



Stormé DeLarverie

December 24, 1920 – May 24, 2014

Stormé DeLarverie was known as “the Rosa Parks of the Gay Community”, and the only male impersonator in the famous Jewel Box Revue**.

Stormé was born in New Orleans to an African American mother and a white father. She is remembered as a gay civil rights icon and entertainer, who performed and hosted at the Apollo Theater and Radio City Music Hall. She worked for much of her life as an MC, singer, bouncer,

bodyguard and volunteer street patrol worker, the "guardian of lesbians in the Village." She is known as "the Rosa Parks of the gay community."

DeLarverie spent the years between 1955 and 1969 as the MC of the Jewel Box Revue, a touring variety performance showcasing both black and white entertainers. The revue featured men dressed in drag while DeLarverie was the only male impersonator in the show. Notably, the Jewel Box Revue was the first integrated drag revue, and drew crowds of both black and white audiences, even performing at the Apollo Theater in Harlem.

DeLarverie is best known for possibly throwing the first punch of the June 27, 1969 uprising at Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village.

While some witnesses say that DeLarverie threw the first punch, and she made the claim as well, there were many people involved in the uprising which made it difficult to determine who the instigator was. Either way, DeLarverie was a large part of what is seen as the catalyst for the protests that set off the gay rights movement.

With her theatrical experience in costuming, performance and makeup, biracial DeLarverie could pass as either a man or a woman, Black or white. Offstage, she cut a striking, handsome, androgynous presence, and inspired other lesbians to adopt what had formerly been considered "men's" clothing as street wear. She was photographed by renowned artist Diane Arbus, as well as other friends and lovers in the arts community, in three piece suits and "men's" hats. [She is now considered to have been an influence on gender-nonconforming women's fashion decades before unisex styles became accepted.

From the 1980s through the 1990s, DeLarverie worked as a singer and a bouncer. She patrolled gay clubs and bars on lower Seventh and Eighth avenues on the lookout for intolerance. She lived at the famous Hotel Chelsea throughout this period, and continued her vigilance against anti-gay and anti-black prejudice until she was 85.

Talk about interesting! You will and should want to delve into researching Stormé and the Jewel Box Revue

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storm%C3%A9_DeLarverie?fbclid=IwAR36dJybs04GZp5t-kFmXHqYvPpqbOF60_gy7KJC8Cqla6ukAbOmvPT8MI