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Press Materials: [pbs.org/pressroom](http://pbs.org/pressroom) or [thirteen.org/pressroom](http://thirteen.org/pressroom)

**American Masters and Firelight Media Present *In the Making* Season 2 Beginning March 14, Audra McDonald to Host Broadcast Premiere on March 24 on PBS**

*The multi-award-winning singer and actress will host the broadcast premiere of* In the Making *season two, which highlights opera singer J’Nai Bridges and country music artist Rissi Palmer.*

*Short films featuring actress Lily Gladstone, muralist Sydney G. James and other groundbreaking artists will be available to stream online* *beginning March 14.*

**(NEW YORK — February 27, 2023)** ***American Masters*** and **Firelight Media** announced today the second season of the documentary short series ***In the Making.*** The new season focuses on nine artists across a variety of disciplines, whose work explores and influences American culture today. Tony Award–winning actress and singer **Audra McDonald** hosts the broadcast premiere of ***American Masters: In the Making,*** which features two films focused on two barrier–breaking musicians: opera singer **J’Nai Bridges** and country artist **Rissi Palmer.** The broadcast premieres on Friday, March 24 at 9 p.m. ET (check local listings) on PBS, [pbs.org/americanmasters](https://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/) and the [PBS App](https://www.pbs.org/pbs-video-app/).

In *J’Nai Bridges Unamplified,* directed by Christine Turner, the Grammy–winning mezzo-soprano takes the stage in *A Knee on the Neck*, a choral tribute to George Floyd.In *Rissi Palmer: Still Here,* directed by Dilsey Davis, country music artist Rissi Palmer redefines success as she works on her latest album while uplifting other artists of color in the Americana genres.

"No-one becomes an ‘American Master’ overnight, and of the idea behind ***In the Making*** is to take a behind-the-scenes look at the creative processes of artists who are on their way to becoming masters in their field,” said Michael Kantor, Executive Producer for ***American Masters***. “We’re always seeking a broad and diverse national audience – whether on television or online – and are thrilled to continue our longstanding and collaborative partnership with Firelight Media. Whenever we can, we team up with public media’s National Multicultural Alliance organizations, and in this case Black Public Media deserves a big shout-out for their support.”

“With the second season of ***In the Making,*** we’re thrilled to continue our long and fruitful relationship with our great partners at ***American Masters***,” said Firelight Media Co-Founder Stanley Nelson. “The ***In the Making*** series, which centers on emerging and established artists who are reflecting, shaping, and creating culture today, beautifully advances Firelight’s mission of supporting communities of color both behind and in front of the camera.”

"As an organization that uplifts Black stories and Black storytellers, we are immensely proud to be supporters of films by Black women directors—Christine Turner and Dilsey Davis—about Black women who are emerging masters—J'Nai Bridges and Rissi Palmer,” says Denise Greene, director of program initiatives for Black Public Media.

In addition to the television broadcast of ***American Masters: In the Making***, seven unique short films round out the full season roster and will premiere weekly beginning Tuesday, March 14 on YouTube, pbs.org/americanmasters, and the PBS App. In February, each short film premiered at Big Sky Documentary Film Festival alongside *J’Nai Bridges Unamplifed* and *Rissi Palmer: Still Here.*

The digital–first episodes of ***In the Making*** include: *Lily Gladstone: Far Out There* (filmmaker: Brooke Pepion Swaney); *Sydney G. James: How They See Us* (filmmaker: Juanita Anderson); *Senghor Reid: Making Way for Tomorrow* (filmmakers: Desmond Love, Eden Sabolboro); *Alejandro Jimenez: The Ground I Stand On* (filmmakers: Raúl O. Paz-Pastrana, Alan Domínguez); *Walshy Fire: Pull Up* (filmmaker: Alicia G. Edwards); *Ethan Lim: Cambodian Futures* (filmmaker: Dustin Nakao-Haider); and *Jonathan Thunder: Good Mythology* (filmmaker: Sergio Rapu).

Now in its 37th season on PBS, ***American Masters*** illuminates the lives and creative journeys of our nation’s most enduring artistic giants—those who have left an indelible impression on our cultural landscape—through compelling, unvarnished stories. Setting the standard for documentary film profiles, the series has earned widespread critical acclaim: 28 Emmy Awards—including 10 for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series and five for Outstanding Non-Fiction Special—two News & Documentary Emmys, 14 Peabodys, three Grammys, two Producers Guild Awards, an Oscar, and many other honors. To further explore the lives and works of more than 250 masters past and present, the [***American Masters*** website](http://pbs.org/americanmasters) offers full episodes, film outtakes, filmmaker interviews, the podcast “American Masters: Creative Spark,” educational resources, digital original series and more. The series is a production of The WNET Group.

***American Masters*** is available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including PBS.org and the PBS App, available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. PBS station members can view many series, documentaries and specials via PBS Passport. For more information about PBS Passport, visit the [PBS Passport FAQ](https://help.pbs.org/support/solutions/5000121793) website.

For the broadcast of ***American Masters: In the Making,*** Executive Producers are Leslie Fields-Cruz, Denise Greene, Michael Kantor, Monika Navarro, Stanley Nelson and Marcia Smith.

The broadcast of ***In the Making*** is a production of Firelight Media, in association with American Masters Pictures and Black Public Media.

Support for *J’Nai Bridges Unamplified* is provided by Brown Girls Doc Mafia and Future of Film is Female. A production of Firelight Media and Peralta Pictures, in association with American Masters Pictures and Black Public Media. *Rissi Palmer: Still Here* is aproduction of Firelight Media and Café con Leche Media, in association with American Masters Pictures and Black Public Media.

Original production funding for ***In the Making*** is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment for the Arts.

***American Masters*** series production funding is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Rosalind P. Walter Foundation, AARP, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, Judith and Burton Resnick, Koo and Patricia Yuen, Seton J. Melvin, Lillian Goldman Programming Endowment, The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, Thea Petschek Iervolino Foundation, The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, Vital Projects Fund, The Marc Haas Foundation, Ellen and James S. Marcus, The Ambrose Monell Foundation, The André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation and public television viewers.

For the digital series, Michael Kantor is the Executive Producer for ***American Masters***. Stanley Nelson, Marcia Smith and Monika Navarro are the Executive Producers for Firelight Media. Major support for the ***In the Making*** digital series is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Additional funding provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Rosalind P. Walter Foundation, Anderson Family Charitable Fund, The Marc Haas Foundation, The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation and Edgar Wachenheim III.

**Websites:**

<http://pbs.org/americanmasters>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/americanmasters>

Twitter: @PBSAmerMasters

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/pbsamericanmasters>

TikTok: <https://tiktok.com/@pbsamericanmasters?lang=en>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/americanmasters>

Hashtags: #AmericanMastersPBS #InTheMaking

**About The WNET Group**

[The WNET Group](http://wnet.org/) creates inspiring media content and meaningful experiences for diverse audiences

nationwide. It is the community-supported home of New York’s [THIRTEEN](http://thirteen.org/) – America’s flagship PBS station – [WLIW21](http://wliw.org/), THIRTEEN PBSKids, WLIW World and Create; [NJ PBS](https://www.mynjpbs.org/), New Jersey’s statewide public television network; Long Island’s only NPR station WLIW-FM; [ALL ARTS](http://allarts.org/), the arts and culture media provider; newsroom [NJ Spotlight News;](https://www.njspotlightnews.org/) and FAST channels Arts TWG+ and PBS Nature. Through these channels and streaming platforms, The WNET Group brings arts, culture, education, news, documentary, entertainment and DIY programming to more than five million viewers each month. The WNET Group’s award-winning productions include signature PBS series ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters*** and ***Amanpour and Company*** and trusted local news programs ***MetroFocus*** and ***NJ Spotlight News******with Briana Vannozzi***. Inspiring curiosity and nurturing dreams, The WNET Group’s award-winning Kids’ Media and Education team produces the PBS KIDS series ***Cyberchase***, interactive ***Mission US*** history games, and resources for families, teachers and caregivers. A leading nonprofit public media producer for more than 60 years, The WNET Group presents and distributes content that fosters lifelong learning, including multiplatform initiatives addressing poverty, jobs, economic opportunity, social justice, understanding and the environment. Through Passport, station members can stream new and archival programming anytime, anywhere. The WNET Group represents the best in public media. Join us.

**About PBS**

[PBS](http://www.pbs.org/), with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 120 million people through television and 26 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’s broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. Decades of research confirms that PBS’s premier children’s media service, PBS KIDS, helps children build critical literacy, math, and social-emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality educational content on TV — including a 24/7 channel — online at [pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org/), via an array of mobile apps and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org/), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, or by following [PBS on Twitter](https://twitter.com/pbs), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pbs) or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](http://www.pbs.org/anywhere/home/). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](http://pressroom.pbs.org/) or by following [PBS Communications on Twitter](https://twitter.com/PBS_PR).

**About Firelight Media**

Firelight Media is a premier destination for non-fiction cinema by and about communities of color. Firelight Media produces documentary films, supports filmmakers of color, and cultivates audiences for their work. Firelight Media’s programs include the Documentary Lab, an 18-month fellowship that supports emerging filmmakers of color; Groundwork Regional Lab, which supports filmmakers in the American south, midwest, and U.S. Territories; and the William Greaves Research and Development Fund for mid-career nonfiction filmmakers from racially and ethnically underrepresented communities. Firelight Media also produces digital short films, including the recently announced collection *HOMEGROWN: Future Visions*.

**About Black Public Media**

Black Public Media(BPM) supports the development of visionary content creators and distributes stories about the global Black experience to inspire a more equitable and inclusive future. For more than 40 years, BPM has addressed the needs of unserved and underserved audiences.  BPM continues to address historical, contemporary, and systemic challenges that traditionally impede the development and distribution of Black stories. For more information, visit blackpublicmedia.org and follow BPM on Instagram and Facebook and @BLKPublicMedia on Twitter.

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