

Where Words Prevail



Cicely Berry Biography

Cicely Berry has been Voice Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon, England since she joined in 1969 at the invitation of Trevor Nunn. Since then, the voice work in the Company has developed considerably, growing to the five-member voice team currently working in both London and Stratford, in addition to covering work with various touring companies.

Deeply involved with the education work in the Company from the beginning, Berry has worked extensively in schools – both with teachers and students – to develop ways of working on classical text, including many weekend sessions for teachers in Stratford. She is also very involved with work in prisons, bringing with her the philosophy that “Where words prevail not, violence prevails,”* and when one can find his or her authentic voice, it allows them to better express their deepest feelings.

Berry has worked a great deal with theater companies and actors abroad, including those in the United States, Australia, India, China, Poland, Russia, Croatia, plus other European countries. For the last four years she has been working regularly in Brazil with Nós de Morro, a youth theater company based in Vidigal – one of Rio’s favelas. She is currently preparing them to perform as part of the RSC’s upcoming Complete Works Festival, which begins in April 2006. She is also an Artistic Associate of the New York-based Company, Theatre for a New Audience.

Berry has written four books. Her first, *Voice and the Actor*, written in 1973, deals with all aspects of voice training for the actor. Her second book, *Your Voice and How To Use It*, was written primarily for public speakers, and was updated in 1994 to include interviews with Neil Kinnock, Helena Kennedy and Tariq Ali. Her third book, *The Actor and the Text*, was updated in 1993, and deals with how modern acting approached can relate to heightened language. Widely used by directors and actors both in professional theater and in Actor Training Schools in the UK, the U.S., Canada, and Australia, it is currently being translated into several languages. Her fourth book, *Text in Action*, published in 2001, carries this work further, investigating how we hear language now, plus the whole area of how fashions in language are constantly changing, and how this affects the actor in performance.

In 1994, Berry co-directed with Andrew Wade the prose and poetry program, “Words, words, words” which was performed at The Other Place and in the Barbican Pit Theatre. Her other directing work includes productions of *Hamlet* for the National Theatre Education Unit, and of *King Lear* for the RSC at The Other Place – this latter received considerable critical acclaim and was transferred to London for a short season.

She was awarded O.B.E. (Officer of the British Empire) in 1985, and in 1992 was nominated, among four others, for a special award by the Arts Council for her “response to the challenges posed by a technologically

more

diverse and increasingly multi-cultural environment.” Her other accolades include Doctor Honoris, National Academy of Film and Theatre Arts, Krustyo Sarafov, Sofia, Bulgaria (1997), Honorary Doctorate of Literature from Birmingham University (1999), The Sam Wanamaker Prize for Pioneering Work in the Theatre (2000), and an Honorary Doctorate of Literature from the Open University (2001).

*From Thomas Kyd’s. *The Spanish Tragedy*

WGBH Boston is America’s preeminent public broadcasting producer, the source of fully one-third of PBS’s prime-time lineup, along with some of public television’s best-known lifestyle shows and children’s programs and many public radio favorites. Its production menu is diverse, including *Nova*, *Frontline*, *American Experience*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Masterpiece Theatre*, *Arthur*, and *Postcards from Buster* on PBS and *The World* and *Sound & Spirit* on public radio. WGBH is the number one producer of Web sites on pbs.org, the most-visited dot-org on the Internet. WGBH is a pioneer in educational multimedia and in technologies and services that make media accessible to the 36 million Americans who rely on captioning or video descriptions. WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors: Emmys, Peabodys, duPont-Columbia Awards... even two Oscars. In 2002, WGBH was honored with a special institutional Peabody Award for 50 years of excellence. For more information visit **wgbh.org**.

For 44 years, **American Public Television (APT)** has been a prime source of programming for the nation’s public television stations. APT distributes more than 10,000 hours of programming including *JFK: Breaking the News*, *Simply Ming*, *Globe Trekker*, *Rick Steves’ Europe*, *Julia and Jacques Cooking at Home*, *Battlefield Britain*, *Jungle*, *America’s Test Kitchen*, *Lidia’s Family Table* and classic movies. APT is known for identifying innovative programs and developing creative distribution techniques for producers. In four decades, it has established a tradition of providing public television stations nationwide with program choices that enable them to strengthen and customize their schedules. Press should contact Donna Hardwick at 617-338-4455 ext. 129 or via email to Donna_Hardwick@APTonline.org. For more information about APT’s programs and services visit **aptonline.org**.

For more information, including press materials and high-res photography, visit
pressroom.wgbh.org or aptonline.org/press

Press Contact

Elizabeth Cote • WGBH Boston • 617.300.5336 • elizabeth_cote@wgbh.org

Photography Contact

Kelly Sweet • WGBH Boston • 617.300.5309 • kelly_sweet@wgbh.org

