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| Sommario/riassunto | Alternative theatre has been one of Canada's strongest cultural institutions over the past twenty years. Coinciding with a major revival of nationalism in Canadian culture during the late 1960s, this strength was in evidence throughout the country, and provided fertile ground for the growth of an important dramatic genre: the collectively created documentary play. Typically inspired by a distinctive community or a political issue, these plays are created through a process that begins with a group of actors researching a specific issue or distinctive community, and ends with a performance aimed at a specific audience. Some of the works thus created represent the most popular plays ever staged in Canada. In this study of the genre as it has developed nationally, Alan Filewod examines six landmark examples in terms of |

their impact on their respective theatres and their role in Canada's cultural development generally. The plays include Theatre Passe Muraille's *The Farm Show*, Toronto Workshop Production's *Ten Lost Years*, Globe Theatre's *No. 1 Hard*, Twenty-fifth Street Theatre's *Paper Wheat*, The Mummery Troupe's *Buchans: A Mining Town*, and Catalyst Theatre's *It's About Time*. Each of these six plays represents an aspect of the documentary genre. Together they evoke a period of unprecedented activity in Canadian theatre and the wide range of social, political, and cultural issues that have driven it.
