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Nicholas Delbanco
Alan Cheuse

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Higher Education

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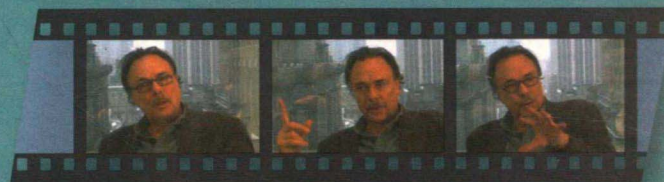
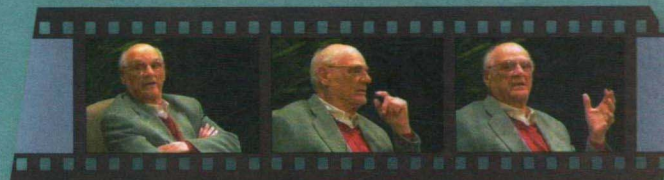
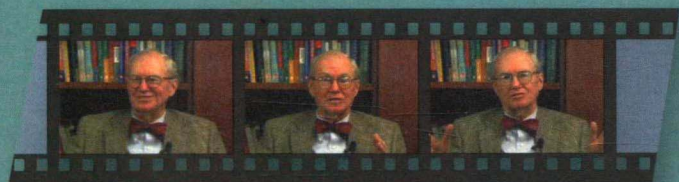
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How are their stories and poems BORN?
Do THEY ever STRUGGLE to WRITE?
What inspires them?

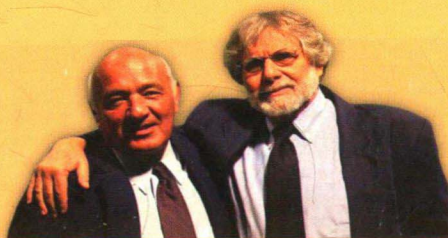
More than 30 celebrated authors agreed to be interviewed for you. And what they had to say will intrigue, delight, encourage and maybe even shock you. Watch. Listen. Learn from today's most renowned writers. They have plenty to share with you.

Check out all of the
conversations on the web at
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Bringing Writers to Students, Bringing Students to Writing

About the Authors



NICHOLAS DELBANCO

is the Robert Frost Distinguished University Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan, where he directs the prestigious Hopwood Awards Program. He is also a co-founder (together with the late John Gardner) of the Bennington Writing Workshops. As a teacher, he has been praised by his students for his enormous frame of literary reference, his eagerness to devour a new work, his sociability (he loves a good story, to tell it and to hear it), his honesty, and his devotion to his craft. One student said, "He gave me confidence when I had no confidence." He has written over twenty-four books of fiction and non-fiction, including *The Sherbrookes Trilogy* and *What Remains*. Among the volumes he has edited is *The Sincerest Form: Writing Fiction by Imitation*. Of his most recent novel—a work of historical fiction that tells the tale of Count Rumford, inventor, philosopher, and spy—the *Chicago Tribune* writes, "In *The Count of Concord*, we see a veteran novelist working at the height of his powers." Among his many awards, Nicholas Delbanco has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship and two Writer's Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts.

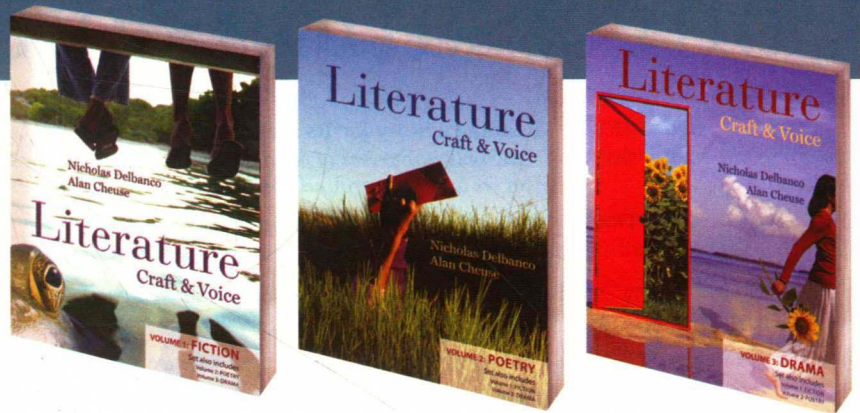
Nicholas Delbanco

ALAN CHEUSE—novelist, essayist, story writer, and teacher—has been described as "The Voice of Books on National Public Radio." For over twenty-five years, Cheuse has been "reading for America" every week on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, writing a number of books of his own, and teaching literature and writing at George Mason University. He earned his Ph.D. from Rutgers University and has also taught at the University of the South, the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, and Bennington College. He splits his time between the two coasts, spending nine months of the year in Washington, D.C., and his summers in California, where he teaches writing at the Squaw Valley Community of Writers. His latest novel, *To Catch the Lightning*, follows the career of turn-of-the-century photographer Edward S. Curtis and his quest to photograph the western tribes of North America. He is the co-editor with Nicholas Delbanco of *Talking Horse: Bernard Malamud on Life and Art*. His essay collection, *Listening to the Page*, appeared in 2001. His travel essays were published in the summer of 2009 as *A Trance After Breakfast*.

Alan Cheuse

A SPECIAL THANK YOU
FROM THE AUTHORS ...

Nicholas
DELBANCO
Nicholas Delbanco
Alan
CHEUSE
Alan Cheuse



“We wish to express
our gratitude to all
the professors who
shared our texts with
their students and
provided us
with invaluable
feedback.”

PAUL ANDREWS, Saint Johns River Community College • CHRISTIAN CLARK, College of Southern Nevada • CHAD HAMMETT, Texas State University • MELODY HARGRAVES, Saint Johns River Community College • REBECCA HEINTZ, Polk Community College • HEIDI JOHNSON, LaGuardia Community College • RUTH McADAMS, Tarrant County College • LOUISE MCKINNEY, Georgia Perimeter College • DOROTHY MINOR, Tulsa Community College • DEBORAH PRICKETT, Jacksonville State University • KATHY SANCHEZ, Lone Star College—Tomball • LINDA SMITH, Midlands Technical College • JIM RAWLINS, Sussex County Community College • BILL STEPHENSON, Santa Fe College • JANE WILLIAMS, Arizona Western College • ROD WOehler, Santa Fe College • SANDER ZURBUE, County College of Morris

STUDENT PRAISE FOR CONVERSATIONS ON WRITING

“It was very helpful and
interesting to hear the story
being told by the author.
Hearing the author makes
[the story] easier to
understand.”

—MAYGEN EUBANKS,
Tarrant County College

“We watched the author
video before we had to
write our first paper and
how much I could relate to
him just amazed me.”

—JOSH POWELL,
Saint Johns River
Community College

“Hearing the story being
read by the author gave me
a different perspective and
allowed me to understand
the text in a different way.”

—TOMMY MODERIE,
Santa Fe College

“I was drawn to the
author’s speech and the
way that she read her
story. It makes me under-
stand the author better be-
cause now I get to see the
author explain her own
story and her reasons for
writing it. She describes
and goes into detail about
herself personally, and her
background, which opens
me up to the author.”

—LARRY ODELUSI,
Tarrant County College

Conversations on Writing

- CHAPTER 1**
John Updike **Reading a Story for Its Elements**
"Your job as a writer of fiction is not to present an ideal world but to try to present the world that you see and hear around you."
- CHAPTER 2**
Richard Ford **Going Further with Reading**
"Writing stories is much more mosaical than it is linear."
Amy Tan *"I think of fiction as being subversive in a good way. It seduces you."*
- CHAPTER 3**
Jamaica Kincaid **Writing about Fiction**
"The advice I would give anyone who wants to write is: Read a lot."
- CHAPTER 4**
T. Coraghessan Boyle **Plot**
"You don't really know what the story means until you have written it, and until you find out what the ending is."
- CHAPTER 5**
Gish Jen **Character**
"I think [character's] where the conflict comes from and I think it's where the plot comes from: that's where the story comes from."
- CHAPTER 6**
Barry Lopez **Setting**
"I think setting is often part of what determines the nature of the story, and the nature of the characters."
- CHAPTER 7**
ZZ Packer **Point of View**
"I think that in the end voice and craft together can make for an incredibly powerful story, because you end up using all your tools of craft to render a voice believable."
- CHAPTER 8**
Aimee Bender **Language, Tone, and Style**
"There isn't a story that doesn't have tone or theme. Those are just things that come from the language itself."
- CHAPTER 9**
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie **Theme**
"If I must think in terms of theme, I would think about multiple themes, that a story can do so many things at the same time."
- CHAPTER 10**
Tim O'Brien **Symbol**
"Symbolism has to do with what objects of the world end up meaning to us. The object has meaning, has resonance and has echoes, and that's what symbolism for me really is."
- CHAPTER 11**
Joyce Carol Oates **Fiction As Social Commentary**
"I've always been very interested in holding a kind of mirror, sometimes a slightly distorting mirror, up to contemporary American society."
- CHAPTER 12**
William Kittredge **American Regionalism and Sense of Place**
"I think one of the ways to not somehow lose track of your dreams is to keep expanding what you see and find in the world."
Dagoberto Gilb *"I absolutely think place is everything. I think place is a character."*
- CHAPTER 14**
Amy Hempel **An Anthology of Stories for Further Reading**
"One of the things that interests me most in story writing is that . . . there's a point where it stops being your story and becomes the story's story."
- CHAPTER 15**
Carolyn Forché **Reading a Poem in Its Elements**
"I think the more we know about how a poem makes its rhythms and musics and patternings, the more deeply we can enter into the poem."
- CHAPTER 16**
Stephen Mitchell **Going Further: An Interactive Reading**
"There's a whole world of beauty and profundity out there for people who don't know poetry—that's just waiting for you."

Videos available online at <http://www.mhhe.com/delbanco1e>

CHAPTER 17 Writing about Poetry

Li-Young Lee *"The minute I wake up I feel as if I'm in the presence of a poem: the whole cosmos, the whole world, seems to exist to me like a giant poem."*

CHAPTER 18 Words

Marie Howe *"It's the greatest feeling in the whole world, to be in the hands of something bigger than oneself."*

CHAPTER 19 Voice

Stephen Dunn *"So that good literature has a way of bringing us into the common fold, of making us part of the world."*

CHAPTER 20 Imagery and Symbol

Jane Hirshfield *"Image is one of the most powerful ways a poem both carries meaning and changes and enlarges it, which is the work that every good poem is trying to do."*

CHAPTER 21 Figures of Speech

Robert Pinsky *"I think one of the thrills of art is the sense that something may be going too far, or is about to go too far."*

CHAPTER 22 Sound

Thomas Lynch *"It does embolden you once you get a poem right. And there is a pleasure to it, I must say. And the pleasure is acoustic."*

CHAPTER 23 Fixed Forms

Edward Hirsch *"The only way you can write a good formal poem is if you can control the form, so that the form becomes the way in which you can express what you need to say."*

CHAPTER 24 Open Forms

Robert Hass *"Poetry is about catching the way we speak and the way things are said, and the rhythms of it, and making a shape from it."*

CHAPTER 25 Spoken Word and Song

Al Young *"Poetry is a wonderful opportunity to do two things at once. You can say something or not say something and you can sing through language."*

CHAPTER 30 Reading and Viewing a Play in Its Elements

Marian Seldes *"One of the wonderful things about reading a play is that you can go back and read the page again. You can take your time with it. Lovingly."*

CHAPTER 31 Going Further: An Interactive Reading

Edward Albee *"If art isn't engaging or troubling in some sense, it is a total waste of time."*

CHAPTER 32 Writing about Drama

Edwin Wilson *"In writing, whatever it is, you reread it and you'll be amazed at some of the changes you want to make to your own work."*

CHAPTER 33 Ancient Greek Drama: Sophocles

Gregory Nagy *"Imagine looking down at a sea of faces, twenty thousand pairs of eyes are weeping simultaneously, twenty thousand people have their hair stand on end in terror."*

CHAPTER 34 A Case Study on William Shakespeare

Ralph Williams *"One of the frightening and thrilling aspects of Shakespeare's plays is the constant reminder of how tentative it is that life turns out to be tragedy or comedy."*

CHAPTER 35 Modern Drama

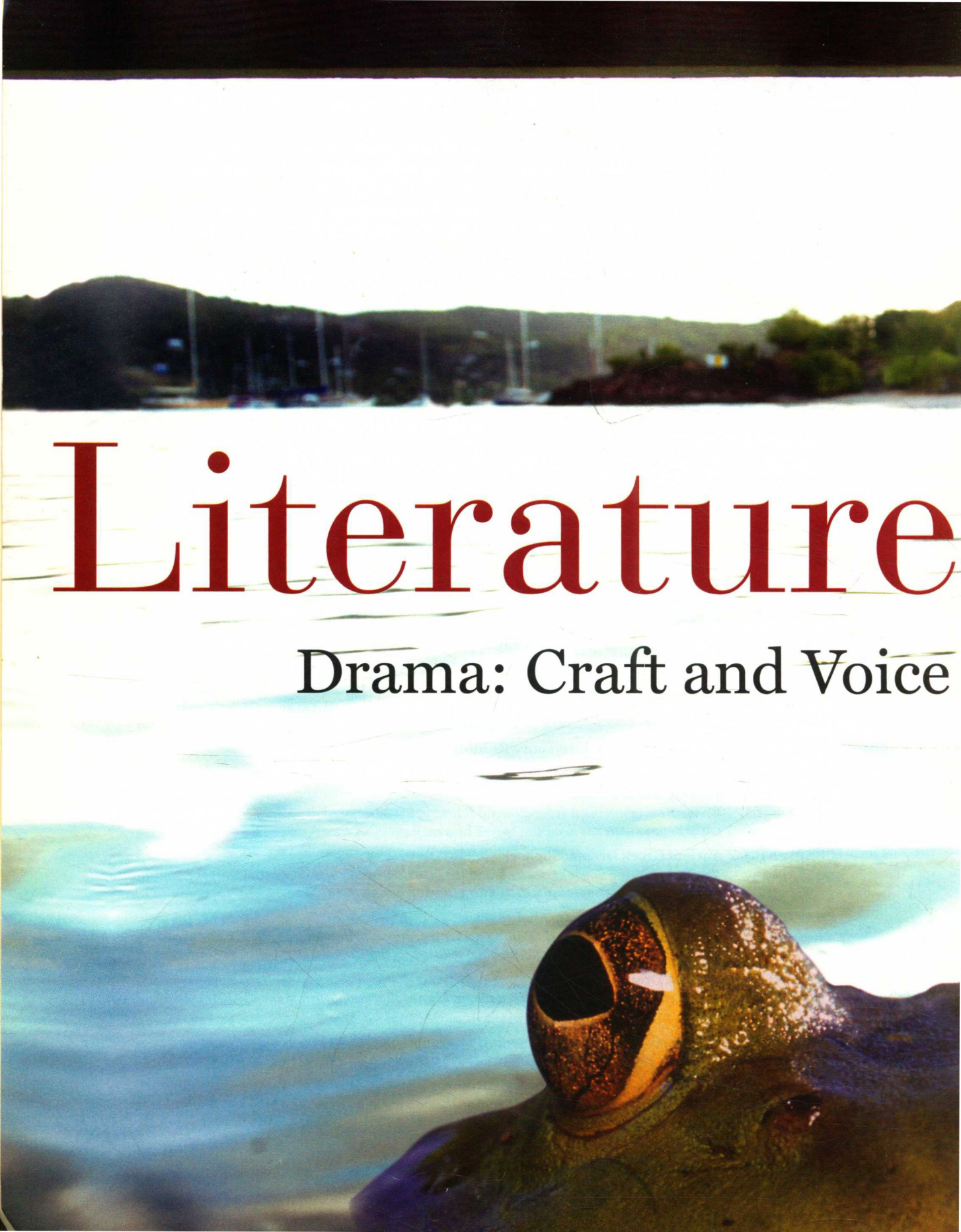
Arthur Miller *"All we can hope for is to illuminate something so that people can make up their own minds based upon the reality of the situation."*

Ruben Santiago-Hudson

"When you can sit down and open up a book and spend time in a whole different world—no matter whether it's five minutes or an hour—that's a privilege."

CHAPTER 36 A Case Study on Contemporary Theater

Arthur Kopit *"To fully get a play, you need to imagine the impact on a crowd. The play is not complete until the audience completes it."*



Literature

Drama: Craft and Voice



Nicholas Delbanco
University of Michigan

Alan Cheuse
George Mason University

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Video interview with the authors available online at www.mhhe.com/delbancopreview

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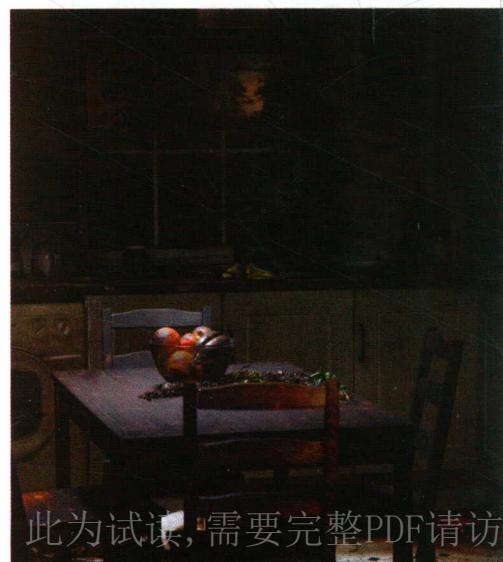
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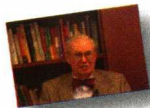
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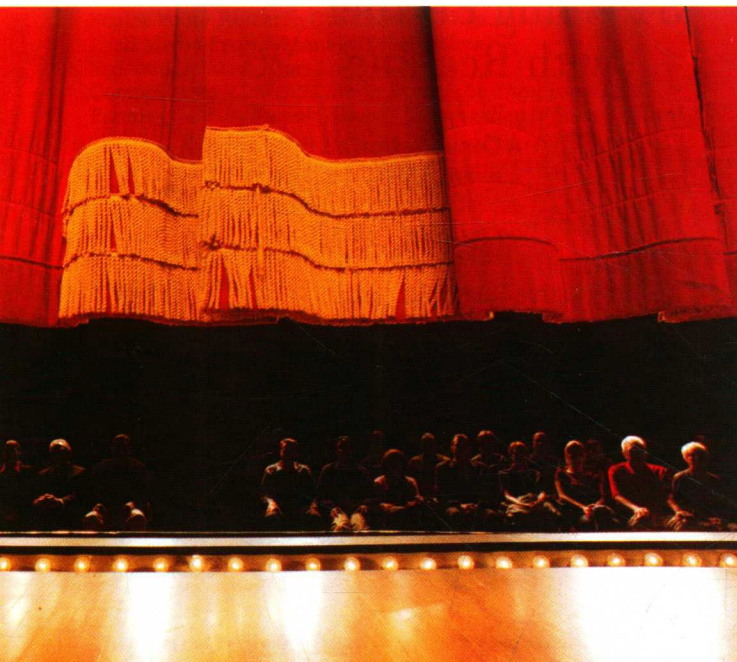
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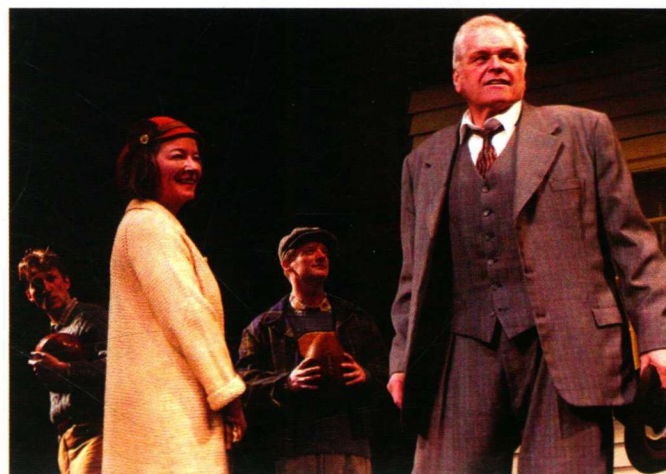
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