



American Political Plays after 9/11 (Theater in the Americas)

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American Political Plays after 9/11 is a diverse collection of bold, urgent, and provocative plays that respond to the highly charged, post 9/11 political landscape. Sparked by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and subsequently fueled by a series of controversial events—the Iraq war, the passing and enforcement of the U.S.A. Patriot Act, and the revelation of torture and other scandals at the Abu Ghraib prison—American political theater is currently experiencing a surge in activity. The plays in this collection include *The Guys* by Anne Nelson, *At the Vanishing Point* by Naomi Iizuka, *The Venus de Milo Is Armed* by Kia Corthron, *Back of the Throat* by Yusseff El Guindi, *Three Nights in Prague* by Allan Havis, and *Question 27, Question 28* by Chay Yew.

The characters range from a New York City fire captain trying to respectfully memorialize eight of his lost comrades, to the citizens of a hog-killing Louisville neighborhood who poignantly exemplify the underside of the economic crisis, to an Arab American citizen being harshly (and possibly unfairly) interrogated by two officers as a “person of interest.” Though not all of the plays deal explicitly with the Al Qaeda attacks, they collectively reveal themes of sorrow and anxiety, moral indignation, alarmist self-preservation, and economic and social insecurity stemming from the United States’ fairly sudden shift from cold war superpower to vulnerable target.

The lively introduction by Allan Havis includes a brief history of political theater in the United States, an extensive discussion about how theater communities responded to 9/11, and an informative analysis of the six plays in the book. A collection of dramatic material framed by this significant historical event, *American Political Plays after 9/11* will be indispensable for theater and cultural studies scholars and students.

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