



**World Theatre Day
27th March 2010**

Judi Dench - Biography

One of Britain's most respected and popular actresses, Judith Olivia Dench or Judi Dench can claim a decades-old career encompassing the stage, screen, and television. In Britain, Judi Dench has developed a reputation as one of the greatest actresses of the post-war period, primarily through her work in theatre, which has been her forte throughout her career. She was granted an Order of the British Empire in 1970 and made a Dame of the British Empire in 1988.

Foremost Shakespearean actress, Judi Dench was first distinguished on stage, particularly in the Royal Shakespeare Company where she performed many leading roles of classical and modern and comical characters. Judi Dench was also shown on television and film.

Born in York, England, on December 9, 1934, Dench made her stage debut as a snail in a junior school production. After attending art school, she studied acting at London's Central School of Speech and Drama. In 1957, she made her professional stage debut as Ophelia in the Old Vic's Liverpool production of Hamlet. A prolific stage career followed, with seasons spent performing with the likes of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre.

In television, she achieved success during this period, in the series *A Fine Romance* from 1981 until 1984 and in 1992 began a continuing role in the television romantic comedy series *As Time Goes By*. Since 1995, Judi Dench has become known throughout the world as the boss 'M' of *James Bond 007*. Her latest Bond movies are *Casino Royale* (2006) and *Quantum of Solace* (2008). She received several notable film awards for her role as Queen Victoria in *Mrs. Brown* (1997), and has since been acclaimed for her work in such films as *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), *Chocolat* (2000), *Iris* (2001), *Mrs Henderson Presents* (2005) and *Notes on a Scandal* (2006), and the television production *The Last of the Blonde Bombshells* (2001).

Regarded by critics as one of the greatest actresses of the post-war period, and frequently named as the leading British actress in polls, Judi Dench has received many award nominations for her acting in theatre, film and television. Her awards include ten BAFTAs, seven Laurence Olivier Awards, two Screen Actors Guild Awards, two Golden Globes, an Academy Award, and a Tony Award.