



# THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

## TOP LUMINARIES IN THE LGBTQ+ AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNITIES JOINED THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA AT *THE PALEY HONORS: TRIBUTE TO LGBTQ+ ACHIEVEMENTS IN TELEVISION ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF STONEWALL*

The Evening Included a Special Salute to *Will & Grace* and *Modern Family*  
Featuring Debra Messing and Jesse Tyler Ferguson,  
and Honored Billy Crystal for his Groundbreaking Portrayal of “Jodie Dallas” on *Soap*

Star-Studded Lineup of Presenters Included: Matt Bomer, Jason Collins, Laverne Cox, Alan Cumming,  
Don Lemon, Judith Light, Greg Louganis, Luis Sandoval, and Robin Lord Taylor

### Paley Center to Host *A Paley Honors Luncheon Celebrating Michael Douglas* on September 12

NEW YORK, NY, May 15, 2019 – Tonight The Paley Center for Media honored the LGBTQ+ community, and the television series, movies, sports and news programs, and that broke barriers, shattered stereotypes, and brought audiences together at *The Paley Honors: Tribute to LGBTQ+ Achievements in Television on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Stonewall*. This momentous occasion was held at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in Midtown Manhattan.

Additionally, the Paley Center announced it will host *A Paley Honors Luncheon Celebrating Michael Douglas* on September 12. This special occasion will celebrate the career of the Emmy Award-Winning actor especially for his work on television including *Behind the Candelabra*, *The Streets of San Francisco*, and most recently his much lauded role of Sandy Kominsky on Netflix’s *The Kominsky Method*.

“Television provides an extraordinary window on where our culture is at any given time,” said Maureen J. Reidy, the Paley Center’s President & CEO. “In a world where so many things divide us, television can be a uniting force. It can cross borders, remind us of our commonality, and connect us whether we’re watching on a big screen or on our phones.”

As part of the salute to LGBTQ+ achievements in television, the Paley Honors acknowledged the unique power of comedy to connect us, to make complex issues understandable, and remind us of our shared humanity, all through the power of laughter. There were special salutes to *Will & Grace* and *Modern Family*, featuring **Debra Messing** and **Jesse Tyler Ferguson**, and **Billy Crystal** for his groundbreaking character of “Jodie Dallas” from the series *Soap* and some moving words spoken by all three including:

- **Billy Crystal:** “I’d like to think in some small way “Jodie Dallas” made just a little bit of difference. He opened some eyes and I think we changed some minds.”
- **Debra Messing:** “On nights like this I’m reminded of television’s power and how great shows can alter our culture permanently.”
- **Jesse Tyler Ferguson:** “It is my great hope that we continue to challenge our audiences. There are still so many stories to tell. We still have so much we can do to represent the LGBTQ+ community on television, and I know there are some brilliant minds in this room—we’re looking to you to keep pushing those stories forward.”

The Paley Honors also featured a stellar lineup of stars including presenters: **Matt Bomer, Jason Collins, Laverne Cox, Alan Cumming, Don Lemon, Judith Light, Greg Louganis, Luis Sandoval, and Robin Lord Taylor**. Some of the moving words spoken included:

- **Don Lemon:** “We cannot go backwards. Together we must create a world where your dreams aren’t limited because of who you love. Television, at its best, can help us achieve that better world. It bears witness to our history, it illuminates our present, and yes, *television* can help create our future.”



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- **Jason Collins:** “We are living in an age of possibility, an age still rife with challenges, but with courage, and with the strength that come from building a community, you can lead the honest and authentic life you want to live.”
- **Alan Cumming:** “Television, at its best, is about possibility—the possibility to change for the better. In the earlier days of TV drama, being gay was often portrayed as a problem to be overcome. Today, I play the lead character on a network drama whose sexuality isn’t the most interesting aspect of his personality...it’s the fourth or fifth most interesting thing, and just a facet of what makes him a whole person.”

This evening benefited the expansion of the Paley Center’s LGBTQ+ collection, which is part of the Paley Archive, the world’s largest publicly accessible archive of TV and radio programming, as well as the Paley Center’s ongoing Education Programs.

Hearst and Fox Corporation served as Co-Chairs. Benefactors, Patrons, and Supporters included: Altice USA; AMC Networks; Apple; Broadway Stages; The Lord Browne of Madingley; CBS Corporation/Showtime Networks Inc.; CNN; Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP; Creative Artists Agency; David Geffen Foundation; Deloitte & Touche, LLP; Discovery, Inc.; ESPN; HBO; ION Media; IPG; Ms. Debra L. Lee; Liberty Global; Major League Baseball; McCann Worldgroup; Mutual of America; NBA/WNBA; NBC Universal; National Football League; Netflix; Nielsen; PwC; Evan Sacks; SESAC; Sony Pictures Television; United Talent Agency; Univision Communications Inc.; Verizon; and Viacom & BET.

The Paley Center President & CEO Maureen J. Reidy and Chief Programming Officer, Executive Vice President Diane Lewis led the production team. Sara Kate Ellis, President & CEO of GLAAD and Rich Ferraro, Chief Communications Officer of GLAAD served as special advisors.

For more information on the upcoming *A Paley Honors Luncheon Celebrating Michael Douglas* please visit [paley.me/michaeldouglas](http://paley.me/michaeldouglas)

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## About The Paley Center for Media

The Paley Center for Media, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with locations in New York and Los Angeles, leads the discussion about the cultural, creative, and social significance of television, radio, and emerging platforms. Drawing upon its curatorial expertise, an international collection, and close relationships with the leaders of the media community, the Paley Center examines the intersections between media and society. The general public can access the Paley Center’s permanent media collection, which contains over 160,000 television and radio programs and advertisements, and participate in programs that explore and celebrate the creativity, the innovations, the personalities, and the leaders who are shaping media. Through the global programs of its Media Council and International Council, the Paley Center also serves as a neutral setting where media professionals can engage in discussion and debate about the evolving media landscape. Previously known as The Museum of Television & Radio, the Paley Center was founded in 1975 by William S. Paley, a pioneering innovator in the industry. For more information, please visit [paleycenter.org](http://paleycenter.org).