

# Jonathan Miller

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Theater & Opera Director  
Physician  
Author



Speaker Press Kit

# Jonathan Miller

## Theater and opera director

Jonathan Miller is a “physician and neuropsychologist, a prolific author and lecturer,” wrote *The New York Times*. “[He] knows more than a little about everything. He combines qualities that shouldn’t be combined in one person: he is both a performer and a thinker.”

Miller first gained international prominence with *Beyond the Fringe*, the 1960 play that redefined the boundaries of comedy, launching a lunatic legacy that has stretched from *Monty Python* to *Saturday Night Live*. He has enjoyed one of the most stellar careers in modern theater, directing countless plays (including 11 for the BBC’s Shakespeare series) and over 50 operas at some of the world’s most distinguished venues from La Scala to The Metropolitan Opera.

He has written and presented several major series for the BBC and PBS including *The Body in Question*, a landmark series on the history of medicine and, most recently, *A Brief History of Disbelief*. His books include *The Human Body*, *The Facts of Life*, *Subsequent Performances*, *Nowhere in Particular* and *On Reflection*, based on his lectures.

For colleges and universities interested in an extended visit, Dr. Miller accepts occasional one or two-week residencies. His multidisciplinary expertise has made these very popular.❖



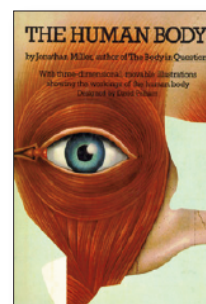
## SUGGESTED TOPICS

*The After-Life of Plays*

*A Brief History of Disbelief*

*Laughing Matters:  
Humor and Comedy*

*Special Projects:  
Available for Residencies,  
Master Classes and Seminars*



**“... The students were so awestruck by Dr. Miller’s incredible depth of knowledge, they were rendered speechless.”**

*Fairfield University*

# Jonathan Miller

## BIOGRAPHY

THEATER & OPERA DIRECTOR  
PHYSICIAN

**J**onathan Miller's career has covered many different fields: author, lecturer, television producer and presenter, theatre, opera and film director.

Born in London, the son of a distinguished child psychiatrist, he was educated at St. Paul's School, read natural sciences at St. John's College, Cambridge and qualified as a doctor of medicine in 1959.

Whilst at university, Jonathan Miller appeared as a member of the Cambridge Footlights and subsequently accepted an invitation to co-author and appear in "Beyond the Fringe" with Alan Bennett, Peter Cook and Dudley Moore. This now legendary satirical review opened at the Edinburgh Festival in 1960 and later transferred to London and New York.

Thereafter, Jonathan Miller's career has been inextricably linked with the stage and he has directed many memorable productions - *The Merchant of Venice* with Sir Laurence Olivier and Joan Plowright, *The Taming of the Shrew* (RSC), *The Seagull* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *A Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Haymarket Theatre) and *The Emperor* (Royal Court). Between January 1988 and October 1990, as Artistic Director of the Old Vic, Dr. Miller directed a number of highly acclaimed productions including *Andromache* with Janet Suzman, *The Tempest* with Max von Sydow, *King Lear* and Corneille's comedy *The Liar*. More recent productions in London include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Almeida Theatre), *The Beggar's Opera* for Broomhill Opera, and *Camera Obscura*, again for the Almeida Theatre, and also *King Lear* at the Lincoln Center, New York. He has most recently had a huge success with Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard* at The Crucible, Sheffield.

Jonathan Miller's involvement in the world of opera began when he was invited to direct the British premiere in 1974 of *Arden Must Die* by Alexander Goehr. He spent several seasons working closely with Kent Opera, and subsequently with English National Opera for which he directed some of his most enduring successes - *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Rosenkavalier*, *Carmen*, and *The Mikado* and *Rigoletto*, both of which have been revived in 2006.

He has also worked at many of the world's leading opera houses - the Maggio Musicale, Florence; La Scala, Milan; Metropolitan Opera, New York; Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin; Bayerische Staatsopera; Vienna Staatsoper; Salzburg Festival and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He has directed productions in Florence, Stockholm, London, Tokyo and at the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York. Productions in 2006 included *Così fan tutti* in Seattle, *Jenufa* at Glimmerglass, *La Traviata* in Vilnius and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in New York. Then in 2007 he directed *L'Elisir d'Amore* at New York City Opera, *Don Giovanni* at the Palau in Valencia, *Rosenkavalier* at the New National Theatre, Tokyo, *Fidelio* at Den Jyske Opera, Aarhus and he revived his hugely successful *Così fan Tutti* at the Royal Opera House, London. In addition, his semi-staging of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* is enjoyed a successful world tour in 2007 with the New London Consort.

For over 30 years Jonathan Miller has contributed prolifically to the BBC and independent television. His 1966 film of *Alice in Wonderland* is regarded as being one of his greatest achievements. Between 1980-1982 he pro-



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## BIOGRAPHY (continued)

duced and directed 11 plays for the BBC's prestigious Shakespeare series, in 1984, *The Beggar's Opera* and in 1985, *Così fan tutte*. His semi-staged performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, which was given in London in 1993, and then in Spain and New York, was also filmed for BBC2.

Television has allowed Dr. Miller to explore aspects of his first career as doctor and neurologist. He has written and presented several major series such as *The Body in Question*, *States of Mind*, *Who Cares*, *Born Talking*, *Museums of Madness*, *Anthropology* and more recently, *Opera Works*. His latest series for the BBC, *A Brief History of Disbelief* was broadcast in the autumn of 2004 and was repeated on BBC2 soon after. The highly acclaimed series was aired in the U.S. on public television in 2007. In 2005 he made a 5-part series for BBC Radio 4 entitled *Self-made Things*.

Jonathan Miller is a frequent lecturer on a wide variety of subjects. He gave a series of lectures at the National Gallery entitled "From the Look of Things" which he subsequently delivered at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and at the Arts Institute of Chicago. He returns to the USA each year as a guest lecturer.

In September 1998, Jonathan Miller was curator of a major exhibition at the National Gallery, London entitled *Mirror Image*, which explored the pictorial representation of reflection. The following autumn, a book of his photographs and extracts from his notebooks, *Nowhere in Particular*, was published by Mitchell Beazley.

Jonathan Miller was awarded the honorary title Doctor of Letters by Cambridge University and in 1997, was elected as a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in London. In 1998 he was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh. He is also a Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In June 2002, he was knighted in The Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours List. ❖

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## SUGGESTED TOPIC TITLES

### AREAS OF INTEREST & EXPERTISE

The After-Life of Plays

A Brief History of Disbelief

Bedside Manners:  
Medicine & the Public

An Evening with Jonathan Miller

Films & the Imagination

Glimmers and Glances

Special Projects:  
Available for Residencies, Master Classes and Seminars

Art  
Brain Research  
Comedy  
The Creative Mind  
Drama  
Health  
Humor  
Imagination  
Language  
Medicine  
Movies  
Neurology  
Residencies  
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## AUDIENCE COMMENTS

“Jonathan Miller’s residency at Vanderbilt University captured the imagination of hundreds of people in the community, and he transformed the lives of the students and faculty members he worked with in the theater, concert hall, and medical center. It was a defining moment in the life of the University.”

*Vanderbilt University*

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“...Miller was absolutely magnificent.”

*Portland Arts & Lecture Series*

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“Dr. Miller threw himself into all of the events, which went well literally from morning to night. It was truly extraordinary, and I will always be immensely grateful for the opportunity that I had, for one magical week, to spend time with him.”

*The University of Texas at Austin*

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“...From our own Provost down to first term freshman who heard the man, there is only the very highest of praise. In my thirty years of university teaching, I do not know of any famous visitor who impressed more people more favorably!”

*Ball State University*

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“...everyone was so completely enriched and enthralled by his intelligence, wit, knowledge, and openness to sharing himself with us that day. Jonathan's morning lecture was filled to capacity (over 600 people attended, including a local high school drama and English entourage of about 80 students who walked over a mile to hear him!) The evening lecture was also very well attended, and many of our faculty was ecstatic at having the opportunity for their students to interact with him. In his brief stay with us, Jonathan's connections to people and willingness to impart his knowledge to all made him a friend that we will not forget. Many of us will enjoy watching for news of his upcoming projects and programs in the months and years ahead. Jonathan was a highlight in the Harold Stoner Clark Lectures, and a bright star in the University's programs this year.”

*California Lutheran University*

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“We loved Jonathan Miller. The event was a big success.”

*FoolProof*

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## AUDIENCE COMMENTS<sub>(continued)</sub>

“...Our board members and donors were very pleased to meet you after such a lively and charming lecture.. Your support means a great deal to the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library and the programs we fund such as the Children's Summer Reading Program.”

*San Francisco Public Library*  
.....

“...Johnathan Miller's presentation at Denison University last evening was most enjoyable. Denison is very pleased that he was able to be a part of our convocation series.”

*Denison University*  
.....

“...The students were so awestruck by Dr. Miller's incredible depth of knowledge they were rendered speechless.”

*Fairfield University*  
.....

“...a terrific success...drew a house of about 1,000...his audience was captivated.”

*Tulane University*  
.....

“...By all reports he was a very charming man and an interesting speaker. All who met and heard him were impressed.”

*Hamilton College*  
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