

2014 ACTION ICON AWARDS



LaFaye Baker
Hollywood Stuntwoman
Founder of Action Icon Awards

Death defying free falls, mind-blowing fire gags, action-packed car chases and breathtaking fight sequences all in a days work for **LaFaye Baker**, an acclaimed professional stuntwoman in Hollywood. She is flawless as a diamond as one of the few, noted African-American stuntwomen carving her niche in Tinsel town.

A career spanning over 20 years, LaFaye Baker has left an indelible mark on the field of stunt performing. To her chagrin, LaFaye's stunt work began as early as three months of age when she started tumbling and crawling in her parents two-story home and walking as early as seven months. Her first acclaim beckoned with breaking the **Guinness Book of World Records** by twirling 58 hula-hoops at one time when she was only 16 years old.

With her strong athleticism, LaFaye was introduced to stunt performing through a colleague in the probation field as a great alternative to releasing the stress of her physically demanding job. She was well trained in gymnastics and volleyball and added an innate athletic ability that proved to be beneficial in her career.

After 10 years of daredevil free falls, LaFaye received the call of a lifetime from **Academy Award Winner Halle Berry** to serve as her stunt-coordinator for the big-budgeted, award-winning HBO film, "**Introducing Dorothy Dandridge**." At the time, no other African-American woman had served in such capacity. Making LaFaye a well respected, admired and sought after player in stunts.

A dossier jaw-dropping in itself landed LaFaye incredible opportunities in entertainment having doubled for over 40 of Hollywood's top-tiered actresses including **Angela Bassett, Regina King, Regina Hall, Vanessa Bell Calloway, Lynn Whitfield** and host of many others. Her career full speed ahead includes more than 20 movies, big-name features like **Hannibal** with **Anthony Hopkins** and 2011's **Green Lantern** and a myriad of national automobile commercials and corporate advertisements.

As a successful stuntwoman, LaFaye's career doesn't come without risks, she recalls an early mere miss on the 1996 music video set of the **Grammy-Winning Fugees "Ready or Not"** where she broke her jaw, splattered her mandible and required complete reconstructive surgery with titanium plates and screws. This incident didn't stop the affable Baker; she kept ticking even after the licking.

Recognizing her often overlooked peers in stunts, LaFaye founded the **Action Icon Awards** which acknowledges the unsung sheroes in Hollywood – the women who risk their lives in action-packed films thrilling audiences with their death defying athleticism. Such honorees have included **Maggie Q., Lindsay Wagner, Jamie Lee Curtis, Vivica Fox, Pam Grier, Angela Bassett, Laila Ali and Gold Medalist Gabby Douglass**.

"To much is given, much is required," says LaFaye. Enter **Diamond in the RAW Foundation**, a non-profit designed in 2008 by Baker to prime the Hollywood pump with at-risk teen girls, a population that often harbors a misplaced interest in life in front of the camera. Baker turns their attention to the work behind the camera, in the hopes that the 20 to 30 girls finishing her program annually will directly address the industry's continued race and gender imbalances.

Daring to be different and civic minded, LaFaye Baker is truly a talent worth mentioning. Her career accomplishments have been featured in a documentary film about Hollywood Stunt women and in 2015 will be inducted into the renowned **Smithsonian Institute's Entertainment** exhibit honoring the contributions of the African-American stunt performer. She can also be found on the pages of **Entertainment Weekly, Essence Magazine, Jet, Wall Street Journal, Scholastic News, Rolling Out** and a host of others.

LaFaye declares that every journey in life is a lesson, which require the three D's of success, "**Determination, Dedication and Discipline**." Seemingly the explosive ingredients needed for perfecting her thrilling unrivaled stunts.

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