



“YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE. YOU DON'T WANT YOUR TOMBSTONE TO READ: ‘PLAYED IT SAFE.’” – ROSARIO DAWSON

Rosario Dawson paves her own path. While she could easily select generic Hollywood projects, she chooses roles that speak to her as an artist and as a human being. It is her unbridled passion and provocative, uninhibited approach that continually leaves the audience profoundly impacted.

Born and raised in New York City amongst poverty in a rundown tenement, Dawson takes great pride in the incredible love she has for family. Raised by her mother, a singer of Puerto Rican and Afro-Cuban descent, and her stepfather, a construction laborer of Irish descent, she uses the struggles and challenges she faced in her youth as inspiration—often selecting gritty, edgy, urban roles.

In the early 90's, as an adolescent, Dawson was discovered on her front porch step by two photographers—one of which happened to be writer-director Harmony Korine, who immediately thought she'd be perfect for a role in the controversial film *Kids* (1995). It took several years after for her career to blossom, but once it did, Dawson quickly solidified herself as a spectacular talent with roles in such films as Spike Lee's *He Got Game* (1998), Craig Bolotin's *Light It Up* (1999), Ed Burns' *Sidewalks of New York* (2001), the teen hit *Josie and the Pussycats* (2001), Spike Lee's *25th Hour*, alongside Will Smith in *Men in Black II* (2002), *Shattered Glass* (2003), Oliver Stone's *Alexander* (2004), and again with Will Smith in *Seven Pounds* (2008).

Always having had an interest in music and singing, Dawson expanded her horizons beyond film and teamed with Prince for the re-release of his hit “1999”, appeared in a Chemical Brothers video, and was featured on the Outkast

song “She Lives in My Lap”. In 2005, she brought her musical roots to the screen when she starred as Mimi Marquez in the film adaptation of the hit musical *Rent* (2005).

Dawson has had an ardent love of comic books. She co-created her own comic book series *Occult Crimes Taskforce* in 2006 landed a starring role in the comic adaptations *Sin City* (2005) and *Sin City: A Dame to Kill For* (2014), lent her voice to the role of Wonder Woman in *Justice League: Throne of Atlantis* (2015), and will star in the new *v* series on Netflix in 2015.

Even with a seemingly endless workload, Dawson never turns away from her passion to impact lives of others in need. Highly active politically, socially and environmentally, she donates her time and efforts to such organizations as the Lower East Side Girls Club; Amnesty International; Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays; Voto Latino (which she also founded); Doctors Without Borders; One Billion Rising; The Nature Conservancy; and Save the Children.

Cinequest, the Silicon Valley's creativity and film institute, bestows its Maverick Spirit Award on bold, visionary and creative forces—this spirit represents the finest in the worlds of film, creativity and innovation. Cinequest is honored to present our highest honor this year to Rosario Dawson, who reveals time and again—through her artistry and activism—her passion for improving our lives in the present and in the future.

“This future is ours to embrace. Whether we, the established generations, choose to accept that is in our court.”

– Rosario Dawson

MAVERICK SPIRIT AWARD EVENT AN EVENING WITH ROSARIO DAWSON

Moderated by Jennifer Siebel Newsom

SAT. FEBRUARY 28
7:30 PM

CALIFORNIA THEATRE
345 S. First Street



Jennifer Siebel Newsom is a filmmaker, speaker, former actress, and advocate for women, girls, and their families.

Newsom's latest movie, *The Mask You Live In*, premieres at Sundance and

plays at Cinequest 2015.

Newsom is also the writer, director, and producer of the 2011 Sundance documentary film *Miss Representation*, which explores how the media's inaccurate portrayals of women have led to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence. *Miss Representation* made its national broadcast debut on OWN: the Oprah Winfrey Network on October 20th, 2011.

Coinciding with the distribution of her film, Newsom launched *MissRepresentation.org*, a call-to-action movement that provides women and girls the tools to realize their full potential. Newsom serves as the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of *MissRepresentation.org*.

Newsom is also the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Girls Club Entertainment, LLC, a film production company established to develop independent films focused primarily on women that educate, activate, and transform culture. Newsom is an Executive Producer of the 2012 Sundance Award-winning documentary *The Invisible War*, which exposes the epidemic of rape in the U.S. military.