

Angela Bassett

Angela Evelyn Bassett (born August 16, 1958) is an American actress and activist known for her biographical film roles, most notably her performance as Tina Turner in the biopic *What's Love Got to Do with It* (1993), for which she was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actress and won the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress – Motion Picture Comedy or Musical. Bassett has additionally portrayed real life figures Betty Shabazz in both *Malcolm X* (1992) and *Panther* (1995), Katherine Jackson in *The Jacksons: An American Dream* (1992), Voletta Wallace in *Notorious* (2009) and Coretta Scott King in *Betty & Coretta* (2013). Her other notable film roles include Reva Styles in *Boyz in the Hood* (1991), Bernie Harris in *Waiting to Exhale* (1995), Rachel Constantine in *Contact* (1997), Lynne Jacobs in *Olympus Has Fallen* (2013) and *London Has Fallen* (2016), and Queen Ramonda in *Black Panther* (2018) and *Avengers: Endgame* (2019).

Bassett began her film career in the 1980s, after earning a bachelor of arts degree from Yale University and a master of fine arts degree from the Yale School of Drama. In the 1990s, she appeared in films nearly every year. The 2000s saw a succession of films starring Bassett, with her appearing in at least one film every year. Bassett's success has continued into the 2010s. Bassett earned nominations for her roles in films such as *The Score* (2001), *Akeelah and the Bee* (2006), *Meet the Browns* (2008) and *Jumping the Broom* (2011) and won awards for her performances in *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* (1998) and *Music of the Heart* (1999), among others. Bassett's performance as Rosa Parks in the 2002 film *The Rosa Parks Story* was honored with her first Primetime Emmy Award nomination.

In 2013, Bassett had a recurring role on the FX horror anthology series *American Horror Story: Coven*, earning her second Primetime Emmy Award nomination for her performance as Voodoo queen Marie Laveau. She returned for *Freak Show*, the series' fourth season, portraying a three-breasted woman named Desiree Dupree, for which she received another Emmy Award nomination. For the fifth season, *Hotel*, she portrayed Ramona Royale, a famous movie star. Bassett returned to the series's sixth cycle, *Roanoke*, portraying an alcoholic actress named Monet Tumusiime, who plays struggling mother and former police officer Lee Harris in the *My Roanoke Nightmare* documentary, and she reprised her role as Marie Laveau in a guest role in the eighth season *Apocalypse*. In 2018, Bassett began producing and starring in the Fox first responder drama series *9-1-1*, playing LAPD patrol sergeant Athena Grant.

Angela Bassett



Bassett in 2015

Born	Angela Evelyn Bassett August 16, 1958 New York City, New York, U.S.
Residence	Los Angeles, California, U.S.
Alma mater	Yale University (BA, MFA)
Occupation	Actress
Years active	1985–present
Spouse(s)	Courtney B. Vance ^(m. 1997)
Children	2

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Early life and education

Bassett was born on August 16, 1958 in New York City, the daughter of Betty Jane (née Gilbert; 1935–2014)^[1] and Daniel Benjamin Bassett (1924–1981),^[2] and was raised in Harlem.^{[3][4][5]} Bassett's middle name was given to her in honor of her aunt Evelyn.^[4] The origin of the Bassett surname comes from her great-grandfather William Henry Bassett, who took the surname of his former slave owner.^[6] Ten months after Bassett was born, her mother became pregnant and had a second child, Bassett's sister D'nette. Bassett said the pregnancy "only made things harder." Bassett's parents "shipped" her to stay with her father's sister Golden. While her aunt did not have any children of her own, she "loved children, and she was good with them."^[7]

After her parents' separation, she relocated from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, to St. Petersburg, Florida, where she and her sister D'nette were raised by their social worker/civil servant mother.^[8] Bassett did not see her father again for several years, until she attended her grandmother's funeral. There, Bassett met his daughter from his first marriage, Jean, who at twelve years old, was several years older than Bassett.^[9] After graduating from Jordan Park Elementary School, she began being bused out of her neighborhood to attend Disston Middle School for seventh grade. The year she began attending was 1970, the first year busing was implemented to integrate public schools in St. Petersburg. After completing seventh grade, she was bused to Azalea Middle School for eighth and ninth grade. Bassett's mother became more involved in her daughter's grades and told her and her sister the pair were going to college.^[10]

In her younger years, Bassett was "in love" with the Jackson 5 and dreamed of marrying a member of the family group, stating it would probably be "whoever had the cutest, roundest Afro at the time. In my imagination we would have children and live in a real house."^[9] As her interest in entertainment developed, Angela and her sister would often put on shows, reading poems or performing popular music for their family.^[11]

At Boca Ciega High School, Bassett was a cheerleader and a member of the Upward Bound college prep program, the debate team, student government, drama club and choir. A straight "A" and "B" student for the most part, Bassett got her first "C" in physical education, and tried to get her mother to not feel disappointment in the grade. Bassett called the grade the "average," leading her mother to say that she did not have "average kids." As Bassett described, a "sense of pride" developed in her and she did not get another "C" until college.^[12] During high school, Bassett became the first African-American from Boca Ciega to be admitted to the National Honor Society. She participated in Upward Bound, an academic and cultural enrichment program for underprivileged students. Bassett says she and the other participants did not see themselves as underprivileged.^[11]



Boca Ciega High School, where Bassett as a teenager was a member of the debate team and student government among other endeavors.

Bassett attended Yale University and received her B.A. degree in African-American studies in 1980. In 1983, she earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Yale School of Drama, despite opposition from her father's sister who warned her to not "waste" her "Yale education on theater." She was the only member of Bassett's family to have gone to both college and graduate school.^[12] At Yale, Bassett met her future husband Courtney B. Vance, a 1986 graduate of the drama school. Bassett was also classmates with actor Charles S. Dutton.^[13]

After graduation, Bassett worked as a receptionist for a beauty salon and as a photo researcher. Bassett soon looked for acting work in the New York theater. One of her first New York performances came in 1985 when she appeared in J. E. Franklin's *Black Girl* at Second Stage Theatre. She appeared in two August Wilson plays at the Yale Repertory Theatre under the direction of her long-time instructor Lloyd Richards. The Wilson plays featuring Bassett were *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (1984) and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (1986). In 2006, she had the opportunity to work on the Wilson canon again, starring in *Fences* alongside longtime collaborator Laurence Fishburne at the Pasadena Playhouse in California.

In 2018, Bassett was awarded an honorary doctoral degree in fine arts from her alma mater, Yale University.^[14]

Career

Early work

In 1985, Bassett made her first television appearance as a prostitute in the TV movie *Doubletake*. She made her film debut as a news reporter in *F/X* (1986), for which she was required to join the Screen Actors Guild (SAG).^[15] Bassett moved to Los Angeles in 1988 for more acting jobs^[16] and gained recognition in the films *Boyz n the Hood* (1991) and *Malcolm X* (1992). For her portrayal of Betty Shabazz, she earned an Image Award. Despite the award, the movie was not entirely given positive reception, being referred to by critics as failing to "capture" the rage of *Malcolm X's* autobiography.^[17] During production of *Malcolm X*, Spike Lee showed Bassett a tape of the exact moment when *Malcolm X* was shot during his assassination, since they would be filming the scene. Bassett called the recording "haunting", but noted that after listening, she was "able to grab hold of the pain and re-create the scene." Bassett felt it was important for her to get the assassination scene correct, and wondered how Betty "found the strength to keep going, to raise her family, to educate, to sustain them."^[18] *Malcolm X* was released on November 18, 1992.

1990s

In 1990, Bassett played an airline stewardess alongside Arnold Schwarzenegger, a tough cop who went undercover as a kindergarten teacher to crack a case. This became Bassett's first movie role. In 1992, Bassett played Katherine Jackson in *The Jacksons: An American Dream*. Bassett's agents tried to discourage her from playing the role, given the negative reception that Michael Jackson had. She admitted to not caring about the negative view of members of the Jackson family at the time, citing her childhood fondness of the group as an example of her passion for the project and believed her "instinct" about the role had been correct once learning of the positive reviews the miniseries received after airing.^[19] Bassett had previously idolized the group growing up and said the Jackson family were positive influences on the African-American community for their successes. Bassett had previously worried that after her role as Betty Shabazz in *Malcolm X*, she would not find another role "as satisfying". Bassett at the time of the film's release expressed her belief that her career would never receive such high-profile roles again. "I think I have been incredibly blessed and it is probably just all downhill from here."^[20]

Later that year, Bassett was cast as Tina Turner in *What's Love Got to Do with It* (1993).^{[21][22]} Bassett returned to Los Angeles after *Malcolm X* filming was completed, and got a call for an audition for a movie based on *I, Tina*, Tina Turner's memoir.^[23] Bassett won a Golden Globe and earned an Academy Award nomination for her portrayal of Turner. She was the first African-American to win the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress – Motion Picture Musical or Comedy. Bassett obtained the role after beating Halle Berry and Robin Givens, but only had a month to prepare before filming began. She met Tina Turner twice, and

was given advice by the woman she would be portraying from wigs and outfits to dancing styles. Turner also did Bassett's make up, leading Bassett to call her "supportive" and her "biggest fan."^[16] Bassett described to the *Orlando Sentinel* going to one of Turner's concerts and crying profusely. According to Bassett, upon realizing that she knew some of Turner's dance moves, she was "almost a river of tears."^[24] Marc Bernardin of *Entertainment Weekly* wrote that Bassett "gave the performance of a lifetime" portraying Turner in the biopic.^[25]

Bassett starred in three movies in 1995, which were released with varied reactions from critics: *Vampire in Brooklyn*, *Strange Days*, and *Waiting to Exhale* (where she worked with author Terry McMillan). In *Strange Days*, Bassett played Lornette "Mace" Mason, a chauffeur and bodyguard. In *Vampire in Brooklyn*, she played Rita Veder, a tortured cop with a dark secret. She was excited to work with Eddie Murphy in *Vampire in Brooklyn*, as well as director Wes Craven. Bassett had previously worked with Craven on television shows.^[26] Bassett's character in *Waiting to Exhale*, Bernadine Harris, was betrayed by her husband and in revenge she set fire to his entire wardrobe and vehicle, then sold what was left for one dollar. Bassett described the then-recently filmed party scene and her character in *Waiting to Exhale* to the *Orlando Sentinel*. Bassett said, "The thing is that my character is thinking about how her husband has left her. I have a cigarette in one hand, and I'm drinking. Basically, the four of us are sitting there talking about men and having some fun."^[24]

In 1997, she starred as the President's advisor in *Contact*.^[27] Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* opined that Bassett was "largely wasted as a Presidential assistant."^[28]

In 1998, *Fatboy Slim* sampled Bassett's voice from 1995's *Strange Days*, specifically the line "this is your life, right here, right now!", for his hit single "Right Here, Right Now". Also in 1998, Bassett starred in *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, once again collaborating with McMillan. She played Stella, a 40-year-old American professional woman who falls in love with a 20-year-old Jamaican man. She received praise for the performance,^{[29][30]} Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* calling Bassett's character "the best thing in the movie" and writing that Bassett "portrays this high-strung superwoman with such intensity that she makes her almost believable."^[31]

In 1999, Bassett starred in *Music of the Heart*, once again collaborating with horror icon Wes Craven.^{[32][33]} Matthew Eng wrote of her "terrifically specific chemistry" with Meryl Streep.^[34]

2000s

In 2000, Bassett turned down the lead role in *Monster's Ball* because of the script's sexual content; the role earned Halle Berry the Academy Award for Best Actress. The first film Bassett appeared in that year was *Supernova*, where she played a medical officer.^{[35][36]} Her other two films released in 2000 were *Whispers: An Elephant's Tale* and *Boesman and Lena*. Todd McCarthy of *Variety* wrote that in *Boesman and Lena* Bassett "abandons her recently cultivated glamorous image to dig to the core of Lena's fierce, probing, contentious, compassionate character."^[37] Kevin Thomas of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote Bassett captured all of her character's "mercurial mood swings" and both Bassett and her costar Danny Glover "rise to the challenge of these larger-than-life roles, just as you would expect."^[38]

She appeared in the 2001 film *The Score*. Her character was in a relationship with Robert De Niro's. She read the film's script and became interested. She was then telephoned by director Frank Oz, who told her Robert De Niro would "like to meet with you". Bassett met with De Niro and later realized the conversation was meant to break the ice before they started filming.^[39] In



Bassett at the NABOB Awards, 1996

addition to *The Score*, that year she also had a role in the television film *Ruby's Bucket of Blood*. The following year, in 2002, Bassett acted in *Sunshine State* and *The Rosa Parks Story*. In *The Rosa Parks Story*, Bassett was cast as Rosa Parks.^[40] Laura Fries of *Entertainment Weekly* wrote that Bassett "takes her physical strength and turns it inward to portray Parks" and expressed her belief that "lesser hands" would allow for misinterpretation or gross underplay of Parks' personality.^[41] In addition to positive reception of her role, Bassett was seen as the "star" of the film due to playing the lead and earned a nomination for a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Miniseries or a Movie for her performance.^[42]

In 2003, she read from the WPA slave narratives in *Unchained Memories*. In the 1930s, about 100,000 former slaves were still living during the Great Depression, of which 2,300 were interviewed part of the Federal Writers' Project. The transcripts of the Slave Narratives collection of the Library of Congress is a record of slavery, bondage and misery.^{[43][44]} That year she also appeared in the film *Masked and Anonymous*, playing a mistress.^{[45][46]} Ann Hornaday noted her as among the "endless parade of actors who show up even for the briefest of appearances".^[47]

In 2004, she had roles in the films *The Lazarus Child* and *Mr. 3000*. *Mr. 3000* was a comedy in which Bassett costarred with Bernie Mac. When asked if the film was much easier to act in than the more intense roles she had in the past, Bassett responded, "This was much easier. This was a walk in the park. It was pretty easy compared to some of the roles I've done that call for so much emotion or physicality." At the time of the film's release, she called both Bernie Mac and Laurence Fishburne, who she had worked with in the past, her "favorites" and said the pair were both "highly professional and extraordinarily talented."^[48] The only film she appeared in during the following year was *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* in an uncredited voice role.^{[49][50]}



Bassett at the 2007 The Heart Truth's Red Dress Collection.

In the 2006 film *Akeelah and the Bee*, Bassett portrayed Tanya Anderson, the mother of the film's lead, Akeelah, played by Keke Palmer. Bassett said she loved the story,^[51] viewing the lead character as someone that "could be anyone because each of us have had dreams and aspirations and wanting to be and needing to be supported and directed",^[52] and described working with Palmer as being "really wonderful." According to Bassett, the two bonded and that Palmer was as good an actress as any adult she had worked with.^[51] Bassett appeared in the television film *Time Bomb* the same year. Her role was seen as just an "extended cameo" by Brian Lowry of *Variety*.^[53]

Bassett provided her voice for the 2007 film *Meet the Robinsons*.^[54] When asked about her motives in taking on the role, Bassett said, "For one, it was a character I had never played before, which is always important to me, to keep me sharp. But it was also the desire to be part of a well-written movie that has something really positive to say about families and about all the different ways there can be to make a family."^[55]

She appeared in the 2008 film *Gospel Hill*.^{[56][57]} Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* wrote that Bassett's "fiery self-possession brings a spark of passion to her stick-figure character".^[58] She next appeared in *Of Boys and Men*, portraying Rieta Cole, the matriarch of a Chicago family who is killed in an accident in the beginning of the film and is seen through flashbacks for the remainder of the film. She and her costars Robert Townsend and Victoria Rowell were seen by Robert Gillard of *LA Sentinel* as doing wonderful jobs of "capturing the emotions of a family stricken by grief."^[59] Bassett also had a role in *Nothing But the Truth* in 2008.^[60] Bassett joined the regular cast of *ER* for the show's final season (2008–2009).^{[61][62]} She portrayed Dr. Catherine Banfield, an exacting Chief of the ER who was also working to recover from the death of a son and to bring another child into her family. Bassett's husband Courtney Vance played her television husband on *ER* as Russell Banfield.

In the 2009 film *Notorious*, Bassett portrayed Voletta Wallace, the mother of The Notorious B.I.G.^{[63][64]} To portray Wallace's Jamaican accent, Bassett conversed with her on and off the film set, and she practiced her accent using tapes that Wallace made.^[65] Bassett said she jumped at the chance to be part of the film after reading the script. She felt it did a "wonderful job of

bringing" The Notorious B.I.G.'s "life to the page."^[66] Bassett earned positive reviews for her performance in the film, noted as being one of the more experienced actors involved.^{[67][68]}

2010s

In 2010, Bassett lent her voice to portray First Lady Michelle Obama^[69] on an episode of *The Simpsons* titled "Stealing First Base". Bassett was seen as a "terrific" fill in for Obama.^[70] Bassett was also cast in the superhero film *Green Lantern*, released in 2011, as notable DC Comics character Amanda Waller.^[71] Bassett said working on the film was "a lot of fun" and that she enjoyed being a part of it.^[72] Despite this, Bassett was taken "out of her element" with the arrangements made that accommodated the computer-generated effects. She called it her first time doing "this kind of movie" but expressed interest in seeing what her scenes looked like.^[73] In 2010, *Deadline Hollywood* reported that Bassett would have a role in *One Police Plaza*.^[74] In 2011, Bassett co-starred with Samuel L. Jackson in the play *The Mountaintop* a fictionalized depiction of the night before the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King (Jackson portrays MLK) while at the Lorraine Motel. The critically acclaimed play by Katori Hall originally debuted in London's West End in 2009 and went on to win the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play. The production opened on Broadway on October 13, 2011. In March 2011, it was reported that Bassett had signed up for a lead role in the ABC pilot *Identity*.^[75]

She also appeared in the 2011 film *Jumping the Broom*, playing the matriarch of a wealthy family.^{[76][77]} Bassett had a good feeling about the film from "the start",^[73] and believed her character had a "real presence" in the film and felt she was active in the plot.^[72] Bassett's and Loretta Devine's performances in the film were called "in some ways too fierce for the room, offering nuances of hostility and hurt that the movie cannot really handle" and contributing to the "unevenness of the performances" in the film.^[78] Bassett and Devine were noted as "superb, distinguished actresses" by Kirk Honeycutt of *The Hollywood Reporter*, but were seen as having been "asked to overdo every moment with permanent scowls and body language more suitable to *Mortal Kombat*."^[79] Despite this, her performance was given some positive attention, with Elizabeth Weitzman of *New York Daily News* saying Bassett "makes the movie hers".^[80] The film was Bassett's second time working with Devine, as the pair had worked together previously in *Waiting to Exhale*.^[81] Director Salim Akil said Bassett's presence quietly makes a big difference.^[73]

Bassett was featured in the 2012 film *This Means War*,^[82] having been known to be attached to the film since two years prior.^[83] Tambay A. Obenson of *IndieWire* attributed Bassett's lack of appearances in promotional material to her having a small role and her demographic not being targeted by the film.^[84] Bassett also appeared as herself in *I Ain't Scared Of You*.

Bassett portrayed Coretta Scott King in the television film *Betty and Coretta*, which aired on February 2, 2013, continuing her trend of portraying real women.^{[85][86]} Bassett had previously played Shabazz in both *Malcolm X* and *Panther*, but instead played Coretta Scott King opposite to Mary J. Blige, who played Shabazz. Bassett was surprised to learn after researching that Coretta initially refused Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "advances" and called Mrs. King a "modern day iconic heroine." While being asked about what drew her to play real-life women, Bassett answered "The respect that I have for their lives—their stories, vulnerabilities, strength, and resolve."^[87] Bassett began filming her scenes during the latter part of the previous year.^[88] Mary J. Blige, when asked about what kind of experience it was to work with Bassett, said that she was "one of Angela's biggest fans" while calling her an "amazing woman."^[89] The film received mix reviews, including negative reactions from Ilyasah Shabazz and Bernice King, the daughters of Betty Shabazz and Coretta Scott King.

Bassett recently appeared as Secret Service director Lynne Jacobs in the action thriller *Olympus Has Fallen*, released in March 22, 2013. Bassett was reported to have a role in the film in June 2012, the month before filming began.^{[90][91]} In an interview with *The Huffington Post*, Bassett noted that there had "never been a female head of the Secret Service, much less a woman of color". She called the decision to have a female African-American Secret Service director "a bold casting choice". Overall, Bassett viewed the film as authentic.^[92] Bassett described working with Morgan Freeman as wonderful, but she admitted to being intimidated by him. She was impressed with the preparation of director Antoine Fuqua, who she said "was just preparation to the hilt" and expressed her interest in working with him again.^[93] She appeared in the 2013 film *Black Nativity*. She sang and it was seen as contributing to the film's "blissful unreality".^[94] She was asked by the film's director, Kasi Lemmons, if she could

sing and Bassett admitted to lying to get the role. She joked to reporter Jennifer H. Cunningham, "Yes, I can sing — you didn't ask how well!" Singing in a film was a new experience for Bassett, who had never had to sing before and had always lip-synched.^[95]

In 2013, Bassett appeared on FX TV show *American Horror Story: Coven*^[74] as Marie Laveau, a voodoo witch. Bassett praised the writers, calling them "amazing".^[96] Her agent approached Ryan Murphy about her having a role in the series and he told the agent that she was the person he had in mind for Marie Laveau. Bassett watched the previous seasons of the series before meeting with Murphy and found the writing "wonderful" and the characters "so realized".^[97] Bassett's performance earned her a nomination for the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Miniseries or a Movie. She returned to the show for its fourth season *American Horror Story: Freak Show*, playing Desiree Dupree, a three-breasted woman. She received another nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Miniseries or a Movie.

It was announced in May 2014 that Bassett would make her directorial debut with *Whitney*, a TV film based on the life of Whitney Houston, who Bassett had worked with previously.^[98] Bassett had previously expressed interest in directing the year before.^[93] It was announced in early June 2014 that Yaya DaCosta would play Houston in the film. Houston's daughter, Bobbi Kristina Brown, insulted Bassett on Twitter for not casting her as her mother in the film, to which Bassett admitted in an interview that she had never thought about casting Brown.^[99] On June 11, 2014, Ruby Dee died from natural causes. Bassett had previously worked with her on *Betty and Coretta* and was reported to attend the Riverside Church memorial for Dee on September 20, 2014.^[100]

In the 2015 film *Survivor*, Bassett portrayed United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom Maureen Crane.^[101] In a negative review of the film, Mark Kermode lamented Bassett "appears from behind closed doors like a celebrity guest on *Stars in Their Eyes*."^[102]

Bassett also voiced the character Six in the first person shooter game, *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege*.

In March 2016, Bassett appeared in *London Has Fallen*, reprising her role as Lynne Jacobs.^[103] Bassett noted it was "the very first sequel I've ever done" and that she had been excited at the prospect of another film after the initial success of *Olympus Has Fallen*.^[104] In June 2016, the Human Rights Campaign released a video in tribute to the victims of the 2016 Orlando gay nightclub shooting; in the video, Bassett and others told the stories of the people killed there.^{[105][106]} Bassett appeared in *American Horror Story: Roanoke*. She also directed its sixth episode, which aired October 19, 2016. The episode marks the third time a woman has directed the show. Co-creator Ryan Murphy praised Bassett in an interview with E! News, saying he told her she would "'do this big, big episode and you're going to knock it out of the park,' and she did. And I've seen it time and time again with these women that we brought into this directing world that they're just killing it, and they're working twice as hard because they know they have a lot to prove."^[107]

In March 2017, Bassett appeared in "Ache", an episode of the television series *Underground*.^[108] Executive producer and director Anthony Hemingway said her character "was written with Angela in mind" and that the entire cast came to see Bassett the day she filmed her performance.^[109] In May 2017, Bassett appeared in an episode of *Master of None*, portraying major character Denise's mother Catherine.^[110] Lena Waithe wanted Bassett after being impressed by her previous work though was convinced she would turn down the role and said Bassett's inclusion influenced the series drastically with "another layer" of tension.^[111] The writers of the series also favored Bassett for the role after seeing her performance in *The Jacksons: An American Dream* and related her character's evolution in that feature to Catherine.^[112]



Bassett at PaleyFest 2014 for *American Horror Story: Coven*.

In January 2018, Bassett starred in the Fox first responder procedural drama *9-1-1*, of which she is also a producer.^[113] In February 2018, Bassett starred in the acclaimed Marvel superhero film *Black Panther*, as Dowager Queen Ramonda, mother of the titular character.^{[114][115][116]} In December 2018, she voiced the Decepticon Shatter from *Bumblebee*.

In 2019, she joined the cast of *Gunpowder Milkshake*.^[117] She also reprised her role as Ramonda in *Avengers Endgame*.

Roles

Bassett has been noted for portraying real life African-American women, usually smart and strong women. Bassett said in 2001 that she liked those roles and added: "That's the image that I like to put out there, and those are the parts I'm attracted to. But not iron-fist kind of strong, just self-assured. I'm nice too."^[39] She has turned down roles which she viewed as demeaning to her image. "This is a career about images. It's celluloid; they last for ever. I'm a black woman from America. My people were slaves in America, and even though we're free on paper and in law, I'm not going to allow you to enslave me on film, in celluloid, for all to see. And to cross the water, to countries where people will never meet people who look like me. So it becomes a bigger thing than me just becoming a movie star, and me just being on TV. So if you're going to show every black woman as 400lb or every black woman as the prostitute on the street ... But I have always maintained that [the roles] I cannot do because of the way I'm made up, or because of the way I think, I don't begrudge that there is someone else who has no issues with that."^[118]

Personal life

Bassett married actor Courtney B. Vance in 1997. In the summer of 2005, they starred together in a production of *His Girl Friday* at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The couple's twins – son Slater Josiah Vance and daughter Bronwyn Golden Vance – carried by a surrogate, were born on January 27, 2006.^[119]

Bassett is a supporter of programs for the arts, especially for youth. She annually attends events for children with diabetes and those in foster homes. She is an active Ambassador of UNICEF for the United States. Bassett is a supporter of the Royal Theater Boys & Girls Club in her hometown of St. Petersburg, Florida.^[120]

She is represented by the Executive Speakers Bureau of Memphis.^[121]

In early 2007, Bassett donated \$2,300 to the presidential campaign of Barack Obama.^[122] Bassett supported Obama in his reelection campaign. In June 2012, she made an appearance at the St. Petersburg office of his campaign and said the election was not one "where we can sit on the sidelines".^[123] Bassett attended the second inauguration of Barack Obama on January 20, 2013.^[124] She endorsed Hillary Clinton for president during the 2016 United States presidential election, saying "Bar none, Clinton would make a great president."^[125] Bassett also spoke at the 2016 Democratic National Convention, introducing survivors of the previous year's Charleston church shooting, an incident about which she spoke during her remarks.^[126] After Clinton was defeated in the general election, Bassett tweeted, "Only 1455 days until November 3, 2020. Rest up my country. #ProudOfHer".^[127]

Bassett was initiated as an honorary member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority on July 13, 2013.^[128]

Filmography

Awards and nominations



Bassett with her husband, Courtney B. Vance, March 1, 2007

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External links

- [Angela Bassett \(https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000291/\)](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000291/) on IMDb 

- [Angela Bassett \(https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-cast-staff/85805\)](https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-cast-staff/85805) at the [Internet Broadway Database](#) 
 - [Angela Bassett \(http://www.lortel.org/Archives/CreditableEntity/3520\)](http://www.lortel.org/Archives/CreditableEntity/3520) at the [Internet Off-Broadway Database](#) 
 - [Angela Bassett \(https://www.allmovie.com/artist/p4466\)](https://www.allmovie.com/artist/p4466) at [AllMovie](#) 
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