



THE
N-C
CHRONICLE

Larry Leon Hamlin's contributions to Black theater in America are immeasurable.

He was the founder, producer and artistic director of the National Black Theatre Festival (NBTF), one of the most historic and culturally significant events in American theater. He was also the founder, executive and artistic director of the North Carolina Black Repertory Company, the first professional Black theater company in the state of North Carolina. Under Hamlin's direction, the North Carolina Black Repertory Company is recognized for its superior artistic excellence as the company has toured across America and abroad. Both the N.C. Black Rep and NBTF are often illuminated as role models for other theater companies and arts organizations around the world.

Hamlin dared to connect Black theater and production companies globally. His vision was to create a nurturing environment for these entities to network and share tangible and artistic resources. By doing so, they are strengthened, enriched and evolve into a cultural oasis in their communities. Hamlin understood Black theater is the voice for people of color around the world - echoing the histories and experiences of those past while at the same time educating future generations and inspiring hope.

Hamlin received theater training at Brown University, under the direction of the late George Houston Bass, as a member of Rites and Reason Theatre Company. His business education was earned at Johnson & Wales University. He lectured on Black theater at such prestigious institutions as Yale University School of Drama, the University of Connecticut, New York University and Brown University.

As an actor, director, producer and playwright, Hamlin played a hand in bringing more than 200 productions to fruition. He often provided artistic and administrative consultation to numerous Black theater companies and was honored with more than 80 awards and citations for his contributions to the theatrical field.

Since the NBTF was founded 20 years ago, it has played a major role in bringing more than 500,000 tourists to Winston-Salem and Forsyth County and attracting theater companies, actors, directors, playwrights and scholars from across the United States, England, Jamaica, Nigeria, Brazil, Canada, South Africa, Ghana and Senegal.

Hamlin was twice celebrated at the White House, receiving two personal invitations from former President and Mrs. William Clinton to attend the Recipients of the National Medal of Arts and the Charles Frankel Prize Awards.

A native of Reidsville, N.C., Hamlin was born Sept. 25, 1948, and died June 6, 2007, at the age of 58. Continuing his legacy are two longtime supporters of the NCBRC and the NBTF, H. Geraldine (Gerry) Patton - the new Executive Director, and Broadway Veteran Mabel Robinson - the Artistic Director.

- Some information taken from Hamlin's official bio

THE CHRONICLE

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Want Tickets?

Tickets to this year's National Black Theatre Festival productions will be available for purchase at the N.C. Black Repertory Company Office (610 Coliseum Drive in the Arts Council Theatre Building) during festival week (Aug. 3 - 8) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Beginning on the morning of Tuesday, Aug. 4, tickets may also be purchased at the NBTF Ticket Booth on the main level of the Benton Convention Center. Tickets will be available there from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets may also be purchased at the various venues before scheduled performances, subject to availability.

An NBTF Stimulus Discount Ticket Package is being offered. Call 336-723-7907 for more information.

All Schedules and performances are subject to change. Check the NBTF Web site, www.nbtf.org, or call 336-723-2266 for more information.

Cover art (from top): From "Black Man Rising" (StageFace Photo); From "In the Continuum" (Black Rep Photo); From "Revenge of the King" (Black Theatre Troupe Photo); and From "The Return" (Giovanni Sterelli Photo)