

## **Suzanne de Passe**

### **Biography**

Suzanne de Passe: Chairman and CEO of de Passe Entertainment, began her career at Motown Records as Creative Assistant to company founder Berry Gordy. She subsequently rose to the position of President of Motown Productions. Blessed with a keen ear for talent, early in her career, de Passe brought the Jackson 5 to Motown Records. With her mentor, she was a partner in Gordy/de Passe Productions prior to establishing de Passe Entertainment in 1992.

The recipient of an Academy Award nomination for co-writing the screenplay "LADY SINGS THE BLUES," de Passe won two Emmy Awards and NAACP Image Awards as Executive Producer of "MOTOWN 25: YESTERDAY TODAY, FOREVER" and "MOTOWN RETURNS TO THE APOLLO."

She also served as Executive Producer for the highly acclaimed and award winning, western mini-series "LONESOME DOVE," as well as "SMALL SACRIFICES," along with "THE JACKSONS: AN AMERICAN DREAM," and "BUFFALO GIRLS," all of which were nominated for an Emmy Award for Best Mini-Series.

As executive producer of the four-hour NBC mini-series "THE TEMPTATIONS," de Passe won an NAACP Image Award for Best Mini-Series and was nominated for both a Golden Globe Award and Emmy Award for Best Mini-Series.

de Passe has been the recipient of many honors, including the AWRT (American Women in Radio and Television) Silver Satellite Award (1999); Revlon Business Woman of the Year Award (1994); was inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame (1990); Essence Award (1989); and was honored with the Women in Film Crystal Award (1988).

In 2004, Ebony Magazine selected de Passe for its highest honor, presenting her with the Madame C. J. Walker Award. A veteran of three decades in Hollywood, she has also received countless awards for her contributions to the television, movie and music industries.

Recent community honors include receiving the 2003 Whitney M. Young Award, the Los Angeles Urban League's highest accolade. And in keeping with tradition, she presented the 2004 award to Magic Johnson.

Additionally, she has appeared as a speaker before numerous businesses and industry trade groups, including the Miller Brewing Company, Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association, Burger King Franchise Owners Association and the Chicago Minority Business Development Council.

The subject of two Harvard Business School case studies: "Suzanne de Passe and Motown Productions" and "de Passe Entertainment," she has lectured at the Harvard Business School on several occasions. In 2002, de Passe was named Time Warner Visiting Professor to the Department of Radio, Television and Film at Howard University's John H. Johnson School of Communications.

She served as Executive Producer of the half-hour, situation comedies, "SISTER, SISTER" and "SMART GUY," both of which aired on the WB Network and were produced in association with Paramount and Disney Television, respectively.

From 2001 through 2003, de Passe served as Executive Producer of the annual NAACP "IMAGE AWARDS," broadcast on the Fox Network. In 2002 and 2003, she was Executive Producer for Essence Magazine's "ESSENCE AWARDS," which also aired on Fox.

In 2002, she assumed the role of, and currently serves as, Executive Producer of "SHOWTIME AT THE APOLLO," a weekly variety program, which is nationally syndicated by Warner Brothers/Telepictures.

Additionally, Ms. de Passe served as Executive Producer of the four-hour documentary "MOTOWN 40: THE MUSIC IS FOREVER," which aired on ABC; Executive Producer of "ZENON, GIRL OF THE 21ST CENTURY," "ZENON: THE ZEQUEL," and "Zenon: Zee Three," which aired on the Disney Channel; Executive Producer of "THE LORETTA CLAIBORNE STORY," for Disney/ABC Sunday Night; and Executive Producer of "CHEATERS" for HBO.

Moving in front of the camera, Ms. de Passe served as both a judge and coach on the ABC reality show "ALL AMERICAN GIRL," which aired in 2003.

## **CAREER HIGHLIGHTS, TELEVISION PRODUCTION:**

### **MINI-SERIES:**

THE TEMPTATIONS, NBC, four hours, 1998, de Passe Entertainment. NAACP Image Award Winner for Outstanding Miniseries. Nominated for six Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Mini-Series and won an Emmy for Outstanding Director. Also won Golden Globe; Producers Guild Award; Directors Guild Award; and Prism Award. Starring: Leon, Charles Malik Whitfield, DB Woodside, Terron Brooks and Christian Payton.

DEAD MAN'S WALK, ABC, five hours, 1996, de Passe Entertainment. Starring: Edward James Olmos, Keith Carradine, Brian Dennehy and F. Murray Abraham.

BUFFALO GIRLS, CBS, four hours, 1995, de Passe Entertainment. Nominated for eleven Emmy Awards, including Best Miniseries and Best Actress. Starring Angelica Huston, Melanie Griffith, Reba McEntyre, Sam Elliott and Jack Palance.

STREETS OF LAREDO, CBS, five hours, 1995, de Passe Entertainment. Starring: James Garner, Sissy Spacek, Sam Shepard and Sonia Braga.

RETURN TO LONESOME DOVE, CBS, four hours, 1993, Motown Productions. Starring: Jon Voight, Barbara Hershey, Rick Schroder and Louis Gossett, Jr. and William Petersen.

THE JACKSONS: An American Dream, ABC, five hours, 1992, Motown Productions. Nominated for multiple Emmy Awards, including Best Miniseries. Starring: Angela Bassett, Billy Dee Williams, and Vanessa Williams as Suzanne de Passe.

LONESOME DOVE, CBS, eight hours, 1989, Motown Productions. Emmy, Golden Globe, Peabody Award-winning miniseries. Named "Outstanding Program of the Year" by Television Critics Association, Best Miniseries in TV Guide Annual Readers Choice Awards, D.W. Griffith Award by National Board of Review. Among other honors, the success of this landmark western resulted in de Passe's induction into the Cowboy Hall of Fame. "Lonesome Dove" was based on Larry McMurtry's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Starring: Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones and Angelica Huston.

SMALL SACRIFICES, ABC, four hours, 1989, Motown Productions. Nominated for three Emmy Awards, including best miniseries and two Golden Globe Awards. Winner of the Peabody Award. Based on Ann Rule's best-selling book. Starring: Farrah Fawcett, Ryan O'Neal and John Shea.

### **MOVIES FOR TELEVISION:**

### **NETWORK:**

THE LORETTA CLAIBORNE STORY – Two-hour, 2000, Disney/ABC Sunday Night, de Passe Entertainment.

SOMEONE ELSE'S CHILD – Two-hour, 1998, ABC, de Passe Entertainment.

THE LAST ELECTRIC KNIGHT – (aka SIDEKICKS) – Two-hour, 1989, ABC, Motown Productions.

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BRIDESMAIDS – Two-hour, 1989, CBS, Motown Productions.

HAPPY ENDINGS – Two-hour, 1983, CBS, King Entertainment, Motown Productions.

**CABLE:**

ZENON: ZEE THREE - Two-hour, 2004, The Disney Channel, de Passe Entertainment.

ZENON: THE ZEQUEL – Two-hour, 2001, The Disney Channel, de Passe Entertainment. When it aired, the movie had the highest-ever rating for a Disney Channel original movie. Premiered January 2001 with 3.3 rating/6 share.

CHEATERS – Two-hour, 2000, HBO Films, de Passe Entertainment.

ZENON, GIRL OF THE 21ST CENTURY – Two-hour, 1999, The Disney Channel, de Passe Entertainment.

**TELEVISION SPECIALS:**

70TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO THE APOLLO THEATER: Two-hour, 2004, NBC, de Passe Entertainment.

MOTOWN 40: THE MUSIC IS FOREVER, Four-hour documentary 1998, ABC, de Passe Entertainment.

MOTOWN 30: WHAT'S GOIN' ON, Two-hour, 1990, CBS, Motown Productions, Emmy Award Nominee.

MOTOWN MERRI X-MAS, One-hour, 1987, ABC, Motown Productions.

MOTOWN RETURNS TO THE APOLLO, Three-hour, 1985, NBC, Motown Productions. Emmy Award winner for best variety Program. NAACP Image Award winner.

MOTOWN 25: YESTERDAY, TODAY, FOREVER, Two-hour, 1983, NBC, Motown Productions, Emmy Award winner for best variety program. Winner of NAACP Image Award and Peabody Award.

MOTOWN ON SHOWTIME:

-- Smokey Robinson – One-hour, 1990, Showtime, Motown Productions.

- Comedy on Campus – One-hour, 1990, Showtime, Motown Productions.
- Michael Jackson – One-hour, 1988, Showtime, Motown Productions.
- Marvin Gaye – One-hour, 1987, Showtime, Motown Productions.
- Temptations and Four Tops – One-hour, 1986, Showtime, Motown Productions.

### **TELEVISION SERIES:**

Sister, Sister: Half-hour sitcom – 122 episodes completed, 1995-1999, WB, de Passe Entertainment. Starring: Tia and Tamera Mowry, Tim Reid and Jackee Harry.

Smart Guy: Half-hour sitcom – 51 episodes completed, 1996-1999, WB, de Passe Entertainment. Starring: Tahj Mowry, John Marshall Jones, Jason Weaver, Omar Gooding and Essence Atkins.

On Our Own: Half-hour sitcom – 19 episodes completed, 1994-1995, ABC, de Passe Entertainment. Starring: The Smollet Family.

The Motown Revue Starring Smokey Robinson: Six one-hour episodes, 1986, NBC, Motown Productions. Starring: Smokey Robinson.

### **FIRST RUN SYNDICATION:**

Showtime at The Apollo: 52 one-hour episodes completed, variety program format. 2002-Present. Syndicated through Warner Brothers/Telepictures. Hosted by the comedian Mo'Nique.

Lonesome Dove, The Outlaw Years: 44 one-hour episodes completed, western drama, 1994-1996. Starring: Eric McCormack, Scott Bairstow and Paul Le Mat.

Night Life: (195) half-hour episodes, talk show. 1986-87. Hosted by David Brenner.

### **AWARD PROGRAMS:**

32nd NAACP Image Awards, Two-hour special, 2001, FOX, de Passe Entertainment. Hosted by Chris Tucker.

MUSIC and MORE...Image Awards, One-hour special, 2001, WB, de Passe Entertainment. Hosted by Sinbad and Brandy.

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33rd NAACP Image Awards, Two-hour special, 2002, FOX, de Passe Entertainment. Hosted by Chris Tucker.

2002 Essence Awards, Two-hour special, FOX, de Passe Entertainment. Hosted by Steve Harvey.

34th NAACP Image Awards, Two-hour special, 2003, FOX, de Passe Entertainment. Hosted by Cedric the Entertainer.

2003 Essence Awards, Two-hour special, FOX, de Passe Entertainment. Winner of the 2004 NAACP Image Award for Best Variety Music Program. Hosted by Steve Harvey.

**BOARDS, TRADE ASSOCIATIONS AND AFFILIATIONS:**

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Member  
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Honorary Member  
American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, Member  
American Film Institute, Trustee  
American Society of Composers and Publishers, Member  
Caucus of Writers, Producers and Directors, Executive Committee  
Debbie Allen Dance Academy, Board Member  
Humanities Prize, Board Member  
Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Former Board Member  
Los Angeles Opera, Board Member  
National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences, Member  
National Association of Television Arts and Sciences, Member  
New York City Ballet, Former Board Member  
Producers Guild of America, Member  
Writers Guild of America, Member

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