

University of Delaware Honorary Degree

JEWEL H. WALKER

DOCTOR OF HUMANE

LETTERS

honoris causa

Beloved and influential professor of theater, you began your teaching career in New York City at the HB Studio. You went on to teach theater at Carnegie-Mellon University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where you were a founding member of the Professional Theatre Training Program. You taught acting and movement and directed plays for Wisconsin's PTTP before bringing that graduate-training program to the University of Delaware in 1989. You taught at UD for 21 years, retiring in 2009 as the Edward F. and Elizabeth Goodman Rosenberg Professor of Theatre.

In addition to your work with PTTP, you led UD's overseas London winter session program for several years and taught with the theater component of the Delaware Governor's School for Excellence.

You received numerous awards for outstanding teaching throughout your career from the University of Wisconsin, the University of Delaware, and the Association for Theatre in Higher Education.

You influenced generations of performers, many of whom credit you for their success. They include actor Ted Danson, actor/director Tom Hewitt, and Tony Award-winner Cherry Jones, who has said that your "extraordinary artistry, discipline, and commitment has proved to be a vital navigational star" in her professional career.

In theater circles, you are widely considered to be one of the first inspiring movement teachers in the United States.

Accomplished actor and noted mime, you studied with Vera Soloviova, Herbert Berghof, Lee Strasburg, and Etienne Decroux. You have acted on stage and on television, and are remembered as Mime Walker, a frequent guest star on the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* television program. You also toured nationally as a mime. You appeared on stage most recently in 2010 in the role of the Stage Member in the UD Resident Ensemble Player's production of *Our Town*, a play that you also directed.

Admired writer and director, you had a long, successful career as a director, beginning with your years in Pittsburgh, when you wrote and directed plays for the Cincinnati Playhouse, the West Virginia Touring Theatre, the Pittsburgh City Theatre, and others. During your two decades at UD, you directed several PTTP productions each year.

In 2005, you were awarded the Barrymore Award for Choreography and Movement for your original creation, *Tuesday*, which was performed first at UD, then in Philadelphia, and has gone on to be performed at theater festivals in Pittsburgh and Japan, at the University of Illinois, and off-Broadway.

Renowned dancer and choreographer Martha Graham said that "Nothing is more revealing than movement." As a teacher of acting and movement, you have helped your students express themselves fully and touch their audiences deeply, just as you have.

Therefore, under the authority of the Board of Trustees of the University of Delaware, I have the pleasure and honor of conferring upon you, Jewel H. Walker, the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, and do declare you entitled to all the rights, honors, and privileges to that degree appertaining throughout the world. In testimony thereof, I am pleased to present to you this diploma.

A. Gilchrist Sparks III

May 30, 2015