
Costume Design Project Research for Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman

— By Rachel Ropella —

Ben Loman

Ben as a symbol of wealth/the American dream

- Cream colored linen suit would be practical for the heat of Africa that Ben has come from, while also making him look wealthy and ghostly since he is Willy's imaginings of his dead brother
- High quality traveling accessories such as valise, a panama hat, and pocket watch since he believes himself to be an important businessman and is about to leave Willy
- Peacock blue tie matches with the accent color of the set that represents the luxury and accomplishment achieved through the American dream



Ben Loman- Continued

Ben as an explorer:

- Wearing arctic gear (thick coat, leather gloves, and goggles) during the dream scenes when he is encouraging Willy to join him in Alaska
- Fur trim used on arctic gear as both a protection from the cold and as a symbol of luxury/the jungle beasts of Africa that Ben referenced multiple times
- Carries a tall wooden walking pole with him as if he is ready to scale the mountains in Alaska Willy dreams of doing with him but never does



Biff Loman

Biff in the present:

- During night scenes wears tradition pajama pants and undershirt since it is early summer and puts on a robe when he and Happy leave their bedroom
- During day scenes first Biff wears high waisted pants and white button down shirt with sleeves rolled up, showing his reluctance to partake in the corporate world (and the American dream) like his father
- Wears a business suit jacket and a peacock blue tie (color symbolizes the American dream throughout the play) when he deludes himself into thinking he has a business meeting with Oliver



Biff Loman- Continued

Younger Biff in flashbacks:

- Wearing a letterman sweater with a block 'S' that represents his high school with a white button down layers underneath
- Traditional football gear, including pants where the thighs and the knees have padding quilted in them and football shoes that have stacked leather football cleats look rugged



Biff at the funeral:

- Black suit jacket over Biff's business outfit from previous scene with blue tie that represented his last hope in the American Dream replaced with a grey one that represents reality

Linda Loman

Linda in the present:

- Floral motif throughout Linda's clothing, representing maternalism and femininity.
- All clothing is well worn due to the family's financial troubles, also shows how she is more practical and realistic
- During night scenes wears a nightgown and robe set which is more conservative in comparison to what the Woman wears during Willy's affair
- During day scenes wears a floral summer dress with an apron over it showing her as the homemaker and matriarch



Linda Loman- Continued

Younger Linda in flashbacks:

- Stockings are an essential part of the costume to help establish that she wears them before Willy has given the Woman a pair of Linda's.
- Wears a more youthful, fashionable dress that still has the floral motif. Higher quality dress since Willy is still making money and they are able to afford some finer things.



Linda at the funeral:

- Simple, understated black dress for the funeral, wearing a black hat that has small flowers on it.
- Dress must must allow Linda to be able to move and sit at Willy's grave during the Requiem



'Ben Loman'
- from -
Death of a Salesman
by Arthur Miller
By: Rachel Popella