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12-3-2012

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University Relations, "Schultz to Channel Tennessee Williams in Blanche and Beyond" (2012). *Campus News Archive*. 339.

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Schultz to Channel Tennessee Williams in *Blanche and Beyond*

Summary: Ray Schultz will present an additional performance of Blanche and Beyond: The Letters of Tennessee Williams on Tuesday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the Humanities Fine Arts Black Box Theatre.

(December 3, 2012)-Ray Schultz, associate professor of theatre arts, will present an additional performance of *Blanche and Beyond: The Letters of Tennessee Williams* on Tuesday, December 4, at 7:30 p.m. in the Humanities Fine Arts Black Box Theatre. Adapted by Steve Lawson, this solo performance piece paints a portrait of one of America's greatest playwrights at his creative peak.

Through the artist's own letters, *Blanche and Beyond* explores Williams's work as well as the demons that haunted him and led to his increasingly self-destructive behavior. This solo piece has been constructed and staged to emphasize the drama of Williams's life and the complexity of the close relationships he shared with such literary and theatrical figures as Carson McCullers, Gore Vidal, and Elia Kazan. The piece provides an excellent introduction or complement to the canonical works of Williams—as well as an insightful study of the highs and lows of the creative process.

Schultz hopes that the audience will come to better appreciate Williams as both a writer and a person as a result of his performance.

“Williams wrote some of the great American plays of the 20th century, and the more I have studied him, the more I admire his talent and how much of his creative energy and spirit was poured into every one of his works,” says Schultz. “His writing voice was singular in terms of its heightened emotionalism and poetic quality, and through his letters one can certainly see that his ‘real’ voice and his writing voice are almost always one and the same. You can certainly hear echoes of his plays and characters in his letter writing.”

A goodwill donation will be collected at the door, with all proceeds benefiting the George Fosgate Theatre Scholarship and Meiningens Student Theatre.

Blanche and Beyond is made possible through generous funding by the University of Minnesota Grant-in-Aid of Research, Artistry and Scholarship program, the University of Minnesota Imagine Fund Annual Faculty Award program, and the University of Minnesota, Morris Faculty Research Enhancement Funds program.

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