



PRESS RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Mary Riker: (850) 484-1211

LOCAL CHOIRS TO PERFORM AT FREE PREVIEW SCREENING OF “GOSPEL”

New Henry Louis Gates Jr. documentary explores Black spirituality in sermon and song

GOSPEL

HOSTED BY HENRY LOUIS GATES JR.

PENSACOLA, Fla., January 18, 2024 — WSRE PBS will host a free preview screening of “GOSPEL” — the new docuseries, from executive producer, host and writer Henry Louis Gates Jr., which explores the rich history of Black spirituality through sermon and song. Performances by the Zion Hope Primitive Baptist Church Choir and the Voices of Victory Radio Choir will follow the film. This special event will take place in the station’s Jean & Paul Amos Performance Studio at Pensacola State College on Tuesday, Feb. 6, at 7 p.m.

Gospel is more than the soundtrack of the African American experience, “it’s the beating heart and soul,” said Gates. “From the Great Migration to today, the history of Black gospel music and preaching is one of constant movement, and it’s long been a dream of mine to bring it to public television.”

In its entirety, the two-part, four-hour documentary will premiere on WSRE PBS at 8 p.m. on February 12 and 13, and a companion concert special will premiere at 8 p.m. on February 9.

“GOSPEL” is the latest in a long line of acclaimed docuseries from Gates, continuing his reputation as one of the preeminent documentarians in public media.

His history-producing content that brings the African and African American experience to a broad audience includes “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); “The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross” (2013); and “African American Lives” (2006). Gates’ slate of programming also includes the fan-favorite PBS series “Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates Jr.,” which is in its 10th season.

Corporate support for “GOSPEL” was provided by Bank of America. Major funding support was provided by the Lilly Endowment Inc., Gilead Sciences, Inc., the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Funding was also provided by members of The Inkwell Society and by public television viewers contributing to PBS and their local stations.

“We’re blessed to have such outstanding partners in delivering this series and concert at a time in our nation when the need for Gospel’s transcendent, healing powers is so great,” said Gates.

WSRE station members can stream an early release of “GOSPEL” on PBS Passport beginning February 4.

Seating is limited for the free film screening and choir performances. Register at wsre.org/events.

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About WSRE: WSRE, a PBS member station licensed to the Pensacola State College District Board of Trustees and supported by the WSRE-TV Foundation, serves as a critical media source for trusted content and a safe media space for children to grow and learn.