

# Debra Ehrhardt

At the tender age of seven, Kingston, Jamaica native Debra Ehrhardt, started telling stories in a Mango tree to entertain herself and her friends. As she grew up, she dreamed of coming to America to study theater. After graduating from drama school in New York, she was advised by Producers and agents to lose her strong Jamaican accent as that would limit work for her. Easier said than done. Instead, she decided to write and perform her own stories based on her colorful life in Jamaica and has performed all over the world.

Previous solo productions include *Mango, Mango* which received two NAACP Awards and *Invisible Chairs*, produced by David Strasberg at the Marilyn Monroe Theatre in West Hollywood and later optioned as a situation comedy by *Fox and Cock Tales: Shame on Me!* which garnered rave reviews. Her play, *JAMAICA FAREWELL* was optioned and produced by Rita Wilson (Tom Hanks' wife) and Oscar-winner, Garry Marshall at the Falcon theater and is currently optioned for film by Oscar winning Producer, Jeremy Thomas in London.

Ehrhardt received a 2007 Proclamation from the City of New York for *JAMAICA FAREWELL* for her "Outstanding Contribution to the Jamaican community" and was named one of Jamaica's top ten newsmakers for 2010. *JAMAICA FAREWELL* was named one of the top shows in the Fall of 2016 when it was produced by the Royal George theater in Chicago.

In addition, Ehrhardt has performed at the Storytelling Center in Jonesboro TN, the Taos Storytelling festival in New Mexico, Ojai Storytelling Festival in California and was the winner in 2017 for the Best Storyteller in Long Beach California.

Debra maintains the fundamental belief that content is king, and to that end she imbues her work with tenderness, subtlety, and intensity, striving tirelessly to emphasize what makes art meaningful: honest emotion.

Debra is married to an Italian Chef and has two beloved children, Danny and Jessica and has made her home in California for the last twenty-five years.