, almost ghostly. She suggests a gothic cathedral image of a medieval saint, but animated. She could be thirty, she could be forty; she is totally feminine and androgynous-looking - almost timeless. She is wearing a cotton print dress and has a bag slung on a strap over her shoulder.

As you can see, Williams provided the reader with information about movement, costumes, props, emotion, and character.

(Continued on page 15)



Write your own “stage directions”. It does not have to relate to an existing story or play, it may even begin to spark some ideas for an original story! Use colorful and detailed language, incorporating as much information about movement, costumes, props, emotion, character, etc. as possible. Once you have finished writing your stage directions, have other students attempt to act out the directions that were written for them. If the directions are detailed enough, the final product should be pretty close to what the playwright had envisioned. Critique and discuss how the actors interpreted the language, what could have been clearer, and where the writer could have left more room for creative input.

## BE A SOUND DESIGNER!

Music and sound is an integral part of any theatrical production. A director needs to have both an audio and aesthetic vision in order for the show to be an immersive experience for the audience. Good music and sound design choices also help the actors stay in their imaginary environment and improve the authenticity of their performance.

On the first day of rehearsal, Fred Sullivan, the director of the Gamm’s production of *The Night of the Iguana*, told the cast that he wants to start the show with a composed cacophony of sound coming from the actors onstage. He had them improvise sounds that they thought they would hear at a bustling hotel surrounded by the jungle and ocean.

- What noises would you use to establish the scene and environment of this show? Think about vocal, verbal, percussive, environmental, and instrumental sounds.

Make a list of sounds and songs that appear in your everyday life. Compare them to that of a friend. Do you have anything in common? How are your audio experiences different? What differences and similarities exist in the sounds of your life versus the sounds of 1938 Mexico? Select other students to “act out” your soundscape. How did it compare to your real life experience?

Did you know that we photographed a real Iguana for our  
*The Night of the Iguana* poster? Her name is Carla, and she’s amazing!



# ACT VI

## EPILOGUE



### THANK YOU!

Thank you for joining us for *The Night of the Iguana* and for working with this Study Guide to ensure the best, most comprehensive theatrical and educational experience. Please be in touch if you would like us to visit your classroom before or after you attend *The Night of the Iguana*.

Our Education Department provides classes for students of various grade levels, as well as a month-long Gamm Summer Intensive for summer time theatre fun. We hope you will join us for more student matinees at The Gamm!

To book a matinee, contact Tracy at [tracy@gammtheatre.org](mailto:tracy@gammtheatre.org) or 401-723-4266 ext. 111. To learn more about Gamm Education, find us on the web at [www.gammtheatre.org](http://www.gammtheatre.org) or reach Susie Schutt at 401- 723- 4266 ext. 121.

### A LOOK AT SEASON 34

Dear Friends Old and New,

Following a whirlwind summer and early fall, we are ecstatic and (whew!) relieved to welcome you to our new home with our opening production of Tennessee Williams' masterpiece *The Night of the Iguana*. Longtime patrons are familiar with our love of this particular author. Our production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* opened our 31st season and remains among the biggest hits in Gamm history. When we last moved our entire organization from Providence to Pawtucket in 2003, we did so on the heels of another Williams masterpiece, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. When that show closed, we packed up our meager belongings and moved to Pawtucket.

Fifteen years later, we're in Warwick ushering in another new home appropriately enough with the astonishing *Night of the Iguana*. Even as we honor our past, we move forward with another provocative season of the powerful, deeply moving and often surprising stories that audiences have come to expect from The Gamm. Those who are new to us will quickly learn that we have a penchant for big plays in intimate spaces. While our new theater is more comfortable than our very cozy digs in Pawtucket, you remain within spitting distance of the action . . . as many a Gamm patron has discovered over the years. We wouldn't have it any other way.

Enjoy!

- Tony Estrella, Artistic Director





**COMING NEXT**

**NOV 8 - DEC 2**

**PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST**

# **GLORIA**

**BY BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS**

This razor-sharp comic drama follows a group of ruthless editorial assistants at a notorious Manhattan magazine—all vying for their bosses' jobs and a book deal before they turn 30. When a mundane workday of cubicles and Starbucks becomes anything but, the stakes for who will get to tell their story become higher than ever.

**DIRECTED BY RACHEL WALSH**

**TICKETS SELLING FAST!**

GET YOURS AT [GAMMTHEATRE.ORG](http://GAMMTHEATRE.ORG)