

Arthur Miller – A Life by Martin Gottfried. Faber and Faber 2003.

Arthur Miller's autobiography *Time Bends* concealed more than it revealed according to his biographer Martin Gottfried, hardly surprising given the author's reluctance to delve publicly into his private life, preferring to concentrate on the theatre and his prodigious and ground-breaking creativity.

Gottfried, an eminent New York theatre critic, sets out to bring the two sides of Miller's remarkable life into a more appropriate balance in this highly readable biography. From Miller's childhood and youth into adulthood, Gottfried pulls together the threads that underpin so many of Miller's plays, the burden of poverty and changed circumstances, tension between family members, and the effect of different perceptions of the truth.

There is also more than enough personal detail to assuage the most eager voyeur; about Miller's childhood and family relationships, his political views, his involvement with actors, his marriages – most notably to Marilyn Monroe – and the strange love-hate relationship between him and America, juxtaposed with his iconic status elsewhere, most particularly in Europe.

Whether you are an inveterate reader of biographies, a theatre buff, or an admirer of Arthur Miller, this is a book that will inform and delight.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh