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2014 GRAND MARSHAL

Laverne Cox

Laverne Cox is a critically acclaimed actress who can be seen in the Netflix original series *Orange is The New Black* where she plays the ground breaking role of Sophia Burset, an incarcerated African American, transgender woman. The show returns for its highly anticipated 2nd season on June 6, 2014. Laverne is the first trans woman of color to have a leading role on a mainstream scripted television show and *Time Magazine* named 'Sophia Burset' the 4th most influential fictional character of 2013.

Laverne is a renowned speaker and has taken her empowering message of moving beyond gender expectations to live more authentically all over the country. Her insights have been featured on CNN, MSNBC, HLN, VH1, Fox News Latino and more.

Her powerful voice and moving story landed her a book deal with Harlequin. Laverne is currently working on her first memoir that will chronicle her personal journey from a misunderstood and socially unaccepted child to an acclaimed actress, speaker and advocate for the LGBTQ community.

Laverne is also working on a documentary titled *Free CeCe* in order to heighten visibility and awareness surrounding CeCe McDonald, a transgender woman who was controversially sentenced to 41 months in prison for second degree manslaughter after allegedly defending herself against a racist and transphobic attack. The documentary will focus on McDonald's case, her experiences while incarcerated in a men's prison and the larger implications of her case for the transgender community.

In 2013 Laverne won Best Supporting Actress at the Massachusetts Independent Film Festival for her work in the critically acclaimed film *Musical Chairs* directed by Susan Seidelman (*Desperately Seeking Susan*). Laverne's other acting credits include *Law and Order*, *Law and Order: SVU*, *Bored to Death*, and the independent films *Carla* and *The Exhibitionists*.

Laverne is the first trans woman of color to produce and star in her own television show, VH1's *TRANSForm Me* which was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award. Laverne is also the first trans woman of color to appear on an American reality television program, VH1's *I Wanna Work for Diddy* for which she accepted the GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Reality Program. She is the recipient of the Dorian rising star award for her work in *Orange is the New Black*, the Courage Award from the Anti-Violence Project, The Community Leader award from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center, received the reader's choice award from *Out Magazine*, was named one of *The Grio's* "100 Most Influential African Americans", was named one of the "Top 50 Trans Icons" by the *Huffington Post*, one of *Out Magazine's* "Out 100" and *Metro Source Magazine's* "55 People We Love."



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Jonathan Groff

Equally versatile on stage and screen, Jonathan Groff currently stars as Patrick, a young video game designer, in the hit HBO television series, *Looking*. Created by Michael Lannan and directed and executive produced by Andrew Haigh, *Looking* follows three gay friends as they navigate life in modern-day San Francisco. Jonathan will next be seen in the HBO telefilm, *The Normal Heart*, directed by Ryan Murphy and also starring Mark Ruffalo, Matt Bomer, and Julia Roberts, among others. Adapted from the award-winning play by Larry Kramer, the film chronicles a gay activist who attempts to raise HIV/AIDS awareness during the early 1980s. Groff most recently voiced the character of Kristoff, the rugged mountain man, in Walt Disney Pictures' Academy Award-winning animated comedy-adventure, *Frozen*. Directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee, and also featuring the vocal talents of Kristen Bell and Idina Menzel, the film was released in November 2013 and has since become the highest grossing animated film in history.



In addition, Jonathan also recently appeared in the independent feature, *C.O.G.*, which premiered as part of the Dramatic Competition at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival. Directed and adapted by Kyle Patrick Alvarez and also starring Denis O'Hare, Corey Stoll, and Casey Wilson, the movie, based on the popular David Sedaris short story and the first ever film adaptation of his work, tells the story of a cocky young man who travels to Oregon to work on an apple farm, finding himself out of his element as his lifestyle and ideas are suddenly questioned by the locals. Jonathan made his big screen debut as Michael Lang, the legendary concert promoter and co-creator of the famed Woodstock Music and Art Festival, in Ang Lee's *Taking Woodstock*. He subsequently starred in *The Conspirator*, directed by Robert Redford and also starring James McAvoy and Robin Wright, as well as the independent drama, *Twelve-Thirty*, written and directed by Jeff Lipsky and co-starring Mamie Gummer. On the small screen, Jonathan gained notoriety for his role as Jesse St. James in Fox's hit musical comedy series, *Glee*. Groff then joined the cast of the critically-acclaimed Starz political drama, *Boss*, for its second season. Among Groff's other television credits include a guest-starring role on the lauded CBS legal drama, *The Good Wife*.

As an active part of the LGBT and arts community, Jonathan has recently participated in events for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center, AIDS WALK New York, and the 52nd Street Project mentoring projects.

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Rea Carey

Rea Carey, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, is one of the most prominent leaders in the U.S. lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights movement. Carey, who came to the Task Force in 2004 as Deputy Executive Director, has served as Executive Director since 2008. Through her leadership, Carey has advanced a vision of fairness and justice for LGBT people and their families that is broad, inclusive and unabashedly progressive.

Some of the Task Force's successes during Carey's tenure have include being a key player in passage of the LGBT-inclusive federal hate crimes prevention law; the defeat of multiple anti-LGBT ballot measures across the country; the creation and implementation of the New Beginning Initiative coalition, which secures federal administrative policy changes to improve the lives of LGBT people and their families; and the release of the largest-ever study on transgender discrimination in the U.S.

Under her guidance, the Task Force has also launched an Online Academy bolstering grassroots power by providing electronic access to its signature training programs; expanded its faith work through the Institute for Welcoming Resources, increasing the number of welcoming and affirming congregations to well over 4,000; and played a vital role in getting the U.S. Census Bureau to report married same- sex couples in the 2010 census. The Task Force also hosts the *National Conference on LGBT Equality: Creating Change*, which is the largest convening of LGBT activists and supporters in the country and serves as a driving force for strategy and organizing on LGBT issues.

Prior to her work with the Task Force, Carey worked extensively in HIV/AIDS prevention and in the LGBT community as one of the co-founders of Gay Men and Lesbians Opposing Violence and the founding executive director of the National Youth Advocacy Coalition. She has also served as an advisor to major donors and foundations, and has served on the advisory boards for such wide- ranging publications as *Teen People* magazine and the *Georgetown University Journal of Gender and the Law*. Carey serves on the Advisory Board of the *LGBTQ Policy Journal*, of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.



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