



For Immediate Release
Erin Callanan
worldmedia@wgbh.org
617-300-3270

WORLD Channel Presents *Race in America*

In partnership with PBS, a collection of films by and about individuals in the Black community across the country and around the world

Boston, MA (October 19, 2020) – WORLD Channel, a national public media broadcast, online and social media platform with news and documentaries humanizing complex issues from across the globe, is presenting [Race in America](#), a series of iconic documentaries and events exploring historical and cultural stories about race and civil rights in America.

Beginning in October 2020, WORLD Channel, in partnership with PBS, will broadcast a series of documentaries that examine the civil rights movement in America, reconciling the history that led to the nation's current racial reckoning. From films such as AMERICAN EXPERIENCE's *The Murder of Emmett Till* and AMERICAN MASTERS' *Miles Davis: The Birth of Cool to Driving While Black*, the films chronicle the history of Black Americans as well as the cultural and political forces which have shaped today's world. The films also will be available for streaming at worldchannel.org.

"Public media has always been dedicated to sharing the stories of the people who shaped our world. That has provided an incredibly rich archive of stories about Black Americans," said Chris Hastings, executive producer at WORLD Channel at GBH in Boston. "At WORLD Channel, we want to bring these films back, to share these stories with new audiences across the country, especially at a time when we need individuals to embrace the differences that make us one country."

Race in America films will air nationwide on Saturday nights at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT from October through March 2021. The featured documentaries will include:

- **AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: *The Murder of Emmett Till***
First aired in January 2003, *The Murder of Emmett Till* takes viewers back 65 years to August 1955, when a Black 14-year-old whistled at a white woman in a grocery store in Money, Mississippi. Emmett Till, a teen from Chicago, didn't understand that he had broken the unwritten laws of the Jim Crow South until three days later, when two white men dragged him from his bed in the dead of night, beat him brutally and then shot him in the head. The murder and the trial horrified the nation and the world and was a spark that helped mobilize the Civil Rights movement. *Streaming now at worldchannel.org.*
- **AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: *Freedom Riders***

From May 2011, *Freedom Riders* is the powerful, harrowing and ultimately inspirational story of six months in 1961 that changed America forever. From May until November 1961, more than 400 Black and white Americans risked their lives for simply traveling together on buses and trains as they journeyed through the Deep South. Deliberately violating Jim Crow laws in order to test and challenge a segregated interstate travel system, the Freedom Riders met with bitter racism and mob violence along the way, sorely testing their belief in nonviolent activism. *Streaming now at worldchannel.org*

- ***Driving While Black***

This 2020 feature-length documentary explores the role of the automobile in the lives of African Americans in the early twentieth century. The film chronicles a crucial and transformative period in American racial, cultural and social history, drawing on a rich archive of material from the period – including photographs, advertisements, road signs, maps, letters and legal records – along with riveting oral histories and the on-camera insights of scholars, writers, musicians, artists, religious leaders and ordinary American travelers. *Airs October 17, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*

- ***AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: Freedom Summer***

The 2014 film *Freedom Summer* tells the story of the summer of 1964 in Mississippi where less than seven percent of African Americans were registered to vote and the segregationist white establishment was prepared to use any means necessary to keep them away from the polls and out of elected office. For ten weeks that summer, white students from the North joined activists on the ground for a massive effort that would do what had been impossible so far: force the media and the country to take notice of the shocking violence and massive injustice taking place in Mississippi. *Airs October 24, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*

- ***John Lewis - Get in the Way***

The first major documentary biography of John Lewis, *Get in the Way* is a riveting, highly personalized narrative of an epic chapter in U.S. history. The film follows the journey of the civil rights hero, congressman, and human rights champion. From his role as one of the original Freedom Riders to his position as a U.S. Congressman, Lewis stood up to injustice wherever he found it. *Airs October 31, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*

- ***The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross***

Noted Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr., recounts the full trajectory of African-American history in this groundbreaking six-part series that explores the evolution of the African-American people, as well as the multiplicity of cultural institutions, political strategies and religious and social perspectives they developed – forging their own history, culture and society against unimaginable odds. Commencing with the origins of slavery in Africa, the series moves through five centuries of remarkable historic events right up to the present. *Airs Saturdays from November 7-21, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*

- **AMERICAN MASTERS: Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool**
First airing earlier this year, *Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool* is a deep dive into the world of a beloved musical giant. The Grammy-nominated film takes a hard look at the mythology that surrounds the legend of Miles Davis, one of the most innovative, influential and respected figures in music. *Airs November 28, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*
- **Reconstruction: America After the Civil War**
From 2019, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., presents a four-hour documentary series, exploring the transformative years following the American Civil War, when the nation struggled to rebuild itself in the face of profound loss, massive destruction and revolutionary social change. The twelve years that composed the post-war Reconstruction era witnessed a seismic shift in the meaning and makeup of our democracy, with millions of former slaves and free Black people seeking out their rightful place as equal citizens under the law. *Airs Saturdays from December 5-12, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*
- **AMERICAN MASTERS: Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise**
First premiering in 2017, *Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise* traces Dr. Angelou's incredible journey, shedding light on the untold aspects of her life. From her upbringing in the Depression-era South and her early performing career to her work with Malcolm X in Ghana and her many writing successes, including her inaugural poem for President Bill Clinton, the film reveals hidden facets of her life during some of America's most defining moments. *Airs December 19, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*
- **GREAT PERFORMANCES: Twilight: Los Angeles**
The film adaptation of Anna Deavere Smith's play *Twilight: Los Angeles* first premiered in 2001. Offering an unflinching look at the fallout from the 1992 Los Angeles riots following the Rodney King trial verdict, the film continues to reverberate powerfully today, giving voice to 40 real-life characters that spoke to her in hundreds of interviews. *Airs December 26, 2020 at 8 pm ET/ 9 pm PT*

On October 21, 2020, at 6:00 pm ET, WORLD Channel will join AMERICAN EXPERIENCE for a conversation with filmmaker Stanley Nelson. Led by AMERICAN EXPERIENCE Executive Producer Cameo George, Nelson will talk about three of his films: *The Murder of Emmett Till*, *Freedom Riders*, and *Freedom Summer*. [Join this free event](#) for a discussion on how these stories shaped and advanced the civil rights movement, how racial tensions are still playing out today and how public media can help elevate filmmakers of color in telling diverse stories.

Follow the social conversation of our [Race in America](#) series using the hashtags [#CivilRightsSaturday](#) and [#RaceinAmerica](#). For a complete list of original WORLD Channel programming, visit www.WORLDChannel.org or follow WORLD Channel on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) and subscribe to the [YouTube](#) channel.

About WORLD Channel

WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and fact-based informational programming that helps us understand conflicts, movements and cultures that may be distinct from our own. WORLD's original content examines issues too often ignored by mainstream media by sharing stories from a diversity of voices. WORLD has won a Peabody Award, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award and other national honors – including 1st and 2nd place Native Media Awards, an RTNDA Kaleidoscope Award, a Media for a Just Society Award, two Lesbian & Gay Journalist Awards, two Gracies and an Asian American Journalists Award. WORLD is a growing platform carried by 177 partner stations in markets representing more than 72% of US TV households. It is also available on WORLDChannel.org and social media platforms. Funding for WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts and Artworks. WORLD Channel is curated by GBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT).

###