

ADELAIDE
FESTIVAL **AF**

EDUCATION RESOURCE

Hewa Rwanda: Letter to the Absent



Youth and Education
Program Partners



Suitable Year Levels

Year 7 – Year 12

Genre

Musical Reading

Documentary Drama

Synopsis

Thirty years after the the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, Dorcy Rugamba, actor, author, and director, shares an excerpt from his work *Hewa Rwanda – Letter to the Absent*. This moving piece reflects on his family, culture, and spirituality. Rugamba asks, "How can one grasp the full dimension of an event that wiped out more than a million people, where my brother's death is almost an anecdote, one case among millions?"

In collaboration with Senegalese artist Majnun, Rugamba presents a musical reading from his memoir, an ode to love, loss, and remembrance. Every year, Rugamba returns to his family home in Kigali, where familiar sights – ivy, calla lilies, and the towering palm and papaya trees – remain, though his return was impossible for many years.

His book serves as a love letter to the departed, honouring their memory while exploring what remains – a hymn to life celebrating memory, poetry, music, humour, lightness and every aspect of life that survives the departed in those who live on. Through his writing and powerful voice, Rugamba shares his journey to understand the unspeakable and celebrates the beauty of life and ancestors.

Themes & Ideas

A 'Hymn to Life'

While *Hewa Rwanda*, *Letter to the Absent* addresses the topic of genocide and mourning innocent lives lost in a very personal way, Dorcy intends for the work to not be simply a commemorative text but rather a 'hymn to life'. For this

reason, he includes lightness, humour, poetry and music in the writing, staging and performance of the piece to capture a sense of, as he puts it, 'life in all its aspects.'

Dorcy says of his own work: 'Over time, I realized, long after the genocide, that the victims, after losing their lives, faced another form of annihilation—the risk of

their existence disappearing as well, after their bodies. Young Rwandans born afterward, as well as international audiences, no longer know who these people were. We often only know their number; sometimes their names are engraved on a stone. Their existence tends to vanish behind their status as victims. A person's

existence is much richer than his biological life. There are many things that survive death under normal circumstances: a person's culture, their projects, their loves, their ambitions, their legacy, their ideals, their achievements, the struggles and challenges they faced during their existence and to which the world afterward is

indebted. All of this, in the memory of the living, tends to fade before the enormity of the genocide.

This "love letter to the absent" is therefore a hymn to life, an attempt to symbolically resurrect the absent so that their lives and existence can be restored to them, and they can cease to be merely the unfortunate victims of a genocide.'





Curriculum Links

This education resource has been developed with links to the Australian Curriculum. Activities have been created to reflect each of the achievement standards, depending on the year level, including content descriptions within each learning area and the general capabilities. The resource aims to provide teachers with information to help prepare students before attending the performance, as well as structured learning activities for the classroom after viewing the performance.

General Capabilities

The Arts Learning Area has a natural link to the elements of the General Capabilities. Specific learning activities have been linked with the following icons:



Literacy



Critical and Creative Thinking



Personal and Social Capability



Ethical Understanding



Intercultural Understanding

Drama

Year 7 and 8

- Incorporate language and ideas and use devices such as dramatic symbol to create dramatic action and extend mood and atmosphere in performance
- Draw on drama from a range of cultures, times and locations as they experience drama
- Learn that over time there has been further development of different traditional and contemporary styles of drama, including contemporary styles developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dramatists, as they explore drama forms
- Explore meaning and interpretation, forms and elements including voice, movement, situation, space and time, and tension as they make and respond to drama
- Consider social, cultural and historical influences of drama
- Evaluate the directors' intentions and expressive skills used by actors in drama they view and perform
- Build on their understanding from previous bands of the roles of artists and audiences as they engage with more diverse performances.

Year 9 and 10

- Draw on drama from a range of cultures, times and locations as they experience drama
- Learn that over time there has been further development of different traditional and contemporary styles of drama and that dramatists can be identified through the style of their work, as they explore drama forms

- Explore meaning and interpretation, forms and elements, and social, cultural and historical influences of drama as they make and respond to drama
- Evaluate actors' success in expressing the directors' intentions and the use of expressive skills in drama they view and perform
- Build on their understanding from previous bands of the roles of artists and audiences as they engage with more diverse performances.

SACE Stage 1

Understanding and Exploration

UE1 Understanding and exploration of dramatic roles, conventions, and processes.

UE2 Understanding and exploration of dramatic ideas, texts, styles, and/or innovations.

Critical and Creative Thinking

CCT2 Analysis and evaluation of dramatic ideas, products, and technologies.

SACE Stage 2

Knowledge and Understanding

KU1 Exploration and understanding of dramatic theories, texts, styles, conventions, roles, and processes.

KU2 Understanding and evaluation of the artistic and cultural value of local, global, contemporary, and/or historical drama.

Critical and Creative Thinking

CCT2 Analysis and evaluation of the student's own drama-making and others' dramatic works, styles, and/or events.

Creative Application

CA3 Integration of theory and practice to make meaningful dramatic outcomes.

Music

Year 7 and 8

- analyse how the elements of music and/or compositional devices are manipulated in music they compose, perform and/or experience.
- evaluate the ways music from across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts communicates ideas, perspectives and/or meaning.
- describe respectful approaches to composing, performing and/or responding to music.
- demonstrate listening and aural skills when composing and performing.

Year 9 and 10

- analyse ways composers and/or performers use the elements of music and compositional devices to engage audiences.
- evaluate how music and/or performances in a range of styles and/or from across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning.
- demonstrate listening and aural skills relevant to the styles and/or contexts in which they are working.

Music SACE Stage 1

Understanding Music

UM1 Development of knowledge and understanding of musical elements.

UM2 Communication of musical ideas.

Responding to Music

RM2 Analysis and discussion of musical works and styles.

RM3 Reflection on own learning in music.

Music Explorations SACE Stage 2

Understanding Music

UM1 Development of knowledge and understanding of musical elements.

UM2 Expression of musical ideas.

Exploring and Experimenting with Music

EEM2 Exploration of and experimentation with musical styles, influences, techniques, and/or production.

EEM3 Synthesis of findings from exploration of and experimentation with music.

Responding to Music

RM1 Application of musical literacy skills.

RM2 Analysis and discussion of musical works.

RM3 Reflection on and critique of own learning within music.

English

Year 7

- interact with others, and listen to and create spoken and/or multimodal texts including literary texts.
- with different purposes and for audiences, they discuss, express and expand ideas with evidence.
- read, view and comprehend texts created to inform, influence and/or engage audiences.
- identify how ideas are portrayed and how texts are influenced by contexts.
- identify the aesthetic qualities of texts.
- identify how text structures, language features including literary devices and visual features shape meaning.

Year 8

- interact with others, and listen to and create spoken and/or multimodal texts including literary texts.
- with different purposes and for audiences, discuss, express and elaborate on ideas with supporting evidence.
- read, view and comprehend a range of texts created to inform, influence and/or engage audiences.
- explain how ideas are represented and how texts reflect or challenge contexts.
- explain the aesthetic qualities of texts.
- explain how text structures shape meaning.
- explain the effects of language features including intertextual references and literary devices, and visual features.

Year 9

- interact with others, and listen to and create spoken and multimodal texts including literary texts.
- with a range of purposes and for audiences, discuss and expand on ideas, shaping meaning and providing substantiation.
- read, view and comprehend a range of texts created to inform, influence and/or engage audiences.
- analyse representations of people, places, events and concepts, and how texts respond to contexts. They analyse the aesthetic qualities of texts.
- analyse the effects of text structures, and language features including literary devices, intertextual references, and multimodal features.

Year 10

- interact with others, and listen to and create spoken and multimodal texts including literary texts.
- with a range of purposes and for audiences, they discuss ideas and responses to representations, making connections and providing substantiation.
- read, view and comprehend a range of texts created to inform, influence and engage audiences.
- analyse and evaluate representations of people, places, events and concepts, and how interpretations of these may be influenced by readers and viewers.

- analyse the effects of text structures, and language features including literary devices, intertextual connections, and multimodal features, and their contribution to the aesthetic qualities of texts.

English SACE Stage 1

Knowledge and Understanding

KU1 Knowledge and understanding of ideas and perspectives explored in texts.

KU2 Knowledge and understanding of language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.

KU3 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which texts are created for a range of purposes and audiences.

Analysis

An1 Analysis of the relationship between purpose, audience, and context, and how they shape meaning.

An2 Analysis of how language features, stylistic features, and conventions are interpreted by readers.

An3 Analysis of intertextual connections.

English SACE Stage 2

Knowledge and Understanding

KU1 Knowledge and understanding of ideas and perspectives in texts.

KU2 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which creators of texts use language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.

KU3 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which texts are created for different purposes, audiences, and contexts.

Analysis

An1 Analysis of ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture represented in texts.

An2 Analysis of language features, stylistic features, and conventions, and evaluation of how they influence audiences.



Performance Literacy

As students engage with and view live theatre, they develop a deeper understanding of the language of performance art. They develop literacies allowing them to 'read' the gestures and movements of a performer, and an understanding of the intention of the set, costume, lighting design and reflect on how they contribute to the narrative. Students consider the intended meaning of the choreographers, playwrights, directors and/or artists' in choosing a setting, character, or artistic form as well as what they are looking to communicate through their work.

Attending live theatre and responding to performances, addresses the criteria for Literacy in line with the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities.

...students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students listening to, reading, viewing, speaking, writing, and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts, and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts.

Art is a means of expressing emotion, a way of transmitting feelings, culture, beliefs and values between the creators and performers of the work and the audience or viewers. Some art is created for the explicit purpose of eliciting a strong emotional response from the audience and

there is a myriad of emotions that students will experience when they are viewing live performance from happiness to anger, surprise, annoyance, and confusion, just to name a few.

The **Before the Show** activities are designed to support students to develop these literacy skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to their Adelaide Festival experience.

The **After the Show** activities are designed to provide students with the opportunity to discuss, analyse and comprehend their responses to the show. Having a strong knowledge and understanding of theatre terminology will support students and extend their vocabulary as they describe their theatre experience with authentic language.

Theatre Etiquette

The French word *l'etiquette*, meaning 'requirements for proper behaviour', was adopted by English speakers in the middle of the 18th century. This can sound a bit formal but understanding theatre etiquette helps an audience understand what to expect and how to get the most out of their theatre experience.

Depending on the age of an audience the expectations can vary. Theatre designed for very young audiences will have different expectations and will often invite and encourage participation. However, as the content becomes more complex and audiences mature, there is an expectation that students will have developed an understanding of the difference between enthusiastic participation and thoughtless disruption.

Group discussion: Why does it matter?

Students to talk about the theatre being a shared space and respecting other audience members attending the performance.

- Discuss the shared role of audience and performer, each is dependent on the other to ensure a great performance.
- Remind students that just as they can see the performers, the performers can see them!
- As a class exercise, compile a list of all the roles and tasks it takes to bring a live performance to the stage.

- What experiences have they had when their engagement with the performance was compromised by others in the audience?
- What is the role of the audience? What responsibility do they have to the performers on stage?

Theatre protocols to share with students

When in the foyer they should:

- Go to the toilet before going into the theatre.
- Follow the directions of the front of house staff.
- Turn off mobile phones.
- Wear a mask if required.

When the lights go down:

- This is a sign the performance is about to start. It is time to end chats and be quiet.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- No eating in the theatre. Only water bottles are allowed.

For senior students writing the review in the darkened auditorium can be disturbing for the performers, particularly if using a mobile phone as a torch. Plus, all the performers can see is the top of the student's head. *Why would this be disturbing for the performers?*

Photographing and filming is not permitted because:

- It can disturb the actors on the stage and break their concentration

- Intellectual property is paramount. The production on stage is the intellectual property of the theatre company therefore no photographs or filming is allowed.
- You will be missing the detail you cannot see through the viewfinder

Five broad groups of children whose responses as audience are characterised as:

- **Technicians** – children who are more interested in the technology than the performance, deconstructing the performance techniques employed in the show.
- **Narrators** – children who talk through the performance, asking questions, commenting on actions.
- **Dramatists** – children who immediately imitate what they see, participating through their own actions.
- **Mystics** – children who are completely engrossed in the sensory aspects of the experience.
- **Spectators** – children who hover around the edges, playing with whatever they can find, apparently not engaged, but often able afterwards to recall what they saw.

Ask your students which group they think they would be. Does their response match your observation?

Production

Music/Sound

Majnun's live instrumental guitar underscores Dorcy's presentation inciting a cavalcade of emotional and atmospheric responses. Dorcy's lecture is also broken up into sections where Majnun performs and sings an interlude. These musical breaks provide Dorcy the opportunity to pause, reflect and acknowledge his family members projected on the screen behind him inviting the audience to do the same.

Incorporation of live music in performance is evident in a breadth of theatrical styles, though in *Hewa Rwanda* it is employed with a particular Brechtian Epic Theatre flair. Majnun remains on stage and is visible to the audience at all times. There is no attempt to 'hide' the source of the music, and his blend of contemporary and traditional cultural sounds creates a soundscape that is soaring and transcends time and place.

While the inclusion of live music elevates the emotional, sensory and theatrical experience for the audience, equally important are the moments where Dorcy chooses not to include music or sound and instead speak directly to the audience accompanied by the silence.

The conscious decision of when not to use techniques such as music and songs to underscore or feature in the performance is as important as moments where these elements are chosen to be used to effect.

Set Design

While it might appear there is little by way of set design – Dorcy stands at a lectern centre stage before a large projection screen while Majnun plays his guitar upstage of him – the impact of this simplicity ensures that Dorcy's story and family is clearly communicated and an essence of abandonment or absence is created. There is no one on stage but Dorcy, Majnun and Dorcy's memories.

The staging reflects elements of Jerzy Grotowski's Poor Theatre, Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre, and Documentary and Verbatim Theatre. The main feature of the set is the dominating projection screen set behind Dorcy which shows photographs of his family killed in the genocide. The intention is to show, at all times, connection between Dorcy's words and the human faces of the innocent people killed in this event. The photographs show a strong sense of the close-knit family, the shared love between the family members and capture a feeling of happiness which juxtapose with the brutality of the genocide and the loss and sadness that Dorcy explains in his talk enhanced by Majnun's atmospheric music.

Jerzy Grotowski's Poor Theatre is characterised by the distinct lack of embellished design to elevate the importance of the actor's performance to create theatrical events and convey dramatic meaning. For Grotowski, theatre

could happen anywhere, even on an empty stage. This was also evident in the staging techniques of Bertolt Brecht in the development of his Epic Theatre. In Brecht's theatre, alienating the audience from deep investment in the artifices of theatre designed for entertainment, such as spectacular or realistic set design, placed the audience's focus on the political or social message being communicated by the performers. Brecht would often use projections in his works to confront the audience with facts, slogans or images that reinforce or contract what was occurring on stage.

Furthermore, design in Documentary Theatre seeks to preserve the authenticity and integrity of the source material and support the performer in telling truthful stories in an engaging way. Documentary Drama often blends different forms of media in a collage style approach often incorporating found video, audio, photographs, text and recordings that enhance the storytelling and provides different perspectives on the themes and ideas being conveyed.

Lighting

Dorcy enters the space in a dim amber wash, a black and white family photograph faintly visible through a scrim on the upstage screen behind him. The effect is a reflective atmosphere that inspires a sense of memory and of the past. Majnun's accompaniment creates a lighter reflective mood as Dorcy begins to reflect on brighter



happier memories of his family – the scrim is removed and family photograph becomes more vibrant in colour, almost as though Dorcy has summoned them back to life through his words. The lighting also becomes lighter here, a white yet still dim wash that retains the feeling of memory. Majnun is held in a blue profile light that enhances his role as the music that occurs in Dorcy's memories. The lighting alternates between the dim amber and white washes as Dorcy's retelling of the stories shift between time and place always reinforcing memory while capturing the mood and atmosphere of each part of the story.

Costumes

Majnun is dressed with a nod to traditional Senegalese clothing with a long sleeve shirt with brocade embellishments along the neckline and placket over jeans. This shirt, known as a Kaftan, is common clothing for daily wear as well as for special formal occasions such as religious festivities and family gatherings. The choice for Majnun to wear a Kaftan in this performance could suggest a level of respect that he has for being present at Dorcy's homage to his family which is, in a theatrical sense, a form of spiritual family reunion.

Dorcy, by contrast, appears more contemporary and Western in his clothing in jeans, jacket and shirt.

Characterisation

In a solo-performance or performance containing only one actor, there is the challenge for the actor to manipulate their performance techniques to convey a sense of different characters in the story. This is done with restraint in *Hewa Rwanda*, though Dorcy does vary his pace and tone in his vocal delivery in his storytelling to capture the personalities of his family members and the mood of different memories as he discusses them. For the remainder, Dorcy's presentational style sees him read his words directly to the audience and adjusting his vocal delivery to create mood and emphasis on significant ideas, and both enhancing and being enhanced

by the atmosphere created by Majnun's music. The overall mood is one of homage, respect and reflection.

Dramatic Structure

Musical Reading

Hewa Rwanda: Letter to the Absent takes the form of a musical reading or lecture. In the performance, he stands at a lectern and reads his letters directly to the audience, addressing family members and recounting the experience of loss in the genocide. While the piece requires little performance in terms of traditional ideas about acting, the performance becomes a theatrical event aided by Majnun's underscoring of Dorcy's reading creating atmosphere, pathos and emotional enhancement.

Memoir and Autobiographical Theatre

In a literary sense, while memoirs contain biographical information, the central focus is on capturing a sense of the author's memories. As such, there is little regard for chronology in the storytelling and often the narrative meanders through interconnected themes and ideas that explore the author's truth. When a memoir becomes a vehicle for autobiographical theatre, the artists often try to use theatrical devices to enhance the audience's understanding of the text as a collection of memories.

In his presentation, Dorcy Rugamba has used symbolic imagery and a sparse set to create an intimate space for sharing his memories with the audience. The images of his family hang behind him in the background, perhaps like ghosts

or an omnipresence, suggesting these memories of his family now fuel the work he creates going forward. Coupled with the haunting underscore of Majnun's music, Rugamba creates a highly personal relationship with the audience who become participants in co-creating the theatrical experience.

Dramatic Form/Convention

Documentary Theatre and Verbatim Theatre

This form of theatre uses pre-existing documentary sources such as newspapers, memoirs, journals, reports, interviews and correspondence as material for stories about real people and events. Often, the texts will be unedited or altered in performance. Sometimes, they will be arranged or linked to create the performance or construct a narrative.

Verbatim Theatre uses a subject's own words from interviews, letters and writing or other sources, word for word and unchanged, as the text or script for the actor who seeks to replicate the words and feelings of the subject with authenticity.

Documentary theatre frequently seeks to portray real people and real events and portrayal and sharing of these stories comes with a high level of responsibility and ethical consideration of the performers as they depict real people, stories and sensitive subjects. These types of performances are created to inform, educate and provoke audiences to think about events and issues.

Hewa Rwanda is a stage interpretation of the book Dorcy Rugamba wrote in homage to his family lost in the 100 days genocide

in Rwanda. The musical reading fosters a presentational style which sees Dorcy speak directly to the audience and apply theatrical elements such as projections and live music to create a theatrical event that promotes the reflection of the audience on a story that might otherwise have been overlooked or forgotten: his is only one story of thousands of families killed and impacted in the genocide. By applying Documentary Drama conventions, Dorcy encourages audiences to critically view and come to a deeper understanding of the messages and ideas presented to broaden their world view.

Further reading on Documentary Drama thedramateacher.com/documentary-drama-conventions/#elements-of-documentary-drama

Epic Theatre

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) who developed Epic Theatre, defied popular realistic and 'theatre for entertainment' conventions in the pursuit of developing a form that would inspire and incite change. He aimed for presentational style of theatre that disengaged audiences from deep emotional connection with characters and storylines and instead alienated them to focus attention on the political and social messages being conveyed in the work. This was known as the Alienation Effect or *Verfremdungseffekt*. Breaking the fourth wall, interrupting the action with songs and the use of projections were common in Brecht's theatre. Brecht's innovations also influenced the development of Documentary Drama. Elements of Epic Theatre

can be seen in *Hewa Rwanda*.

Further reading on Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre thedramateacher.com/brechts-epic-theatre-conventions-pt-2

Alienation and Breaking the Fourth Wall

Coming to prominence through Brecht's Epic Theatre, alienation techniques seek to detach audiences from deep emotional engagement with characters and story in order to redirect their attention to the political and social messages at the heart of the performance. This was Brecht's paramount intention in creating theatre and in doing so he saw the capacity for theatre to provoke thought, incite action, and advocate for change.

Breaking the fourth wall is one of the hallmark's of Brecht's theatre. The concept alludes to the imaginary wall between the actor and audience that exists in realistic theatre where the actors perform in a way that their characters are unaware of being seen by an audience.

By speaking directly to the audience, assuming different character perspectives in the story, and through symbolic minimal set pieces, props and projections, Rhoda is able to break the imaginary fourth wall between the audience and actor, and transform the space as required to recreate different memories.



Suggested Tasks

BEFORE the show:

Questions to put to your students

- What is genocide? What are its intentions?
- What do you know about the The genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi? If you know nothing about the The genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, spend 15 minutes searching for information online.
- How do you think trauma and loss can be portrayed through theatre and storytelling?
- Why do you think it is important for artists to address historical events and social issues in their work?
- How does memory shape identity, both on a personal and collective level?
- What role do you think culture and tradition play in healing after a traumatic event?
- In what ways can a performance or artwork give voice to people who are no longer present?
- How do you think the concept of absence can be explored on stage?
- What do you think it means to "honor the memory" of those who have passed away?
- How do you think a performance can help audiences connect emotionally with a historical or cultural event?
- How do you think different art forms (like music, theatre, and writing) can work together to create a deeper understanding of a theme?
- The piece is described as a 'musical reading'. What might you expect from the emotional tone of the performance? How could it differ from a traditional play or theatre piece?
- What is the importance of a "love letter" to those who are absent, and how might it help with the healing process?
- How do you think performance can be used as a form of resistance to silence or erasure?
- What does it mean to "give victims a face, a name, a life"? Why is this important in telling a story of loss?
- How can a performance about historical and personal loss also inspire hope, renewal, or reflection on the future?
- Who do you think a story like this is important to hear today?

- Dorcy describes *Hewa Rwanda* as a 'hymn to life.' What ideas emerge for you from the word 'hymn' in his description? What expectations do you have of the production from Dorcy's description of the show? Why?

Activity 1: Historical and Cultural Context Research

It may be useful for students to understand the historical and cultural context of Rwanda prior to viewing the performance, particularly focusing on the 1994 genocide, and the themes of memory and loss explored in *Hewa Rwanda*.

- Assign students to research the history of the The genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, its aftermath, and the role of art in healing and reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda.
- Ask them to explore the significance of storytelling, memory, and ancestral connections within Rwandan culture.
- Ask them to research and engage with other works of Dorcy Rugamba and Majnun; in particular, what do they understand or notice about Majnun's musical style and body of work?
- Students could present their findings in small groups, highlighting key facts, personal stories, and artistic responses that might relate to the themes of *Hewa Rwanda*.

This will give students a deeper understanding of the emotional and cultural background of the performance and prepare them for the sensitive nature of the content.

After the research presentations, have students discuss

- how understanding the history of Rwanda might affect their experience of the performance.
- what they now might expect from the emotional tone of the work
- any feelings they might have about going to view a performance and hear a story about these themes and ideas.
- This activity may help develop students' emotional intelligence about the themes and ideas of the work and prepare them to respond with empathy.

DRAMA

Year 7 and 8

AC9ADR8E01: investigate ways the elements of drama and/or conventions are used to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama created and/or performed across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

Year 9 and 10

AC9ADR10E01: investigate use of elements of drama, performance skills and/or conventions to communicate and/or challenge ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

ENGLISH

Year 7

AC9E7LE02: form an opinion about characters, settings and events in texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others' opinions and justifying a response

Year 8

AC9E8LE02: share opinions about the language features, literary devices and text structures that contribute to the styles of literary texts

Year 9

AC9E9LE02: present a personal response to a literary text comparing initial impressions and subsequent analysis of the whole text

Year 10

AC9E10LE03: analyse how the aesthetic qualities associated with text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features, and the context in which these texts are experienced, influence audience response

MUSIC

Year 7 and 8

AC9AMU8E01: investigate the ways that composers and/or performers use the elements

of music and/or compositional devices in music composed across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

Year 9 and 10

AC9AMU10E01: investigate composers' and/or performers' use of elements of music, compositional devices and/or vocal/instrumental techniques in music from a range of cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

-  Literacy
-  Critical and Creative Thinking
-  Personal and Social Capability
-  Intercultural Understanding
-  Ethical Understanding

AFTER the show:

Questions to put to your students

- Prior to viewing the production, you were asked to consider the ideas and expectations that emerged for you from Dorcy's description of *Hewa Rwanda* 'as a 'hymn to life.' After seeing the production, to what extent were your predictions true?
- What elements of the performance helped Dorcy achieve his intentions for the production as a 'hymn to life'? (Review Dorcy's discussion of his thematic and narrative intentions in the 'Themes and Ideas' section of this resource.



Activity 2: Thinking Routine Values, Identities, Actions (VIA)

This thinking routine asks provoking questions that unearth intercultural understanding, ethical reasoning and the potential for theatre to inspire change and action.

- Students understand values as principles, standards or things that hold great importance or worth.
- Students understand identities as the unique way in which a person or people define themselves.
- Students understand that actions may be tangible, practical and concrete (ie doing something or refraining from doing something), or they may be intangible, like committing to learn more about something, or regarding or treating people with more understanding.
- Students understand the distinction between 5 different types of action
 1. Lifestyle Choices: We make informed changes in our lives based on our learning
 2. Social Justice: We act in a way that inspires positive change for human rights, equity and/or equality, and for inclusion
 3. Advocacy: We take action as individuals or as a group to publicly support change
 4. Participation: We actively contribute to our community as individuals and as part of a group

5. Social Entrepreneurship: We recognise the need for social change in our local and broader communities. We respond to those needs by applying our knowledge, learning and skills to create positive, innovative, resourceful and sustainable solutions to those problems.

TASK: Students create a table with three columns labelled 'Values', 'Identities' and 'Actions'. Working individually or in pairs, they populate the columns with responses to the provocation questions for each heading listed below:

Values:

- What values does this work invite us to think about?
- Who's values are they? Ours? Others? Does it affirm or raise questions about these values"
- How does the work create this impact?

Identities

- Who is the work speaking about?
- Who is it trying to speak to?
- Is anyone left out of the story who should be in it?
- Where do I fit in the story?
- How does the work convey these ideas?

Actions

- What actions does the work encourage?
- Whose actions?
- How does the work encourage these actions?

Note to Stage 1 and 2 Drama Teachers: This task can help students to interrogate the dramatic meaning, purpose and impact of the work as part of a scaffold for an AT2 Responding task.

DRAMA

Year 7 and 8

AC9ADR8E01: investigate ways the elements of drama and/or conventions are used to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama created and/or performed across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

AC9ADR8D02: reflect on their own and others' drama to inform choices when manipulating elements of drama and/or conventions to shape dramatic action

Year 9 and 10

AC9ADR10E01: investigate use of elements of drama, performance skills and/or conventions to communicate

and/or challenge ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

AC9ADR10D02: reflect on their own and others' drama or practices to refine and inform their use of elements of drama, conventions and/or approaches to shape and sustain dramatic action

ENGLISH

Year 7

AC9E7LA01: understand how language expresses and creates personal and social identities

AC9E7LA02: recognise language used to evaluate texts including visual and multimodal texts, and how evaluations of a text can be substantiated by reference to the text and other sources

AC9E7LA03: identify and describe how texts are structured differently depending on their purpose and how language features vary in texts

AC9E7LE01: identify and explore ideas, points of view, characters, events and/or issues in literary texts, drawn from historical, social and/or cultural contexts, by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors

AC9E7LE02: form an opinion about characters, settings and events in texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others' opinions and justifying a response

AC9E7LE03: explain the ways that literary devices and language features such as dialogue, and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts

AC9E7LE04: discuss the aesthetic and social value of literary texts using relevant and appropriate metalanguage

AC9E7LE05: identify and explain the ways that characters, settings and events combine to create meaning in narratives

AC9E7LE06: identify and explain how literary devices create layers of meaning in texts including poetry

AC9E7LY03: analyse the ways in which language features shape meaning and vary according to audience and purpose

Year 8

AC9E8LA01: recognise how language shapes relationships and roles

AC9E8LA03: explain how texts are structured depending on their purpose and how language features vary, recognising that some texts are hybrids

that combine different genres or elements of different genres

AC9E8LE01: explain the ways that ideas and points of view may represent the values of individuals and groups in literary texts, drawn from historical, social and cultural contexts, by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors

AC9E8LE02: share opinions about the language features, literary devices and text structures that contribute to the styles of literary texts

AC9E8LE03: explain how language and/or images in texts position readers to respond and form viewpoints

AC9E8LY01: identify how texts reflect contexts

AC9E8LY02: use interaction skills for identified purposes and situations, including when supporting or challenging the stated or implied meanings of spoken texts in presentations or discussion

AC9E8LY03: analyse and evaluate the ways that language features vary according to the

purpose and audience of the text, and the ways that sources and quotations are used in a text

AC9E8LY04: analyse how authors organise ideas to develop and shape meaning

Year 9

AC9E9LA01: recognise how language empowers relationships and roles

AC9E9LA03: examine how authors adapt and subvert text structures and language features by experimenting with spoken, written, visual and multimodal elements, and their combination

AC9E9LA07: analyse how symbols in still and moving images augment meaning

AC9E9LA08: analyse how vocabulary choices contribute to style, mood and tone

AC9E9LE01: analyse the representations of people and places in literary texts, drawn from historical, social and cultural contexts, by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors

AC9E9LE02: present a personal response to a literary text

comparing initial impressions and subsequent analysis of the whole text

AC9E9LY01: analyse how representations of people, places, events and concepts reflect contexts

AC9E9LY02: listen to spoken texts that have different purposes and audiences, analysing how language features position listeners to respond in particular ways, and use interacting skills to present and discuss opinions regarding these texts

AC9E9LY03: analyse and evaluate how language features are used to represent a perspective of an issue, event, situation, individual or group

Year 10

AC9E10LA01: understand how language can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people

AC9E10LA03: analyse text structures and language features and evaluate their effectiveness in achieving their purpose

AC9E10LA07: evaluate the features of still and moving images, and the effects of those choices on representations

AC9E10LE01: analyse representations of individuals, groups and places and evaluate how they reflect their context in literary texts by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors

AC9E10LE03: analyse how the aesthetic qualities associated with text structures, language

features, literary devices and visual features, and the context in which these texts are experienced, influence audience response

AC9E10LE04: evaluate the social, moral or ethical positions represented in literature

AC9E10LE05: analyse how text structure, language features, literary devices and intertextual connections shape interpretations of texts

AC9E10LE06: compare and evaluate how “voice” as a literary device is used in different types of texts, such as poetry, novels and film, to evoke emotional responses

AC9E10LE07: analyse and evaluate the aesthetic qualities of texts

AC9E10LY01: analyse and evaluate how people, places, events and concepts are represented in texts and reflect contexts

AC9E10LY02: listen to spoken texts and explain the purposes and effects of text structures and language features, and use interaction skills to discuss and present an opinion about these texts

AC9E10LY03: analyse and evaluate how language features are used to implicitly or explicitly represent values, beliefs and attitudes

MUSIC

Year 7 and 8

AC9AMU8E01: investigate the ways that composers and/or performers use the elements of music and/or compositional devices in music composed across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

Year 9 and 10

AC9AMU10E01: investigate composers’ and/or performers’ use of elements of music, compositional devices and/or vocal/instrumental techniques in music from a range of cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

-  **Literacy**
-  **Critical and Creative Thinking**
-  **Personal and Social Capability**
-  **Intercultural Understanding**
-  **Ethical Understanding**

Activity 3: Tableau and Physical Theatre

Inspired by the powerful imagery and emotional tone of the performance, students could create tableaux (frozen images) that represent key moments or themes from *Hewa Rwanda*.

Using physical theatre techniques, they could embody these moments, focusing on the physicality of emotions like grief, love, and resilience.

After presenting their tableaux, students discuss how body language and physical expression can convey complex emotional states, mirroring the rawness and intensity of Rugamba’s work.

DRAMA

Year 7 and 8

AC9ADR8E01: investigate ways the elements of drama and/or conventions are used to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama created and/or performed across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

AC9ADR8D01: develop performance skills relevant to selected drama styles and/or forms

AC9ADR8D02: reflect on their own and others’ drama to inform choices when manipulating elements of drama and/or conventions to shape dramatic action

AC9ADR8C01: improvise and devise drama and/or interpret scripted drama, manipulating elements of drama and applying conventions relevant to the style/form

AC9ADR8C02: evaluate and refine use of elements of drama and/or conventions to shape and sustain dramatic action and/or communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

Year 9 and 10

AC9ADR10E01: investigate use of elements of drama, performance skills and/or conventions to communicate and/or challenge ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

AC9ADR10D01: develop performance skills and/or techniques to manipulate elements of drama and/or use conventions to communicate the physical and psychological aspects of roles and characters consistent with intentions

AC9ADR10D02: reflect on their own and others’ drama or practices to refine and inform their use of elements of drama, conventions and/or approaches to shape and sustain dramatic action

AC9ADR10C01: improvise and devise drama, and interpret scripted drama, using elements of drama and conventions to shape and manipulate dramatic action and convey intended ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

AC9ADR10C02: rehearse and refine drama making deliberate aesthetic choices to unify dramatic meaning

AC9ADR10P01: perform improvised, devised and/or scripted drama to audiences, using performance skills and conventions to shape the drama.

-  **Literacy**
-  **Critical and Creative Thinking**
-  **Personal and Social Capability**
-  **Intercultural Understanding**
-  **Ethical Understanding**



Activity 4: Memoir Monologue Writing

Students write monologues inspired by the themes of loss, memory, and personal reflection as presented in *Hewa Rwanda*.

They can choose to write from their own personal experience of loss, memory and personal reflection, or they might assume the perspective of a historical figure, an ancestor, or a fictional character who might have been affected by a significant.

Using the following Memory Mapping exercise can help provide structure for student writing.

TASK: Memory Mapping

Students create a Memory Map based on their own experiences of family and loss, or those of a fictional or historical character. This activity can help to build students' empathy to the experiences of Dorcy Rugamba despite their most likely vastly differing context, and can be a way in for students to find where

similar feelings of family, belonging, survival, hope and healing are present in their own lives, especially if they write from personal experiences.

Each student will require a large piece of paper and a pencil

1. Give students 5 minutes to quickly draw a timeline or 'memory map' of their lives or the life of a chosen historical or fictional character ranging from as early as they can remember to the present day (or the character's final day)
2. When time is up give students 2 – 3 minutes with a partner to share their memory maps with each other, insofar as they are comfortable to share.
3. Ask students to independently return to their memory map and with a different colour pen or highlighter to mark and label significant moments on their memory map as follows. They should try to avoid having more than one label per prompt.

Choose from a variety of prompts including

- a moment of family togetherness
- a moment of love
- a moment of home
- a moment of belonging
- a moment of fear
- a moment of being loneliness
- a moment of loss
- a moment of injustice
- a moment of survival
- a moment of healing
- a moment of hope

4. After identifying these moments, ask students to

choose 2 – 3 moments that evoke the most memories for them. What images, symbols, sounds, smells or tastes come to mind when they remember these moments? Ask students to note these thoughts on their maps next to their chosen memories.

TASK: Memoir in Minutes: Ask students to choose one of these moments they they feel most comfortable or inspired to write about. Give them 15 minutes to write a monologue in first person that recounts the memory and feelings of that time. Encourage them to use the symbols and sensory memories they noted in the previous step when writing their pieces.

Use this as a draft to polish a personal recount written piece, a monologue script or performance.

This piece of memoir writing could become the basis of a summative assessment task as a hypothetical or realised performance piece in Stage 1 Drama (AT3 Creative Synthesis) or Stage 2 Drama (AT2 Evaluation and Creativity combined task or part task).

DRAMA

Year 7 and 8

AC9ADR8D02: reflect on their own and others' drama to inform choices when manipulating elements of drama and/or conventions to shape dramatic action

AC9ADR8C01: improvise and devise drama and/or interpret scripted drama, manipulating elements of drama and applying conventions relevant to the style/ form

AC9ADR8C02: evaluate and refine use of elements of drama and/or conventions to shape and sustain dramatic action and/or communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

AC9ADR8P01: rehearse and perform improvised, devised and/or scripted drama to audiences, using performance skills and conventions relevant to style and/or form

Year 9 and 10

AC9ADR10D01: develop performance skills and/or techniques to manipulate elements of drama and/or use conventions to communicate the physical and psychological aspects of roles and characters consistent with intentions

AC9ADR10D02: reflect on their own and others' drama or practices to refine and inform their use of elements of drama, conventions and/or approaches to shape and sustain dramatic action

AC9ADR10C01: improvise and devise drama, and interpret scripted drama, using elements of drama and conventions to shape and manipulate dramatic action and convey intended ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

AC9ADR10P01: perform improvised, devised and/or scripted drama to audiences,

using performance skills and conventions to shape the drama.

ENGLISH

Year 7

AC9E7LA01: understand how language expresses and creates personal and social identities

AC9E7LA05: understand how complex and compound-complex sentences can be used to elaborate, extend and explain ideas

AC9E7LE01: identify and explore ideas, points of view, characters, events and/or issues in literary texts, drawn from historical, social and/or cultural contexts, by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors

AC9E7LE07: create and edit literary texts that experiment with language features and literary devices encountered in texts

AC9E7LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, selecting subject matter, and using text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features as appropriate to convey information, ideas and opinions in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical

AC9E7LY07:

plan, create, rehearse and deliver presentations for purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical, by selecting text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features, and using features of voice including volume, tone, pitch and pace

Year 8

AC9E8LE06: create and edit literary texts that experiment with language features and literary devices for particular purposes and effects

AC9E8LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, organising and expanding ideas, and selecting text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features for purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical

AC9E8LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver spoken and multimodal presentations for audiences and purposes,

selecting language features, literary devices, visual features and features of voice to suit formal or informal situations, and organising and developing ideas in texts in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical

Year 9

AC9E9LE06: create and edit literary texts, that may be a hybrid, that experiment with text structures, language features and literary devices for purposes and audiences

AC9E9LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, organising, expanding and developing ideas, and selecting text structures, language features, literary devices and multimodal features for purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

AC9E9LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver spoken and multimodal presentations for purpose and audience, using language features, literary devices and features of voice such as volume, tone, pitch and pace, and organising, expanding and developing ideas in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

Year 10

AC9E10LE08: create and edit literary texts with a sustained “voice”, selecting and adapting text structures, literary devices, and language, auditory and visual features for purposes and audiences

AC9E10LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, organising, expanding and developing ideas through experimenting with text structures, language features, literary devices and multimodal features for specific purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

AC9E10LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver spoken and multimodal presentations by experimenting with rhetorical devices, and the organisation and development of ideas, to engage audiences for different purposes in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical



Literacy



Critical and Creative Thinking



Personal and Social Capability



Intercultural Understanding



Ethical Understanding



Activity 5: Musical Letters

Engage students in a group discussion about the themes of cultural memory, identity, and ancestral connections explored in *Hewa Rwanda*.

- How were these ideas explored in the production?
- How were literary, technical and performance elements of theatre manipulated and applied in order to convey these ideas?
- How did music influence the audience’s response to these ideas and enhance the performance storytelling?

Following the discussion, student writes a short letter or poem addressed to someone who is no longer present in their life. This exercise would allow them to process the themes of absence and remembrance in a deeply personal way, while also honing their creative writing skills.

TASK: Write a short letter or poem addressed to someone who is no longer present in your life. In your letter, you might remember their personal characteristics, their impact on you, memories you treasure, feelings that you retain for them, or what you would like to say to them now.

- Rehearse a reading of your letter for performance. This could be a reading for a live audience, to the class, or an audio or video recording of your letter.
- Consider how you can use music and sound, both pre-recorded and live, to enhance the emotional mood and atmosphere of your storytelling.
- Consider where silence and pause can also be powerful in enhancing the mood and atmosphere.
- Make choices about your use of music and sound and apply these techniques to your performance to create dramatic impact in your storytelling.

You could present this as a realised musical reading performance or develop a concept for a hypothetical performance or presentation of the work.

A note to Stage 1 and 2 Drama and Music teachers: You could use this exercise as the basis for an **AT3 Creative Synthesis task in Stage 1 Drama**, an **AT2 Creating or AT3 Creative Presentation task in Stage 2 Drama**, or as a task or part of an inquiry in **Stage 2 Music Explorations**.

DRAMA

Year 7 and 8

AC9ADR8D02: reflect on their own and others’ drama to inform choices when manipulating elements of drama and/or conventions to shape dramatic action

AC9ADR8C01: improvise and devise drama and/or interpret scripted drama, manipulating elements of drama and applying conventions relevant to the style/form

AC9ADR8C02: evaluate and refine use of elements of drama and/or conventions to shape and sustain dramatic action and/or communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

AC9ADR8P01: rehearse and perform improvised, devised and/or scripted drama to audiences, using performance skills and conventions relevant to style and/or form

Year 9 and 10

AC9ADR10D01: develop performance skills and/or techniques to manipulate

elements of drama and/or use conventions to communicate the physical and psychological aspects of roles and characters consistent with intentions

AC9ADR10D02: reflect on their own and others' drama or practices to refine and inform their use of elements of drama, conventions and/or approaches to shape and sustain dramatic action

AC9ADR10C01: improvise and devise drama, and interpret scripted drama, using elements of drama and conventions to shape and manipulate dramatic action and convey intended ideas, perspectives and/or meaning

AC9ADR10C02: rehearse and refine drama making deliberate aesthetic choices to unify dramatic meaning

AC9ADR10P01: perform improvised, devised and/or scripted drama to audiences, using performance skills and conventions to shape the drama.

ENGLISH

Year 7

AC9E7LA01: understand how language expresses and creates personal and social identities

AC9E7LA05: understand how complex and compound-complex sentences can be used to elaborate, extend and explain ideas

AC9E7LE01: identify and explore ideas, points of view, characters, events and/or issues in literary texts, drawn from historical,

social and/or cultural contexts, by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors

AC9E7LE07: create and edit literary texts that experiment with language features and literary devices encountered in texts

AC9E7LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, selecting subject matter, and using text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features as appropriate to convey information, ideas and opinions in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical

AC9E7LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver presentations for purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical, by selecting text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features, and using features of voice including volume, tone, pitch and pace

Year 8

AC9E8LE06: create and edit literary texts that experiment with language features and literary devices for particular purposes and effects

AC9E8LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, organising and expanding ideas, and selecting text structures, language features, literary devices and visual features for purposes

and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical

AC9E8LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver spoken and multimodal presentations for audiences and purposes, selecting language features, literary devices, visual features and features of voice to suit formal or informal situations, and organising and developing ideas in texts in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive and/or analytical

Year 9

AC9E9LE06: create and edit literary texts, that may be a hybrid, that experiment with text structures, language features and literary devices for purposes and audiences

AC9E9LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, organising, expanding and developing ideas, and selecting text structures, language features, literary devices and multimodal features for purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

AC9E9LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver spoken and multimodal presentations for purpose and audience, using language features, literary devices and features of voice such as volume, tone, pitch and pace, and organising, expanding and developing ideas in ways that may be imaginative, reflective,

informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

Year 10

AC9E10LE08: create and edit literary texts with a sustained "voice", selecting and adapting text structures, literary devices, and language, auditory and visual features for purposes and audiences

AC9E10LY06: plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts, organising, expanding and developing ideas through experimenting with text structures, language features, literary devices and multimodal features for specific purposes and audiences in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

AC9E10LY07: plan, create, rehearse and deliver spoken and multimodal presentations by experimenting with rhetorical devices, and the organisation and development of ideas, to engage audiences for different purposes in ways that may be imaginative, reflective, informative, persuasive, analytical and/or critical

MUSIC

Year 7 and 8

AC9AMU8D01: develop and practise listening/aural skills and vocal and/or instrumental skills/ techniques for manipulating elements of music to achieve expressive effects

AC9AMU8D02: reflect on their own and others' music to inform choices they make as composers and performers about how they will manipulate elements of music and/or compositional devices

AC9AMU8C02: compose using the elements of music and compositional devices to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning, and notate, document and/or record the music

AC9AMU8P01: perform music using relevant vocal and/or instrumental techniques and performance skills

Year 9 and 10

AC9AMU10D02: reflect on their own and others' music to inform choices they make as composers and performers about how they will interpret and/or manipulate elements of music and/or compositional devices

AC9AMU10C02: compose music, manipulating and combining elements of music and compositional devices relevant to chosen styles and/or forms to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning and notate, document and/or record the music

AC9AMU10P01: rehearse and present planned performances of music they have learnt and/or composed, using relevant vocal/ instrumental techniques and performance skills



Literacy



Critical and Creative Thinking



Personal and Social Capability



Intercultural Understanding



Ethical Understanding

About the Company

Rwanda Arts Initiative RAI: Rwanda Arts Initiative (RAI) is a not-for-profit organisation established in 2012 to develop and professionalise Rwanda's arts and culture industry by setting up an incubator in Kimihurura. The organisation's main activities are management, consultancy and expertise for cultural projects, training, production and distribution, and advocacy with public authorities and private bodies.

RAI was created with the aim of promoting culture and art as factors in development, diversifying the Rwandan economy and enriching the country's social and cultural life. RAI is therefore committed to strengthening the regional cultural industry by forging partnerships with cultural operators in the East African Community (including Burundi, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania) and the DRC, as well as

building bridges of South-South cooperation with countries such as Burkina Faso.

Dorcy Rugamba is a writer and prominent figure in the Rwandan cultural scene, known for his powerful narrative style and rare intensity. In recent years, his work as an artist has focused on resisting the erasure of victims by giving them names, faces, and lives, transforming them from mere statistics into individuals with dreams, families, and histories. He believes it is essential to breathe new life into these stories, restoring their humanity.

An actor, author, and director, Rugamba co-authored *Rwanda 94*, a landmark collective work. In 2001, he founded the Urwintore collective to promote Rwandan artists on both local and international stages. In 2012, he established

the Rwanda Arts Initiative, an arts center in Kigali. His work *Les Restes Suprêmes*, created in 2020, was critically acclaimed, and in October of that year, he collaborated with Abderrahmane Sissako and Damon Albarn on the opera *Le vol du Boli* at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. In 2024, he co-founded the Kigali Triennial of Contemporary Art.

Majnun, a charismatic artist from Senegal, chose his name, meaning "madman" in Arabic, to symbolize the freedom found in madness. Growing up in an art-rich environment, he discovered hip-hop before embracing the guitar, which led him to become a multi-instrumentalist. His eclectic style, influenced by his nomadic lifestyle, is expressed through his voice, which narrates the extraordinary journey of his life with sincerity and emotion. This time, he focuses on sharing the story of his homeland.



Links

Website

RAI Rwanda Arts Initiative africalia.be/en/rwanda-arts-initiative

Articles

Scar Tissue; Article in The Guardian that speaks of Dorcy Rugamba's earlier works inspired by the killing of his family in the genocide: theguardian.com/world/2007/oct/31/rwanda.theatre

Rwanda: Senegal's Majnun, Local Musicians Thrill Kigalians; article reviewing Majnun's contribution to a live music concert in Kigali organised by Dorcy Rugamba and the Rwandan Arts Initiative: allafrica.com/stories/202407220064

Resource developed by Aldo Longobardi 2025

The resource remains the property of Adelaide Festival Corporation 2025.

Copyright protects this Education Resource. Except for purposes permitted by the Copyright Act, reproduction by whatever means is prohibited. However, limited photocopying for classroom use only is permitted by educational institutions.



ADELAIDE FESTIVAL
AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL



28 FEB – 16 MAR 2025

