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## **WNET Hires New Executive Producer for *American Masters* series**

*Veteran producer and filmmaker **Michael Kantor** to head the long-running PBS series*

(New York, NY — April 16, 2014) WNET, parent company of New York’s public television stations THIRTEEN and WLIW21 and operator of NJTV, announced the appointment of Michael Kantor as executive producer of its [\*\*American Masters\*\*](#) series.

“We did a thoughtful and exhaustive search to find the right person for this position,” said Stephen Segaller, vice president of programming at WNET. “And Michael has the talent and vision to continue the great legacy of **American Masters**. He has a deep knowledge of American culture — as his many award-winning films have demonstrated — and the ability to get projects funded and filmed. We are pleased and fortunate to welcome him to WNET.” Kantor will begin his new duties April 30.

A long-time producer and filmmaker for PBS who has also worked on programs for HBO and other cable networks, Kantor has created a number of award-winning programs with WNET. Kantor’s six-part series **Broadway: The American Musical** was hosted by Julie Andrews and won the Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series. His Emmy-nominated series **Make ‘Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America** was hosted by Billy Crystal and narrated by Amy Sedaris. Kantor has produced two programs for WNET’s **Great Performances** series, including **Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy**, which was narrated by Joel Grey and just won a 2014 Peabody Award.

“This is an amazing opportunity,” said Kantor, “I can’t imagine a more interesting and creatively challenging series to work on than **American Masters**. I’ve been inspired by the remarkable films and the extraordinary filmmakers that the series has brought to a broad national audience. I’m honored to carry on this tradition as we plan for the exciting evolution of the series.”

“Michael’s fine filmmaking and his history with WNET and PBS makes him a natural choice for this position,” said WNET President and CEO Neal Shapiro. “I’m excited about the next chapter for **American Masters**, one of the iconic series we produce for PBS, and I look forward to having Michael on our team.”

Launched in 1986, **American Masters** has earned 26 Emmy Awards — including nine for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series since 1999 and five for Outstanding Non-Fiction Special — 12 Peabodys, an Oscar, three Grammys, two Producers Guild Awards, and many other honors. Now in its 28<sup>th</sup> season on PBS, the series is a production of THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC for WNET. To take **American Masters** beyond the television broadcast and further explore the themes, stories and personalities of masters past and present, the companion website (<http://pbs.org/americanmasters>) offers streaming video of select films, interviews, photos, outtakes, essays, and other resources.

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#### **About WNET**

As New York’s flagship public media provider and the parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than 5 million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children’s programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. Pioneers in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the tri-state’s unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Reel 13](#), [NJTV News with Mike Schneider](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the [THIRTEEN Explore iPad App](#) where users can stream PBS content for free.