



## MICHEALA COEL: DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, PLAYWRIGHT.

"Like any experience I've found traumatic, it's therapeutic to write about it, and to twist a narrative of pain into one of hope, and even humour." Coel

**“She won the Laurence Olivier Bursary Award which helped fund her schooling”**

Michaela Coel (born 1987), is a British actress, screenwriter, director, producer, singer, songwriter, poet, playwright and BAFTA award winner.

Michaela's parents are Ghanaian. She and her older sister grew up in London (Hackney and Tower Hamlets), with her mother as her parents had separated before her birth.

Michaela began to study English Literature and Theology at the University of Birmingham. She took a Che' Walker masterclass at RADA and in 2009, transferred to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where she was the first black woman enrolled in five years. Michaela won the Laurence Olivier Bursary award, which helped her fund her schooling.

In 2014, Channel 4 announced that Coel would star in and write a new sitcom called *Chewing Gum*, inspired by her play *Chewing Gum Dreams*. Her performance and writing earned her two BAFTAs in 2016. At the BAFTA Awards, Michaela gave an inspirational speech wearing a dress designed by her mother, made of Kente Cloth, a Ghanaian material.

More recently Michaela created, wrote, produced, co-directed and starred in the comedy-drama series *I May Destroy You*, inspired by her own experience of sexual assault. The show launched on the BBC in June 2020 to widespread acclaim.