

Comparing biographical entries with those in *The Companion to South African English Literature* (1986), *The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature* (1985), and *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre* (1989), I find a general agreement in matters of detail, except for slight discrepancies in the dates assigned to plays, which may well be accounted for by differences between the years in which a play was written, first produced, and first published.

Readers of *ARIEL* may wish that *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre* had paid more attention to the literary aspects of the drama and that its coverage of the Commonwealth theatre were wider and deeper. Specialists whose interests are served by the Australian or Canadian Oxford Companions may not need to own *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre*, although it should prove useful to them in studying connections with Europe or the United States, while those whose countries are not yet covered by comprehensive handbooks or those whose interest is comparative — across the English-speaking world — should find it as worthwhile as *The Oxford Companion to the Theatre*.

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John Gray, comp. *Black Theatre and Performance: A Pan-African Bibliography*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990. pp. xv, 414. \$45.00.

One of Gray's stated purposes in compiling *Black Theatre and Performance* is to provide an antidote to the "Eurocentric biases [which] have defined theatre as a wholly Western tradition rooted in Greece and Rome, Europe, and finally the U.S." (xii). Gray has admirably achieved this purpose by providing scholars with a research tool which will give them easy access to information about theatre outside the Western tradition. To accomplish this, Gray has compiled "as comprehensive a record as possible" of theatre and performance in the black communities of sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, and Canada. The U.S. is omitted since it has been covered thoroughly in other publications. Gray's enumerative bibliography includes primary material in the form of all known play texts, and secondary material in the form of both biographical and critical material. It contains more than 4000 entries, including books, sections of books, dissertations, theses, unpublished papers, periodical and newspaper articles, films, videotapes, audiotapes, media materials, and reviews. The entries represent most European languages and thirteen African languages. Gray's definition of theatre is broad and

ranges from oral and literary traditions to protest theatre and literary dramas. Non-black playwrights whose plays have African subject matter (for example, Athol Fugard) are also included, again displaying a broad definition of "black" theatre. Gray has purposely omitted pre-1985 material on playwright Wole Soyinka which has been published elsewhere.

The *Bibliography* is organized into three main sections. Section I, an introductory section, discusses "Cultural History and the Arts." Section II on "African Theatre" and Section III on "Black Theatre and Performance in the Diaspora" are sub-divided into general works, regional studies, countries, and individual playwrights. The organization of the book works very well, allowing the reader to see all citations for a given country or playwright in one place. In addition to the standard citations, sections on individual playwrights include the playwrights' birth and death dates and their country of origin. Citations are grouped first by the play to which they pertain and then by format (including articles, media materials, audiotapes). Two appendices are included: one listing general references and a second listing playwrights and theatre companies by region. Finally, the *Bibliography* includes four indices: Artist, Title, Subject, and Author. The Subject Index, in particular, is a boon, leading the reader to items on topics such as the role of women in Black Theatre and the Gelede masquerades of Nigeria. Since each citation is numbered, access from index to citation is direct. The introductory matter is thorough and explains clearly the coverage of the work, citations are complete, and the book is published in clear, readable layout. Gray has also included both library locations for works not held in a U.S. library and addresses where self-published works can be obtained.

Gray is well qualified for the task at hand. As a historian of black culture, he is Director of the Black Arts Research Center and compiler of: *Blacks in Film and Television: A Pan-African Bibliography of Films, Filmmakers, and Performers*; *Blacks in Classical Music: A Bibliographical Guide to Composers, Performers, and Ensembles*; *African Music: A Bibliographical Guide to the Traditional, Popular, Art, and Liturgical Music of Sub-Saharan Africa*; and *Ashe, Traditional Religion and Healing in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Diaspora*. Gray's research has been very thorough. He utilized various collections of the New York Public Library and verified the location of copies using several U.S. bibliographical databases.

Gray's *Bibliography* provides an invaluable research tool in the areas of both black studies and theatre. While a number of *dictionaries* and *directories* cover black plays, playwrights, and theatre, *Black Theatre and Performance* is the only comprehensive *bibliography* of work in this area. Even the few similar bibliographical

publications (George H. Hill's *Black Women in Television and Blacks on Television*, Marshall Hyatt's *The Afro-American Cinematic Experience*, and Bernard L. Peterson's *Contemporary Black American Playwrights and Their Plays*) focus solely on African-American subjects, leaving Gray's work the only one covering non-U.S. areas.

The *Bibliography* is an excellent resource in the area of black theatre and will be an essential tool for both English-speaking and non-English-speaking scholars in the field.

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