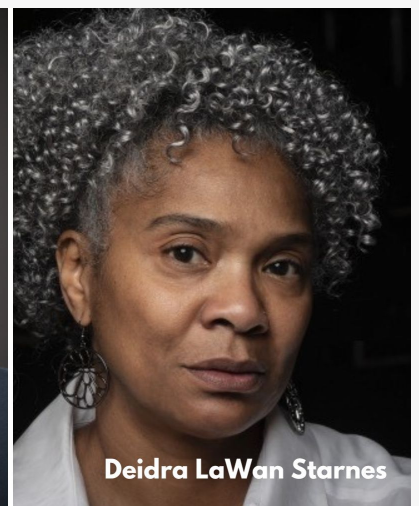


# Anderson-Hopkins Award for Excellence in Theatre DC Area Theater Artists

*William L. Hopkins and the estate of Richard B. Anderson announce the 2024 Anderson-Hopkins Award for Excellence in Theatre Bestowed to DC Area Theater Artists*

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (DC), DC, UNITED STATES, October 4, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The vibrant Washington, D.C. theater scene celebrated the achievements of four exceptional artists on Monday, September 30th, 2024, at the Signature Theatre in Arlington, Virginia. The occasion was the presentation of the prestigious [Anderson-Hopkins Award for Excellence in the Theater Arts](#). This year's recipients – Tony Cisek (scenic design), Tom Story (acting), Deidra LaWan Starnes (acting), and Walter "Bobby" McCoy (music director and conductor) – represent the pinnacle of artistic talent and dedication within the D.C. theater community.

The Anderson-Hopkins Award, a \$5,000 grant awarded to each recipient, is not merely a lifetime achievement award, though it certainly acknowledges a career filled with accomplishments. Instead, it focuses on recognizing artists who have consistently demonstrated excellence throughout their careers, showcasing both their past achievements and their continued potential for future contributions to the Washington theater world. This unique focus sets the award apart, highlighting the ongoing creative journey of these artists and their commitment to enriching the D.C. theater landscape.



Tom Story and Deidre Starnes



Bobby McCoy and Tony Cisek

## Honoring a Legacy of Passion for the Arts

Established in 2017 and funded for the next two decades by the Estate of Richard B. Anderson, the award is a testament to the deep love for theater held by Anderson and his long-time partner, William L. Hopkins. The couple, who were ardent theater enthusiasts and patrons, believed that their personal growth was nurtured by the Washington theater community. This award serves as a beautiful tribute to their legacy, giving back to the community that so profoundly impacted their lives.

## Celebrating the 2024 Awardees:

### Tony Cisek: A Master of Scenic Design

Tony Cisek's artistry has graced nearly 400 productions across the United States, transforming stages into captivating worlds. His recent credits include premieres at renowned venues like the Denver Center Theatre Company and Arena Stage, along with productions at the Alliance Theatre, New Orleans Opera, Round House Theatre, and many more. Cisek's work has been featured at prominent theaters across the country, including the Roundabout Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Guthrie Theatre, and the Kennedy Center, among others.

His exceptional talent has earned him numerous accolades, including four Helen Hayes Awards in Washington, D.C., five Drammy Awards in Portland, and two Barrymore Award nominations in Philadelphia. Beyond the stage, Cisek has lent his creative vision to opera, television, and film, and he served as the principal theatre consultant for the Atlas Performing Arts Center in Washington, D.C. His dedication to mentorship and education is evident in his teaching at various universities.

### Deidra LaWan Starnes: A Commanding Presence on Stage

A native Washingtonian, Deidra LaWan Starnes has been a captivating presence on regional stages for over 35 years. Her impressive resume includes performances at Adventure Theatre, African Continuum, Constellation Theatre, The Folger Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, and many other esteemed venues. Starnes has brought to life a diverse range of characters in productions such as "Dorothy's Dictionary," "The Hula Hoopin' Queen," "Mlima's Tale," and "The Amen Corner," among many others.

Her talent has been recognized with a Helen Hayes Award for her performance in "Invisible Man" and nominations for her roles in "Intimate Apparel," "A Raisin in the Sun," "I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document," "Spunk," and "Doubt." In addition to her acting prowess, Starnes has also made her mark as a director, with credits including "Quilters," "The Rainmaker," and "A Civil War Christmas." She currently serves as the Associate Artistic Director at 1st Stage and an Adjunct Professor at Bowie State University.

### Walter "Bobby" McCoy: A Musical Maestro

Walter "Bobby" McCoy is a celebrated music director, conductor, and pianist whose work has garnered national acclaim. With over 15 years of experience directing music for D.C. area

theaters, McCoy has contributed to over 150 productions. Their career began at the young age of 16, and they quickly established themselves as a force in the industry, earning nine Helen Hayes Award nominations and winning for their work on "In the Heights," "On Your Feet," and "Legally Blonde."

McCoy's collaborations span prestigious theaters such as the Olney Theatre Center, GALA Hispanic Theatre, STAGES St. Louis, and Arizona Theatre Company, among others. Their recent projects include music direction for "Momia en el closét" and "Masterclass." Notably, McCoy directed and conducted the music for the groundbreaking Olney Theatre Center production of "Beauty and the Beast." Their innovative approach and profound understanding of musical theater continue to enthrall audiences nationwide.

#### Tom Story: A Versatile Talent on Stage and Behind the Scenes

Tom Story is a multi-faceted artist, excelling as an actor, director, and teacher in the Washington, D.C. area. With over 80 productions to his credit, Story has graced stages in D.C., New York City, and across the country. He has been an Affiliated Artist at The Shakespeare Theatre Company, where he starred in works by Shakespeare, Noel Coward, Stephen Sondheim, and David Ives. At The Studio Theatre, he has been featured in numerous contemporary plays, including "The Invention of Love" and "The Wolfe Twins."

Story's directorial ventures include "At The Wedding" and "Terminus" at Studio Theatre and "The Legend of Georgia McBride" at Roundhouse Theatre. He has also directed productions at American University, Solas Nua, Imagination Stage, and Georgetown University. His exceptional talent has garnered him eight Helen Hayes nominations for his acting and ten nominations for his directing.

#### The Anderson-Hopkins Award: A Beacon of Support for D.C. Theater

The Anderson-Hopkins Award for Excellence in the Theater Arts serves as a powerful symbol of support and recognition for the dedicated artists who contribute to the rich tapestry of Washington, D.C. theater. By honoring those who have demonstrated a long-term commitment to their craft and who continue to push the boundaries of creativity, the award ensures that the legacy of Richard B. Anderson and William L. Hopkins lives on, inspiring generations of theater artists to come.

Michael Burke

The Anderson Hopkins Award for Excellence in the Theater Art  
ahaward@andersonhopkinsaward.org

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