

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2

Thirteen/WNET New York
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thirteen.org



Series At-a-Glance

press information

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2

Series Overview

Building on the widespread acclaim of *African American Lives* (2006) and *Oprah's Roots* (2007), *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2* again journeys deep into ancestry of an all-new group of remarkable individuals, offering an in-depth look at the African-American experience and race relations throughout U.S. history. Harvard professor **Henry Louis Gates, Jr.** returns as series host, guiding genealogical investigations down through the 20th century, Reconstruction, slavery and early U.S. history, and presenting cutting-edge genetic analysis that locates participants' ancestors in Africa, Europe and America. Joining Professor Gates in the new broadcast are poet **Maya Angelou**, author **Bliss Broyard**, actor **Don Cheadle**, actor **Morgan Freeman**, theologian **Peter Gomes**, publisher **Linda Johnson Rice**, athlete **Jackie Joyner-Kersey**, radio personality **Tom Joyner**, comedian **Chris Rock**, music legend **Tina Turner**, and college administrator **Kathleen Henderson**, who was selected from more than 2,000 applicants to have her family history researched and DNA tested alongside the series' well-known guests.

Featured stories include the tragic account of **Tom Joyner's** great-uncles, who in 1915 were convicted by an all-white jury and executed in the electric chair for a crime that new evidence suggests they did not commit; **Bliss Broyard**, who lived her life unaware that her father, renowned *New York Times* critic Anatole Broyard, was a light-skinned black man who chose to "pass" as white; **Chris Rock's** maternal great-great grandfather, Julius Caesar Tingman, a black Civil War veteran who was twice elected to the South Carolina State Legislature; **Don Cheadle's** ancestors, who had been enslaved by Chickasaw Indians and brought to Oklahoma on the tail end of the "trail of tears," the forced relocation of Native Americans during the 1830s; and much more.

Educational Outreach

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2 will be accompanied by a far-reaching educational outreach component. Working in cooperation with seven public television stations in key markets across the country, Thirteen will provide direct, hands-on training to more than 1,000 K-through-12 educators, guiding them in the use of the broadcast program, Web site, and print materials in standards-based classroom instruction. Each participating public television station will be partnering with a local museum, historical society, or genealogical association to maximize impact of the program in local communities. In addition, Thirteen is developing curriculum materials, lesson plans, a Web-based educational interactivity, as well as a print guide and highlights DVD to promote educational use of the series.

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Major corporate funding for this new production and its outreach initiatives is provided by The Coca-Cola Company and Johnson & Johnson. Additional corporate funding is provided by Buick. Funding is also provided by public television viewers and PBS.

The Coca-Cola Company

Johnson & Johnson



Co-Produced by
Thirteen/WNET New York,
Kunhardt Productions
and Inkwell Films

thirteen
WNET NEW YORK

KUNHARDT
PRODUCTIONS

Inkwell Films

The Educational Publishing Department will produce an engaging Multimedia Package, including a guide and DVD, exploring the themes and ideas presented in *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*. The guide will be interactive, with information on how to build a family tree, profiles of the 10 individuals featured in the series, and a list of informative resources. Users of the package will learn how to uncover details of their own past, and witness the revelatory moments others have experienced through this process of looking back. The *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2* Multimedia Package will place the circumstances of one's history within reach.

Web Site

Launching the week of January 28, the companion Web site for *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2* (www.pbs.org/aalives2) will provide resources for visitors to pursue their own family genealogy; further information on the series' research, scholarship and science; interactive scrapbooks for each series participant; a social media application that allows users to upload and tag their own family stories; lesson plans and media-rich classroom activities for teachers, and more.

DVD

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2 will be available on DVD through PBS Home Video at ShopPBS.com in spring 2008.

Book

A book by Professor Gates, *In Search of Our Roots: How 19 Extraordinary African Americans Reclaimed Their Past*, will be published by Crown, a division of Random House, in spring 2008 as well. Incorporating the family histories of all the participants from *African American Lives*, *Oprah's Roots*, and *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*, the book presents further discoveries not included in the broadcasts while weaving the narratives together into an unprecedented tapestry of the African-American experience.

Production and Funding

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2 is co-production of Thirteen/WNET New York, Kunhardt Productions and Inkwell Films. Producers are Leslie Asako GladstjØ, Jesse Sweet, and Jack Youngelson. Directors are Graham Judd, GladstjØ, Sweet, and Youngelson. It is written by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Judd is senior producer; Gates, William R. Grant, Peter Kunhardt, and Dyllan McGee are executive producers.

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