



and
CONSTELLATION ENTERTAINMENT
PRESENT

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS'
THE LOSS OF A
TEARDROP DIAMOND



WRITTEN BY TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
DIRECTED BY JODIE MARKELL

STARRING
BRYCE DALLAS HOWARD
CHRIS EVANS
ELLEN BURSTYN
ANN-MARGRET
MAMIE GUMMER
WILL PATTON
JESSICA COLLINS

RELEASE DATE: December 30, 2009 NY/LA, National Expansion January 8, 2010

RUNNING TIME: 102 minutes

RATING: PG-13

OFFICIAL WEBSITE: www.teardropdiamond.com

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CAST AND CREW

Fisher Willow	Bryce Dallas Howard
Jimmy Dobyne	Chris Evans
Miss Addie	Ellen Burstyn
Cornelia	Ann-Margret
Julie	Mamie Gummer
Old Man Dobyne	Will Patton
Vinnie	Jessica Collins
Mr. Van Hooven	Peter Gerety
Esmeralda	Marin Ireland
Mathilde	Zoe Perry
Mrs. Dobyne	Barbara Garrick
Mr. Fenstermaker	Zach Grenier
Mrs. Fenstermaker	Laila Robbins
Addie's Nurse	Susan Blommaert
Susie	Carol Sutton

Written by	Tennessee Williams
Directed by	Jodie Markell
Produced by	Brad Michael Gilbert
Executive Producers	Ron Gilbert Catherine Kellner

Line Producer	Molly Mayeu
Director of Photography	Giles Nuttgens
Edited by	Susan E. Morse
Music Composed by	Mark Orton
Music Supervisor	Joe Mulherin
Production Designer	Richard Hoover
Art Director	David Stein
Set Decorator	Alice Baker
Costume Designer	Chrisi Karvonides
Sound	Rob Fernandez
Supervising Sound Editor	Bob Hein
Casting by	Avy Kaufman
Make-up	Vivian Baker
Hair Design	Emanuel Millar

SYNOPSIS

THE LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND is a new drama based on a recently rediscovered original screenplay by legendary writer Tennessee Williams. Starring Bryce Dallas Howard and Chris Evans, the Paladin release will open in New York and Los Angeles in late December, with expansion to major markets following in early 2010. Academy Award-winner Ellen Burstyn, Academy Award-nominee Ann-Margret, Mamiie Gummer, and Will Patton co-star in the film which was directed by award-winning short filmmaker and stage and screen actress Jodie Markell, in her feature debut.

Widely considered the most important American playwright of the post-WWII era, Williams wrote the **TEARDROP DIAMOND** screenplay at the height of his late-1950's heyday, amid such classic plays, (which themselves were adapted into classic films), as "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," "Suddenly, Last Summer," "Sweet Bird of Youth," and "Orpheus Descending." Set in the Roaring Twenties in the town of Memphis, the film tells the story of Fisher Willow (Howard) a headstrong young heiress who chafes under the constraints of proper Southern society, and who rebels by asking the impoverished but handsome son of her father's caretaker, Jimmy Dobyne (Evans), to escort her to the major social events of the season. The relationship is purely a business arrangement at the outset, with Fisher paying for Jimmy's time and attention, but when she discovers that she really loves him, she finds it impossible to re-write the rules and earn the affection she tried to buy. Howard's ability to evoke the dueling strength and fragility of this quintessential Williams heroine, along with her stunning mastery of his lush, poetic language, firmly establish her as one of the best actresses of her generation, and place her Fisher Willow in a pantheon of performances that includes Vivien Leigh's Blanche DuBois, Elizabeth Taylor's Maggie the Cat, Anna Magnani's Serafina delle Rose, and Geraldine Page's Alexandra Del Lago.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

In an interview that appeared in the New York Times on July 28th, 1957, noted playwright Tennessee Williams announced his next project. The two time Pulitzer Prize-winner revealed that he had completed a new script, one written directly for the screen, as opposed to adapted from one of his illustrious plays. Entitled “The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond,” Williams hoped it would reunite him with renowned director Elia Kazan, with whom he created the triumphant stage and film productions of “A Streetcar Named Desire.” Award-winning actress Julie Harris, who had catapulted to fame in Carson McCullers’ Southern drama, “A Member of the Wedding,” and who had starred alongside James Dean in Kazan’s “East of Eden,” would play the leading role. Surely, with an assemblage of names such as these, the whole world would be waiting for this cinematic jewel. As it turned out, they would have to wait over fifty years. Recently rediscovered after having been abandoned decades ago, THE LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND finally reaches the screen. Bryce Dallas Howard and Chris Evans head a cast that also includes Academy Award-winner Ellen Burstyn, Academy Award -nominee Ann-Margret, Mamie Gummer, Will Patton, and Jessica Collins. Directed by award-winning short filmmaker and stage and screen actress Jodie Markell, in her feature debut, the Paladin release opens in New York and Los Angeles on December 30th, with national expansion to follow on January 8, 2010.

Widely considered the most important American playwright of the post-World War II era, Williams wrote TEARDROP DIAMOND at the height of his powers, both commercially and critically. Beginning with his 1945 classic, “The Glass Menagerie,” which won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award (and which was filmed with Oscar-winner Jane Wyman, Kirk Douglas and Gertrude Lawrence in 1950), Williams produced nearly one major play a year for the better part of two decades. Most were Broadway hits, garnering both acclaim and awards, and all but one were adapted for the screen. His 1948 play, “A Streetcar Named Desire,” won him his first Pulitzer for Drama and, when the film version was made in 1951, it received ten Academy Award nominations—including one for Williams himself—and four Oscars. His 1952 play, “The Rose Tattoo,” won him the Tony Award, and its 1955 film version garnered eight Oscar nominations and three awards. That same year, he won his second Drama Pulitzer for “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” which, in turn, landed six Academy Award nominations when it was filmed three years later. For his 1956 screenplay adaptation, “Baby Doll,” Williams received his second writing Oscar nomination.

Despite all this, Williams was feeling vulnerable when he wrote TEARDROP DIAMOND. His most recent play, “Orpheus Descending,” had been a rare commercial disappointment, and was not particularly well received by critics. Itself a re-working of an earlier failure, “Battle of Angels,” Williams used a number of anti-realistic devices and tried to transform both his characters and his plot into something more mythic and metaphorical than had been evidenced in the majority of his previous work. With abundant references to Orpheus and Christ, and a protagonist named “Val Xavier”—pronounced Savior—Williams veered further away from realism than he ever had, and his fans rebelled. In a March, 1957 interview with the New York Times, Williams attempted to explain what he was striving for, calling “Orpheus Descending” a play

“about unanswered questions that haunt the hearts of people, and the difference between continuing to ask them...and the acceptance of prescribed answers that are not answers at all, but expedient adaptations or surrender to a state of quandary.” Such an “explanation” could only have confounded audiences further, and their negative reaction to the play--his second attempt at the same material-- left Williams in his own “state of quandary.” For the first time in his career he suffered from writer’s block. In a letter he wrote in June of 1957, Williams announced that he had begun psychoanalysis. He also announced that “it seems advisable to stay at a safe distance from Broadway until the critics have a chance to forget my recent transgressions.”

There is only one reference to TEARDROP DIAMOND in Williams’ journals, and it was written on June 13: “Thurs Midnight Havana. This a.m. (woke at 6 and read till room service started at 7) I was able, for the first time in months to do some satisfactory work. (“The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond’)-- only a few pages but it picked up my spirits a bit. Loneliness has begun to shadow me though...” Having decided to take a breather from the theater, it made perfect sense that Williams would stir his creative juices with something tailored to a different, yet familiar, medium. More importantly, having failed in his attempt to depart extensively from realism with “Orpheus Descending,” it also made sense that he turned to film, the one medium that could accommodate his customary poetic and symbolic touches, while still being fundamentally grounded in realism. TEARDROP DIAMOND would be both the departure and the return to form that Williams needed.

TEARDROP DIAMOND departs noticeably from Williams’ plays of the period. There are no clearly delineated acts, and it moves in a more fluid, inherently cinematic style. Plot is subordinated, and the emphasis, instead, is on evoking time, place and, most importantly, character. The time period, in this instance, is the late 1920s, a past not-too-distant to be socially relevant but remote enough to assume a nostalgic glow. For Williams, the quintessential Southerner, the years just before the Great Depression represented a turning point, one that signaled the decline of old world grace and charm. Once-genteel families accustomed to living off their land were suddenly reduced in circumstances, and modern society grew increasingly industrialized and urbanized. The languid pace of living—and speaking—so well suited to the region’s tropical heat, was becoming outdated. If, as he once said, everything he wrote was about “the loss...the loss...the loss,” then the about-to-vanish era portrayed in TEARDROP DIAMOND expresses Williams’ ongoing themes perfectly. So does his geographical setting—Memphis—a city he lived in while still a student, and one that had ancestral significance for him. (His father hailed from the area and, out of deference to these roots, he adopted the name “Tennessee” in his early 20s.) It is far from irrelevant that Memphis sits on the Mississippi and is protected by levees—man-made structures that perpetually strain against the ravages of nature. Memphis is also the home of the blues.

As for character, Williams chose as his heroine Fisher Willow, a headstrong young heiress who chafes under the constraints of proper Southern society. Until her family tightened the purse strings, Fisher traveled Europe, studied art, and attended salons peopled with a glittering variety of artists and sophisticates. Back home, she wants nothing to do with her father, a greedy landowner much despised by the locals, and tries to avoid the watchful eye of her prudish maiden aunt, whose goal is to see her niece well and properly married. Fisher rebels by asking the handsome but impoverished son of her father’s caretaker, Jimmy Dobyne, to escort her to the major social events of “the

season.” The relationship is strictly business at the outset, with Fisher paying for Jimmy’s time, attention, and even his clothing. But, when she discovers she really loves him, she finds it impossible to re-write the rules and earn the affection she tried, at first, to buy. “You could get used to me,” Fisher says to Jimmy by way of marriage proposal. As harsh as it sounds, in this context it is strangely romantic, proving that Fisher would sacrifice anything for the man she loves, including her self-respect. Like Brick and Maggie in “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” Fisher and Jimmy are the perfect mismatch—a woman who is too strong for her own good, and a man who is too weak to ever be her equal. Like so many of the couples Williams created, these two may never be happy together, nor will they ever be happy apart.

If there is little known about how the screenplay for TEARDROP DIAMOND came together, even less is known about how-- or why-- it fell apart. If one is to trust Williams (and the New York Times), it was meant to be filmed by Kazan in the late 1950s. Instead, Kazan went on to make “Wild River,” released in 1960 and, strangely enough, also set on a Tennessee river in a community beset by turmoil and transition. Stranger still, his film after that, the 1961 drama “Splendor in the Grass,” turned out to be another story set in the 1920s that chronicles a doomed romance beset by class differences, moral and sexual hypocrisy, and mental instability. Clearly, whatever attracted Kazan to TEARDROP DIAMOND stayed with him, and worked its way into his oeuvre. The unfortunate consequence of this was that TEARDROP itself fell by the wayside. As for Williams, he too moved along, adapting (with Gore Vidal) his one act play, “Suddenly, Last Summer,” into a highly regarded 1959 film that received three Oscar nominations. He even took one more stab at his beloved, albeit beleaguered, “Orpheus Descending,” turning it into the 1960 film “The Fugitive Kind,” directed by Sidney Lumet and starring Oscar-winners Marlon Brando, Anna Magnani, and Joanne Woodward. Several more adaptations of his plays made it to the screen, some successful, such as “Summer and Smoke” and “Sweet Bird of Youth,” (which garnered seven nominations between them), and some less so, such as the Elizabeth Taylor-Richard Burton curiosity, “Boom!,” adapted from “The Milk Train Doesn’t Stop Here Anymore,” and “The Last of The Mobile Hotshots,” starring Lynn Redgrave and James Coburn, and based on the Broadway flop “The Seven Descents of Myrtle.” No fewer than seven major films derived from Williams properties were made after 1960, but Williams himself had no hand at all in their creation. A total of seventeen feature films have been based on Williams’ work, but only one of them—THE LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND--was based on an original Williams screenplay.

Jodie Markell, who finally directed THE LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND fifty years after it was written, first came across the script in a published anthology of Williams’ screenplays. “When I was at acting school in New York,” she recalls, “a teacher I knew was very interested in Tennessee Williams, and he showed me a collection of his screenplays which included ‘The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond.’” By this point, Markell was already an avowed Williams aficionado. “When I was fifteen, growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, I was cast as Laura Wingfield in a high school production of ‘The Glass Menagerie’. From that moment on, I was hooked. By the time I was seventeen, I had already read everything I could find by Williams.” She goes on to explain, “I felt an immediate affinity. His people are so unusual, so idiosyncratic, and his syntax so specific that, even at a fairly young age, I saw his universal appeal. He takes

a humanistic approach to his characters. He doesn't judge them. He makes you understand them." For Markell, reading the previously unknown TEARDROP was a revelation. "I instantly sparked to Fisher Willow and related to her as a strong female character in the Williams mold," she says. "Maybe it was the emotional connection of having grown up in Memphis. When you have an artistic tendency, and look toward the more sensitive side of things, as Williams did his whole life, you always feel a little out-of-place in traditional society. Fisher could almost be speaking for Williams himself when she says, 'I am out of my element here.' So, I related to her call for understanding." This character, who always feels "out of his element," was Williams' specialty. From the very beginning of his career he was preoccupied with the man or woman who, by virtue of being different, can (indeed must) stand apart and see the world clearly for what it is. For Williams, this usually meant seeing disillusionment, decay, and death. Perhaps the best description of the Williams outsider can be found in his 1965 play "The Eccentricities of a Nightingale," his 1965 re-working of "Summer and Smoke." In that play, the heroine, Alma, refers to her "little company of the faded and frightened and difficult and odd and lonely." This "company" includes not only Alma, but Williams himself, along with every other major character in his entire canon, beginning with Tom, Laura, and Amanda Wingfield in "The Glass Menagerie," and reaching all the way through his final play, "Clothes For a Summer Hotel," which was about the ruined genius, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and his hopelessly mad wife, Zelda. It certainly includes Fisher Willow, Jimmy Dobyne and Miss Addie, the focal characters in TEARDROP DIAMOND.

These characters, who are never really at home in the world, are constantly running to or from something. Perhaps the best term to describe them would be "the fugitive kind," which Williams used as the title for his film version of "Orpheus Descending." Within this group are many varieties. Some, like Williams, are artists, and his works contain more than their fair share of painters, poets, and singers, most of them amateurs or failures, like Fisher, who boasts of having studied painting in Paris and fancies herself a person of rare refinement. Also included in this group are the mentally unbalanced, an acknowledgement of the fact that there can be a fine line between the artist and the madman. Because Williams' sister was a schizophrenic who had to be institutionalized (and who was, tragically, lobotomized,) he had a lifelong fear that he would succumb to madness himself, (which, doubtless, contributed to the several nervous breakdowns he experienced throughout his life). As a result, characters afflicted with madness, or haunted by its specter, appear repeatedly in Williams' writing. In TEARDROP, there is the obvious example of Jimmy's mother, who resides in a mental hospital. There is also the eventual revelation that Fisher herself had a breakdown in Europe, and needed to "go away" to recover. Finally, there are the physically afflicted, regularly embraced by Williams, who suffered from partial paralysis for two years of his childhood. In TEARDROP DIAMOND, this category of fugitive is represented by Miss Addie, a bedridden stroke victim who has had enough of life and who now seeks deliverance. Having discovered these wonderful, archetypal Williams characters in the TEARDROP screenplay, Markell knew it had to be filmed, and she understood how to do it. "As a young actress," she observes, "I saw a number of productions of Williams that did not feel true to me, that did not feel organic to the South that I knew. Williams' plays were being presented as awkward, dated, and dusty museum pieces. How could this have happened? As a Southern woman, I felt a calling to reclaim Williams, and to bring his visually poetic world to the screen with as much vibrancy and authenticity as I could

achieve, in the hopes of inspiring a new audience to re-discover this original American voice.”

In addition to her high school appearance in “The Glass Menagerie,” Markell had another foray into Williams territory that would prove more significant—and applicable—to her eventual work on TEARDROP. In 1983, along with a group of fellow acting students, she performed in and helped produce a seldom staged Williams play entitled “Confessional.” “He granted us the rights to produce the play as a New York premiere,” Markell recalls. “There was only one stipulation—he wanted to be invited to see it. I was ecstatic that I would get a chance to meet him in this way. And then, on our first day of rehearsal, he tragically passed away.” Markell proved that she had a talent for artistic excavation. “I have always been interested in rediscovering lost American gems by great writers who might have been misunderstood or badly represented in the past,” she says. In 1990, in a similar vein, Markell found herself digging through an obscure book of lost plays by American women. She came across a 1928 drama by Sophie Treadwell called “Machinal,” and once again she knew she’d struck gold. “I was stunned,” she says “that I had never heard of the play in my theater history courses. I thought the writing was as strong, if not stronger, more modern, and more relevant than the classic expressionistic plays that we had been taught. Then, I realized that the play had probably been lost simply because it was written by a woman! I felt a need to see it produced, and I was very interested in portraying the central character.”

Markell persisted with “Machinal.” She convinced her former Northwestern University classmate, Michael Greif (who went on to direct the Broadway hits “Rent” and “Grey Gardens”) to stage it. She joined Naked Angels, a new theater company, and persuaded them to give her a two week slot in which to produce the play. And, at the last performance, famed Public Theater impresario Joseph Papp, saw the show and offered to transfer it to the Public the following season. Frank Rich of the New York Times wrote “What the audience hears, of course, is not just the passion of a young actress, but the piercing voice of a forgotten writer who, in an act of justice unknown to her tragic heroine, has been miraculously reborn.” “That closing sentence blew me away,” says Markell, “because that was my original goal in re-mounting the play. We all won Obies—acting, directing, lighting, set, sound design—and Mr. Rich listed us as one of the 10 Best revivals of the year. “ Thanks to Markell, “Machinal” is now in theater history textbooks around the world , and when England’s National Theatre staged the play a few years later, she served as a consultant to Stephen Daldry, who directed the award-winning London run starring Fiona Shaw.

Her persistence, along with her unerring eye for divining valuable “vintage” material, brought Markell back to the TEARDROP DIAMOND. “When a story touches me,” she says, “I tend to carry it in my heart until the time is right to see it realized. A few years after I read the screenplay, I brought it to producer Brad Michael Gilbert, who has a knack, not only for getting what he wants, but also for supporting an artist’s vision. “ In 1999, Gilbert had produced Markell’s first short film, “Why I Live at the P.O.,” which was drawn from a short story by Eudora Welty, a Southern author much revered, but rarely adapted. Markell appeared in the film, (along with Catherine Kellner, who would later become one of the producers of TEARDROP, and Tony Award-winner Robert Morse,) and it went on to play numerous film festivals and win several prizes, including the MovieMaker Magazine Breakthrough Award. This project convinced the pair that Markell was ready to helm the film of TEARDROP. More difficult was obtaining the

rights from the Williams estate. Over the course of a few years, Gilbert made a number of unsuccessful attempts to do so, but it wasn't until the estate changed hands relatively recently that they were finally secured.

Always the actor, Markell knew that the film's success would rise or fall on her choice of cast. "This project required top actors who also had training and experience in the theater, and who would be able to handle the language," she notes. "Finding the unique rhythm and musicality of Williams' dialogue can be as challenging as reciting Shakespeare, and I knew we needed thoroughbreds." Bryce Dallas Howard, who was Markell's first choice for the lead, had recently starred in Kenneth Branagh's adaptation of "As You Like It," in which her performance as Rosalind, alongside Kevin Kline and Alfred Molina, earned her a Golden Globe nomination. A graduate of the Tisch School of the Arts, Howard has done Shakespeare at the Public Theater and Moliere at The Roundabout, amidst a broad and eclectic spectrum of film work that ranges from M. Night Shyamalan to Lars Von Trier, so her ability to handle Williams was clearly established. "I believe her to be the best of her generation," says Markell, who surrounded her leading lady with such luminaries as Ellen Burstyn (an Oscar, Tony and Emmy winner) as Miss Addie; Oscar nominee Ann-Margret in a lovely cameo as Aunt Cordelia; along with such rising young theater actresses as Mamie Gummer and Jessica Collins in ensemble roles. Under Markell's guidance Howard shows a rare ability to evoke the dueling strength and fragility of this quintessential Williams heroine. That, along with her mastery of his lush, poetic language, firmly place her Fisher Willow in a pantheon of performances that includes Vivien Leigh's Blanche DuBois, Elizabeth Taylor's Maggie the Cat, Anna Magnani's Serafina delle Rose, and Geraldine Page's Alexandra Del Lago.

In conclusion, Markell says, "I have been asked if I found the prospect of realizing Williams' forgotten screenplay overwhelming. On the contrary, I have always felt exhilarated and enlivened by the mission and the challenge. I felt lucky to have the opportunity to make the film; it was like winning the lottery or even finding a diamond!" At Northwestern, Markell studied the adaptation of literature for the stage and screen under her mentor Frank Galati (who wrote and directed the acclaimed Steppenwolf production of Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" for Broadway). Under Galati, Markell learned that it was her responsibility to reveal the true voice of the storyteller. As she puts it, "when approaching an adaptation, our goal was always to let go of our preconceptions and opinions. It was often an exercise in letting go of your ego in order to see another's vision as clearly as possible. This is what I kept in mind every step of the way in making THE LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND."

ABOUT THE CAST

BRYCE DALLAS HOWARD (“Fisher Willow”)

Bryce Dallas Howard recently starred in Kenneth Branagh’s adaptation of the Shakespeare classic, “As You Like It,” for which her performance as Rosalind opposite Kevin Kline and Alfred Molina earned her a Golden Globe nomination. Howard most recently starred opposite Christian Bale in “Terminator Salvation,” directed by McG. Howard’s additional film credits include Sam Raimi’s “Spider-Man 3,” in which she played Gwen Stacy; M. Night Shyamalan’s “Lady in the Water,” co-starring Paul Giamatti, and the Lars von Trier film, “Manderlay,” the filmmaker’s follow-up to “Dogville.” She made her feature film debut starring in the M. Night Shyamalan film, “The Village,” opposite Adrien Brody, Joaquin Phoenix and Sigourney Weaver. Howard made her directorial debut with the short film “Orchids,” a project she took on as part of Glamour Magazine’s “Reel Moments” program.

After leaving the Tisch School of the Arts program at New York University, Howard immediately began working on the New York stage, including playing the role of Marianne in the Roundabout’s Broadway production of “Tartuffe,” Rosalind in the Public Theatre’s “As You Like It,” Sally Platt in the Manhattan Theater Club’s production of Alan Ayckbourn’s “House/Garden” and as Emily in the Bay Street Theater Festival production of “Our Town.”

CHRIS EVANS (“Jimmy Dobyne”)

Chris Evans has emerged in recent years as one of Hollywood's most in-demand young actors for both big budget and independent features. Raised in Massachusetts, Evans began acting in regional theatre before moving to New York, where he studied at the Lee Strasberg Institute.

Evans will soon be seen starring in Sylvain White's "The Losers" opposite Zoe Saldana, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, and Idris Elba. The film is based on the graphic novels of the same name about members of a CIA black ops team that root out those who targeted them for assassination after being betrayed and left for dead. Warner Bros. Pictures will release the film on April 9, 2010.

Evans will also soon be seen starring in Edgar Wright's "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World" opposite Michael Cera, Anna Kendrick, Jason Schwartzman, and Mary Elizabeth Winstead. Evans plays Lucas Lee, an ex-skateboarder / actor and one of the seven evil ex-boyfriends that Scott Pilgrim (Cera) must defeat in order to win the heart of the his dream girl (Winstead).

Evans recently starred in Paul McGuigan's "Push" opposite Dakota Fanning. The action packed sci-fi thriller involves a group of young American ex-pats with telekinetic and clairvoyant abilities, hiding from a clandestine U.S. government agency. Evans plays Nick, one of the young American expats with the ability to move things with his mind.

Evans starred in David Ayer's "Street Kings" opposite Keanu Reeves and Forest Whitaker. Evans stars as Paul Diskant, a Homicide detective who is the younger, timid officer of the force. He is a by the books type guy but adapts to Ludlow's (Reeves) street tactics.

In 2007, Evans reprised the role of Johnny Storm, a.k.a. The Human Torch in the summer action hit "Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer." He reteamed with Jessica Alba, Michael Chiklis and Ioan Gruffudd as a group of astronauts, who gain individual super powers after being exposed to cosmic radiation, that square off against the powerful Silver Surfer and the planet eating Galactus to save the earth.

Evans other film credits include Danny Boyle's critically acclaimed "Sunshine" with Cillian Murphy and Michelle Yeoh; David Ellis' "Cellular" opposite Kim Basinger and Jessica Biel; Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini's "The Nanny Diaries" opposite Scarlett Johansson; Brian Robbins "The Perfect Score" also starring Scarlett Johansson; Griffin Dunne's "Fierce People" with Diane Lane and Donald Sutherland, and Hunter Richards' romantic drama "London" opposite Jessical Biel.

ELLEN BURSTYN ("Miss Addie")

Ellen Burstyn's illustrious career encompasses film, stage, and television. In 1975, she became only the third woman in history to win both the Tony Award and the Academy Award® in the same year, for her work in Bernard Slade's "Same Time Next Year" on Broadway and in Martin Scorsese's "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore," for which she also received a Golden Globe nomination and a British Academy Award for Best Actress. She has been nominated for an Academy Award® five other times, for the films: "The Last Picture Show" (1972), "The Exorcist" (1974), "Same Time, Next Year" (1979), "Resurrection" (1981), and "Requiem for a Dream" (2001).

Burstyn recently starred in "The Stone Angel," directed by Kari Skogland and based on the Canadian best-seller by Margaret Laurence, and appeared this summer in the critically acclaimed HBO series "Big Love," where she played Jeanne Tripplehorn's mother. In June she was featured in a new film from director Tim Chambers titled "Our Lady of Victory." Upcoming films include "Greta" alongside Hillary Duff, "Lovely, Still" with Martin Landau, and Oliver Stone's "W." Later this year, Burstyn will reprise her role in the eagerly awaited third season of "Big Love."

Burstyn recently appeared in Darren Aronofsky's film, "The Fountain," with Hugh Jackman and Rachel Weisz, at the same time her memoir, "Lessons in Becoming Myself," was published by Riverhead Press. This national bestseller is now available in paperback in bookstores and online, along with a CD version of the same title. In addition to "Same Time, Next Year," Burstyn's many theater credits include the Broadway production of 84 Charing Cross Road (1982), the acclaimed one-woman play Shirley Valentine (1989), as well as Shimada (1992), and Sacrilege (1995). She starred off-Broadway with Burgess Meredith in Park Your Car in Harvard Yard (1985). In the mid-90s, she starred in regional productions of Horton Foote's The Trip to Bountiful and Death of Papa, and Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey Into Night at Houston's Alley

Theatre and at HartfordStage in Connecticut. Most recently, she received rave reviews in Stephen Adley Guirgis' new play, *The Little Flower of East Orange* (2008), directed by Phillip Seymour Hoffman at The Public Theater in New York.

Burstyn has worked with some of film's most visionary directors, from Martin Scorsese to Darren Aronofsky – and has appeared in such films as “Alex in Wonderland” (1970), “The King of Marvin Gardens” (1972), “Harry and Tonto” (1974), “Providence” (1976), “Dream of Passion” (1978), “Silence of the North” (1980), “Twice in a Lifetime” (1986), “Dying Young” (1990), “The Cemetery Club” (1993), “Roommates” (1995), “How To Make An American Quilt” (1995), “The Babysitter's Club” (1995), “The Spitfire Grill” (1996), “Playing By Heart” (1998), “The Yards” (1998), “Walking Across Egypt” (1999), “The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood” (2002), “The Elephant King” (2006) and “The Wicker Man” (2006).

On television, Burstyn received an Emmy nomination for her title role in “The People vs. Jean Harris” (1981). She received a second nomination for her starring role in “Pack of Lies,” a 1987 Hallmark Hall of Fame television production. In 2001, Burstyn co-starred on the CBS series “That's Life,” followed by Mitch Albom's television film version of “The Five People You Meet in Heaven,” (2004) and in NBC's series “The Book of Daniel” (2006).

In her early years, known as Ellen McRae, she was cast in numerous television episodes including “Surfside 6” (1961), “The Dick Powell Show” (1961), “Ben Casey” (1962), “Perry Mason” (1962), “Laramie” (1963), “Wagon Train” (1963), “Kraft Suspense Theater” (1964), “The Doctors” (1964-65), “The Iron Horse” (1967-68), “The Virginian” (1969), and “Gunsmoke” (1962-71), and was a regular as a “Glee Girl” on the Jackie Gleason Show.

Ellen Burstyn was the first woman to be elected President of Actors' Equity Association (1982-85), and served as the Artistic Director of the Actors Studio for six years, where she studied with the late Lee Strasberg. She continues to be active there as co-president with Al Pacino and Harvey Keitel. In 2000, Burstyn received the Career Achievement Award from the Boston Film Festival. She was given the Career Achievement Award from the prestigious National Board of Review in early 2001, and was most recently honored with the Career Achievement in Acting Award from the 2006 Hamptons Film Festival.

Academically, Burstyn holds three honorary doctorates, one in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts, a Doctor of Humane Letters from Dowling College, and a doctorate from The New School for Social Research. Burstyn also teaches in The Actors Studio M.F.A. program at its new home at Pace University in New York City and lectures throughout the country on a wide range of topics.

ANN-MARGRET (“Aunt Cornelia”)

This Swedish-born actress and singer was one of the most famous sex symbols and actresses of the 1960s and beyond. She continued her career through the following decades, into the 21st Century. Born in Sweden in 1941, she came to America at age 6. She studied at Northwestern University and left for Las Vegas to pursue a career as a

singer. She was discovered by George Burns and soon afterward got both a record deal at RCA and a film contract at 20th Century Fox. In 1961, her single "I Just Don't Understand" charted in the Top 20 of the Billboard Hot 100 Charts. Her acting debut followed the same year as Bette Davis' daughter in Frank Capra's "Pocketful of Miracles" (1961). She appeared in the musical "State Fair" in 1962 a year later before her breakthrough in 1963. With "Bye Bye Birdie" (1963) and "Viva Las Vegas" (1964) opposite Elvis Presley, she became a Top 10 Box Office star, teen idol and a Golden Globe nominated actress. Her other 1960's movie credits include "Bus Riley's Back in Town" (1965), "The Swinger" (1966) and "The Cincinnati Kid" (1965). After a stint in Italy in the late 1960's, Ann-Margret returned to Hollywood in the 1970's, and was back in the public image with films like "'R.P.M.'" (1970) opposite Anthony Quinn, Las Vegas sing-and-dance shows and her own television specials, and – most notably -- her Oscar-nominated turn in Mike Nichols' "Carnal Knowledge" (1971). A near-fatal accident at a Lake Tahoe show in 1972 only momentarily stopped her career. She was again Oscar-nominated in 1975 for "Tommy" (1975), the rock opera film of the British rock band The Who. Her career continued with successful films throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s. She starred next to Anthony Hopkins in "Magic" (1978) and appeared in pictures co-starring Walter Matthau, Gene Hackman, Glenda Jackson and Roy Scheider. She even appeared in a television remake of Tennessee Williams's masterpiece play "A Streetcar Named Desire" in 1983. Another hit film for her was "Grumpy Old Men" (1993) as the object of desire for Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau. She also appeared in the sequel, "Grumpier Old Men" (1995), which co-starred Sophia Loren. Ann-Margaret has also performed with such stars as Steve McQueen, Al Pacino, Jack Nicholson, Julie Andrews, Jennifer Aniston and Cameron Diaz. She continues to act in movies today. Later career highlights include "Any Given Sunday" (1999), "Taxi" (2004/I), "The Santa Clause 3: The Escape Clause" (2006), "The Break-Up" (2006), and "Old Dogs" (2009/I). Ann-Margaret is considered iconic, remaining one of Hollywood's top sex symbols and one of the most famous women in America.

MAMIE GUMMER ("Julie")

Mamie Gummer made her New York stage debut in 2005, starring opposite Michael C. Hall in the Roundabout Theatre production of Noah Haidle's MR. MARMALADE, directed by Michael Greif, which earned her a Theater World Award. More recently, she starred with Kate Burton and Tony Goldwyn in Theresa Rebeck's THE WATER'S EDGE, directed by Will Frears at NYC's Second Stage Theatre, for which she received a Lucille Lortel nomination for Outstanding Featured Actress and in a revival of THE AUTUMN GARDEN by Lillian Hellman at the Williamstown Theater Festival. In spring 2008, Mamie made her Broadway debut in LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES opposite Laura Linney.

In 2009, Mamie starred opposite Maggie Gyllenhaal and Peter Sarsgaard in the Broadway production of "Uncle Vanya."

In Film, Mamie appeared on-screen in EVENING with an all star ensemble including Claire Danes, Patrick Wilson, Meryl Streep and Vanessa Redgrave. She was also featured in Lasse Hallström's THE HOAX with Richard Gere and Hope Davis, in Kimberly Peirce's STOP LOSS with Ryan Phillippe and Joseph Gordon-Levitt, and in LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND with Bryce Dallas Howard. Mamie will next be seen in Ang Lee's TAKING WOODSTOCK. This summer she will begin production on

THE LIGHTKEEPERS opposite Richard Dreyfus and Blythe Danner, Jeff Lipsky's "12:30" and John Carpenter's THE WARD opposite Amber Heard.

In TV, Mamie appeared in the Emmy nominated HBO miniseries, JOHN ADAMS, with Paul Giamatti and Laura Linney.

A Native New Yorker, Mamie graduated from Northwestern University, and also studied theater at the British Academy of Dramatic Arts.

JESSICA COLLINS ("Vinnie")

Jessica Collins most recently made her Broadway debut as 'Madame De Tourvel' in Roundabout Theatre's "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," where she co-starred alongside "The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond" cast mate Mamie Gummer.

A graduate of Julliard, Collins made her off-Broadway debut in the world premiere of "Manic Flight Reaction" at Playwrights Horizons. While attending Julliard, Collins performed in such classic productions as "Macbeth," "Three Sisters" and "Faust." During her training, she was hand selected to attend an elite acting program at the British American Drama Academy in Oxford, England.

One of four daughters, Collins was born in San Antonio, Texas and currently resides in Los Angeles.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS (Writer)

Long acknowledged as one of the leading forces in Twentieth Century American Theater, Tennessee Williams has also been a powerful voice in film. Nearly all of his major plays were adapted for the screen, some of them more than once. Even those works that were regarded as experimental, controversial and, at one time, failures, were considered worthy of transfer to film, attracting the medium's greatest actors (and stars), and resulting in collaborations with some of cinema's most important directors. Among the legendary performers who appeared in Williams-derived movies are Marlon Brando, Elizabeth Taylor, Vivien Leigh, Anna Magnani, Joanne Woodward, Richard Burton, and Geraldine Page—each of them twice-- along with such other acting luminaries as Katharine Hepburn, Paul Newman, Jane Fonda, Robert Redford, Natalie Wood, Warren Beatty, Montgomery Clift, Kirk Douglas, Jane Wyman, Laurence Harvey, James Coburn, Lynn Redgrave, Ava Gardner, Deborah Kerr, and Noel Coward. Major filmmakers with whom he worked, or who helped guide his vision to the screen, include Elia Kazan, John Huston, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Sidney Lumet, Joseph Losey, Sydney Pollack, Paul Newman, and Luchino Visconti.

With respect to awards and accolades, Williams received this country's highest honors for stage writing, including two Pulitzer Prizes and the Tony. In film, an extraordinary total of 45 Academy Award nominations were accorded to a mere ten of the movies that were written, co-written by, or adapted from Williams' work. Most notable among the

nominated films are: “A Streetcar Named Desire (10 nominations, 6 wins); “The Rose Tattoo” (8 nominations, 3 wins); “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” (6 nominations); and “Baby Doll,” “Suddenly, Last Summer,” and Summer and Smoke,” (4 nominations apiece). Roles he created won Best Actress Oscars for Vivien Leigh (“Streetcar”) and Anna Magnani (“The Rose Tattoo”), a Best Actress nomination for Katharine Hepburn (“Suddenly, Last Summer,”) and two apiece for Elizabeth Taylor (“Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” and “Suddenly, Last Summer), and Geraldine Page (“Sweet Bird of Youth” and “Summer and Smoke”). Karl Malden and Kim Hunter each won Supporting Actor Oscars (“Streetcar”) and Grayson Hall and Lotte Lenya were nominated (For “The Night of the Iguana “ and “The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone”, respectively). Though Williams was personally nominated twice for Oscars as a screenwriter (for “Streetcar” and “Baby Doll”), those were both adaptations. Before “The Loss of the Teardrop Diamond,” no screenplay written directly for the screen by Tennessee Williams was ever produced.

Thomas Lanier Williams, who did not adopt the name “Tennessee” until late in the 1930's, was born on March 26, 1911, in Columbus, Mississippi, the son of a traveling shoe salesman. He grew up in St. Louis and began attending the University of Missouri in 1929. After an extended interruption while, among other things, he worked for a shoe company, he graduated from the University of Iowa in 1938. He had begun to write plays during those years and to have them produced locally. His first national recognition came in 1939 when he received a citation for a related group of one act plays, *American Blues*, in a Group Theatre play contest. His first commercial production was *Battle of Angels* (1940), which closed in Boston after a losing struggle with censorship and contentious reviews. He spent six months in 1943 as a contract writer for MGM, during which time he wrote an original script, *The Gentleman Caller*, which he eventually turned into a play, *THE GLASS MENAGERIE*, his first theatrical success. Since the New York opening of *Menagerie* (March 31, 1945), Williams was accepted as one of the leading American playwrights.

He wrote steadily for the theater, averaging rather more than a play a year, with a list of his major works including *You Touched Me!* (1945), written with Donald Windham; *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947); *Summer and Smoke* (1948); *The Rose Tattoo* (1951); *Camino Real* (1953); *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955); *Orpheus Descending* (1957); *Suddenly Last Summer* (1958); *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959); *Period of Adjustment* (1960); *The Night of the Iguana* (1961); *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* (1963; revised 1964); *Slapstick Tragedy* (1966); *The Seven Descents of Myrtle* (1968); *In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel* (1969); *Small Craft Warnings* (1972); *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur* (1979); and *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* (1980). His last known play, *A House Not Meant to Stand*, was published posthumously in 2008, and Williams called it a “Southern Gothic spook sonata.” His greatest commercial and critical successes have been *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *The Night of the Iguana*. These plays not only had the longest runs, but they all received the Drama Critics Circle Award and two of them (*Streetcar* and *Cat*) were given Pulitzers.

Tennessee Williams was, without doubt, among the most important playwrights to emerge in America since World War II. He made a consistent attempt to put the world as he saw it onstage in dramatic parables that brought both pleasure and shock to his audiences, an attempt that sometimes brought attacks from those who imagined that his

fables were realistic portraits. His sharp eye for nuance of speech and gesture gave the American theater a number of powerful and often funny characters. His attempts to impose nonrealistic plays on the essentially realistic American theater – even when they were considered failures---have been one of the major theatrical endeavors in the United States since 1945.

The lonely woman inhabiting a world of dreams was to remain one of Williams' most powerful themes throughout his career. Clearly, this characterizes his early great plays such as *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, just as it aptly describe THE LOSS OF A TEARDROP DIAMOND. This theme can also be seen in *Summer and Smoke* (1947,) which is about a woman who, lost in dreams of her purity, is unable to respond to the man she loves and is driven into lonely spinsterhood and *The Rose Tattoo* (1951,) a humorous and sympathetic treatment of a Sicilian-American woman who has misplaced ambitions for her daughter. Less typical and more controversial was *Camino Real* (1953), an experimental play featuring such characters as Don Juan, Casanova, and Kilroy, the ubiquitous American G.I. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, which also won a Pulitzer Prize, deals with the tensions and pretensions of a wealthy Southern family. *Suddenly Last Summer* (1958), produced on a double bill with *Something Unspoken* under the title *Garden District*, concerns a possessive mother and her homosexual son, who use others for their own selfish purposes; the son is killed and devoured by a mob of starving children. Other, lesser known plays from this fertile period of Williams' career include *Period of Adjustment* (1960), his first social comedy, *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* (1963,) and *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale* (1965,) which Williams considered two of his best and most difficult plays.

Much of Williams' work is fueled by difficulties of his early family life (he was briefly paralyzed as a boy, and his sister was plagued by mental illness,) and by feelings of alienation from society at large that sprang from his homosexuality. Williams' plays are not dramas of reconciliation, although he sometimes leaves a hint of hope. His characters are unhappy creatures who experience loneliness, fear of death, and profound sexual anxiety – all of which generally remain unresolved. He wrote one novel, *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* (1950), and collections of stories, such as *Hard Candy* (1954), *The Knightly Quest* (1967), and *Eight Mortal Ladies Possessed* (1974). *Memoirs* was published in 1975, and selected personal essays, *Where I Live*, in 1978.

Williams died on February 24, 1983, after choking on an eyedrop bottle cap in his room in New York's Elysee Hotel. (He would routinely place the cap in his mouth and lean back to administer his drops, but this time, accidentally, swallowed it. However, the police report suggested that his use of prescription drugs and alcohol contributed to his death and may have diminished his gag response). His funeral took place on March 3, 1983 at St. Malachy's Roman Catholic Church in New York. His body was buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis. Williams left his literary rights to the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee and the funds support a creative writing program. When she died after many years in a mental institution, Williams' sister Rose bequeathed \$7 million dollars from her portion of the estate to the University of the South as well.

Williams is still the most highly produced playwright on Broadway and intensely popular in London's West End. His estate licenses nearly 1000 performances of his works throughout the world every single year. Festivals run every summer devoted to his plays and there are numerous retrospectives around the world.

JODIE MARKELL (Director)

Born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, Jodie Markell studied theater from an early age and eventually attended Northwestern University where she was mentored by renowned Tony Award winning writer/director Frank Galati (“Ragtime,” “The Grapes of Wrath”). After moving to New York, Markell studied at Circle-in-the-Square Theater. She helped rediscover the Tennessee Williams' play “Confessional,” and her company was granted the rights to produce it as a New York premiere. Her success grew as an actress, as she worked with accomplished theater directors such as John Patrick Shanley, John Malkovich, Gary Sinise, Simon Curtis, and Michael Greif, and eventually starred at Lincoln Center, Manhattan Theater Club, Circle Rep, The Public, Steppenwolf, Williamstown, and The Mark Taper Forum. Markell has been featured in films by directors including Woody Allen, Jim Jarmusch, Todd Haynes, and Barry Levinson. After receiving the OBIE award for her leading performance at The Public Theater in Sophie Treadwell's “Machinal” (a play she rediscovered and brought to Joseph Papp's attention), Markell was invited by Richard Eyre and the National Theater in London to be the creative consultant to Stephen Daldry on his subsequent award winning production of “Machinal” with Fiona Shaw.

Markell adapted and directed the award winning short film “Why I Live at the P.O.,” based on Pulitzer Prize writer Eudora Welty's classic story. The film premiered at Seattle International Film Festival/Women in Cinema, and has played at numerous festivals since including the Hamptons International Film Festival and the New Orleans Film Festival. At the New Orleans festival, the film was awarded the Lumiere Award and the Moviemaker Magazine Breakthrough Award -- the highest award given to any film in any category at the festival. The film continued to receive great reviews and was recently invited to screen at the National Museum of Women In The Arts in Washington D.C. “The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond” is Markell’s feature film directing debut.

BRAD MICHAEL GILBERT (Producer)

Brad Michael Gilbert founded Constellation Entertainment in 2006, where he has spearheaded the production of “The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond,” including playing an instrumental role in obtaining the film rights from the estate of Tennessee Williams.

Gilbert recently produced “Afterlife” starring Liam Neeson and Christina Ricci to be released in 2010. Previously, Gilbert was partnered in the production company Monument Pictures which produced “South Central,” distributed by Warner Bros. and executive produced by Oliver Stone; the acclaimed Sundance Film Festival selection “Little Noises” starring Crispin Glover and Tatum O’Neil; and “Benefit of the Doubt” starring Donald Sutherland and Amy Irving, released by Miramax and executive produced by Harvey and Bob Weinstein. He is a member of the Directors Guild of America.