

DEBRA ANN BYRD

Actress, Playwright, Producer, Founding Artistic Director
Harlem Shakespeare Festival

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EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Harlem Shakespeare Festival, New York, NY

- Founding Artistic Director (2013-present)

Take Wing And Soar Productions, Inc., New York, NY

- Producing Artistic Director (2003-2013)
- Founder and Chief Executive (1999-2003)

National Black Theatre, Inc., New York, NY

- Associate Producer (2004-2008)
- Asst. to the Producer (2002-2004)

Classical, Contemporary and Musical Theatre, New York, NY and Touring Companies

- Actor/Singer (1989 - Present)

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Shakespeare & Company, Month-Long Intensive and 3 Day Training (2017/2016)

Acting: *Tina Packer* Scene Study: *Claire Warden* Voice & Speech: *Gwendolyn Schwinke / Dave Demke*
Acting: *Dennis Krausnick* Clown: *Michael F. Toomey* Text Analysis: *Andrew Borthwick-Leslie*

League of American Theatres and Producers - CTI, Certificate of Completion (2007/2005)

- Commercial Theatre Institute, 14-week Certificate Program, *Jed Bernstein*
- Producing for the Commercial Theater, 3-Day Intensive Program, *Various*

Teacher's College - Columbia University | Arts & Business Council, Certificate of Completion (2004)

- Arts Leadership Institute, Professors: *Joan Jeffri | Thomas P. Ference | Edward P. Henry | Schon L. Beechler*

Marymount Manhattan College, Continuing Education (2003)

- Management of the Arts, *Prof. Alvin Reiss*
- Careers in Arts Administration, *Prof. Alvin Reiss*

New York Shakespeare Festival - Shakespeare Lab, Public Theater (2001)

Acting: *Ron Van Lieu* Voice & Speech: *Debra Hecht* Stage Combat: *J. Steven White*
Scene Study: *Michael Cumpsty* Voice & Speech: *Kate Wilson* Text Analysis: *John Dias*

Marymount Manhattan College, Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Acting, Theater Department (2001)

Acting: Contemporary and Modern Theatre *Adrienne D. Williams*
Acting: Heightened Language and Period Styles *Kevin Connell*
Acting: Shakespeare and Restoration *Elizabeth Swain*
Musical Theatre Performance *Patricia Hoag-Simon*
Musical Theatre Dance for Actors & Singers *Haila Strauss*

HONORS, GRANTS AND RESIDENCIES

Writer-In-Residence, *Becoming Othello Project*, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK (2017)

Warwick Impact Fund, *Becoming Othello Project*, University of Warwick, UK (2017)

Center for Actor Training Scholarship, Shakespeare & Company (2017)
Outstanding Achievement Award, Othello/ Actress, AUDELCO Black Theatre Recognition Award (2016)
Shirley Stewart Farmer Woman of Excellence Award, NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch (2016)
Shakespeare On The Road Honor, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust & University of Warwick, UK (2014)
Woman of the Year, Riverside Club, National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women (2014)
The Lucille Lortel Award, League of Professional Theatre Women (2009)
Josephine Abady Award, League of Professional Theatre Women (2006)
Artist-In-Residence, *Take Wing And Soar Productions Project*, National Black Theatre (2002)
The Rowley Founder's Medal, Marymount Manhattan College (2001)
Gold Medal for Academic Excellence in Acting, Marymount Manhattan College (2001)
Mary Colquhoun Acting Scholarship, The Shakespeare Lab, NYSF / Joseph Papp Public Theatre (2001)
Senior Class Speaker, Marymount Manhattan College (2001)
Women's Forum Educational Award, The Women's Forum (2001)
Dorothy L. Stickney Theatre Scholarship, Zonta Club of New York (2001)
The American Scholars National Honor Society, Lifetime (2000)
Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society, Lifetime (2000)

STAGEPLAYS, RESEARCH AND/OR PUBLICATIONS

BECOMING OTHELLO: A Black Girl's Journey (book in progress)
BECOMING OTHELLO (script in progress)
Co-Writer: *THE SABLE SERIES: The History of Black Shakespearean Actors*, Stage Play (2014)
Co-Editor: *Journey To Success*, The Griffin Year Book (2001)
Author: *JURIES: An MMC Actor Prepares*, Research Publication (2001)

- Prize: Best Theater Research, Marymount Manhattan Honors Colloquium Award

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Shakespeare Theatre Association, Executive Committee, Member-At-Large (2017-2020)
Manhattan County Committee, Honorable Debra Ann Byrd (2017-present)
Manhattan Community Board 9, Honorable Debra Ann Byrd, (2007-2013)
League of Professional Theatre Women, Vice President of Communications (2006-2008)
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Actor's Equity Association
Shakespeare Association of America
British Shakespeare Association
The Shakespeare Guild
The National Arts Club

MEDIA

"Black Shakespeare Champion." Newspaper feature by Dalya Alberge, *The Guardian*, UK, October 28, 2017.
"Debra Ann Byrd | Othello." Video interview, *This Week in Shakespeare: Episode 72*, September 23, 2015.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNeX_iDiNRc
"All-Female Othello." Podcast interview with James Elliott and Gerritt VanderMeer, *The State of Shakespeare*, November 30, 2015. <http://stateofshakespeare.com/?p=4919>
"Shakespeare in/and Harlem." Podcast interview with Paul Edmondson and Paul Prescott, *Shakespeare On The Road*, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK August 15, 2014. <http://shakespeareontheroad.com/debra-ann-byrd/>
"Black Voices: Debra Ann Byrd." Podcast interview with Suman Bhuchar, *Theatre Voice*, South London UK, July 5, 2013. <http://www.theatrevoice.com/audio/harlem-shakespeare-festival-director-debra-ann-byrd-discusses-black-theatre/>