
Florence LaRue

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Intelligent, beautiful, and talented are words that are frequently used when describing glamorous Florence LaRue, the original member of the legendary 5th Dimension. Whether on stage performing, lecturing, or serving as a celebrity judge for beauty pageants, such as Miss Universe, Miss LaRue juggles her roles as mother, grandmother, speaker, actress, vocalist, and humanitarian with the same electric perfection that she devotes to ballads such as “One Less Bell” which bears The5th Dimension trademark. “I give my best to whatever I am involved with,” explains the concerned citizen, who is also a six-time GRAMMY winning star.

The American Society of Jewelry Executives named Miss LaRue one of the ten most beautiful women in the world. When asked how she felt about being placed on a list beside such legendary beauties as Sophia Loren and Lena Horne and their contemporary equivalents, Penelope Cruise and Halle Berry, LaRue laughs. “Naturally, I’m honored, but I truly believe that beauty comes from within. What I see when I look in the mirror is someone who tries to look her best and stay healthy mentally, physically, and spiritually. I aim to make positive and significant deposits in other people’s lives while pursuing my God directed destiny.”

On the personal side, while God and family are Miss LaRue’s first priorities, her interests include cooking, music of various styles (especially gospel, classical and jazz), reading (particularly inspirational books and biographies of show business personalities), charity work, and her escalating speaking and acting careers.

Recognized as an expert on beauty, Miss LaRue turns her many experiences into delightful stories that are uplifting and inspiring. She excites audiences at schools, community events, churches, and corporate events. Her primary topics, “Success,” “Beauty,” and “Relationships,” are leading her to rapidly becoming a sought-after speaker.

Staring in the national tour of Broadway’s tony award winning musical, “Ain’t Misbehavin’” and then in the Calgary, Canada production of “Mo Magic” (held over for three weeks by popular demand), and in the Toronto production of “More Magic,” have all worked toward fulfilling Florence’s dream of working in theatre. “It’s exciting,” she says. I moved to California to pursue a career in big screen movies, and these experiences bring me one step closer!”

In the past, Miss LaRue has: co-hosted the Arthritis Telethon with Jayne Wyman, judged two segments of “Puttin’ on the Hits,” appeared as a celebrity guest on “Star Search,” led the nationwide audience of “Hour Magazine” to fitness with a televised aerobic lesson, and has been a special guest on numerous television shows, including several appearances on “The Dale Evans Show,” “The Today Show,” “The Carol Lawrence Show,” and numerous other Christian and secular programs. She considered it a great blessing to have been a member of the Billy Graham Crusade choir in November 2004.

Never one to avoid challenges, it was Florence who initially embraced the cause of abused children as a charitable effort for The 5th Dimension. “Anything involving children has always been of special concern to me. She hopes to one day see the little girl in Africa she has been sponsoring through World Vision. Florence was graduated from California State College and received her bachelor’s degree in education during her first year as a member of *The 5th Dimension*. To her, education and spiritual guidance are two entities that will ultimately heal and reunite suffering children and the emotionally conflicted parents who abuse them. “There are programs that can and do work,” she explains, pointing to Olive Crest Home for Children in Southern California as an

example. Florence has also been an active member of the Celebrity Action Council, which ministers to women at the Ann Douglas Center on Skid row in Los Angeles, California.

When she served on a mission with a medical / evangelism team to The Gambia, West Africa, Miss LaRue gained such compassion for the people that she plans to continue mission work and other countries (especially the United States!) In 1986, Florence LaRue was named Woman of the Year by The City of Hope, and received their prestigious Spirit of Life Award, which resulted in a research fellowship being established in her name for extensive study and treatment of gynecological cancer. She also founded and served on the educational committee of The Mid-City Chamber of Commerce in Los Angeles and was on the board of the Christian Entertainers' Fellowship. Florence's volunteer work also includes working with the Special Olympics. Among her most recent awards is her "Omni Youth Music & Actor Award "for outstanding support and contribution to the entertainment industry," benefiting the Arts in after school programs. Although many of her community service projects are performed without publicity or fanfare, Miss LaRue is very proud of receiving The President's Call to Service Award from The White House in 2014 "in recognition and appreciation for her commitment to strengthening our Nation and for making a difference through volunteer service."

Florence LaRue is very concerned with keeping healthy. She believes that it is important for one to care for one's mental, physical, and spiritual health, and has written a book, "Grace In Your Second Act," on the subject. Preparing to reach her goal of completing a full marathon, she has helped to raise money for the American Stroke Association by participating in half marathons. She completed three half marathons in one year to receive the California Dreaming medal. She has also participated in several 5k and 10k races to benefit different charities.

As leader of *The 5th Dimension*, Florence accepts her responsibility with grace and style. "Leadership means more to me than being the featured vocalist or making major decisions. It also means having patience and maturity in reaching out to others, humbly listening, and considering their suggestions, and helping them to reach their goals. I don't know whether or not I'll always live up to those expectations, but I do know that I certainly put forth my best effort."

Although she plans to continue with *The 5th Dimension*, Miss LaRue is excited about the new direction her career has taken as a solo artist. She has added the title of author behind her name by completing a soon to be published book, "Grace in Your Second Act," a guide to aging gracefully." Florence is also excited about her one woman show, "Just As I Am," which has received rave reviews. Mrs. Mary Sias, president of the Kentucky State University where Miss LaRue presented her show stated: "While the music was uplifting and exciting and delivered with an amazing energy, it was the story interwoven between the songs that was spellbinding." Florence continues to take voice and acting classes to perfect her craft.

Miss LaRue has performed for the prestigious Trumpet Awards' activities several times; including the prayer breakfast, the pre-show, and the formal dinner. She also traveled with the delegation to the Bahamas, where she performed. To quote Ms. Xernona Clayton, the highest African American woman ever at CNN, author, creator, and executive producer of The Trumpet Awards, "When Florence LaRue sings, she displays a myriad of moods and feelings for her audience. She mesmerizes, excites, enthuses, and inspires them. She has a compelling voice and enchanting expression,"

For many years, she has been an active member of The Church On The Way, in Van Nuys, California, where she especially enjoyed singing in the choir and working with the homeless ministry. Florence LaRue is clearly a star who shines for God. She is grateful to Him for the opportunity to speak and minister in the secular world through her music, writing, and acting, and for blessing her with success. She looks forward to what He has planned for her future.