

The Monkey on My Back

(An Intimate Evening with Debbi Morgan)

Debbi Morgan, the popular actress who is co-chairing this year's National Black Theatre Festival, just saw the realization of a longtime goal. Her book, "The Monkey on My Back: A Memoir," was released in June; she had been working on the project for many years. Along the way, she developed an acclaimed one-woman show – "The Monkey on My Back! (An Intimate Evening with Debbi Morgan)." Her Bowie, Md.-based Dam Entertainment brought the show to the 2013 NBTF. It is back again this year.

On stage, like in the book, Morgan takes her fans on a deeply personal journey through her family's long legacy of abuse and fear, detailing the effects that legacy has had on three generations of women – her grandmother, her mother and Morgan herself. The candid play is emotional and, at times, painful, but there are also bits of humor. Morgan, one of the best actresses in the business, captivates her audience and shows why she has had such a long and successful career.

Morgan, who was born in Dunn, N.C., started acting in high school productions when she was 15. She was still a teenager when she joined New York's Players Workshop and the New Federal Theater Company. She tested her fortunes in Hollywood when she was in her 20s and quickly landed roles on "Good Times" and in the landmark miniseries "Roots."

She is best known for "All My Children," on which she played Angie Baxter Hubbard for many years. The role earned her a Daytime Emmy in 1989. Among her many other honors is a NAACP Image Award for her recurring role on "Soul Food" and an Independent Spirit Award for the film "Eve's Bayou." On the big screen, Morgan has starred opposite some of Hollywood's most popular leading men, including Denzel Washington ("The Hurricane") and Samuel L. Jackson ("Coach Carter").

"The Monkey on My Back" is directed by Denise Dowse, who will be ubiquitous at this year's NBTF, as an actress in "Sassy Mamas" and director of "The Homecoming." ■



Debbi Morgan's memoir is available in stores and online at popular sites like Amazon.

The Monkey on My Back!
(An Intimate Evening with Debbi Morgan)

Reynolda House Museum of American Art

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| Thurs, Aug. 6 | 3 p.m. |
| Thurs, Aug. 6 | 8 p.m. |
| Fri. Aug. 7 | 8 p.m. |
| Sat. Aug. 8 | 3 p.m. |

\$43



PUBLICITY PHOTO

Denise Dowse

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The art of performance draws our eyes to the stage



Our community's commitment to arts and culture says a lot about where we live. Theater brings us together from the moment the lights go down and the curtains come up.

We proudly celebrate the National Black Theater Festival.

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