

DEBRA DRAGOTTO: BIO

(323) 851-9566 ddragotto@yahoo.com
DebraDragotto.com

Debra began her career as an actress and award-winning stage director before becoming a producer for Reality TV. She headed departments focusing on talent and story research for companies such as Disney and Buena Vista, Fox's FX, NBC, Sony, Tribune Entertainment, and Warner's WB and TelePictures among others. Her debut short film (22 min.), *"The Desire,"* was produced through an elite UCLA Extension competition. It first screened at the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences and was later selected for the prestigious Women in Film International Festival, airing on the Shorts Channel.

Recently, her pandemic-directed short, *"22 Dollar Eggs,"* won numerous international awards in New York, Venice, Berlin, and Sicily. It has been acquired by Eshort and translated into five languages. Several of Debra's projects have been optioned. She has written television, film shorts, and feature film scripts in various genres, including dramedy, drama, erotic thriller, dark comedy, reality, one-hour series, and sitcom. Many of these projects are in different stages of production. A small selection includes her sitcom *"Patsy's Place,"* which she also directed; an animated children's feature, *"Cryptids,"* for Roddenberry Productions; a sitcom pilot, *"Downsized";* and a feature, *"Addiction."*

Debra received her B.A. in Drama from Hofstra University and her M.F.A. in Screenwriting from UCLA, where she was honored with the Jack K. Sauter Award for Artistic Merit. She also studied Acting and Directing at the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute, Producing at the New York School of Visual Arts, and Shakespeare at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts.

Currently, she works as a Screenwriting and Business of Entertainment Instructor at the Los Angeles Performing Arts Conservatory, as well as an Acting, Writing, and Directing Instructor at the New York Film Academy, LA, where she is considered the "go-to" instructor due to her diverse entertainment background. She has written and directed numerous stage productions and film projects at the New York Film Academy. As the lead instructor for undergraduate and graduate students' thesis films, she guides them from inception through production as they conceive, write, and produce their projects. Many of these films have been accepted into and won awards at film festivals worldwide.

Debra continues to write and pursue her own projects while working as a consultant and script doctor for film, television, and new media. During the pandemic, she was cast as a principal actor in a national commercial that ran for two years. Presently, she is pitching a two-book series on young Jackie Kennedy that she optioned and is in pre-production on her feature film, *"Homemade Salami,"* set in New York and Italy, which she intends to direct.