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Analytical Interpretation of Drama and Cinema 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' Based on The Original Play by Tennessee Williams

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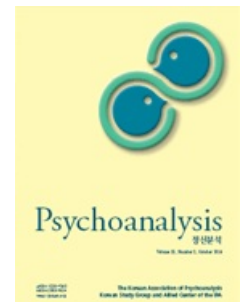
Abstract

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In this paper, four different versions of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (three stage dramas and one movie), based on the original play by Tennessee Williams, are analyzed. Two versions of the play (Cat, No. 1 and the 1974 version) were written solely by Williams, but in the other versions (Cat's Broadway Version and the movie), the main theme of the drama was changed. In the Cat, No. 1 version, the playwright tried to portray the theme of homosexuality and also pretended to assert that homosexuality was a pure and real lifestyle of humankind. Further, through his play, he wished to declare that homophobia was a kind of malignant mendacity. The author speculated that Williams had another motive of "coming out" of his homosexuality in public. However, according to Elia Kazan and Richard Brooks, the theme of homosexuality was diluted and/or omitted during the stage presentation and screenwriting of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Furthermore, the movie was almost completely different from Williams's original play with regard to the theme of homosexuality. Williams called the play a tragedy, but the movie is a drama with a happy ending. Thus, despite having the same title, the play Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and the movie Cat on a Hot Tin Roof are dealt with differently.

Keywords : Tennessee Williams · Homosexuality · Greed · Mendacity · Death.

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A 1955 play that won

Tennessee Williams his second Pulitzer Prize, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof has endured thanks to numerous productions ever since. One of its best known versions was a 1958 film adaptation, directed by Richard Brooks, starring Paul Newman, Elizabeth Taylor and Burl Ives. The story concerns the Pollitt family, and all the ugly family issues that rear their ugly heads as they reunite for the birthday of its patriarch, Big Daddy. Big Daddy, unaware that he's dying of terminal cancer, tries desperately to connect to his angry, alcoholic favored son, Brick, who is married to Maggie. Given that it is Tennessee Williams's best play, it is surprising how rarely we see Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Since its British premiere in 1958, it has had only three major London revivals. Although many people know it through the disastrously diluted Elizabeth Taylor-Paul Newman movie, it is not that often seen on regional stages, either: I can trace four Scottish revivals in the last 15 years, but few in England. The original 1955 Broadway production ran for nearly 700 performances, won Williams his second Pulitzer prize and restored a reputation badly dented by the failure of Camino Real. But, even though it was a big commercial success, Cat raised a fundamental issue. Whose text was it – the author's or the director's? by tennessee williams directed by israel hicks geary theater october 13–november 13, 2005. WORDS ON PLAYS prepared by elizabeth brodersen publications editor jessica werner contributing editor michael paller resident dramaturg margot melcon publications assistant emily miranker literary & publications intern. a.c.t. is supported in part by grants from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. © 2005 american conservatory theater, Loading [MathJax]extensions/tex2jax.js served. table of... Cat on a Hot TinRoof opened at the Morosco Theatre in New York on March 24, 1955, directed by Elia Kazan.