



American Next Wave: Four contemporary plays from the HighTide Festival (Play Anthologies)

Stella Fawn Ragsdale, Mona Mansour, Laura Marks, Branden Jacob-Jenkins

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A collection of four plays by new American writers curated from the Emerging Writers Group at the Public Theater, New York. These plays represent the finest works developed by the Public Theater, addressing contemporary social preoccupations: race, class, heritage, economic hardship, family values and identity. **The plays included are: *Perish* by Stella Fawn Ragsdale: when Porter's father kidnaps her son, she must go back to the woods of East Tennessee to find him, where she is distracted by a mysterious firebird. Textured with poetry and grit, this play follows the plight of women in Appalachia and the disappearance of the working class. *The Hour of Feeling* by Mona Mansour: in 1967, fuelled by a love of English Romantic poetry, a young Palestinian academic, Adham, and his new wife, Abir, take a trip to London, where he will deliver a career defining lecture. While the situation in his home "country" deteriorates and his marriage threatens to dissolve, Adham confronts his fear of failure and the reality that he may be an outsider no matter where he goes. *Bethany* by Laura Marks: when the going gets tough, the tough get going, and the going has gotten very tough indeed for Crystal. Her job is in jeopardy, her house has been repossessed and her daughter taken by social services. It's time for Crystal to get going. But in her effort to get her daughter back and put her life on the right track, Crystal is forced to question just how far she's willing to go to survive. *Neighbors* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins: Black face, not on my doorstep, not today. Richard Patterson is not happy. The family of black actors that has moved in next door is rowdy, tacky, shameless, and uncouth. And they are not just invading his neighborhood-they're infiltrating his family, his sanity, and his entirely post-racial lifestyle. This wildly theatrical, explosive play on race is an unconventional comedy which uses minstrelsy both to explore the history of black theater and to confront tensions in 'post-racial' America.**

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