Theatre of
Remembrance

What is my name?

Themes: Remembering Today, Former Colonies
Location: Amsterdam, the Netherlands
By: Nina Haanappel

This story explores aspects of the Second World War that are often unknown — stories missing from history books, rarely the first to come to mind when we think of the war. These are the hidden stories waiting to be discovered and retold, especially those connected to the Netherlands' former colonies.

Characters:
JOHN
ERIN-NOËLLE

JOHN
What is my name?
You see me, but you don't know me.
My story and my actions are just like yours —
yet I am different… forgotten…
Why you and not me?
Where is my story?
Where is my statue?
Where is my monument?
Everyone remembers you, but everyone has forgotten me.
We stood together in battle, but…
did we also win together?
Why are you the face of *our* story?
We stood there side by side, you and I,
as brothers.
What happened to that brotherhood?
Why is it your story now instead of ours?
Nobody wants to live just to be forgotten.
Everyone knows your name —
but what is mine?

ERIN-NOËLLE
I read, I search, I read, I search.
What the hell am I looking for?
Words create stories,
and stories shape our history.
At school — page after page after page.
I have one question:
Have you ever read in your history book
about a resistance hero who looks like me?
No? Yes?

If yes, show me.
If no… that's exactly the problem.

Until a few days ago, I didn't know that Suriname
played an important role in the war —
that its raw materials were used to build airplanes here,
that without Curaçao and Aruba there would have been no fuel for those planes.

JOHN
"The war will be won on waves of oil and shipments of bauxite."

ERIN-NOËLLE
Until a few days ago, I didn't know that the British Indian Army,
with two and a half million Indian men and women, was the largest volunteer army in history.
That sixty percent of the French army consisted of Black soldiers.
That 250,000 North Africans fought in that same army.
And that they weren't "just" forgotten,
or "accidentally" lost among the sea of postwar stories
that had to be told.

JOHN
No.
The face of the liberator *had* to be white.

ERIN-NOËLLE
Tell me — where is *that* written in our books?
How can you read between the lines
when the lines aren't even there?

In May 2021, the short film Between the Lines premiered (directed by Nina Haanappel, produced by Jeugdtheaterschool Zuidoost). This was one of the alternative forms through which Theater Na de Dam continued its work in 2021, despite Covid restrictions and limited audiences.The full film can be viewed at https://theaternadedam.nl/voorstelling/tussen-de-regels/