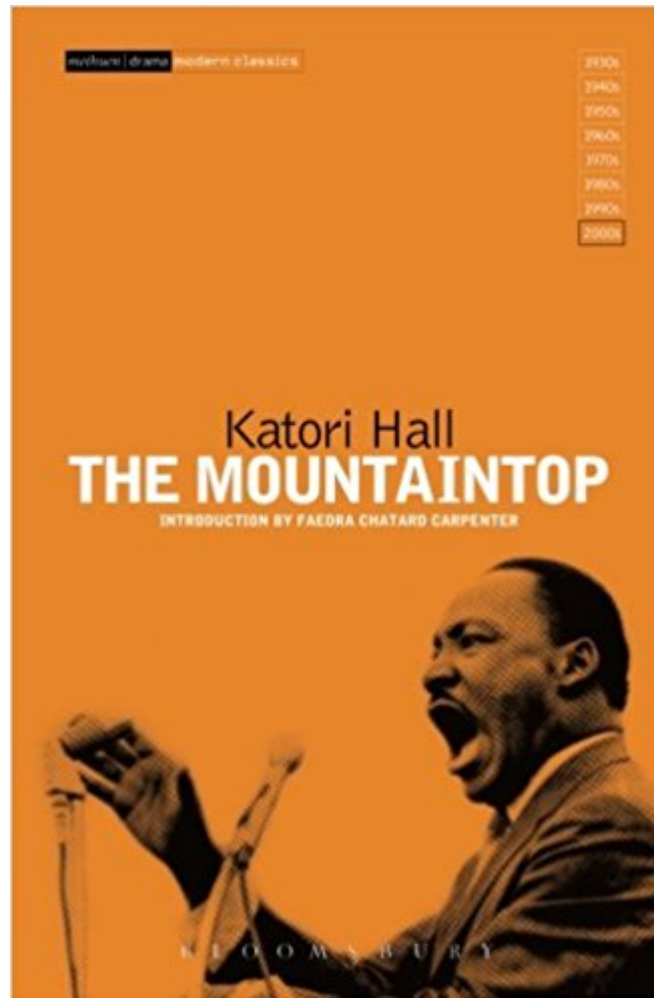




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The Mountaintop (Modern Classics)



Synopsis

Exactly one year ago, I stood in that crumbling pulpit in Riverside and shouted that this war would be our own violent undoing, freedom's suicide . . . Well, I'll tell you, there weren't too many Amens that Sunday. But who is a man who does not speak his mind? He is not a man, but I am a man. The night before his assassination, King retires to room 306 in the now-famous Lorraine Motel after giving an acclaimed speech to a massive church congregation. When a mysterious young maid visits him to deliver a cup of coffee, King is forced to confront his past and the future of his people. Portraying rhetoric, hope and ideals of social change, *The Mountaintop* also explores being human in the face of inevitable death. The play is a dramatic feat of daring originality, historical narration and triumphant compassion. This Modern Classics edition of the play features a foreword by Michael Eric Dyson and an introduction by Faedra Chatard Carpenter, Assistant Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies in Theatre, University of Maryland.

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Customer Reviews

• *Inventive and startlingly moving* • *The Times* • *Sometimes a play comes out of the blue and knocks everyone for six . . . A beautiful and startling piece, beginning naturalistically before shifting gear into something magical, spiritual and touching . . . A play that keeps you marveling to the end.* • *Telegraph* • *Wondrous, hilarious and heartbreaking* • *Independent*

Winner of the Olivier Award for Best New Play 2009, *The Mountaintop* is a historical-fantastical two hander and portrays the penultimate days in the life of Martin Luther King. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

I recommend this play to students of theatre, biography, historical fiction, Black theatre, American history, Black history, and scholars on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. because it taps into something beautiful in imagining that Dr. King was not alone on that last evening of his life. Everything I hear the playwright talk about in connection with this play is usually about how she wants to humanize Dr. King and yet she imagines that Dr. King actually does something that no other human being has ever claimed - a telephone conversation with God in which God hangs up on Dr. King. Yes it is funny - that is the point - yes it is powerful to hear Dr. King beg the Almighty for more time - yes it is tragic to know that there was likely the equivalent of some talk with God - the beauty is that Ms. Katori Hall's true genius is to imagine that tragic final experience of likely doubt, fear, etc., in a way that still elevates the legend of Dr. King and yet elevates all of us right along with him.

This is a powerful play with an important message for our time: we all have the potential to be change agents. I'd love to put on this play for my community. Unfortunately the too often used "f" word limits my ability because I run a small religious nonprofit. I completely understand the use of the word. And although I don't shy from getting people out of their comfort zones, the repeated use of the word would be too much for my audience. Still it is a great and powerful work.

An imaginative work of fantastical realism. A disarmingly unique rendering of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., coupled with engaging, natural dialogue. I think I appreciate Katori Hall's focus on King as an imperfect man more than I enjoyed it. At times, I felt as though Hall was trying a tick too hard, or with a lack of subtlety, to bring King down from his moral throne and put him even-keel with the rest of humanity. However flawed King's character, we see a man with only good intentions, doing what he believes to be best not just for 'his people' (suffering and oppressed African-Americans), but all people living within the confines of the United States of America. A wonderful little blurb Hall added: King: You smoke like a man. Camae: You smoke like a fruit. King: Aww, Camae, don't use those kinda words... Camae: What, you root for the fruits? King: Indeed I do. Alla God's children got wings. As the play nears its end, it rears back and thrusts at the audience (much like Dr. King's sermons), bombarding us with powerful, constant rhetoric. Get this play. Whether you love or you hate it, you'd be hard-pressed to deny it's uniqueness as a work of a theatre, and especially it's

unique rendering as a bold new work of art.

I was told to read this by a friend and I am thoroughly ashamed that I didn't read it sooner. It is a must read. No literary collection can be considered complete without it.

The play book is well written. I saw the play in Chicago first and was very impressed with the actors and surprised by some of the content. I wanted to find out how much creative license the director used in producing thos play or was the content of the author closely followed. The director's interpretation of the play closely aligned with the author's play. It was an easy read for me since I'd just seen the play, please be open minded when you read this play or if you go see the production. Definitely worth reading and seeing it.

I would like to think??? That God would send an angel to all of us before we were to die....BUT if anyone deserved that honor it would be MLK....however, this was a different sort of angel and it gave you a different view of the great MLK. a more human view. You laughed, you cried and you wondered could this have really occurred? Would have loved to have seen the Play..

Great play. Winner of the Oliver Award in England for Best New Play. That's like winning a Tony over here and the writer is American!

Several of our students saw this play performed at a local theater by professional actors. They loved it and so did I. They wanted to reread some of the statements in the play. If you have a chance highly recommend reading and seeing this play. It portrays the last days of Martin Luther King's life in a different way. Quite intriguing.

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