Take a moment to think about Walt Disney and the impact he’s had on American popular culture. In 1966, the year Disney died, 240 million people saw a Disney movie, 100 million tuned in to a Disney television program, 80 million bought Disney merchandise and close to 7 million visited Disneyland.

Walt Disney’s influence extended far beyond the numbers, and American Experience’s two-part, four-hour biography Walt Disney takes you behind-the-scenes to give you an unprecedented look at the life and legacy of a consummate storyteller who built ‘Disney’s land’ for the American people.

To say he was a genius hardly begins to describe his vision, intellect, bold courage and tenacity to achieve his view of perfection. He was driven — which was good for him, but difficult for many of those who worked for him.

Walt Disney spent his early years in Marceline, Missouri, where he fell in love with cartoons and trains, and Kansas City, where he took a course at the Kansas City Art Institute. Although he had little formal art training, he was sure he could create better animation, so at age 20 he started his own company, Laugh-O-Grams, Inc. Although the company went bankrupt, he would not be deterred.

Walt Disney knew that the real action was in California, so he headed out West, and his luck began to turn around. He created characters based on his life experiences — outsiders struggling for acceptance, while questioning conventions of class and authority. Mickey Mouse became one of the most beloved cartoon characters in history.

Disney improved upon existing technologies, adding sound and music to enhance his films, and conceived the first feature-length animated film, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, released in 1937. He took animation from crude shorts to complex, emotional stories with lovable characters.

He wanted his animated films to be great art, but greatness had its price in time, cost overruns and dissatisfied employees. When Walt’s employees joined the union and went out on strike, he saw it as a personal betrayal.

Cinderella was one of his last blockbuster animations, but his heart was not in it. As he moved away from films, he became increasingly obsessed with trains and his vision of a magical, make-believe world that reflected his own ideas of a utopian universe. Disneyland was born.

The film tells the story of his extraordinary accomplishments and lasting legacy through rare archival footage and revealing interviews with artists who worked at the studio, historians and Disney experts. The film will spark your imagination and give you new insights into his influence on the American cultural journey.

Airs Monday and Tuesday, September 14-15 at 9 p.m.

“If you can dream it, you can do it.”
— Walt Disney
THE WIDOWER

Based on a true story, this three-part drama, The Widower, reveals the bizarre life of Malcolm Webster. On the surface a personable gentleman and a mild-mannered nurse, he is really a cold-blooded killer.

Played by Reece Shearsmith, Malcolm first marries the unsuspecting Claire (Sheridan Smith) in Scotland. When she starts questioning his finances, he turns on her and kills her in a staged car crash. Several years later, he moves to New Zealand, where he marries Felicity. He also attempts to murder her — she narrowly escapes, but not before he steals most of her savings.

When he returns to Scotland, he moves in with Simone. She changes her will, leaving him her entire estate. He intends to kill her by tampering with the life jacket on her boat. The police have been gathering evidence on him. They are getting closer. Will Simone escape his clutches? Will he be arrested? Tune in to find out.

Airs Sunday, October 4 at 10 p.m.

Politics,
passion,
power...

INDIAN SUMMERS

At the heart of the story is the tangled web of rivalries and clashes that shape the lives of those brought together in this summer that changes everything. The all-star cast also includes Henry Lloyd-Hughes who plays Ralph Whelan, the ambitious private secretary to the Viceroy of India; Jemima West, who plays his sister, Alice; and Nikesh Patel, in the role of Aafrin Dalal, a junior clerk in the Viceroy’s office. As Indian Summers begins, politics, power and love play out as the British Raj falters and a nation opens its eyes to the possibilities of freedom.

Airs Sunday, September 27 at 9 p.m.

MASTERPIECE’s new blockbuster, Indian Summers, takes you back to 1932. Set against the sweeping grandeur of the Himalayas and tea plantations of Northern India, the lavish nine-part drama tells the explosive story of the birth of modern India and the decline of British colonial rule.

Simla is where the British power-brokers are posted to govern during the summer months. At the center of Simla’s society is Cynthia, played brilliantly by Julie Walters (Harry Potter, The Hollow Crown), a widowed doyenne of the Royal Club and a force with which to be reckoned.

Thanks to members like you, we can create these long-form documentaries that do justice to our past.

For all your help to keep thoughtful, intelligent, commercial-free programs alive, thank you! Enjoy all our new programming this fall on ETV and ETV Radio!

Sincerely,
Coby C. Hennecy, CPA
Executive Director
ETV Endowment of South Carolina

A Word from... Coby Hennecy

Dear ETV Endowment Member,

Stories that make us both laugh and cry are integral to the cultural fabric of America. Next month, ETV will continue to explore American history with epic documentaries that touch this range of emotions.

American Experience will chronicle the life of Walt Disney, who created what some call “the happiest place on Earth.” Then, we’ll reprise Ken Burns’ epic The Civil War, which was first broadcast on PBS 25 years ago, in September. We’ll devote more than 16 hours to do what no other television service does — tell these two uniquely American tales from the perspective of the people who lived them.

Also in this issue, you’ll find an exclusive interview with American Experience’s Mark Samels, the genius behind TV’s most-watched history series.

American history is rich in delicate nuance, fascinating facts, and incredible people.

Credit: Courtesy of New Pictures/Channel 4 for MASTERPIECE in association with All3Media International
In remembrance of the 150th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's assassination, the entire nine episodes of *The Civil War*, which have been remastered and are in high definition, will be rebroadcast.

The series was first broadcast in September 1990, and although producer Ken Burns had already created several successful films, *The Civil War* established him as a trailblazer of the new documentary format. The film, the highest rated series in the history of PBS, attracted an audience of 40 million during its premiere and was honored with more than 40 major awards.

In discussing the film, Ken Burns said, "We wanted to tell the story of the bloodiest war in American history through the voices of the men and women who actually lived through it."

You will "see" a soldier's life through the simple sentences that Private Elisha Hunt Rhodes wrote in his diary, and you'll "feel" the anxiety and determination before battle in the moving words of Sullivan Ballou in his letter to his wife, Sarah.

The sophisticated blending of archival photographs, meticulous research, live modern cinematography, music, narration and a chorus of first-person voices make this program an unforgettable experience. 

*Airs Monday-Friday, September 7-11 at 9 p.m.*

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**ETV Endowment's New Website!**

The ETV Endowment is proud to announce the release of our dynamic, new website, designed with a fresh new look and located at the same address, www.etvendowment.org. Our goal at the ETV Endowment is always to provide the highest level of service for our family of members, and we realized it was time to bring that level of service to our website. The new website was crafted with user-friendly navigation, and you'll find everything you are looking for in a few easy clicks!

In addition to providing a more streamlined user experience, we wanted a website that better explained who we are and why our work is important. Finally, we can tell the stories we've been dying to share... about the exceptional programming found on ETV and ETV Radio and how membership support really makes a difference!

We hope that you will enjoy browsing our new site. Please let us know what you think!

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**Mark Samels for ETV**

Mark Samels joined *American Experience* in 1997 and was named executive producer in 2003. He has overseen the production of more than 50 films. Today, he talks about the upcoming *Walt Disney* film and what makes *American Experience* television's most-watched history series.

**Q.** You said that the Walt Disney project has been in the forefront of your mind for years. **W**hy are you so intrigued with Walt Disney?  

**A.** Walt Disney's presence goes far beyond his moment in history and ventures into our psyche. His influence on American culture is pervasive and deep. The film is a story about an artist who put down his pencil and created an empire. It's about the price of that empire, the trade-offs and the cost of success. He was so driven, immersed in his art... until he wasn't.

**Q.** What does *American Experience* offer viewers that is unique in television programming?  

**A.** We give the subject the time and depth it deserves. *Walt Disney* is four hours long over two nights. It delves into the man, his work and the world around him. We give filmmakers the time they need to interview a wide range of people and to collect the seldom-seen to the never-seen archival footage. We give them time to let the film reach its full potential.

**Q.** There are so many important historical events and fascinating people; how do you choose the topics of your films?  

**A.** It is a process we go through. We put ideas through a series of filters: Will the story add meaningful understanding to American history? Are there strong characters who can be represented? Is there dramatic conflict and resolution? Can a single event stand for something larger? We also consider the time period, perspective and voices so that we are inclusive of the complexity that is our country.

**Q.** How important are the viewers and members to your process?  

**A.** Individual viewers are absolutely critical to our production. *American Experience* wouldn't exist without the passion and commitment of people who have contributed as donors and supporters.
Chef Vivian Howard, along with her husband, Ben Knight, and other colorful characters, will be back to thrill public television audiences from coast to coast and abroad with her down-home portrayal of Southern culture, food, and family.

The popular show, entering its third season, was recently awarded a Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Directing in the category of Lifestyle/Culinary/Travel Program. Additionally, the show was nominated for three James Beard Foundation Awards in the categories of Outstanding Personality/Host, Television Program on Location and Visual and Technical Excellence. The James Beard Foundation Awards are recognized as the highest honor for food and beverage professionals in America.

If you need to catch up on past episodes, visit www.achefslifeseries.com. Stay connected through social media for a more intimate experience with the show, the characters and the food. You may even consider becoming a Friend of A Chef’s Life with a special gift to support this award-winning series. Your support will help ensure that this series stays on the air! Join this select group of fans at www.achefslifeseries.com/friends.

This past spring, ETV Radio made some changes to programming to reflect its commitment to local coverage. New local programs, South Carolina Focus, State House Week and Health Focus, have been added to the schedule and allow ETV Radio to tell a broader, more comprehensive narrative of South Carolina.

State House Week is produced by Russ McKinney, a longtime news and public-relations expert in South Carolina with strong ties and a solid reputation in state government, higher education and political circles. South Carolina Focus, produced by Tut Underwood, provides the listeners with longer, more in-depth stories about South Carolina, its people, places, art, culture, music, history and innovation.

Health Focus, produced by MUSC, takes a look at medical issues and health advances relevant to our citizens.

John Gasque, Operations Manager/Program Director, says, “Listeners asked for more local content, and these programs make a strong addition to local headlines and weather, produced and delivered each morning by ETV Radio host George Kearns.”

George has been with ETV since 2012, serving as a producer for ETV Radio and a narrator for ETV. George is one of radio’s early risers, waking at 3:30 a.m. each morning and arriving at the station at 5 a.m. to begin assessing the news, selecting the most significant items of interest to the South Carolina audience from our partners at the National Weather Service, the Associated Press and ETV.

George says, “It’s not my favorite time of day, but I do appreciate the lack of traffic!”

Approximately 120 million Americans do not have a proper estate plan. An estate plan is not limited to matters of money and inheritance. Did you know it can also guide your future health decisions and provide special instructions for loved ones in your care?

Whatever your stage in life, it is a good idea to think about and plan for how your affairs will be handled. A few simple steps today can give you peace of mind tomorrow by ensuring that you and your loved ones are well protected.

Join other loyal public media supporters by requesting your FREE planning guide.

Contact Dawn Deck at the ETV Endowment at 1-877-253-2092 for more information.

Get your estate plan in order and put your mind at ease by getting your ducks in a row today!

October 19-25 is National Estate Planning Awareness Week.