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WRITING WRONGS

Sometimes the title of a play foreshadows its power.

Take "I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me By a Young Lady From Rwanda," which opens this month through a collaboration between Dobama Theater and Tri-C East Theater. It feels like an entire paragraph on your tongue — direct, heavy, burdensome.

"I would call it remarkable, enlightening, horrific," says director Brian Zoldessy. "There is no way people won't be affected by this particular piece."

Written by Sonja Linden, the play is based on a true story, inspired by her experience at Write to Life, an organization that helps victims of atrocities cope with their trauma. It follows Juliette, a young woman who survived the Rwandan genocide and meets Simon, an erstwhile professor. Juliette has written a history of her family's experience: Her entire family had been murdered, and she survived by playing dead while lying beneath her dead relatives. Together Simon and Juliette work to complete the manuscripts and deal with their demons.

"It's a love story, but they don't fall

in love," Zoldessy says. "They learn about themselves and each other."

The two-person play features local professional actors Scott G. Miller and Andrea Belser. Zoldessy, director of the theater department at Tri-C, will open the production at the Black Box Studio Theater at Tri-C East, allowing students to have a hands-on experience with a professional production. Students will be responsible for a variety of technical components. After a two-weekend run, the show will be performed in various churches, synagogues and community centers.

"I always try to find pieces that ... will bring the hard-edged social issues to the forefront of the Cleveland audience," Zoldessy says. "If [this play] brings one person to a volunteer center wanting to help, we've done our job."

— *Tori Woods*

"I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me By a Young Lady From Rwanda," Jan. 10 through 20, Thu 7:30 p.m., Fri and Sat 8 p.m., first Sun at 7:30 p.m., other Sun 2:30 p.m.; Cuyahoga Community College East Campus, Black Box Studio Theater, 4250 Richmond Road, Highland Hills; Traveling Jan. 24 to Feb. 3 at various locations; Visit www.dobama.org for more information.