

## David Shakes

David Shakes has worked in theater most of his life and was a founding member of the Spirit House Movers and Players Repertory Company that presented plays and poetry readings under the direction of Amiri Baraka.

Mr. Shakes has been acting, directing, and producing plays in Rochester, NY for 4 years. Currently, he is the artistic director of the North Star Players as well as an artist in residence at MuCCC. He is a founding member of the Bronze Collective.

Over the years, while performing at Geva Theatre Center, David Shakes has worked with internationally renowned actors – Samuel L. Jackson in *A Raisin in the Sun*, Theresa Merritt in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, Josh Brolin in *Into the Deep*, and Lou Meyers in *Fences*.

Mr. Shakes is also known as a historical interpreter who brings iconic figures to life such as Frederick Douglass, Langston Hughes, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He has reenacted numerous Frederick Douglass 4<sup>th</sup> of July speeches over the years.

For the last few years, David has presented the work of William Wells Brown and his literary work – *A Slave Narrative*. His other work with the Genesee Country & Village Museum includes various projects such as observations of Juneteenth and Watch Night. He produced a program for the opening of the museum's Davis Opera House, which included works by Paul Laurence Dunbar and the music of Scott Joplin.

David Shakes was a 2022 recipient of the Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award, an annual honor presented by Geva Theatre.