

The Black Arts Movement gave African Americans a unique voice in which they could express themselves in a way they could not before. The movement gave African Americans a voice in which they could express themselves through different artistic mediums. One of these artistic mediums was theater. One way that theater was implemented in the movement was through the protest theater. Formal protest theater is defined as incorporating a strong theme in a play that opposes social, political, or environmental injustices. Ed Bullins was a play write involved in the Black Arts Movement that emphasized a theme in his plays that highlighted social and political injustices pertaining to freedom of expression free of white influence. One play where Bullins emphasized this theme was in *How Do You Do*.

In *How Do You Do*, Bullins created a juxtaposition between two characters to reflect two different perspectives on white culture and how African Americans should deal with it. One perspective, which was manifested through the character of Roger, was that African Americans should adopt white culture and embrace it as the norm. The other perspective, which was shown through the character of Paul, was that African Americans should break from white culture and strive to create opportunities as African Americans to influence society free of white culture. The ability to make a mark on society as African Americans and not simply serving the white community highlighted one of the main goals of the Black Arts Movement.

In this exhibit, there are artifacts that aim to support the theory that, among different artistic platforms, protest theater was a driving force behind achieving the goals of the Black Arts Movement because of its ability to expose the essence of what the movement was fighting for to the broadest audience possible. In addition to the period of the Black Arts Movement, this exhibit will examine how protest theater is used today and whether it has similar intentions and effects on fighting social, political, or environmental injustices.

