



In Two Minds: a Biography of Jonathan Miller

Kate Bassett

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In Two Minds... is the story of Jonathan Miller, one of post war Britain's most intriguing polymaths. Descended from immigrants who fled Tsarist anti-Semitism to become shopkeepers in Ireland and London's East End, Miller was born into an intellectual milieu, between Bloomsbury and Harley Street - the son of a novelist and a leading child psychiatrist. Miller trained as a doctor but then forged a career as a stellar comedian and as a world renowned theatre and opera director. He is a controversial humorist, public intellectual and TV personality. As a star in the ground breaking satirical revue *Beyond the Fringe*, he shot to fame alongside Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Alan Bennett. His expertise and interests encompass many areas, from medicine (he wrote and presented the hugely acclaimed BBC documentary series *The Body in Question*) to the history of art, Mozart, atheism and the nature of laughter. Jonathan Miller is one of the most multi-talented Britons of his generation, celebrated for his dazzling intelligence and anti-establishmentarian wit. This is the first comprehensive biography of him, written by leading arts journalist Kate Bassett (the *Independent on Sunday*). Drawing on in-depth interviews, it is an entertaining and illuminating portrait of a fascinatingly complex man.

‘I suppose it is true, my life does resemble a butterfly’s existence, moving around from one flower to the next. But, of course, butterflies do pollinate. There is a point to their activity. I hope there is to mine.’
Jonathan Miller

‘He was always my idea of an impossible Renaissance man ... he has been a benign and hopeful presence in my life, and the life of my mind, from Cambridge until now.’
A.S. Byatt

‘He was groundbreaking, willing to take risks. His impact upon the opera world has been, without question, one of the most significant of any director in modern times...part of all the schools of thought whose developments we are now experiencing.’
Thomas Hampson

‘If he’d been born French, there would be streets named after him.’
John Fortune



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