



August 2017 Her Story ENewsletter Emmy Winners

It's Emmy season! Although most of us think of Emmys as recognizing acting on television, there are multiple other categories of Emmy awards. In this enewsletter, we profile two of the many amazing women who have received Emmys in recognition of their significant prowess as entertainers: Rita Moreno and Leontyne Price.

The first person of Hispanic descent and one of the very few people to reach this pinnacle of entertainment excellence, actress, singer and dancer Rita Moreno has won an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony. Born in Puerto Rico, her family moved to New York City when she was young; she began dancing lessons soon after. At age 11, she was providing Spanish voiceovers for American films. At age 13, she appeared in her first Broadway production. She appeared in numerous small roles in film throughout the 1950s, although she disliked many of those roles as she felt they were stereotypical.



Rita Moreno

In 1961, she was cast as Anita in the film version of *West Side Story*, for which she won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress. She received a television Primetime Emmy (1977) for her role as Rita Kapcovic on *The Muppet Show*. Still active after seven decades, she continues to appear in films, on stage and on television. In addition to her many other honors, Moreno has received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Medal of Arts, and the Kennedy Center Honors.



Leontyne Price

Operatic soprano Leontyne Price became one of the first African Americans to have leading roles with the Metropolitan Opera of New York City. Price grew up in Mississippi playing the piano and singing. Later she was able to enroll in the Julliard School in New York City where she studied voice. During the 1950s and 1960s, she was an international star singing in operas around the world. She was the first African American to sing a leading role at La Scala in Italy. When she debuted at the Met in 1961, she received an ovation that lasted for at least 35 minutes (her family recorded it at 42 minutes!). In total she sang 201 performances at the Met in 16 different roles; she was particularly well suited for Puccini, Verdi and Mozart. After her retirement from the Met in 1985, she continued to sing at recitals and concerts until 1997.

Named as one of the 20 best all-time sopranos by the BBC, Price won her first Emmy in 1983 when she sang with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic. She has won 19 Grammys, more than any other classical singer, as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award. Like Moreno, her many honors include the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Medal of Arts, and the Kennedy Center Honors.

Rita Moreno and Leontyne Price are among the more than 850 women profiled in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*. Women's accomplishments continue to inspire and encourage us. Help us to tell women's stories!

Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen
Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America
www.hersstoryatimeline.com
8547 E. Arapahoe Road, PMB J189
Greenwood Village, CO 80112-1430

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