

LEEDS ARTS CENTRE

presents



**THE
CRUCIBLE**

by Arthur Miller

THE CRUCIBLE

Arthur Miller was born in New York on 17th October 1915 of Austrian-Jewish parentage. He has been ranked with the more prolific Tennessee Williams as the most important in the post-World War II generation of American playwrights. His first success, "All My Sons" (1947) was followed by "Death of a Salesman" (1948), still perhaps his most famous play. Two years after "The Crucible" (1953) he produced "A Memory of Two Mondays" and "A View from the Bridge" followed some years later by "After the Fall" and "Incident at Vichy". His latest play is "The Price" (1969).

Miller is essentially a serious playwright profoundly concerned with morality and the pressures exerted on people by family and society. "The Crucible" is both a dynamic dramatisation of the seventeenth century Salem witch trials and a parable about the United States in the McCarthy era.

Joseph Raymond McCarthy (1908–57), lawyer, judge and Republican Senator for Wisconsin, pursued an undistinguished senatorial career until February 1950 when he made a speech alleging that the State Department had been infiltrated by communists, a claim which he subsequently repeated on radio and television in spite of an investigating committee's report which scotched the allegations. When challenged to produce his evidence, McCarthy refused and made further accusations, using his position to exploit the public's fear of communism. Through widely publicised hearings, reckless accusations and the use of unidentified informers, he doggedly pursued those whom he called communists and subversives; careers were ruined on the flimsiest of evidence and his methods came under increasing attack by the press and his colleagues until he was finally censured by the Senate in December 1954. Thereafter his influence on the national scene diminished steadily until his death in 1957 but his indiscriminate attacks gave rise to the term "McCarthyism", denoting assaults characterised by sensationalist tactics and unsubstantiated accusations.

Miller's personal experience of the McCarthy scare – he was made to "confess" to having once attended a communist party meeting out of curiosity but refused to reveal his companions – provided him with the stimulus for a play about mass hysteria and the individual caught up in its evil.

BLE

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The action of the play takes place in the township of Salem in the year 1692. Salem is a port on the coast of New England about fifteen miles from Boston. It was founded in 1626 and by the end of the seventeenth century it had become a small, but still fiercely Puritan township. The inhabitants followed their faith with the utmost rigidity; attendance at church was compulsory (without a very good excuse), "vain enjoyment" was totally prohibited and a thorough acquaintance with the scriptures was considered a good test of a "Christian character".

Outside this dedicated community lay the Indians and the virgin forest, heathens, in the eyes of Salem folk, in the devil's own country.

The strict Puritan regime, the theocratic government and the rather perilous position of Salem all combined to imbue its people with a defensive, suspicious outlook on life. This attitude, together with their "time-honoured predilection for minding other people's business", created the conditions which allowed the tragedy of the witch-hunt to take place.

ACT I A small upper bedroom in the home of the Reverend Samuel Parris in the Spring of the year 1692.

ACT II The common room of Proctor's house eight days later.

INTERVAL

ACT III The vestry room of the Salem meeting house, now serving as the anteroom of the General Court.

ACT IV A cell in Salem jail in the Autumn of that year.

There will be one interval of twenty minutes, during which the theatre bar will be open. Ice cream will be on sale in the auditorium and coffee will be available in the bar.

produced by Tony Nelson

at Leeds Civic Theatre. 5th to 9th October, 1976.

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Reverend Parris , the Minister of Salem	<i>Gordon Carlin</i>
Betty Parris , his daughter	<i>Gillian Watson</i>
Tituba , his Negro slave	<i>Betty Triggs</i>
Abigail Williams , his niece	<i>Chris Polley</i>
Susanna Walcott	<i>Chris Lamy</i>
Mrs. Ann Putnam	<i>Gillian Thresh</i>
Thomas Putnam , her husband, a well-to-do landowner	<i>Jim Young</i>
Mercy Lewis , the Putnams' servant	<i>Christine Wiison</i>
Mary Warren , the Proctors' servant	<i>Debbie Smith</i>
John Proctor , a farmer	<i>Robin Polley</i>
Rebecca Nurse , Francis's wife	<i>Monica Brown</i>
Giles Corey , a garrulous old man	<i>Trevor Money</i>
Reverend John Hale , the Minister of Beverly	<i>Alan Mitcheson</i>
Mrs. Elizabeth Proctor , John's wife	<i>Mary Nelson</i>
Francis Nurse , a landowner	<i>Roger Cook</i>
Ezekiel Cheever	<i>Geoff Mountain</i>
Marshal Herrick	<i>John Dickson</i>
Judge Hathorne	<i>Philip Pawson</i>
Deputy-Governor Danforth	<i>Graham Alchorne</i>
Sarah Good	<i>Betty Johnson</i>
Mrs. Martha Corey , Giles's wife	<i>Joyce King</i>
Hopkins , a guard	<i>Douglas Harris</i>

For the Arts Centre:

Stage Manager: George Westmoreland
Set: John Kerwin-Davey
Sound Effects: Douglas Harris
Prompt: June Stevenson
Costumes: Leeds Arts Centre Wardrobe team.
Properties: Doreen Parker
Publicity: Gordon Wilson
**Box Office &
Ticket Sales:** John Pemberton, Margaret Rhodes
Front of House Manager: Anne Robinson.

For the Civic Theatre:

Theatre Manager: Fred Mower
Resident Stage Manager: Julia Piggott
Lighting Technician: Nick Morris

Additional costumes by courtesy of Leeds Playhouse.

The drawing on the front of this programme is by Elaine Cooper of the Leeds Arts Centre Fine Arts Group.

BLE

by **Arthur Miller**

Coming shortly:

SAVED DAYS

A revival of the brilliantly successful musical by

JULIAN SLADE and DOROTHY REYNOLDS

Producer: Margaret Rhodes. Musical Director: David Carrack.

7th to 12th December.

Our productions for the rest of the season will be:

8th to 12th February 1977: "The Rivals" by R. B. Sheridan.
Producer: Margaret Rhodes.

3rd to 7th May: "When We Are Married" by J. B. Priestley.
Producer: Nina Goldthorpe.

28th June to 2nd July: "The First Born" by Christopher Fry.
Producer: Malcolm Brown.

If you would like tickets for any of the above shows please enquire at the box office during the interval or telephone Leeds 756796. You might like to take a season ticket for the rest of the season; this gives you a seat anywhere in the theatre for each of the four shows at a cost of only £2. It's a bargain — please ask for details!

The public may leave the Civic Theatre at the end of the performance by all exit and entrance doors and such doors must at that time be open. All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any obstruction. The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before each performance to check that it is in proper working order.

NEXT WEEK:

Leeds Art Theatre presents "MACBETH" by William Shakespeare.

LEEDS ARTS CENTRE

Leeds Arts Centre was formed in 1945 as an amateur Society to encourage and foster interest in the arts.

The Drama Group mounts five productions – usually including a musical or revue type show – at the Civic Theatre.

The Green Room Group puts on plays and other forms of entertainment in the rehearsal rooms to give members valuable experience of acting and producing before tackling major parts or productions in the Civic Theatre. Season ticket holders are welcome to attend these performances.

The Fine Arts Group meets twice each week throughout the year for drawing, painting and other creative work.

In addition there is a variety of social activities for members, such as theatre visits, outings, parties, etc.

New Members are always welcome so if you are interested in acting, drawing, painting (pictures or scenery), set building, making costumes, helping back stage, front of house or even with publicity and think you might like to join the Centre, or would like more information please write to:

*The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre,
Stansfield Chambers, Great George Street,
Leeds 1.*

costume hire

You may not realise that the costumes you have seen tonight and countless others from different periods are available for hire from the Leeds Arts Centre costume collection at reasonable rates.

If you are interested please telephone Leeds 756796 and discuss your requirements with Mrs. Margaret Rhodes, our wardrobe mistress.