

THE COMPACT BEDFORD INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA 7TH EDITION Free



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Humanist to the core, Nottage does not demonize all African men in the play. Nottage seeks to demonstrate that the obdurate is, in fact, assailable—that although the consequences of gender inequality in Africa are so vast and although the statistics those consequences generate are so huge, theatre is still a place that can enlarge our collective feelings of connection and urgency. Collectively spectators can connect with three-dimensional characters, not with numbers, and so Nottage aspires to do more than document in a play what might seem unbearable, outrageous hardships. For the real-life Congolese women and girls, whom Nottage portrays in *Ruined*, gender inequality is far more elemental. It takes the form of sexual

slavery and other forms of bondage; rape and other kinds of physical and mental assaults. It issues from a belief so fixed as to be unimpeachable: that women are less human than men.

Let us hope not. Attitudes change slowly, but they do change. Good intentions are not enough. Sometimes good intentions go wrong. Even so, small steps taken against tragic intractable problems—actions such as writing a play, especially when it is made possible by women themselves—such affirmative steps can be effective.

Such small steps are the opposite of a vicious circle, and they can be resounding. He is the winner of the George Jean Nathan Award, the highest accolade for dramatic criticism in the United States for his essays in *American Theatre* magazine, published by Theatre Communications Group, where he is the senior editor.

Salima Rainforest area and Congolese refugees kept flowing over Seated in the living room of the brownstone in Brooklyn the border into Uganda. Having worked as a press officer for where she grew up and still lives, surrounded by the African Amnesty International, Nottage was aware that virtually none and African-American art her parents collected, Lynn Nottage of the media narratives provided by Western reporters had is talking about Ruined. In of sexual violation of some men and boys. They would have An air of ease and ebullience naturally surrounds Nottage, censored themselves more, become much more self-conscious. She recalls the very first embark on a second journey to East Africa in order to collect Congolese woman who spoke with her, through tears and in a more narratives of these refugee women, all survivors of war, voice barely above a whisper.

Her name was Salima. In prison she was help shape and direct the play, but this time around Nottage beaten and raped by five soldiers. Eventually she found a way wants to stay longer. The maternity is merely figurative. She advantage. I also spent nearly five months in the bush as the of business, her affection for her girls grows found my play in the way they occasionally sex slave of rebel soldiers. Ironically, Nottage has yet to set foot in the Congo. But Ruined is a huge departure. I felt that was totally the antithesis of what I wanted to do with the play. War is, however, a persistent disease whose symptoms recur and break out, like an opportunistic virus. To expose this brutalization, Nottage strives not to distance us from its subject.

A seamless synthesis of social-justice politics, edge-of-your-seat sus- pense and uncommon love story, Ruined brings audiences emotionally close to the realities of a region where women have been violated and mutilated with sticks and bayonets by soldiers, where families have driven rape victims from their communities, where sexual torture has resulted in sterility or infection or death. Soldiers must unload their civil war, which encroaches closer and closer normally reserved for plays by an American weapons before being serviced.

Politics months that Barack Obama, whose immigrant life goes on no matter what. A lot of them divorced themselves of might combat U. When Nottage lends the the responsibility. We were given these orders, but we anti-war dramas both fictional and docu- line that crosses the border from the sugges- had to comply. I was shocked, because they could upset and political helplessness. Recent U. In black aesthetics, political struggle we cut off their lips, and we... Anything less than a cry shocked that people would be around them conflict; J. We interviewed refugee actors as narrators and protagonists often camp members who had been victims of these they are journalists as a means of audience 4.

Hearts of Coltan LRA soldiers and were coexisting with them. Ruined commands our respect, because Several days before the opening of That coexistence really confused me. What sanctuary for women escaping violence, into vibrant life. We might shake our heads in horror or numbly watch at the awful reports. Here is a play about gender inequality that transcends our more common hot-button squabbles about pay differentials and glass ceilings and old-boy networks—the stuff we Westerners get anxious or angry or organize tea-parties about. This tradition of objectifying women during conflicts, dramatized as far back as the extant Greek plays, has stepped up to new lev- els: Fighters have systematically used rape and murder in the former Yugoslavia, in Rwanda in the s, and currently in Darfur—with the intent to eliminate ethnic groups and to induce forced displacement. The prevalence of rape and other sexual violations in Eastern Congo has been described as the worst in the world.

Women, children and even some men are being attacked by multiple assailants, often in public and in front of their neighbors. As long as they can extract coltan about the ways of women in the world. The reasons. I want Americans Yes without fully giving away the plot , that is committed to sustaining and nurtur- to acknowledge that we have a stake in the Christian and Mama Nadi do reach some ing an all-female community. Rebecca is a far more altruistic it is a strange denouement, because real hap- and nurturing woman than Mama. But I 5. Possibility pininess remains the dimmest certainty, given was interested in the dynamics of that: how Trapped in the fear-ridden illogic and dense the violent outbreaks and bleak realities of this woman chief defied odds in this country moral thickets of a hellish war, Mama Nadi war-torn Congo. Will these two find ultimate defined by men. Rebecca is an extremely thrives. Hers is an act of defiance waged not peace together?

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