

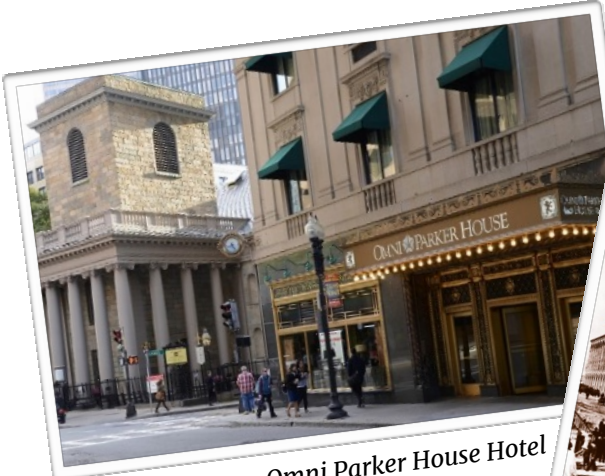
**PROSCENIUM**



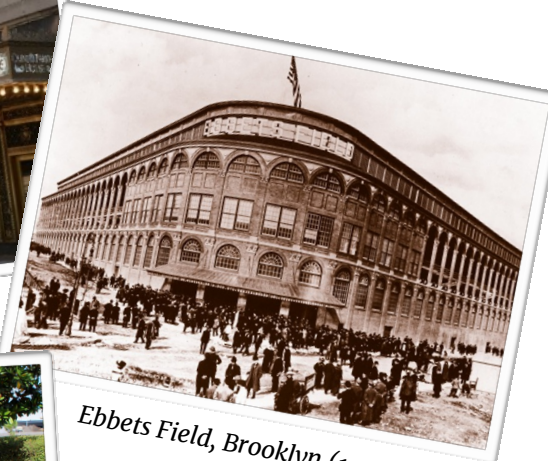
19 - 22 March 2025

**DEATH OF A  
SALESMAN**

**ARTHUR MILLER**



Boston - Omni Parker House Hotel



Ebbets Field, Brooklyn (1929)



1928 Chevrolet



New York City - Grand Central Station



Boston - South Station

**PROSCENIUM**

# **Death of a Salesman**

By Arthur Miller

Wednesday 19 to Saturday 22 March 2025  
Compass Theatre, Ickenham

# Cast

Willy Loman.....	Mark Sutherland
Linda Loman .....	Shirley Wootten
Biff Loman .....	Nishchal Patel
Happy Loman.....	Aaron Rice
Bernard.....	Dan Weiss
The Woman.....	Isabelle Cartwright
Charley .....	Dermot Boyle
Uncle Ben.....	Mike Williams
Howard Wagner.....	Charles Anthony
Stanley.....	Kim Jungreuthmayer
Jenny/Miss Forsythe .....	Sam Mistry
Letta/Voices.....	Eva Peerless

# Creative Team

Directed and designed by .....	Anton Jungreuthmayer
Stage Manager .....	Debbie Keating
Assistant Stage Manager .....	Crystal Anthony
Properties .....	Sam Mistry
Costumes.....	Angela Evans
Lighting Design / Lighting Operation .....	Helene Smith
Sound Operation .....	Paul Davis
Set Construction .....	Mike Williams
Poster and Programme Design .....	Charles Anthony
Programme Compilation .....	Mark Sutherland

The play begins in Willy Loman’s house in Brooklyn,  
New York City, in the late 1940s

There will be one interval of fifteen minutes between Act 1 and Act 2

With thanks to Phil Stewart, Evelyn Moutrie,  
Caroline Bronne-Shanbury and Rickmansworth Players

# Arthur Miller and Death of a Salesman – Timelines

Year	Arthur Miller	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>
1886		Willy Loman born
1890s		The Lomans travel across America
1915	Arthur Miller born in Manhattan	Biff Loman born. Willy starts at Wagner Company
1925		Willy and Linda Loman move to Brooklyn
1929	Miller family hit by the Depression; family move to Brooklyn	
1933	Miller enters University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	Biff is a high school football star
1938	Miller begins work with Federal Theatre Project	
1940		Biff leaves home, heads West
1947	Miller's <i>All My Sons</i> opens	
1949	Miller's <i>Death of a Salesman</i> opens. Wins New York Drama Critics' Circle Award and Pulitzer Prize	Present time for the Lomans in Brooklyn

## Arthur Miller - Stage Plays after 1949

1950	<i>An Enemy of the People</i>	1974	<i>Up from Paradise</i>
1953	<i>The Crucible</i>	1977	<i>The Archbishop's Ceiling</i>
1955	<i>A View from the Bridge</i>	1980	<i>The American Clock</i>
1955	<i>A Memory of Two Mondays</i>	1980	<i>Playing for Time</i> (TV play)
1964	<i>After the Fall</i>	1991	<i>The Ride Down Mount Morgan</i>
1964	<i>Incident at Vichy</i>	1993	<i>The Last Yankee</i>
1968	<i>The Price</i>	1994	<i>Broken Glass</i>
1970	<i>The Reason Why</i>	1998	<i>Mr Peters' Connections</i>
1972	<i>The Creation of the World and Other Business</i>	2002	<i>Resurrection Blues</i>
		2004	<i>Finishing the Picture</i>

Arthur Miller died on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2005

## Director's Note

A couple of things have guided my approach to the design and direction of this play.

First was Miller's original working title for the play, *The Inside of His Head*. The audience experiences the story through the prism of Willy's fractured mental state, witnessing the imaginings and distorted memories of a man on the brink of total breakdown.

And secondly Ivo Van Hove's *A View From The Bridge* at the Young Vic in 2015 which broke away from traditional staging methods, opting for a more innovative approach. Seeing this production inspired me to consider a fresh perspective for the staging of *Death of a Salesman*.

I hope we have done justice to this remarkable play, which stands as one of the finest of the 20th century and is often considered the greatest American play ever written.

*Anton Jungreuthmayer*

## Drummer Defined

According to Webster's Dictionary, two meanings for the term "drummer" are: "1. A drum player, 2. A travelling salesman. [Colloq]". It is [believed] that use of the word "drummer" to connote a travelling salesman originated with the practice of the seller beating a drum to get the attention of prospective buyers, and use of the term in this way was born in the USA.

Webster's defines the phrase "to drum up" as meaning "(a) to summon by or as by beating a drum; (b) to get (business etc) by canvassing or soliciting." In reference to the American distribution systems, a report by the Society of Commercial Travellers (SCT) states that the term drummer, "when applied to the commercial traveller of today, came in vogue some fifteen years ago" (1869). In a series of detailed anecdotes about commercial travel in England, Throne Crick not once refers to a drummer (1847). So, apparently the term

“drummer”, meaning travelling salesman, came into usage in the United States around 1854.

## Miller on Death of a Salesman and America

The first image that occurred to me which was to result in *Death of a Salesman* was of an enormous face the height of the proscenium arch which would appear and then open up, and we would see the inside of a man's head. In fact, *The Inside of His Head* was the first title. It was conceived half in laughter, for the inside of his head was a mass of contradictions...

Probably the most succinct reaction to the play was voiced by a man who, on leaving the theatre, said, ‘I always said that New England territory was no damned good’...

Above all, perhaps, the image [of the play is] of a need greater than hunger or sex or thirst, a need to leave a thumbprint somewhere on the world. A need for immortality, and by admitting it, the knowing that one has carefully inscribed one's name on a cake of ice on a hot July day...

The law of success is not administered by statute or church, but it is very nearly as powerful in its grip upon men...

*From Arthur Miller's Introduction to his Collected Plays (1958)*

I am not a fictionalist. I reflect what my heart tells me from the society around me. We are living at a time when there is great uncertainty in this country... It is not for me to make easy answers and come forth before the American people and tell them everything is all right, when I look in their eyes and see them troubled... But my criticism, such as it has been, is not to be confused with hatred. I love this country, I think, as much as any man, and it is because I see things that I think traduce certainly the values that have been in this country that I speak. I would like more than anything else in the world to make positive my plays, and I intend to do so before I finish. It has to be on the basis of reality... I believe now in facts. I look at life to see what is happening, and I have



no line. I have no preconception. I am devoted to what is going on. The hardest thing to do is to tell what is going on.

*From Miller's statements to the House Committee  
on Un-American Activities (1956)*

## **First Reaction to Death of a Salesman**

The historical American dream is the promise of a land of freedom with opportunity and equality for all. This dream needs no challenge, only fulfilment. But since the Civil War, and particularly since 1900, the American dream has become distorted to the dream of business success. A distinction must be made even in this. The original premise of our dream of success... was that enterprise, courage, and hard work were the keys to success. Since the end of the First World War this too has changed. Instead of the ideals of hard work and courage, we have salesmanship... This creates a new psychology... To possess himself fully, a man must have an intimate connection with that with which he deals as well as with the person with whom he deals. When the connection is no more than an exchange of commodities, the man himself ceases to be a man, becomes a commodity.

*Harold Clurman, The Nation, after the premiere  
of Death of a Salesman (1949)*

## **On Selling**

He showed me a picture of a beautiful statue by the famous sculptor Phillip Sears. It showed an Indian brave shooting at the stars with his bow and arrow. Each salesman when he comes to work for my friend is given this picture. It is a totem of their life as a salesman. 'I tell my men' said he, 'that this statue is the very essence of their success – an aspiration so high, a goal so far away that it is like shooting an arrow at the stars. Believe me, that high aim is the thing which makes sales records.'

*Charles B Roth, Secrets of Closing Sales (1940)*



A successful insurance salesman in Chicago had three sons whom he hoped would some day take their places in his business. So, while the boys were still in school, he began to recount at dinner the pleasant things that had happened during the day – the satisfaction he got from helping a client with a tough problem, or the golf game he had enjoyed with an old customer. As a result, all three of the boys are now associated with him in business as George Brown and Sons. George simply applied what he had learned about psychology to his family.

*J C Aspley, The Power of Enthusiasm in Selling (1956)*

## **On America**

Under the absolute sway of an individual despot, the body was attacked in order to subdue the soul; and the soul escaped... and rose superior to the attempt; but such is not the course adopted by tyranny in democratic republics; there the body is left free and the soul is enslaved. The sovereign can no longer say, 'You shall think as I do on pain of death' but he says, 'You are free to think differently from me, and to retain your life, your property, and all that you possess; but if such be your determination, you are henceforth an alien among your people.'

*Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (1835)*

### **Sources:**

*Death of a Salesman programme, National Theatre (1979)*

*Death of a Salesman programme, National Theatre (1997)*

*Death of a Salesman programme, Young Vic (2019)*

# Our Next Production:

## Confusions

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Proscenium presents *Confusions* by the master of sharply pointed comedy, Alan Ayckbourn. This set of five interlinked one-act plays deal riotously, and perceptively, with human eccentricities and the universal dilemma of loneliness. A mother unable to escape from baby talk, a disastrous summer fête, an unsuccessful seduction attempt, a fraught dinner encounter, and a final play about five characters on park benches...

“Buoyant... sad, sharp and funny.” – The Guardian

Directed by Isabelle Cartwright

Wednesday 4 to Saturday 7 June 2025, 7.45 pm

Compass Theatre, Ickenham

Box Office : 01895 250 615

## About Proscenium

Proscenium was founded in 1924. Since then, the aim of this experienced group has been to present classic and contemporary plays to as wide an audience as possible. Since 1990, performances have taken place at the Harrow Arts Centre and, more recently, at the Compass Theatre, Ickenham.

The company meets three times a week in Harrow for rehearsals, so that up to four plays are presented in each season. Social, fund-raising activities and play readings take place throughout the year.

Chair : Mike Williams

Contact us at [www.proscenium.org.uk](http://www.proscenium.org.uk)



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**Saturday 5th April 2025  
5.30 pm**

**St Alban's Church  
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