

## BIOGRAPHICAL RESUME, BARBARA LEIGH

Barbara Leigh is an originating artist, born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. She received her Ph.D. in French Theatre from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, based on her study of an acting school in France, L'Ecole du Vieux Colombier, that became the basis for actor training throughout the world. She has studied in London and Paris, with workshops in Marcel Marceau's School and that of Etienne Decroux. Upon her return from study abroad, she became the Associate Director of the Wisconsin Mime Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin.

In 1971 Barbara founded the London Theatre Workshop, Ltd. In 1974 she and Mike Moynihan co-founded Friends Mime Theatre, renamed the Milwaukee Public Theatre (MPT) in 1991. The company was a professional outreach theatre that provides primarily free-to-the-public original theatreworks and educational workshops that focus on giving voice to people of all ages, cultures and abilities.

In her 44+ years as Artistic/Producing Director of MPT Ms. Leigh has co-created or produced over 90 original theatre and video plays and revues with the company. She has performed and given workshops and talks on acting, ensemble creation, diversity, healing and disability issues throughout the country and in Canada. She has also appeared in a variety of television commercials and educational and corporate video productions.

Ms. Leigh's work has been supported by grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Wisconsin Arts Board, Milwaukee County and many private foundations, corporations and individuals. Awards include the GE Angel Award, the Milwaukee Sentinel/PAC Hall of Fame Award, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund Community Leadership Award and a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

After suffering partial paraplegia in a serious accident in 1987, Leigh has been very active on issues dealing with healing, disability and diversity, including a One-Woman Musical Comedy, *The Survival Revival Revue!* and *ADA*, about the Americans with Disabilities Act. Barbara and Karen Stobbe also have developed workshops and performances that focus on issues of Alzheimer's Disease and trauma and the challenges faced by caregivers. Barbara also performed in and helped to produce *UNCLOTHED, the Naked Truth; Stories of Sexual Abuse and Healing*. In 2017-18 she worked with the Grand Avenue Club—developing original theater-works based on the members' writings.

Dr. Leigh worked as an Artist-In-Education throughout the state since 1975, developing hundreds of workshops and collaborative performances, including keynotes for diverse clients. In 2006 she spearheaded the *StoryBridge Literacy Through Theatre* project for young minority children who have trouble reading. Since 2009 she has worked to produce *Cultivating Community Through Public Art* projects, including the *All-City People's Parade and Latino Carnival*-- city-wide community arts projects that brings people together across barriers of race, class, culture, age and ability to create a theme parade that gives voice to the community's greatest fears and hopes through giant puppets, floats, masked creations music and dance. In 2013 she helped to produce *Food for Thought*—performances and workshops that address food inequality and that promote affordable food, gardening and fitness for Milwaukee's low-income families.

From 1991 to 2018 Ms. Leigh was also MPT's Development Director, expanding the company's healing arts programming and community partnerships and raising over a million dollars in contracts and grants. She is currently working with other theatre companies as an arts consultant, and artist. and is a member of Milwaukee County Commission for Persons With Disabilities.