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**NEW SERIES “ICONIC AMERICA: OUR SYMBOLS AND STORIES**

**WITH DAVID RUBENSTEIN” PREMIERES WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26 AT 10 P.M. ET ON PBS**

***Eight-Episode Series Explores American History Through Iconic National Symbols Across the Country, Including Fenway Park, the Hollywood Sign, the Gadsden Flag, and the American Cowboy***

Pasadena, CA — January 16, 2023 — WETA President and Chief Executive Officer Sharon Percy Rockefeller announced today that the new eight-episode documentary series **ICONIC AMERICA: OUR SYMBOLS AND STORIES WITH DAVID RUBENSTEIN** will premiere Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 10:00 p.m. ET on PBS stations nationwide ([check local listings](http://www.pbs.org/tv_schedules/)) and [PBS.org](http://www.pbs.org) and the [PBS app](https://www.pbs.org/pbs-video-app/).

In **ICONIC AMERICA**,David M. Rubenstein – co-founder of The Carlyle Group, patriotic philanthropist, lifelong student of history, and the series’ host and executive producer – explores American history through a close examination of iconic national symbols: indelible artifacts, places, and archetypes. Rubenstein is on location and in conversation with historical thinkers, community members, and subject matter experts. Together, they dive deeply into each symbol’s history and how its meaning has changed over time, using these symbols as a gateway to understanding America’s past and present. Emmy-Award-winning production company Show of Force is also an executive producer.

The subjects of the series’ eight episodes are Fenway Park, the Hollywood Sign, the Gadsden Flag, the Cowboy, the Statue of Liberty, the American Bald Eagle, Stone Mountain, and the Golden Gate Bridge The series spotlights how these icons were created and how the perception of them formed and changed. These manifestations of our cultural history are sometimes highly contested as different groups invest them with distinct meanings. The symbols that endure speak to what a society values and how people see themselves ─ and they help us to contextualize a nation’s shared past in the present moment.

“I’ve long been struck by the strength of American symbols while saddened by how little we know about them,” said Rubenstein. “Our goal with this series was to explore the history and meaning of these iconic symbols and to better understand the bigger issues and societal currents they reveal. I am grateful to WETA for its confidence in and support of this project and to Show of Force for helping to create a remarkable series.”

“David brings his unique mix of wry humor, relentless curiosity, and deep engagement with history to this exploration of how we interpret our iconic American symbols throughout the country,” noted Rockefeller. “This series offers viewers a new perspective on how we tell **─** and retell **─** our American story.”

Rubenstein’s quest for a deeper understanding of these symbols takes him on a journey to an array of regions and communities, from Boston to San Francisco and New York to Oklahoma City. He conducts interviews with historians and history makers from the worlds of sports, politics, entertainment, and academia, including David “Big Papi” Ortiz (former Red Sox player) and Lake Iolani Stevens (Women’s Ranch Bronc Champion); Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-SC) and former Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL); Sylvester Stallone (actor, screenwriter, and filmmaker) and Melissa Rivers (writer, host, and producer); Hasan Kwame Jeffries (associate professor of history at The Ohio State University) and Michael Boulware Moore (chief executive officer of the International African American Museum).

Descriptions and premiere dates for each of the eight episodes are provided below:

**“Fenway Park”**

**Premieres Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 10:00 p.m.** **ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

Baseball is a favorite American pastime and obsession, and no ballpark is more iconic than Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox. This episode tells the story of a city’s loyalty to its team and love for its ballpark through thick and thin.

**“The Hollywood Sign”**

**Premieres Wednesday, May 3, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

The Hollywood Sign episode examines the history of the Los Angeles landmark, which was erected in 1923 originally as a real estate advertisement, and went on to become an international symbol of fame, fortune, and the American dream.

**“Gadsden Flag”**

**Premieres Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

In this episode, viewers will discover how the “Don’t Tread on Me” flag, once a potent symbol of independence, has been co-opted by a variety of Americans over its long history.

**“The Cowboy”**

**Premieres Wednesday, May 17**, **2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

The cowboy is the quintessential American — fiercely independent, brave and laconic.  The episode examines the myths and realities of this archetype, which remains as powerful as ever in the 21st century.

**“Statue of Liberty”**

**Premieres Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

This episode surveys the evolving meaning the Statue of Liberty has for a “nation of immigrants” and how it embodies our values and our conflicts, from abolition and women’s suffrage to the treatment of refugees.

**“American Bald Eagle”**

**Premieres Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

In this episode, discover how the American Bald Eagle soared to its vaunted perch in American iconography, a symbol not only of patriotism but also of environmental activism and Native American traditions.

**“Stone Mountain”**

**Premieres Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

This episode considers the fate of the Monument at Stone Mountain in Georgia, revealing a nation wrestling with its past as Confederate statues are being removed across the country.

**“The Golden Gate Bridge"**

**Premieres Tuesday, August 1, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. ET / 9:00 CT on PBS**

The Golden Gate Bridge is an engineering marvel that symbolizes America’s can-do spirit. This episode explores if America can continue to execute bold and ambitious infrastructure projects in the 21st century.

**ICONIC AMERICA: OUR SYMBOLS AND STORIES WITH DAVID RUBENSTEIN** is a production of Show of Force, DMR Productions, and WETA Washington, D.C. David M. Rubenstein is the host and executive producer. Maro Chermayeff, Jeff Dupre, Joshua Bennett and Sam Pollard are executive producers for Show of Force. John F. Wilson is executive producer for WETA. Bill Gardner is the executive in charge for PBS. Christopher Ullman is producer for DMR Productions. Jonathan Scheinberg, Prisca Pointdujour, Sam Lacroix, Alexandra Nikolchev, Sally Rosenthal, Matthew Horovitz, Lizzie Mulvey and Ken Levis are producers for Show of Force. Kate Kelly is producer for WETA. Rick Van Meter is supervising producer. Allison Hanna is archival producer. Gary Lionelli is composer of the original score.

Funding is provided by The Zohar and Lisa Ben-Dov Family through the Luminescence Foundation.

**ABOUT WETA**

WETA is the leading public broadcaster in the nation’s capital, serving Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia with educational initiatives and with high-quality programming on television, radio, and digital. WETA Washington, D.C., is the second-largest producing station for public television in the United States, with news and public affairs programs includingPBS NEWSHOUR, PBS NEWS WEEKEND,and WASHINGTON WEEK; films by Ken Burns, such as THE U.S. AND THE HOLOCAUSTandBENJAMIN FRANKLIN; series and documentaries by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., including FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR. and MAKING BLACK AMERICA: THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE; performance specials including IN PERFORMANCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE, THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS GERSHWIN PRIZE FOR POPULAR SONG, NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT, and A CAPITOL FOURTH; and health content from Well Beings, a multiplatform campaign. More information on WETA and its programs and services is available at [weta.org](http://www.weta.org/)*.* Visit [facebook.com/wetatvfm](http://www.facebook.com/wetatvfm) on Facebook or follow @WETAtvfm on Twitter*.*

**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://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 David M. Rubenstein**

David M. Rubenstein is co-founder and co-chairman of The Carlyle Group, a global investment firm. Mr. Rubenstein is Chairman of the Boards of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Council on Foreign Relations, the National Gallery of Art, the Economic Club of Washington, and the University of Chicago. He is an original signer of The Giving Pledge and a recipient of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy. Mr. Rubenstein is the host of *The* DAVID RUBENSTEIN SHOW: PEER-TO-PEER CONVERSATIONS on Bloomberg TV and PBS and BLOOMBERG WEALTH WITH DAVID RUBENSTEIN on Bloomberg TV, and is the *New York Times* best-selling author of THE AMERICAN STORY, HOW TO LEAD, THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT*,* andHOW TO INVEST. A native of Baltimore, Mr. Rubenstein is a graduate of Duke University and the University of Chicago Law School.

**About Show of Force**

Show of Force, founded in 2006 by veteran film and television producers Maro Chermayeff and Jeff Dupre, is known for creating award-winning feature documentaries and event television series. Their work includes the recent 5-part HBO series ATLANTA'S MISSING AND MURDERED about the child murders that engulfed the city 40 years ago, which won the 2020 International Documentary Association Award for Best Multi-part Documentary; the Emmy and Grammy-nominated 8-hour series SOUNDBREAKING, created in partnership with legendary Beatles producer Sir George Martin; the 8-hour music series SOUNDTRACKS: SONGS THAT DEFINED HISTORY produced for CNN in partnership with Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson; the Peabody and Emmy Award-winning MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ: THE ARTIST IS PRESENT for HBO, KEHINDE WILEY: AN ECONOMY OF GRACE, which won the 2014 SXSW Jury Prize for Best Documentary Short and was shortlisted for an Academy Award nomination; MANN V. FORD, a feature-length documentary for HBO; and the Emmy Award-winning 10-hour PBS series CARRIER. Their projects A PATH APPEARS and Emmy Honors-recipient HALF THE SKY, based on the bestselling books by the Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, reached more than 40 million people worldwide. Show of Force recently produced a series of films on the global refugee crisis titled HUMANITY ON THE MOVE. The films garnered two nominations from the International Documentary Association. One of the films, LOS COMANDOS was shortlisted for an Academy Award nomination. Most recently Show of Force produced the four part documentary series HOSTAGES for HBO, which has been nominated for a 2022 Critics' Choice and IDA award for best documentary series.

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