



WHAT
HAPPENED

The first Broadway production of "A Streetcar Named Desire" occurred Dec. 3, 1947.

Tennessee Williams, a native of Columbus, Mississippi, considered New Orleans his "spiritual home."

In 1938, when he was 28, Williams moved to New Orleans and lived here for less than a year. It was in New Orleans that Williams first used the name Tennessee rather than his given name of Tom.

A born wanderer, Williams returned frequently to the city, and it became the setting and inspiration for some of his most successful works, including "A Streetcar Named Desire," which earned him a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, "Vieux Carre" and "Suddenly Last Summer."

Williams said it was New Orleans that turned him from a proper young man into a "Bohemian," and where he was unleashed creatively.

He stayed in several places during his visits, including the Hotel Monteleone, whose Carousel bar is mentioned in more than one of his works, and he liked to frequent Galatoire's and sit at the front table.

He eventually returned to New Orleans more permanently in 1962, buying a house at 1014 Dumaine St. While he said he wanted to die "in this beautiful big brass bed in my New Orleans apartment," he died in New York in 1983.

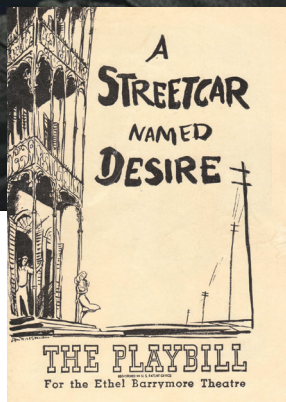
Three years later, the first Tennessee Williams Literary Festival was held in New Orleans to honor the city's adopted author.



The U.S. Mint draped a streetcar to honor Williams after his death.

"America has only three cities: New York, San Francisco, and New Orleans. Everywhere else is Cleveland."

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A playbill from the first production of 'A Streetcar Named Desire' at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre in 1947.



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION

While living at 722 Toulouse St., Thomas Lanier Williams experimented with different names, including Valentine Xavier, which upon reflection Williams said "seemed a bit pompous."



Marlon Brando's portrayal of Stanley in the 1951 film version of A Streetcar Named Desire sparked the popular "Stella" contest at the Tennessee Williams' literary festival.

THE NEW ORLEANS ADVOCATE PHOTOS