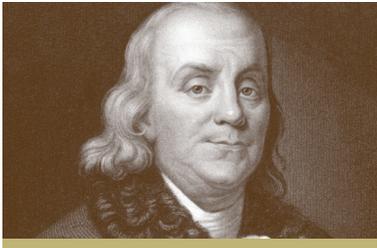


Menu of Funding Opportunities

AUGUST 19, 2021

FILMS



Benjamin Franklin Spring 2022

Scientist, inventor, writer of enduring epigrams of homespun wisdom, creator of America's first subscription library and one of its most prestigious universities, Benjamin Franklin was (with the possible exception of Thomas Jefferson) the nation's most complex and compelling Founding Father — and certainly its wittiest. During his 84 years, he rose from being a lowly printer's apprentice to become a central figure in the American story: a man who could guide his fellow colonists in declaring their independence and crafting their Constitution, charm all of Paris as one of our first diplomats, and yet stay true to his guiding principle — a “dislike of everything that tended to debase the spirit of the common people.”

Directed and executive produced by Ken Burns, written by Dayton Duncan, and produced by David Schmidt and Ken Burns.



The United States and the Holocaust Fall 2022

The Holocaust and the United States tells the story of how the American people grappled with one of the greatest humanitarian crises of the twentieth century, and how this struggle tested the ideals of our democracy. By examining events leading up to and during the Holocaust with fresh eyes, this film dispels the competing myths that Americans either were ignorant of what was happening to Jews in Europe, or that they merely looked on with callous indifference. The truth is much more nuanced and complicated, and the challenges that the American people confronted raise questions that remain essential to our society today.

Directed by Ken Burns, Lynn Novick & Sarah Botstein, written by Geoffrey C. Ward, story by Kevin Baker and produced by Burns, Novick, Botstein and Mike Welt.

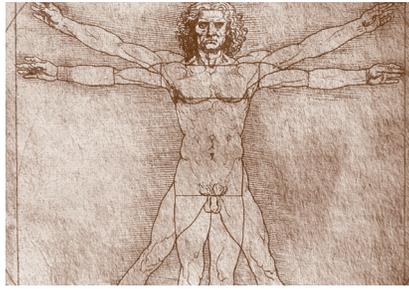


The American Buffalo 2024

This film will be the biography of the continent's most magnificent species, an improbable, shaggy beast that nonetheless has found itself at the center of many of our nation's most thrilling, mythic, and sometimes heartbreaking tales. Most of all, within its story the buffalo provides not one but two important and historically significant lessons. In the startling swiftness of its near disappearance at the end of the 19th century, Americans were forced to confront the uncomfortable fact that they were capable of exterminating another species.

But if the story of the buffalo represents one of the most dramatic demonstrations of our ability to destroy part of the natural world, it also provides compelling proof that we are equally capable of pulling a species back from the precipice of extinction. Today there are more than 250,000 buffalo in the United States, most of them descendants of 77 animals from five founding herds at the start of the 20th century, and their numbers are rapidly increasing. This story — never before told on television — is as dramatic and riveting as the tale of the buffalo's demise, and equally full of unforgettable characters.

Directed and executive produced by Ken Burns, written by Dayton Duncan, and produced by Julie Dunfey and Ken Burns.



Leonardo da Vinci 2024/25

This film will tell the story of Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci, best known as Leonardo da Vinci, a fifteenth century Italian polymath of soaring imagination and profound intellect, who left behind artistic works of staggering beauty and detailed sketches of futuristic contraptions of warfare and flight that today are marveled at for their technical ingenuity and foresight.

Set against a rich and dynamic backdrop of Renaissance Italy, at a time of skepticism and free-thinking, regional war and religious upheaval, Leonardo da Vinci will bring Leonardo and his towering achievements to life through his voluminous personal notebooks, primary and secondary accounts of his life and times, and on-camera interviews with modern scholars, artists, engineers, inventors and admirers.

Directed and produced by Ken Burns, Sarah Burns, and David McMahon, written by David McMahon and Sarah Burns, and executive produced by Ken Burns.



Crime & Punishment in America 2024/2025

This series will explore the history of the American criminal justice system from the Colonial Era, when America was a dumping ground for British criminals, to today. Through the histories of institutions and the lives of criminals and victims, law-enforcement officials, and crusading reformers, we will confront issues of class and race and ethnicity, changing definitions of crime and our evolving efforts to deal with it, and the fairness or lack of it in deciding who is to be punished and who walks free.

We will look into the real history of the not-so-Wild-West, trace the growth of big-city police forces from their beginnings as thuggish political enforcers and explore the history of vigilantism and lynching that were the special shame of small-town America. And through it all we hope to provide some answers to a single troubling question: Why, after 237 years of independence, are more than two million American men and women incarcerated, the largest prison population on earth?

Directed by Lynn Novick, executive produced by Ken Burns, senior produced by Laurens Grant, and written by Geoffrey Ward.



The American Revolution 2025

In defeating the British Empire in North America, in giving birth to a new nation conceived in liberty, the American Revolution turned the world upside-down. While every grade school student in the United States learns its basic facts, the quarter-millennium distance between then and now shrouds America's founding struggle in mythology and renders the Revolutionary War among the least understood major subjects in American history.

This documentary series will take a microscope to the myths and present an unvarnished, true-to-life account of the men and women of the Revolutionary generation, their humanity in victory and defeat, and the crisis that tried their souls. As our previous films were to the Civil War, World War II, and the Vietnam War, this series will be a wide-ranging, intimate history of the American Revolutionary War.

Directed and executive produced by Ken Burns, written by Geoffrey C. Ward, and produced by Sarah Botstein, David Schmidt, and Ken Burns.



Emancipation to Exodus 2026

When the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, over four million Americans, who had heretofore been unfree in a free land, were given their freedom. But freedom was all they were given. This three-part series will examine in depth the fate of African Americans after the Civil War and the much misunderstood period of Reconstruction, when the federal government sought to enforce civil rights in the vanquished Confederacy. The film will look at Reconstruction's bloody and little known collapse, as Jim Crow and lynching and the KKK came to govern the daily lives of blacks in America. It will focus on the pernicious effect of the Supreme Court's infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision and its doctrine of "separate but equal" facilities for African Americans.

The film will also examine in detail three very different black leaders: Booker T. Washington, who urged "accommodation" with whites; W.E.B. Du Bois, who urged blacks to build their own institutions; and Marcus Garvey, the erratic leader who sometimes championed a return to Africa for his people. The film will end as African Americans, fresh from heroic service in WWI, begin to leave the South. Over the next several decades they collectively form a great migration that will take them to new homes — and new unexpected challenges — in the North.

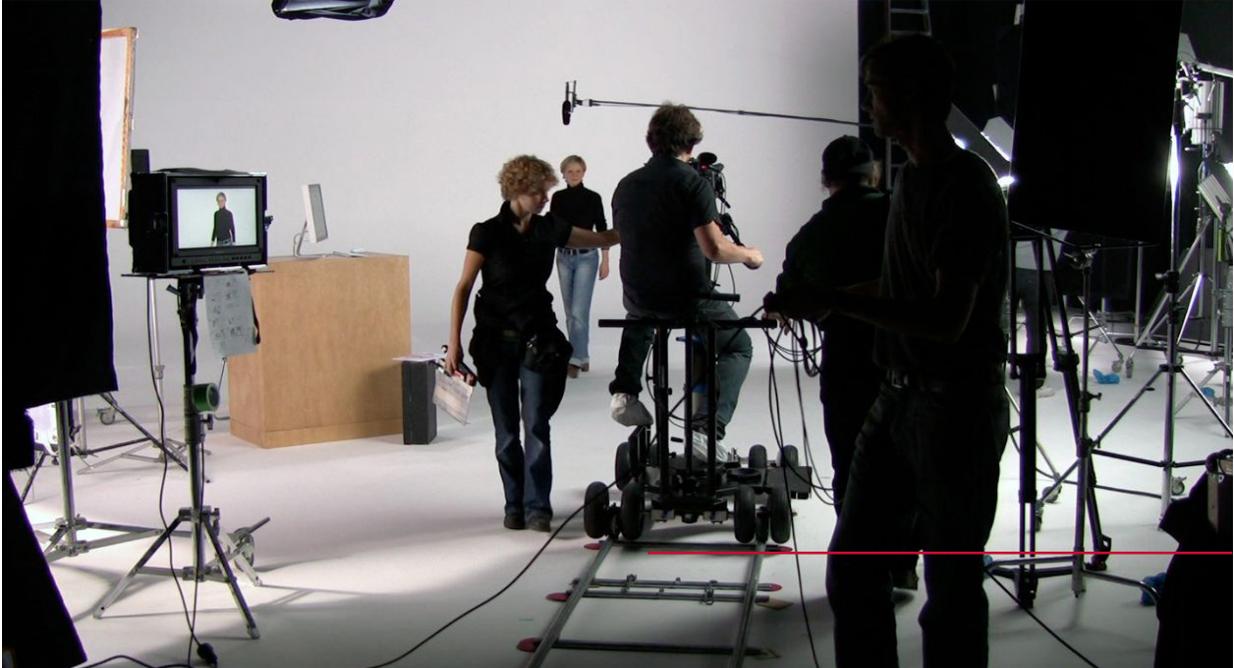


LBJ & The Great Society 2027

This three-part series will chronicle the life and times of Lyndon Johnson, one of the most capable, colorful and controversial men ever to occupy the White House. No president's ambition was more naked than his, and no president's ambitions for his country were more lofty.

Johnson took office as an "accidental" president after the assassination of John F. Kennedy and determined immediately to make himself a great president in his own right. He declared "War on Poverty," and pledged to build a more just, more prosperous "Great Society." Then, employing the legislative mastery and legendary powers of persuasions he'd honed as a Congressman, Senator and Majority Leader, he pushed through Congress a blizzard of laws that included Medicare and Medicaid, Head Start and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that did more to empower African Americans than any legislation since the enactment of the 14th Amendment nearly a century earlier. In the end, among 20th century presidents, only Franklin Roosevelt, the hero of Johnson's youth, could match his record of domestic achievement.

A proud Texan, the first southerner to live in the White House since Woodrow Wilson, Johnson was a fascinating blend of qualities, awful and admirable. He was, one veteran observer wrote, "everything that is human." He could be cruel, vulgar, self-pitying, duplicitous. He was also generous, loyal and sometimes courageous, willing to expend his and his party's political capital for the greater good of the country.



UNTOLD STORIES: GBH & WNET FILMS

In the Fall of 2020, The Better Angels Society launched the *Untold Stories* Initiative, a program dedicated to supporting films by and about underrepresented communities in documentary filmmaking. As a part of the *Untold Stories* Initiative, The Better Angels Society has begun partnering with two prominent PBS stations, GBH in Boston and WNET in New York City, to support up-and-coming and established filmmakers who are developing documentary films in the Ken Burns mold and to ensure that they are able to bring their complex stories about American history to millions of PBS viewers across the country. We are also supporting films selected as finalists for the Library of Congress Lavine/Ken Burns Prize for Film that have secured distribution but are still in need of additional funds.

GBH, home to the program *American Experience*, and WNET, home to *American Masters*, have a proven track record. The Better Angels Society is seeking donations starting at the \$25,000 and \$50,000 level and up to \$200,000 for each film to ensure that they will come to fruition and expand the scope of what is seen in American historical documentary filmmaking. The films currently supported by this program are:

- *Becoming Helen Keller* (WNET)
- *Cured* (Prize for Film)
- *Joe Papp in Five Acts* (WNET)
- *Marian Anderson: The Whole World in Her Hands* (WNET)
- *Plague at the Golden Gate* (GBH)
- *Terror in Osage County* (GBH)
- *W. E. B. DuBois* (WNET)



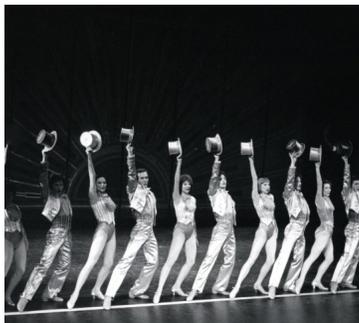
Becoming Helen Keller

Becoming Helen Keller examines the complex and misunderstood aspect of an icon's life. This work places the deaf and blind Helen Keller within the context of her times, especially the historical experience of Americans with disabilities. Keller assigned herself the role of human rights advocate before civil or human rights rhetoric existed, and perpetually put her celebrity to use to pursue a social justice agenda while also facilitating her own economic independence. Her life was full of surprises, occasional scandals, and contradictions. To be accompanied by a major outreach effort, this program is produced and directed by Laurie Block.



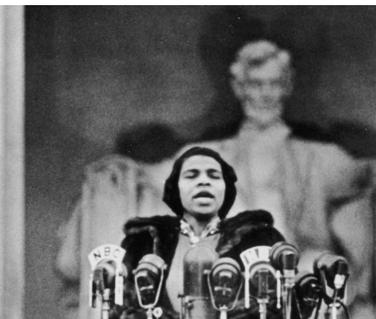
Cured

Cured chronicles the battle waged by a small group of activists who declared war against a formidable institutional opponent—and won. This feature-length documentary takes viewers inside the David-versus-Goliath struggle that led the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to remove homosexuality from its manual of mental illnesses. Viewers will meet the key players who achieved this victory, along with allies and opponents within the APA. The film illuminates the strategy and tactics that led to this pivotal yet largely unknown moment in the movement for LGBTQ equality. Indeed, following the Stonewall uprising of 1969, the campaign that culminated in the APA's 1973 decision marks the first major step on the path to first-class citizenship for LGBTQ Americans.



Joe Papp in Five Acts

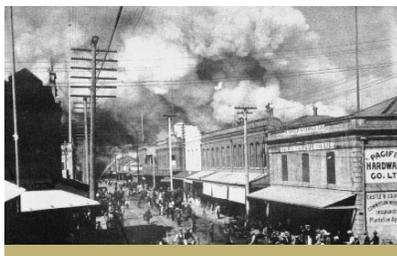
Joseph Papp truly believed that everyone needs theater . . . and he made sure that everyone in New York City got it. The original architect and presiding spirit of The Public Theater and the Free Shakespeare Festival, Papp produced such innovative works as *Hair*, *A Chorus Line* and *For Colored Girls...*, and offered ethnically diverse casts in *Hamlet*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. With a narrative in his own voice and rare archival performance footage, this film interweaves 50 years of oral and visual history – bringing the young James Earl Jones to street theater and the unknown Meryl Streep to perform in Central Park. Papp's commitment to diversity is seen through the people he nurtured – from Vietnam vets to feminists to African American to Latino writers, actors and directors – a generation which permanently changed the face and the pulse of American theater. Co-produced and co-directed by Karen Thorsen and Tracie Holder.



Marian Anderson: The Whole World in Her Hands

An in-depth exploration of African American contralto Marian Anderson and her achievements as a pioneering artist and civil rights figure, presented in the context of the cultural and racial upheavals she experienced at home and abroad. Anderson's voice was unique – famed conductor Arturo Toscanini said that it was a voice “to hear only once in a hundred years.” Banned from singing at the Daughters of the American Revolution's Constitution Hall in Washington,

D.C. in 1939, she became an inspiration to the growing civil rights movement and an icon, thanks to her subsequent performances. The “Freedom Concert,” when she sang to a vast, interracial crowd on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, not only inspired a young Martin Luther King, Jr., then a 10-year-old audience member, but helped inaugurate the relatively new Memorial as the center of American protest for generations to come. Production funding from the NEH. A co-production with Philip Gittelman Pictures; directed by Rita Coburn.



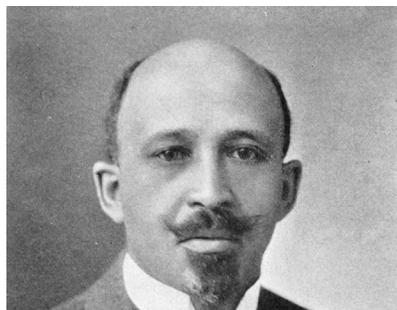
Plague at the Golden Gate

The death of Chinese immigrant Wong Chut King in San Francisco on March 6, 1900, would have likely passed unnoticed if the medical officer inspecting King's body had not discovered a swollen black lymph node on his groin—evidence that the poor man's rapid and painful death was the result of bubonic plague. Fearing the city would become the American epicenter of a disease that had already claimed ten million lives worldwide, health officials drew upon racist pseudoscience to quarantine Chinatown. Local press, business and political leaders, meanwhile, conspired to cover up the threat in hopes of protecting San Francisco's burgeoning economy. As the disease continued to spread, the city's new federal public health officer, Rupert Blue, determined to save the city. Blue dedicated himself to tracking the epidemic, proving that the throngs of flea-infested rats that swarmed through the district—rather than simply urban filth or the foreign habits of the Chinese—were the true reason the disease persisted. He then launched a comprehensive sanitation campaign focused on rodent control as a way to combat the crisis—the first time in American history a federal health official had launched such a campaign. Based on the critically-acclaimed book, *Black Death at the Golden Gate* by David K. Randall, this film will present a complex and dramatic narrative of the desperate race to save San Francisco and the nation from the plague.



Terror in Osage County

In the 1920's, the Osage Indians of Oklahoma were the richest people per capita in the world, their wealth generated by leasing the mineral rights to the vast oil reserves on their tribal lands. With chauffeured limos, mansions, and children studying in Europe, Osage County was the Dubai of its day. Then, one by one, tribal members began to be murdered — by gunshot, poison, bombing—all part of a vast conspiracy in which white men and women were marrying Osage spouses then killing them to inherit their wealth. It became known as the Osage Reign of Terror. The Osage used their wealth and political connections to finance an investigation by what was then a fledgling federal agency, the FBI. The ensuing investigation would unearth an ever-expanding web of conspiracy involving much of the white community. Doctors neglected to report poisonings, the county mortician covered up bludgeoned corpses, lawmen and courts failed to investigate or prosecute, and bankers overlooked illicit deposits. *Terror in Osage Country* will shed light on one of the most brazen, calculated acts of genocide in American history. Directed by Gary Glassman.



W.E.B. Du Bois

W. E. B. Du Bois, the best-known spokesperson for African American rights during the first half of the 20th century, was an American civil rights activist, leader, Pan-Africanist, sociologist, educator, historian, writer, editor, poet, and scholar. Du Bois was the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1895. In 1899, while teaching at the University of Pennsylvania, Du Bois published a pioneering sociological study of an urban community, "The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study" in which he coined the phrase "the talented tenth," a term that described the likelihood of one in 10 black men becoming leaders of their race. Teaching next at the University of Atlanta, Du Bois continued to publish including: *The Souls of Black Folk* a seminal collection of essays and became known for challenging Booker T. Washington. In 1909, Du Bois co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was the founding editor of *The Crisis*, its monthly magazine. Until his death in 1963, Du Bois' efforts were geared toward gaining equal treatment for Black people in a world dominated by whites and toward marshaling and presenting evidence to refute the myths of racial inferiority. Produced in collaboration with Henry "Skip" Gates, director to be determined.