AMBER RUFFIN

b. January 9, 1979

COMEDIAN, WRITER & ACTOR

She is the first Black American woman to write for a late-night talk show.

"I'm using the last day of PRIDE to come out! Be proud of who you are … I know I am!"

Amber Ruffin is a queer Black comedian, writer, actor, and playwright. In 2014, she became the first Black woman to write for a U.S. late-night network television show, joining the team at "Late Night with Seth Meyers." She has gained broad recognition as the host of "The Amber Ruffin Show," which premiered in 2020, and as a panelist on CNN's "Have I Got News for You."

Born in 1979 in Omaha, Nebraska, Ruffin spent her early 20s performing in local theater and improv before meeting the owner of the improv company iO, who urged her to pursue comedy full-time. She trained at iO Theater in Chicago until 2008, then moved to Amsterdam to join Boom Chicago.

After Ruffin returned from the Netherlands, she performed with The Second City in Denver and Chicago. There, she met Jenny Hagel, with whom she later founded the production company Straight to Cards.

In 2011, Ruffin moved to Los Angeles, where she performed in an episode of "Key & Peele" and with groups such as RobotDown, Story Pirates, and Sacred Fools Theater Company.



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Three years later, after an unsuccessful audition for "Saturday Night Live," Ruffin was hired as a writer for "Late Night with Seth Meyers." She soon began appearing in on-air segments.

Ruffin was nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award in 2017, then hosted the ceremony in 2018. During this time, she also appeared in the educational comedy series "Drunk History" and in the sitcom "Detroiters."

In 2020, Ruffin launched her eponymous late-night show on Peacock. It ran for three seasons and received Writers Guild and Emmy Award nominations. She was named to the TIME100 Next list in 2021, and in 2023, she won a Tony Award alongside Matthew López for Best Book of a Musical for "Some Like It Hot."

On June 30, 2024, at the end of Pride Month, and after recently divorcing her husband, Ruffin came out as queer on Instagram — a revelation she quipped would shock "exactly zero people." Three months later, CNN premiered its own take on the British quiz show "Have I Got News for You," featuring Ruffin and Michael Ian Black as permanent panelists.

With her sister, Lacey Lamar, Ruffin is also the New York Times best-selling co-author of "You'll Never Believe What Happened to Lacey: Crazy Stories of Racism." She wrote the lyrics for "Bigfoot! The Musical," which premiered off Broadway in 2026, and continues to write for Seth Meyers's show while working on other projects.

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