

# A Streetcar Named Desire

## Relaxed Performance Show Information

### Show Information

- This is a ballet adaptation of Tennessee Williams' play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, by The Scottish Ballet. This document will share details of the production, including surprises. If you don't want information revealed ahead of time, read no further.
- Using dance and movement, the dancers tell the story of Blanche Dubois. Blanche is forced to leave her life in Mississippi after a scandal causes her young husband Allen to commit suicide, and she falls into alcohol addiction. She turns up at her sister Stella's apartment via a New Orleans streetcar. Stella has fallen in love with a factory worker called Stanley, who resents Blanche's presence in his home and feels that Blanche thinks he isn't worthy of Stella. Blanche uses fantasy and imagination to escape her difficult life, but she is also haunted by the ghost of Allen. She faces abuse and violence from Stanley that she can't escape. After Stanley attacks and rapes Blanche, Stella sides with him to send Blanche away to a hospital, where Blanche fully retreats into her imagination in her loneliness.
- This story is portrayed mainly by movement. It's not required to know every detail of the play to follow or to enjoy the story, but if you'd like more details, you can check out the synopsis of the show provided by the Scottish Ballet.
- This production includes themes of suicide, addiction and domestic and sexual violence.

**Location:** Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre, Aotea Centre. Staff can direct you to the correct entrance for finding your seat.

**Time:** 2pm, Saturday 22 March, 2 hours including an interval. The interval happens about 1 hour into the performance, for 15-20 minutes.

### Pre-show Demonstration

Before the show starts, we will have a pre-show demonstration in the theatre at **12:30pm**. This will introduce the lighting, sound and a few elements of the show. We will talk about what the show will be like and how the relaxed show will work. This document will give you even more details about the show.

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We will meet inside the Aotea Centre in the small seating space directly across from main entrance doors to the building. Katie, your guide for the pre-show demonstration, will be wearing a black baseball cap.

## Relaxed show features

During the relaxed performance, the audience may come and go, visit breakout spaces, and use comfort and fidget items. If you need to leave during the show and then come back, please return to your same seat. Please don't go onto the stage with the performers. The theatre doors will remain closed, but you can leave the theatre at any time. To come back into the theatre, an usher will let you in when it's ok to return. You might have to wait outside the closed doors for a moment. If you'd like assistance to come and go, please let theatre staff know.

If you need to move around out of your seat during the show, theatre staff will tell you where to go inside the theatre to have some space. Standing in the aisles isn't allowed.

A breakout space with seating and plenty of space away from crowds is available upstairs on Level 5. Noise from the crowd below will filter up to Level 5, but there should be more space and less people than in the levels below. There are toilets and a drinking fountain on Level 5 that may also be less crowded.

If you need to use devices for accessibility, please put them on silent and dim the brightness. At the start of the show, the whole audience will be reminded with an announcement that during the relaxed performance it's ok for the audience to be themselves.

## Lighting

- The show mainly uses soft lighting that changes slowly. Lights shine directly down onto the stage from the top, and also onto the stage from right and left. Light haze is used, which has no smell and doesn't reach the audience area.
- Bright exposed lightbulbs are included as part of the set, and they are raised and lowered, turned off and on, and dimmed and brightened during the show by the technicians. They may be very bright at times.
- We will demonstrate some of the lighting during the preshow demonstration

## Sound

- The score is performed by a live orchestra. The music is dynamic, starting rather softly with quiet higher pitched strings music. At some moments, the orchestra

will stop playing and all will be silent. This is sometimes in the leadup to a sudden sound effect or sudden loud playing.

- The orchestra plays very loudly especially during the scenes in the New Orleans club.
- Sound effects are also used, which are played through the speakers. Sound effects are used to create the noise of New Orleans, and include train whistles, street sounds, bells, and sirens.
- The **loudest sound effect** is a sudden, booming gunshot. This happens after Blanche's husband Allen is rejected by Blanche after she catches him cheating. Allen leaves the stage, and the orchestra is silent. Suddenly, the gun sound fires very loudly from offstage. This gunshot sound happens three times.
- Other sounds include crickets chirping, bowling pins being knocked down and mechanically re-racked, the sharp snaps of two photos being taken, and a phone ringing.
- Whispery, overlapping voices can be heard during Blanche's fantasies at times, over the orchestral music, as she is haunted by the ghosts of her past.
- After a drunken night, when Stanley can be seen staggering and collapsing as he dances, he screams out Stella's name several times.
- Earplugs or headphones might be helpful during the show.

## Effects, surprises and stunts

- At the beginning of the show, there is a wall with an old, stately southern home pictured on it. After Allen's death, Blanche experiences her world falling apart as dancers gracefully collapse as they pose for photos. At the end of the photos, the wall suddenly and noisily collapses into rubble.
- The ghost of Allen appears several times in a white shirt covered in blood.
- Violence is portrayed through dance and choreography, including dancers getting grabbed, pulled, and thrown, and appear to be out of control. The dancers are all highly trained with safety systems in place, and all the violence is carefully choreographed so that everyone is comfortable and safe.

## Audience Interaction

There is no audience interaction.

## Triggers

- The dancers portray scenes of rape and violence.

- Blanche crawls across the stage in her underwear after being assaulted by Stanley, which might be distressing.
- The auditorium seats are somewhat rough, so long sleeves and trousers may be helpful.

## Want to know more?

Email the Access and Inclusion Coordinator Hannah at [access@aaf.co.nz](mailto:access@aaf.co.nz) or call/text 022 1239 759.