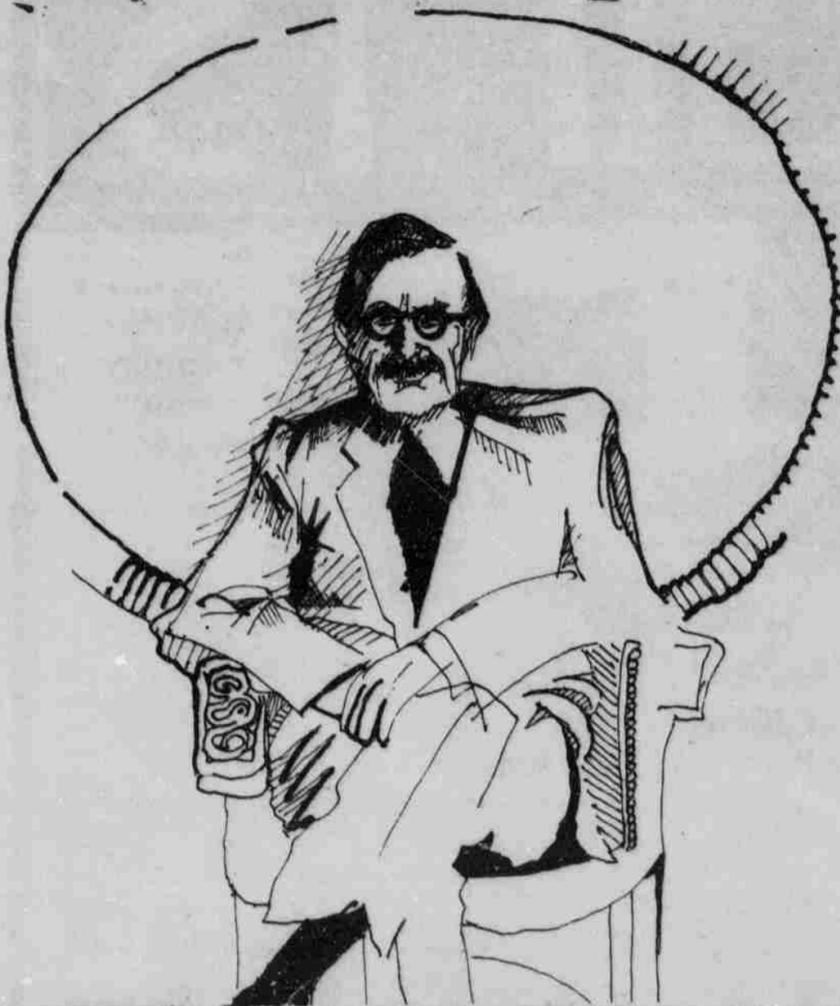


arts & entertainment



William's memoirs add insight dramas omitted

Book review by Bill Roberts
Memoirs, by Tennessee Williams/Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York/\$8.95

When one of America's literary giants writes his memoirs, it's bound to be of some interest. The peculiar worth of Tennessee Williams' *Memoirs* is that it is a demonstration of the great dramatist's artistic methods.

Memoirs is lengthy, uneven in style and tone, and jumps back and forth from past to present. It is the entire body of his full life, with all the extra skin and hair intact.

This is in contrast to his plays, where Williams sliced away the unnecessary flesh of life and works with the muscles and bones of emotions. The plays, after reading *Memoirs*, seem like a distillation, a rewrite job, of his passionate life.

For example, he drew on his close relationship with his mentally ill sister, Miss Rose, for the character of Laura in *The Glass Menagerie*. But he did it as a dramatic artist, not a biographer.

"Laura of *Menagerie*," he explains, "was like Miss Rose only in her inescapable 'difference,' which that old female bobcat Amanda would not believe existed."

As the story of a famous person's life, *Memoirs*, with help from 144 photographs, is satisfactory. Williams was once introduced, by Ernest Hemingway, to Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, and there are anecdotes about Tallulah Bankhead, Gore

Vidal, Elia Kazan and others.

Williams tells about his drug and alcohol bouts in the 60s, which he lost and which eventually caused him to be hospitalized. He writes that he changes his name from Thomas Lanier Williams in honor of his paternal grandfather, who tried and failed to be elected governor of Tennessee.

Williams is frank to the point of boring the reader about his homosexual love life. Except for one 14-year affair, the playwright was promiscuous, and just to give his significant encounters fair mention takes up considerable space.

With all the evidence of his sexual preferences, the strong heterosexuality in his early plays becomes even more remarkable. Of course, to some extent the social climate of the 40s and 50s made the more conventional treatment of sexuality necessary.

But one cannot say that the author of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* sold out. In all his work he was dedicated to honesty. *Memoirs* rounds out the truth of his plays and fiction, and helps the reader appreciate Williams' accomplishments.

"What is in these memoirs," Williams writes, "is mostly the barest periphery of that which is my intense life, for my intense life is my work."

up & coming

On Campus

Art
 Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery- 12th & R- Watercolors by W.M. Dickerson through Dec. 8; Christmas Fair through Dec. 24.

Film
 Sheldon Film Theater- 12th & R- (Classic Silent Films) *General, Cops and One Week*- Fri. and Sat.- 3, 7 and 9 p.m.
 Student Union- 14th & R- (Foreign Films) *Middle of the World*- Tues., Wed. and Thurs.- 7 and 9:15 p.m.

Music
 Kimball Recital- 11th & R- Kari Ravnan cello recital- Mon.- 8 p.m.; Faculty String Quartet- Tues.- 8 p.m.; Marching Band- Thurs.- 8 p.m.; Student Chamber Music- Fri.- 8 p.m.
 Student Union- 14th & R- Keith Jarrett Quartet- Sat.- 8 p.m.; Coliseum- 12th & Vine- Messiah- Sun.- 8 p.m.

Theater
 Howell Memorial Theater- 12th & R- *The Crucible*- Fri. and Sat.- 8 p.m.



Photo courtesy of Sheldon Film Theatre

The Foreign Film Series will present the 1974 Swiss production, *The Middle of the World*, Tuesday-Thursday at 7 and 9:15 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Auditorium.

The Middle of the World charts the day-by-day progress of a summertime affair between a free-spirited Italian waitress and a regimented Swiss politician.

Sheldon's Classic Silent Film Series this week features the films of comedian/actor, Buster Keaton: *The General, Cops and One*

Art gallery offers films of Keaton

Week. *The General* spoofs the espionage tactics during the Civil War. As both director and actor, Keaton's efforts are considered classical by many film historians.

The Cops finds Keaton the innocent perpetrator of mass chaos within a police department.

The General, Cops and One Week will be screened on Friday and Saturday at 3, 7 and 9 p.m.

Ragtime still selling

Below are best sellers this week in Lincoln.

- Fiction:**
1. *The Greek Treasure*, Stone
 2. *Ragtime*, Doctorow
 3. *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*, Woiwode
 4. *Choirboys*, Wambaugh
 5. *The Eagle Has Landed*, Higgins
- Non-fiction:**
1. *The Relaxation Response*, Benson
 2. *The People's Almanac*, Wallenchinsky
 3. *The Doonesbury Chronicles*, Trudeau
 4. *Angels*, Graham
 5. *Money*, Galbraith
- List compiled from the five best-selling books at B. Dalton, The Nebraska Bookstore and Miller and Paine.

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