

LILY TOMLIN

b. September 1, 1939

*“Don’t be afraid of missing opportunities.
Behind every failure is an opportunity
somebody wishes they had missed”*

Lily Tomlin is an accomplished actress, comedian, writer and producer who has won numerous awards including six Emmys, two Tonys and a Grammy. She has been involved in many performing arts genres including film, stand-up comedy, sketch comedy, Broadway and television. She performed in feature roles in the TV series “The West Wing” and “Murphy Brown” and also appeared in the “X-Files” and “Will and Grace.”

Tomlin attended Wayne State University as a premed student until her elective classes in theater arts inspired her to pursue a career as a performer. She started as a stand-up comedian in New York City.

In 1966, Tomlin made her television debut on “The Garry Moore Show.” After a few appearances on “The Merv Griffin Show,” she joined the comedy series “Rowan & Martin’s Laugh-In” in 1969. Her “Laugh-In” character Ernestine captivated audiences and earned her a Golden Globe Award in 1972. Tomlin worked on comedy television specials with her partner, Jane Wagner. The duo’s six specials, produced over the next nine years, earned them three Emmy Awards—the first one for “Lily” in 1974.

Robert Altman’s “Nashville” marked Tomlin’s break into film in 1975. Two years later, she starred on Broadway in “Appearing Nitely,” a show written and directed by Wagner. Another Wagner creation, Tomlin’s one-woman show “The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe,” became a major Broadway hit in 1985 and earned Tomlin a Tony Award in 1986.

Winner of six Emmy Awards, two Tony Awards and a Grammy Award, Lily Tomlin is a renowned actress, comedian, writer and producer.

Returning to television in 1993, Tomlin starred in “And the Band Played On,” an HBO film special about AIDS. From 1994 to 1998, she entertained children with her role as Mrs. Valerie Frizzle on “The Magic School Bus.” In addition to her roles on “The West Wing” and “Murphy Brown,” Tomlin continued to appear in hit movies such as “The Kid” (2000) and “I Heart Huckabees” (2004).

Tomlin officially came out to Gay TV in 2000. Her relationship with Wagner had been openly acknowledged for the majority of its existence.

Tomlin and Wagner started the Lily Tomlin Jane Wagner Cultural Arts Center, which provides art exhibits, theater and other programs. The Center donates to services for people with HIV/AIDS and funds programs at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center.

