



PRESS RELEASE

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AFROPOP: THE ULTIMATE CULTURAL EXCHANGE PRESENTS ITS 100TH FILM

***Paradox: Echoes of Reform & the Minneapolis Police*, the season 18 finale of Black Public Media's Peabody Award-winning series, premieres November 9**

NEW YORK (October 20, 2026) — Black Public Media's Peabody Award-winning series *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange* marks its 100th film presentation this fall with *Paradox: Echoes of Reform & the Minneapolis Police*, the finale of Season 18. Directed by 20-time regional Emmy award winner Daniel Pierce Bergin and produced by Minnesota PBS, the documentary traces 150 years of power, politics and policing in Minneapolis, a hotbed of police misconduct and abuse that has exploded onto national headlines. *Paradox* premieres Monday, November 9, on the PBS App and PBS.org. Viewers are encouraged to check local listings for broadcast times.

The murder of George Floyd in 2020 and other incidents of law enforcement abuse of people of color have sparked protests across the nation and around the world. *Paradox* delves deep into the 150 years of policing in Minneapolis, tracing the history of power, politics and reform that set the stage for his murder. Acclaimed historian Dr. Yohuru Williams, the distinguished university chair and professor of history and founding director of the Racial Justice Initiative at the University of St. Thomas, guides viewers through that history. The film follows Williams as he examines how mayoral politics, police unions and community activists — particularly those from Black, Latinx and Indigenous communities — have clashed over policing in Minnesota's largest city.

Paradox draws on deep archival research, rare footage and candid interviews with civic leaders, activists, police officers and historians, including Dr. Michael Lansing, professor of history at Augsburg University, a key advisor on the project and author of the companion book, [A Police State](#).

"George Floyd's murder did not happen in a historical vacuum. To understand what happened on that Minneapolis street in 2020, we have to examine the decisions, policies and struggles over policing that shaped the city for generations," said Bergin, who also serves as executive producer and WEM endowed director of history at Minnesota PBS. "We hope *Paradox* will deepen the national conversation about policing, accountability and the possibility of meaningful reform."

"As police misconduct continues to dominate the news cycle, this compelling work by Daniel and Minnesota PBS uncovers the deep and dark history behind recent events," said Leslie Fields-Cruz, executive director of Black Public Media and executive producer of *AfroPoP*. "It's fitting that BPM's 100th film is one that challenges Americans to confront the past to better

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understand the present. This milestone is a testament to *AfroPoP*'s enduring commitment to bringing important and often overlooked stories about the Black experience to audiences nationwide."

Paradox rounds out a season of compelling documentaries that include [*Listen to Me*](#), about the nation's Black maternal health crisis, by Kanika Harris and Stephanie Etienne; and [*This World Is Not My Own*](#), about the late folk artist Nellie Mae Rowe, by Opendox filmmakers Petter Ringbom and Marquise Stillwell. *This World Is Not My Own* is the first feature-length film to premiere exclusively on [BPM's YouTube channel](#).

AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange is the only U.S.-based public media program solely devoted to independent documentaries and narrative films about contemporary life, art and culture across the African diaspora. Filmmakers whose work has been featured on the series include: Joel Zito Araújo, Blitz Bazawule, Yaba Blay, Joe Brewster, Barron Claiborne, Rebecca Richman Cohen, Luchina Fisher, Bobbito Garcia, Alain Gomis, Thomas Allen Harris, Terence Nance, Raoul Peck, Sam Pollard, Michèle Stephenson, Anisia Uzeyman, Marco Williams and Saul Williams.

BPM was able to present Season 18 despite a \$1.8 million budget cut resulting from Congress's 2025 rescission of public media funding.

Denise A. Greene is the series producer/director of *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange*, which is presented with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

To find out more about *AfroPoP*, visit <https://blackpublicmedia.org/afropop/>.

ABOUT BLACK PUBLIC MEDIA:

BPM supports the development of visionary content creators and distributes stories about the global Black experience to inspire a more equitable and inclusive future. For 45+ years, BPM has addressed the needs of unserved and underserved audiences. BPM-supported programs have won five Emmys®, 10 Peabodys, five Anthem Awards, 14 Emmy® nominations and an Oscar® nomination. BPM continues to address historical, contemporary and systemic challenges that traditionally impede the development and distribution of Black stories.

About Minnesota PBS:

Minnesota PBS's mission is to enrich lives and strengthen communities through the power of media. Building on nearly 70 years of public media service, Minnesota PBS provides trusted programming, educational resources, and community engagement through broadcast channels, digital platforms, and outreach initiatives that connect with communities across Minneapolis, St. Paul, Austin, and Rochester. Minnesota PBS produces high-impact local films and series that explore the people, places, culture, and ideas shaping Minnesota and develops original content that reaches audiences nationally through PBS and other media platforms. Through innovative storytelling, learning resources, and community activations, Minnesota PBS reflects the diverse voices, experiences, and stories of the communities it serves. Minnesota PBS has been recognized for its originality and creativity with numerous awards, including Peabody Awards and national and regional Emmy® Awards. Learn more at [MinnesotaPBS.org](https://minnesotapbs.org).

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ABOUT PBS PLUS:

PBS Plus is a syndicated programming service for public television stations, supplementing primetime, daily news, and children's content in the National Program Service (NPS). All PBS member stations, reaching all available national TV households, have access to PBS Plus content. Annually, stations are provided with approximately 500 hours of programming.

PBS Plus series and specials range from "how-to" programs such as [*This Old House*](#) and food series such as [*Family Ingredients*](#) to topical news and information programs and arts and cultural shows such as [*Austin City Limits*](#) and [*The Caverns Sessions*](#).

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For media inquiry, contact:

For BPM: Cheryl L. Duncan, Cheryl Duncan & Company, Inc., cheryl@cdcprnews.com

For TPT: Amy Campbell, Minnesota PBS, acampbell@minnesotapbs.org