

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Barbara Ann Teer

PERSON

Teer, Barbara Ann

Alternative Names: Barbara Ann Teer;

Life Dates: June 18, 1937-July 21, 2008

Place of Birth: St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Residence: New York, New York

Work: New York, New York

Occupations: ; Arts Administrator

Biographical Note

Founder and CEO of the National Black Theatre, Inc., Barbara Ann Teer was born in East St. Louis, Illinois on June 18, 1937, to a family of educators and leaders in the field of community development. After graduating magna cum laude with her degree in dance education from the University of Illinois, Teer moved to New York City to begin her career as an actress, dancer, and director.

In the 1960s, Teer left show business to begin teaching at Harlem's Wadleigh Junior High School; her methods helped to develop the Group Theatre Workshop, which became the foundation for the world renowned Negro Ensemble Company. In 1968, Teer founded the National Black Theatre with the aim of maintaining and developing African American cultural traditions. In 1983, Teer expanded the purpose and vision of the National Black Theatre by purchasing a 64,000 square foot city block of property on 125th Street and Fifth Avenue, creating the first revenue generating black art complex in the country by housing several entrepreneurial businesses.

In May 1994, Teer was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Rochester, New York; in 1995, she received an honorary doctorate degree of humane letters from the University of Southern Illinois. Teer is included in Who's Who Worldwide, which recognizes her as a global business leader and has received more than sixty awards and citations. Teer passed away on July 21, 2008 at the age of 71. She leaves behind two children: her son, Michael F. Lythcott, is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University's Business School and her daughter, Barbara A. Lythcott, is a graduate of New York University.

Dr. Barbara Ann Teer passed away on July 21, 2008, at the age of seventy-one.

Related Entries

Dunbar Elem School [STUDENTOF]
[\[from ? to ?\]](#)

Bennett College for Women [STUDENTOF]
[\[from ? to ?\]](#)

University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Wadleigh Junior High School [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Art teacher

National Black Theatre [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1968 to 2008]

Founder

The Group Theatre Workshop [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Negro Ensemble Company [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]