

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Clinton Turner Davis

PERSON

Davis, Clinton Turner, 1950-

Alternative Names: Clinton Turner Davis;

Life Dates: April 9, 1949-

Place of Birth: Washington, District of Columbia, USA

Residence: Brooklyn, NY

Occupations: Theater Director; Stage Producer

Biographical Note

Theatrical director Clinton Turner Davis was born on April 9, 1949 in Washington, D.C. to Josephine Davis and Clinton Davis. Davis attended McKinley Technical High School, where he performed in plays and was president of the thespian club. He briefly attended Hanover College in Hanover, Indiana, but received his B.F.A. degree in theater from Howard University in 1972.

After being cast in Slaughterhouse Play at the Public Theatre in New York City, Davis began his career with the Negro Ensemble Company in 1972 as the production stage manager for *The Great Macdaddy* at St. Mark's Playhouse. Throughout the 1970s, Davis served as the stage manager for a succession of Negro Ensemble Company productions, including *Eden*, *Nevis Mountain Dew*, *Old Phantoms: A Play in Two Acts*, *The Sixteenth Round*, *Zooman and the Sign*, *Weep Not for Me* and *Home*. In 1982, Davis made his directorial debut with *Abercrombie Apocalypse: An American Tragedy* at Westside Arts Theatre in New York City. Produced by Negro Ensemble Company and written by playwright Paul Carter Harrison, the off-Broadway drama starred Graham Brown, Timothy B. Lynch, and Barbara Montgomery. Davis would go on to direct Pearl Cleage's first play, *Puppetplay*, at Theatre Four in New York City in 1982, and serve as the stage manager for *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music* in 1983. Additional Negro Ensemble Company productions directed by Davis in the 1980s included *Two Can Play*, *House of Shadows* and *That Serious He-Man Ball*. In 1986, Davis co-founded the Non-Traditional Casting Project. He then directed his first August Wilson play, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, at Theatreworks in Palo Alto, California in 1989. At the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 1993, Davis directed Joe Turner's *Come and Gone*, which was the festival's first produced work by an African American playwright. In 2013, he directed Charles Fuller's *One Night....* Davis was an associate professor of drama at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Davis served as a director for the American Young Playwrights Festival in New York City. He was a guest lecturer at Yale University, Dartmouth College, Columbia University, The Ohio State University, and Howard University; and directed theatrical productions at The Juilliard School, Brandeis University, and Colorado College. Davis received a Distinguished Alumni Award from Howard University, in addition to Dallas Theatre, Bay Area, and Drama-logic Critics' Awards. In 2015, Davis received the Lloyd Richards Directors Award from the National Black Arts Festival.

Clinton Turner Davis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on October 25, 2016.

Related Entries

Charles E. Young Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Barnard Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Keene Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

MacFarland Middle School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

LaSalle-Backus Education Center [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

McKinley Technology High School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Hanover College [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Howard University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

BFA (magna cum laude)

Hunter College [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

PhD

Howard University [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1979 to 1979]

Department of Drama, Guest Lecturer

Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1986 to 1986]

Production Supervisor

First National Symposium on Non-Traditional Casting [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1986 to 1986]

Producer

Yale University [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1993 to 2000]

School of Drama, Guest Lecturer

Colorado College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1995 to 2012]

Associate Professor, Department of Drama

Colorado College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1995 to 1995]

Visiting Professor

Ohio State University [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1995 to 1995]

Department of Theatre, Guest Lecturer

Colorado College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1995 to 1995]

Production Supervisor

University of California, Berkeley [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1996 to 1996]

Theatre Institute, Guest Lecturer

Anna Deavere Smith Project [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1997 to 1997]

Associate Producer

University of Colorado - Colorado Springs [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1999 to 1999]

Guest Lecturer

University of Wisconsin-Madison [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2000 to 2000]

Inaugural Lorraine Hansberry Chair Professor - Theater & Drama and African American Studies

Colorado Festival of World Theatre/Market Theatre Tre [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2007 to 2007]

Production Supervisor

Taiyuan Puppet Theatre Artists Residency [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2012 to 2012]

Producer

Apollo Theater [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2013 to 2014]

Production Supervisor - Apollo Club Harlem

2nd International Festival of Marionettes [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Guest of Ministry of Culture of Vietnam

New Federal Theatre [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Associate Producer, Board Member

Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts/ Non-Traditional Casting project [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Co-Founder, Board Member

International Theatre Institute - UNESCO [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Delegate

Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Young Playwrights Festival, Inc. [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Associate Artist

Spencer Cherashore Fund [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Former Board Member

Actors' Equity Association [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member, Former Councilor

National Black Arts Festival [MEMBEROF]
[from 1988 to 1992]

National Advisory Board - Theatre

New Dramatists [MEMBEROF]
[from 1996 to 1997]

Director in Residence

