



THE KIMMEL CENTER  
ACADEMY OF MUSIC  
MERRIAM THEATER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Going the Distance Films* Ensures the Legacy of Marian Anderson Lives on with the Release of “Once in a Hundred Years, The Life and Legacy of Marian Anderson”**

Comcast Premieres Film at The Kimmel Center on February 23, 2019, 7:30 pm

(Philadelphia, PA)- January 28, 2019 – Going the Distance Films has announced the release of its most current project, ***Once in a Hundred Years, the Life and Legacy of Marian Anderson***. Directed and produced by Bill Nicoletti, the film traces the arc of Anderson’s life and most notably her struggles against racism and poverty. Culminating with her battle against the Daughters of the American Revolution which led to her historic concert at The Lincoln Memorial with the assistance of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Anderson’s quest for equality was one to be heard around the world.

“This is a true passion project for me. This is an incredible story that needs to be shared with people of all ages and all backgrounds,” said Nicoletti. “The immense interest in this film from many different people and organizations has given real voice to Marian Anderson’s important and inspiring journey,” he continued.

The World premiere of ***Once in a Hundred Years*** will take place on February 23, 2019 at 7:30pm at The Kimmel Center’s Perelman Theater – just a stone’s throw from where Marian was born, and on the same street where her plaque is embossed in The Philadelphia Walk of Fame. The evening will include the film’s debut and a performance by Broadway actress, N’Kenge from the hit play *Motown*, followed by a Question and Answer session with Director Bill Nicoletti and a selected panel of scholars, relatives and friends of Marian Anderson.

“Marian Anderson paved the way for countless performers and her stories of sacrifice and struggle resonate with women, particularly African American women, who still experience setbacks both on and off the stage,” says Anne Ewers, President & CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. “We are thrilled that Mr. Nicoletti and Comcast chose The Kimmel Center as the location for the world premiere of this historic documentary that will inform and inspire future generations.”

The film was inspired by Nicoletti’s admiration and interest in Marian Anderson, “As Americans, we have seen pictures and heard stories about the American civil rights movement. We know about Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglas, Rosa Parks and Jackie Robinson. We know the events of Selma and Montgomery and the stories of Dr. King and Malcolm X. But there is one great American story too many of us have never been told. That of young girl from South Philadelphia who, armed with only a voice, fought to break down one of the most daunting barriers closed to black Americans in the 1930s—the classical music stage,” said Nicoletti.

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased by visiting <https://www.kimmelcenter.org/events-and-tickets/201819/rentals/once-in-a-hundred-years/>.

#### ABOUT THE EVENING'S Q&A PANEL:

##### **Bill Nicoletti | Producer / Director**

Founder of *Visual Innovations* and *Going The Distance Films*, Nicoletti started his career at the legendary Sigma Sound Studios and witnessed the emergence of what would become known as The Sound of Philadelphia. After spending ten years as a commercial director for NFL Films, he established two production companies still in operation today and is currently in production with recording artist, John Legend, on a feature film documentary about the artists and impact of the Philadelphia music scene through many decades. The film, entitled *The Sound of Philadelphia "Wake up Everybody,"* is due to be completed in 2019.

##### **Dexter Gresh | Head Editor**

An Emmy-winning editor, Gresh has been working in the Philadelphia region since 1991. He won a Daytime Emmy in 2001 for his work on TLC's "A Wedding Story" and has edited a wide variety of documentary, television, commercial and corporate projects. Gresh led the editing effort of *Once in a Hundred Years* and is also working on the *Sound of Philadelphia* documentary in current production at *Going The Distance Films*.

##### **Dr. Brent Smith**

A tenured Professor of Marketing at Saint Joseph's University and an expert in global business, Dr. Smith is also a mixed media artist whose work reflects both his northern and southern roots. Much like Marian Anderson, he is a proud product of a vibrant church experience early on, where god and gospel music converged to inspire him for the rest of his life.

##### **Michelle Jenkins**

A classically-trained vocalist having studied voice at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, NJ, Ms. Jenkins is currently singing with Bel Canto Lyric Opera Company of Philadelphia while also pursuing a career in modeling, tv and film.

##### **Loretta Lewis**

Born to a South Philadelphia family, Ms. Lewis is an active member of the Historic Union Baptist Church and a has served as a lifelong advocate for the rights of women and children.

##### **Earl Harvey**

Mr. Harvey is the CEO of the Earl Harvey Media Group a multimedia communications firm that promotes diversity in media, entertainment and marketing. Earl spent the first 13 years of his life living next door to Marian Anderson and her family in South Philadelphia. Earl boasts that Marian Anderson was his most famous babysitter.

**ABOUT GOING THE DISTANCE FILMS:** Established in 2015, *Going the Distance Films* has produced a diverse range of award-winning films and commercial projects that have been nationally recognized. Owned and operated by Producer and Director, Bill Nicoletti, *Going The Distance Films* has just wrapped production on a documentary about the life of vocal artist, Marian Anderson, and is in final production on a film about the rise and influence of the *Sound of Philadelphia* musical movement.

##### **The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center Campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2018-2019 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit [www.kimmelcenter.org](http://www.kimmelcenter.org).

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For photography, please visit <https://kcpres.smugmug.com/>