

THE  
NATIONAL  
ACADEMY OF  
TELEVISION  
ARTS & SCIENCES



**SONIA MANZANO  
TELEVISION'S "MARIA" ON SESAME STREET  
TO RECEIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD  
AT THE 43rd ANNUAL DAYTIME EMMY® AWARDS**

*To be Honored on Sunday, May 1, 2016 at the Daytime Gala*

New York, NY - April 6, 2016 - The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) today announced that Sonia Manzano, legendary performer of "Maria" from *Sesame Street*, will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 43rd Annual Daytime Emmy® Awards on Sunday, May 1, 2016 at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel and Suites in downtown Los Angeles, CA.

"My children and just about every child in America has grown up learning their ABC's from the iconic character of "Maria," on *Sesame Street* played by Sonia Manzano," said Bob Mauro, President, NATAS. "Sonia not only brought the life events of marriage, having a baby, and being a mother to viewers young and old, she also brought a seldom-seen diversity, a Latin role-model, unlike anything on television at the time. She is one of the most beloved female performers in the history of *Sesame Street*, and the National Academy is proud to be honoring her with our prestigious Emmy Award for Lifetime Achievement."

"Honoring Sonia Manzano has a special meaning for me - as we both started our professional careers doing the play, *Godspell*, though in different casts when we were practically children," said David Michaels, SVP, Daytime (NATAS). "Her talent both in front of the camera and as a writer, bringing the themes of diversity to a national audience on *Sesame Street*, is an extraordinary achievement worthy of this well-earned recognition!"

Ms. Manzano will be joining an illustrious group of previous Lifetime Achievement Honorees including, Betty White, Oprah Winfrey, Barbara Walters, Merv Griffin, Dick Clark, Bob Barker, Alex Trebek and many others.

## Sonia Manzano

Sonia Manzano (Maria) is a first generation Puerto Rican who has touched the lives of millions of parents and children as "Maria" on *Sesame Street* and helped them grow smarter, stronger and kinder.

Manzano was raised in the South Bronx where her involvement in the arts was inspired by teachers who encouraged her to audition for the High School of Performing Arts, where she began her career as an actress. She came to New York from Carnegie Mellon University to star in the original production of the off-Broadway show *Godspell*. Manzano joined *Sesame Street* in 1971 and holds 15 Emmy Awards for her previous work as part of the *Sesame Street* writing staff.

Manzano has performed on the New York stage in *The Vagina Monologues*, *The Exonerated* and *Love, Loss and What I Wore*. She has written for the Peabody Award-winning children's series, *Little Bill*, and her children's book, No Dogs Allowed, published by Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing in 2004, was selected by the General Mills initiative *Spoonfuls of Stories*. Her second book, A Box Full of Kittens, was published in 2007. Manzano's first young adult novel The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano, published by Scholastic in 2012, was chosen as a Pura Belpre Honor Book. A Christmas picture book, Miracle on 133rd Street was released September 2015. Her memoir Becoming Maria: Love and Chaos in the South Bronx was published September 2015 as well.

Manzano received the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Award in Washington, DC and the Hispanic Heritage Award for Education in 2003. She is proud to have been inducted into the Bronx Hall of Fame in 2004. She received an honorary doctorate in fine arts from Notre Dame University in 2005. She was voted one of the most influential Hispanics by *People Magazine en Español* (February 2007) and Ballet Hispanico awarded her their Inspiration Award in April 2011. She received the New York Women in Film and Television Muse award for outstanding vision and achievement in December 2013. Manzano was twice nominated for an Emmy Award as Outstanding Performer in a Children's Series.

She has served on the March of Dimes board, the board of the George Foster Peabody Awards and the board of Symphony Space, a New York City theatrical institution. Manzano also volunteers for The Bronx River Alliance, an organization dedicated to cleaning up the Bronx River in the South Bronx. She also volunteers to make a The Bronx Children's Museum a reality.

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The Daytime Emmy Awards recognize outstanding achievement in all fields of daytime television production and are presented to individuals and programs broadcast from 2:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. during the 2015 calendar year.

The 43rd Annual Daytime Emmy Awards is a presentation of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

FX Group, Inc., is the official provider of the Daytime Emmy Award Almanac, the official program for the event. Yangaroo, Inc. is the official provider of the Digital Media Distribution System Awards Management Solution (“DMDS”) for the submission, judging and voting of all programs in the 42nd Annual Daytime Emmy Awards.

United Airlines is the official airline of the Daytime Emmy Awards and The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

A full list of all nominees in all categories can be downloaded from our website at [www.emmyonline.tv](http://www.emmyonline.tv).

Press Registration forms for the May 1st event can be found on the NATAS website at [http://emmyonline.com/day\\_43rd\\_credentials](http://emmyonline.com/day_43rd_credentials)

#### **About The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences**

The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS) is a professional service organization dedicated to the advancement of the arts and sciences of television and the promotion of creative leadership for artistic, educational and technical achievements within the television industry. It recognizes excellence in television with the coveted Emmy® Award for News & Documentary, Sports, Daytime Entertainment, Daytime Creative Arts & Entertainment, Public & Community Service, and Technology & Engineering. NATAS membership consists of over 15,000 broadcast and media professionals represented in 19 regional chapters across the country. Beyond awards, NATAS has extensive educational programs including Regional Student Television and its Student Award for Excellence for outstanding journalistic work by high school students, as well as scholarships, publications, and major activities for both industry professionals and the viewing public. For more information, please visit the website at [www.emmyonline.tv](http://www.emmyonline.tv)

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