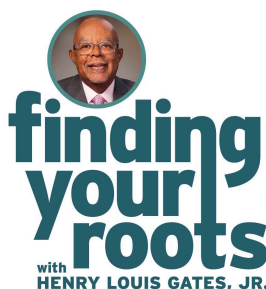




Present

**TWO-TIME EMMY NOMINATED
“FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.”
CELEBRATES UPCOMING SEASON 12 WITH SERIES TRAILER**



Season 12 Premieres on January 6, 2026 on PBS

*Season Includes Twenty Celebrity Guests
Ranging from Actors and Musicians to Filmmakers and Businessmen*

Watch the trailer [HERE](#)

Season Twelve’s celebrity lineup includes:

***Kate Burton, Lizzy Caplan, Kristin Chenoweth, Liza Colón-Zayas, Darren Criss,
Danielle Deadwyler, Barry Diller, America Ferrera, Flea, Rhiannon Giddens,
Brittney Griner, Sara Haines, Wiz Khalifa, Sanaa Lathan, Spike Lee, Tracy Letts,
Delroy Lindo, Lizzo, Hasan Minhaj and Chris Paul***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Arlington, VA (October 8, 2025) — In the upcoming twelfth season of the two-time Emmy® nominated series **FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.**, twenty new celebrity guests will sit down with Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. to learn about their genealogical history and the journeys of their ancestors dating back hundreds of years when the series returns January 6 on [PBS](#).

Seasons Ten and Eleven of **FINDING YOUR ROOTS** were recently nominated for back to back Emmy® nominations in the category Outstanding Hosted Nonfiction Series or Special.

Through ten new episodes, Gates and his team use genealogical detective work and cutting-edge DNA analysis to trace the family trees of twenty celebrity guests, telling stories that shine a light on America's fundamental diversity and compelling similarities. Season 12 episode guest pairings will be:

- **January 6** "American Dreams" - actors **Darren Criss** ("Glee") and **America Ferrera** ("Barbie")
- **January 13** "Great Migrations" - musician **Wiz Khalifa** and actor **Sanaa Lathan** ("Love & Basketball")
- **January 20** "Caribbean Roots" - actor **Liza Colón-Zayas** ("The Bear") and **Delroy Lindo** ("Sinners")
- **January 27** "The Road We Took" - actor **Lizzy Caplan** ("Mean Girls") and comedian **Hasan Minhaj**
- **February 3** "Love & Basketball" - basketball superstars **Brittney Griner** and **Chris Paul**
- **February 10** "Westward Bound" - journalist **Sara Haines** and actor **Tracy Letts** ("Lady Bird")
- **February 17** "Family Harmonies" - musicians **Flea** and **Lizzo**
- **February 24** "Artistic Roots" - filmmaker **Spike Lee** and actor **Kristin Chenoweth** ("Wicked")
- **April 7** "Song of the South" - actor **Danielle Deadwyler** ("Till") and musician **Rhiannon Giddens**
- **April 14** "Rags to Riches" - businessman **Barry Diller** and actor **Kate Burton** ("Scandal")

**Guests, pairings and episode order subject to change*

Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. returns for its 12th season on PBS. 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.

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 a national root system fortified by difference as well as commonality. Along the way, viewers are transported from coastal Africa to rural Texas; from Muslim communities in northern India to the ancestral lands of the Cherokee Nation; from villages in the Philippines to George Washington's camp at Valley Forge—all in search of the stories that will bring our guests' ancestors to life.

Guests include actors Kate Burton, Lizzy Caplan, Kristin Chenoweth, Liza Colón-Zayas, Darren Criss, Danielle Deadwyler, America Ferrera, Sanaa Lathan, and Delroy Lindo; comedian Hasan Minhaj; basketball stars Brittney Griner and Chris Paul; musicians Flea, Rhiannon Giddens, Lizzo, and Wiz Khalifa; playwright Tracy Letts; talk show host Sara Haines; media mogul Barry Diller; and filmmaker Spike Lee.

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.

“I am thrilled to announce another season of FINDING YOUR ROOTS filled with inspiring stories from our wonderful guests that further show us that at the level of the genome, we are all 99% the same despite the forces that try to divide us,” said Gates. “It’s especially important to all of us at FINDING YOUR ROOTS that our viewers know, despite the loss of federal funding for public television, our show and PBS are not going anywhere. We encourage everyone to support PBS by becoming a member of your local PBS station if you aren’t already, and continuing to spread the word about the great work PBS is doing.”

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 past series THE GENETIC DETECTIVE) and lead genealogists **Kimberly N. Morgan and Akosua Moore**, who together have solved hundreds of mysteries and reconnected innumerable lost relatives over the course of the series.

Throughout the first eleven 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); the identity of Laurence Fishburne’s biological father; 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.

FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR., Season Twelve 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, Robert L. Yacyshyn and Sam Hartley are supervising producers. Kevin Burke is the producer. Sabin Streeter, Krista Whetstone and Natalia Warchol are directors.

Corporate support for Season 12 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; W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Candace King Weir; by the Inkwell Society together with many of its members; 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), NO ACCIDENT (HBO), 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 GREAT MIGRATIONS: A PEOPLE ON THE MOVE (PBS), DEAR MS: A REVOLUTION IN PRINT (HBO), 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 1-11 (2012-2025), 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, 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 GREAT MIGRATIONS: A PEOPLE ON THE MOVE; films by Ken Burns and Florentine Films, such as THE U.S. AND THE HOLOCAUST and the new major documentary THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION; performance specials including A CAPITOL FOURTH; and health content from WELL BEINGS, a multiplatform campaign. Sharon Percy Rockefeller is president and CEO of WETA. More information on WETA and its programs and services are available at weta.org. Visit 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 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, one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](https://facebook.com/pbs), [Instagram](https://instagram.com/pbs), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](http://pbs.org/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](https://pbs.org/communications-on-x).

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