

Another favorite – I read this play a week before going to London. I saw the John Malkovich film in high school, but I didn't remember much of it. After I read the play, I thought Tennessee Williams was brilliant and I was really looking forward to seeing it in London. I also thought that our discussion of this play was the best class of this trip. We started out discussing truth and memory plays. Although Tom warns us that this is a memory play and therefore not realistic, I actually felt that it was quite realistic. Amanda's character may have been a bit exaggerated, but the other characters seemed fairly realistic to me.

Amanda's clinging to another time and place seemed exaggerated, but perhaps that is because this is how Tom remembers her. When she discusses all her gentlemen callers in the first scene, we just want to tell her, "Get over it!" She conveys herself as a beautiful young woman, wanted by all these gentlemen, when in reality this is only a fantasy that she cannot let go of. What is even sadder about her character is that she actually believes this fantasy is real. Toward the end of the play, she still talks about her gentlemen callers to Jim, which means she has not changed throughout the plot. She has failed to establish contact with reality, but she does not realize this.

However, we dislike her more than we should; she wants the best for her children but she doesn't have the right approach. This is demonstrated in the very first scene, when Amanda says to Tom during dinner, "Honey, don't  with your  . If you have to push with something, the thing to push with is a crust of bread. And chew – chew! ... Eat food leisurely, son, and really enjoy it... So chew your food and give your salivary glands a chance to function!" (Scene 1). While it is true that eating slowly is healthier, Amanda has annoyed Tom with her directions

on how to eat. She wants her son to enjoy his food, but her approach has led Tom to become irritated with her.

Amanda's method of getting a gentleman caller for Laura is also flawed. Laura knows that her mother's hopes are high when Tom invites Jim for dinner, so Laura feels tremendously pressured to make things go well, and combined with her social anxiety, she becomes sick and skips the dinner. The way that Amanda forces Laura to open the door for Tom and Jim deepens the pressure on Laura. While Amanda is desperate to make her children fit in and be normal, her



As another one of my favorites on this trip, I enjoyed every musical number in .  
My favorite sequence was the number right before the intermission, "Angry Dance." The hard  
rock music stood out from the other musical numbers, which were either comedic or sentimental.  
It was also intere







Karimloo, who was brilliant and had a wonderful voice) sings “‘Til I Hear You Sing,” which wasn’t a bad song, but it was too slow for my taste and didn’t engage me. The next musical number, “The Coney Island Waltz,” was reminiscent of “Masquerade” from \_\_\_\_\_, in that both sequences brought light to a darker story, but “Masquerade” still triumphed over it. The other musical numbers were okay but not as good as the music from \_\_\_\_\_; the one exception would be “The Beauty Underneath,” my favorite song in this production.



Another one of the production's stronger scenes takes place right after the intermission, when the Phantom and Raoul sing "Devil Take the Hindmost." This takes place in a bar, where the Phantom is disguised as a bartender until Meg leaves. The Phantom and Raoul make a bet: if Christine sings, Raoul must leave alone. If she does not sing, Raoul may leave with her and Gustave. The Phantom also leads Raoul to question whether he is really Gustave's father (after Christine has already revealed to the Phantom that Gustave is not Raoul's). This scene was entertaining because it was the first face-to-face, settled confrontation between the two. In

, Raoul confronts the Phantom at the cemetery and in the climax scene, but neither of these scenes were settled (both were only to rescue Christine in haste).

With the exception of a few scenes, the production was mostly a disappointment. In terms of character development, most of the characters were not very likable, except for the Phantom and perhaps Gustave. Even Christine wasn't that likable; if we return to the end of , she was very much in love with Raoul. Yet she spends a night with the Phantom before her wedding ("Beneath a Moonless Sky," the duet between the Phantom and Christine in which they recall that night, was also a good musical number); if this hadn't happened,



This would've been the better ending: the Phantom hands the Phantasma over to Madame Giry, allowing Meg to be the star, and the Phantom and Christine run away together with Gustave. Raoul can go back to Paris alone, since we don't care about him anymore. Where the family runs away to can be a mystery to us – we don't need to know where they're going. They can just disappear, like the way he disappeared from his lair at the very end of . The happy ending is not expected, but with the ridiculous plot already, I would've liked it a bit more if Christine had not been accidentally killed by Meg. Then again, I would've like it a whole lot more if the plot had been completely different. I don't regret seeing because it fulfilled my curiosity as a lover, but if I went back to London or if it opened on