

Arthur Miller

(17 October 1915 -)

Stephen A. Marino
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See also the Miller entry in *DLB 7: Twentieth-Century American Dramatists*.

PLAY PRODUCTIONS: *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, New York, Forrest Theatre, 23 November 1944;

All My Sons, New York, Coronet Theatre, 29 January 1947;

Death of a Salesman, New York, Morosco Theatre, 10 February 1949;

An Enemy of the People, adapted from Henrik Ibsen's play, New York, Broadhurst Theatre, 28 December 1950;

The Crucible, New York, Martin Beck Theatre, 22 January 1953;

A View from the Bridge, one-act version and *A Memory of Two Mondays*, New York, Coronet Theatre, 29 September 1955;

A View from the Bridge, revised two-act version, London, Comedy Theatre, 11 October 1956;

After the Fall, New York, ANTA Washington Square Theatre, 23 January 1964;

Incident at Vichy, New York, ANTA Washington Square Theatre, 3 December 1964;

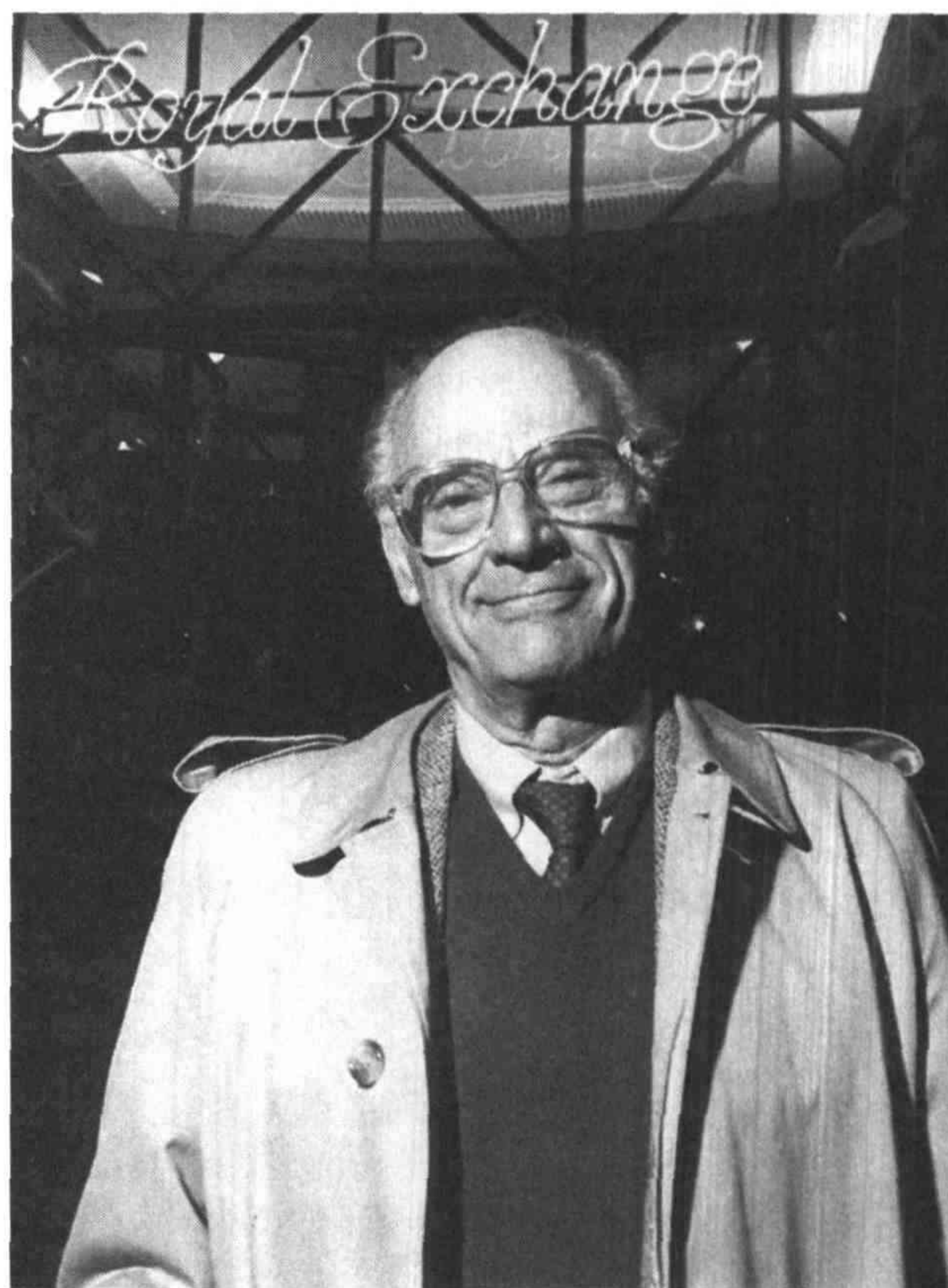
The Price, New York, Morosco Theatre, 7 February 1968;

The Creation of the World and Other Business, New York, Shubert Theatre, 30 November 1972; revised as *Up from Paradise*, Ann Arbor, Mich., Powell Center for the Performing Arts, 23 April 1974;

The Archbishop's Ceiling, Washington, D.C., Eisenhower Theatre, Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 30 April 1977;

The American Clock, adapted from Studs Terkel's *Hard Times*, Charleston, S.C., Spoleto Festival Dockside Theater, 24 May 1980; New York, Biltmore Theatre, 20 November 1980;

2 by A.M., New Haven, Long Wharf Theatre, 26 October 1982—comprised *Elegy for a Lady* and *Some Kind of Love Story*;



Arthur Miller in Manchester, 1989
(photograph by Michael Arron)

Danger: Memory! New York, Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 23 January 1987—comprised *Clara* and *I Can't Remember Anything*;

The Last Yankee, one-act version, New York, Ensemble Studio Theatre, June 1991; revised two-act version, New York, Manhattan Theatre Club, 21 January 1993;

The Ride Down Mt. Morgan, London, Wyndham's Theatre, 11 October 1991; Williamstown, Mass., Williamstown Theatre Festival, July 1996; New York, Joseph Papp Public Theater, November

- 1998; New York, Ambassador Theater, 9 April 2000;
- Broken Glass*, New Haven, Long Wharf Theatre, March 1994; New York, Booth Theatre, 24 April 1994;
- Mr. Peters' Connections*, New York, Signature Theatre Company, 28 April 1998;
- Resurrection Blues*, Minneapolis, Guthrie Theater, 9 August 2002.
- BOOKS:** *Situation Normal* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1944);
- Focus* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1945; London: Gollancz, 1949);
- All My Sons* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1947);
- Death of a Salesman* (New York: Viking, 1949; London: Cresset, 1949);
- An Enemy of the People*, adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's play (New York: Viking, 1951);
- The Crucible* (New York: Viking, 1953; London: Cresset, 1956);
- A View from the Bridge: Two One-Act Plays* (New York: Viking, 1955)—includes *A Memory of Two Mondays*;
- A View from the Bridge: A Play in Two Acts*, revised edition (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1957; London: Cresset, 1957);
- The Misfits* (New York: Viking, 1961; London: Secker & Warburg, 1961);
- Jane's Blanket* (New York: Crowell-Collier / London: Collier-Macmillan, 1963);
- After the Fall* (New York: Viking, 1964; London: Secker & Warburg, 1965);
- Incident at Vichy* (New York: Viking, 1965; London: Secker & Warburg, 1966);
- I Don't Need You Any More: Stories* (New York: Viking, 1967; London: Secker & Warburg, 1967); revised as *The Misfits: And Other Stories* (New York: Scribners, 1987);
- The Price* (New York: Viking, 1968; London: Secker & Warburg, 1968);
- In Russia*, by Miller and Inge Morath (New York: Viking, 1969; London: Secker & Warburg, 1969);
- The Creation of the World and Other Business* (New York: Viking, 1973);
- In the Country*, by Miller and Morath (New York: Viking, 1977);
- The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller*, edited by Robert Martin (New York: Viking, 1978); revised and expanded, edited by Martin and Steven R. Centola (New York: Da Capo, 1996);
- Chinese Encounters*, by Miller and Morath (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1979);
- Playing for Time: A Screenplay* (New York: Bantam, 1981);
- The American Clock* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1982);
- Elegy for a Lady* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1982);
- Some Kind of Love Story* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1983);
- Up from Paradise*, book and lyrics by Miller, music by Stanley Silverman (New York: S. French, 1984);
- The Archbishop's Ceiling* (London: Methuen, 1984; New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1985);
- Salesman in Beijing*, by Miller and Morath (New York: Viking, 1984);
- Danger: Memory!* (London: Methuen, 1986; New York: Grove, 1987)—comprises *I Can't Remember Anything* and *Clara*;
- Timebends: A Life* (Franklin Center, Pa.: Franklin Library, 1987; New York: Grove, 1987; London: Methuen, 1987);
- The Golden Years and The Man Who Had All the Luck* (London: Methuen, 1989);
- Everybody Wins: A Screenplay* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990; London: Methuen, 1990);
- The Last Yankee* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1991; revised and expanded, London: Methuen, 1993; New York: Penguin, 1994);
- The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* (London: Methuen, 1991; New York: Penguin, 1992);
- Homely Girl: A Life* (New York: Peter Blum, 1992); republished as *Plain Girl: A Life* (London: Methuen, 1995);
- Broken Glass* (New York: Penguin, 1994);
- The Crucible: Screenplay* (New York: Penguin, 1996; London: Methuen, 1996);
- Mr. Peters' Connections* (New York: Penguin, 1999);
- Echoes Down the Corridor: Collected Essays 1944–2000*, edited by Steven R. Centola (New York: Viking, 2000);
- On Politics and the Art of Acting* (New York: Viking, 2001).
- Editions and Collections:** *Arthur Miller's Collected Plays*, volume 1 (New York: Viking, 1957; London: Cresset, 1958); republished as *Plays: One* (London: Methuen, 1988);
- The Portable Arthur Miller*, edited by Harold Clurman (New York: Viking, 1971);
- Arthur Miller's Collected Plays*, volume 2 (New York: Viking, 1981; London: Secker & Warburg, 1981); republished as *Plays: Two* (London: Methuen, 1988);
- Two-Way Mirror* (London: Methuen, 1984)—comprises *Elegy for a Lady* and *Some Kind of Love Story*;
- The American Clock and The Archbishop's Ceiling: Two Plays* (New York: Grove, 1989);
- Plays: Three* (London: Methuen, 1990);
- Plays: Four* (London: Methuen, 1994);

Homely Girl, A Life, and Other Stories (New York: Viking, 1995);
Plays: Five (London: Methuen, 1995);
The Portable Arthur Miller, edited by Christopher Bigsby (New York: Penguin, 1995).

PRODUCED SCRIPTS: *The Misfits*, motion picture, United Artists, 1961;
Fame, television, NBC, 30 November 1978;
Playing for Time, adapted from Fania Fénelon's *The Musicians of Auschwitz*, television, CBS, 30 September 1980;
Everybody Wins, adapted from Miller's play *Some Kind of Love Story*, motion picture, Orion, 1990;
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OTHER: *The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber Who Was a Man and William Ireland's Confession*, in *One Hundred Non-Royalty Radio Plays*, edited by William Kozlenko (New York: Greenburg, 1941), pp. 20-30, 512-521;
The Man Who Had All the Luck, in *Cross-Section*, edited by Edwin Seaver (New York: L. B. Fischer, 1944), pp. 486-552;
Grandpa and the Statue, in *Radio Drama in Action*, edited by Erik Bamouw (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1945), pp. 265-281;
That They May Win, in *The Best One-Act Plays of 1944*, edited by Margaret Mayorga (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1945), pp. 45-60;
The Story of Gus, in *Radio's Best Plays*, edited by Joseph Liss (New York: Greenburg, 1947), pp. 303-319;
 "I Think about You a Great Deal," in *Václav Havel: Living in Truth*, edited by Jan Vladislav (London: Faber & Faber, 1986), pp. 263-265.

SELECTED PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS— UNCOLLECTED:

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"It Takes a Thief," *Collier's*, 119 (8 February 1947): 23, 75-76;
 "Kidnapped?" *Saturday Evening Post*, 242 (25 January 1969): 40-42, 78-82;
 "Ham Sandwich," *Boston University Quarterly*, 24, no. 2 (1976): 5-6;
 "White Puppies," *Esquire*, 90 (July 1978): 32-36;
 "1928 Buick," *Atlantic*, 242 (October 1978): 49-51;
 "Bees," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 29 (Spring 1990): 153-157;
 "Bulldog," *New Yorker* (13 August 2001): 72-76;
 "The Performance," *New Yorker* (22-29 April 2002): 176-188.

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"Subsidized Theatre," *New York Times*, 22 June 1947, II: 1;
 "Picking a Cast," *New York Times*, 21 August 1955, II: 1;
 "Global Dramatist," *New York Times*, 21 July 1957, II: 1;
 "My Wife Marilyn," *Life*, 45 (22 December 1958): 146-147;
 "A New Era in American Theater?" *Drama Survey*, 3 (Spring 1963): 70-71;
 "Lincoln Repertory Theater—Challenge and Hope," *New York Times*, 19 January 1964, II: 1, 3;
 "With Respect for Her Agony—But with Love," *Life*, 56 (7 February 1964): 66;
 "How the Nazi Trials Search the Hearts of All Germans," *New York Herald Tribune*, 15 March 1964, p. 24;
 "Our Guilt for the World's Evil," *New York Times Magazine*, 3 January 1965, pp. 10-11, 48;
 "After the Fall: An Author's View," *New Haven Register*, 25 April 1965, p. 9;
 "The Writer as Independent Spirit: The Role of P.E.N.," *Saturday Review*, 49 (4 June 1966): 16-17;
 "Literature and Mass Communication," *World Theatre*, 15 (1966): 164-167;
 "Writers in Prison," *Encounter*, 30 (June 1968): 60-61;
 "On the Shooting of Robert Kennedy," *New York Times*, 8 June 1968, p. 30;
 "The War between Young and Old, or Why Willy Loman Can't Understand What's Happening," *McCall's*, 97 (July 1970): 32;
 "Banned in Russia," *New York Times*, 10 December 1970, p. 47;
 "When Life Had at Least a Form," *New York Times*, 24 January 1971, p. 17;
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 "A Playwright's Choice of 'Perfect' Plays," *New York Times*, 14 January 1979, II: 10;
 "Every Play Has a Purpose," *Dramatists Guild Quarterly*, 15 (Winter 1979): 13-20;
 "Clurmania," *Nation* (26 May 1979): 606;
 "Arthur Miller on McCarthy's Legacy," *Harper's*, 269 (July 1984): 11-12;
 "Arthur Miller Speaks Out on the Election," *Literary Cavalcade* (November 1984): 4-5;
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 "Arthur Miller on Rushdie and Global Censorship," *Authors' Guild Bulletin* (Summer 1989): 5;

- "Death in Tiananmen," *New York Times*, 10 September 1989, IV: 31;
- "In the Ayes of the Beholder: With Congress Debating Obscenity in Federally Funded Art, What Will Happen to Free Expression?" *Omni*, 13 (February 1991): 10;
- "The One Thing That Keeps Us from Chaos," *New Choices for Retirement Living* (October 1994): 22-25;
- "Why I Wrote *The Crucible*," *New Yorker*, 21 (28 October 1996): 158-164;
- "On Broadway, Notes on the Past and Future of American Theater," *Harper's* (March 1999): 37-47;
- "My New York," *New York* (18 December 2000): 122;
- "Writers on Writing: Shattering the Silence, Illuminating the Hatred," *New York Times*, 22 October 2001, p. E1.

Arthur Miller is one of the major dramatists of the twentieth century. He has earned this reputation during a more than sixty-year career in which he wrote his first plays as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan in the 1930s; achieved critical success with dramas such as *All My Sons* (1947), *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *The Crucible* (1953), and *A View from the Bridge* (1955) in the 1940s and 1950s; served as president of the International Association of Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists and Novelists (PEN) and as a delegate to two Democratic conventions in the 1960s and 1970s; produced a critically acclaimed autobiography, *Timebends: A Life*, in 1987; and premiered new plays on Broadway and in London in the 1990s. In the twenty-first century Miller remains as active as at the beginning of his career, having published a collection of essays, *Echoes Down the Corridor* (2000), and completed a new play, *Resurrection Blues* (2002). Recipient of the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *A View from the Bridge*, the Pulitzer Prize for *Death of a Salesman*, Tony Awards for *Death of a Salesman*, *The Crucible*, and Lifetime Achievement (1999), and the Olivier Award for *Broken Glass* (1994), Miller clearly ranks with the other truly great figures of American drama such as Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and Edward Albee.

Arthur Asher Miller was born on 17 October 1915 in Manhattan, the second son of Isadore and Augusta Barnett Miller. His older brother, Kermit, was a businessman, and his younger sister is the actress Joan Copeland. The Millers—his father a Jewish immigrant from Poland, his mother born on the lower East Side of Manhattan to Polish Jewish émigrés—were wealthy from their coat and suit factory, a family business that his father had built up. The Millers lived in upper-middle-class splendor on East 112th Street in a large apartment that Miller describes in *Timebends* as "at

the edge of Harlem, six stories above the glorious park, from whose windows we could see downtown, even down to the harbor it seemed." The family owned a chauffeur-driven, seven-passenger "National" automobile and a summer bungalow on the beach in Far Rockaway. However, Isadore Miller's business collapsed, even before the stock-market crash of 1929; the family relocated to Brooklyn in 1928, when Arthur was thirteen. The move was clearly a step down, and the family settled in the Midwood section of the borough in a little six-room house on East Third Street, where Arthur shared a bedroom with his maternal grandfather.

The move to Brooklyn and the onset of the Depression were the most defining events of Miller's youth. Many critics have discussed the autobiographical elements of Miller's work, and his experiences as a teenager and young man in Brooklyn during the Depression are evident in many of his plays. The Brooklyn of Miller's youth, despite the size and population of the borough, was still relatively rural and undeveloped, and Miller's recollections emphasize the pastoral aspect. In *Timebends* Miller recounts the life of his "two pioneer uncles," Manny Newman and Lee Balsam, both salesmen whom Miller later used as prototypes for Willy Loman. They had moved their families to Brooklyn after World War I, almost ten years earlier than his own family. Miller describes the Midwood area as "so empty they could watch their kids walking all the dozen blocks to the school across the scrubby flatlands." Miller often describes the physical transformation of Brooklyn in the era between the world wars, when he witnessed a quick and dramatic change to the wholly urban environment of today.

Miller attended James Madison and Abraham Lincoln High Schools in Brooklyn, where he was an average student and played on the second squad of the Lincoln football team. In 1932 Miller graduated from Lincoln. His poor grades and his family's finances kept him out of college. For two years Miller worked in a succession of odd jobs as a deliveryman for his father, as an on-air tenor for a Brooklyn radio station, and as a stock clerk in the warehouse of an auto-parts supplier, an experience he turned into his 1955 one-act play *A Memory of Two Mondays*. During this time Miller first encountered anti-Semitism, which became a major theme of his later work. After saving the \$500 minimum bankbook balance to assure the school he would not become an indigent ward of the state, Miller finally entered the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 1934.

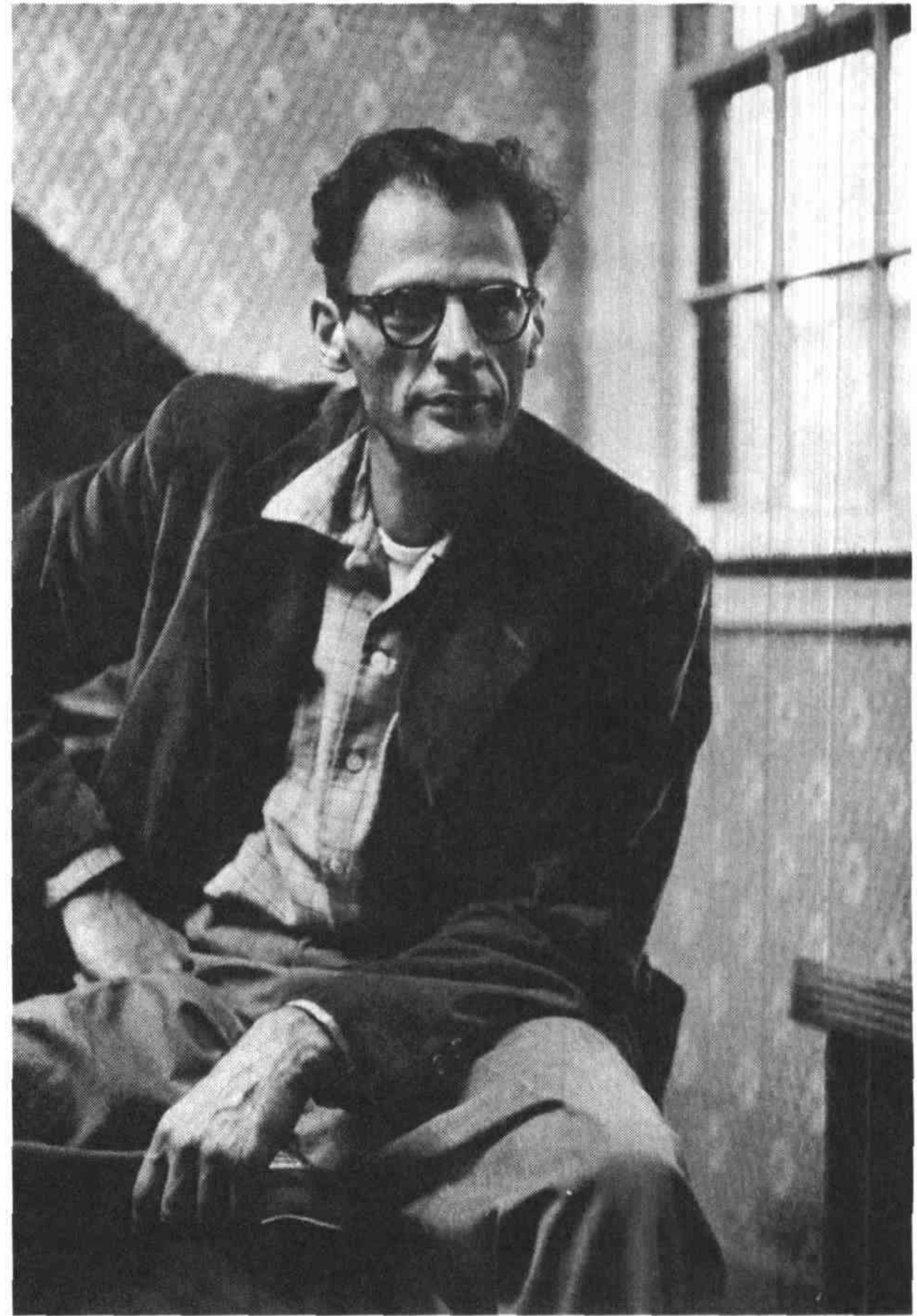
Miller worked his way through the university with jobs washing dishes three times a day and feeding three floors of mice in a genetics laboratory. But he maintained a full academic schedule and immersed

himself in university life, which then had the reputation of being a hotbed of 1930s leftist political radicalism. He wrote for the student newspaper and majored in English. However, Miller's years at Michigan are most notable as the start of his playwriting career. Miller had known little about the theater, but during these formative years he became aware of German expressionism, August Strindberg, and Henrik Ibsen, who was a major influence on him. Miller read one-act protest plays about miners and stevedores and was markedly affected by the social protest work of Clifford Odets. As a result, Miller twice won the annual \$250 Avery Hopwood Award (which Miller called the college's Nobel Prize) for *Honors at Dawn* in 1936 and *No Villain* in 1937; a third play, *The Great Disobedience*, placed second in 1938, the year he finished his A.B.

After graduation Miller joined the Federal Theater Project, which employed promising young playwrights at a living wage of \$23 per week. He expected to have *The Golden Years*, a drama about Montezuma II and Hernán Cortés, produced, but Congress curtailed the program. This play, which was not produced until a 1987 British radio and television version, was written in response to the growing power of Adolf Hitler and was an early demonstration of Miller's lifelong interest in the social relevance of drama.

At this time, because a high-school football injury had made him ineligible for the draft, he also wrote half-hour radio plays for DuPont's *Cavalcade of America*, the Columbia Workshop, and U.S. Steel. These radio plays exhibit themes that are evident in later Miller masterpieces. For example, in the radio playlet *The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber Who Was a Man* (1941) one character states: "The one thing a man fears next to death is the loss of his good name. Man is evil in his own eyes, my friends, worthless, and the only way he can find respect for himself is by getting other people to say he's a nice fellow." This proclamation foreshadows similar cries by such Miller characters as Willy Loman, John Proctor, and Eddie Carbone, who value the worth of their names in the eyes of the world.

To assist the war effort and earn some money, Miller worked in the Brooklyn Navy Yard for two years while continuing to work on his plays. In 1940 he married Mary Grace Slattery, a fellow student and a Catholic, whom he had met at the University of Michigan. They settled in Brooklyn Heights and had two children, Robert and Jane. In early 1943, Miller left the Navy Yard to conduct background research for the screenplay of *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945), adapted from columns by American war reporter Ernie Pyle. Miller used his research for a book of reportage called *Situation Normal* (1944), his first published book, in which he



Miller in Brooklyn Heights during the 1940s
(photograph © Dan Weiner)

tried to see a higher purpose operating among soldiers about the aims of World War II.

Miller then turned to his first play produced on Broadway, *The Man Who Had All the Luck* (1944). In 1940 he had written a 360-page novel about a man for whom everything turns out perfectly and who therefore comes to believe he has no control over his own destiny. Failing to find a publisher for the novel, Miller rewrote it as a play, publishing it in *Cross-Section* (1944), a volume of new American writing that included works by other then-unknowns such as Norman Mailer and Ralph Ellison. The play opened at the Forrest Theatre on 23 November 1944 to almost universally negative reviews, and the critics punned unmercifully on the title. It closed after four performances.

Miller has called *The Man Who Had All the Luck* "an argument with God." He says that the crux of the play is: "How much of our fate do we make and how much is accident?" The so-called fantasy relates the story of David Beeves (Frieber in the published version), a young, self-taught garage mechanic, who is successful at everything he attempts and benefits from

an unbroken series of fortunate events: his garage becomes a success when the state builds a highway next to it; he is rescued from an inability to repair a valuable automobile by the sudden appearance of an expert mechanic; the father of the girl he loves refuses to allow the marriage but is killed in a timely automobile accident; even David's apparent sterility is overcome when his injured wife gives birth to a healthy son. But instead of reveling in his streak of good luck, David becomes haunted by it, coming to believe that his good fortune must be paid for.

David's good luck is contrasted with the story of his brother, Amos, in whom David's father has invested all his hopes and dreams of turning him into a star baseball player. Their father has taught Amos how to pitch in the cellar of their house, and the result is a technically perfect pitcher who is unable to cope in a real game with men on base. David cannot fathom why his brother, despite his efforts, has failed while David has succeeded. David is further challenged by Shory, a wheelchair-bound character who harangues him with his insistence on man's inability to control his fate.

David challenges his fate by staking his wealth on a mink-breeding ranch. The results seem calamitous when a sudden, violent hailstorm and poisoned feed threaten the animals. His wife insists that David should allow the animals to die, for only then will he be free of his fear and accept responsibility for his own actions. The mink survive because David picks the silkworms (fatal if ingested) off the fish he is feeding them, and he, perhaps, realizes he has some measure of control in his life.

Although a critical failure, *The Man Who Had All the Luck* clearly included strains of plot and themes that Miller used in his later successful plays. The rivalry of two brothers is a major component of *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Price* (1968), and even *The Creation of the World and Other Business* (1972), in which Cain and Abel struggle in the first fraternal battle. Similarly, David's acceptance of responsibility for his actions is a key for other major characters. In his introduction to volume one of his *Collected Plays* (1957) Miller acknowledged the critical failure of *The Man Who Had All the Luck* but realized its importance as a seminal text:

The play was impossible to fix because the overt story was only tangential to the secret drama the author was unconsciously trying to write. But in writing of the father-son relationship and the son's search for his relatedness there was a fullness of feeling I had never known before; a crescendo was struck with a force I could almost touch. The crux of *All My Sons*, which would not be written until nearly three years later, was formed; and the roots of *Death of a Salesman* were sprouted.

In recent years critics and theater companies have recognized the importance of Miller's first Broadway play. In 1988 a successful staged reading of *The Man Who Had All the Luck* was given in New York, which led to the publication of a new version in 1989.

Disappointed by the reception of *The Man Who Had All the Luck* and convinced he would never write another play, in 1945 Miller wrote and published a novel, *Focus*, one of the first important American works about anti-Semitism. The novel was successful, selling ninety thousand copies. The title possesses literal and figurative meanings for the main character, Lawrence Newman. The Gentile Newman, the personnel manager of a large company that refuses to hire Jews, is forced to wear glasses because of failing eyesight. Although the glasses help him see clearly, his co-workers suddenly view him differently. The glasses make him look like a Jew, and he becomes the object of discrimination and persecution. His colleagues suspect his real name is Neuman, and he is removed to a back desk. He quits and cannot find another job because of his appearance. Moreover, he becomes an outcast to his neighbors, and his wife, a worker for an anti-Semitic organization, is also accused of being a Jew. His neighbors plan an assault against a Jewish grocer who serves their community. But Newman, emboldened by identification with a man he now sees as a fellow Jew, defends the grocer Finkelstein with a baseball bat against the attack. *Focus* tackles a subject that Miller made a major part of his dramatic canon: all humanity shares a responsibility for the suffering of the Jews. The novel was adapted into a motion picture in 2001, starring William H. Macy and Laura Dern.

Despite the success Miller had with the novel form, he was determined to write another play and decided if it were not a hit, he would give up playwrighting altogether. The result of Miller's self-ultimatum was *All My Sons*, his first Broadway hit and critically acclaimed drama. Miller formed the idea for the play from a story his Midwestern mother-in-law told him about a family in her neighborhood that had been destroyed when the daughter discovered her father had been selling faulty machine parts to the army and reported him to the authorities. Miller decided to transform the daughter into a son, and a play was born.

The drama focuses on Joe Keller, a small factory owner, finally forced to confront his legal and moral crime of knowingly selling defective airplane parts during World War II, which resulted in the deaths of twenty-one pilots. Joe has denied his part in the crime by blaming his business partner, who has been in jail for three years, while Joe has reestablished his successful business. When his cover-up unravels, he can no longer deny the truth, and when he ultimately realizes

the ramifications of his crime for his family and society, he kills himself.

Keller's two sons and wife also struggle with the repercussions of his crime. Three years earlier, the pilot son, Larry, deliberately crashed his plane out of shame and guilt after discovering his father's culpability. The other son, Chris, survived the war and witnessed the sacrifices men make for each other. Chris suppresses his suspicions of Joe's crime, works in his plant, and plans to marry Ann Deever, Larry's fiancée and daughter of Joe's jailed business partner. But Chris is shattered when the truth is revealed, and he confronts his own and his father's accountability for denying the crime. The mother, Kate, consciously denies her husband's crime and son's death; although she has known the truth from the beginning, she uses astrology and religion to create the illusion that Joe is innocent and Larry is merely missing in action and coming back.

Miller writes in his *Collected Plays* introduction that *All My Sons* is "designed to bring a man into the direct path of the consequences he has wrought." Miller judges that Joe is a threat to society because "his cast of mind cannot admit that he, personally, has any viable connection with his world, his universe, his society." *All My Sons* established Miller as a realistic social playwright in the Ibsenesque tradition, a reputation that has stuck with him throughout his career. Clearly, *All My Sons* is a "well-made" play with a long exposition, careful attention to plot detail, the device of a concealed letter, hidden truths, and secrets. Many critics have seen parallels to Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* (1884) with its emphasis on the revelation of past action.

With the production of *All My Sons* Miller began his professional and personal association with the motion-picture and stage director Elia Kazan. *All My Sons* ran for 328 performances and received the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. Universal Pictures purchased the movie rights, turning it into a movie with Edward G. Robinson and Burt Lancaster in 1948. Miller was beginning to reap the benefits of his success financially and artistically: he bought a house in Brooklyn Heights, and royalty income gave him a new freedom to create. After researching life in the Italian criminal underworld on the docks, waterfronts, and piers of Red Hook, Brooklyn, which he later used as the raw material for *A View from the Bridge*, Miller turned to writing his masterpiece, *Death of a Salesman*.

Death of a Salesman had been gestating in Miller for some time. When Miller was seventeen he wrote a story (rediscovered by his mother during the original production of the play) called "In Memoriam," based on his experiences with a Jewish salesman when he was working for his father a few months after graduating high school. Miller also had written a play about a

salesman and his family during his time at the University of Michigan. Miller was particularly influenced by the memory of his uncle Manny Newman. In *Timebends* Miller relates how Manny, who later committed suicide, raised his two sons to be competitive alter egos with Miller. Thus, the prototypes of Willy, Biff, and Hap were born.

Miller wanted this play to differ from the tight composition of *All My Sons*. By the spring of 1948 he felt that he could find the form of the play but that he would have to write it in one sitting. He retreated to his country house on four hundred acres in Connecticut, which he had bought the year before, and built a workshop where he could block out the world while he wrote the play. As he labored physically, he contemplated everything he had in his head about the play: the name of the salesman's family, Loman; a death; and the first two lines: "Willy" and "It's alright. I came back." When the tiny ten-by-twelve-foot cabin was completed, Miller sat down one April morning and began. He wrote all day until dark, had dinner, and then went back to his desk until the middle of the night. He had finished act 1. When he lay down to sleep, he realized he had been weeping; his eyes and throat hurt from talking out the lines, shouting, and laughing. It took him six more weeks to complete act 2.

Miller sent the completed play to Kazan, who immediately recognized its merit and together with Miller began the casting of what is now widely considered to be one of the greatest American plays of the twentieth century. Lee J. Cobb played the original Willy Loman, while Mildred Dunnock portrayed his wife, Linda. Kazan also enlisted the services of designer Jo Mielziner, who had created the set for Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947). Miller, Kazan, and Mielziner collaborated to produce innovative staging and a revolutionary set that became legendary in the American theater.

Death of a Salesman depicts the last twenty-four hours in the life of Willy Loman, a sixty-three-year-old traveling salesman, who for thirty-six years has plied his trade all over New England. Willy has come to realize that he is a failure and is contemplating suicide. At the same time, he is haunted by an unresolved conflict with his son, Biff, over the latter's discovery of Willy's adultery with a woman in a Boston hotel room. Biff, at thirty-four years old, is a fallen football hero who has flunked out of school, stolen himself out of every job he has had, and led an unsettled existence. As the play opens, he has been ranching out West but has come home to Brooklyn on one of his infrequent visits. A younger son, Hap, is mired in a dead-end merchandise job in a New York department store and wallows in whores and booze. Linda is the seemingly long-suffering,



Arthur Kennedy, Karl Malden, Beth Merrill, Ed Begley, and Lois Wheeler in the 1947 New York production of *All My Sons* (photograph © Eileen Darby)

supportive wife and mother but also conveys a strength that neither her husband nor sons possess.

In *Death of a Salesman* Miller created a form that was deliberately opposite to a straight realistic play such as *All My Sons*, in which one event creates the necessity for the next. As Miller explains in his *Collected Plays* introduction, he conceived *Death of a Salesman* with the "concept that nothing in life comes next, but that everything exists together and at the same time within; that there is not a past to be 'brought forward' in a human being, but that he is his past at every moment and the present is merely that which his past is capable of noticing and smelling and reacting to." Working in an expressionistic style that has become known as "subjective realism," Miller simultaneously depicted both the real time of the play and the internal workings of Willy's mind, especially as he recalls events of the past. Miller called these scenes "imaginings," and they are not flashbacks but rather what Miller describes in the *Collected Plays* introduction as "a mobile concurrency of past and present," because linear time is broken down in the play. The overall effect is to convey the dislocation of time in Willy's mind,

because as Miller has noted, "In his desperation to justify his life Willy Loman has destroyed the boundaries between then and now."

The original working title for *Death of a Salesman* was "The Inside of His Head." Miller's first idea for the set was of an enormous face, the height of the proscenium arch, which would open so that the audience would see the inside of a man's head, where all the action of the play would occur. Mielziner took this image and designed the now-famous set with a series of three platforms, for the kitchen and two bedrooms, without walls. The Boston hotel room, Howard's office, and the yard scenes were played in the open space downstage. Moreover, Mielziner created surrealistic apartment buildings surrounding and encroaching on the Loman house. Lighting and music helped convey the instantaneous changes in time and place. Furthermore, plaintive, haunting flute music punctuated Willy's musings throughout the play.

When the play opened on 10 February 1949 at the Morosco Theatre, the critical reaction was overwhelming. It ran for 742 performances and won a Tony Award, the New York Drama Critics Circle

Award, and the Pulitzer Prize. Within a year of its premiere, *Death of a Salesman* was playing in every major city in the United States and within a few years began its incredible run of international productions. Brenda Murphy has concluded that since the first production there has never been a time when *Death of a Salesman* was not being performed somewhere in the world.

The enduring universal appeal of *Death of a Salesman* to audiences, theater critics, and scholars lies in its focus on the American Dream as a central theme. For thirty-six years as a traveling salesman Willy Loman has fought to achieve the success that the American Dream promises, and he has accrued the tangible products that signify the dream. However, the intangibles—personal satisfaction, self-worth, and economic security—have eluded him, and the play captures the dramatic moments when Willy confronts this failure. Perhaps this recognition is why most audiences have identified with Willy. When Linda tries to convey to her sons that Willy is “a human being and a terrible thing is happening to him,” audiences realize that the same can happen to them.

Willy's failure is based largely on his flawed understanding of what constitutes the American Dream; he confuses his material and spiritual values so that he no longer can differentiate between reality and illusion, as illustrated in his imaginative longings for the idyllic past. He alternately believes that personal appearance, being liked, and contacts are the ways to succeed in the material world. Willy has spent his career with these beliefs but has never been a successful “hot shot” salesman with big commissions. He, therefore, has struggled to make the payments on the tangible items that exemplify the dream: his home, the car, the refrigerator. In addition, Willy possesses spiritual flaws; his adultery and condoning of stealing and cheating signify his moral failings. Willy has transmitted his flawed beliefs to his sons, and as a result both men are failures too. Neither is able to perform the hard work necessary to achieve financial success and personal fulfillment. In contrast, the Lomans' next-door neighbor, Charley, and his son, Bernard, have integrated the material and spiritual; they have succeeded financially through integrity, humility, and studiousness.

Death of a Salesman has been analyzed as a play that critiques the role of capitalism in American society. Certainly, the play illustrates Willy's lifelong dream for economic success while he struggles to compete in the American economic system. At the end of the play, in a “Requiem,” Hap expresses Willy's striving for the American Dream in a climactic metaphor that is at the heart of Willy's struggle: “It's the only dream you can have—to come out number one man.” Willy's drive to

achieve that status illustrates the workings of an American capitalist system based on competition. Although the dream possesses the potent allure of seeming attainable for all, its enchantment masks the competition that in reality does not guarantee its achievement by everyone. Willy himself declares in the first scene that “The competition is maddening,” and the play details how he is literally maddened as he fails at his dream to be number one. The very products of the American capitalist system seem arrayed against Willy: his car breaks down, and the refrigerator consumes belts like a “god-damn maniac.” But ultimately Willy fails to realize that he actually is competing against himself: that he is responsible for his own failure.

Willy's sons also desire the American Dream. Throughout the play, Hap and Biff detail their relative disappointment in what they have accomplished in life: Biff is torn between his love of the outdoors and his desire for economic success in the city, while Hap is stuck selling in a department store. Both men seek financial success and personal contentment, but they are as confused as Willy about how to achieve these things. By the end of the play, only Biff seems to have become aware of his failings, as he tries to tell Willy to take his “phony dream and burn it.” On the other hand, Hap decides to stay in the city in an attempt to show that Willy Loman did not die in vain. As the bearer of Willy's legacy, Hap makes the same mistakes as Willy—especially in perverting spiritual and material values. But Hap does not understand that Willy exalts the acquisition of material possessions without regard for personal conduct, misunderstands the legitimate methods for attaining success, and corrupts his humanity.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing analyses of *Death of a Salesman* has been whether Willy Loman is a tragic hero, and therefore, whether the play is a modern tragedy. Critics have argued on both sides: that Willy's death is merely the pathetic demise of a small man, and conversely, that Willy's death is the consequence of his noble action. A few weeks after the production opened, Miller wrote an op-ed piece for *The New York Times* titled “Tragedy and the Common Man” (27 February 1949) in which he made the case for Willy as a modern tragic hero. Miller maintains that modern literature did not require characters to be royalty or leaders and therefore fall from some great height to their demise, as in the tragedies of other eras. Rather, Miller insists: “I think that the tragic feeling is evoked when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life, if need be, to secure one thing—his sense of personal dignity. From Orestes to Hamlet, Medea to Macbeth, the underlying struggle is that of the individual attempting to gain his ‘rightful’

position in his society." Thus, Miller argues that a lowly man such as Willy could be considered a tragic hero. (Miller chuckled at those critics who emphasized Loman as a pun for "low man"; he actually took the name from a 1933 movie, *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*.) "Tragedy and the Common Man" is now widely considered to be an important part of twentieth-century literary criticism. It stands as the first of a large body of dramatic criticism that Miller has produced over a span of fifty years, the most significant output of such writing since George Bernard Shaw.

Since the original production there have been many notable revivals of *Death of a Salesman* both in the United States and around the world. A New York revival in 1975 featured George C. Scott as Willy; Dustin Hoffman led a stellar 1984 Broadway production with John Malkovich as Biff; and the Goodman Theater of Chicago mounted a fiftieth-anniversary production that opened on 11 February 1999 at the Eugene O'Neill Theater. That show won Tony Awards for Brian Dennehy as Willy, Linda Franz in a redefining role as Linda, and for Best Play Revival. Miller also won a Tony for Lifetime Achievement. International audiences have never lost their attraction to the quintessentially American struggle of Willy Loman. In 1950 audience members in Vienna wept; Japanese audiences responded with empathy to Willy's fall; and the 1983 Beijing production, which Miller directed, caused tears in the Communist Chinese audiences.

In 1950 Miller wrote an adaptation of Ibsen's 1882 play, *An Enemy of the People*, a version that reinforced in the critics' eyes Miller's significant debt to the Norwegian playwright. The play concerns itself with Peter Stockmann, a doctor who refuses to allow his town a permit to build a spa when he discovers the unhealthy quality of the water supply. Stockmann literally becomes the enemy of the townspeople, who turn their wrath on him, one of their most respected citizens, because his decision threatens their profit-making ability. Although *An Enemy of the People* was a commercial failure, closing after thirty-six performances, critics have seen this play as an important transition for Miller. In it he signaled his return to a thematic interest that he had expressed in *All My Sons*: one's responsibility to self and society.

Miller certainly saw political relevance in *An Enemy of the People*, for in 1950 the United States was embarking on a period of political and social upheaval that had a lasting effect on Miller's career and personal life. Miller said in the preface to the play that "Its central theme is, in my opinion, the central theme of our social life today. Simply it is the question of whether the democratic vision of the truth ought to be a source of guilt at a time when the mass of men condemn it as a

dangerous and devilish lie." During these times, Miller witnessed the rise of the hearings conducted by Wisconsin senator Joseph McCarthy and the establishment of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), which was revived after World War II in response to the "Red Scare" threat from the Soviet Union and the fall of China to a Communist government. People were called before these committees and made to account for suspected radical pasts, and the targets of these accusations were often high-profile celebrities whose appearances would guarantee major publicity. In the next few years Miller's friends and colleagues became targets, and eventually Miller did too. Thus, in the preface to *An Enemy of the People*, he explained that in Peter Stockmann's principled stand against his entire town, Miller saw the universal theme that "there never was nor will there ever be an organized society able to countenance calmly the individual who insists that he is right while the vast majority is absolutely wrong." With these events in mind, he turned to *The Crucible*.

Miller became interested in writing about the 1692 Salem witch trials when he read Marion Starkey's book *The Devil in Massachusetts* (1949). In April 1952 Miller decided to write a play about the events in Salem because he saw a "living connection between myself and Salem, and between Salem and Washington." Miller planned an exploratory trip to Massachusetts to research the original court records. The day before he was to leave, he received a phone call from Kazan, who had been subpoenaed by the HUAC. Kazan and Miller met in Connecticut, where Kazan told Miller that he had decided to cooperate and testify about other celebrities Kazan had encountered at Communist Party meetings years earlier. Kazan's decision caused a breach in his personal and professional relationship with Miller that lasted until the next decade.

In Salem, Miller examined the court records and became struck by the testimony about a farmer, John Procter (Miller changed the spelling in his play), his wife, Elizabeth, and their servant girl Abigail Williams, who accused Elizabeth, but not John, of witchcraft. Months before the witchcraft hysteria had begun, Abigail had been dismissed from service by Elizabeth. Miller perceived that Abigail had personal motives against the Procters. Thus, Miller decided to wrap his historical play about the Salem trials around what he viewed as the personal story of John's adultery with Abigail, Elizabeth's discovery of it, and Abigail's vengeance. When Miller left Salem, he heard a news report of Kazan's testimony before the HUAC: he had "named names." In the next few months the playwright Odets, who had a major influence on Miller, was called before the committee; he, too, named names. Cobb, the original Willy



Mildred Dunnock, Lee J. Cobb, Arthur Kennedy, and Cameron Mitchell in the 1949 New York production of Death of a Salesman (photograph © Eileen Darby)

Loman, was called, and he also succumbed to the pressure. Miller was struck by the power of the state to force men to testify and further implicate others. This power became a central focus of the play Miller was about to write.

Miller constructed *The Crucible* in four acts. Act 1 details the start of the hysteria, when a group of girls led by Abigail Williams, Reverend Parris's niece, is caught dancing naked and conjuring spirits in the woods. From the outset Miller shows how under the guise of witchcraft the personal conflicts simmering in Salem among the villagers quickly surface. Reverend Hale, an expert on demonic arts, arrives to discover the truth of the sorcery in Salem. At the center of the action is the personal vengeance of Abigail Williams, who was dismissed as servant girl after Elizabeth Proctor discovered Abigail's adultery with John. The dramatic high point of act 1 is when Hale examines Tituba, Parris's Barbados slave, after Abigail accuses her of bewitching her. In fear, Tituba confesses to consorting with the

devil and names villagers she claims to have seen with the devil. Abigail leads the girls in a general outcry against the others.

Act 2 focuses on the tension in the marriage between John and Elizabeth as a result of his adultery. Weeks have passed since the initial accusations, which have spread to include Salem's most prominent citizens, including Rebecca Nurse and Martha Corey. Hale arrives at the Proctor farmhouse to examine the Proctors' religious beliefs, and the marshals arrest Elizabeth, who has been accused of bewitching Abigail. John resolves to go to court.

Act 3 takes place in the anteroom of a Salem village meetinghouse that has been turned into a court to accommodate the trials. In this act the power of the theocratic state is represented by Judge Hathorne and by the deputy governor Danforth, who is thought to be somewhat representative of McCarthy and of HUAC chairman Francis E. Walters. Miller depicts a court with absolute power, willing to crush any dissent from

its mission to discover evil in Salem village. Giles Corey, Francis Nurse, and John Proctor come to obtain their wives' freedom. Danforth wields his unjust power when John presents him with a deposition of Salem citizens who attest to the good character of Rebecca, Martha, and Elizabeth. Parris sees this document as an attack on the court, and Danforth calls for these innocent citizens' arrest and examination. Miller shows how the scantiest evidence can accuse and convict people, not only in Salem in 1692 but also in the United States in the 1950s. Proctor calls Abigail a whore and confesses his adultery. Abigail denies the charge and threatens Danforth, while Elizabeth is brought in to confirm John's accusation. Having no knowledge that John has confessed, Elizabeth lies to protect him, and he is arrested. Hale finally comes to an awareness of the hypocrisy of the trials, realizing that private vengeance fuels many of the witchcraft accusations.

Act 4 occurs in late fall, months after the initial accusations; the hysteria has subsided, and there is a growing resentment against the trials, especially at the impending hanging of reputable citizens. Hale is going among the prisoners encouraging them to falsely confess to save their lives. John admits that he wants to confess, since as a sinner he is not worthy to mount the gibbet with good women such as Martha and Rebecca. Elizabeth admits culpability for prompting his adultery because of her coldness. John decides to confess, which delights the magistrates who look to use him as an example. However, John's confession breaks down when Rebecca is brought in. Proctor refuses to name others, then refuses to hand over his signed confession because his name will be posted on the church door. He admits his confession is a lie, and he is sent to his hanging with Elizabeth proclaiming his goodness to Hale.

The Crucible marked a notable change in the style of language Miller used. In his previous work Miller was mostly known for his use of colloquial dialect, the so-called common man's language. In *The Crucible* Miller created a vernacular that suggests the archaic forms of the seventeenth-century Puritan dialect but at the same time approaches the level of poetry with its use of metaphors particular to Puritan society. In fact, Miller has shown a keen interest in verse drama and reported that he initially wrote much of *Death of a Salesman* and all of *The Crucible* in verse and later converted them to prose.

The Crucible raises several complicated themes and issues. Like *An Enemy of the People* and *All My Sons*, the play is about moral choices when an individual confronts the pressures imposed by society. John Proctor is a character whose individual conscience does not allow him to succumb to the will of others, even an autocratic state. Proctor's sense of sin, guilt, and shame over his

adultery at first impedes his ability to see himself as good, but Elizabeth ultimately helps him find his moral compass. The play shows how the goodness of individual conscience defeats its opposite: the evil of state-sponsored fanaticism. Some critics have also pointed out the significance of marriage and adultery in *The Crucible* and how these topics are a major focus of Miller's other plays.

The original production of *The Crucible* was not a hit with audiences or critics, who, Miller noted, felt uncomfortable with the subject and theme, given the parlous current events in the country. He reports that on opening night, people with whom he had close professional relationships passed him by as if he were invisible. The reviews were respectable, as Miller has wryly observed: "the kind that bury you decently." However, the show played for 197 performances, a decent run, and won a Tony Award. It proved popular in Europe, and Miller was planning to attend the Brussels opening in 1954 when the State Department denied him a passport because he was believed to be involved in Communist activities. In 1958, well after the Communist hysteria had died down, *The Crucible* was revived Off-Broadway to plaudits and ran for more than 600 performances.

For Miller's next play, *A View from the Bridge*, he turned to a subject that had interested him earlier—the Italian immigrant society of the Brooklyn docks. In 1950, when Miller had been researching the criminal underworld of the dockside for an unmade movie titled "The Hook," a lawyer who had been trying to fight the corruption and unionize the workers told him the story of a longshoreman who had informed immigration authorities about two brothers who were related to him and living illegally in his house. The man had done so in order to break up the relationship between his niece and one of the brothers, but his action made him a pariah in his neighborhood. Local gossip held that he had been killed by one of the brothers.

In "Tragedy and the Common Man" Miller had maintained that it was possible for tragedies to be written about modern characters, and he clearly set his dramatic sights on achieving this goal in *A View from the Bridge*. But he also was clearly interested in further exploring the themes of betrayal, informing, and adultery, which he had illustrated in *The Crucible*. By the time he was writing the one-act version of *A View from the Bridge*, Miller had embarked on an affair with Marilyn Monroe, was about to divorce his wife, and was becoming a target of the HUAC.

The one-act version opened in New York in 1955 together with *A Memory of Two Mondays*. The production had a disappointing run, closing after 149 performances, though Miller won his third New York Drama

Critics Circle Award. A year later, Miller revised and expanded the play to two acts and premiered it in London. Evaluation of the differences between these versions has focused almost exclusively on how Miller, in response to criticism of the sketchiness of the characters in the one-act, enlarged the psychological motivations of the principal characters—Eddie Carbone, a Brooklyn longshoreman; his wife, Beatrice; and her niece, Catherine—in order to emphasize the social consequences of the central action: Eddie's desire for Catherine. Most literary criticism focuses almost exclusively on the two-act version, which is the published version.

Eddie and Beatrice have raised Catherine since she was a child. When the play begins, Catherine is seventeen and on the verge of becoming a woman. Eddie's affection as an uncle/stepfather has changed into a physical and emotional attraction, which neither Eddie nor Catherine fully perceives, but of which Beatrice is aware. Eddie's emotion is transformed into jealousy when Catherine falls in love and wants to marry Rodolpho, one of two Italian illegal immigrants, cousins of Beatrice who are living in the Carbone's Red Hook apartment. Eddie impugns Rodolpho's masculinity and tells Catherine that Rodolpho is only using her to obtain citizenship. After Eddie discovers the young couple coming out of a bedroom, he informs immigration authorities—a deed abhorrent to the social codes of the Sicilian American community—who arrest Rodolpho and his brother, Marco, who publicly accuses Eddie of snitching. Out on bail, Rodolpho intends to marry Catherine, and Marco comes to vindicate his and his brother's honor. Eddie wants Marco to apologize in front of the neighborhood for his accusation because he wants his "name" back. When Marco strikes him, Eddie pulls a knife, which Marco turns back on Eddie, killing him.

In the writing and production of the one-act version of *A View from the Bridge*, Miller wanted to make a tragedy of Eddie Carbone's story; so he created an outside narrator, the lawyer Alfieri, who functions as a Greek chorus, both as character and commentator. Alfieri's speeches to the audience directly connect Eddie to what Miller sees as the mythic level of the play: Eddie's larger universal fate, his destiny to enact the tragic action. Moreover, the New York production used sparse staging to achieve the "skeletal" quality of the mythic story, because as Miller wrote in the introduction to the two-act version, "nothing existed but the purpose of the tale."

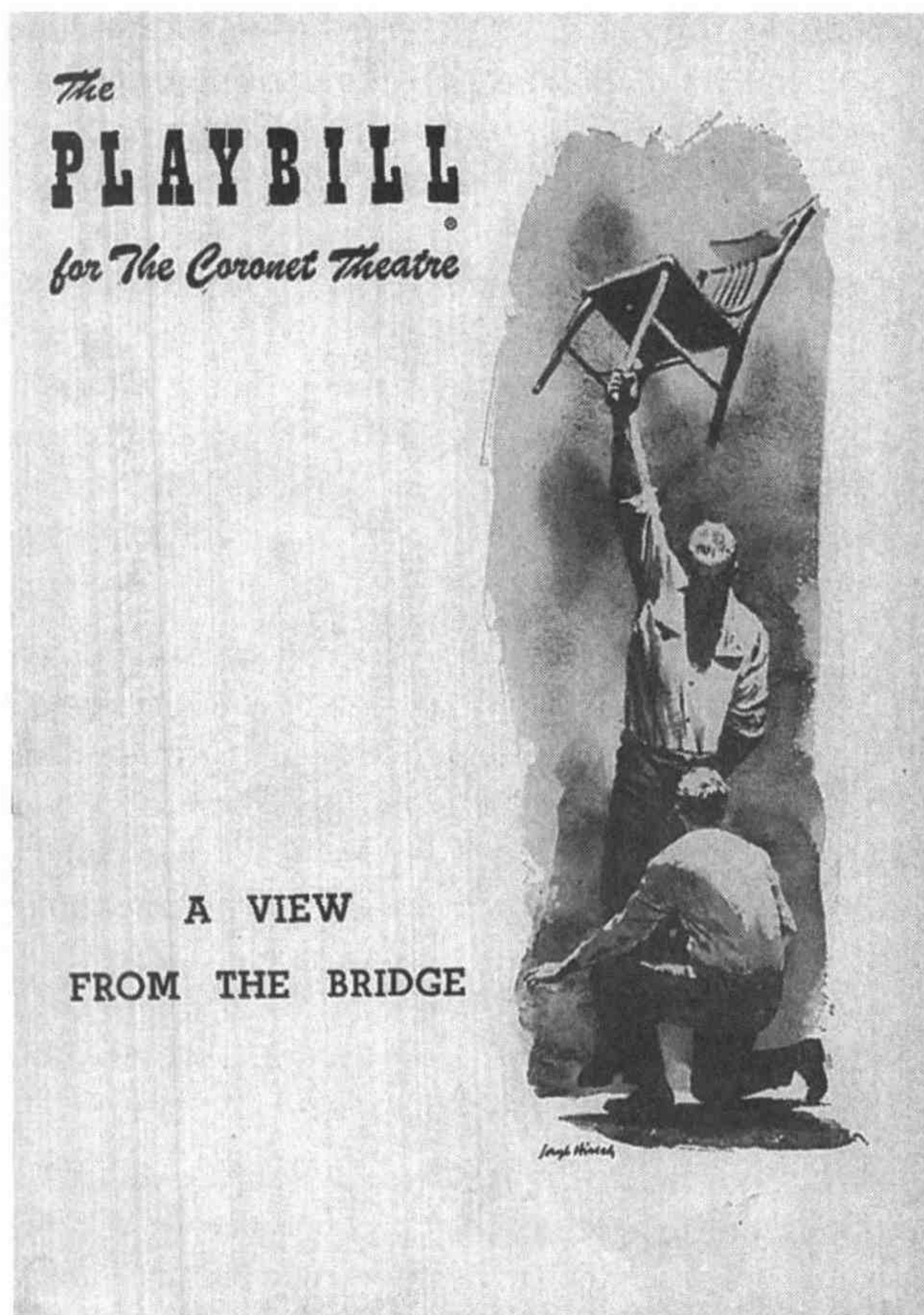
Miller admits that the meaning of Eddie's fate remained a mystery to him even after writing the one-act play. In revising for the London production, Miller sought to place Eddie more in relation to his Sicilian American society. As he explains in the two-act intro-

duction, he realized that "The mind of Eddie Carbone is not comprehensible apart from its relation to his neighborhood, his fellow workers, his social situation. His self-esteem depends upon their estimate of him, and his value is created largely by his fidelity to the code of his culture." For the London production the set was more realistic; additional actors played Eddie's neighbors. Miller ultimately judged that "once Eddie had been placed squarely in his social context, among his people, the myth-like feeling of the story emerged of itself, and he could be made more human and less a figure, a force."

The most provocative issues that *A View from the Bridge* raises are incest and sexuality. From the outset, Eddie's attention to Catherine is depicted as more than fatherly affection. The girl is not his blood niece but Beatrice's, although he has raised her as his own daughter, which further complicates his borderline incestuous desire for her. When the cousins arrive, Catherine's immediate attraction to Rodolpho is obvious, and Eddie's jealousy turns into an attack: he is repulsed by what he perceives as Rodolpho's effeminate nature.

Eddie's conflicting sexual impulses are one of the most intriguing aspects of the play. The one-act version downplays Eddie's apparent impotency, which is central in the two-act version, in which Beatrice asks him, "When am I going to be a wife again, Eddie?" They have not slept together in more than three months, which heightens the sexual conflicts. Although he is unable to perform with Beatrice, he clearly desires Catherine, but at the same time he does not want her virginity violated. Furthermore, Eddie has possible sexual feelings for Rodolpho, whose masculinity Eddie assaults because he seems both repulsed and attracted by Rodolpho's femininity. Yet, Eddie clearly is portrayed as completely unconscious of his desires.

One of the most controversial actions in *A View from the Bridge* occurs in the first scene of act 2, when Eddie returns home a few days before Christmas to find that Rodolpho and Catherine have been intimate in his own home. Eddie is drunk and beyond rage, and he wants to expel Rodolpho. When Catherine attempts to leave, Eddie grabs her and kisses her on the mouth, a visible sign of his unconscious desire for her. Then, when Rodolpho intervenes, Eddie pinions him and kisses him on the mouth. Eddie acts out of rage, but he clearly needs to humiliate Rodolpho. Eddie later uses Rodolpho's unwillingness to fight back as further proof of his effeminacy. Yet, the complication is that Eddie may also have unconscious homosexual desire for Rodolpho. After this incident, he informs the immigration authorities, which brings the vengeance of Marco on him.



Program cover for the 1955 New York production of Miller's controversial play about a Brooklyn longshoreman's attraction to his wife's niece (Brucoli Clark Layman Archives)

In late 1955 and early 1956 Miller's troubles with the government over his suspected leftist activities increased. While he had been working on "The Hook," an investigator from the HUAC warned the city administration about being associated with Miller for his political opinions. In turn, the American Legion and the Catholic War Veterans successfully applied pressure to stop the movie because of Miller's "Communist ties."

Also during this period, Miller had divorced Mary Slattery and in 1956 married Monroe. The seemingly unlikely marriage caused a media sensation, and Miller suspected that the publicity would draw the attention of the HUAC, whose influence had been waning. Miller was subpoenaed, and the hypocrisy of the committee was evident to him when his lawyer told him that chairman Walters had proposed that the hearing could be canceled if Monroe agreed to be photographed shaking hands with him.

In Miller's testimony he answered the committee's questions about his association with political groups, and he gave his opinions on freedom of speech, Communist conspiracies, and figures such as Kazan

and the poet Ezra Pound. At the end of his testimony Miller was asked about his attendance at a meeting of Communist writers a decade earlier. Miller admitted his presence but refused to give the names of others in attendance. He was warned that he would be in contempt of Congress for refusing to answer since he had chosen not to claim the Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination. He still refused and therefore was cited.

Miller was allowed a six-month visa to accompany Monroe to England, where she was to make a movie with Laurence Olivier while Miller oversaw production of the two-act version of *A View from the Bridge*. Miller returned to stand trial for contempt of Congress and was found guilty on two counts. His sentencing was deferred for an appeal, and in 1958 the U.S. Court of Appeals overturned his conviction. In 1957 his *Collected Plays* appeared.

Meanwhile, Miller had become completely engrossed in his marriage to Monroe. He worked on a few projects, but it was, he admits, an unproductive period for him since he devoted much of his time to the emotional support that he knew Monroe needed. After Monroe suffered a miscarriage, he revised a short story he had written, "The Misfits," into a screenplay for her. When Miller was in Nevada establishing residency for his divorce from Slattery, he had accompanied a group of cowboys who were rounding up mustangs to sell for dog food. The mustangs, too small to ride, were called "misfits." Miller created for Monroe the part of Roslyn, a dance-hall girl who identifies with the mustangs. Monroe and Miller's marriage was clearly faltering during the making of the movie. Her emotional insecurity, inconsistent work habits, and the untoward influence of Lee and Paula Strasberg, whose Actor's Studio Monroe had attended, caused an irreparable rift. Miller and Monroe divorced in early 1961, and a year later she was dead, apparently from an overdose of barbiturates.

Miller's first play in nine years, *After the Fall*, premiered with the new Lincoln Center Repertory Company in 1964. The play was a result of a concatenation of events for Miller since his marriage to Monroe ended. In 1962 Miller married Ingeborg Morath, a renowned photographer whom he had met on the set of *The Misfits*. Their daughter, Rebecca, was born in 1963, the same year Miller published a children's book, *Jane's Blanket*. Miller also had been thinking about Albert Camus's *The Fall* (1956), a novel about a man who was unable to forget that he had not tried to stop a girl from jumping to her death in a river. Miller was intrigued by the character's obsession and by his lack of moral responsibility. Miller had tackled the theme before in *All My Sons* and *The Crucible*, but he wanted to write a new play about this issue. Since the bombing of

Hiroshima, Miller also had been thinking about writing a play about the men who had created the bomb, including physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. The creative process of the scientists whose noble intentions had inadvertently unleashed an awful power into the world fascinated him. Miller became intrigued by the question: "Why was one responsible if one had no evil intention?" He began drafting a verse play about Oppenheimer in which blame, guilt, and responsibility were major themes. Miller and Morath then took a trip to Austria and Germany, where Miller attended the Nazi trials that were then being held in Frankfurt, which he covered for the *New York Herald Tribune*. His experience in court solidified the formation of *After the Fall*, for he realized the theme of his play—the paradox of denial—was at the heart of Germany and the aftermath of the war. Thus, *After the Fall*, like *The Crucible*, is about how individuals and nations confront guilt, denial, and responsibility.

In *After the Fall* Miller returned to the expressionistic dramatic structure he had used in *Death of a Salesman*. The action of *After the Fall* occurs entirely in the mind, thoughts, and memory of the protagonist, Quentin. The form of these plays puts Miller at odds with his persistent critical reputation as a realistic playwright in the Ibsenesque tradition. The nonrealistic play, in which the conflicts are staged as occurring inside characters' heads, actually has been a dominant method in Miller's dramaturgy. American critics, in particular, have had difficulty perceiving Miller as a nonrealistic playwright.

Miller has said that the dramatic structure of *After the Fall* is based on psychoanalysis. He structured the scenes and the characters, who remain on the stage, to appear as almost free associations popping into Quentin's head. Quentin speaks to an unidentified Listener—a friend, perhaps, or an analyst—someone he is going to tell about a decision he must make. In this fashion he examines his entire life: his guilt and responsibility in his relationship with his parents, his two failed marriages to Louise and Maggie, and his doubts about marrying a third time to Holga. But Miller moves the play beyond Quentin's personal story and shows how guilt and responsibility also operate in history, particularly in the Holocaust and McCarthyism. The tower of a concentration camp dominates the set, designed by Mielziner, and indicates the guilt of the survivor. Similarly, Quentin confronts the guilt of betrayal when one of his friends, Mickey, modeled after Kazan, is subpoenaed to testify before the HUAC and tempted to betray his friends and colleagues.

Critical reaction to *After the Fall* was mixed. In addition to the critics' difficulty with the unconventional stage design, there was a chorus of negative reac-

tion to the portrayal of Maggie, who was judged to resemble too closely Monroe, who had already become an iconic figure in American culture. Many critics focused on the personal elements and mostly ignored the theme and implications of the play, thus obscuring the fact that *After the Fall* is a major drama in Miller's canon. Miller believes that the play was bound to fail since it was produced so soon after Monroe's death. He praises the direction of Kazan, with whom Miller had partially reconciled, especially his casting of Jason Robards as Quentin and Barbara Loden as Maggie.

Despite the controversy, *After the Fall* played to consistently high attendance during its fifty-nine performances. Therefore, Miller was commissioned to write another play for the Lincoln Center Repertory. *After the Fall* is the first Miller play to blatantly tackle a Jewish subject, and he decided to address this topic again in *Incident at Vichy* (1964), which premiered only eleven months later. The roots of the play came from a psychiatrist friend of Miller's who had hidden in Vichy, France, during World War II. Miller combined this story with one of an old friend of Morath's, an Austrian prince who had suffered during the war because he refused to cooperate with the Nazis.

Incident at Vichy takes place in a room where men suspected of being Jews are detained before questioning; the interrogation determines either their release or further incarceration in a concentration camp. The characters discuss the fate that awaits them if they cannot prove their identity papers are valid. The play also depicts the characters' uncertainty about their detention: they are not completely sure why they have been arrested, in what building they are being detained, and whether racial laws are being applied. However, underlying their uncertainty is the real fear that everyone in the room has been detained because he is "Peruvian"—the euphemism for Jew. The prisoners are called individually into an adjacent room where their credentials are checked. However, the identity check is an examination not only of their papers but also of what, at that time, physically identified a Jew—whether he is circumcised.

Two of the more important characters in the play are the major, a Nazi officer assisting with the roundup, and the Gentile Austrian prince Von Berg. The major has been assigned to the examination of Jews in Vichy, a detail that he admits "takes a little getting used to." When two of the detainees attempt to escape down a hall, they encounter the major returning from a walk he took in order to escape the unpleasant proceedings. The major is drunk, and he begins a dramatic confrontation with Leduc, one of the escapees. The major drinks to create an oblivion that allows him to escape from, and fortifies him for, the unpleasant

examinations of the detainees. More important, the stupor allows him to escape the truth about the larger meaning of what is being enacted in the room, in Vichy, and in all of Europe—events that are, he admits, inconceivable to him. The major believes that the war represents a dramatic shift in man's perception of his humanity, a crucial thematic focus of the play. He asks Leduc if there can be persons any more when there is no such thing as love and respect in a world at war. The major wants to maintain his dignity as a "man of honor," but his hunger to survive "others'" sadism is just as strong as any other man's—Gentile or Jew—so he does what he must in order to survive and loses his humanity in the process.

Von Berg is the most important character in the play, which depicts his growing awareness of his responsibility as an aristocrat, as a Gentile, and as a human being for the atrocities in Europe. Von Berg has lived the war years consumed in his aristocratic lifestyle; he has ignored his cousin's role in the purging of Jewish doctors in Vienna; he has left Austria rather than resist. By the end of the play he recognizes his own identification with Jews—a theme Miller first used in *Focus*. Von Berg's decisive action to give his pass, which frees him, to Leduc signifies the recognition of a moral hunger within himself to identify with Jews as human beings suffering persecution. Miller has said that Von Berg's act of sacrifice represents "the step from guilt to responsibility to action."

Incident at Vichy received a decidedly mixed critical reception, closing after ninety-nine performances. Then Miller broke with the governing board of Lincoln Center in a policy dispute; he felt that the company was not developing a true repertory theater similar to that in Europe. He published a collection of short stories, *I Don't Need You Any More*, in 1967, and then returned to Broadway in 1968 with his next play, *The Price*. Once again he was dramatizing conflicts he had explored in previous plays—including the struggle between two brothers—and the themes of personal responsibility and regret.

The Price is about two estranged brothers who meet in the attic of their deceased father's brownstone, which is being demolished, to settle on a price with an appraiser for its contents. Victor is a police officer who years earlier had given up his dream of becoming a scientist in order to care for his elderly, widowed father, who had apparently lost everything in the Depression; Victor's brother, Walter, is a successful surgeon who has forsaken the family years ago. During the course of the play both brothers, along with Victor's wife, battle over their regrets, frustrations, and responsibility for the choices they made years ago—the "price" they now realize they paid. At the cli-

max of the play Victor blames Walter for not giving him the \$500 he needed to finish school and earn his degree. When Walter insists that Victor could have abandoned their father and finished school regardless, Victor rejects that as impossible. Then Walter reveals the huge secret of the play: that the father had more than \$4,000 in savings about which he never told Victor. Moreover, Victor admits he knew that his father was not completely destitute.

The Price explores how both brothers confront their responsibility for decisions they made years ago about their father and each other, and the dramatic tension of the play is how Victor and Walter finally account for those decisions. As in *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman*, *The Price* illustrates how one must ultimately face the consequences for past actions. Each brother brings to the attic his version of the past: Walter believes that he actually wished to lend Victor the money, and Victor believes he sacrificed his career to care for the father. Each man has his illusions and rationalizations shattered and ultimately comes to understand his personal responsibility, primarily through the probing of the comic character Gregory Solomon, the ninety-year-old appraiser, whose wisdom provokes the brothers to their awareness.

Perhaps the most intriguing personality in *The Price* is Victor and Walter's dead father—an absent character who looms quite large in the play. The memory of his past actions—especially his financial failure during the Depression—has haunted Victor and Walter all these years. The play takes place in an attic filled with the accumulation of furniture, clothes, and cast-offs that have been stored for decades. The junk in the attic signifies the psychological detritus not only of the father but also of Walter and Victor. The ever wise Solomon, after bargaining for a price with the brothers, perceives that they can never completely exorcise the father's memory.

The Price was well received by the critics and audiences, running for 428 performances, the longest for a Miller play since *Death of a Salesman*. Although it seems an apolitical play, Miller has indicated that it is connected to the turbulent times in which it was produced. Perhaps the critical response was rooted in questioning America's responsibility in Vietnam in 1968. During the 1960s Miller was as engaging a political figure as during the McCarthy era. He actively protested against the Vietnam War, served as a delegate from Connecticut to the Democratic National Convention in 1968 (and again in 1972), and assumed the presidency of PEN, an organization dedicated to protecting the rights of artists and writers throughout the world. He also produced a book of reportage, *In Russia* (1969), with photographs by Morath.

In the 1970s Miller produced three plays that reflected his continuing interest in morality, politics, and the Depression. In 1972 he staged the offbeat *The Creation of the World and Other Business* at the Shubert Theatre in New York. The play is difficult to categorize. It is a seriocomic retelling of the story of Genesis that focuses particularly on Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and God and Lucifer. The play revolves around a debate between God and Lucifer about the nature of good and evil, using the biblical stories as illustrations and counterpoints. The overall effect was uneven, and the critical reaction was so negative that the production closed after twenty performances. Despite the bad notices, Miller remained committed to this play and wrote a musical version, *Up from Paradise*, which was produced at the University of Michigan in 1974.

In 1977 Miller published another book of reportage, *In the Country*, with photographs by Morath. In the same year, partially disgusted with Broadway critics, Miller premiered his next production, *The Archbishop's Ceiling*, for a limited run at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., a location entirely fitting for the politically charged play. Miller details in the introduction to *The Archbishop's Ceiling* how he was moved to write the play after his 1970s experiences visiting Eastern European countries behind the Iron Curtain, where he found himself in living rooms that had almost certainly been bugged by the regimes. However, similar spying that had occurred in the United States in the 1970s also influenced Miller: the microphones in the White House, the Watergate break-in, and domestic espionage. Although bugging became the occasion for the play, power—on all its political, social, legal, personal, artistic, and moral levels—was the predominant theme.

The Archbishop's Ceiling takes place in an unnamed Eastern European country where daily life involves living in homes where the ceilings may have been electronically bugged. Miller illustrates the power that this surveillance gives to the state and the way citizens handle this power. The plot centers on the authorities' confiscation of the manuscript of Sigmund, the country's greatest writer, who is faced with jail or expulsion. Adrian, an American novelist, has come to investigate reports that Marcus, another author who is collaborating with the government, and Maya, a woman who has had relationships with all three writers, have compromised other writers in the bugged room where the play takes place, the former residence of the archbishop.

In his introduction to the published text Miller pointed to the metaphoric significance of the microphones planted alongside the angels on the ceiling: "What happens, in short, when people know they are—at least most probably, if not certainly—at all times talk-



Miller and Marilyn Monroe, to whom he was married from 1956 to 1961 (from Miller, *Timebends: A Life*, 1987)

ing to Power, whether through a bug or a friend who is really an informer? Is it not something akin to accounting for oneself to a god? After all, most ideas of God see him as omnipresent, invisible, and condign in his judgments; the bug lacks only mercy and love to qualify, it is conscience shorn of moral distinctions." In the Iron Curtain country where the play takes place, God's power, as symbolized by the angels, has been replaced by political power.

The tension of the plot arises from exactly how each character contends with power in its many forms. Maya, Marcus, and Sigmund fear the clearly defined power of the state, but each responds in his or her own way. Maya, in particular, is the major focus of the conflicts, because she often connects not only to the power of the state but also to other powers—the power of emotions and the power of the writer. Maya has been

involved intimately with Marcus, Adrian, and Sigmund, each of whom uses his manipulative power as a writer and as a man to create as suppressive a hold on Maya as the government.

Both Maya and Adrian are contending with political power—he as an American writer publicizing the truth about life behind the Iron Curtain, she as a possible collaborator with the regime. But as former lovers, they equally contend with the power of their emotional hold on each other. Their relationship is complicated further by Adrian's having used Maya as a character in his latest work.

Marcus has become a tool of political power. He has given parties to compromise writers for the state, and as Maya reveals, that is exactly what they are attempting this night. However, Marcus is a complicated character not entirely without sympathy. He has suffered past political persecution as a writer, having spent six years in a labor camp. Moreover, Maya is clear that Marcus has lost his creative power as a writer. However, Marcus knows that real moral power comes from the pen, and he forces political power against writers such as Sigmund, whose creative power, Marcus knows, is more forceful than the state's political power. When the play moves toward its climax in the return of Sigmund's manuscript, in Maya's revelation that the ceiling is bugged, and in Sigmund's decision not to leave his country in exile, each character is forced to confront the suffering and knowledge gained in dealing with political power.

Sigmund is the most crucial character at the end because he suffers in gaining knowledge of all the levels of power in the play. Most important, Sigmund becomes endowed with the power that is beyond politics and religion: moral power. Marcus ultimately recognizes Sigmund's great power as a writer and moral human being when he decides to stay and suffer the consequences of political power.

Although *The Archbishop's Ceiling* received mostly unfavorable reviews, many scholars have viewed it as marking a major new phase in Miller's work for the way the play creates both a reality and unreality for its characters. In 1978 *The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller* was published. During this period he also wrote two screenplays for television—*Fame*, a 1978 comedy for the Hallmark Hall of Fame, and *Playing for Time* (1980), the adaptation of Fania Fénelon's Holocaust memoir—and he produced another book of reportage, *Chinese Encounters* (1979), with photographs by Morath.

Miller returned to the Great Depression for the subject matter of his next work in 1980. In *The American Clock*, Miller chronicles his family's experiences during the 1920s and 1930s, creating the Baum family and combining their episodes with the traumatic events of

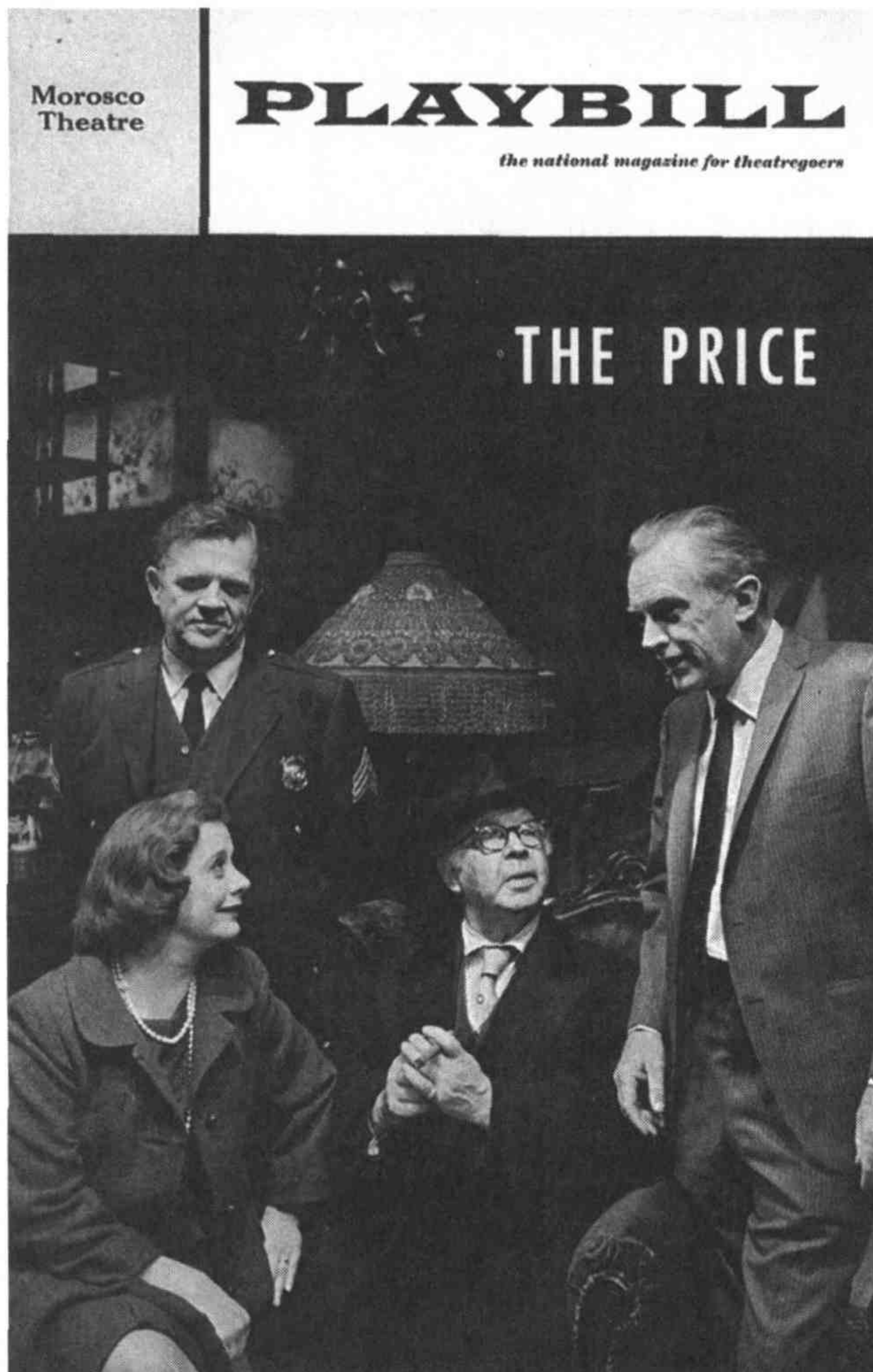
other actual Americans whom Miller had read about in Studs Terkel's *Hard Times* (1970). The play premiered at the Dockside Theater in Charleston, South Carolina, in May 1980 at the Spoleto Festival and opened on Broadway the following fall to lukewarm reviews. It closed after twelve performances. Miller revamped the play for a 1986 London production, the same version that enjoyed a successful New York revival for the Signature Theater Company in 1997.

The form of *The American Clock* is one of the more spectacular in Miller's dramatic canon. The cast includes forty-six named characters, plus extras who in the revised version remain on the stage the entire time. The plot offers a kaleidoscope of individual stories of economic loss, political turmoil, and social upheaval caused by the Depression, including thinly disguised episodes from Miller's family experiences. The play shows how the individual stories are an integral part of the landscape of the entire American society. All of the action is punctuated by the music of the era, performed by a live band onstage and sung by the characters. Miller also wrote a song for the production. The overall effect is to show Americans' steely determination, innate sense of hope for recovery, and the promise of prosperity in the future.

During the 1980s Miller continued to be engaged in politics: supporting the Polish Solidarity movement, protesting Israel's West Bank settlements, and continuing to defend the rights of artists and writers under repressive governments such as Turkey and the Soviet Union. Miller's railing against the Tiananmen Square massacres was particularly relevant since he had directed an acclaimed version of *Death of a Salesman* in Beijing in 1983.

In 1981 the second volume of his *Collected Plays* was published. Miller also increasingly criticized the state of the American theater, particularly of Broadway. Miller saw the creeping commercialization of Broadway, where the musical was becoming the dominant form, as a condition that made it difficult for serious dramas to be produced and remain viable. During this decade Miller did not produce a new full-length play on Broadway and instead wrote pairs of one-acts. In 1982 *Elegy for a Lady* and *Some Kind of Love Story* appeared at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Connecticut, under the title *2 by A.M.*, later published in 1984 as *Two-Way Mirror*. In 1986 Miller published a second pair of one-act plays, *Clara* and *I Can't Remember Anything*, under the title *Danger: Memory!*, which subsequently premiered at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater of Lincoln Center the next year.

Despite Miller's criticism of the legitimate theater, revivals of his work achieved tremendous popularity on Broadway in the 1980s. In 1983 the two-act version



Program cover and title page for the original production of Miller's play about two estranged brothers settling their father's estate (Brucoli Clark Layman Archives)

of *A View from the Bridge* played on Broadway for the first time to strong reviews, with Tony LoBianco receiving a Tony Award as Eddie Carbone. The 1984 revival of *Death of a Salesman* with Hoffman and Malkovich introduced the play to a new generation of audiences, and the critics rediscovered its importance as a classic American play. A year later, twenty-five million people watched the television version of this production. In 1987 a production of *All My Sons* received a Tony Award for Best Revival.

Miller received the Kennedy Center Honors for Lifetime Achievement in 1984. During this decade he also produced a book-length account of his direction of *Death of a Salesman* in China, *Salesman in Beijing* (1984), and wrote a screenplay version of *Some Kind of Love Story*, which was released as the movie *Everybody Wins* (1990). However, the capstone of his prose writing was the 1987 publication of his autobiography, *Timebends*, in

which Miller challenges the conventional form of the biography by deconstructing chronological time and bending it across the sweep of his life experiences. Roger Shattuck, in a front-page *New York Times Book Review* article (8 November 1987), judged it "a work of genuine literary craftsmanship and social exploration."

The 1990s were a period of unparalleled creative activity for a playwright of Miller's age. He wrote three full-length plays, a one-act, a screenplay for *The Crucible*, and a novella, and he continued to write essays and political tracts while overseeing revivals of his work around the world. Miller's first full-length play of the decade, *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* (1991), was the first Miller play not to premiere in the United States, because at the time Miller found American theater inhospitable to serious new dramas. After the London premiere, the American debut did not occur until the Williamstown Theatre Festival in Massachusetts in

1996. A production with Patrick Stewart ran Off-Broadway in the fall of 1998, and Stewart reprised his role in a Broadway production in 2000.

In *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* Miller once again returned to the dramatic form of having the characters' crucial conflicts occur inside their heads, blurring even more the line between reality and unreality in the minds of the protagonists. Lyman Felt is an unabashed bigamist, a wealthy insurance executive who, ten years before the play begins, married a younger woman, Leah, without divorcing his older first wife, Theo. Moreover, he has unashamedly maintained ties with both families, shuttling between lives in New York City and upstate New York. When the play begins, Lyman has crashed his Porsche on Mount Morgan in a snowstorm in the middle of the night, and both wives have been inadvertently summoned to the hospital. Lyman's literal ride down the mountain—the euphemism for the car crash—stops his wild ride through his double life, forcing him to confront the tragic results when the wives meet in the waiting room. The entire action of the play takes place while Lyman is in bed; through flashbacks he is forced to confront the morality of having two wives and two lives.

Many critics have discussed how *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* is a much trickier play than *Death of a Salesman* or *After the Fall* in discerning how the past and present occur inside a character's head. In her essay "From Loman to Lyman: The Salesman Forty Years On," included in *"The Salesman Has a Birthday": Essays Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman* (2000), Susan C. W. Abbotson points out that while "the scenes which spring from Willy's mind are well signposted in *Salesman*, Miller makes it far harder to recognize any reality in *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* . . . it is impossible to say for sure if any of the encounters take place anywhere other than in Lyman's mind." The nonrealistic staging of this unconventional play caused little controversy among critics and audiences in America, but audiences of the original London production had difficulty distinguishing between what was real and imaginary. Though Miller made this distinction clearer in the American productions, Abbotson questions further, "is Lyman's crash and hospitalization even real, or just the product of a guilty conscience?" She even suggests that perhaps his whole bigamous relationship is a figment of his imagination.

Miller's one-act play *The Last Yankee* was given a studio production in 1991, then revised and expanded in 1993 to premiere at the Manhattan Theatre Club. The play is set in a mental hospital, where two women are suffering from clinical depression. Patricia is married to Leroy Hamilton, the "last Yankee" of the title, who is descended from Alexander Hamilton and plies

his trade as a carpenter, which she views as inadequate for survival in the modern world. The second woman, Karen, has similar anxieties; her husband, Frick, is a successful businessman, but his drive repulses her. The play is tightly structured, with conversations between the husbands in the waiting room, dialogue between the women in the ward, and discussion among all four, climaxing in the release of Patricia from the hospital and the inability of Karen to leave. Critics have viewed this play as offering a kind of redemption in Patricia's apparent recovery, but despair at Karen's continued inability to accept reality.

In *Broken Glass* (1994), Miller's first full-length play on Broadway since *The American Clock*, Miller again explores the subject of the Holocaust. *Broken Glass* takes place in Brooklyn in 1938, and its central concern is with the cause of Sylvia Gellburg's paralysis: her hysteria about the persecution of Jews in Germany after Kristallnacht. However, her condition is also symptomatic of an emotional and sexual paralysis between her and her husband, Phillip. Moreover, Miller connects the world of the European Jew at the beginning of the Holocaust to the Gellburgs' shattered world. The conflict with her husband and the persecution of the Jews literally and figuratively cripple Sylvia. Miller has stated that her paralysis also signifies the world's political paralysis at stopping the Holocaust.

The play is complicated by Phillip's identity as a Jew. He works as the head of the mortgage department at a large New York bank—the only Jew in such a position. At the same time, he separates himself from his identity as a Jew, bristling when his name is mistaken for "Goldberg" and even insisting his ancestors came from Finland. Phillip's denial of his Jewishness is, of course, markedly contrasted with Sylvia's powerful identification with the persecuted Jews in Nazi Germany.

The sexual conflicts of Sylvia and Phillip also complicate the action. Sylvia tells Dr. Hyman, who is treating her, that she and Phillip have not had sex in more than twenty years, since the birth of their son. Hyman is an important character, as the play details his unorthodox and not wholly professional treatment of Sylvia. Hyman becomes aware of Sylvia's sexual anxieties and uses his own sexual attraction in an attempt to cure her paralysis. Thus, Hyman acts as a sexual foil to Phillip, whose impotency symbolizes his own kind of paralysis.

The broken glass of the title is a crucial unifying image, with literal and figurative meanings. Of course, Sylvia's anxiety ostensibly refers to Kristallnacht—the night of glass—the literal smashing of the stores and synagogues in Germany in 1938 that began the Nazi pogrom against the Jews. Also, the broken-glass imagery suggests the breaking of the glass at a Jewish wed-



*William Atherton and Joan Copeland in the 1980 New York production of
The American Clock (Rivka Photos)*

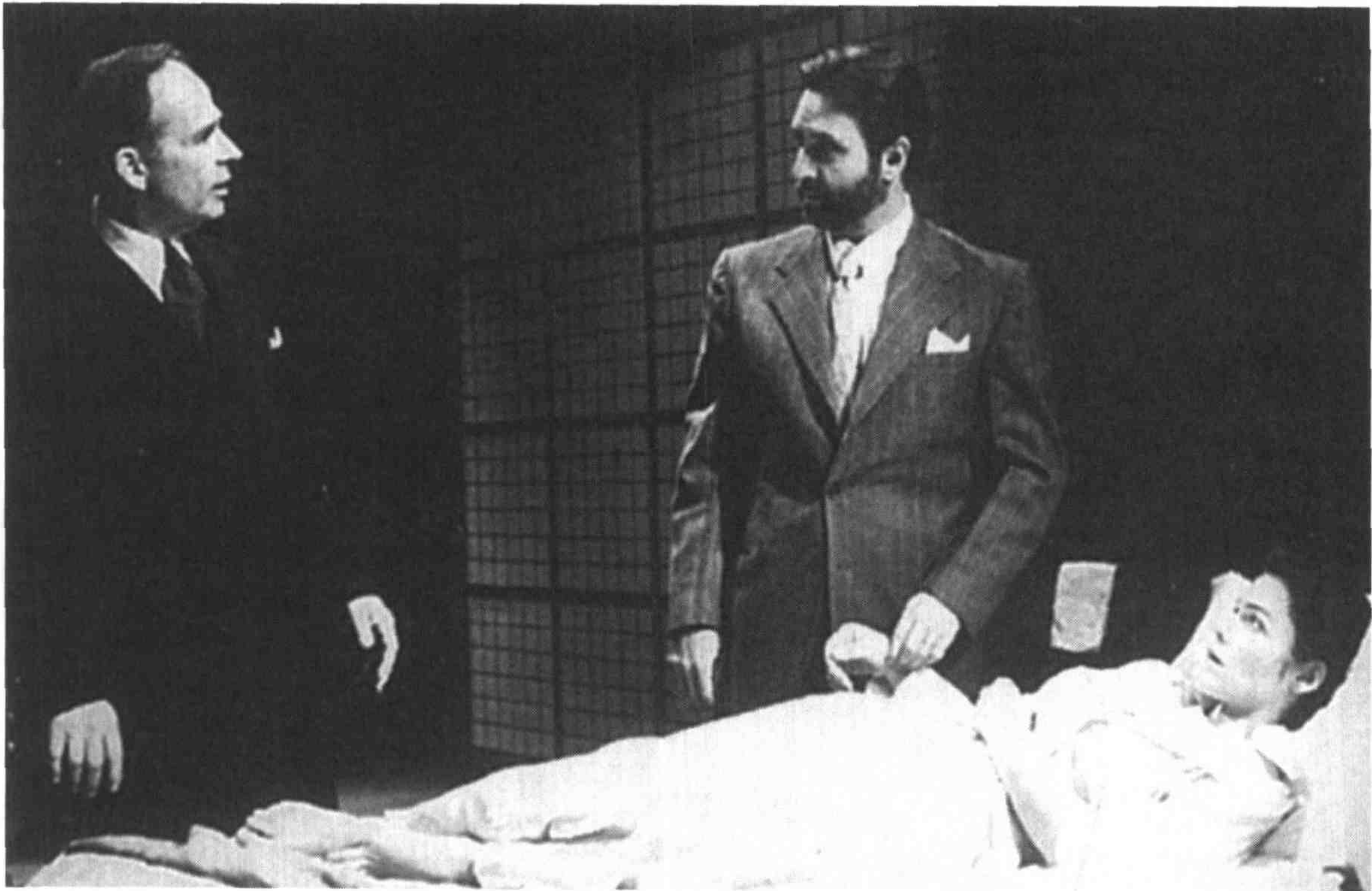
ding ceremony, itself a reminder of historical Jewish loss: the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Sylvia and Phillip's marriage is clearly as shattered as glass, and the play ultimately depicts Phillip as the cause of Sylvia's paralysis and the destruction of their marriage. Indeed, Sylvia is frightened by Phillip. He is capable of Nazi-like violence, as the play shows when he and Sylvia discuss his impotency.

In *Broken Glass* Miller continually relates Sylvia's condition to the larger social themes. In one scene, Sylvia turns her attention to the newspapers scattered on her bed and repeats: "What is going to become of us?" and "What will become of us!" Of course, Sylvia's cry operates on two levels: she is literally referring to what will become of her, Hyman, and Phillip, but the "us" also refers to humankind and the paralysis of the entire world in the face of Hitler's ascendance. She screams, "But why don't they run out of the country! What is the matter with those people! Don't you understand . . . ? . . . This is an *emergency!* What if they kill those children! Where is Roosevelt! Where is England! Somebody should do something before they murder us all!"

Broken Glass was mostly well received, although some critics found it melodramatic. It ran for sixty-four performances. Miller received a Tony nomination for

Best Play and an Olivier Award as Best Play of the Year for the London production. In 1995 Miller wrote the screenplay for the 1996 movie version of *The Crucible*, for which he received an Academy Award nomination. Also in 1996 a revised and expanded edition of *The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller* was published.

The Signature Theater Company in New York devoted its entire 1997–1998 season to producing Miller plays: *The American Clock*, *I Can't Remember Anything*, and *The Last Yankee*. For the final play of the season, Miller wrote a new full-length play, *Mr. Peters' Connections*, which starred Peter Falk. Miller once again uses the form of going "inside the head" of a character; however, this time he obliterates the thin line between reality and unreality, past and present, that he kept somewhat visible in previous plays. In this play the "connections" of the title are literally the synapses between the moments of memory in Mr. Peters's life; Miller explains in a preface to the published version that the play is "taking place inside Mr. Peters' mind, or at least on its threshold, from where it is still possible to glance back toward daylight life or forward into misty depths." Some characters are dead; others are alive. The play is set in a broken New York structure, and audiences are often unsure of where they are or how they got there. The whole play



Ron Rifkin, Ron Silver, and Amy Irving in the 1994 Long Wharf Theatre production of *Broken Glass* (photograph by T. Charles Erickson)

involves Mr. Peters's searching for the plaintive, haunting "subject" of his life.

In 1995 Miller received the William Inge Theatre Festival Award for distinguished achievement in the American theater. On the occasion of his eightieth birthday that October, tributes were held at the National Theatre in London and Town Hall in New York. In 1998 Miller received the Lillian Gish Award for notable contribution to the arts. During this time, Miller's career has also undergone a reevaluation by literary critics. His plays have long been examined from the perspective of social criticism, realism, politics, and psychology, but later critics are analyzing his work from feminist and cross-cultural perspectives and are exploring their theatrical innovation and figurative language.

Miller celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday with the publication of *Echoes Down the Corridor*, a collection of his nontheater essays of the previous fifty years on subjects as diverse as growing up in Brooklyn, attending the University of Michigan, meeting Lucky Luciano in Sicily, attending the Russian Opera, walking across the Brooklyn Bridge, and directing *Death of a Salesman* in Beijing. Many of the essays cover Miller's extensive political views and activities. In 2001 Miller gave the annual Jefferson Lecture in Washington, D.C., and typically caused a stir with his controversial comments on the disputed election between Al Gore and George W.

Bush. In November 2001 Miller received the Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Literature at the National Book Awards. Broadway revivals of *The Crucible* and *The Man Who Had All the Luck* opened in 2002. His play, *Resurrection Blues*, premiered at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis in August 2002—evidence that Arthur Miller is continuing the pace that has made him one of the major figures of the American theater.

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