

Document Display: Wake Up: Black Theatre

PLAYS AND PAGEANTS
FROM
the LIFE of the NEGRO
WILLIS RICHARDSON



HSP is pleased to present its new document display, *Wake Up: Black Theatre*. Curated by Tauheed J. Alim *with funding from the Arts Intern program at the Studio InSTITUTE*, it uses HSP's collection of theatre documents and ephemera to trace the history of Black-led theatre in the United States from the 19th century through the late 20th century.

Beginning with minstrel shows in the early 19th century, the exhibition explores the transition from stereotypical depiction of Black music, dance and theatre to the New Deal-funded theatre of the early 20th century. Called "The Negro Movement", black people were employed at all stages of production, though the program only lasted from 1935 to 1939.

With the rise of Black Power in the late 20th century, the Black Theatre movement turned to telling politically motivated stories dedicated to focusing on self-love, cultural awareness and unity.

The document display contains songs, playbills, posters and other artifacts of these movements, and raises questions about how art and identity intersect, and the power of innovation in the Black Arts movement.

This display is free at HSP until the 6th of October, so plan to visit soon!

(Can't make it in person? Visit our online display [here](#) [1]!)

Links

[1] <http://hsp.org/history-online/exhibits/wake-black-theater>