



CHARACTER IDENTITY, STRUGGLES, AND RESILIENCE: ACTING EXPLORATION OF SELECTED MONOLOGUES

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ABSTRACT: *This article examines the portrayal of identity, struggles, and resilience through theatrical monologues, focusing on *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* by Athol Fugard and *Fences* by August Wilson. Both plays present socio-political and socio-cultural challenges faced by black individuals in apartheid South Africa and segregated America, respectively. Through detailed analysis of selected monologues, the study explores how acting techniques are employed to convey these themes and resonate with contemporary audiences. The findings reveal that the systemic discrimination, hardships, and resilience depicted in the monologues remain relevant today, as issues such as racial injustice and inequality continue to affect black communities globally. The analysis also highlights how acting can powerfully communicate these experiences, shaping audience perceptions and encouraging social reflection. The paper concludes that theatrical acting is a potent tool for social change, allowing actors to embody and reflect the struggles and triumphs of their communities. The study underscores the need for actors to immerse themselves fully in character roles to effectively convey these complex narratives. The recommendations include encouraging actors to deepen their training through rigorous script analysis, accent mastery, and exploration of diverse acting techniques. Additionally, it suggests that future studies should continue to explore the role of theatre in addressing identity and socio-political issues, with a focus on how contemporary performances can inspire social change and personal reflection.*

KEYWORDS: Acting techniques, identity, monologues, resilience, social change.



INTRODUCTION

In the layman's sense, Acting is simply doing certain things in a certain way to express an idea or even execute a plan – this can be likened to behaviours, characters, and attitudes. Ironically, these 'characters' are technically linked to what acting is in more elaborate, technical terms – especially in theatre. Therefore, theatre acting is the routine that sees someone (an actor) take on the role or persona of another person or an idea to show who this new, other person or idea is – all this is to carry a message (embody the script) for audiences' perception, comprehension and appreciation (Wilson & Goldfarb, 1991; Vicentini, 2012).

According to Aristotle, acting has always been with us since time – an innate tendency in children to mimic their parents and surroundings in learning their culture – language, music, dance, morals, jobs, mode of dressing, cooking, etc (Wilson & Goldfarb, 1991). In doing this, children, from an infant age, learn who they are to themselves and one another and what is expected of them by society by 'picking up' roles and scenarios through play-fights, games, discussions, other activities, etc – hence, their socio-cultural identity is introduced to them and they hold and advance it through socialisation.

According to Vicentini (2012), theatre acting as we know it today, regardless of its contested origins in academia, is popularly viewed and accepted to have originated from ancient Greece through Thespis – who decided to take the roles of the mythical and legendary figures sung about in the dithyramb, a religious hymn sang by a chorus in the cult of Dionysus. It can then be understood that the taking up of roles in acting mirrors the many roles and responsibilities of the many different people in our society across the world; this is a phenomenon they can all relate to in their shared society and culture– hence, they 'identify' with it. Life as it comes with ups and downs with incredible stories of how many rather than succumb to their problems, fought hard against them and coped through it all to excel at the end – resilience. Thus, acting if it does have the quality to identify with audiences' identity would cover their struggles and resilient stories of successes too. Therefore, at the nexus of our identity, struggles and resilience story is acting channelling it all through theatre which is the mirror of life. In this case, it is worthwhile to look into the phenomenon of these possible connections.

The purpose of this study is to highlight how acting can be used to channel our identity(ies), struggles, and resilience as a people anywhere in the world. For this study, three (3) monologue excerpts from two different plays were used as source material. These play-texts are namely: *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* by Athol Fugard and *Fences* by August Wilson. These monologues capture the subject of identity, struggles, and resilience in both socio-political and socio-cultural contexts. These monologues hold great thematic contemporary relevance for our world today. The monologues are titled: 'Master Bradley and the Boys' as performed by the character, Styles in the play-text *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* devised chiefly by Athol Fugard; as well as 'I ain't got to like you', from *Fences* by August Wilson.

Sizwe Bansi is Dead is a play devised by Athol Fugard that highlights the harsh realities for black folks in Apartheid South Africa. It tells the tale of Sizwe Bansi who comes to a town called New Brighton in Port Elizabeth in search of work. However, and unfortunately so, the conditions facing him would not enable him to get a job that easily. He is not formally educated and he is also a black man with a 'passbook' – a document that identifies black people in those days and restricts their movement and employment – that will soon be of no use. Through,



improvisation and re-enactment of scenes from their lives and happenings in their immediate environment, Styles, Sizwe, and Buntu, a friend of his, all showcase and comprehensively critique their world as they know it in all spheres – religion, healthcare, job market, family, traditions, colonialism and pro-nationalism, etc. The name of the play derives from a scene where Sizwe and Buntu chance upon a dead man with the name, Robert Zwelinzima whose passbook is still worth some use. Sizwe, whose passbook is expired and upon encouragement by Buntu, takes the dead man's passbook and hence the dead man's identity. Hence, his former self Sizwe is dead and gone with Robert. The monologue excerpt here is taken from the opening scene which sees Styles recount his previous job experiences at a car plant for Ford, the American car company. He tells various instances involving him, Mr. Bradley, a sort of foreman, and as well as other workers around. He switches from one person to another – with matching voices, descriptions, and even accents and other mannerisms.

Fences tell the story of an African-American family characterised by hardships, regret, and estranged inter-relationships – the narrative is set in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Troy and Rose are the typical working-class black family in a capitalist society like America. Troy is illiterate, but hard-working and a stereotypical strict black father in his household. They do not make much, but enough to earn a humble and honest living. Troy failed in his actual sporting aspirations as a baseball athlete. This was during a time around the 1940s when black players had a separate league called the 'Negro League' separate from the relatively richer, advanced institutionalized league called the 'Major League Baseball' (MLB). Troy's failure was due to his old age compounded by the fact that he missed a chance to be eligible to play in the MLB just when segregation in that sport was ending. Troy, however, is embittered by his failed dreams and sees his younger, former self in his son, Cory. Cory has sporting aspirations but in American football. Cory is bent on going all out for his dreams including giving up on a menial job he has at a grocery store, but Troy will not have it – believing the odds are not in Cory's favour – that Cory, a young black man will end up wounded and dealt with institutional and systemic discrimination like he, Troy, faced in his day. Troy has been unfaithful to his wife, Rose and hence their marriage is rocky. Troy also shares his hardships with a friend, Bono, and a relative, Gabriel whose struggles with mental health are no secret. At last, Cory leaves the home to build a name and life for himself after all his sporting dreams have been thrown into nothingness and his relationship with Troy ultimately and entirely hits rock bottom.

The monologue from *Fences* centres on Troy and Cory. Here, Cory confronts him about Troy never liking him: to which Troy says 'I ain't got to like you' – meaning as a father and leader of his household, his provision for his family is the ultimate show of love and affection. Troy insinuates and equates the responsibilities that he owes Cory and Rose and strives to fulfil to the two of them ever since, is enough love and not the soft, tenderness one might expect from a mother like Rose. *Fences* as a play is allegorical to what a 'fence' is – something that restricts any advancement or movement from without or within or keeps something or someone out. It could also allude to how a fence marks one's property and gives it a sense of completeness. The 'fences' mainly refer to the bitter, estranged, and unfriendly inter-relationships between the characters Troy, Rose, and Cory.

As an actor, these play texts in general and not only the monologue excerpts have since had a profound impact on me – personally and occupationally. I have come to understand the role an actor has to play in completing the sphere of the theatre – text/story, cast & crew, space, and audience. In my involvement with these narratives, I have come to appreciate the thought and



creativity that went into the writing of the stories from the playwright's perspective. It is just beautiful how words, through dialogue and other dramatic elements and devices, can paint a vivid picture of our world to reflect its happenings. These narratives have taught me histories and core human values of hard work, discipline, adaptability, family, truth, creativity, patience, and hope regarding my fellow black folks regardless of where they are located – their location matters less since spiritually and even now more physically our lives have always mirrored each other – indeed, we share a race with all the bitter experiences it might come with. But, there definitely will be light at the end of the tunnel. From an actor's viewpoint, I have come to practically realise and further appreciate my purpose and worth in my occupation as an artist – a vessel through which the playwright's vision contained in the text/story can reach audiences. The actor is the embodiment of the story and the live depiction of it; hence, a great responsibility is bestowed upon me to teach, channel, and mirror our shared existence and not just vainly entertain.

Despite its historical significance and potential for social impact, acting is often underexplored as a medium for reflecting on identity, struggles, and resilience. While theatrical performances have been used to mirror societal issues and inspire audiences, relatively few scholarly studies have focused on the specific ways in which acting might foster personal reflection and social change. This study seeks to contribute to this area by examining how theatrical monologues can convey profound messages about identity, struggles, and resilience, and how these messages can resonate with contemporary audiences. The objectives were to analyse the two plays, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *Fences*, to identify key themes of identity, struggles, and resilience, and to explore how these themes are conveyed through acting.

The selected monologues are significant because they vividly depict the everyday struggles of black people, whether in the diaspora or on native African soil. Both *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *Fences* highlight the systemic challenges of discrimination, hardship, and near hopelessness faced by black individuals. Despite being written in different eras, the issues raised in these plays still resonate today, reflecting ongoing socio-economic, political, and cultural struggles. These monologues not only voice grievances but also provide glimpses of hope, resilience, and the potential for overcoming adversity. This study contributes to further research on shared black identity, struggles, and resilience, promoting a deeper understanding of these experiences and pathways to progress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theatre is often seen as a mirror to life, with acting serving as the channel that brings this reflection to audiences. Thespis, through his innovative transformation of the religious dithyramb into drama, offered the ancient Greeks a vivid portrayal of their cultural and religious beliefs, turning abstract ideas into a real experience. His art opened a new way for people to comprehend their own culture, especially during the City Dionysia festival, which shared many features with modern theatre. With distinct roles, costumes, and performance spaces, this festival reflected the Greeks' socio-cultural and religious practices, weaving together their collective identity. Thespis's contributions demonstrated how acting could shape and express identity, a concept that remains relevant in contemporary theatre, where acting continues to mirror and communicate the identities of people across the world, particularly in Africa.



The importance of identity through the art of acting lies in the work of the actor to ‘become’ the role (character) totally (Cohen, 2002; Abel, 1999; Brockett & Ball, 2004). In doing this, the actor needs to read the text several times to analyse and interpret the script thoroughly. These several readings coupled with the critical analysis and interpretation of the text enable the actor to connect with the character’s true purpose – their origin, motivation, weaknesses and shortcomings, and failures and successes. This makes the actor’s portrayal of the character most believable and essential to the message reaching the audience. The actor then ultimately assumes the role to best channel it in a way that will connect with audiences’ general sensibilities – the same audiences for whom the character and the general text were created. The purpose of theatre to mirror life with everyone’s unique identity (whether cultural, professional, educational, political, spiritual, psychological, emotional, etc.) is made possible through the actor’s art which sees him/her be the closest in contact to audiences in the theatre.

Scholars agree that a good actor should first and foremost be able to weaponize their most natural instrument, the voice, and then their entire body to the fullness of their advantage – this is to communicate the script that forms the character’s world (Mda, 1993; Wilson & Goldfarb, 1991; Cohen, 2002). However, the actor’s overall art’s success depends on the actor’s natural talent to act and then dedication to a strict routine of rehearsals and many performances in many different plays and performance spaces to build his/her experience and versatility. Brockett & Ball (2004) stressed the need for the actor to never stop training. This means that the actor should never settle for less and always push their limits and even tastes and styles. In doing so, the actor should open him/herself to many acting techniques, and readings of plays of various styles from various authors; capitalising on their use of imagination, observation, and concentration even in performance. Actors should be open to branching into academia and referring to established scholarly contributions to the art of acting and even theatre in general centring on great figures like Peter Brook, Grotowski, Stanislavsky, Bertolt Brecht, etc. (Cohen, 1997; Wilson & Goldfarb, 1991; Brockett & Ball, 2004).

These many experiences and even experimentations will put the actor right in the middle of many influences, references, and inspirations – cultures, accents, theatrical styles and theories, historical facts, current affairs and trends, contemporaries, prospective collaborators (other actors, directors, and designers, etc.). With all these experiences, the actor will build on their vocal audibility, pitches, tones, etc. to determine a character’s gender, accent, age, voice, race, profession, or even profession. These experiences, also, will build on the actor’s body’s endurance and stamina. A benefit of this, for instance, will be that lengthy plays will be easy to execute and the actor is well grounded on contemporary happenings too. Additionally, the actor builds on his attention to detail to, say, manipulate facial muscles and other body parts to execute mannerisms, and channel emotions or messages in pantomimic dramatisations for instance.



DISCUSSIONS

Exploring Struggles and Challenges in the Selected Monologues

The monologue, 'Mr. Bradley & the Boys from the play-text, Sizwe Bansi is Dead centres on Styles role-playing and mimicking several other figures like Mr. Bradley, his former boss as well as random workers at the car plant, his former place of work and even sounds, noises, and other white executives at the same car plant. Styles currently is working as a photographer to make ends meet; being a black entrepreneur in Apartheid South Africa is a nightmare. He cannot read or write to any significant formal level or just any level at all. He has all the odds stacked up against him indeed. Styles' start-up in that business was a discouraging one. This is because photography as a means of income for a poor boy from the lower ranks of the working class in such a society that disenfranchises people of colour is just unheard of and deemed a miserly outcome socio-economically. Styles' father disapproves of the whole idea, but Style is bent on achieving his dream and goes on to find his way through systematic and institutional discrimination and a disadvantageous setting for him just to even get a space to rent in the first place.

The other monologue: 'I ain't got to Like You', from the play *Fences* by August Wilson, centres on the characters: Troy, and Cody. These characters are right in the middle of a racially-motivated disenfranchised settlement even in a society that has civil rights in favour of all races and peoples. This status quo for them sees them have miserly housing, welfare, access to health care, and even rendering simple dreams most unbelievably difficult. Troy failed to reach his actual full potential as a star athlete in his youth due to segregation laws that involved sports in his days. Now, he is a pauper – a regular working class man who works collecting people's garbage. He also struggles with a secret affair with another woman. This tears his relationship with his wife, Rose who has been by his side through thick and thin. Troy's problems also include the responsibility of taking care of a mentally ill relative – a situation that stigmatises black folks in his society. Troy is a humble working-class man but deals with racism, guilt, regret, bitterness, and the ability to be emotionally available and compatible with his wife and son in a way they wish.

Rose and Cody are at the receiving end of Troy's estrangement and seeming psychological and emotional insensitivity and unavailability. Cody struggles with a father who does not see the sense in pursuing a football career and not anything else more concrete and worthwhile like an actual job round the clock. Cody is in a dilemma – go against his dad and lose his family's support or make a compromise to keep a roof over his head. Rose is Troy's darling wife who deals with Troy's infidelity and the repercussions thereafter. She has always been torn between chasing her dreams or compromising them for the greater good of her family's existence and progress. A part of her now struggles with the regret that comes with seeing failure when you had hoped for success. She also deals with loneliness and has her fair share of the system they all live in that puts them almost always at a disadvantage.

Conveying Resilience and Inner Strength

Resilience is the quality of bouncing back from a loss or disappointment; it is also the ability to stand tall in the face of hardships, setbacks, and difficulties. My work with these monologues was in no way a sweet or easy one. In my treatment of the monologues, I had to read the script several times to carry out an in-depth analysis and interpretation of not only the monologue



excerpts but the entire text to have a comprehensive idea of the narratives. All three monologues capture scenes that will cause someone to either be sorrowful, empathetic, laugh, or even fight. In channelling resilience throughout the rendition of the monologues, I made my voice sound firm, tough, assuring, and relatively more audible than when rendering other lines that come with a different mood or state of mind. My head was held eye to get contact and exert authority when or where the character might have been timid. My character would sometimes have fists clenched or fingers pointing at the person the lines are directed to. The emotion-ridden aspects were rendered with a voice that would shake and tremble to give the emotion of great emotional involvement. The lines here would break steadily to build upon the emotions as I use concentration and memory to draw from emotional experiences I have been through in person. These techniques all complemented well with each other, to sum up my rendition of lines that carry emotions that should resonate with the same situations audiences can identify with.

Acting Techniques and Artistic Choices

Acting techniques are simply the strategies, procedures, and routine exercises undertaken by an actor in ‘becoming’ the person they should embody in a performance; whereas Acting choices are the decision taken with all affirmation after due consideration by an actor in complementing and/or supplementing their creative process climaxing in the actual rendition of the character/performance (Abel, 1999). As an actor, these acting techniques were a no-brainer to me: I could not have disregarded them or taken them lightly. With all consciousness and determination, I immersed myself in a series of carefully thought-out ideas and exercises in building my respective characters in the performance of the respective monologue texts they hail from.

Understanding the Texts’ Pre-Requisites and Early Preparations

The monologues in question are from authors, although of African origin even in the case of August Wilson (an African-American), who are foreign to my immediate environment as a Ghanaian. Although, after having acquainted with the texts in full through thematic and general assessment and critique, I have come to see the many ways by which they hold contemporary relevance for me as Ghanaian – as an actor, and a person from the black race. The foreign origin of each play-text from which the monologues were gotten necessitated the situation where I had to perform with the accents owing to each play-text; hence, I needed and I did learn a South-African accent for the monologue from *Sizwe Bansi is dead* and then, a typical-sounding black American or African-American accent for the monologues from August Wilson’s *Fences*. In learning the respective accents, I immersed myself into the language-speaking culture of both South Africans and African Americans.

This process aligns with Koomson and Boateng’s (2022) call for the actor’s role in harmonizing all elements of a performance. They emphasize that actors shape their choices, including accents, to reflect the play’s thematic and cultural essence (Koomson & Boateng 2022). Therefore, by mastering accents, I aimed to align with these principles, ensuring an authentic representation that resonated with the plays’ intended cultural depth.

YouTube and TikTok videos (including news reports on popular news outlets’ channels), and even from a senior acquaintance. Additionally, my familiarity with American (whether white or black) social media content and popular culture proved a vital source of material in training



and practising with the American accent. Luckily for me, *Fences* has since gotten a film adaptation in 2016 produced by the original playwright. This film adaptation gave me in-depth insight into the characters and characterization revolving around the narrative. I could now see Rose played by Viola Davis come alive and inspire me consciously; Denzel Washington's portrayal of Troy was and still is phenomenal, to say the least. There are also countless other videos on YouTube and TikTok featuring clips from many stage productions of *Fences* over the years and across the USA. Therefore, I watched these clips and snippets on social media as well as Netflix's film adaptation of *Fences*.

Becoming the Characters

Moreover, notwithstanding my accent acclimatisation process, I had to put my knowledge and experience as a trainee actor to the utmost test playing Styles and Troy. This was a huge, quite insurmountable mountain I honestly did not climb successfully. These roles did not only demand different accents from South Africa (Afrikaner and Zulu) and also African-American accents; the roles also demanded vocal alterations to deepen my voice to give the impression of various adult males – three maybe elderly people (Troy, Styles, and Mr. Bradley) and the worker/workers in the crowd. Making all this more complex a situation is the fact that Styles mimics many different people and I play Troy also in a different monologue. These roles and their many respective situations come with many different stereotypical male mannerisms I had to grasp comprehensively and execute flawlessly. I had to sit, talk, sound, smile, giggle, do one or two asides, raise my voice, be calm at some times, etc. – all as an adult male would and different for these three or more male characters. I observed people around me for inspiration. Also reminisced about my father and older male relatives for additional inspiration. However, my performance in all this was lacklustre per the standard I always hold myself to and is expected of me having had the practical acting training and overall academic education it comes with. All that has been a learning phase for me which I badly needed all the same – I now understand that with the actor's job comes setbacks and some failures which are all but spacious room for improvement.

Some Acting Choices in Appreciation of The Texts

My choices surrounding my art as a trainee actor saw me reach out to an alumnus and also deep-dive into social media trends due to the urgent nature of my preparation regarding the performance. For the sake of the main limitation of time, I had to think carefully and draw from any available outlets to build my performance. The social media videos, the film, and this alumnus in question all were near to me and just a click on my mobile phone away, thanks to technology today. Also, the alumnus' contribution stemmed from priceless first-hand experience. This broke down any barriers that could have stood in my way in terms of any restricting formality because our world and art of acting strives on first-hand, direct interpersonal interactions and relationships. It should be noted though that boundaries still need to be in place and all needs to be ethically done to respect each other. My relationship with this alumnus gave us a common purpose somehow to bring back to life this play-text, *Sizwe Bansi is dead* in particular to life – share and tell the story of our fellow brothers and sisters in Africa whose story we can relate to including the story of the hope that is there for our future.

Regarding *Fences*, my research around it as well as the familiarity I have built with it opened my eyes to African-American cultural and societal dynamics since around the time it was first written and performed up until now we still see the same discriminations and disadvantages



served to Americans of African origin. I came to realise that Africans everywhere either in the motherland or abroad in the diaspora are all used to pain, suffering, and adversity. It is like in our DNA – we come from struggle, still facing struggles, and will even go through more struggles in the future. But we ought to know our worth and many capabilities and talents to overcome them all. Our struggles have since given us resilient and prominent figures past and present like Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Barack Obama, etc. I now have learned and have come to know proudly that the future might be uncertain, but it shall shine for us.

Comparing both Monologues in terms of Appreciation and Experience

Comparatively, I must add, that learning the accents for the monologues from *Fences* was a relatively easier experience than it was preparing the accents for the monologues from *Sizwe Bansi is dead*. This is because I am more accustomed to American popular culture – celebrity news, movies, fashion, music, etc. than I am accustomed to that of any other nation, especially elsewhere in Africa like South Africa. I did not have a first-hand, direct source of inspiration and training for the South African accent like I had for the American one. Interestingly, the American accent came somehow easier and more natural to me than the former. Training my voice and getting the suitable male mannerisms to compliment them was more difficult ‘becoming’ Troy – an American – than it was becoming Styles – an African - even though some nuances in the performance surrounding Styles are complex i.e. regarding his mimics a white South-African of an older age and higher socio-economic status. Becoming Troy was more difficult than becoming Styles as I do not have any American people to directly draw inspiration and ideas from, but I have many Africans (although Ghanaian, Togolese, and even Nigerian) directly surrounding me. Yet, both play-texts called for my orientation into their respective cultures in getting abreast with some minor current happenings like familiarising myself with the social and political history like nation anthems, and contemporary contexts of the play-texts.

Reflections

The attitudes, prospects, determination, and hard work I put into this study to examine how the notions of identity, struggles, and resilience exist in the aforementioned play texts as well as the contemporary relevance they hold for our existence today. In accomplishing this purpose with these play-texts in focus, I have come to the following findings:

The discrimination and disadvantages facing the characters – Troy, Styles, and Sizwe – all still exist today but maybe in different forms. For example, we still hear of police killings of blacks in many parts of the world home and abroad. In light of this, the popular name George Floyd rings a bell. Also, many blacks in politically dominant white firms and countries can not seem to get the same jobs as their white counterparts that they are even more qualified for. To this effect, there are affirmative actions and quotas regarding employment for disadvantaged blacks in those said countries. But all this still spells controversy over the controversy.

Women still fall under the upper hand that many men might stereotypically have over them, especially in marriages where the man is chauvinistic – this then becomes their ‘fence’ – a wall that cannot be torn down – between them putting what God has put together asunder. Rose’s plight regarding Troy’s infidelity can be exemplified in the divorce culture of today. Men, however, do suffer and this should be equally noted. But the case of men seems to be in the shadows – yet, still because of how society has trained and labelled men to not show emotions



and their struggles and failures. This ‘toughness’ in male chauvinistic upbringing has since seen fathers ‘fenced’ away from their children, stereotypically sons – there is no tenderness and affection there between men and their sons because these men do not know anything of that sort which they relate wrongly to feminine weakness. This could leave an everlasting void in the emotional and then psychological connection and sustenance between males today. Today, it is almost just natural and normal to see boys love their mothers to death at the expense of their fathers. These boys ironically become estranged from their sons in the future. It is a toxic cycle and status quo.

Acting is such a potent tool to advertise social change while showcasing our true-life experiences – who we are, where we come from, and where we can end up possibly. It is so ironically remarkable how *Sizwe Bansi is dead* was devised by a white man fighting to save and change black people like in the South Africa of his day. Athol Fugard, with his work and life experiences in the legal system of South Africa, channelled his white society as abusers and inhumane against the true inhabitants of the country – the Zulus and so on. He gave them a mirror to see their wrongs in the hopes of achieving catharsis for a change. Truly, it worked to an extent as we can even see how whites supported Nelson Mandela around the same time and eventually, they stood their ground and overcame those struggles; hence, their resilience.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Theatre Acting is not just an opportunity to make fun of yourself for the sake of the audience’s entertainment, but it is also an outlet to research – discover and rediscover yourself – the many possibilities that may come with your challenges. Theatre Acting is an honourable means to become someone or something else for appreciation and comprehension. By doing this, you give people and ideas a voice to be heard and a picture to be seen to make change come and stay with us and for our unknown follies and dangers to be learned and dealt with. Actors come to the rescue of their society and put it on the map. The many challenges actors go through are just like the many challenges we face in real life, so in that case, that connection is there. Finally, just like actors make it through all the stumbling blocks and onto the beautiful stage to give an equally beautiful performance, we shall all make it through all these problems. Ten times we fall, 12 more times we shall get back up. Blacks have been through it all – decades upon centuries of primitivity (wild animals, harsh weather, and little to no food); even more harsh and wild colonialists (before and today in technologically-advanced modernity), slavery, poverty, corrupt leaders, etc. – and still standing heads held high and ten toes solidly on our feet. We are our identity; we are our struggles; and resilience is imprinted in our DNA everlastingly.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Now, more than ever, I appreciate that an actor is the closest to the audience in reflecting on their lives and in communicating it all for a good cause. For possible studies after this one that may or may not relate to this topic, I hereby make these few recommendations:

Actors should not take any exercise or task in their routine or training as performers lightly. Complacency and compromise have no place here in the theatre. We strive to achieve excellence each time – greater than the previous: be it during rehearsal or performance. This is about script reading, analysis, and interpretation which is the very soul of any performance in hand. Also, rehearsals would and should get highly intense, detailed, and critical at a point in an actor's life. This should be a challenge embraced wholeheartedly because the longer and the more demanding a rehearsal gets in any way, the better for the actor's development and the performance at large and at last.

Accents can prove very vital as a tool for actors. Trainee actors should strive to learn and master as many as possible to identify with and portray the many characters (people) they embody and mirror – because with many accents come the banner of the many peoples of the world.

Actors should get the proper orientation and even re-orientation into the art of theatre as a whole and then more specifically acting. This should entail both a scholarly and secular approach to these art forms. Theories, experimentation, leading popular theatre trends, and notable figures past and present should all take centre stage in discourses during a thorough production process – but by the appropriate persons involved and at appropriate times and places of course.

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