



African American Theater: A Cultural Companion

Glenda Dickerson

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Written in a clear, accessible, storytelling style, African American Theater will shine a bright new light on the culture which has historically nurtured and inspired Black Theater. Functioning as an interactive guide for students and teachers, African American Theater takes the reader on a journey to discover how social realities impacted the plays dramatists wrote and produced.

The journey begins in 1850 when most African people were enslaved in America. Along the way, cultural milestones such as Reconstruction, the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Freedom Movement are explored. The journey concludes with a discussion of how the past still plays out in the works of contemporary playwrights like August Wilson and Suzan-Lori Parks.

African American Theater moves unsung heroes like Robert Abbott and Jo Ann Gibson Robinson to the foreground, but does not neglect the race giants. For actors looking for material to perform, the book offers exercises to create new monologues and scenes. Rich with myths, history and first person accounts by ordinary people telling their extraordinary stories, African American Theater will entertain while it educates.

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