

Denise J. Hart is a full professor at the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts at Howard University. She is a highly sought after consultant, educator, restorative practices facilitator & speaker. She has over 30 years of proven experience leading in higher education, arts management, theatre training, archival research, nonprofit theatre programming and coaching.

Throughout her career, Hart has honed mastery expertise in theatre for social change, cultural transformation through the arts, restorative practices in theatre, community collaboration & leadership development.

Hart, a restorative practices facilitator, is the founder of the [Restorative Theatre Performance Project \(RTPP\)](#), a collaborative arts-based research initiative that employs restorative practices to build bridges between arts, culture and science to engender social change. She's an experienced trainer supporting arts leaders, educators and practitioners, helping them learn from the past, create meaningful change and elevate organizational narrative and image.

Throughout her academic career she's held academic leadership roles such as Secretary of the Howard University Faculty Senate, chair of the Spelman College Theatre & Performance Department external evaluation committee, chair of the Howard University Division of Fine Arts Executive Committee and transition team for the College of Fine Arts reinstatement, area coordinator for Playwriting, interim area coordinator for Theatre Education, area coordinator of the Theatre Minor and Vice President of Conference for the Association of Theatre for Higher Education (ATHE). Other academic appointments include visiting professor at St. Mary's College teaching in the Department of Theatre, Film and Media Studies, Bowie State University, American University and Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

In 2020, she was appointed as a [Howard Entertainment Faculty Fellow](#) at Amazon Studios in Television Development and served through 2022. Her professional TV writing credits include TV Drama Limited Series Development Consultant and TV Drama Development Consultant at Amazon Studios. Her training in TV scriptwriting was completed at Script Anatomy in Los Angeles CA; with comedy training at Second City Chicago and Upright Citizens Brigade NYC.

A research scholar and creative practitioner, Hart's creative research spans her career as an actress, playwright, director and production dramaturge with theatre's and institutions such as "Miss Anna" on HBO'S award winning drama series, *The Wire*, African American Museum of Boston, Lark Play Development Center in New York, Wolly Mammoth Theatre, Weston Playhouse/VT, Arena Stage, Hatiloo Theatre/Memphis, Studio Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Playwright's Forum, Mosaic Theatre, Ford's Theatre, ACTCO Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre and DC Queer Theatre Festival among others.

For her scholarship on the Howard Players, her body of work includes her book chapter, *The Howard University Players: From Respectability Politics to Black Representation*, published in the Routledge Companion to African American Theatre and Performance. Her digital humanities research, [Howard Players Theatre History Archive](#) deepens that scholarship by documenting the hidden interdisciplinary history of the Howard University Players collegiate theatrical production history from 1909-2019. A significant resource for researchers, educators and the public to study

the history of Black Theatre, the digital archive offers a broader understanding of the Howard Players contribution to American Theatre.

Her dramaturgical scholarship includes serving as a scholar dramaturge/presentation coach, for six years, Denise coached internationally recognized scholars, artists and activists for appearances on the Lone Star Emmy nominated Blackacademics TV, which airs on PBS and reaches over 3 million households. Her own 2018 appearance on Blackacademics TV examined *Excellence at Historically Black Colleges: Beyond Respectability Politics*. In 2016 her episode was nominated for a Lone Star Emmy award.

In 2024 she was honored to collaborate with Ford's Theatre as dramaturge, director and moderator for the interdisciplinary performance symposium, *Written Then, Spoken Now: African American Letters to Lincoln* written by historian, author and professor Johnathon White and with panelist historian scholar Edna Medford, Ph.D. The curated presentation aired on *CSPAN*.

She's the founder and lead dramaturge for [Play Development Lab](#) offering play development opportunities to Black women playwrights to advance process, craft and career.

Hart's public scholarship includes her 22-year career leading youth camps, All About Creativity Performing Arts Camp Inc. and The Children's Theatre Workshop Inc. in the DC metro area she created 20 children's musicals and became "2nd mom" to hundreds of youths. She also founded and served as Artistic Director of the Performing Arts Training Studio Inc. which provided adult and youth acting and playwriting classes for the nation's capital.

Hart's professional specialties include restorative practices in theatre performance, playwriting, play development, dramaturgy, African American theatre, TV scriptwriting, acting, directing, analysis and theatre criticism.

She received her Master of Fine Arts in Playwriting from Sarah Lawrence College, where she was awarded the Lipkin Prize for Playwriting and acquired her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting from Howard University, where she was the president (95/96) of the historic Howard Players drama organization. She also holds a certificate in Creativity Coaching from the Creativity Coaching Association with Eric Maisel, Ph.D.

Some of Hart's current governance and board appointments include VP of Conference for the Association of Theatre of Higher Education, Secretary of the Black Theatre Network and she's a proud founding charter member of the [August Wilson Society](#).