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BLOOD ON THE STAGE 1975-2000

MILESTONE PLAYS OF
CRIME, MYSTERY,
AND DETECTION

AMNON KABATCHNIK

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COURTESY: MARYGLENN MCCOMBS

OUR MEMBERS IN PRINT

BY ALYSSA DVORAK

AMNON KABATCHNIK

Suspense, drama, murder, and espionage have been common story lines throughout the long history of American and European theatre. "The motives never change—motives of revenge, jealousy, greed, and so forth. They're still the same human frailties and human weaknesses we all have," says **Amnon Kabatchnik**, a well-known author, director, and professor. In the latest book from his *Blood on the Stage* series, Kabatchnik "highlights those works of enduring importance, pioneering contributions, and outstanding success by prolific playwrights in this genre," according to publicist Maryglenn McCombs.

From a young age, Kabatchnik was captivated by the thrilling story lines and enticing plot twists. "These stories have strong plots, and the dilemmas are always dilemmas of life and death," he says. Kabatchnik became a "bona fide collector" as his personal collection grew immensely over time. "At some point it hit me that I can combine my two loves: my love for this type of literature and my profession, directing theatre. The combination led to *Blood on the Stage*." At first, the idea was developed "as a way to create a checklist of plays in the genre," he says. However, after endless hours of research, the full-scale book was formed.

"I spent long hours, eight hours a day, at the Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts going over files, making notes, and reading scripts that are not allowed to be taken out," Kabatchnik tells SDC. He also took full advantage of the libraries at Cornell and Elmira along with the Academy of Motion Pictures Library. "Those libraries with my own advanced collection helped me to write the four books that cover hundreds of plays."

After *Blood on the Stage, 1975–2000* was released in October 2012, Kabatchnik received a Silver Medal in the Benjamin Franklin Awards™ Competition. The Benjamin Franklin Award™ "recognizes excellence in independent publishing," according to McCombs.

The *Blood on the Stage* series is published by Scarecrow Press; the most recent book covers the last quarter of the 20th century, "a time period that for sheer adventure, excitement, and heart-pounding thrills, may be the genre's most intriguing era," said McCombs. Kabatchnik informed SDC that Scarecrow Press has already contracted him for the next *Blood on the Stage*, which will cover the time frame of 480 BC to 2000. "In other words, I'm going back to all those blood-spattered Greek phases," he says.

Kabatchnik has maintained his strong love of the genre since soft cover books from New York and London arrived in his hometown of Tel Aviv, Israel when he was quite young. "Those wonderful pictorial covers and exciting books literally caught me," he says. As Kabatchnik remains caught in his love of the genre, he concedes he has "a very long way to go" before he completes reading more than 250 plays that are set to be featured in his upcoming continuation of the *Blood on the Stage* series.

Since graduating from Boston University with a degree in theatre and journalism, Amnon Kabatchnik has directed numerous comedies, musicals, dramas, and thrillers in the U.S., Israel, and Canada. He was a member of the Director's Unit in New York's Actors Studio and has taught at five universities across the country. With his journalism background, Kabatchnik has written for various news publications such as the Tallahassee Democrat and the Star-Gazette of Elmira, N.Y. His first book, Sherlock Holmes on the Stage, and his series Blood on the Stage "are the culmination of Kabatchnik's lifelong work in the theatre," according to his website.