

UC Merced

Bobcat Comics

Title

What We Can Learn from Black Women's Theatre

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7kd2h37p>

ISBN

NA

Authors

Shakes, Nicosia

Africa, Eli

Publication Date

2024-09-24

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM BLACK WOMEN'S THEATRE

I saw my first play when I was six years old. It was written and directed by my mother, Elaine Shakes and even starred her.



The story was about a teenage girl who was mistreated by her family and community when she got pregnant.

A seed was sown in my mind...

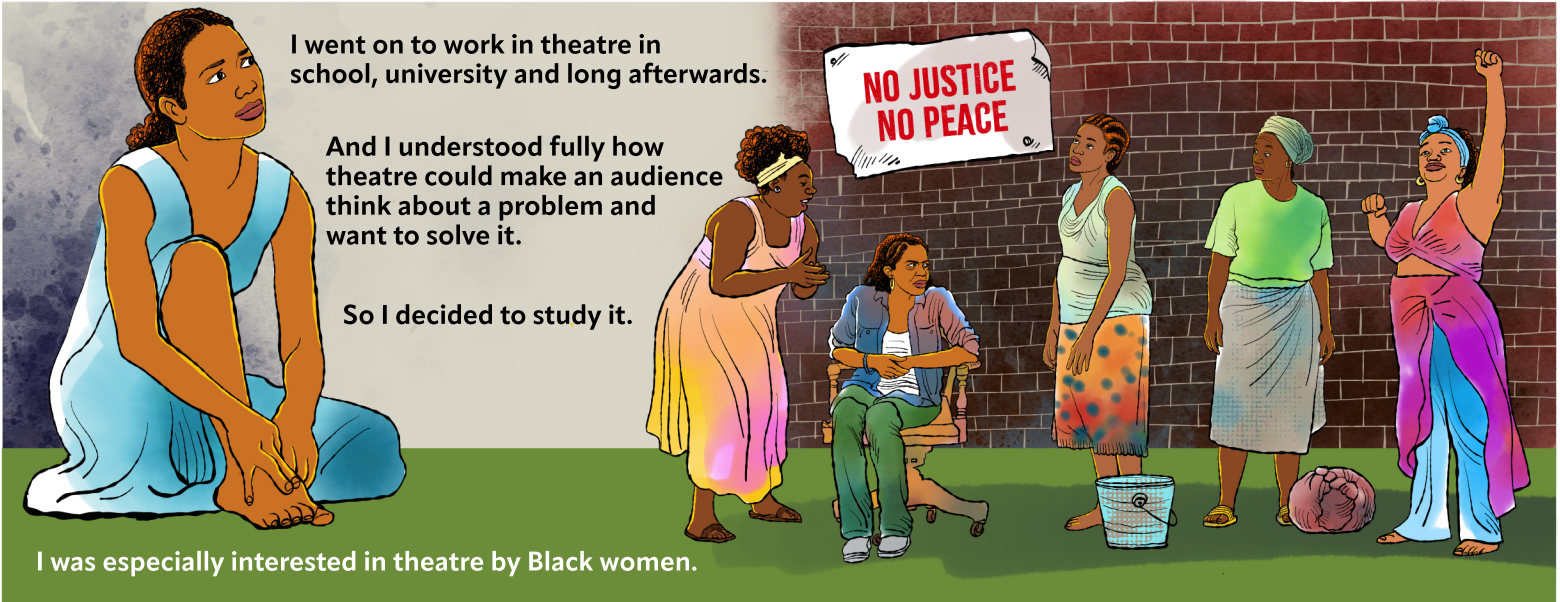


I went on to work in theatre in school, university and long afterwards.

And I understood fully how theatre could make an audience think about a problem and want to solve it.

So I decided to study it.

I was especially interested in theatre by Black women.

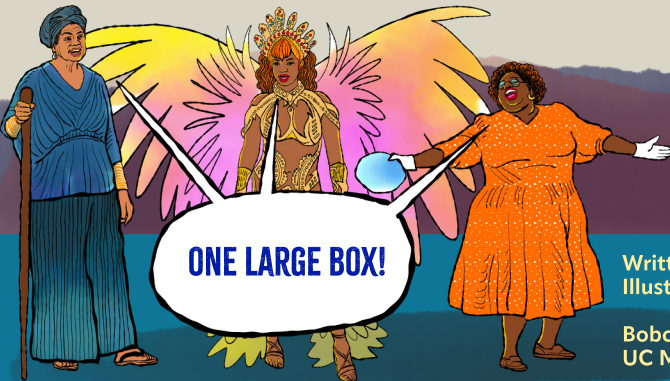


And here's what I've concluded...

Black women's theatre provides a space for stories that are under-represented in the media and academia. Black women's theatre embraces **EMOTIONS** and **FEELINGS** which we are often told to suppress. Black women's theatre is intersectional. It makes us think about the many ways people face discrimination based on **RACE**, **GENDER**, **CLASS**, **SEXUALITY**, etc.



And finally...Black women's theatre is one of the main ways we develop feminist and womanist ideas about **EQUALITY** and **FREEDOM**.



Written by Nicosia Shakes
Illustrations by Eli Africa

Bobcat Comics
UC Merced Center for the Humanities, 2024