

**Gina McKee**  
**Doctor of Letters**  
**Durham Cathedral, 2 July 2025**

Gina McKee is a familiar face in film, TV, stage and radio. Her soft north-east accent and authentic manner make her one of the most versatile actors of her generation.

Born in County Durham and raised in Easington and Sunderland, Gina explored acting at a local drama club which led on to television roles. Like several of our graduating students, Gina spent several summers at the National Youth Theatre.

Many will recognise Gina from recent television shows such as *Black Narcissus*, *Bodyguard* or *Line of Duty*. Before these it was her portrayal of a working-class girl growing up on Tyneside, that would be her “big break”. Gina starred in *Our Friends in the North* alongside Daniel Craig, Christopher Eccleston and Mark Strong, in a story that spanned three decades. Gina went on to win the 1996 BAFTA for Best Actress for her portrayal of Mary Cox.

Firmly cemented as a star of British television, Gina then shot to international fame as *Bella* in Richard Curtis’s 1999 film *Notting Hill*.

Keenly dedicated to her craft, Gina’s talents are widespread and ever evolving. Her 2010 performance as Goneril in the Donmar Warehouse production of *King Lear* earned a nomination for the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Supporting Actress.

In 2013, her role as Pauline in locally inspired series, *Hebburn*, earned Gina the Royal Television Society’s Performance of the Year award.

More recently Gina starred in Eline Arbo’s critically acclaimed production *The Years* at the National Theatre.

Gina's career spans film, television, stage, and radio. She is known worldwide for her nuanced performances and meticulous attention to detail.

*Deputy Vice-Chancellor, I present Gina McKee to receive the degree of Doctor of Letters, honoris causa.*

Nicola Candlish

May 2025