



Press Contacts:

Elizabeth Boone, The WNET Group, 212.560.8831, [booneb@wnet.org](mailto:booneb@wnet.org)

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

## ***Great Performances* Spotlights Opera Star Grace Bumbry in *New Magic of...* Episode Friday, October 3 on PBS**

*Features archival footage of the opera legend's breakthrough performances, including 1964's "Carmen"*

### **Synopsis:**

***The Magic of Grace Bumbry*** recounts the story of the African American Missouri native who rose to fame in the 1960s international opera scene. Bumbry's rise began in the 1950s when she won a radio competition at the age of 17. Encountering racism when she was prevented from studying at the St. Louis Institute of Music, she nevertheless achieved international renown with her breakthrough performance in Wagner's "Tannhäuser" at the 1961 Bayreuth Festival, in which she appeared for 40 performances. The film explores Grace Bumbry's groundbreaking career, featuring performances from her early career leading up to her role in the 1966 Salzburg Festival production of "Carmen," directed by German conductor Herbert von Karajan.

The film follows the format of previous documentaries from ***Great Performances***' "***Magic of***" series, including ***The Magic of Spirituals*** highlighting opera stars Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman and ***The Magic of Nureyev***, which explored the career of ballet dancer and choreographer Rudolf Nureyev. Featuring interviews with singer and vocal coach David Lee Brewer, opera singer Felicia Weathers, opera singer Anna Tomowa-Sintow and La Scala general director Dominique Meyer, ***Great Performances: The Magic of Grace Bumbry*** premieres Friday, October 3 at 9/8c on PBS ([check local listings](#)), [pbs.org/gperf](http://pbs.org/gperf) and the [PBS app](#).

**Series overview:**

For more than 50 years on PBS, **Great Performances** has provided an unparalleled showcase of the best in all genres of the performing arts, serving as America's most prestigious and enduring broadcaster of cultural programming. Showcasing a diverse range of artists from around the world, the series has earned 67 Emmy Awards, a Tony Honor for Excellence in the Theatre and six Peabody Awards. The [Great Performances website](#) hosts exclusive videos, interviews, photos, full episodes and more. The series is produced by The WNET Group. **Great Performances** is available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on [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.

**Production credits:**

Produced by Lily Küntzle with Claus Wischmann as executive producer, **Great Performances: The Magic of Grace Bumbry** is a production of Sounding Images on behalf of ZDF in cooperation with Arte. It is a film by Dag Freyer. For **Great Performances**, Julie Leonard is producer, Bill O'Donnell is series producer and David Horn is executive producer.

**Funding:**

Series funding for **Great Performances** is provided by The Joseph & Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, the Thea Petschek Iervolino Foundation, the Abra Prentice Foundation, Jody and John Arnhold, The Starr Foundation, The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, Leni and Peter May, Seton J. Melvin, the Kate W. Cassidy Foundation, the Blanche and Hayward Cirkner Charitable Trust, the estate of Worthington Mayo-Smith, and Ellen and James S. Marcus. Funding for **Great Performances: The Magic of Grace Bumbry** is provided by The Charles & Lucille King Family Foundation and The S. Irving and Anne Nevard Sherr Foundation.

**Websites:** [pbs.org/gperf](#), [facebook.com/GreatPerformances](#), [@GPerfPBS](#), [@PBSGreatPerformances](#), [youtube.com/greatperformancespbs](#), [giphy.com/great-performances](#) #GreatPerformancesPBS

**About The WNET Group**

[The WNET Group](#) creates inspiring media content and meaningful experiences for diverse audiences nationwide. It is the community-supported home of New York's [THIRTEEN](#) – America's flagship PBS station – [WLIW](#), THIRTEEN PBS KIDS, WLIW World and Create; [NJ PBS](#), New Jersey's statewide public television network; Long Island's only NPR station WLIW-FM; [ALL ARTS](#), the arts and culture media provider; newsroom [NJ Spotlight News](#); and FAST channel 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 like **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 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.

###