

PRE-SHOW IN-THE-KNOW

FAST FACTS

TITLE:

Suddenly Last Summer by Tennessee Williams. Directed by Kip Williams.

ABOUT THE PLAY:

Something unspeakable happened last summer. And now the dashing, debonair Sebastian Venable is dead. His young cousin is desperate to tell the truth about what happened, even if it finishes her.

But his mother will stop at nothing - nothing - to protect his reputation.

Renowned American playwright Tennessee Williams (*A Streetcar Named Desire*) has created the ultimate high-stakes battle of wills between Violet Venable (Robyn Nevin), the ruthless matriarch of a prominent New Orleans family, and her niece Catharine (Eryn Jean Norvill) – the sole witness to her cousin’s shocking death.

In the middle is Doctor Cukrowicz (Mark Leonard Winter), a neurosurgeon under pressure to discern torrid memory from grim reality before any more lives are spoiled.

In a new production of this rarely produced classic, STC Resident Director Kip Williams blends the powers of film-making and stage craft to delve into the sharp heart of Tennessee Williams’ darkly poetic drama.

Using live video, the audience will have a cinematic view of the action on stage. Cameras capture and zoom in on the live action to take you closer to these extraordinary characters and inside their story like never before.

CHARACTERS

Mrs. Venable – Robyn Nevin
Catharine Holly – Eryn Jean Norvill
Dr. Cukrowicz – Mark Leonard Winter
Mrs. Holly – Susan Prior
George Holly – Brendan McClelland
Sister Felicity – Paula Arundell
Miss. Foxhill – Melita Jurassic

STYLE

Heightened Naturalism, Surrealism, Memory Play, Contemporary Performance technique - live video.

RUNNING TIME

1 hour and 30 minutes including interval

Created by Hannah Brown for STC Education. ©

ACTIVE AUDIENCE

THINK ABOUT:

- The baby sea turtles being eaten by the birds as a metaphor for Sebastian’s death
- Concealed identities and searching for truth
- Sebastian’s Amazonian garden, the Venus fly trap and the drumming sounds as a metaphor for the animalistic nature of humans and our ability to destroy each other
- The play as an metaphor for Tennessee Williams’ life

WATCH FOR:

- Camera angles and techniques used to suggest dreams and nightmares
- Camera angles and techniques used to focus on character reactions to Catharine’s story
- The inclusion of sound and rhythm to build tension and create atmosphere
- The binary of watching and being watched

MEMORABLE MOMENTS:

- The introduction of the Venus fly trap
- Mrs. Venable’s discussion with Dr. Cukrowicz about Catharine’s lobotomy
- When Catharine begins to tell the story of Sebastian’s death and the screen splits
- Catharine’s narration of Sebastian’s death in the final five minutes of the play