



African American Dramatists: An A-to-Z Guide

Emmanuel S. Nelson

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Despite their significant contributions to the American theater, African American dramatists have received less critical attention than novelists and poets. This reference offers thorough critical assessments of the lives and works of African American playwrights from the 19th century to the present. The book alphabetically arranges entries on more than 60 dramatists, including James Baldwin, Arna Bontemps, Ossie Davis, Zora Neale Hurston, and Richard Wright. Each entry is written by an expert contributor and includes a biography, a discussion of major works and themes, a summary of the playwright's critical reception, and primary and secondary bibliographies. The volume closes with a selected, general bibliography.

African American dramatists have made enormous contributions to the theater and their works are included in numerous editions and anthologies. Some of the most popular plays of the 20th century have been written by African Americans, and high school students and undergraduates study their works. But for all their popularity and influence, African American playwrights have received less critical attention than poets and novelists. This reference offers thorough critical assessments of more than 60 African American dramatists from the 19th century to the present.

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