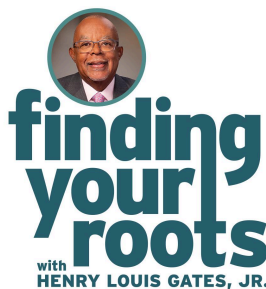




*Present*

**FRESH OFF THE SERIES' FIRST EMMY® NOMINATION,  
"FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR."  
CELEBRATES UPCOMING SEASON 11 WITH SERIES TRAILER**



**Season 11 Premieres on January 7 on PBS**

**Season Includes Nineteen Celebrity Guests and a  
Special Genealogical Reveal for Host and Executive Producer Gates**

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

*In addition to revealing the solution to a mystery that has haunted Gates' family for generations,  
new episodes will feature an all-star line-up with guests*

***José Andrés, Joy Behar, Kristen Bell, Rubén Blades, Lonnie Bunch, Rita Dove,  
Laurence Fishburne, Debra Messing, Natalie Morales, Michael Imperioli,  
Melanie Lynskey, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Lea Salonga, Amanda Seyfried, Dax Shepard,  
Sean Sherman, Sharon Stone, Amy Tan and Chrissy Teigen***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Arlington, VA (September 19, 2024) — In the new season of the Emmy® nominated series **FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.**, nineteen celebrity guests will sit down with Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. to dive into their ancestral history and solve mysteries that have plagued their families when the series returns January 7 on [PBS](#). In addition to the all-star line-up, Gates will have his own familial mystery solved when

the tables are turned and the celebrated host becomes a guest on an eagerly anticipated episode of the new season.

Season Ten of **FINDING YOUR ROOTS** recently received the series' first ever Emmy® nomination in the category Outstanding Hosted Nonfiction Series or Special.

Over the course of ten new episodes, Gates and his team use genealogical detective work and cutting-edge DNA analysis to trace the family trees of twenty compelling guests, telling stories that illuminate America's fundamental diversity. Season 11 episode guest pairings will be:

- **January 7** "Larger Than Life" - actors **Lea Salonga** ("Mulan") and **Amanda Seyfried** ("The Dropout")
- **January 14** "La Famiglia" - talk show host **Joy Behar** and actor **Michael Imperioli** ("The White Lotus")
- **January 21** "Stranger Than Fiction" - novelist **Amy Tan** and poet **Rita Dove**
- **January 28** "Dreamers One and All" - actor **Sharon Stone** ("Basic Instinct") and model **Chrissy Teigen**
- **February 4** "Family Recipes" - celebrity chefs **José Andrés** and **Sean Sherman**
- **February 11** "Latin Roots" - musician **Rubén Blades** and journalist **Natalie Morales**
- **February 18** "The Ties That Bind" - actors **Kristen Bell** ("The Good Place") and **Dax Shepard** ("Parenthood")
- **February 25** "The Butterfly Effect" - actors **Debra Messing** ("Will & Grace") and **Melanie Lynskey** ("Yellowjackets")
- **April 1** "Moving on Up" - historian **Lonnie Bunch** and actor **Sheryl Lee Ralph** ("Abbott Elementary")
- **April 8** "Finding My Roots" - actor **Laurence Fishburne** ("The Matrix") and host and executive producer Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

As the pages turn in each guest's book of life, emotional revelations give way to complex questions about identity. Through Gates' discerning touch, his guests learn what every family history shares—love, courage, and sacrifice—and how our histories transcend borders, merging to form an American root system fortified by its diversity. Along the way, viewers are transported from coastal Africa to the Mississippi Delta; from shtetls in the former Russian Empire to the ancestral lands of the Lakota Nation; from villages in the Philippines to a pirate enclave in Puerto Rico—all in search of the stories that will bring our guests' ancestors to life. What's more, this new season also includes a special reveal: the solution to a mystery that has haunted Gates' own family for generations.

At the center of it all, guiding every discovery, is host, writer and executive producer Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and director of the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University.

"Our ancestors' genetic legacies cascade down the branches of our family trees informing who we are," said Gates. "As **FINDING YOUR ROOTS** enters its eleventh season, the team and I cherish deeply the bond we have with our guests and viewers to explore the history we have in

common through personal stories of those who have shaped our world, one generation to the next. It's a special honor to have our home on PBS, and we can't wait to share this season's amazing slate of guests with our audience."

Assembling the extensive family trees and ancestral narratives alongside Dr. Gates are DNA expert **CeCe Moore** (chief genetic genealogist for Parabon Nanolabs and host of ABC's THE GENETIC DETECTIVE) and genealogists **Nick Sheedy, Kimberly N. Morgan, and Akosua Moore**, who together have solved hundreds of mysteries and reconnected innumerable lost relatives over the past two decades.

Throughout the first ten seasons of the acclaimed series, Gates and his team have made life-changing discoveries for many celebrity guests. Highlights include finding the long-lost biological family of Andy Samberg's mother (who had been adopted); Pamela Adlon learning the identity of her maternal grandfather; LL Cool J learning that his mother had been adopted (something she had not known); and Rebecca Hall learning of her maternal grandfather's African American background, which he had kept hidden (a discovery that inspired Hall's directorial debut, "Passing").

In addition to the hundreds of familial information uncovered for the notable guests, dozens of celebrity DNA connections have been made throughout the show's ten seasons, often a fan favorite part of the series. Memorable connections include Julia Roberts and Edward Norton; Larry David and Bernie Sanders; Michael Douglas and Scarlett Johansen; Bill Hader and Carol Burnett; Cory Booker and RuPaul; and Marisa Tomei and Julianne Moore.

The public can explore and share their family histories via social media using the hashtag #FindingYourRoots on Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok, via [Facebook.com/FindingYourRootsPBS](https://www.facebook.com/FindingYourRootsPBS) and @HenryLouisGates, and on the series companion site, [pbs.org/FindingYourRoots](https://pbs.org/FindingYourRoots).

**FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.**, Season 11 is a production of McGee Media, Inkwell Media, and Kunhardt Films, in association with WETA Washington, D.C.. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is the writer, host, and executive producer. Dyllan McGee and Peter Kunhardt are executive producers. Sabin Streeter is the senior producer. Natalia Warchol is the series producer. Deborah Clancy Porfido is the supervising producer. Kevin Burke is the producer. Robert L. Yacyshyn and Leslie Brown are line producers. Sam Hartley is the coordinating producer. Sabin Streeter and Krista Whetstone are directors.

Corporate support for Season 11 of **FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.** is provided by Gilead Sciences, Inc., Ancestry® and Johnson & Johnson. Major support is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Support is also provided by Ford Foundation; Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation; Candace King Weir; the Inkwell Society; and by public television viewers.

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### **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 1-10 (2012-2024), 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, PBS NEWS WEEKEND, 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 forthcoming LEONARDO DA VINCI; performance specials including THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS GERSHWIN PRIZE FOR POPULAR SONG and 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](#), 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](#) for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media brand, [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](#) and the [PBS KIDS Video app](#), games on the [PBS KIDS Games app](#), and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](#), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](#) or by following [PBS Communications on X](#).

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