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We Are Proud To Present A Presentation About The Herero Of Namibia, Formerly Known As Southwest Africa, From The German Sudwestafrika, Between The Years 1884 - 1915 (Modern Plays)





Synopsis

I'm not doing a German accent
You aren't doing an African accent
We aren't doing accents
A group of actors gather to tell the little-known story of the first genocide of the twentieth century. As the full force of a horrific past crashes into the good intentions of the present, what seemed a faraway place and time is suddenly all too close to home. Just whose story are they telling?
Award-winning playwright Jackie Sibblies Drury collides the political with the personal in a play that is irreverently funny and seriously brave.
We Are Proud To Present . . . received its European premiere at the Bush Theatre, London, on 28 February 2014.

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Customer Reviews

An inventive new play . . . incendiary results . . . impressively navigates the tricky boundaries that separate art and life * *New York Times* * [a] dark, funny, and unruly play * *Washington Post* * a rising playwright * *Washington Post* * Drury's excoriating drama really is theatre in the raw, which by the end takes your breath away * *Metro (London)* * extraordinary * *Time Out New York* * ingenious * *The Guardian* * a very promising new play * *Chicago Tribune* * a smart piece of self-reflexive theatre, constantly questioning the appropriation of characters, narratives and cultures that are commonplace elements of 'storytelling' . . . a bold and distinguished work, particularly in its suggestion that theatre itself can be an act of colonialism . . . At its best Drury's confrontational play depicts theatre (imperfectly, vitally) checking its privileges. * *Time Out London* *

Jackie Sibblies Drury is a Brooklynbased playwright. Her play *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915* had its world premiere at Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago and its New York premiere at Soho Rep in Fall 2012. Her work has been featured at PRELUDE'11, The Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Victory Gardens 2010 Ignition Festival, American Theater Company's 10 x 10 Festival, and The Magic Theatre's Virgin Play Festival. She received a 2012-13 Van Lier Fellowship at New Dramatists. She was a member of the 2011-12 Soho Rep Writer/Director lab, a 2010-12 New York Theater Workshop Emerging Artist of Color Fellow, and member of The Civilians' R&D Group. She was the dramaturg and contributing writer for *Zero Cost House*, a collaboration between Pig Iron Theatre Company and Japanese playwright Toshiki Okada. Jackie Sibblies Drury is a NYTW Usual Suspect and a MacDowell Colony fellow and is on committees to organize classes for Pataphysics Playwriting Workshops and The Public School New York. She is a graduate of Brown's MFA playwriting program where she received the David Wickham Prize in Playwriting. Her play *Social Creatures* was commissioned by Trinity Repertory Theater Company in Providence RI and premiered there in March 2013. She is the inaugural recipient of the 2012-14 Jerome New York Fellow at the Lark Play Development Center.

The boneheaded negative reviews below probably function as a stronger recommendation of this play than anything I can say - but there should be a review here acknowledging just how good it is, and that four-starer isn't quite cutting it. Jackie Sibblies Drury's originality seems to me to disappear toward the end, when she switches from satirizing our affectless, self-fixated college educated class to showing us that deep down all nice liberal white people want to kill black people (not necessarily a wrong idea, but it doesn't feel like HER idea). But what comes before that makes for the best recent English language play I know by anybody who isn't Caryl Churchill.

I was hoping for more of a description of the horrible treatment of the Hereros, an earlier attempt at genocide. Instead, this kept promising more to come but it never came. It may have been good theater, but it is not sufficiently informative for me.

We produced the play in Seattle, so I lived with this script quite intimately. The more you look into it the more you realize exactly how brilliant it is -- it uses an improv company's attempt to tell the story

of a tragic genocide from 100 years ago to illustrate exactly how many of us today, of all racial backgrounds, are stuck looking at racial issues, both past and present, through the lens of our own racial perspective, and just how difficult it is for us to step outside of those views, no matter how well intentioned. As well, it draws strong parallels between the racial history of Sudvestafrika and that of the US with which we are more familiar and which permeates our individual viewpoints. Finally, it illustrates how easily we as human beings can fall into behaviors that we so easily condemn in others. Parts of the play that might on first reading seem disconnected from the main narrative are in fact, not. They are all used to emphasize important themes that recur throughout the play. So many layers to uncover in this work. It is brilliant. And it started numerous conversations here. I only wish we could have produced this in a larger space so that more people could have seen it.

Saw a production of this play in Seattle at Theater 21... I think the script is brilliant. Set in an educated, well-intentioned america, where the response to racial tension is so often to ignore it and hope that it will go away, this play digs unflinchingly beneath the surface. It's kind of like watching an abscessed wound be split open by a doctor- sort of frightening and disgusting, but also a relief...

I saw a production of this piece. In my opinion it does not tell much of a story. It seems more focused on promoting an activist agenda.

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