

KATE MCKINNON

SNL COMEDIAN

b. January 6, 1984

“One of my favorite things is to try and make an unlikable person endearing.”

She is the first openly gay cast member of “SNL.”

Kate McKinnon is an American comedian, writer and Emmy Award-winning actress. She is best known for her work on the sketch comedy series “Saturday Night Live” (SNL).

McKinnon grew up on Long Island, New York. A self-professed “theater kid,” she showed a knack for mimicry and impersonations as early as fifth grade, when she convincingly imitated a British accent while auditioning to play the “queen of reading week.” After high school, McKinnon studied theater at Columbia University. In her senior year, she beat thousands of competitors for a spot on Rosie O’Donnell’s television series “The Big Gay Sketch Show.”

McKinnon joined the cast in 2006, where she remained for the run of the program.

In 2008 McKinnon began regularly performing live sketch comedy at the Upright Citizens’ Brigade Theater. When “SNL” called her to audition, she realized a longtime dream. McKinnon joined “SNL” as a featured player in April 2012. She became the show’s first openly gay cast member and the second known gay cast member since Danitra Vance in the 1980s.

On “SNL” McKinnon quickly became a breakout star with her off-the-wall yet eerily accurate impressions of celebrities and politicians, such as Justin Bieber, Ellen DeGeneres, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Jeff Sessions and Hillary Clinton. She has created a host of iconic characters—from a crass mermaid to an alien abductee. McKinnon’s uncanny ability to make unlikable characters relatable won the hearts of viewers.

Since she joined “SNL,” McKinnon has appeared in a number of screen productions. She starred in the all-female reboot of “Ghostbusters” and in “Office Christmas Party” (both in 2016) and in “Rough Night” (2017) and “The Spy Who Dumped Me” (2018). She has also performed as a voice actor for animated films such as “The Angry Birds Movie” and “Finding Dory.”

Among other comedy awards, McKinnon received two consecutive Emmys (2016 and 2017) for her work on “SNL.” She delivered a heartfelt acceptance speech thanking fellow lesbian comedian Ellen DeGeneres for “making it less scary to be gay” and for encouraging her to pursue her dreams. McKinnon has credited her gay identity for informing her unique comedic voice. “As minorities, we’re on the fringe,” she said, “and there’s just something so wonderful about that perspective, something so inspiring.”



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