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THIRTEEN's *American Masters* explores fifty years of folk legend and human rights activist Joan Baez in *Joan Baez: How Sweet the Sound*, airing October 14 on PBS

Features rare performance footage and candid interviews with David Crosby, Bob Dylan, ex-husband David Harris, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Roger McGuinn, and more

Joan Baez made her debut appearance at the Newport Folk Festival in 1959. Fifty years later she returned to that same Rhode Island stage on August 2, marking her and the festival's 50th anniversaries. She is presently on a worldwide tour in celebration of her 50 years as a performer and in support of her Grammy-nominated CD, *Day After Tomorrow*.

In the first comprehensive documentary to chronicle the private life and public career of Joan Baez, [*American Masters*](#) examines her history as a recording artist and performer as well as her remarkable journey as the conscience of a generation in ***Joan Baez: How Sweet the Sound***, premiering nationally Wednesday, October 14, 2009 at 8 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). The film coincides with the DVD/CD release on October 13th on Razor & Tie. This DVD/CD will feature the film with bonus content and an audio CD of music from the film. The audio CD contains rare live performances

and studio recordings that span her career.

American Masters is a production of THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG – one of America’s most prolific and respected public media providers.

“From an early age, Joan Baez had the courage of her convictions,” says Susan Lacy, series creator and executive producer of ***American Masters***, a six-time winner of the Emmy Award for Outstanding Primetime Non-Fiction Series. “Her artistry and her commitment to human rights make her a musical and political force as relevant today as when she first started.”

Following Baez on her 2008/2009 world tour, the filmmakers captured Baez in performance as well as in intimate conversations with individuals whose lives parallel hers. From a stop in Sarajevo, Bosnia to revisit the scene of Joan’s courageous trip to that war-torn city in the middle of the 1993 siege, to Nashville, Tennessee, where she joined Steve Earle to talk about their collaboration on Joan’s 2008 Grammy-nominated album *Day After Tomorrow*, the film allows viewers an unprecedented level of access to Ms. Baez.

Shot in high definition with a natural, filmic look, Joan is also joined on screen by, David Crosby, Bob Dylan, Roger McGuinn and Reverend Jesse Jackson, among others, to illuminate this extraordinary life. Rich historical archival footage – Baez’ controversial visit to North Vietnam, where she is seen praying with the residents of Hanoi during the heaviest bombing of the war; Martin Luther King Jr. outside a California prison where he visited Joan to offer his support after she was jailed for staging a protest; Joan at her first Newport Folk Festival in 1959 and Joan as a teenager performing at the historic Club 47 – is woven into the story so viewers can experience scenes from Joan’s life that have never been uncovered.

The grit of the film is Baez’ power as a musician – from her tentative teenage years in the Cambridge, Mass coffee houses to her emergence onto the world stage and the 50-year career that followed – Joan Baez is a musical force of nature and this film captures her strength as a performer and the influence she has brought to bear on successive generations of artists.

Joan Baez: How Sweet the Sound is a co-production Razor & Tie Entertainment and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG. The film is produced by Mark Spector and Mary Wharton and directed by Wharton. Susan Lacy is the series creator and executive producer of ***American Masters***.

American Masters is produced for PBS by THIRTEEN. 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 (pbs.org/americanmasters) 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, Rolf and Elizabeth Rosenthal, The André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation, and public television viewers. Additional funding for **Joan Baez: How Sweet the Sound** is provided by The Michael & Helen Schaffer Foundation.

About WNET.ORG

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