

# Why I Broke Down When Arthur Miller Died

FRANK GAGLIANO

**abstract:** Why did I break down when Arthur Miller died? This is the dramatic question this playwright attempts to answer in this essay. My emotional attachment to Miller began when New York's New Dramatists sent me to observe rehearsals of Miller's original Broadway production of *The Price*. It grew when I saw Miller's comic side while meeting him in his producer's office. I was overwhelmed when I saw the first Kazan "operatic" production of *Salesman*. Dealing with Miller personally when I initiated the Arthur Miller Award at the University of Michigan was intensely affecting. And the intensity of my respect for him reached new depths while presenting my paper on fashioning an epic theater piece from his memoir, *Timebends*. Unquestionably Miller's political activism and his dramatic writing techniques shaped my own. Did the convergence of all these Miller events in my memory explain why I broke down when Arthur Miller died? Yes!

**Keywords:** *Mr. Peters' Connections*, New Dramatists, operative *Salesman*, University of Michigan Festival of New Works, Arthur Miller, political activist

This is from the opening speech of one of Arthur Miller's late plays—the musing, elegiac, Godot-like chamber piece *Mr. Peters' Connections*: “And yet, deep down . . . deep down I always seem on the verge of weeping” (2).

Shortly after Arthur Miller died, at the age of eighty-nine, on 10 February 2005, I was interviewed about it on a National Public Radio show

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called *Weekend America*. They wanted to interview people who had seen the original production of *Death of a Salesman*. In the middle of my reminiscing about that experience, I briefly broke down. Ever since, I've been trying to figure out why the death of Arthur Miller caused such personal grieving and sadness in me—and still does.

When Tennessee Williams, our other great playwright, died, I was sad, of course—I believe *A Streetcar Named Desire* is the other great American play. I also felt that Williams, like Miller, had been dealt with disgracefully in his later years, but I had met Williams only once. He was pleasant and encouraging, but distant and shy. With Miller, it was more personal; he was sprinkled throughout my life, professionally and in person.

I was first in the presence of Arthur Miller, up close and in the flesh, in 1967, when I was a new member of the New Dramatists in New York. He came to speak to us “emerging playwrights,” and he was very excited—because he had recently seen an excellent Off-Broadway revival of his play *A View From the Bridge*, and had signed the director of that show, Ulu Grosbard, to direct his new Broadway play, *The Price*. I remember how important Arthur Miller thought it was that a playwright have the right director for his work. In fact, that was the theme of his remarks at that New Dramatists' meeting.

In those days the New Dramatists sent out playwrights to attend rehearsals of shows headed for Broadway. I landed the plum assignment of observing rehearsals of the new play Arthur Miller had talked to us about. I was even invited to attend an early meeting at producer Robert Whitehead's office, where I met Whitehead, director Ulu Grosbard, and, of course, Arthur Miller. I was allowed to listen and take part, encouraged to ask questions, and—at one point, when there was a lot of joking and banter going on, and apropos of who knows what, I repeated what Winston Churchill was supposed to have said about a certain British MP: “He's the kind of man,” said Sir Winston, “who gives sodomy a bad name.” That broke up the room, especially Arthur Miller, who laughed—and with a full-out laugh. And that laughter surprised me; it was coming from the major American playwright of serious, tragic plays.

What also surprised me in Whitehead's office—as it had at the New Dramatists' meeting—was Arthur Miller's regular-guy, New York-accented, and somewhat gravely, somewhat Godfather-ish voice. With *All My Sons*, *The Crucible*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *An Enemy of the People* behind

him at that point, and known as an articulate, intellectual man of letters, the in-the-flesh speech/sound coming from this already giant American playwright was the sound of—well—my cousin Alfred. I knew this man; I knew that New York, Brooklyn voice. It was *famiglia*. It was *mishbocher*. It was not grand. It was not phony. It was not distant. The speech/sound was—well—cousin Alfred's; a playwright-genius cousin Alfred, to be sure, but, unlike cousin Alfred's, a speech/voice that had no trouble articulating big, and often dense, ideas.

Years before that meeting in Whitehead's office, I had, indeed, seen the first production of *Death of a Salesman*—a huge and awesome hit—on Broadway! I was able to pay the dollar twenty-five for standing room. While standing, I noticed that one seat down front and to the side of the Morosco Theatre was empty. A miracle. I brazenly dashed for it during intermission and took up residence there for the second act. And like everyone else—and now, very close to the stage—I was overwhelmed by the experience. Grown men around me did cry, as history recounts. My father was a bread salesman whose route included delivering hot dog buns to Ebbets Field, where the Brooklyn Dodgers played. I don't think I associated salesman Willy Loman's despair at not attaining the American Dream with my bread-salesman father's dreams. In fact, I didn't know what my father's dreams were—or had been; and *that* discovery and emotional recognition, watching the play, did pain and move me. Nor had my father placed all his hopes in me to fulfill his faded dreams, as Willy had in his son Biff. Where Willy and my father did directly connect, however (and which I felt deeply), was in their great fatigue. My father could sit down and fall asleep in thirty seconds flat, so tired was he from getting up at three o'clock to literally put bread on our table. Was my father as fatigued to the soul as Willy? That, I did not know.

But what awed this young, unschooled playwright, however, was the totality of the theatrical experience: The pressured words hurled at me from un-miked, larger-than-life, clear-spoken actors, who gave each word its due, and the rhythm of the text's phrases, *their* due; the rendering of characters at the ends of their ropes, who were clearly overcoming, and struggling with, monumental family and societal inner and outer obstacles; *and*—with Elia Kazan directing—the production was staged with a breath-holding relentlessness as it drove toward Willy Loman's suicide—in a trajectory that had been triggered in the play's opening moments.

Unlike much of Broadway's slick and technically hyped productions today, the original *Salesman* Broadway production was meticulous in its detail—so that the seamless dissolves, clearly part of the writing, were rendered in an organic synthesis of acting, lighting, costumes, set, and staging—and somehow, it wasn't blatantly theatrical for its own sake—superimposing a *concept* on it, as is often done today; it simply was, and was of a piece! The writing was a marvel of compressed, pressured, dramatic events that drove the whole mechanism with mounting intensity; the language was—well—realistic, certainly—yet unrealistic; the emotional lava, bubbling to erupt from each main character, was at such a boil from the get-go, that it could only explode to the sky, and in our heads, in molten language.

In fact, my impression, the impression that stays with me to this day, is that the *Death of a Salesman* text, in that first Broadway production, was a score that had been sung. There was something operatic about it all. I still have in my mind's ear, for example, the way Lee J. Cobb, playing Willy, rendered the line, "That boy—that boy is going to be magnificent" (133). Cobb moved each word up the scale, and the whole thing crescendoed to a high C. Something like this: "That boy—THAT BOY is going TO BE MAGNIFICENT!" And it was sung-supported by a terrifying, despairing, emotional inner life. Once again Willy was denying the truth of the moment—and at top, soul-busting, voice. Hair-raising.

It seemed, too, that that kind of musical take was what the text demanded. Over the course of that first production, after Cobb left the show, I used to go back and sneak into second acts (I did that a lot in those days) and I saw Gene Lockwood, Thomas Mitchell, and Albert Dekker play Willy. They never seemed to have the operatic grandeur the text demanded, and that Lee J. Cobb gave it. Only Dekker, because he was bigger and more lumbering than the others, I suspect, approached that kind of "bigness" in Willy's "smallness," that Cobb had—but Dekker didn't have the singing chops, as I recall. Or, that deintensifying the music with other Willys, might have been the result of Kazan's negligence—Kazan was notorious for rarely going back to monitor a production, once it was up and running.

What also astonished me about that first *Salesman* production—and remember, I was a fledgling playwright then, still flailing around for a technique—was that a character who was clearly "exhausted to the death"

in body and spirit could, paradoxically, be written with so much explosive dynamic stage energy. Playwriting rule number ten—right? “If you’re writing a character who is a bore, he must not be boring.” In short: I had never seen theater like it!

What I couldn’t know at the time was that I was also absorbing playwriting craft and that, technically, *Death of a Salesman* would influence many of my plays—especially one, *Father Uxbridge Wants to Marry*—which opened Off-Broadway around the time of *The Price*, and which I recently revived and directed. For years I thought that *Uxbridge* had been influenced only by Georg Buchner’s great play *Woyzeck*, but I’ve come to realize that *Uxbridge*, which also takes place in one “little man’s” head, and is structured with the use of dissolves and with a fragmenting of time, and with each scene built on strong wants and obstacles, and with the heightening of language into the operatic, was very much influenced by *Salesman*. *Uxbridge*’s main character, Morden, in fact, pummeled by a crumbling church and society, and by his own failings, even has echoes of some of Willy’s lines.

So I was surprised, years after that *Death of a Salesman* experience, at *The Price* meeting in Robert Whitehead’s office, to discover that Arthur Miller, the playwright of such earnest, serious, relentless, intense, operatic power—and extraordinary technique—was, in the flesh, a big, laughing, generous-of-spirit, seemingly easygoing—regular—funny guy.

Over the next four decades, of course, one was to see some strong, blatant, comic riffs in Arthur Miller’s plays. (From the character Solomon in *The Price*, Lyman Felt in *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan*, and sprinkled throughout Miller’s memoir, *Timebends*—starting, for me, with Ben, in *Salesman*, who I always thought was a stylized hoot.) In *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan*, Miller, decades later, even was to comment on his humor. Leah, one of Lyman’s wives (Lyman is a bigamist), says, “Well, your presentation was so funny, I’d heard you were a real brain, not a comic” (42).

Here’s a more recent sample; at once shtick, social satire, and wonder—again, from *Mr. Peters’ Connections*—a bit that, in true comic construction, keeps topping itself:

PETERS: I found this on the train. Amazing ads; pages and pages . . . look: breast augmentation, \$4,400. And guess how much breast reduction is?

CALVIN: How much?

PETERS: Same price. That seem strange to you?

CALVIN: No, seems about right.

PETERS: My father paid five thousand for the eight-room house our whole family lived in for thirty years! And a pair of tits is almost five thousand?

CALVIN: Yes. But houses are not as important; put a house on one magazine cover and a pair of tits on another, which one'll sell?

PETERS: And here we have penile augmentation for four thousand dollars and hymen reconstruction for two thousand. I can't imagine why hymens are cheaper.

CALVIN: There's not as much to a hymen. And they're nothing but trouble.

PETERS: Ah! But isn't it odd that penile augmentation costs four hundred dollars less than breast augmentation?

CALVIN: Well, I wouldn't take it personally.

PETERS: But you have to, don't you? I read these ads and I wonder—"Why don't I understand this?" You see? WHY DON'T I UNDERSTAND THIS!

(21-22)

I was shortly to find out something else during the period of *The Price*. Mr. Grosbard, in Mr. Whitehead's office, had graciously asked me, as a New Dramatists' representative, if I would please mind holding off attending rehearsals until he could get things started with the cast alone, without any onlookers. Of course. I certainly understood. But I never did get the call. Never attended a rehearsal. Not one. Then I read that Ulu Grosbard was no longer the director, and that Arthur Miller himself had taken over the directing of *The Price*. This great, earnest playwright, then, was a laugher, and was capable of stepping in and taking control of his own production when he felt it was needed; he had the speech/voice of my cousin Alfred—and he was also, through his writing, becoming my playwriting teacher.

After *Salesman*, I saw the misdirected Jed Harris production of *The Crucible* on Broadway (it was not until I saw a college production of *The Crucible* that I felt the full fury of that piece and began to analyze Miller's writing technique in that play); and, on Broadway, I also saw the double bill of *A Memory of Two Mondays*, paired up with the then one-act version of *A View From the Bridge*, which, incidentally, was not only beautifully constructed, but written in verse. In each of the plays, form was not superimposed but followed content (that was one of the things I was beginning to absorb); and, with Miller, content involved conflicted characters trying to overcome a monumental despair, both personal and societal, that weighed on them

like—well—like those rocks in *The Crucible* that were used in the Salem executions to press men to death. Through Miller, I was also beginning to unravel for myself the DNA of drama: The Dramatic Event—which I’ve since come to define as “a new pressure journeying to a consequence”—and which Miller applies beautifully in each explosive scene, in most of his plays. No wonder actors love to perform in them.

So, was that it? Was that why I especially grieved and wept when I heard of Arthur Miller’s death—that a seeming family member, who also taught me my craft, had died? And that Miller’s death, like some cosmic dramatic event, was a consequence, setting off a new pressure, that would journey me to some unknown consequence still to come? Perhaps.

The toughness that Miller showed when he took over his own production of *The Price* was a toughness and activism he was to exhibit on the larger world stage—the same world I was living in, and was beginning to see through his eyes, his courage, and filtered through his sensibility, and articulated through his language. Here’s Miller, on hearing that President John Kennedy has been murdered (from Miller’s memoir *Timebends*): “Even in the thirties, as bad as things got, there was always the future; certainly in all my work was an implicit reliance on some redemptive time to come, a feeling that the cosmos cared about man, if only to mock him. With Kennedy’s assassination the cosmos had simply hung up the phone” (509–10). And was my grief involved, as well, with that now-gone Arthur Miller, who could arrange words to articulate what I had felt, when I first confronted President Kennedy’s murder? Perhaps.

Because, by the time of *The Price*, Arthur Miller had lived through, and publicly fought, in deed and in word, HUAC—and was humiliated by having his passport revoked; had been indicted on charges of contempt of Congress—later reversed; had been elected President of PEN, a position that would enable him to fight for oppressed writers and artists in the Soviet Union and elsewhere; had had his work banned in Soviet Russia; had served as a delegate to the Democratic Party National Convention in 1968, trying to establish an anti-Vietnam statement into the platform—while the heads of dissenters outside the convention hall—mostly heads of young Americans—were being cracked open by the Chicago police.

In short, Arthur Miller was a man of letters who was active, engaged in the world, as well as in writing for the theater; very much in the mold of a Sartre or a Camus; not unusual in the Europe of that day—fairly unusual in

the United States. In fact, I can think of only one American man of letters who came close to being so totally engaged: Gore Vidal. In England, of course, there was Harold Pinter, who, incidentally, marched with Miller in many a human-rights campaign. And because Arthur Miller was a playwright, a model I looked to for the craft and for his plays' themes, his real-world actions made me become somewhat more of an activist, engaged in the world as well.

Then I meet Arthur Miller again.

Fast-forward to the 1990s. I'm Artistic Director of the newly conceived Festival of New Works at Arthur Miller's alma mater, the University of Michigan, and I establish an Arthur Miller Award and spend one weekend with Miller in Ann Arbor. Prior to that weekend, a meeting is set up in New York with Miller to discuss the award ceremony. Wendy Keeney, a University of Michigan fund-raiser, and I, are to meet at Miller's apartment in New York. Wendy warns me that Miller does not have someone to arrange his appointments—he does that himself—so things may not go as planned. Wendy and I arrive at the appointed time. No Arthur Miller. We wait in the lobby. Miller walks in late. He's chagrined, apologetic. Lost track of time and of the meeting. He says, simply, that he had come from the skin doctor. "I have to go on occasion to have some precancerous growths removed from my nose," he says.

In the pleasant but nondescript apartment, Miller's only concern about that award weekend coming up is how tight it is going to be; because that's the week of the Tony Awards, where he'll be given a special award and he'll have to get back to New York quickly. No problem. Lee Bollinger, President of the University of Michigan at the time, arranges for one of their mogul/alums to send a corporate plane to get Miller to the Tonys on time.

After meeting with Miller, Wendy Keeney and I see the Brian Dennehy performance of *Death of a Salesman*. And again I'm struck by the relentlessness of the piece. And I get the impression that, like the 1949 audience, this audience is holding its breath—I know I am—and it occurs to me that Broadway audiences may just not be used to this kind of sustained emotional assault any longer—one that drives and drives and drives, and doesn't let up for three hours, and doesn't get them off the hook; and the juxtaposition of having just met, in his unassuming apartment, the plain-spoken, generous, easygoing man of the precancerous nose, and the playwright who wrote this tsunami of a play, adds to my awe of it—and him.



Between that New York meeting and the Ann Arbor/Tony weekend, Arthur Miller is scheduled to speak in Pittsburgh. I fax him that, since I live in Pittsburgh, I'll be there and look forward to saying hello to him after he speaks. He calls me. My wife takes the call and, awed, rushes down to tell me, "Frank, it's Arthur Miller!" I pick up. My cousin Alfred's voice says, "Frank, I don't know anything about speaking in Pittsburgh. Could you check that out for me?" I do. I call him back. A woman with an accent answers. It's his wife, Inge Morath. "Arthur," she shouts off—not awed at all—"Arthur, a Frank Gagliano who says he knows you!" When he gets on, I tell him that, yes, he is scheduled to speak in Pittsburgh, and I read him all the information from the brochure I have in front of me, a brochure that has been out for months. As I recall, he says something like: "I'll be damned! Well, I guess I better figure out what to say." And he laughs. That laugh again.

In Ann Arbor, Miller presents the Arthur Miller Award and a check for three thousand dollars to playwright Willy Holtzman. He publicly congratulates Willy on his play *Hearts*, and quips: "An award for a writer is nice—a check is better."

When he was an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, during the Great Depression, the money Arthur Miller received as part of the university's Hopwood prizes for playwriting was very important to him; he assumes a prize with money attached will be as important to all playwrights. After Miller sees *Hearts*, Holtzman asks him if he has any notes for him. "Cut out ten minutes," he tells Willy. "You know," Willy says to me afterward, "Arthur's right."

All that weekend I attend luncheons and one breakfast with Arthur Miller. They are always public occasions, but once in a while I get a moment to chat with him alone, and we talk—never about the craft of playwriting—and never, never, never about Marilyn Monroe (that's a too-painful no-no)—mostly about his writing about Brooklyn, in *Timebends*. I am amazed how much of his Brooklyn life during the Great Depression paralleled mine. For example, we played the same kinds of street games: stick ball, Johnny-on-a-Pony and stoop ball. I didn't know anyone knew about stoop ball—I didn't know anyone knew about STOOPS! We talk, too, about Russ Columbo, a Bing Crosby-type crooner I remembered and whom Arthur Miller admired—Miller wanted to be a pop singer in that era. Where Miller's job

in the kitchen was to hang the homemade noodles over the backs of chairs, mine, on Sundays, was to grate the Parmesan cheese for the week. Different tasks—same ritual. At that breakfast, one of the actors in *Hearts* tells Miller that he had just appeared in a production of *A View From the Bridge* at a theater on Long Island. Miller says, simply, and with the delight of recognition, “I saw that production. You were very good.” One of the treasured photos I have of Miller and myself is of the both of us at that breakfast meeting—laughing. Of course.

Fast-forward again. Three years later. One final time in the presence of Arthur Miller—and he’s literally twenty feet tall. The University of Michigan is holding a Conference on Arthur Miller, in honor of his eighty-fifth birthday. Scholars and professionals from all over the world are presenting papers on Miller and his plays. Some days earlier, while in London, Miller falls and breaks three ribs, so he can’t make the trip to Ann Arbor for the conference. Damn. Among other things, I would have finally met his wife Inge Morath, whom I had come to admire through her superb photos, and because I knew how much of a partner she had become to Miller; also, perhaps Miller would have been present when I read my paper on making an epic theater piece out of his autobiography, *Timebends*. But not to worry; Miller is recovering, and a video hookup is arranged, and hundreds of people in Rackam Auditorium at the University of Michigan watch a live feed on giant screens, with Miller having a dialogue with Professor Enoch Brater; Miller on screen, Enoch in the auditorium.

In that period—while rereading Miller’s memoir for the second time—this time very carefully, for the research needed for my paper—it is the first time I realize how energetically involved in the affairs of the world Arthur Miller has been throughout his life, and continued to be, even at age eighty-five. As national political events begin to explode, I become aware of the world through Miller’s op-ed pieces. One piece really catches my eye and contains a phrase that captures the madness of the moment. It is during the impeachment days of former President Bill Clinton. In an op-ed *New York Times* article, “Clinton in Salem,” in which Miller compares the Salem witchcraft frenzy with the frenzy of that Clinton impeachment moment, Miller writes that Clinton’s “closeness to blacks may, in fact, have contributed to the relative racial harmony we have been enjoying these past few years. But it may also be part of the reason for his estrangement to his peers,

and it may have helped uncork the sewer of contempt upon his head, the Starr report” (269). That phrase, “the sewer of contempt,” immediately entered my vocabulary. It fit almost all the scoundrel/shenanigans then going on—and going on now.

Each age is an age of hypocrisy, of course. Miller’s chronicling of the particular hypocritical “sewer of contempt” of each of his decades (in addition to his dissection of contemporary art and artists) goes many decades back, appearing in such disparate publications as the *New York Times*, the *Nation*, *Esquire*, the *New Republic*, the *Atlantic Monthly*—even *TV Guide*; and covered such topics as “The Sin of Power,” “The Limited Hang-Out: The Dialogues of Richard Nixon as a Drama of the Antihero,” “Ibsen’s Warning” (about the tyranny of the majority), “The Parable of the Stripper” (about the Yugoslav catastrophe in 1994), “Get It Right: Privatize Executions,” “Let’s Privatize Congress”—and many, many others.

So. Besides looking to a new play from Arthur Miller to define our age, our particular hypocrisy, our special “sewer(s) of contempt,” I soon began to look more and more to Miller to articulate, and emotionally render, in his articles and essays, all the immediate dissatisfactions and betrayals that I began to feel were corrupting just about everything in our country. And, when I confront a Miller-less world now; when for me, the corruption and demise of the Constitution, for example, is, for the first time in my life, a reality—as well as the drive toward a radical, theocratic central government—the threat of which Miller hoped had died in Salem, hundreds of years ago; and when I feel as he did in his essay, “*The Crucible* in History,” “that there were days when I wondered if we would end in an unacknowledged, perhaps even comfortable American fascism” (283)—when I confront all that, I truly grieve for the loss of that Arthur Miller voice: smart, incisive, eloquent, articulate, elegant, passionate, patriotic—and I terribly miss those moral thunderbolts he was bound to hurl at us, in his attempt to try to recharge the country’s enervating soul.

The iconographic Joseph Hirsch cover design for the original program and book jacket of the 1949 Broadway production of *Death of a Salesman* shows a dark drawing of the black back of Willy Loman, walking away from us, carrying two unbearably heavy suitcases—a hunched-over figure in a down spot—outside of which is all darkness—a darkness Willy is walking into. Substitute a “tired-to-the-death,” sclerotic Uncle Sam, also weighed down from the weight of two suitcases—filled with, what?—Denial?

Despair? Dying ideals? Spine breaking, heavy-with-useless, merchandise?—and you have my image of our country in these dark times.

“My personal situation these days,” says Mr. Peters, “is trying to paddle a canoe with a tennis racket” (3). I feel that way. As an often “tired-to-the-death” playwright, I also gravitate, at my age, and in this Miller-less age we’ve entered, to another of Mr. Peters’ musings: “Conflict is not my game any more,” he says; “or suspense; I really don’t like trying to figure out what’s going on. Peace and quiet. Avoid the bumps. I’m perfectly content just to raise the shade and greet my morning” (3).

On the other hand, if one is used to looking to Miller for guidance, one must also look to his Harvard Lecture, “*The Crucible* in History,” in 1999, in which he said, “And yet one can’t forever stand on the shore; at some point, even if filled with indecision, skepticism, reservation and doubt, you either jump in or concede that life is forever elsewhere” (294).

Miller, despite his moments of “standing on the shore”—and no matter the dark storms he confronted that kept thundering in on him—always “jumped in”—and that, I know, is a Miller/Model worth emulating, too. It’s worth remembering that for a very long time Arthur Miller was shamefully ignored on these shores, and his work and stature diminished here and, Miller being Miller, he looked across the oceans and probably said something like, “Fuck it, I’m diving in and heading for England and Europe and China!” where he was appreciated and revered. And when he got to those shores—especially the English shore—he was produced, produced well—and lionized; and proclaimed America’s greatest living playwright. He lived long enough to dive back—when the tide turned back to the shores of America, where, finally, here, he was also acknowledged as America’s greatest living playwright.

That he lived, fought for decency, and for a human collaboration for goodness for ourselves and for our country; that he gave us a body of great, inspired plays—among our country’s and the world’s best—plus solid, professional short stories, novels, television/movie scripts, and insightful essays and op-ed pieces—and when this, to me, family member, gave me the personal pleasure of laughing with him, those times when I was lucky enough to be in his presence—the memory of all that should make it easier to overcome the grief. And, to a certain extent, it has. “It’s just that,” says the retired airline and military pilot Mr. Peters, “It’s just that when you’ve flown into hundreds of gorgeous sunsets, you want them to go on forever and ever . . . and hold off the darkness” (31).

With Arthur Miller gone, whose voice is there to help me hold off the darkness now? That question haunts me.—Ah! And was that, perhaps, the question that dropped in for a second, and triggered my crying, shortly after Arthur Miller died?

Perhaps.

**Frank Gagliano** was part of the 1960s group of Off-Broadway playwrights that revitalized American drama. In the 1960s, Edward Albee produced Frank's plays *Conerico Was Here to Stay* and *Night of the Dunce*, at NY's legendary Cherry Lane Theatre. Frank's many plays (and musicals *Congo Square*, *From the Bodoni County Songbook Anthology*) were produced Off-Broadway and around the country. In 2008, Frank published his novel, *Anton's Leap* (Amazon, Kindle). In 2010, Frank retired as Benedum Professor of Playwriting at West Virginia University—and for 12 years Frank was Artistic Director of Carnegie Mellon's Showcase of New Plays. In 2014, at the Kennedy Center, Frank was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Theatre.

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