



Acting Up and Getting Down: Plays by African American Texans (Southwestern Writers Collection Series, Wittliff Collections)

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One of the few books of its kind, *Acting Up and Getting Down* brings together seven African American literary voices that all have a connection to the Lone Star state. Covering Texas themes and universal ones, this collection showcases often-overlooked literary talents to bring to life inspiring facets of black theatre history.

Capturing the intensity of racial violence in Texas, from the Battle of San Jacinto to a World War I-era riot at a Houston training ground, Celeste Bedford Walker's *Camp Logan* and Ted Shine's *Ancestors* provide fascinating narratives through the lens of history. Thomas Meloncon's *Johnny B. Goode* and George Hawkins's *Br'er Rabbit* explore the cultural legacies of blues music and folktales. Three unflinching dramas (Sterling Houston's *Driving Wheel*, Eugene Lee's *Killingsworth*, and Elizabeth Brown-Guillory's *When the Ancestors Call*) examine homosexuality, a death in the family, and child abuse, bringing to light the private tensions of intersections between the individual and the community.

Supplemented by a chronology of black literary milestones as well as a playwrights' canon, *Acting Up and Getting Down* puts the spotlight on creative achievements that have for too long been excluded from Texas letters. The resulting anthology not only provides new insight into a regional experience but also completes the American story as told onstage.

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