



*Present*

**PBS AND WETA ANNOUNCE FOUR-PART DOCUMENTARY  
BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA: AN INTERWOVEN HISTORY  
WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES JR. TO PREMIERE FEBRUARY 3, 2026**



**Series from McGee Media and Inkwell Media Explores the Rich and Complex Relationship Between Black Americans and Jewish Americans Throughout History**

**Watch the trailer for the documentary [HERE](#)**

**Embed code:** `<iframe width="733" height="412" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/lf-u9B4wZbA" title="Black & Jewish America: An Interwoven History | Official Extended Trailer" frameborder="0" allow="accelerometer; autoplay; clipboard-write; encrypted-media; gyroscope; picture-in-picture; web-share" referrerpolicy="strict-origin-when-cross-origin" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

**WASHINGTON, DC — December 4, 2025 —** PBS and WETA today announced **BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA: AN INTERWOVEN HISTORY**, a new four-part docuseries that explores the complex relationship between Black Americans and Jewish Americans – forged in shared struggle, tested by division, and representing a uniquely American experience. From executive producer, host, and writer **Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.**, the series premieres February 3, 2026, at 9:00 p.m. ET on PBS, PBS.org, and the PBS app, and it will run for four consecutive Tuesdays through February 24.

Black and Jewish Americans began on fundamentally different footing, but by the early 20th century, they were drawn together by entrenched racism and rising antisemitism. These shared experiences led to productive civic partnerships and sparked creative bonds that led to collaborations in music and film that would profoundly shape American popular culture. The relationship between these communities deepened after World War II, when the atrocities of the Holocaust came to light, reinforcing a sense of common struggle as both communities grappled with the devastating consequences of hatred and intolerance. The civil rights era is often described as the “golden age” of the alliance, when Jewish Americans worked closely with Black leaders and organizers to dismantle Jim Crow segregation.

While shared ideals of justice united Black and Jewish people, they were also divided by the realities of race in America. The historic alliance suffered as each group turned inward, prioritizing its own struggles and agendas in an increasingly fragmented social and political landscape. Still, the hope and promise of cross-cultural solidarity endures to this day, amid constant reminders of the persistent threat of violence and injustice in the world. **BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA** offers a lesson in fulfilling that promise while confronting the challenges of maintaining unity against divisiveness.

In **BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA**, Gates, the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor at Harvard University and director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, speaks with dozens of scholars, activists, religious leaders, and writers about the kinship between the two groups, defined by powerful moments of solidarity and painful episodes of division. Notable participants include Billy Crystal, Tony Kushner, Anna Deavere Smith, Al Sharpton, David Remnick, the children of noted civil rights figures Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Rabbi Abraham Joshua, Rabbi Israel Dresner, and more.

“This is a deeply personal subject for me,” said Henry Louis Gates, Jr. “It’s connected to my own coming of age during the heroic days of the civil rights struggle and is an urgent response to the violent forces I’ve seen reawakened in our society over the last decade. By tracing the long arc of Black and Jewish history in America, I hope we can see each other more clearly, more honestly, and find hope in our mutual stories of survival, resilience, and solidarity. But this series is not only about the past. It is about us—and how, together, we can prevail over the forces of hatred that seek to divide us.”

“As directors, it was a dream to explore a story so layered and endlessly fascinating, with countless echoes and lessons for today,” remarked directors Phil Bertelsen, Julie Marchesi, and Sara Wolitzky. “The Black-Jewish connection is complicated and was never inevitable. Our struggles overlap, but our experiences in America are distinct. And yet, the times these communities have come together, however imperfectly, produced defining art and civil rights gains in America. We were determined to tell the unvarnished story, in all its glory and messiness/complication.”

Executive Producer Dyllan McGee observed: “It’s a privilege to be collaborating on another powerful Henry Louis Gates, Jr. history series with our partners at PBS and WETA. This film is particularly poignant in a moment of divisiveness and rancor as a reminder of what’s possible when we choose to come together, even across differences. It is not just a Black and Jewish story, but a quintessentially American story.”

**BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA** serves as the latest in a lengthy career of acclaimed docuseries from Gates, who has made a name for himself as one of the preeminent documentarians in public media. A collection of Gates’ most iconic documentary series including **THE BLACK CHURCH**, **GOSPEL**, **BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK**, **RECONSTRUCTION**, and **MAKING BLACK AMERICA**, can be streamed with [PBS Passport](#). In addition to his history-producing content that brings the African and African American experience to a broad audience, Gates’s slate of programming also includes the fan-favorite PBS series [FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.](#), which recently received its second Emmy Award nomination, and will return for its 12th season in January 2026.

Episode descriptions are provided below:

- **Tuesday, February 3, at 9/8c - “Let My People Go”**  
Episode 1 explores the core differences at the start of the Black and Jewish American stories, as well as overlapping struggle, faith, resilience, and early civic partnerships by the 1920s.
- **Tuesday, February 10, at 9/8c - “Strange Fruit”**  
Episode 2 spotlights how Black and Jewish communities collaborated in the early 20th century on music, movies, and the universal fight against fascism, navigating tensions while shaping culture, confronting injustice, and leaving a lasting social impact.
- **Tuesday, February 17, at 9/8c - “The ‘Grand Alliance’”**  
Episode 3 traces the 1960s’ “Grand Alliance” as Black and Jewish communities fought for civil rights in a transformative interracial coalition, and the imbalances that quickly tested their alliance.
- **Tuesday, February 24, at 9/8c - “Crossroads”**  
Episode 4 examines the shifting Black and Jewish relationship from the 1970s onward, exploring political gains, global tensions, rising hate, and the enduring lessons of coalition building and solidarity.

**BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA: AN INTERWOVEN HISTORY** is a production of McGee Media and Inkwell Media, in association with WETA Washington, D.C. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is the writer, host, and executive producer. Dyllan McGee is an executive producer. Executive in charge for PBS is Geoff Daniels. Phil Bertelsen and Sara Wolitzky are co-executive producers and directors. Julia Marchesi is a series producer and director. Rachel Dretzin is an executive producer. Deborah Clancy Porfido and Robert L. Yacyszyn are the supervising producers.

Kevin Burke is a producer and Rachel Fleischer, Bianca Ladipo and Lauren Wimbush are co-producers. Ashley Thomas is line producer. Megan A. Graham is the supervisory archival producer and story producer. Stacey Holman and Eric Thielman are story producers.

Corporate support for **BLACK AND JEWISH AMERICA: AN INTERWOVEN HISTORY** was provided by Bank of America and Johnson & Johnson. Major support was provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Major foundation support was provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Ford Foundation. Major support was also provided by The Klarman Family Foundation, Brad Bloom, Robert F. Kraft through the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism, Abby Milstein and Howard Milstein—Chairman of Emigrant Bank and co-founder of HooverMilstein, Dr. Georgette Bennett in memory of Dr. Leonard Polonsky CBE, Leonard & Judy Lauder, The Ronald & Joe Carole Lauder Foundation, The Righteous Persons Foundation, and Mimi & Peter Haas Fund. Additional support was provided by The Jeffrey H. & Shari L. Aronson Family Foundation, David Berg Foundation, Kenneth & Kathryn Chenault through the Ayco Charitable Foundation, David Fialkow, Grain Family Foundation, Hobson Lucas Family Foundation, Jewish Story Partners—Co-Founders Roberta Grossman & Caroline Libresco, Van Jones—Founder of the License to Dream Fund, Laura & Gary Lauder, Carol Sutton Lewis & William M. Lewis, Jr., Joanna Lipper, Michael Lynton with Ares Management LLC, Charles E. Phillips, Regina K. Scully and Artemis Rising Foundation, Robert F. Smith, Sy Syms Foundation, The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, The Inkwell Society, together with these members—Hayward & Kathy Draper, Betsy & Jesse Fink, John H. N. Fisher & Jennifer Caldwell, Brenda Johnson, Eric G. Johnson, Mitch Kapor & Freada Klein, Jim & Susan Swartz, Richard & Kathy Taylor, Larry Thompson & Dr Unjeria Jackson, Lloyd & Teri Trotter, Charlotte Wagner, and Fletcher & Benaree Wiley, and by public television viewers.

###

### **About McGee Media**

McGee Media was founded by award-winning filmmaker Dyllan McGee to produce documentary content that is innovative, compelling, and immersive. Every story is born from a vision of a fairer and more equitable world. Whether it is the sweeping history of the African-American experience, or the intimate personal stories of the hundreds of women who made up the feminist movement, McGee Media uses television, film, and digital media in radical new ways to inform and inspire. Recent projects include Emmy® nominated FINDING YOUR ROOTS (PBS), FREDERICK DOUGLASS: IN FIVE SPEECHES (HBO), NOT DONE: WOMEN REMAKING AMERICA (PBS), THE BLACK CHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG (PBS), and BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: AND STILL I RISE (PBS) as well as GOSPEL (PBS), GOSPEL Live! Presented by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (PBS), MAKING BLACK AMERICA: THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE (PBS), RECONSTRUCTION: AMERICA AFTER THE CIVIL WAR (PBS), AFRICA'S GREAT CIVILIZATIONS (PBS), MAKERS (PBS), ONCE & FOR ALL (AOL), FIRST IN HUMAN (Discovery), and RANCHER, FARMER, FISHERMAN (Discovery).

### **About Inkwell Media**

Inkwell Media was founded by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. to produce sophisticated documentary films about the African and African-American experience for a broad audience. The six-part PBS documentary series *THE AFRICAN AMERICANS: MANY RIVERS TO CROSS* (2013) earned a Peabody Award, Emmy® Award and NAACP Image Award. Inkwell has co-produced *FINDING YOUR ROOTS*, Seasons 1-12 (2012-2026), *GREAT MIGRATIONS: A PEOPLE ON THE MOVE* (2025), *GOSPEL* (2024), *GOSPEL Live! Presented by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* (2024), *FREDERICK DOUGLASS: IN FIVE SPEECHES* (2022), *MAKING BLACK AMERICA: THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE* (2022), *THE BLACK CHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG* (2021), *RECONSTRUCTION: AMERICA AFTER THE CIVIL WAR* (2019), *AFRICA'S GREAT CIVILIZATIONS* (2017), *BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: AND STILL I RISE* (2016), *BLACK IN LATIN AMERICA* (2011), *FACES OF AMERICA* (2010), *LOOKING FOR LINCOLN* (2009), *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2* (2008), *OPRAH'S ROOTS* (2007) and *AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES* (2006).

### **About WETA**

WETA is the leading public media station in the nation's capital, serving Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia with educational initiatives and with high-quality television, radio, and digital content. WETA Washington, D.C., is the second-largest producing station for public television, with news and public affairs programs including *PBS NEWS HOUR* and *WASHINGTON WEEK WITH THE ATLANTIC*; series and documentaries by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., including *FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.* and *GOSPEL*; films by Ken Burns and Florentine Films, such as *THE AMERICAN BUFFALO* and *THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*; performance specials including *A CAPITOL FOURTH*; and health content from *WELL BEINGS*, a multiplatform campaign. More information on WETA and its programs and services are available at [weta.org](http://weta.org). Visit [facebook.com/wetatvfm](https://facebook.com/wetatvfm) on Facebook.

### **About PBS**

[PBS](http://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 36 million adults on linear primetime television, more than 16 million users on PBS-owned streaming platforms, 53 million viewers on YouTube, and 60 million people view PBS content on social media, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs 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 LearningMedia](http://PBS LearningMedia) for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media brand, [PBS KIDS](http://PBS KIDS) helps children 2-8 build critical skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality content on TV — including a PBS KIDS channel — and streaming free on [pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org) and the [PBS KIDS Video app](http://PBS KIDS Video app), games on the [PBS KIDS Games app](http://PBS KIDS Games app), and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](http://PBS.org), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](https://Facebook), [Instagram](https://Instagram), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](http://apps for mobile and connected devices). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](http://pbs.org/pressroom) or by following [PBS Communications on X](http://PBS Communications on X).

**PRESS CONTACT:**

[FindingYourRoots@id-pr.com](mailto:FindingYourRoots@id-pr.com)