

# EXPRESSIONISTIC DEVICES IN DEATH OF A SALESMAN

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## ABSTRACT

Miller was interested not merely in the physical but also in the mental and emotional aspects of his characters. More important for an understanding of the form of *Death of a Salesman* is a familiarity with German expressionism. To deliver the complexity of what was going on in Willy's head, Miller departed from the realism of *All My Sons*; time is exploded, linear cause and effect rearranged, the sets minimized –a table and chairs become the kitchen, a window frame hangs in air. Miller wrote "There is no limit to the expansion of the audience's imagination so long as the plays internal logic is kept inviolate. It is not true that conventionalism is demanded. They will move with you anywhere; they will believe right into the moon so long as you believe right into the moon so long as you believe who tell them this tale. We are at the beginning of many explosions of form. They are waiting for wonders.

He later said about the experiments in form found in *Death of a Salesman* : "I was very moved by German expressionism when I was in school; yet there too something was perverse in it to me. It was the end of man, there are no people in it any more; that was especially true of the real German stuff. It's the bitter end of the world where man is the voice of his class function and that's it. Brecht has a lot of that in him, but he's too much of a poet to be enslaved by it. And yet at the same time I learned a great deal from it. I used elements of it that were fused into *Death of a Salesman*."<sup>1</sup>

**KEYWORDS** : Death of a Salesman, Miller