

Bill Cosby

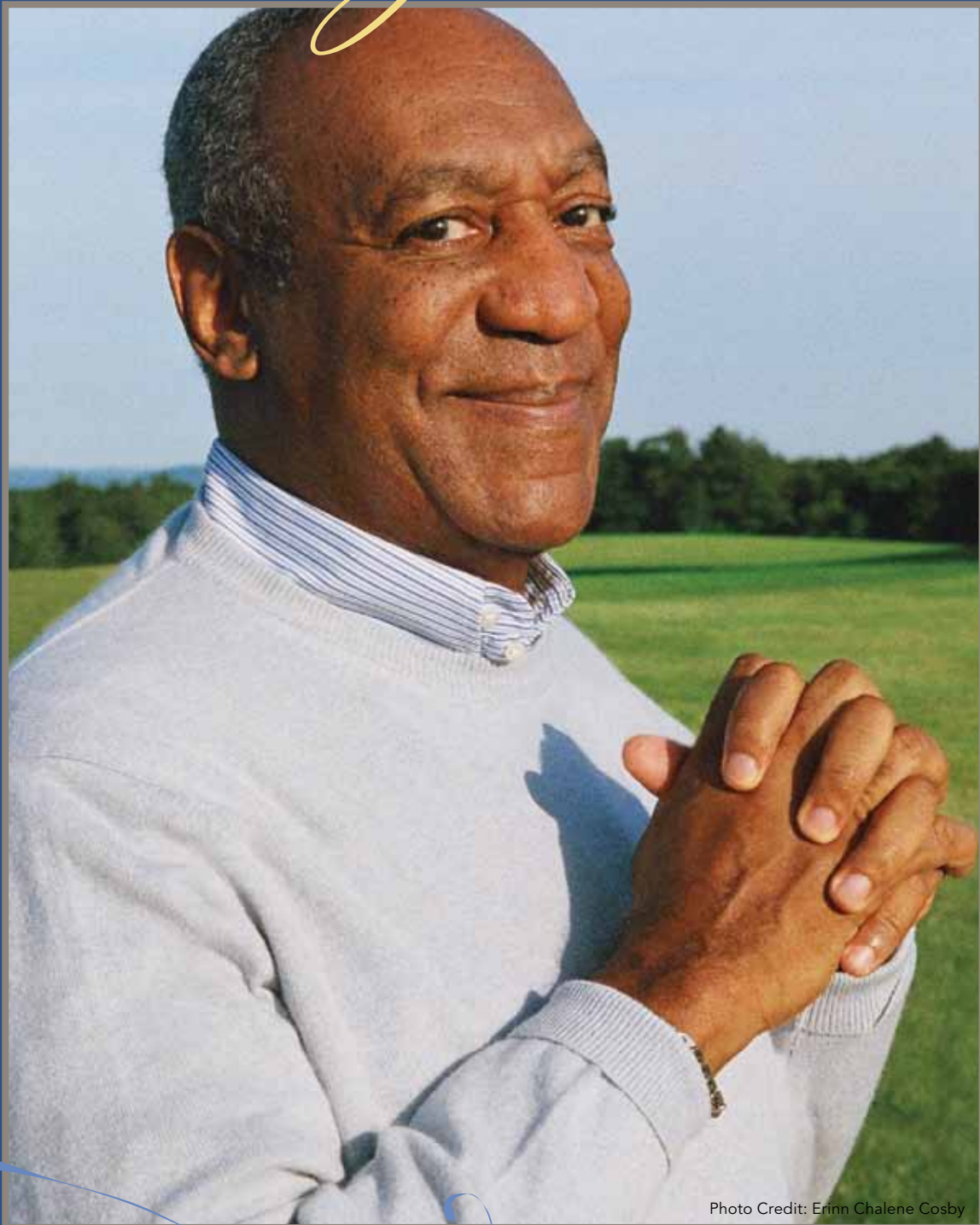


Photo Credit: Erinn Chalene Cosby

One of America's most prolific comedians of all time, Bill Cosby has dazzled generations of fans with his comedy routines, his iconic albums, best-selling books and groundbreaking television shows. His comedy transcends age, gender and cultural barriers.

Cosby broke television's racial barrier with a role in *I Spy*, becoming the first African-American to co-star on a television series and win three consecutive Emmys for "Outstanding Lead Actor" in the dramatic series. The veteran comic hosted the Emmy-winning cartoon *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*, performed in roles on the children's educational show *Electric Company*, and created and produced the Emmy award-winning *Little Bill*.

Perhaps Cosby's greatest contribution to American entertainment and culture is *The Cosby Show*, about a close-knit, upper-class black family. Cosby said his intent was to portray an American family. *Time* magazine called the show "an encouraging sign of maturity in matters of race" that has "given millions a fresh, laughter-splashed perspective on their own domestic lives."

In 1998, he received the Kennedy Center Honors Award. In 2002, he was awarded with the highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Cosby was the 2009 recipient of the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor. He was the first lifelong Philadelphian to receive the Marian Anderson Award given to individuals who have helped change society through their art and the courage of their convictions.