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SCREENING & PANEL DISCUSSION FOR PBS DOCUSERIES 'GOSPEL'

WYES & WWNO will Host a Joint Screening of Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s Newest Series with Local Ties

New Orleans, LA — As the birthplace of Mahalia Jackson and home to Grammy-winning gospel artist Irma Thomas, dozens of gospel choirs and site of the beloved gospel tent at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, south Louisiana has a long and rich history with gospel music. WYES and WWNO are giving viewers a chance to explore the history of the musical genre at a screening of excerpts from the new PBS docuseries **GOSPEL** from acclaimed scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

The **free screening on Saturday, February 17 at 11:00 a.m.** will be followed by a panel discussion and Q&A with members of the local gospel music community moderated by former WWL-TV anchor/reporter Sally-Ann Roberts. The event will be held at the WYES Paulette and Frank Stewart Innovation Center for Educational Media located at 916 Navarre Avenue, New Orleans. Admission is free but registration is required at wyes.org/events.

The first two-hour episode of **GOSPEL** will premiere on WYES on Monday, February 12 at 8:00 p.m. Episode two will premiere on Friday, February 16 at 9:00 p.m. and both episodes will air on Saturday, February 17 at 8 p.m. WYES programming can also be streamed live at wyes.org/live as well as on the WYES and PBS Apps. More information about the series is available at pbs.org/gospel.

While musical styles come and go, there is one sound that has been a constant source of strength, courage and wisdom from the pulpit to the choir lofts on any given Sunday: gospel. This series explores Black spirituality in sermon and song, giving a look at the history of Black religious music and preaching, showcasing the symbiotic relationship of words and song present in any Black church.

Of note to local viewers will be episode one, which highlights gospel music icon Mahalia Jackson, a New Orleans native. The episode takes viewers north to Chicago, where southern migrants Jackson, Thomas A. Dorsey, and Sister Rosetta Tharpe fused blues and jazz with testimonies of God's goodness to create a genre enduring for generations.

GOSPEL teams Gates, the host, writer and executive producer, with executive producers Dyllan McGee, John F. Wilson and Bill Gardner as well as series producer/directors Stacey L. Holman and Shayla Harris, the team behind the recent PBS series **MAKING BLACK AMERICA: THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE** (2022) and **THE BLACK CHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG** (2021). Gates's slate of programming also includes the popular series **FINDING YOUR ROOTS WITH HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.**, now in its tenth season on PBS and WYES.

GOSPEL is a production of McGee Media, Inkwel Media and WETA Washington, D.C. 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, Emerson Collective and the Ford Foundation. Funding was also provided by members of The Inkwel Society and by public television viewers like you.

ABOUT WYES:

For 66 years, WYES has worked to inform, teach, illuminate, entertain and inspire our entire community. It is the oldest public television station serving southeast Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the 12th oldest in the nation, and the most utilized non-profit organization in our two states with as many as a half-million people using our broadcasts, outreach activities and website each week. We are proud to be part of the nation's largest classroom, the largest stage for the arts and a trusted window to the world. For more information, call (504) 486-5511 or visit wyes.org.