

‘The Price’

By Arthur Miller

Directed by Rod Lewis

9-17 November 2012



**Evening performances
at 7.45 pm**

**Sunday matinee at
2.30 pm**

**No Sunday, Monday or
Thursday evenings**

In 1968 Arthur Miller jointly led a peace march at Yale against the war in South East Asia, *Death of a Salesman* sold its millionth copy and, just three years after the success of *View From The Bridge*, *The Price* opened on Broadway. Miller was not only at the forefront of contemporary American issues but also at his peak as a writer. After *Death of a Salesman*, *The Price* was to have the longest run of a Miller play on Broadway, and yet it has been so rarely produced in Britain - time for an NVT production!

This is Miller in top form. With just four characters, set in one location and running in continuous time, *The Price* gave Miller unparalleled scope for character development . . . with its subtlety, depth, its humour and devastatingly hard edge, no wonder he later referred to it as ‘one of his best plays’, ‘a quartet’, ‘the most specific play I’ve ever written’.

The Price reflects the long-term effects of the Depression set against the backdrop of the 1960s.

In the attic of a Manhattan brownstone, soon to be torn down, Victor and Walter, two long-estranged

brothers, are brought together some years after the death of their father to pick over a lifetime of furniture and arrange its sale. Amid the relics of their once wealthy father, old

complex and multifaceted and yet they are also rich in streetwise humour. However, as layer by layer is stripped away, their deepest feelings bleed up to the surface and the real issues



L. to R. Des Potton, Janice Jones and Andy Bell

hostilities resurface as they are forced to confront the truth about their past and the decisions they have made.

The play is tightly structured; everything past, present and future emanates from its four character cast. With Victor’s troubled wife Esther joining the fray and the octogenarian furniture dealer Solomon striving to clinch one last deal, conflicts between brothers, parent and sons, husband and wife, and buyer and sellers explode into life. We witness the effects of the Past, combust the hopes of the Present, watch how once promising lives fragment, learn just how high a price the characters have had to pay.

All four characters are

are exposed ... issues which resonate as much today as they would have done 1968.

A great play needs a strong cast and this is exactly what we have. New York cop Victor is played by Andy Bell (Lenny in NVT’s *Mice and Men*); his wife Esther by Janice Jones (Donna in *Kvetch*); Victor’s brother by Des Potton (whose many roles for The Little Theatre include John Proctor in Miller’s *The Crucible*) and the sometimes wise, always charismatic, furniture appraiser Solomon by Jerry Lyne (whose many NVT roles include Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman* and Alfieri in *A View from the Bridge*.)

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'The Price' Continued from page 1



If you liked Arthur Miller's writing in NVT's *All My Sons* and *A View from the Bridge* – you'll surely like this. Working on such a profound and intriguing play with such a talented cast and creative team has proved an exhilarating experience, a challenge that has been a joy and a privilege. I hope that you, as a member of the audience, will not only be moved by this production, but will leave the theatre hotly debating what exactly the price, the real price, was.

Clive Barnes *New York Times* "One of the most engrossing and entertaining plays that Miller has ever written – superbly, flamboyantly theatrical, with 'four wonderfully meaty parts.'

"A taut, intricate, beautifully crafted piece of writing." *The Guardian*.

Rod Lewis

Booking by post? Book early!



Are you booking your NVT show tickets by post?

Make sure you send your booking slip in good time!

Since integrating the booking form into the newsletter you are now able to book up to the next three productions in advance - but unfortunately postal bookings are still arriving at the theatre after shows are almost all sold out. To avoid disappointment please aim for your booking to arrive a good two weeks in advance, which will also ensure you receive your confirmation in good time.

Booking form - page 9

Thoughts from a South Hall Chair

As you read in the last newsletter the AGM for this year was almost a memory. However, I would like to take a couple of minutes to comment on the outcome of the meeting. It was a well attended and lively meeting at which there were discussions on membership, the main theatre refurbishment progress and the development of a new youth theatre. I was returned as Chairman for a further year, along with Jerry as Secretary and Ollie as Treasurer. Chris has remained Technical Manager and agreed to stay a Trustee. Dan will continue as Publicity & Marketing manager and has become a trustee as well. With Uli as Artistic Director – not having been up for renewal, this list comprises your management committee for the forthcoming year. Uli has also stated she will not be standing as Artistic Director next year.

A full list of the roles will appear in the AGM minutes, however thanks to Natasha, Judy, Pat, Kevin, Anne, Charles, Trish, Tim and Mike who have all agreed to continue. Welcome to Jo Spratley as Acting Class Co-ordinator, Caroline

Blick who has agreed to share the Production Manager role with Kevin, Peta and Peter who will now assist Trish with props, Michael and Kay who jointly take on the Front of House co-ordination, Rosie Nicchitta as Volunteer Liaison coordinator and Sarah Charsley our new Social Secretary.

Many thanks to all the above for their help in keeping the NVT functioning and building for the future. I would also like to give a big thank you to Lou and Sarah who have worked hard behind the scenes over the past few years in the roles of Front of House and Volunteer Liaison respectively. Also to Tony for all the hard work he has given the theatre over the years, most recently as Building Manager. However he will remain at the helm in more of a consultant role.

And finally, last month I updated you on the winners of the NVT awards. However, I neglected to thank the designer and creator of the 2012 awards – Ben Pritchard. Many thanks to Ben for the work he put into these awards.

Ian Black, Chairman



Acting Class

29 Oct & 5, 12 Nov

**Presence & physicality -
Ulrike Schilling**

In these sessions we will explore body awareness and physicality as performance tools. Through a variety of tasks and exercises we will connect to our bodies and utilise physicality in relation to text and within devised work.

Working individually and in small groups in a safe environment we will explore which movement skills we already bring and how to use our bodies in performance.

You do not need to have previous experience or training, but please wear comfortable clothing.

Ulrike has trained in Dance and Visual Art and has been performing internationally before moving to Brighton. She has created interactive and promenade based work at NVT, 'Intimate Encounters', 'Icarus', and has been involved in many productions backstage as well as on stage.

**19, 26 November
and 3, 10, 17 December**

**Secrets of the sketch
comedians -**

Andy Thomas

Have you ever wanted to know the secrets of how comedy sketches work? How long should they be? What is funny and what isn't? What risks can I take? How do I put a show together? Come on a journey as we try to answer those questions and launch you on your way. From The Goons, Cook and Moore, the Two Ronnies, Python to Little Britain and Armstrong and Miller we study the greats of comedy sketch performance and see what we can produce ourselves. Expect plenty of 'get up and go', dynamic games and activities, improv and script study for two hours of great fun. Inclusive and supportive, we work at our own pace and everyone is welcome!

Keep going NVT!!!

At the end of last season I received a very sweet email from long standing members congratulating me to a wonderful season. I was very touched by this as it is not often that the management receives thanks for their hard work. Many of the jobs we are doing are outside of NVT or happen during times when no one is around, and we do know our members are grateful and your input and attendance proof this to us. During the last three or four productions several members who remember the early days of NVT commented on the outstanding work NVT is doing and how they have enjoyed the way their theatre has developed. I am very proud that this is the case and that people are still enjoying their theatre after such a long time and input from many, many people.

NVT's 65th season started with the AGM and as you will know from there or from Ian's article it will be my 4th and last season as Artistic Director. Being on the committee is an amazing experience and learning curve, and during my two years as Company's Production Manager I gained a good understanding of the company and its management. During that time I started to take on and develop the training programme of NVT and built foundations I could expand within the role of AD. Recently I started handing some of those aspects to other volunteers as many of these aspects are time consuming even though extremely re-

warding. I am always excited by the suggestions the membership brings forward every season and it is amazing to observe new projects develop and come to life in our space. I personally love seeing people explore new ventures and try things out and at times find their niche or talents within the safe NVT set up. And as you can see our current season will enhance exactly those aspects promising many exciting, interesting and magical shows spiced up with workshops and other treats.

Biloxi Blues opened our season with not only a very innovative and fresh approach tailored to our Studio theatre but with a sell out of the run, an added show and a 'Calendar Boys' calendar you all can take home with you! Sarah's one woman show followed straight away weaving Sarah's short stories into a one act play not only about bananas and artichokes. Our next production, The Price, is our entry to the Brighton and Hove Drama Awards, so make sure you don't miss it!

If you are interested in getting involved and maybe taking on a position within the theatre or even considering the role of Artistic Director, please do get in touch with me and/or previous artistic directors or other trustees to find out what its all about and what you could bring to NVT.

I look forward to another exciting season at NVT!

Ulrike

Furniture Sale, EVERYTHING must go!

Sunday 18th November 10am – 3pm

With the Main Theatre refurbishment fully under way we have to get rid of all the furniture that has been stored up there! Quite a lot of it is being used in the upcoming production of The Price (9th – 17th November) so you can have a good look at it all whilst enjoying the play!

The sale will take place on Sunday in the South Hall, though you will have to be able to transport any furniture you wish to buy. You can drop in and have a browse. We won't be fixing any prices on the pieces, so you can name your price and take away a piece of NVT history!

Kevin Moore

Serving up something 'naughty' and 'nice' this New Year!

Fancy something a bit different for those drab Christmas stockings? Well, we've undertaken a rather 'nude venture' to provide you with just that. This Christmas, forget the ghastly socks and gaudy ties and give your loved ones (or even yourself) a present to remember with an official New Venture Theatre nude male calendar.

Featuring twelve of our 'members' baring their all for 2013, 'Calendar Boys' prove there's no better way to fill your stocking this Christmas.

All this for just £8.00! After costs, every penny from the sale of 'Calendar Boys' goes to the restoration of our Main Theatre. So whatever month or mood you're in, be it tragic or comic, you can gaze in wonder at these twelve good men and true knowing that you've helped to restore one of Brighton's leading theatrical venues back to its renewed glory.

'Calendar Boys' is **on sale now**. Available at the theatre or online at <http://www.newventure.org.uk>

Grab them before they disappear!

Please note: Online purchase cost is £10 (to include postage and packing)

Any questions? Email Colin Elmer on colinelmer@hotmail.co.uk

Colin Elmer

CALENDAR BOYS



The NVT Morality Committee discussing the pros and cons of THAT calendar!

'Biloxi Blues'

By Neil Simon

Directed by Gerry McCrudden

A review by Barry Hewlett-Davies

Biloxi Blues is a hit Broadway comedy and movie from America's most successful modern comic writer, his autobiography as a raw GI conscript in World War II. The platoon he finds himself with is really not so much a gallant band of brothers but more like a sticky gang putting up with each other because they have no option. Their common cause is survival, their success in dealing with it the evening's *raison d'être*. No classic heroics, then, but lots of fun with some tender moments as well.

It is a show of surprising and sometimes eccentric adventure with a dark underdrag. The audience I shared it with yelled their approval. It's a hard, long two and a half hours for the cast, physically and emotionally, and the rapport between them works really well. As a matter of fact, you possibly get to know more about them - and their ailments - than you want for com-

fort. Neil Simon is parading their discomfort to make us laugh, after all.

They speak exactly as you would expect - young men in a barrack room, their dialogue explicitly sexual. The advance publicity stressed this, with the "adult" theme and nudity, as "unsuitable for children." This is probably true, though it occurred to me that any under-12s who might have been in, could have got the giggles. The full nude bits were hardly Prince Harry at Las Vegas, the fellatio off-stage.

If I want to grumble, and I don't specially, I found the intervention of the "civilian" stage staff coming on to move the furniture, somewhat of an intrusion. Could the GIs have done it? The staging, like a boxing ring with the audience on four sides, brings problems as well. The protagonists are often in the corners, not the centre and, depending where your

seat is, you can't see all of them at the same time. You need to. Their inter-reaction is important.

The show is surely the theatre's most-publicised event for ages. The campaign started in August and I got 17 email invitations in one day. The final tally was 80+. They sold out. They deserved to!

I do not intend to intrude on some especially good ensemble work by going into individual performances. But an actor friend in the audience with considerable experience in professional theatre, commented that she would happily engage all the cast on the spot. Seems a good enough recommendation to me.

The Players

Warren Saunders, Steve Larkin, Tobias Clay, Frank Leon, Tom Slater, Alistair Lock, Jonny Parlett,



Spotlight on Ollie Donovan, Treasurer

Why did you decide to join NVT? I came across NVT when I tried (and failed) to get tickets for a production of *An Inspector Calls*. I looked around the website and saw that the Treasurer position was to become vacant so I spotted this as an opportunity to support local arts, keep some administrative skills fresh, meet some lovely people and generally be around theatre again after a long absence from the environment.

How long have you been a member? Three years now - since September 2009.

What have been the highlights for you? Watching Sheelagh Baker's performance as Mrs Culfeathers in *The Steamie* springs to mind. I really admired the love and attention that went into *The Permanent Way*. Strat Mastoris' *Love Letters* was heartbreaking, and Andrew Allen's performance in *Art* also stands out for me. Also, helping to rip up the South Hall floor last summer and finding all the retro crisp packets was a personal highlight (you probably had to be there). Oh, and Frank Leon's card tricks, which are always delivered with heroic amateurism.

What does your current role at NVT involve? I am in charge of balancing the theatre's finances - maintaining the books, reporting to the committee, and generally ensuring that we operate profitably.

What have been your most satisfying achievements on or off the NVT stage? I have really enjoyed hosting seminars at NVT (about Arthur Miller in 2010 and one about Jim Cartwright in 2012) with special guests from Sussex University. Also working closely with Mark Wilson as the Production Manager for *A Streetcar Named Desire* for the Fringe Festival in 2012 - seeing it evolve from the first audition to the last curtain call was a wonderful experience, I learnt a lot.

What are you looking forward to at NVT? I can't wait to see *The Price* by Arthur Miller this month, and also very much looking forward to seeing Kevin Moore's production of *The Lover* in June 2013. Seeing the Main Theatre re-open after everybody's hard work will also be a great moment, when the time comes.



Audition Notice

'BOSTON MARRIAGE'

By David Mamet

Production Dates

30 March to 6 April 2013

AUDITIONS AT NVT 10:30 to 12:30 SATURDAY 24 NOVEMBER

2 pm to 4 pm SUNDAY 25 NOVEMBER

CALL BACK 7:30 pm TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER

One of America's most revered and provocative dramatists, David Mamet conquers new territory with this droll comedy of errors set in a Victorian drawing room.

Anna and Claire are two bantering, scheming "women of fashion" who have long lived together on the fringes of upper-class society.

Anna has just become the mistress of a wealthy man, from whom she has received an enormous emerald and an income to match. Claire, meanwhile, is infatuated with a respectable young lady and wants to enlist the jealous Anna's help for an assignation.

As the two women exchange barbs and take turns taunting Anna's hapless Scottish parlour maid, Claire's young innamorata suddenly appears, setting off a crisis that puts both the valuable emerald and the women's futures at risk.

To this wickedly funny comedy, Mamet brings his trademark tart dialogue and impeccable plotting, spiced with Wildean wit. This is an incisive satire of decorous vulgarity, barely repressed desire, and class hostility.

CAST:

Anna: Witty, sharp, glamorous but a slightly fading beauty. 30's /40's

Claire: Maybe a bit younger than Anna, also witty, sharp, glamorous

Catherine: Scottish Maid 20's slightly frumpy but determined. Accused of being an Irish peasant and abused mercilessly by Anna and Claire

Production Team:

I am delighted that Caroline Blick has agreed to be my Production Manager. Strat Mastoris and Jezz Bowden will be designing the lighting and sound.

However I am in need of a costume and set designer, lighting and sound operator and a Stage Manager.

THIS IS GOING TO BE GLORIOUS FUN AND I CANNOT WAIT TO START !!

Copies of the script are available from me as are audition pieces

Jerry Lyne: 01273 446574 / 07762916888, jerry.lyne@btinternet.com



Spotlight on Dan Walker PR & Marketing Manager and Lighting Designer



Why did you decide to join NVT?

I had some friends who were already involved and so I started coming to acting classes as a way to add more skills to my stand-up comedy routine. Then I got hooked.

How long have you been a member?

Around three years now – I had to look up the dates of the first shows I was involved in because the time has gone so quickly.

What have been the highlights for you?

That's a tough question, because I have really enjoyed every production. My first speaking role at NVT in Gaby Goes Global stands out; the cast and crew became very close and we are still all great friends. Those kinds of moments are my favourites, when a group of people get to know each other and become a team and that goes for many, many other productions too.

What does your current role involve/cover? It covers a large number of tasks and I am glad that I didn't have to take it over from Tamsin all at once! In the normal routine I edit and send information about our productions to newspapers, magazines and websites. I also manage social media like our thriving Facebook group and send out email notices to members. Sometimes I get to contribute towards more unique stunts to promote the shows and I am always researching more ways to make us seen and stand out.

What have been the most satisfying roles/positions on or off the NVT stage? I enjoyed all my acting roles and I still have so much to learn. I think I managed to put everything I had into my brief perform-

ance as Brink in the rehearsed reading of *Road* in our Jim Cartwright evening. On the other side of the curtain I have been lucky enough to design the lighting for a few shows, including *Icarus*, *All My Sons* and *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*. That's something I feel a real affinity for and I would like to thank Strat, Chris and everyone else for introducing me to it and teaching me more all the time.

What are your major interests outside of NVT?

I promote live comedy nights at various small venues around Brighton and Hove and every so often I get up and perform a bit myself. Brighton has the fastest growing comedy circuit in the country so it is a great place to be. In the rare event of spare time, I enjoy painting, graphic design, cooking and other art forms.

What has been your greatest life achievement?

I hope something still to come! It's hard to pick something out from the past but I'll say: overcoming depression and everything that I was able to be a part of as a result – and that includes NVT.

What are you looking forward to at NVT?

Most immediately I am keen to get started on lighting *The Price*. It will be a very unique set and the challenge for me is going to be showing it off in a dramatic way while also keeping the light naturalistic. On the PR side the press are already interested in *Hansel and Gretel* so I think the show is going to generate a fantastic buzz! Then there are auditions and the main stage refurb and socials and workshops and

'Three Kinds of Me' Written and performed by Sarah Charsley Reviewed by Barry Hewlett-Davies

Sarah Charsley got very nearly a full house for her opening night. She deserved it just as much as the spontaneous cheering at the end from an audience on its feet. It is an extraordinary 85 minute, 5000 word journey through a woman's early life - exactly like watching someone repeatedly throwing themselves under a train. An excursion into self-destruction, it is comic as well, with moments which resonate for every member of the audience – classic catharsis. She uses her voice and body excellently.

The play developed from a series of short stories about mental health written by Sarah as degree material and from it she and Andrew Allen have shaped a working narrative. It is a bit on the long side for the available material and the sudden final transition into golden sunlight rather leaves you wondering. That aside, the show is New Venture Theatre at its best, a genuinely new experience. It is a pity programme planning did not allow for it to have a longer run.

Isabel Aidallbery's setting and Jezz Bowden's lighting add a great deal to the show's success.

Sarah's first stage experience, aged five, was as a rat in the *Pied Piper*. Mine was the dormouse in *Alice*, also at five. You might well think my contribution to theatre has turned out a lot less creative than hers: I became a newspaper drama critic.

Nation's Best Am Dram

The search is on for the Nation's best amateur dramatic theatre company

Six one hour programmes starting Wednesday 14th November at 9pm on Sky Arts HD

Amateur theatre is alive and flourishing across the UK like never before, with more than 2,500 amateur theatre groups putting on nearly 30,000 productions a year, attracting an audience of eight million people and generating £40 million in box office income. Sky Arts HD will showcase the cream of the UK's amateur dramatic societies, in its new six part series Nation's **Best Am Dram**, where eight groups battle it out to be crowned Britain's best.

The series, which is the first of its kind, will offer the amateur theatre groups an unprecedented opportunity to work with a glittering cast of luminaries and industry professionals from stage and screen, to realise their ultimate dream and win the chance to perform on a West End Stage.

A raft of extraordinary acting talent including **Roger Allam, Martin Shaw, Julie Graham, Paterson Joseph, Richard Wilson, Niamh Cusack, Jill Halfpenny** and **Dame Harriet Walter** were each assigned to one group. The mentors worked meticulously with the groups to practice, develop and hone their theatrical skills in preparation for their appearance before the panel of judges, made up of award winning actress **Miriam Margolyes**, producer extraordinaire **Bill Kenwright** and formidable theatre critic **Quentin Letts**.

Bill Kenwright states: "Having worked in the theatre for so long and of course having appreciated the love that people have for theatre throughout the length and breadth of this land, I shouldn't have been at all surprised at the hard work, talent, and dedication that we saw in our search to find the "Best Am Dram". I shouldn't have been surprised, but I was! The level of talent that exists in the world of amateur dramatics is extraordinary, but what

stood out more than anything was the level of absolute dedication, and real hard work. The whole series has been an eye opener for me. And it has been so pleasing to see amateur and professional performers working together to one end. To showcase amateur talent and to provide the groups with the appreciation and respect they deserve."

Nation's Best Am Dram will display the passion, dedication and talent that the world of amateur dramatics has to offer, as the groups' start their journey in fine tuning their craft to impress the judges. With members ranging from sheep farmers to an accountant, a solicitor and a mother of seven, the series highlights that people from all walks of life can embrace the thriving and exhilarating industry.

The groups' mentors are:

- FissiParous Theatre, Wirral - Roger Allam
- Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group, Edinburgh - Niamh Cusack
- Heath Players, Hertfordshire - Julie Graham
- Regent Rep, Dorset - Jill Halfpenny
- Crossmichael Drama Club, Galloway - Paterson Joseph
- Tell Tale Theatre Company, Liverpool - Martin Shaw
- Strathclyde Theatre Group, Glasgow - Dame Harriet Walter
- Bingley Little Theatre, Bradford - Richard Wilson

Report from Pat Boxall

Eileen Miller - Mark Wilson's thoughts

I somehow missed out on the request for thoughts about Eileen Miller but wanted to say something about her at her passing. Eileen took part in my very first NVT show, 'At The Inland Sea' in 2003. She also played in my productions of 'The Crucible' and 'Macbeth'. Eileen was a joy to work with. She had more youthfulness - playfulness at times, more energy and a greater willingness to take risks than many people a fraction of her age. There are a very

few people I've known - and thankfully we still have a few (a very few) at NVT - who are able to combine the highest standards of effortless professionalism whilst not appearing to bother terribly much with what others think. In that respect she was a great teacher. What contributed to her rarity was that she never really knew she was one.

Mark Wilson.

Tickets for next upcoming NVT productions

Ticket prices: £9 (£8 members)

Final Friday/Saturday: £10 (£9 Members) Tuesday evenings: tickets £7

(Please note: On Sundays matinee only, and no productions on Mondays)

Evening performances at 7.45 pm

Sunday Matinees at 2.30 pm

9-17 November: 'The Price' by Arthur Miller
(Note: No Thursday evening performance)

Performance date?

How many?	
Member?	Non-Member?

Total Cost?
£

6-9 December: 'Hansel & Gretel'
Adapted by Helen Nelder
(additional matinee on Saturday 8 December)

Performance date?

How many?	
Member?	Non-Member?

Total Cost?
£

19-26 January: 'Far Away' and 'Seven Jewish Children' by Caryl Churchill

Performance date?

How many?	
Member?	Non-Member?

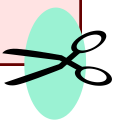
Total Cost?
£

Name, Address, Postal code & phone number:

Membership Number(s)

* PLEASE SEND or DELIVER YOUR CHEQUE and this coupon to:
New Venture Theatre, Bedford Place, Brighton BN1 2PT

* Please note there may be a delay in receiving confirmation of your tickets for bookings made more than a month in advance of the performance date.





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DECEMBER 2012 newsletter

Copy deadline: Saturday 3 November

Printing: Monday 12 November

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