



Our next production:

# THE LAST YANKEE

## The Last Yankee- Directors Notes

Arthur Miller was in his seventies when he wrote "The Last Yankee" in 1992, but the moral fervour that fuelled his big plays burns just as strongly in this small one.

Throughout his career, Miller weighed the price of chasing "The American Dream". Here, he explores the cost of trying to live up to the dreams and expectations of the people closest to you: where failure is all the more painful, because its source is so close to home.

2015 is the centenary of Miller's birth, and it has been a pleasure to work on this Criterion tribute, with a cast who have not been afraid to try and get to the truth of it.

I'd like to thank them for the commitment they have all brought to it, right from the start.

I'd also like to thank the whole production team, all of whom volunteered to work on this alongside their commitments to other plays: not least Karl Stafford for designing it, lighting it, and running it (again). Finally, I'd like to thank Jane Flavelle for her invaluable advice as a Psychiatric Nurse Therapist on depressive illness, treatments and the effects of medication.

In a play that deals with disappointment, I sincerely hope we don't.

*Richard Warren*

### Criterion Lottery Fund and Draw

Funds for the theatre are raised through our Lottery Fund. Please consider buying a number (or more than one) for the small sun of £5 per number per month. Please contact Mike Tooley on 024 7667 3789 or [mike\\_tooley@hotmail.com](mailto:mike_tooley@hotmail.com) for details.

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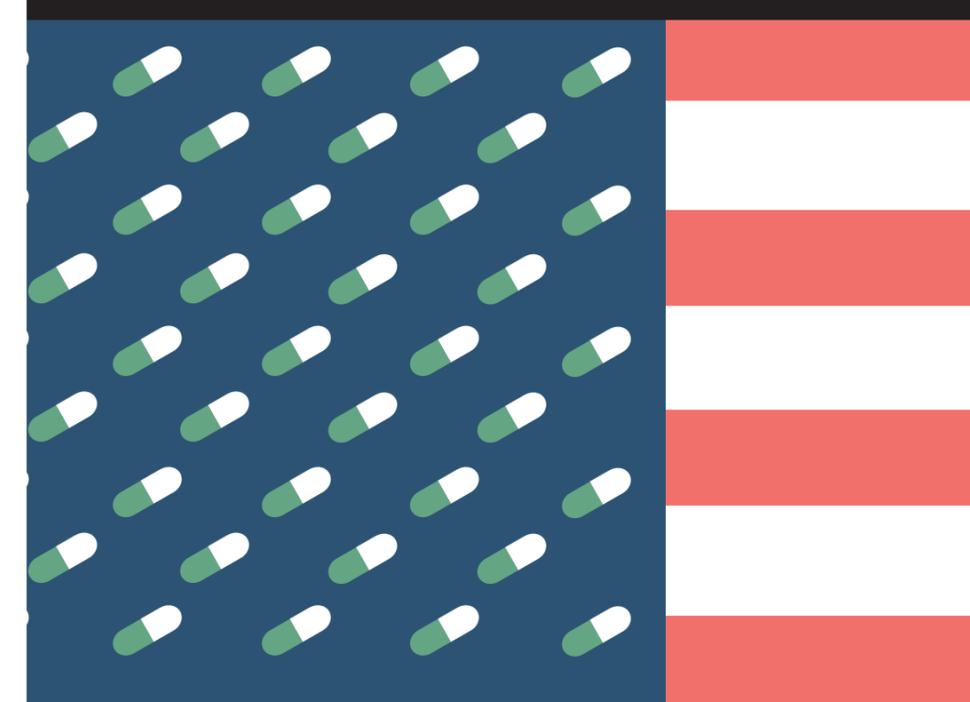
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If you have any comments about your experience at The Criterion Theatre, please email us at: [comments@ctrriteriontheatre.co.uk](mailto:comments@ctrriteriontheatre.co.uk)

**No photography or videoing allowed.  
The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre.**

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**BY ARTHUR MILLER**

This amateur production is presented by  
arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited

# Programme

# THE LAST YANKEE

BY ARTHUR MILLER



## Ruth Herd

*Character: Patricia Hamilton*

This is Ruth's debut at The Criterion - though her second role as a mental patient, and her third involving a mental institution (given that she has only acted in six plays since she got back into performing three years ago, we will allow you to draw your own conclusions...)

Playing Patricia has been a serious challenge, a huge learning experience and a sheer delight, and she hopes to be welcomed back again to the Criterion very soon. Ruth's long-term acting ambition is to eventually get cast as somebody sane.



## Chris Firth

*Character: Leroy Hamilton*

Chris's wife is particularly keen to ensure that the audience recognise that Leroy's character traits are frighteningly similar to those of the actor playing him, and to confirm that they would indeed make you go crazy!

Away from the stage, Chris can often be found remarking about "glorious sunsets" or "smelling the autumn air" whilst driving his hand-me-down car, which "will be good for another year" at any mention of a replacement. Despite this, there has been no call for medication for either himself, or those closest to him. Yet. Love all the People.

## Cast

Leroy Hamilton	Chris Firth
Patricia Hamilton	Ruth Herd
Karen Frick	Anne Houston
John Frick	John Fenner
Patient	Jane Flavelle

## Crew

Director	Richard Warren
Production Assistant	Amanpreet Ahluwalia

Movement	Debbie Relton-Elves
Stage Manager	Karl Stafford

Set team	Alan Fenn/Sam Pyllyp
Props/Set dressing	Les Rahilly
Lighting/Sound	Karl Stafford
Wardrobe	Maureen Liggins

Music editor/composer	Joe Bennett
Artwork Design	Melissa Harvey/Chris Townsend
Technical Adviser	Jane Flavelle

## Setting

A New England state mental hospital in the early 1990s.

## Notes

### Yankee

In the context of this play, "Yankee" refers to a New Englander, specifically one whose family has not recently arrived from another country. It implies a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant heritage, a preference for plain talk, and a penchant for everyday common sense.

### Alexander Hamilton

Leroy's ancestor, Alexander Hamilton, is one of America's "Founding Fathers": the men who signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. As Treasury Secretary, Hamilton mapped out institutions that would shape the American market economy, emphasising industry, trade and banking.

### Prozac

A trade name of Fluoxetine, Prozac was approved for the treatment of depressive disorder in 1987. In 2010, over 24 million prescriptions for generic Fluoxetine were dispensed in the United States alone. It is on the World Health Organisation's List of Essential Medicines.

With acknowledgements to the Methuen edition, edited by Katherine Egerton



## John Fenner

*Character: John Frick*

John was last seen on the Criterion stage playing Jack Gale in the thought-provoking "The Thrill of Love", and expects that audiences will find this late piece by Arthur Miller equally thought-provoking. Other Criterion roles include Nicely-Nicely Johnson in "Guys and Dolls", Mr Mushnik in "Little Shop of Horrors", Andrew Crocker-Harris in "The Browning Version", Roberto Miranda in "Death and the Maiden", and Magwitch in "Great Expectations". John also appears at the Talisman Theatre, where he was last seen as the PM in "Pardon Me, Prime Minister", and at the Loft Theatre where he recently played the Ghost of Christmas Present in "Scrooge - The Musical". Despite sharing the same Christian name with his character here, he hopes that this is where the similarity ends!



## Anne Houston

*Character: Karen Frick*

Anne has been a member of the Criterion company since about 2000 as far as she can remember, appearing in several very enjoyable productions along the way, whose titles she cannot at the moment call to mind. She does know, however, that this play is a good one, has an excellent cast and crew, and has been a pleasure and a privilege to be part of. As far as she's aware, anyway...



## Jane Flavelle

*Character: Patient*

After an absence of 26 years, Jane is delighted to be back on (or at least near) the stage. She has always had a very good time here (if mainly in the bar) and, after many years of working with people who are struggling with mental illness, she hopes she has been able to help her cast-mates to understand some of the difficulties their characters face. Having conquered her fear of learning lines again, Jane hopes that the part she is playing will lead to greater things for her at the Criterion in the future.