

American[®]
MASTERS



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**THIRTEEN's *American Masters* Series Co-Produces
New Documentary about "Migrant Mother"
Photographer Dorothea Lange by Her Granddaughter,
Award-Winning Cinematographer Dyanna Taylor**

Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning *Premieres Nationwide
Friday, August 29 at 9 p.m. on PBS (check local listings)*

*Preview video and connect with more than 200 cultural icons at
pbs.org/americanmasters*

Her celebrated photograph "Migrant Mother" is one of the most recognized and arresting images in the world, a haunting portrait that came to represent the suffering of America's Great Depression. Yet few know the story, struggles and profound body of work of the woman behind the camera: Dorothea Lange (May 26, 1895 – Oct. 11, 1965).

American Masters – Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning, premiering nationwide Friday, August 29, 9-11 p.m. on PBS (check local listings), explores the life, passions and uncompromising vision of the influential photographer. Her enduring images document five turbulent decades of American history, including the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl and World War II Japanese American internment camps. Peabody- and five-time Emmy award-winning cinematographer Dyanna Taylor – the granddaughter of Lange and writer/social scientist Paul Schuster Taylor – directs and narrates this intimate ***American Masters*** documentary.

Taylor, who learned to see the visual world through her grandmother's eyes, combines family memories and journals with never-before-seen photos and film footage to bring Lange's story into sharp focus. The result is a personal documentary of the artist whose empathy for people on the margins of society challenged America to know itself.

The film features newly discovered interviews and vérité scenes with Lange from her Bay Area home studio, circa 1962-1965, including work on her unprecedented, one-woman career retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Showcasing more than 800 works by Lange, her first husband Maynard Dixon and second husband Paul Schuster Taylor combined, ***American Masters — Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning*** reveals the camera as Lange's first muse and the confluence of artists at work and in love. Explaining the impact of these relationships on Lange's life and documentary photography style, filmmaker/narrator Dyanna Taylor demonstrates the challenges of balancing artistic pursuits and family.

The documentary weaves Lange telling her own story with new interviews of family, friends and colleagues, including Lange's son Daniel Dixon; Lange's goddaughter and biographer Elizabeth Partridge; Richard Conrad, Lange's assistant for the MoMA exhibit; photographer Rondal Partridge, Lange's assistant and son of photographers Imogen Cunningham and Roi Partridge; Becky Jenkins, Maynard Dixon's granddaughter; Dr. Margot Taylor-Fanger, Paul Schuster Taylor's daughter; and many others.

"My grandmother's photographs grew out of her depth as a person. Ever since I began my career in filmmaking, I've wanted to make a film which would express the true breadth of her work and the ways she perceived the world," said Dyanna Taylor, whose past work on ***American Masters*** films includes *Ernest Hemingway: Rivers to the Sea* and *F. Scott Fitzgerald – Winter Dreams*. "During my young years, as we spent time together, she taught me how to see, to understand that nothing is as it appears at first glance."

"We are fortunate to have a family member, who is also a talented filmmaker, telling Dorothea Lange's remarkable life story in a way that no one else possibly could," said Michael Kantor, executive producer of ***American Masters***.

A DVD will be available October 21, 2014, from PBS Distribution. The film's companion book, *Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning* (Chronicle Books) by Elizabeth Partridge, is available now.

Launched in 1986 by series creator Susan Lacy, ***American Masters*** has earned 26 Emmy Awards — including nine for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series since 1999 and five for Outstanding Non-Fiction Special — 12 Peabodys, an Oscar, three Grammys, two Producers Guild Awards, and many other honors. Now in its 28th season on PBS, the series is a production of [THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC](#) for [WNET](#). WNET is the parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21, New York's public television stations, and operator of NJTV. For more than 50 years, THIRTEEN has been a partner with the tri-state community, using its rich resources to inform and inspire the passionate people of New York and the world to better understand and address the issues that challenge our diverse communities.

To take *American Masters* beyond the television broadcast and further explore the themes, stories and personalities of masters past and present, the companion website (<http://pbs.org/americanmasters>) offers streaming video of select films, interviews, photos, outtakes, essays and other resources. *American Masters* is also seen on the WORLD channel, a 24/7, full-service multicast channel featuring public television's signature nonfiction documentary, science and news programming, broadcast in nearly two-thirds of the United States.

Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning is a co-production of Raven Rouge, Inc., Katahdin Productions and THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC's *American Masters* for WNET. Dyanna Taylor is producer, writer and director. Roberta Grossman is producer. David Leach is editor. Jami Sieber and Evan Schiller are original score composers. Susan Lacy, Michael Kantor and Lisa Thomas are executive producers.

American Masters is made possible by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Rosalind P. Walter, The Blanche & Irving Laurie Foundation, Rolf and Elizabeth Rosenthal, Jack Rudin, Vital Projects Fund, The André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation, Michael & Helen Schaffer Foundation, and public television viewers. *Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning* is made possible by the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Cal Humanities.

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About WNET

As New York's flagship public media provider and the parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than 5 million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. Pioneers in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Reel 13](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the [THIRTEEN Explore iPad App](#) where users can stream PBS content for free.