

Bucknell University Department of Theatre and Dance Presents

Arthur Miller's

ALL MY SONS



April 8, 9, 10, 11, 2005
8 p.m. Harvey M. Powers Theatre

Bucknell

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

Presents:

All My Sons

By Arthur Miller

Direction: Lee Cromwell '05
Scene Design: F. Elaine Williams
Assistant Scene Design: Chris North '07
Costume Design: K.J. Gilmer
Assistant Costume Design: Holly Lamberson
Lighting Design and Technical Direction: Heath Hansum
Stage Management: Cari Haines '05

Cast:

JOE KELLERAndy Nogasky '07
KATE KELLER.....Paola Grande'05
CHRIS KELLER.....Will Winner '08
ANN DEEVER.....Anastasia Peterson '08
GEORGE DEEVERJon Ginn '07
JIM BAYLISSMike Mellas '05
SUE BAYLISSJanine Merolla '08
FRANK LUBEYAlan Johnson-McNutt '08
LYDIA LUBEYMallory Sweeney '07
BERTTaylor Lightman

ACT I

The back yard of the Keller home in the outskirts of an American town. August of our era (circa 1947).

ACT II

Scene, as before. The same evening, as twilight falls.

ACT III

Scene, as before. Two o'clock the following morning

A 10 minute intermission will occur after Act I.

Smoking, the taking of photographs, or the use of recording devices and cell phones is strictly prohibited.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director..... Heath Hansum
Assistant Technical Director Ryan Bauer
Faculty Directing Advisor.....Bob Gainer
Stage Manager..... Cari Haimes
Assistant Stage Manager.....Chris North, Reanna Trunk
Lightboard and Soundboard OperatorBen Rimai
Set Construction and Electrics Jon Backhaus, Adam Clark,
Mike Mellas, Shannon Melligan, Ben Rimai,
Jeffrey Breon, Joe Rusiewicz, Fred Park
Props and Paints..... Emily Aloiz, Anya Hess, Chris North, Cari Haimes
Costumer Pam Miller
Assistant Costume Designer..... Holly Lamberson
Costume Construction Vita Lamberson, Kelsey Cook,
Diana Koretsky, Gloria Clendaniel, Rachel Ochotny
Hair and MakeupDiana Koretsky, Jessica Ripley, Dorian Petersen,
Laura Goeller, Anastasia Peterson, Kevin Ransome,
Anthony Lovelace, Danielle Watson, Dafina Sharpe,
Lillian Drumgold, Ally Ginter
DressersMia Fioravanti, Amanda Finkelstein
PublicityAlexandra Bambrick, Allison Brady
Presidential Fellows Jon Backhaus, Joe Rusiewicz, Andy Nogasky
House ManagersAlexandra Bambrick, Allison Brady, Kristen Habacht
Poster Design and Program Cover.....Andy Nogasky
Ushers provided by Cap & Dagger

UPCOMING EVENTS

Choreographer's Showcase

April 14th and 15th at 8:00 p.m.
Tustin Studio Theatre

Spring Dance Performance

April 29th and 30th at 8:00 p.m.
Weis Center for Performing Arts

Director's Notes

Born Arthur Asher Miller in New York City on October 17, 1915. The son of a prosperous businessman, he and his family moved to Brooklyn after his father lost his business during the Depression. Miller worked various odd jobs before attending the University of Michigan to study journalism. While at Michigan, Miller began to write plays that were produced by, among others, the Federal Theatre Project and New York City's Theatre Guild. Miller's first major success, *All My Sons* (1947), won the Drama Critics Circle Award. His next big play, *Death of a Salesman* (1949), won the same award and also the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, establishing him as one of America's leading playwrights. *The Crucible* (1953), Miller's infamous allegory using the Salem Witch Trials as a comment on the McCarthy era Red Scare won the Tony Award for Best Play, thus cementing his position as a dramatist. Other famous plays include *A View From the Bridge* (1955) and *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* (1991). Arthur Miller recently passed away on February 10, 2005.

Miller's Perspective on *All My Sons*:

While at the University of Michigan in the early 1930's, Arthur Miller studied journalism. While studying there, Miller began to write plays, exploring the genre of the theatre. This practice of delving into contemporary and current themes in writing would become a cornerstone of Miller's work in the theatre. In the early 1940's, Miller wrote a fictionalized account of a journalist's experience with the Army called Situation Normal. In this book, Miller's protagonist tries to explore and expose what it was to be a soldier. The narrator examines different reasons why men go to war:

I had an instinctive fear that millions of men could not be put through the hell of battle and be expected to return to American life as whole men unless they had some basic elementary understanding of why they had to go through their battle. (p. 31)

In the beginning of this essay, Miller questions the reasons for war and tries to understand these ideas from the perspective of a soldier. Miller describes that an understanding for a soldier's dedication during wartime stems from an overall "Belief" in a community and sense of purpose. From Miller's perspective, these soldiers all relied on a strong bond of kinship between everyone with whom they interacted. Miller's protagonist describes the bond of these men:

"They have fought their battle. Carried forward by faith in an officer, by a feeling of love for their comrades, by an innate sense of honor, by a plain love of adventure and danger, by whatever drive obtained in them at the time of battle, they fought their battles, and now they are home. No man has ever felt identity with a group more deeply and intimately than a soldier in battle. But now their uniforms are off. They walk out of the circle of the imperative order, out of the unity of feeling they had known in the Army. They go home." (p. 32)

But the life of a soldier does not end when he returns back to America. Miller then set out to question how these men would live the lives they had before they left. His protagonist speculates on what the experience of returning home would be for these soldiers:

"Home may give [the soldiers] a satisfying substitute for the close comradeship of the battlefield. The battlefield and its emotions may quickly fade once the fighter is really home. But maybe not. Home, to many, perhaps to most, means a town or a city cut into a thousand little disjointed pieces, each an exclusive class in

itself... The usual veteran returning to his city or town on the usual day finds no common goal at all. He finds every group in town excluding the proximate group... He must reassume its little prejudices, its hates, its tiny aims. He must lop off at once that onetime feeling of exhilaration he got from the knowledge that whatever the insignificance of his job, it was helping an enormous mass of men towards a great and worthy goal. Now he must forget that. Now he must live unto himself, for his own selfish welfare. Half of him, in a sense, must die, and with it must pass away half the thrill he knew in being alive. He must, in short, become a civilian again... There is a great and deep sense of loss in that. (pp.32-33)

Miller's powerful insight into the social and personal conflicts of a soldier in peacetime America could have been the focus and motivation for the creation of *All My Sons*. But Miller's real genius in playwriting is that the play he writes includes much more than Chris's struggle to return to normal. The challenge faced by soldiers returning to a civilian life is only one of many complex themes and ideas that Miller brings to light. Under the guise of an everyday (usual) Sunday in rural America, Miller unearths many different complicated dynamics of life. Miller brings us into the lives of the Keller family, and we are confronted by their intricate conflicts and struggles. Family relationships, trust, and love are all included in our examination of these characters. Miller incorporates business, with questions of capitalism and commercial ethics.

Arthur Miller had the incredible foresight to stare America in the face in the 1940's and to have the courage and conviction to bring to light some of the most deeply rooted conflicts and challenges. Miller's amazing insight into life at the same time he lived is one of the strongest ideas from this play that resonates to me. Although the play is set in the 1940's, Miller's steadfast examination of life at that time still has relevance today. This play asks questions that we have not yet discovered the answers.

(Excerpts quoted from Arthur Miller's *Echoes Down the Corridor: Collected Essays 1944-2000*)

 SPECIAL THANKS TO: 

Bloomsburg University Costume Shop,
Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble, Suzanne Flinchbaugh,
Nancy Cleaver, Lynn Kerr, Arden Theatre Company, Tracey Perry,
David and Clayton Lightman, Elderberry Cottage on Rt. 15 S. Lewisburg

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

Paula Davis-Larson, *costume design, costume history (on leave)*
Christine Fry, *academic assistant*
Robert Gainer, chair, *acting and directing*
K.J. Gilmer, *costume design (spring 2005)*
Gary Grant, *theatre history, theory, directing*
Heath Hansum, *technical direction, lighting*
Er-Dong Hu, director of dance, *technique and theory*
Kelly Knox, *dance technique and theory*
Pam Miller, *costumer*
F. Elaine Williams, *scene design*
Ryan Bauer, *technical direction intern*
Holly Lamberson, *costume design intern*

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