

D'Atra Hicks



D'Atra Hicks began singing at the tender age of four in the New Bethel Way of the Cross Church of God in Christ where her grandfather, the late Bishop James H. Hicks was the founder. D'Atra learned to sing in church choirs and soon became the lead soloist for the church. She then went on to expand her vocal talents at the renowned High School of Music and Art in New York City.

While attending high school, she learned about the longest running off-Broadway Black Musical, "[Mama, I Want To Sing.](#)" She and her sister Miriam formed The Hicks Sisters duo as teens, and eventually cut a demo. The producers of the play "[Mama I Want To Sing](#)" were impressed enough to offer Hicks the lead role in what eventually became the most successful off-Broadway black musical in theatrical history. She got the lead role Doris Winter -- the minister's headstrong teenage daughter, who sings her way out of the church choir and into big-time pop stardom -- which she played for seven years. D'Atra's performance enraptured [Bruce Lundvall](#), president of Capital Records, who immediately signed her during intermission at one of the performances. Soon after, [D'Atra](#) released her self-titled debut album which placed on Billboard Top Albums chart. The album debuted at 9 September 1989, reached number 63 and lasted 10 weeks on this chart. Her first single "[Sweet Talk](#)" went to number four on the Billboard charts. D'Atra had two other appearances on Billboard charts (see below). This impressive entry into the R & B arena led to sell-out tours in Japan as a solo artist and with the play.

With "[A Good Man Is Hard To Find,](#)" D'Atra made professional and music history. She was the first "star" to demand adequate compensation for her work, while others either treated gospel theatre as an avocation. With her efforts to professionalize treatment of the performers, a new industry was built on her work --the travelling gospel theatre. She brought the expectation of salary equity and benefits to the genre. D'Atra remained with the play for four years, touring throughout the United States, performing before standing room only audiences in over 100 cities, changing the paradigm and the expectations of gospel promoters. D'Atra proved that gospel theatre is big business. D'Atra went on to star in gospel stage plays across the country such as "[Behind Closed Doors,](#)" "[What's Done in the Dark](#)", "[Diary of a Mad Black Woman,](#)" "[Madea's Family Reunion,](#)" "[Laugh to Keep from Crying](#)" and "[Maintenance Man.](#)" She understudied for the Tony Award nominated and Grammy Award winning "[Smokey Joe's Cafe](#)" where she moved up into the leading role and went on to London to star in the show. The doyenne, muse of Tyler Perry who exclaimed,

"D'atra Hicks has been in 2 past productions -- now who could forget her voice!"

Videos of many of the plays show D'Atra's acting skills. Currently, she is producing her own plays and conducting voice and theatrical workshops through her company and non--profit organization, Diamond Productions and the Diamond Foundation.

D'Atra recently scored Billboard entries on [T.D. Jake's](#) with the single penned by R. Kelly , "[The Storm is Over](#)", which debuted at Number 1 on the Billboard Gospel charts (the album peaked at 56 on the

Billboard Gospel Charts) and has collaborated with other artists to include Earnest Pugh, Freddie Jackson and Peabo Bryson on their projects. Her last album was [Finally, My Time](#) was produced in 2007.

In addition to Miriam, D'Atra has a younger sister [Taral Hicks](#).

She has her own one-woman show that has toured to Morocco, North Africa. She has also performed in Italy, and her TV credits consist of a variety of shows such as Showtime at the Apollo, Regis and Kathy Lee, The Morning Show, Soul Train, The Rosie O'Donnell Show and much more. Her 2011 appearance on [Divorce Court](#) is one of the highest rated episodes in Divorce Court history and has received over 1,000,000 hits on [YouTube](#).

D'Atra celebrates her most recent accomplishments as a producer and director of her own hit stage play "[Crazy Love](#)." And, she now works with other entertainers and conducts gospel workshops.

She is the mother of a teenage phenom, Diamond Victoria who inherited D'Atra's five-octave range.

Discographyⁱ

Year	Album	Artist	Credit
			Filter By Credit
			•
2007	Finally My Time	D'Atra Hicks	Composer, Primary Artist
2007	Mama I Want to Sing [1986]		Primary Artist
2006	Earnest Pugh Live: A Worshipper's Perspective	Earnest Pugh	Primary Artist
2005	Only You [Columbia River 2005]		Primary Artist
2004	2 Love Forever: R&B		Primary Artist
2003	The Goddess Is Here	Wanda Dee	Featured Artist, Guest Artist, Primary Artist, Vocals
2001	The Storm Is Over	T.D. Jakes	Additional Personnel, Featured Artist, Performer, Primary Artist
1998	Anthology	Freddie Jackson	Guest Artist, Performer, Primary Artist
1992	Soul Embrace	Richard Elliot	Featured Artist, Guest Artist, Performer, Primary Artist, Vocals (Background)
1992	Time for Love	Freddie Jackson	Performer, Primary Artist
1990	Part Two of Mama I Want to Sing	Vi Higgenson	Performer, Primary Artist
1989	All My Love	Peabo Bryson	Vocals

1989 [D'Atra Hicks](#) [D'Atra Hicks](#) Primary Artist, Producer, Vocals, Vocals (Background)

Billboard Albumsⁱⁱ

Year	Album	Chart	Peak
1989	D Atra Hicks	R&B Albums	63

Billboard Singles

Year	Single	Chart	Peak
1989	Sweet Talk	Dance Music/Club Play Singles	24
1989	Sweet Talk	Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks	8
1989	You Make Me Want To Give It Up	Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks	51

Theatre- Broadway

Smokey Joe's Café Leading Role

Theatre- Off Broadway

Mama, I Want To Sing Part 1 and Part 2 Leading Roles

Let The Music Play Gospel Leading Role

Club 12 Leading Role

A Good Man Is Hard To Find Leading Role

Bishop TD Jakes' Behind Closed Doors Leading Role

Michael Baisden': The Maintenance Man Leading Role

Crazy Love Leading Role

My Sweet Potato Pie Leading Role

The Cleanup Woman Leading Role

Tyler Perry Productions

Tyler Perry's: Diary of a Mad Black Woman Leading Role

Tyler Perry's: Madea's Family Reunion Leading Role

Tyler Perry's: What's Done in the Dark Leading Role

Tyler Perry's: Laugh To Keep From Crying

Leading Role

International:

Mama, I Want To Sign – Italy, Japan, Germany

Leading Role

Smokey Joe's Café – London

Leading Role

D'Atra Hicks in Concert – Morocco, Japan

Television Appearances:

Regis and Kathy Lee

Guest Artist

Show Time At The Apollo (NBC)

Guest Artist

Soul Train (WPIX)

Guest Artist

Bobby Jones Gospel (BET)

Guest Artist

Phil Donahue Show (NBC)

Guest Artist

Midday Live (WNEW)

Guest Artist

Dr. King T.V. Special

Background Singer

Rosie O'Donnell

Appearance

Tony Awards

Appearance

Divorce court

Episode

ⁱ Taken from the AllMusic website, D'Atra Hicks, <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/datra-hicks-mn0000114206/credits>

ⁱⁱ Taken from the AllMusic website, D'Atra Hicks, <http://www.allmusic.com/artist/datra-hicks-mn0000114206/awards>