



IN DARFUR

by Winter Miller
directed by Nick Bowling

STUDY GUIDE

prepared by
Maren Robinson, Dramaturg

This Study Guide for *In Darfur* was prepared by Maren Robinson and edited by Karen A. Callaway and Lara Goetsch for TimeLine Theatre, its patrons and educational outreach. Please request permission to use these materials for any subsequent production.

© TimeLine Theatre 2011

— STUDY GUIDE —
Table of Contents

About the Playwright 3

The Play: A Production History 3

The Interview: Nick Bowling Talks to Winter Miller..... 3

The Context: Sudan and the Conflict in Darfur 8

The Leader: Omar al-Bashir 11

The Crimes: Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity 12

The Players: Organizations and Groups in Darfur and Sudan 13

The Locations: The World of the Play 15

Timeline: Conflict in Darfur and Sudan..... 16

In Darfur: Facts at a Glance 18

Women in Darfur 19

The Farchana Manifesto 19

Discussion Questions 20

What You Can Do: Contacting Government Officials 21

References and Resources 23

***Download a PDF of the entire
Study Guide at TimeLine’s website:
[http://www.timelinetheatre.com/in_darfur/
InDarfur_StudyGuide.pdf](http://www.timelinetheatre.com/in_darfur/InDarfur_StudyGuide.pdf)***

The Playwright: Winter Miller



Winter Miller is a playwright and journalist whose plays include *In Darfur*, *The Penetration Play*, *Conspicuous* and *Cake and Ice Cream*. She is working on *Paternity*, mentored by Craig Lucas with the Cherry Lane Mentor Project; *The Arrival* as a 2010 Sundance Institute Playwriting Fellow; a musical called *Amandine*; and a play, *Home/Away*. Her

grandmother's cousin was Ben Hecht, whose play *The Front Page* will close TimeLine Theatre's 2010-11 season. For more information, visit wintermiller.com. Miller visited the Chad/Sudan border with *The New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof in 2006.

The Play: *In Darfur*

Miller wrote *In Darfur* as part of the "Two-Headed Challenge Project" co-commissioned by the Guthrie Theater and The Playwright's Center in Minneapolis. *In Darfur* premiered in New York City at The Public Theater, directed by Joanna Settle; this was followed by a standing-room-only performance at the Public's 1,800-seat venue in Central Park, a first for a play written by a woman. *In Darfur* also has been performed at Theatre J in Washington, D.C.; the Horizon Theatre in Atlanta; the Mosaic Theatre in Plantation, Fla.; the Theatre Awakening in Toronto, Canada; and in benefit readings nationwide. TimeLine's production is its Chicago premiere.

The Interview: Director Nick Bowling Talks to Winter Miller

"We were told the Janjaweed were coming to the exact soil we were standing on and we had to leave a town full of the elderly, children and the ill to face the Janjaweed on their own. We looked at their faces, I took a photo of them standing there in a ring around us and wondered if this would be the last evidence that they'd lived."

Early in the rehearsal process for *In Darfur*, TimeLine Associate Artistic Director Nick Bowling (NB), who is directing the play, interviewed playwright Winter Miller (WM). They discussed why she is so passionate about the people in Darfur, what is happening to them and how she conceived the play.

(NB) How did you get involved in writing plays?

(WM) Slightly accidentally. When I was 15, my dad read a book report I wrote on Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and told me I was good at writing dialogue. I ignored this praise; I positively wanted to be an actor. After many high school and college productions I landed in New York City, thoroughly unprepared. I was too much in my head. I kept getting cast as a boy or a very clean-shaven young man in mostly terrible productions. Seeking agency, I wrote myself a screenplay, which came in handy a few months later. I applied to two graduate schools, one for acting, the other for playwriting. Let fate decide. I was mailed someone else's rejection letter to NYU's acting school and was accepted into Columbia's playwriting program.

(NB) Your play, *In Darfur*, came out of a trip you took with Nicholas Kristof, the well-known *New York Times* columnist. How did that trip come about, and can you describe the experience?

(WM) I was working as Nick's researcher at the *Times*, and he was writing about Darfur before anyone else really was, at least with a wide audience. I began to know about atrocities most people I knew had no idea were going on, and I couldn't stop thinking about what could I do to bring awareness to this conflict— assuming that if we knew what was happening, the world collectively would intervene. False assumption on my part.

Since Nick had the Op-Ed writing part covered well, I thought about what I could bring to the table and came up with the idea to write a play about Darfur. It was my good fortune to win the commission from the Playwrights Center and the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis called the Two Headed Challenge. This gave me some money to cover my plane fare to Chad and the guts to believe I could write a play that wasn't a dark comedy and didn't have my family in it. Oh, and was about genocide in Africa, in a place few had heard of yet.

Nick didn't want to take me with him; he said it was too dangerous. I explained that just as he isn't an armchair reporter, I was not an armchair playwright and to write about something so unfamiliar to me, I needed to go there. I needed to breathe in the dust, feel the ground, look into people's eyes and just feel what it felt like to be there, or else I felt in danger of writing an academic treatise rather than a play with the intention to open hearts.

The experience was life altering. To experience firsthand the resilience of the refugees I met along the Chad/Sudan border, to see what they had survived and were still trying to survive each day taught me things I didn't know about the human spirit.

The night sky there is the most beautiful I've ever seen anywhere in the world, including way out in the middle of the ocean where there's nothing but sea.

There were no clouds, was no humidity, and there was so little electricity that the night sky lights up like a thick black curtain pebbled with lights.

It was difficult to be powerless to actually do anything on the ground that would save a life. We were told the Janjaweed were coming to the exact soil we were standing on and we had to leave a town full of the elderly, children and the ill—all those who weren't strong enough to flee and had been left—to face the Janjaweed on their own. We looked at their faces, I took a photo of them standing there in a ring around us and wondered if this would be the last evidence that they'd lived. We got in the car and drove away. We had no other choice. As we drove in silence, I was painfully aware of how vulnerable they all were and the privilege we were born into and that we weren't going to be heroes.

I saw a young man dying, because he was fighting on behalf of the Janjaweed, and he and his horse had been shot. His friend, who was next to him tied loosely in ropes, said they had gone against their tribe because they were going to be paid \$200, and they needed the money. I understood the desperation it must have taken for him to betray his neighbors. I also knew we weren't going to put him in our car and drive him to the hospital because he'd crossed a line; he'd made a decision, and he was going to have to, in that moment, live and die with it.

(NB) When you took that trip, did you already have an idea what story you wanted to tell? How did the idea evolve during your research and writing of the play?

(WM) I knew the plot and the three main characters. In order to submit to the Two Headed Challenge, an outline was required. I came up with it in about an hour or two—that never happens with me; plot is something I plod toward and I make a lot of mistakes along the way.

The main character was based on a woman Nick had written about in one of his columns, Hawa, a college-educated English teacher. She was chained to a hospital bed because she had been raped, and the aid worker who had helped her had reported to the UN that she'd been raped. The Sudanese police, sent by the government, came and arrested her, because being raped is a crime of adultery.

I wanted Western characters in the play because I wanted an American audience to resonate with what was happening in Darfur, and I thought it would be most accessible if I presented people and scenarios that I and people I know could relate to. I wanted this to be a play that would be seen. Or else, why write this one at all?

(NB) In the play, you deal with the ethical challenges a journalist faces in getting a story out without compromising the people who are acting as

sources. Did you have to resolve similar challenges in bringing this story to the stage?

(WM) Well, I wanted Carlos, the aid worker, to be affiliated with a particular aid group that is well known worldwide. But when this aid organization read the play—I had them fact-check it, along with a lot of other people—they said, you can't name our organization; you will endanger our people, you will jeopardize our freedom to be there if we are seen as taking a political stance.

In terms of my sources, I protected all of them; I let nothing be traceable to any one particular person. I imagined all the journalist and aid-worker stuff based on things that actually could happen—I interviewed a lot of journalists and aid workers. I don't think you can really compare a play that is a work of fiction based on some true events with a journalist's role, which is to tell the story with true facts. What I did was look for emotional truth and then back it up with stuff that could have happened.

(NB) Interesting. Can you say more about how you view the role of a journalist versus that of a playwright?

(WM) To me, it's two sides of the same coin. As a journalist or a playwright your ultimate goal is to tell a good story. The first requires factual information, attributions about who said what and what happened chronologically, and a real attention to perceiving a situation as objectively as possible. As a playwright, I seek emotional truth; people need to do actions and feel emotions that are believable or else the story is a hollow shell. I can play with who said what and make it more dramatic, but I'm still going for the same goal, to tell a particular truth.

(NB) What did you wish to accomplish with this play?

(WM) I wanted to point out the complexity of the conflict, that it isn't simply Arabs versus Africans, Christians versus Muslims. That those delineations don't take into account the way the culture is lived, nomads and farmers. That there are linguistic and cultural differences, but that they also happen on a continuum. That what made this appear like an X versus Y conflict was the propaganda of the Government of Sudan, its desire to destabilize and get rid of entire groups of people, like the Fur, the Massalit and the Zaghawa. I thought if collectively we saw what was happening to humans—to us—we could feel outside our comfort zone, raise our voices and demand leadership from world leaders and the UN. I wanted the audience's love for Hawa, the desire to see her survive, to represent our desire for all of these people to survive.

I wanted to be a part of a movement that, along with journalists and activists, was and is seeking to bring about an end to genocide in Darfur and to those genocides that are brewing in other hot spots. I wanted to say, "Look,

here it is: you know what's going on. What you do about it is your choice, but you can't say you didn't know."

(NB) There will be a great deal of political activity happening between north and south Sudan in 2011. How may this affect Darfur?

(WM) The entire country may be destabilized. There may be another genocide unfolding in south Sudan, and Darfur will potentially be further forgotten. These people who are living scattered in refugee camps and camps for internally displaced persons—they don't have their lives or their livelihood back, and they have not been given safety. If all hell breaks loose in southern Sudan, then you've simply got more bodies to bury, more children without parents—and peace slips further away.

(NB) In just the few years since the play was written, the situation in Darfur has changed dramatically. How do you think this affects our experience of the play?

(WM) It has and it hasn't changed. People are living and dying in camps. It's genocide in slow motion if you're dying from malnutrition and disease. The villages are burned, so you can't keep burning and looting what isn't there to loot. But the rapes continue. It's not safe in the camps. Women barter sex with Chadian soldiers, hoping for some protection, and HIV is passed from man to woman and to child. If you're in the audience and you think that just because people aren't being shelled every day, there's enough peace to rebuild—then you don't have the full story. When it chooses, the Government of Sudan still perpetrates violence on people who are unprotected. And by keeping aid workers out, the death toll continues.

I'll be curious to see how this audience receives the play. I chose to set it in 2004 and keep it in that time frame. But just because the play ends there, that doesn't mean that the violence isn't still a daily threat. There is a collective consciousness about what they've all lived through: There is communal trauma; there are ongoing traumas. Children aren't getting educated, and adults aren't working. It's stasis in a very horrible situation.

(NB) What would you say to someone who says, "I don't want to see a depressing play about genocide or murder"?

(WM) A) Don't go see a depressing play about genocide. But can you find a way to engage in a way of helping to end genocides, can you use your energy as a force for good? B) I don't think this play is depressing. It's a play about the resilience of the human spirit and a rallying call for action. The intention here is to remind us of our own humanity. C) What do you want to see? What matters to you? Can you trust a playwright to lead you deeper into yourself, and are you willing to feel your own discomfort in the service of empathy and justice? D) Also, there are some funny moments. I think humor is essential. Some call it gallows humor.

(NB) What's next for you?

(WM) Good question! I have no idea. Is there a suggestion box?

I'm trying to figure out how to leave enough space in my head to be an artist but to also figure out how to have some financial security. I just did an experiment of living as a nomad for almost two years to see what it would be like to just write plays and work only when absolutely necessary. It was an interesting experiment, but not sustainable. I have occasional visions about what I want to do in the world with the way I write and how I am eager to hear marginalized voices, but I'm not entirely sure how to birth that in an ongoing way.

On a trip to Uganda to write plays for former child soldiers in an Internally Displaced Persons camp, I realized that theater—or art—can nourish in a way that is just as necessary as medicine, food, shelter and safety. I saw how when people tell their stories, when they experience their aliveness in art, that sustains them through the darkest of times. It provides a memory, an escape.

I'd like to manifest some kind of "Playwrights Without Borders," where a team of artists goes into places of deep conflict and works to allow the expression of that trauma and conflict in a way that addresses human resilience and beauty. People want to know they matter; telling their story is one way to do that. So I'd like to facilitate a lot more storytelling among people as a means of bridging our differences and opening our hearts. It sounds Pollyanna-ish, but I'm willing to be mocked for something I've seen with my own eyes. When we put ourselves in the shoes of another, most of us—many of us—find compassion. I seek that compassion for all of us, myself included.

(NB) Is there anything else you would like to share about *In Darfur* or yourself?

(WM) My gratitude to TimeLine for this production and to you, the audience, for receiving the work, however it lands with you and wherever you take it. Thank you.

The Context: Sudan and the Conflict in Darfur

Sudan is a country located in eastern Africa; it is bordered by Egypt, Libya, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2004 a 10-year civil war, between mostly Islamic groups in the north and Christian and Animist groups in the south, reached a cease-fire. In 2005, Sudanese president Omar Al-Bashir signed a peace agreement with rebel leader John Garang that granted south Sudan autonomy and set Jan. 9, 2011, as the date for a referendum on

independence. The peace accord did not include the mostly poor tribal regions in the west part of Sudan known as Darfur.

The name Darfur comes from the word “Dar,” which means land, and “Fur,” the name of one of the many tribal groups in west Sudan. The other main tribal groups in Darfur are the Zaghawa and the Masalit.

The conflict in Darfur has been hard for many to understand. In Darfur, African tribal farming groups live and trade with Arabic herding communities. Both groups are basically Islamic. Long intermarriage makes them virtually indistinguishable, but ongoing violence has exaggerated the perceived differences between them. Many in the nomadic groups consider themselves Arab and better than their African counterparts.

The already arid climate of Sudan has been taxed with droughts and overgrazing of desert vegetation. This has led to further deterioration of the soil and an increase in deserts, a process known as desertification. Tensions rose as tribal farmers and Arab grazing communities vied for resources stretched by drought. Poverty and limited resources led many in the farming communities to campaign for more representation in the Sudanese government. This led to the formation of rebel groups such as the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

Starting in 2003, the Government of Sudan (GOS) began surreptitiously arming militias to help provide opposition to rebel groups like the SLA and JEM. The militias, known as Janjaweed, were drawn from the nomadic Arab groups. There is also a large civilian population that is affected by these groups' activities.

In many cases it is difficult to distinguish whether atrocities committed in Darfur have been committed by the GOS or the Janjaweed, and often both are reported to be working together. Local police are a *de facto* extension of the GOS forces: International observers have reported that the police fail to investigate attacks on Darfuris and, in some cases, obstruct the work of the international monitors sent to report on the violence.

“I’m still chilled by the matter-of-fact explanation I received as to why it is women who collect firewood, even though they’re the ones who are raped. The reason is an indication of how utterly we are failing the people of Darfur, two years into the first genocide of the 21st century. ‘It is simple,’ one woman here explained. ‘When men go out, they’re killed. The women are only raped.’” — Nicholas D. Kristof writing in “A Policy of Rape,” *The New York Times*, June 5, 2005

Additionally, race has been used as a pretext for violence. The tribal farmers are referred to as Africans and denigrated as “not Arab” or “too dark.” During attacks on villages, men and male children are killed. Women are raped, gang raped and often mutilated with weapons. The rapes, including those of the elderly and children, often result in death or permanent mutilation of the victims. Rape is used as a weapon of war, as women who survive rape are often ostracized by their families or villages. Thus the systematic use of rape not only harms the victims but also is intended to destroy entire family units.

The rapes continue to occur, even in and around aid camps, and women who are treated for rape have been accused of being adulterers and punished or intimidated by local police forces. In 2005, the aid organization Doctors Without Borders issued a report that it had treated 500 cases of rape in a four-month period. In response to the report, the GOS arrested an Englishman and a Dutchman working for Doctors Without Borders.



Journalists Ann Curry and Nicholas D. Kristof in the field. Both have given information about the situation in Darfur airplay in the United States. Photo courtesy Winter Miller.

“Whatever terms it uses to describe the situation the international community cannot stand idle. ... [T]he international community must be prepared to take swift and appropriate action. By ‘action’ in such situations I mean a continuum of steps, which may include military action.” — U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan in an address to the U.N. Human Rights Commission on April 7, 2004, the 10th Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide.

According to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, by 2010 there had been 2.6 million to 2.7 million people internally displaced in Sudan, and 250,000 had sought refuge in neighboring Chad. An estimated 300,000 people have died of violence and disease.

The violence also has exacerbated the limited resources in Darfur. Villages and crops have been burned, and the few bushes and trees have been

stripped for firewood by displaced persons, thus accelerating the process of desertification.

The issue of oil is further exacerbating the problems in Sudan. Eighty percent of the country's oil production is purchased by China. China needs to acquire oil reserves for its expanding domestic economy and has been willing to deal with countries shunned by the international community because of human-rights violations. Chinese firms have built roads and infrastructure for Sudan's oil pipeline and provide security. These roads are used by the Sudanese military, and guarding the pipeline is used as a pretext for attacks on area villages. According to a BBC Investigative report, *Panorama: China's Secret War*, aired on July 14, 2008, funds from China have been used to support the war in Darfur, and China has sold equipment and weapons to the Sudanese Army.

Today, oil is still responsible for tensions in Sudan because the oil reserves are concentrated in the south.

On Jan. 9, 2011, many south Sudanese voted on a referendum to secede from Sudan, a term of the original peace accord that ended a 20-year civil war. Many observers are cautiously optimistic that the vote will be fair, and violence will not be reignited because of the vote. However, Darfur, in west Sudan, remains in a humanitarian crisis on a massive scale as those who have been displaced from their homes deal with continued disease, hunger and violence.

The Leader: Omar al-Bashir

Omar Hassan al-Bashir is the president of Sudan. He was born in 1944 in an area north of Khartoum, the country's capital. He studied at military academies in Khartoum and Cairo, graduating in 1966. He fought against Israel as an Egyptian paratrooper in the Yom Kippur War of 1973. He is married to a cousin, Fatima Khalid, and also has a second wife, Widad Babiker. He has no children.

In 1989, he led a bloodless coup in Sudan and ousted Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi. As part of the coup he suspended political parties and trade unions and instituted a version of Islamic law that included many provisions not based on traditional Islamic law, such as restrictions on free assembly and freedom of the press. Sudan effectively became a military dictatorship.

He appointed himself president in 1993, returning the country to civilian rule. Under Bashir, al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was invited to set up a base in Sudan.

Bashir was reelected in 1996; he was the only candidate.

He has denied arming the Janjaweed, although the African Union and other international observers have seen Janjaweed militias with government issued weapons and uniforms and have seen government planes attack villages in advance of Janjaweed attacks.

“It is not acceptable to put that many people’s lives at risk. We need to be able to get those humanitarian organizations back on the ground.” — President Barack Obama in a March 11, 2009, press conference after the expulsion of international aid organizations from Sudan.

On March 4, 2009, Bashir became the first sitting head of state to be indicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court (ICC) at The Hague. However, the ICC has no authority or power to extradite or incarcerate him. After the ICC decision, Bashir expelled 13 foreign-relief organizations and three Sudanese aid organizations from the country, eliminating medical aid for numerous internally displaced persons.

On April 26, 2010, Bashir was reelected after the other candidates withdrew from the election, alleging voter fraud.

The Crimes: Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity

“Call it civil war; call it ethnic cleansing; call it genocide; call it ‘none of the above.’ The reality is the same. There are people in Darfur who desperately need the help of the international community.” — Secretary of State Colin Powell, Senate Foreign Relations Committee testimony, September 2004

Genocide is defined by the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide at The Hague as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.” As initial reports about violence in Sudan emerged, many in the international community seemed reluctant to call the events taking place genocide. Naming the atrocities for what they are helped draw international attention to the violence in Sudan. However, it also sparked a debate about whether the events in Darfur were genocide, which distracted the international community and delayed international action on Darfur.

The International Criminal Court includes this in its definition of **war crimes**: “Wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity” and the “attack, or bombardment, by whatever means, of undefended towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings.”

According to the ICC, **crimes against humanity** are crimes enacted against a civilian population, including “murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment, torture, rape, persecutions on political, racial and religious grounds.”

The core of international humanitarian law is based on the 1949 **Geneva Conventions** and additional protocols. They protect civilians and aid or health workers who are not taking part in the conflicts, as well as the wounded and prisoners of war.

The Players: Organizations and Groups in Darfur and Sudan

Arab The idea of who is an Arab is complicated to many Westerners. In Sudan, the belief that leaders are of Arab descent is important in the ongoing conflicts. Most of the population of northern and western Sudan is Muslim; however, those who are perceived as African or tribal or whose skin color is darkest are called African and targeted by the Janjaweed with the tacit approval and arms of the Government of Sudan. In actuality the groups have intermarried, and it would be difficult to determine who is Arab and who is African.

Arabic A language spoken in Sudan, Africa and the Middle East. In Sudan it functions as one of several common languages through which members of different tribes with different tribal languages can communicate. Arabic is taught in many schools in Sudan.

AU (African Union) A pan-African institution set up like the United Nations to help monitor incidents in African nations. Established Sept. 9, 1999, its goals are “to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonization and apartheid; to promote unity and solidarity among African States; to coordinate and intensify cooperation for development; to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and to promote international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations.” The conflict in Darfur was one of the first tests of the AU monitors.

FRD Playwright Winter Miller created this acronym to stand for the acronyms of aid organizations, to protect their anonymity.

Fur One of the African farming tribal groups in Western Sudan. Darfur means Land of the Fur.

GOS (Government of Sudan) Sudan is a military dictatorship. There is little distinction between the Sudanese military and local police forces.

HAC The Humanitarian Affairs Commission is part of the Sudanese Government

IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) Refugees are those who flee conflict into another country. Internally displaced persons are those who are moving within the same country.

Janjaweed Believed to come from the words *jinn* (spirit) and *jawad* (horse), the word translates roughly as “devils on horseback” and is used to describe the Arab militias armed by the Sudanese government to carry out attacks on local villages.

JEM (Justice and Equality Movement) When Bashir staged the 1989 coup, he was supported by Hassan a-Turabi of the National Islamic Front, a Sudanese political party. Turabi recruited African Muslims from areas like Darfur and offered them roles in the government. In 1999, Turabi introduced a bill into the General Assembly to reduce presidential powers. Bashir dissolved the assembly, and Turabi’s supporters, including African Muslims, were purged from the government. Those purged organized the Justice and Equality Movement. Although the JEM and the Sudanese Liberation Army have worked together against the Janjaweed, they are separate entities and not free from disagreements.

Masalit Another African farming tribe in the Darfur region of Sudan.

NGOs (Non-governmental organizations) This general term refers to the various international aid or humanitarian organizations that go to countries during crisis.

SLA (Sudanese Liberation Army) The rebel army grew out of the militias founded by the Fur. Members also were recruited from the Zaghawa and Masalit tribes when the GOS started arming Arab nomadic communities and did not follow through on peace agreements to have Arabs pay blood money for tribal deaths. They began launching attacks on Sudanese government locations in February 2003. SLA Secretary-General Minni Arkou Minnawi said, “The objective of the SLA is to create a united democratic Sudan.” The SLA always has been a group of loosely allied military units with a variety of military leaders. The political arm is known as the SLM (Sudanese Liberation Movement) and the two acronyms are often used interchangeably.

HCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) This refugee agency was organized in the wake of World War II to respond to humanitarian crises related to the displacement of people around the world.

Zaghawa One of many farming communities in the Darfur region, it also refers to the language spoken by the Zaghawa tribe.

The Locations: The World of the Play



Children in Farchana Refugee Camp along the Chad/Sudan border. Around their necks they wear gris-gris, amulets to protect from harm. They are pieces of the Koran, wrapped in leather. Photo courtesy Winter Miller

Abeché is a city in Chad near the border of Sudan.

Farchana Camp Farchana is a UNHCR refugee camp in Chad very close to the border of Sudan. In 2008, during a visit by Physicians for Human Rights, a document written by eight Darfuri women in the camp was distributed. It came to be known as the Farchana Manifesto and addressed the particular problems facing women in the camps.

Kutum Camp Kutum is another city in western Darfur. It is the home of one of the three largest camps of internally displaced persons in Sudan.

Zalingei Camp The town of Zalingei in western Darfur, close to the Chad border, is home to one of many camps for internally displaced persons.

Timeline: Conflict in Darfur and Sudan

1984 Drought leads to famine in Darfur.

1987-1989 The Arab-Fur War. The first ethnic Arab militias are first organized at this time.

1989 In June, Omar al-Bashir takes control of the Government of Sudan through a bloodless coup.

1995-1999 The Arab-Masalit Conflict.

2002 Sudan's vice president, Ali Osman, warns Darfur not to follow the path of the south into civil war.

2003 The Sudan Liberation Army and Justice and Equality Movement, Darfuri rebel groups, announce their existence and attack government military facilities because of political marginalization.

The Government of Sudan responds with attacks on civilians from ethnic groups accused of supporting the rebel organizations. They use both the official military and the government-armed militias, known as Janjaweed, in the attacks. The resulting displacement of civilians leads to more than 700,000 Darfuris being driven from their homes by the end of the year.

2004 A cease-fire ends a 20-year civil war in Sudan that resulted in the deaths of two million people. The war was between the Muslim north and the Christian and Anamist south.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan visit Darfur. One camp of displaced persons is removed before Annan can see it, and he is urged to see the better camp visited by Powell.

In September, Powell testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and calls the atrocities in Sudan genocide.

The U.S. government calls the situation in Darfur genocide.

The African Union deploys a peacekeeping mission to Darfur.

The United Nations declares Darfur the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Almost 1.2 million Darfuris are driven from their homes. One million are internally displaced, and more than 150,000 refugees flee to neighboring Chad.

2005 President Bashir signs a peace agreement with rebel leader John Garang, granting south Sudan autonomy and a referendum on independence that will take place in January 2011.

The United Nations Security Council approves sanctions on those who impede the peace process.

The United Nations estimates 300,000 have died in Darfur since 2003.

The International Criminal Court at The Hague opens investigations in Darfur.

The number of internally displaced Darfuris rises to 1.85 million.

2006 The Government of Sudan signs the Darfur Peace Agreement with a faction of the Sudan Liberation Army led by Minni Minnawi, but other factions of the SLA and the Justice and Equality Movement abandon the peace talks. Because not all rebel groups agree to the peace, fighting worsens.

The United Nations Security Council approves a peacekeeping mission in Darfur of 17,000 peacekeepers.

The number of internally displaced Darfuris reaches 2.4 million.

2007 The number of internally displaced Darfuris reaches 2.6 million.

The International Criminal Court issues arrest warrants for war crimes and crimes against humanity for Sudan's humanitarian-affairs minister and a militia leader.

2008 A hybrid United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission replaces the African Union mission.

The Justice and Equality Movement and government forces clash in Omdurman, a city near Khartoum, the country's capital.

The number of internally displaced Darfuris rises to 2.7 million.

2009 The United Nations and the African Union lead efforts to resume peace talks.

On March 4, the International Criminal Court issues an arrest warrant for President Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is the first time such charges have been brought against a sitting head of state.

2009 The Sudanese government expels 13 international humanitarian aid organizations and three internal-aid organizations, creating huge gaps in medical and humanitarian aid in Darfur.

The United Nations' military commander in Darfur declares the conflict is over despite continued violence.

2010 4.7 million of Darfur's 6 million inhabitants remain adversely affected by the ongoing conflict. Peace talks continue, but without progress. 2.6 million to 2.7 million Darfuris remain displaced.

2011 Per the peace agreement signed in 2005, the residents of south Sudan voted Jan. 9 whether or not to secede from Sudan and form an independent country.

“There is a great need for us to sound the alarm in Darfur. It is a terrible humanitarian crisis compounded by a corrupt and very cruel regime in Khartoum.” — Newly endorsed Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton in a January 2009 press conference

In Darfur: Facts at a Glance

- Sudan is the largest country in Africa, roughly the size of Western Europe.
- Darfur is a region of west Sudan near the Chad border; it is about the size of France.
- There are 6 million people in the Darfur region; approximately 4.7 million have been adversely affected by the ongoing conflict.
- As of 2010, approximately 2.6 million people have been displaced in Darfur as a result of the violence.
- About 250,000 Darfuris have sought refuge in neighboring Chad.
- An estimated 300,000 Darfuris have died because of the violence or disease that has plagued the displaced persons camps.
- Approximately 80 percent of the oil in Sudan is bought by China.
- Darfur does not have oil. The oil reserves are in south Sudan.
- In 2009, after the International Criminal Court issued a warrant for the arrest of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes, 13 international aid organizations were expelled from Sudan, increasing the health risk and suffering of displaced persons.

Women in Darfur

The price paid by women and children in Darfur has been extraordinarily high. Women in villages or gathering firewood are repeatedly raped. The violence women experience, the subsequent ostracization by their communities and lack of safety even in aid camps are some of the worst human-rights violations.

In 2008, during a visit by Physicians for Human Rights to the Farchana internally displaced persons camp, a document written by eight Darfuri women in the camp was distributed. It came to be known as the Farchana Manifesto and addressed the particular problems facing women in Darfur and in the camps. The Farchana Manifesto follows, in a translation from the Save Darfur web site (<http://www.savedarfur.org/pages/the-farchana-manifesto>) It is remarkable for the resilience and hope expressed by a group of women who have endured so much.

The Farchana Manifesto

June 5, 2008

We, the women of Farchana Camp, have many concerns and problems with the lack of freedom and having the opportunity to speak about freedom.

We can assign these problems to a number of items, including the following:

1. Lack of opportunity for freedom of speech, and no one to listen to what women say.
2. Lack of freedom to go to work or engage in life's activities. If a woman is working in some occupations, responsibility is left to the woman alone in all cases, such as: illness, home activities, and responsibility for the children. While the man does what he wants with money, the responsibility is left to the woman.
3. Lack of women's equality. One man, if he has the notion, can have one wife or two or more wives.
4. Lack of freedom for women even with their own private property; for example: money, gold, household pots and pans, and livestock.
5. Women are not allowed to make contact with people outside the community. For example: visiting neighbors, family, and friends. And women are not allowed *[illegible]* to travel far, and if he allows her, he does not give her money, and he tells her, "This trip is of your own accord."

6. Lack of acceptance of higher education and universities to enable women to get ahead.
7. Failure to encourage girls in the schools and leaving the responsibility to the mothers.
8. Failure of fathers to take responsibility for girls. If something happens, the mother is blamed, and they make her hear harsh words from the family, and sometimes divorce even takes place.
9. Outside chores, such as: *[illegible]*, provisions, construction, and feeding livestock—that is, all physical demands—are the responsibility of the woman.
10. Failure to show confidence in women, such as leaving the house without the man’s knowledge and he tells her, “You went out to commit adultery.”
11. Failure to value the life of the woman. They only value her in bed. They like a lot of births, but they do not like raising sons and children.
12. Early marriage for girls and compulsory marriage without consent.
13. In the case of meetings, women do not have the freedom to speak at organizations; only men’s statements are heard.
14. Women do not know how to submit their complaints—the place and the organization that is concerned about them.

Thank you. We hope to achieve freedom for women in the whole world.

Discussion Questions

About the Play

1. The opening car ride in the play does not have a context. How did it get you into the world of the play? The car ride appears a second time in the play. How was it different the second time you saw the car ride?
2. The two Western characters in the play do things that inadvertently put a Darfuri character’s life at risk. What is the responsibility of aid workers and journalists in a region of conflict?
3. There are documentaries and news programs about the subject matter of the play. What is unique about seeing the problems of Darfur dramatized?

About the Production

1. The production makes use of a variety of projections. How do the images add to your experience of the play? How do they differ from your usual theatrical experience?
2. There are also photographs in the TimeLine lobby that are part of the experience of seeing the play. What role do images play in reaching an audience, whether they appear in a newspaper or in a play?
3. In the production, certain actors translate lines that are in Arabic or Zaghawa. As an audience, how do you adjust to hearing both languages simultaneously? What role does sound in general play in how you experience the play?

About the History

1. *In Darfur* is set in 2004. What makes the play topical for an audience in 2011?
2. The news is regularly full of violence and tragedy around the world. What is the role art can play in the conversation concerning world events?
3. When genocide has occurred around the world we often say “never again,” and yet genocide has happened again. There are many scenes in the play that are difficult to watch and the audience has to be observers of these events. In a similar way, what is the responsibility of an observer of the world when we observe violence and genocide in other countries?

What You Can Do: Contacting Government Officials

In cases of genocide throughout the world the refrain always has been “never again,” and yet genocide has occurred again and again. It can seem daunting to know what to do to help people suffering in distant countries. Here are a few resources to get you started:

Contacting Government Officials

PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES
Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
202.456.1111
whitehouse.gov/contact

SECRETARY OF STATE
Hillary Rodham Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520
202.647.4000
state.gov/secretary

ILLINOIS SENATORS

Richard J. Durbin (D)
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202.224.2152
durbin.senate.gov/contact.cfm

Mark Kirk (R)
87 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202.224.2854
kirk.senate.gov/contact_form.cfm

ILLINOIS REPRESENTATIVES

To confirm who your representative is you can go to the following website and enter your zip code: <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

United States House of Representatives
2419 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Bobby L. Rush (D – 01)
202.225.4372

Adam Kinzinger (R – 11)
202.225.3635

Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. (D – 02)
202.225.0773

Jerry F. Costello (D – 12)
202.225.5661

Dan Lipinski (D – 03)
202.225.5701

Judy Biggert (R – 13)
202.225.3515

Luis V. Gutierrez (D – 04)
202.225.8203

Randall Hultgren (R – 14)
202.225.2976

Mike Quigley (D – 05)
202.225.4061

Timothy V. Johnson (R – 15)
202.225.2371

Peter Roskam (R – 06)
202.225.4561

Don Manzullo (R – 16)
202.225.5676

Danny K. Davis (D – 07)
202.225.5006

Robert T. Schilling (R – 17)
202.225.5905

Joe Walsh (R – 08)
202.225.3711

Aaron Schock (R – 18)
202.225.6201

Janice Schakowsky (D – 09)
202.225.2111

John Shimkus (R – 19)
202.225.5271

Robert J. Dold (R – 10)
202.225.4835

References and Resources

Documentaries

The following documentaries have been useful to the cast and crew:

- *The Devil Came on Horseback* (2007), Break Thru Films, directed by Ricki Stern and Anne Sundberg, with Brian Steidle.
- *Darfur Diaries: Message from Home* (2006), directed by Aisha Bain and Jen Marlowe.
- *Darfur Now* (2007), directed by Ted Braun.
- *Sound and Sorrow* (2007), directed by Paul Freedman
- *On Our Watch*, *Frontline* on PBS (Nov. 20, 2007. This is available to watch online at www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/darfur/view/main.html)

Books

- *The Devil Came on Horseback: Bearing Witness to the Genocide in Darfur*, by Brian Steidle and Gretchen Steidle Wallace.
- *Darfur: A 21st Century Genocide*, by Gérard Prunier.
- *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*, by Julie Flint and Alex de Waal.
- *Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan*, edited by Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen.
- *A Problem From Hell: American and the Age of Genocide*, by Samantha Power
- *Not On Our Watch: The Mission to End Genocide in Darfur and Beyond* and *The Enough Moment: Fighting to End Africa's Worst Human Rights Crimes*, by John Prendergast and Don Cheadle

News Articles

There are many news sources out there, but because the play features a *New York Times* reporter and playwright Winter Miller traveled with *New York Times* reporter Nicholas D. Kristof to the Sudan border, we are providing several *Times* resources here. These are some of the articles the cast and crew found most useful for background on Darfur.

- Marc Lacey, "In Sudan, Militiamen on Horses Uproot a Million," *The New York Times*, May 4, 2004
- Nicholas D. Kristof, "A Policy of Rape," *The New York Times*, June 5, 2005
- Nicholas D. Kristof, "Is It Ever Okay to Name Rape Victims?" *The New York Times* blog, February 4, 2010

Web sites

- Nicholas Kristof, Op-Ed columnist, *The New York Times*
<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/opinion/>
- Eric Reeves, professor of English Language and Literature at Smith College, Northampton, Mass. — www.sudanreeves.org
- Mia Farrow, actress and activist — www.miafarrow.org
- Jon Nicholson, Photographer — www.jonnicholson.co.uk
- VII Photographers Covering Darfur
<http://viiphoto.wg.picturemaxx.com/>

Aid and Activist Organizations

- Art Works Projects
www.artworksprojects.org
- Chicago Council on Global Affairs
www.thechicagocouncil.org
- Enough Project
www.enoughproject.org
- Genocide Intervention Network
www.genocideintervention.net
- Human Rights Watch
www.hrw.org
- Save Darfur
www.savedarfur.org
- STAND
www.standnow.org
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
www.ushmm.org/genocide/take_action/atrisk/region/sudan