

# American MASTERS

**thirteen**  
WNET NEW YORK

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## press information



**PBS**

AMERICAN MASTERS  
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**AMERICAN MASTERS** PROFILES THE PREEMINENT CHOREOGRAPHER OF BROADWAY  
AND BALLET IN **JEROME ROBBINS: SOMETHING TO DANCE ABOUT**

Thirteen/WNET New York Production Premieres February 18 on PBS

No other creative figure of the latter twentieth century was as contradictory as Jerome Robbins, and few were as controversial. He was a master of the Broadway musical, transforming its possibilities with such works as *West Side Story*, *Gypsy*, and *Peter Pan*, and was one of the greatest ballet choreographers this country has ever produced.

Thirteen/WNET's **AMERICAN MASTERS** profiles this complex mid-century artist in ***Jerome Robbins: Something to Dance About***, premiering Wednesday, February 18, 2009 at 9 p.m. on PBS (check local listings). Directed and produced by six-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Judy Kinberg and written by best-selling Robbins biographer Amanda Vaill, the two-hour film is narrated by Ron Rifkin (*Brothers & Sisters*), who performed the roles of both Robbins and his father in a workshop production of the director/choreographer's theatrical autobiography, *The Poppa Piece*. This first and only documentary on Robbins features excerpts from his personal journals, archival performance footage, and never-before-seen rehearsal recordings, as well as interviews with Robbins himself and over forty witnesses – among them Mikhail Baryshnikov; Jacques d'Amboise; Suzanne

- more -

Farrell; Arthur Laurents; Peter Martins; Rita Moreno; Austin Pendleton; Frank Rich; Chita Rivera; Stephen Sondheim; and Robbins' *Fiddler* collaborators Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick, and Joseph Stein.

“Robbins’ remarkable body of work forever redefined dance and musical theater for a contemporary audience,” says Susan Lacy, Creator and Executive Producer of WNET’s **AMERICAN MASTERS**, a six-time winner of the Emmy Award for Outstanding Primetime Non-Fiction Series. “The revival of *West Side Story* on Broadway this winter just validates his lasting importance, his lasting impression. We are thrilled to air this film in tribute to Robbins' genius, celebrating the 90th anniversary of his birth.”

**AMERICAN MASTERS** is produced for PBS by Thirteen/WNET New York. To take **AMERICAN MASTERS** beyond the television broadcast and further explore the themes, stories, and personalities of masters past and present, the companion Web site offers interviews, essays, photographs, outtakes, and other resources. **AMERICAN MASTERS** is made possible by the support of the National Endowment for the Arts and by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Additional funding for **AMERICAN MASTERS** is provided by Rosalind P. Walter, The Blanche & Irving Laurie Foundation, Jack Rudin, The André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation, and public television viewers.

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