

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2

Thirteen/WNET New York
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thirteen.org



press information

COMING TO PBS IN FEBRUARY 2008, HENRY LOUIS GATES JR. TAKES AN ALL-NEW GROUP OF AFRICAN AMERICANS ON A QUEST TO DISCOVER THEIR ROOTS IN *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*

Maya Angelou, Morgan Freeman, Peter Gomes, Linda Johnson Rice, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Tom Joyner And Tina Turner Are Among The Accomplished Group Participating In Sequel To Landmark PBS Series

The Coca-Cola Company, Johnson & Johnson And Buick To Sponsor Series, A Production Of Thirteen/WNET New York, Kunhardt Productions And Inkwell Films

The critically acclaimed PBS broadcasts *African American Lives* (2006) and *Oprah's Roots* (2007) shined a national spotlight on the powerful process of discovering one's family history. In February 2008 on PBS, Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. will guide an all-new group – poet Maya Angelou, actor Morgan Freeman, theologian Peter Gomes, publisher Linda Johnson Rice, athlete Jackie Joyner-Kersey, radio host Tom Joyner and rock 'n' roll legend Tina Turner – on a journey to discover their ancestry in *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*. The new four-part series will draw on DNA analysis, genealogical research and family oral tradition to trace the lineages of the participants down through U.S. history and back to Africa.

In a unique twist to *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*, one ordinary individual, selected from more than 2,000 applicants, will join Professor Gates and this distinguished group on the life-changing quest for their roots.

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Major corporate funding for *African American Lives 2* 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.



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

thirteen
WNET NEW YORK

KUNHARDT
PRODUCTIONS


INKWELL FILMS

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2 is the centerpiece of a multifaceted project that will include a major new book written by Professor Gates and published by Crown, a division of Random House, a companion Web site, and teacher training and outreach events in seven key markets across the country.

Major corporate funding for ***AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2*** and its outreach initiatives is provided by The Coca-Cola Company and Johnson & Johnson. Additional funding is provided by Buick. Funding is also provided by public television viewers and PBS.

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2 is a co-production of Thirteen/WNET New York, Kunhardt Productions and Inkwell Films. Graham Judd is series producer; Dyllan McGee is senior producer for Kunhardt Productions. Executive producers are Henry Louis Gates Jr., William R. Grant and Peter W. Kunhardt.

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About Thirteen/WNET New York

Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as *Nature*, *Great Performances*, *American Masters*, *Charlie Rose*, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*, *Exposé: America's Investigative Reports*, *Wide Angle*, *Secrets of the Dead*, *NOW With David Brancaccio*, and *Cyberchase* – as well as the work of Bill Moyers – to audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as *The Ethnic Heritage Specials*, *The Thirteen Walking Tours*, *New York Voices*, and *Reel New York*. Thirteen extends the impact of its television productions through educational and community outreach projects – including the Celebration of Teaching and Learning – as well as Web sites and other digital media platforms. More information can be found at: www.thirteen.org.

About Kunhardt Productions

For nearly 20 years, Kunhardt Productions has been responsible for critically acclaimed historical programming with a reputation for high editorial standards. Most recently, Kunhardt Productions co-produced *Oprah's Roots* (2007) and *African American Lives* (2006) for PBS. Previously, the company produced *Freedom: A History of US*, an eight-hour PBS series based upon Joy Hakim's award-winning books. Other notable works from Kunhardt Productions include *Lincoln*, a four-hour series for ABC; *In Memoriam*, a one-hour co-production with HBO about Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; and *The American President*, a 10-hour PBS series profiling all forty-one presidents of the United States. Kunhardt Productions is currently developing a multi-part series for PBS, *Looking for Lincoln*, to be broadcast in 2009 as

part of the Bicentennial Celebration of Abraham Lincoln's birth. More information can be found at: www.kunhardtproductions.com.

About Inkwell Films

Inkwell Films was founded by Henry Louis Gates Jr. to produce sophisticated documentary films about the African-American experience for a broad audience. In addition to *Oprah's Roots*, Inkwell Films co-produced *African American Lives* (2006) and is currently developing *The History of the African American People*, an eight-part series tentatively slated for national broadcast premiere in 2009-2010.

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