

CYNTHIA HENDERSON

Associate Professor

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Academic Degrees

The Pennsylvania State University, Professional Actor Training Program – MFA 1997

Troy State University, Theatre Major – BS 1994

Professional Membership

1997 – Present **Actor's Equity Association**

2007 – Present **National Congress of Acting Teachers – Actors Center NYC**

Awards and Honors

2008 **CSPA-NYS Outstanding Contribution to Social Justice Award**

2008 **20 Outstanding Women You Should Know in Central NY**

2004 – 2005 **Who's Who of American Women**

2003 – 2004 **Fulbright Scholar**
Awarded a Fulbright grant to do research on Theatre for social Development and teach at the University of Yaounde 1 in Cameroon, Africa.

1991 **Best Supporting Actress in a Musical**
European Tournament of Plays
Production – *Little Shop of Horrors*; Role - Ronnette

Books

2009 ***The Actors Landscape***
Publisher: Gateways Books and Tapes – Nevada City, CA

2004 ***Understanding Character Through Self***
Publisher: Editions SHERPA – Yaounde, Cameroon, Africa

2001 ***Introduction to Theatre Study Guide*** (with Dr. Jack Hrkach)
Publisher: McGraw-Hill Primus Custom Publishing

University Teaching

- 2000 - Present Associate Professor, Department of Theatre Arts
Ithaca College
Ithaca, NY
Description:
Teaching acting for both the B.A. and B.F.A. programs. The classes are intensive basic and advanced courses geared towards elevating the actors' grasp and ownership of the art and craft of acting. Taught Introduction to Theatre for academic year 2001 – 02. A large lecture course, which averages 160 students per semester, geared towards introducing non-majors to the collaborative process of theatre. Direct main stage productions.
- 1999 - 2000 Adjunct Professor, Department of Theatre and Dance
California State University, Sacramento
Sacramento, CA
Description:
Taught two classes. One was a Children's Theatre class designed to teach future educators various ways of working with children using drama as a basis for learning. In this class we created our own text as we worked. The other class was an acting class for non-theatre majors, designed to introduce the beginning actor to the concepts and practices of acting. We explored concepts and exercises based on the works of Hagen, Cohen, some Meisner, as well as my own.
- 1998- 1999 Adjunct Professor, Department of Theatre Arts
Hunter College
New York, NY
Description:
Advanced acting techniques for the continuing theatre major. Course combined a variety of acting concepts. Class covered monologues, scenes and some improvisation. Required texts were *Practical Handbook for the Actor*, *Sanford Meisner on Acting*, and *Mira Felner's Free To Act*.
- 1997- 1999 Adjunct Professor, Department of Theatre Arts
Marymount Manhattan College
New York, NY
Description:
Basic and some advanced acting techniques for the BA and BFA theatre majors with an emphasis on monologues in the first semester and scenes in the second semester. Course combined a variety of acting concepts with a heavy Meisner emphasis. Required texts were *Practical Handbook for the Actor*, *Uta Hagen's Respect for Acting* (first semester), and *Sanford Meisner on Acting* (second semester).

1995 - 1997 Instructor of Acting, School of Theatre
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA
Description:
Fundamentals of Acting - course designed for college level non-theatre majors, as an introduction to the actor's craft. Basic acting techniques emphasized improvisation, scene and monologue work. Course combined Hagen, some Meisner, and concepts from *Practical Handbook for the Actor*.

Youth Actor Training

1999- 2000 Instructor
Bitney Springs Charter High School
Grass Valley, CA
Description:
Worked with high school students on a quarterly basis to understand and embrace the craft of the actor. We focused on basic acting techniques, using improvisation, monologue and scene work. I combined Cohen, Meisner and Hagen with my own approaches.

1997- 1999 Instructor of Acting
The American Academy of Dramatic Arts
(Summer Program)
New York, NY
Description:
Basic acting techniques for actors at various stages of development, ranging from the professional to the beginner, in a conservatory setting. Emphasis was on scene work. Course combined some Cohen, Hagen, and Mamet with Meisner.

Invitational Acting Workshops

March 99 Visiting Instructor, Department of Speech and Theatre
Bainbridge College
Bainbridge, GA
Description:
Weekend Shakespeare workshop for theatre majors and non theatre majors. Used experiential exercises, and worked with heightened language, students explored Shakespeare's work as it applied to their lives and the work they were currently doing. Workshop culminated in a performance of Shakespeare scenes.

December 98 - May 99 Visiting Artist / Instructor
New York City Urban League
New York, NY

Description:

Various storytelling workshops for under-funded inner city elementary schools. Workshops designed to introduce students to multicultural folk tales as well as to encourage the children to read for understanding. Using village-style theatrical storytelling techniques the children learned how to tell a story using their entire body and voice range. Workshop culminated with each child taking part of a folk tale and putting it together in a circle telling of the tale.

October 98 - January 99

Visiting Instructor

The Duke Ellington School

New York, NY

Description:

Workshop designed to introduce elementary school students to the works of Shakespeare. We worked with storytelling, experiential research concepts and lots of energy combined with quick thinking. The students and I brought Shakespeare back to life on their level. Workshop culminated in the students performing a scene from one of Shakespeare's plays, using actual text.

July - August 1995

Instructor for Acting Workshop

MetaStages Children's Theatre

State College, PA

Description:

Acting Camp designed for children 8 - 17 years of age. Basic acting techniques and improvisational work culminated in the production of folk tales, from a variety of cultures, showcasing the students' work at camp.

April 1995

Visiting Shakespeare Workshop Acting Instructor

State College High School

State College, PA

Description:

Workshop designed for high school Juniors and Seniors competing in classical acting competitions. Focus was on experiential exercises which aided the students' understanding of Shakespearean material. Culminated in mock competition presentations of monologue pieces.

International Conference Presentations

September 2003

Presenter

Cameroon International Film Festival

Cameroon, Africa

Panelist for conference and presented a workshop on professional development in the field of acting.

October 2004

Presenter

U.S. Fulbright Association 27th Annual Conference

Athens, Greece

Presented on work in Cameroon, Africa with Theatre for Social Development and on "Politics and Theatre."

Performance - Theatre (partial listing)

SOMETHING YOU DID	Lenora	Next Stage Theatre – PA
VAGINA MONOLOGUES	Memory/Baptized	V-Day Event – NYC
IT'S ONLY A PLAY	Julia	Midtown International Theatre Festival – NYC
TWO ROOMS	Ellen	Kitchen Theatre – Ithaca
PRETTY FIRE	Charlayne	U.S. Cultural Center - Cameroon, Africa
JOY IN THE MORNING	Ruth/Woman	Playwrights Horizon
LIVE AND IN COLOR!	All Characters	Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts
CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY	Lily	Kitchen Theatre – Ithaca
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Titania	Hangar Theatre – Ithaca
GOD'S TROMBONES	The Creation	Eisenhower – PA
STOP KISS	Callie	Kitchen Theatre – Ithaca
LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING	Woman	Shomberg Center – NYC
A WRINKLE IN TIME	Happy Medium	Lincoln Center – NYC
BROTHER'S KEEPER	Latisha	Samuel Beckett – NYC
DOROTHY	Dorothy Dandridge	Samuel Beckett – NYC
A RAISIN IN THE SUN (w/ Frances Foster)	Ruth	U/RTC – PA
MEASURE FOR MEASURE	Marianna	U/RTC – PA
SWEENEY TODD	Ensemble	Pennsylvania Centre Stage
ALICE IN WONDERLAND	Cheshire Cat	Pennsylvania Centre Stage
MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM	Dussie Mae	Springer Theatre – GA
CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD	Sarah	Frankfurter Playhouse – Germany
LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS	Ronnette	Frankfurter Playhouse –Germany

<i>INTO THE WOODS</i>	The Witch	Frankfurter Playhouse – Germany
<i>DREAMGIRLS</i>	Lorrel	Frankfurter Playhouse – Germany

Performance – Film and Television (partial listing)

MATTRESS HOUSE	Principal	Commercial – NJ
SOUL CONNECTION (TV commercial)	Voice Over	REP Productions – Ithaca
GREEK PEAK (TV spots into 2005)	Voice Over	REP Productions – Ithaca
IPG SOFTWARE	Principal	Industrial – Owego
STEAL AWAY	Narrator	Roy Park School - IC
COMEDY CENTRAL	Principal	Commercial - National
ROOMS TO GO	Principal	Commercial – FL
UPFRONT	Principal	MTV Productions – NYC
GHOST STORIES	Starring	Syndicated – National
JENNIFER CONVERTIBLES	Principal	Commercial – NYC

Directing – Theatre Productions

2008	THE EXONERATED	Ithaca College
2007	DRIVING TO THE END OF THE WORLD	Puerto Penasco, MX
2005	<i>BURN THIS</i>	Ithaca College
2004	<i>for colored girls who have considered suicide ...</i>	U.S. Cultural Center- Cameroon, Africa
2004	TOP DOG/UNDER DOG	Univ. of Yaounde 1 Cameroon, Africa
2003	<i>THE COLORED MUSEUM</i>	Ithaca College
2003	<i>TRIAD</i>	Ithaca College
2000	<i>AN OLD-FASHIONED SOAP OPERA</i>	Bitney Springs High Grass Valley, CA

Creative Works

ROAD TRIP: DEMYSTIFYING HIV/AIDS Writer/Producer/Narrator Documentary Film
Airings and Screenings:

- CRTV (international television station) Cameroon, Africa 2004

- World AIDS Conference in Bangkok, Thailand 2004
- PBS affiliates WCNV and WSKG 2005

Performing Arts for Social Change projects

ACS at Louis Gossett Jr. Residential Center writing project

Greater Ithaca Activities Center *Voice Suspended*

MacCormick Secure Center *I Too Am America*

Professional Teacher Development in Actor Training

The Actors Center (NYC) – June 2005
 (Lloyd Richards, Earle Gister, Catherine Fitzmaurice, Per Brahe, Slava Dolgatchev and J. Michael Miller)

Additional Acting, Movement and Vocal Production Training for the Stage

American Academy of Dramatic Arts (NYC) – 1984-'85
 (Marcella Dodge, Renee Guerin, Andrew Roher, Lynn Metrick, Nadia Veness)

Private Voice Training

Carlo Menotti and Vince Morton

Theatrical Skills (partial listing)

Stage Combat - Quarterstaff, Hand to Hand, Broadsword, Rapier and Dagger; Various Dialects; Licensed Radio Announcer

Professional Associations

National Association of University Women

Fulbright Alumni Association

Service: Ithaca College, Local and International

Theatre Arts BA Advisor: 2000 – Present

Theatre Arts Committees:

- Curriculum
- Guest Artist
- Personnel
- Scholarship
- Area Coordinators
- Theory Professor and Technical Director Searches

Other Theatre Arts Service:

- Faculty advisor for Haley Raphael – Independent Study/Performance
- Creation of an acting company for Intro to Theatre '01 – 02
- Department audition tours (DC, SF, LA and NYC)
- Ithaca College Campus auditions
- Faculty advisor for Amanda LaForge – Independent Study in Cameroonian Theatre
- BFA Acting Area Coordinator '04 – 06

Humanities and Science Committees:

- H & S Senate (Vice President '07 – present)
- H & S Senate (Secretary '01 – 03 and '06 – 07)
- Associate Dean Search Committee
- H & S Curriculum
- H & S General Education Working Group

Ithaca College Committees:

- Middle States Task Force
- Diversity Awareness
- Black History Month Planning Group
- AIDS Working Group

Ithaca College and Local Community Service

- Executive Board member for CRESA: National Center for Transformative Action – Cornell University
- Red Cross Blood Drive – Ithaca College
- Unity Relay – Ithaca College
- Multicultural Admissions Video – Ithaca College
- Boy Scouts Troop 2: one day acting workshop – Ithaca, NY
- TST: playwriting workshop for high school students – Ithaca, NY
- *AIDS Up Close in Cameroon and Namibia* – presented with Lisa Maurer, Center for LGBT – Ithaca College
- *Mug To Mug: the affect that African American women writers have had on America's social landscape* – Discussion Facilitator – Ithaca College
- Harriet Tubman Residential Center for Young Women: yearly one-day workshop for at risk teens geared toward using theatre to address societal and emotional issues. Dan Noble, Resident Supervisor – Auburn, NY
- MacCormick Secure Center: theatre workshop with male violent offenders between the ages of 16 to 18. Carol Whitlow, center psychologist – Brooktendale, NY

International Service (Cameroon – Central Africa)

- Delivery of school supplies to children in various villages
- Storytelling with orphans in Yaounde
- Work with Local AIDS Committee – assistance to AIDS orphans
- Created Performing Arts Scholarship – University of Yaounde 1
- Created Performing Arts Reading Room – University of Yaounde 1
- Co-Author/Co-Director of *Unsilenced Voices* – Theatre for the Disabled with Goodwill Theatre

Professional Biography

Cynthia Henderson has performed professionally throughout the United States, Europe and Africa. Her New York City credits include *A Wrinkle in Time* at the Lincoln Center; Off Broadway: *Dorothy Dandridge an evening of song and remembrance*, *Brother's Keeper* and *It's Only A Play*. Off off Broadway: *Joy In the Morning* and *A Star Ain't Nothin' but a Hole in Heaven*. Regional Theater credits include: *Two Rooms*, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, *Stop Kiss*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Valley Song*. European credits include *Dreamgirls*, *Into the Woods*, *Children of a Lesser God*, and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Best Supporting Actress in a Musical – European Tournament of Plays). African credits include *Pretty Fire*. Television credits include her documentary *Road Trip: Demystifying HIV/AIDS* (PBS), starring role in UPN's *Ghost Stories* as well as numerous commercial credits. Directing credits include: *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf* (Africa), *Top Dog/Under Dog* (Africa), *Driving to the End of World* (Mexico), Ithaca College's *The Exonerated*, *Burn This*, *The Colored Museum* and *Triad*. Cynthia is an associate professor of acting at Ithaca College and a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. Peace