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Image courtesy of Mainframe Studios and Phoebe & Jay Productions

PBS KIDS Welcomes Phoebe & Jay

**A new show that empowers
children to navigate their world**

Learn more on page 6

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Your tax-deductible contribution will help PBS to continue creating content that educates, informs, and inspires all Americans now and for generations to come. To learn more about the ways you can help PBS, including gifts of stock, bequests, trusts, and other forms of giving, please contact Brian Reddington, Executive Director at:

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A Message From the President

Dear Friends,

As we face one of the most challenging times in PBS's history, we are grateful for your support. Over the last several months, as we have faced significant threats to our service, I have been inspired to keep fighting because of the voices of so many people who have shared what public media means to them. For millions of people all across the country, we are knit into families and communities. Remembering the impact we can have is what keeps me going, and keeps me committed to our work.

Despite losing federal support for our work, we are not going anywhere. Thanks to the support of viewers like you, who have come forward to fill the gaps in our funding, we are more energized to fulfill our mission. Anywhere you seek PBS out, we remain there, providing the stories that help you engage and connect with your world.

This fall, PBS presents a full slate of thoughtful, thought-provoking programming our audiences have enjoyed for years — across all platforms. We remain a valuable destination for people from all walks of life in every corner of the country. No one offers the breadth and depth of perspectives that PBS does.

There is nothing more American than PBS. We do what no one else can, bringing stories to life that inform, educate, and inspire. We cannot do it without you, and we are thankful that you have stepped forward to support us in this moment.

Warmly,
Paula Kerger

PBS President & CEO
PBS Foundation President



GREAT PERFORMANCES

“From Vienna:
The New Year’s Celebration 2025”

Image courtesy of Dieter Nagl

Holiday Bounty From PBS

The holidays are always a special time at PBS, something that’s reflected in our programming. They’re a time when turning over a new leaf can also mean turning to tradition. Take, for example, the January 1 broadcast of **FROM VIENNA: THE NEW YEAR’S CELEBRATION 2026**. New Year’s Day concerts from the Musikverein in Vienna have been a PBS tradition since 1985.

Featuring the Vienna Philharmonic in a program that showcases a seemingly endless variety of waltzes, polkas, and other light-hearted music by the Strauss family and others — but that always ends with the *Blue Danube Waltz* (by Johann Strauss II) and the *Radetzky March* (by his father, Johann Strauss I) — the festive New Year’s Concerts are entrusted each year to a conductor specially invited by the members of the orchestra. This year’s maestro, making his New Year’s Day debut with the Viennese, will be Philadelphia Orchestra and Metropolitan Opera music director Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

For the New Year, the always beautiful Golden Hall of the Musikverein — the Philharmonic’s home — is made to look especially festive with elaborate

floral décor. Television audiences get an extra bonus, namely the insertion, while the music is being played by the orchestra, of specially choreographed dance vignettes performed by members of the Vienna State Ballet.

Annual telecasts of the New Year’s Concert from Vienna are produced by PBS member station NET in New York, under the banner of its flagship arts series **GREAT PERFORMANCES**, now in its 52nd season. Two additional holiday productions from **GREAT PERFORMANCES** will be included among the season’s PBS offerings: **TCHAIKOVSKY’S THE NUTCRACKER** (scheduled to air on December 16 at 8 p.m. ET), and a **NEW YEAR’S EVE SPECIAL 2025** (slated for December 31 at 9 p.m. ET).

PBS viewers can also look forward to **HOPE OF THE SEASON: CHRISTMAS WITH THE TABERNACLE CHOIR**, a 90-minute concert produced by member station GBH in Boston, packed with classic carols and holiday favorites (December 15 at 8 p.m. ET).

Finally, there’s a Christmas Day special on PBS that really will be special — a two-part anniversary broadcast heralding the 15th PBS season of BBC’s beloved drama **CALL THE MIDWIFE**.

For more on that, just turn the page.



“CALL THE MIDWIFE”

Image courtesy of BBC Studios / Neal Street Productions

A PBS Tradition — BBC’s CALL THE MIDWIFE on Christmas Day

Touching, witty, and raw, **CALL THE MIDWIFE**, based on Jennifer Worth’s memoirs and created by Heidi Thomas, chronicles the lives of a group of East London midwives from the late 1950s to the 1970s. The beloved series, from BBC and Neal Street Productions, has won more than 20 awards and is the longest-running drama series on PBS.

This year, PBS continues what has become a holiday tradition, delivering a special episode of **CALL THE MIDWIFE** on Christmas Day. Then, in early 2026 — after another special episode, this one a prequel set during World War II — **CALL THE MIDWIFE** will return for its 15th season on PBS.

Back in 2012, PBS viewers got to meet Jenny Lee (portrayed by Jessica Raine in the show’s first three seasons), a young woman raised in the posh English countryside. She left home to take a job as a midwife, and found herself working in a destitute area of London at the Nonnatus House — a convent and clinic run by an Anglican religious order. From that point on, it has been one adventure after another.

The series’ success is a testament both to Worth and her life’s work, and to Thomas’s bold creative vision. Like Worth, Thomas (who died in 2011, after developing the show’s initial concept with Worth) was the granddaughter of

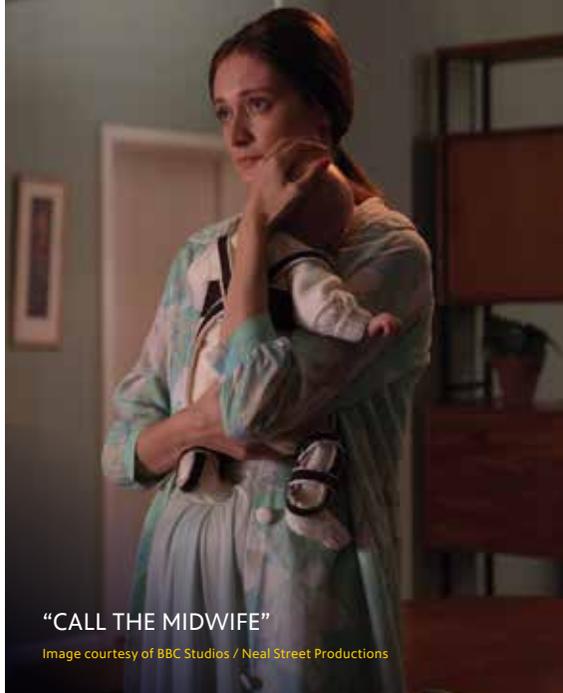
a suffragist and as such had a personal connection to the subject. The stories **CALL THE MIDWIFE** has been telling ever since remind us to find joy in the face of life's greatest challenges.

Narrated by Vanessa Redgrave as an elderly Jennifer Worth, the series stars Judy Parfitt (Sister Monica Joan), Jenny Agutter (Sister Julianne), Laura Main (Shelagh Turner), and Helen George (Trixie Aylward). In an interview, Redgrave shared that her narration touches on the “rights and dignity of the poorest and least regarded.” She called the show “passionately human... For me, it’s a reminder of something I already knew: Nurses are heroes.”

Back in 2015, PBS began an unprecedented partnership with the BBC and BBC Worldwide aimed at delivering a broad range of programs to American audiences. In addition to **CALL THE MIDWIFE**, this partnership has produced engaging content in the genres of natural history, science, history, religion, and the arts.

Quite recently, there was news that fans of **CALL THE MIDWIFE** found especially welcome: In addition to the two-part special on Christmas Day, the World War II prequel, and then season 15, we learned that BBC and Neal Street are producing a feature film based on the series, set in 1972.

Happy news for the holidays! As Maria Bruno Ruiz, PBS Vice President for Program Content Strategy and Scheduling, has said: “**CALL THE MIDWIFE** is a PBS treasure. The beginning of filming for the 15th season is something to surely be



celebrated! Our audience has fallen in love with the nuns and midwives of Nonnatus House, celebrating their wins and sharing in their losses, and having a ‘deep cry’ along with them, and we look forward for what is to come.”

The life of evergreen content like **CALL THE MIDWIFE** extends well past broadcast. One example: *Working Nurse*, a career-advice publication based in California, thanked **CALL THE MIDWIFE** for being instructive and inspirational to today’s nurses. Then there’s PBS’s science and nature content, which includes some outstanding programs produced by the BBC. It’s regularly adapted for classroom use and is provided free of charge to teachers and students via PBS LearningMedia. The bottom line? For decades, the shows PBS has imported from the BBC, including **CALL THE MIDWIFE**, have stood out proudly as a major part of our service to the American public.

Got Literacy? Phoebe & Jay Are Here!

PBS KIDS's new series helps
preschoolers' everyday literacy



"PHOEBE & JAY"

PBS KIDS® wants families across America to know that, coming soon, there will be a couple of new kids on the block. Their names are Phoebe and Jay, and they're the central figures in a brand-new animated series for children ages 3-5. The show will premiere in early 2026.

PHOEBE & JAY has been designed to support "everyday literacy" for preschoolers by showcasing the various kinds of texts they are likely to see in their everyday lives — everything from signs and flyers to recipes and movie tickets. Through a curriculum-driven concept, children can feel empowered to approach texts, learn from them, and utilize what they've learned to solve the kinds of problems they encounter in daily life. The goal is to help kids accomplish tasks in their everyday lives and feel more confident in doing so. This objective makes **PHOEBE & JAY** a great example of PBS KIDS' broader effort to support early learning for children by encouraging literacy at all levels, which has been a priority for PBS since its founding more than 50 years ago.

The new series follows the adventures of 6-year-old fraternal twins Phoebe and Jay Yarber, charismatic youngsters who live with their ever-optimistic dad, Pete, and their no-nonsense Grandma Annie in the fantastical Topsy Towers. Whether they're using a flyer to help a neighbor find a lost pet, or reading clothing labels to find the right size shirt, Phoebe and Jay model for young PBS KIDS viewers how they, too, can use everyday texts to manage their daily activities, develop important life skills, and communicate

with others in their family and community.

Topsy Towers, the setting for **PHOEBE & JAY**, is inspired by old grand hotels that have been converted into affordable apartment housing, and serves as a unique setting for many of the literacy-based stories for the tight-knit Yarber family. For example, in one episode, the Yarbers put on their best outfits for a family photo. Jay is determined to keep his sneakers spotless, but then the twins see the local playground wide open and can't resist going down the sliding board, just once, before the photo session. Jay will learn about the meaning of size labels on clothing when he finds he needs a whole new outfit.

"**PHOEBE & JAY** beautifully blends fun and learning by introducing young viewers to the importance of everyday problem solving, literacy, and life skills in a way that's relatable and engaging," says Sara DeWitt, Senior Vice President and General Manager, PBS KIDS. "We're excited to bring this series and its endearing stories that celebrate family, community, and the power of literacy to families across the U.S."

PHOEBE & JAY has been created and executive produced by Genie Deez and Thy Than, and is produced by Phoebe & Jay Productions and Mainframe Studios. Than is supervising director, and Tanya Green is supervising producer. Mike Alcock and Mark Sinclair are series co-directors, and Aydrea Walden is head writer. Executive producers for Mainframe are Michael Hefferon and Kim Dent Wilder. Additional executive producers are Wendy Klein and Nancy Steingard.

It's significant that Deez and Than, the creators of **PHOEBE & JAY**, wanted to use positivity and humor to reinforce their message that learning about written words and using that knowledge to solve problems can be fun. "Growing up," says Deez, "we didn't see many kids who spoke or looked like us on television. We're excited to feature an awesome cast of characters dealing with similar environmental influences. I was also inspired by my own Grandma Annie, who helped raise me and my brother." Adds Than: "The inspiration for our stories comes from our lived experience, and they embody the belief that 'things don't have to be the best, to make the best of things.'"

Advisors for the series include Kelly Cartwright, Ph.D., the Spangler Distinguished Professor of Early Child

Literacy at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, who serves as lead curriculum advisor; Geraldine Oades-Sese, Ph.D., the former Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; Tim Ojetunde, M.Ed., an educator from South Los Angeles; and Cathy Tran, Ph.D., curriculum consultant in the series's writers' room.

Funding for **PHOEBE & JAY** has been provided by grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and by the U.S. Department of Education as part of the Ready To Learn Initiative, a federal program that supported the development of innovative educational television and digital media targeted to preschool and early elementary school children and their families.



"PHOEBE & JAY"

Image courtesy of Mainframe Studios and Phoebe & Jay Productions



Engagement Activities Abound for THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By the time **THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION** — the new 12-hour documentary directed by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein and David Schmidt and written by Geoffrey Ward — makes its PBS debut on Sunday, November 16, 2025, outreach and engagement activities involving a wide-range of national and local organizations, together with PBS and PBS LearningMedia, will be in full swing. The filmmakers began a major tour of the United States back in January, holding screenings and having conversations with teachers, students, and the general public. Fall dates for the tour include Saratoga/Albany, NY (on September 10), Newark, NJ (September 17), New York, NY (September 18), Chicago, IL (September 25), Detroit, MI (September 26), Philadelphia, PA (October 9), and Washington, DC (October 29). And in 2026 there will be events in Gettysburg, PA (April 3-4)

and Concord, NH (June 9). Additional markets will be added later on in 2026. To stay up to date on specific event dates and details, go to pbs.org/americanrevolution.

In addition, PBS LearningMedia, working with station partners and national and local organizations, is developing digital resources and professional learning opportunities for educators and students in grades 3-12. These classroom resources and events delve into the themes of the film, providing teaching tips, discussion questions, activity suggestions and digital content to enrich student learning and elevate teacher effectiveness and student achievement — all with the goal of making history resonate for today's youth. Support for these activities is being provided in part by grants from the Kern Family Foundation and Burns's long-time underwriter, Bank of America.



Donor Spotlight: The Hoveida Family Foundation

Supporting PBS's Science Programming

The Hoveida Family Foundation believes that science is humanity's true salvation.

Empowered by their success in business and entrepreneurship, Bahman and Becky Hoveida established the Foundation in 2020 to channel their wealth into philanthropic support for the sciences, aiming at a more sustainable future for generations to come.

The Foundation's priorities include investing in scientific causes such as engineering, science education, and public health programs that focus on the environment, energy, and health and medical research. The Hoveidas also promote science education to build the STEM pipeline to ensure that technology continues to be a force for progress. They are passionate about communicating solutions toward shaping a better and more sustainable future that each generation can build upon.

Bahman Hoveida is a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and Engineering and currently serves as President at Accurant International and Chairman at Sentient Energy. He is an electrical engineer with more than 30 years of industry experience, including his founding of Open Systems International (OSI) in 1992, where he served as President and CEO until its acquisition by Emerson Electric in 2020. He is an expert in policies and initiatives to modernize the electric grid. His passion for innovation and collaboration drives his desire to help guide the industry through the complex challenges of integrating new technologies and meeting future reliable energy demands in a sustainable way.

Becky is an executive board member of the Foundation and is also a Vice President of Accurant International, assisting with overseeing and managing various initiatives.

“We have always enjoyed the PBS progressive approach in promoting the scientific truth and educating the public without any political biases.”

—Bahman and
Becky Hoveida

The Hoveida Family Foundation awarded the PBS Foundation generous grants in 2024 and 2025 to support the six-episode series **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FUTURE** as well as Seasons 51 and 52 of the award-winning PBS science and technology series **NOVA**.

About PBS, Bahman and Becky Hoveida agree. “We have always enjoyed the PBS progressive approach in promoting the scientific truth and educating the public without any political biases. With the current political climate and elimination of federal funding, there is no better time to support PBS to continue with its mission. We are happy that our Foundation has had the opportunity to support PBS and its scientific programming.”



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By naming the PBS Foundation in your will, trust, or other gift plans, you become part of the PBS Beacon Society — a select circle of donors united by their love of PBS and desire for meaningful impact. The Beacon Society provides an exceptional opportunity to be part of a community of donors who value PBS as much as you do. By joining, you’ll receive a special welcome gift, invitations to members-only events, and, of course, the satisfaction of knowing your membership may also inspire others to give. To learn more about the Beacon Society and other ways to strengthen PBS, visit foundation.pbs.org.

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