



“THE WOMEN WHO MADE ME”

By Laverne Cox

Each issue we're asking one amazing woman: who's changed your life? The star of *Orange Is The New Black* and new movie *Grandma* shares her dream team

got a 45-minute standing ovation at the Metropolitan Opera House when she debuted in *Il Trovatore* in 1961. She transcended all kinds of barriers. I love her voice; I listen to her almost every day.

Brené Brown

Shame researcher

Brené mostly writes about shame and vulnerability, and her work has changed the way I think about myself and the world. She talks so much about owning our stories and that is crucial for me.

Jessye Norman

Opera singer

She has a beautiful voice and amazing sense of dignity, but is also so eloquent and elegant in the way she speaks and the way she carries herself. I love women who are larger than life, who occupy space and are intelligent.

Bell Hooks

Author, feminist and social activist

I discovered her work when I was in college, and it changed the way I think about gender, race and class. She's incredible.

Martina Navratilova

Tennis player and coach

She's the reason I got into tennis as a kid. Her athleticism and will to win were inspiring. She was so

strong and athletic, and I saw myself in her for some reason.

Beyoncé

Musician

She's so beautiful and chic, and again I love her work ethic. I love women who work hard. Being the very best is very difficult.

Eartha Kitt

Singer, dancer and actress

I saw her perform once before she passed away. Her memoir is so arresting and I cried on the first page. She was blacklisted for ten years, because she was against the Vietnam War. She had this amazing resilience – she and so many African-American performers in the '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s. It was not easy to be black in America at that time. These women were extraordinary.

Susan Batson

Acting coach

Susan is my acting mentor. I discovered her in 2001 or 2002, and if it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be here. I went to her class and it changed my life. She sets a super-high standard for the craft of acting that I'm still trying to attain.

Laverne stars in *Orange Is The New Black*, Seasons One to Three available on Netflix. *Grandma* is released on December 11



Gloria Cox

Laverne's mum

My mom is everything. From the values she instilled in me to the example that she set with her own work ethic.



Serena Williams

Tennis champion

She's inspired me a tremendous amount. Tennis is so intense and difficult and shows how hard one has to work to be the very best. Serena exemplifies that with elegance, grace and sexiness.



Leontyne Price

Opera singer

Leontyne made so much opera history. She was the first black singer to sing on NBC television in 1955, and stations in the South did not carry it because her love interest was played by a white man, and interracial relationships were illegal. She

From top Laverne and her mum, Gloria; Serena Williams; Beyoncé