


AMERICAN MASTERS



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American Masters: Itzhak

Premieres Sunday, October 14 at 10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings)

Itzhak Perlman

16-time Grammy-winning violinist & four-time Emmy-winner

[@PerlmanOfficial](https://twitter.com/PerlmanOfficial)

One of the only household names in classical music today, Itzhak Perlman, the reigning virtuoso of the violin, enjoys superstar status rarely afforded a classical musician. Beloved for his charm and humanity as well as his talent, he is treasured by audiences throughout the world who respond not only to his remarkable artistry but also to his irrepressible joy of music-making and communicating with audiences.

Having performed with every major orchestra and at venerable concert halls around the globe, Perlman was granted a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, by President Obama in 2015; a Kennedy Center Honor in 2003; a National Medal of Arts by President Clinton in 2000; and a Medal of Liberty by President Reagan in 1986. In 2009, Perlman was honored to take part in the inauguration of President Barack Obama, premiering a piece written for the occasion by John Williams alongside cellist Yo-Yo Ma, clarinetist Anthony McGill and pianist Gabriela Montero, for an audience of nearly 40 million television viewers in the United States and millions more throughout the world. In 2007, he performed at a State Dinner for Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, hosted by President George W. Bush and Mrs. Bush at the White House.

A major presence in the performing arts on television, Perlman has received four Emmy Awards, including one for the PBS documentary *Fiddling for the Future*, a film about the Perlman Music Program and his work as a teacher and conductor there. Founded in 1993, the Perlman Music Program offers unparalleled musical training to young string players through intensive summer programs and mentoring.

Perlman has entertained and enlightened millions of television viewers of all ages on popular shows including *The Late Show* with David Letterman, *Sesame Street*, *The Frugal Gourmet*, *The Tonight Show* and multiple Grammy Awards telecasts. During the 78th Annual Academy Awards in 2006, Perlman performed a live medley from the five film scores nominated in the category of Best Original Score for a worldwide audience in the hundreds of millions.

Having garnered 16 Grammy Awards over the years with his best-selling recordings, Perlman was honored in 2008 with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in the recording arts.

Born in Israel in 1945, Perlman completed his initial training at the Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. He came to New York and soon was propelled into the international arena with an appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1958. Following his studies at the Juilliard School, Perlman won the prestigious Leventritt Competition in 1964, which led to a burgeoning worldwide career.

Numerous publications and institutions have paid tribute to Itzhak Perlman for the unique place he occupies in the artistic and humanitarian fabric of our times. Harvard, Yale, Brandeis, Roosevelt, Yeshiva and Hebrew universities are among the institutions which have awarded him honorary degrees. He was awarded an honorary doctorate and a centennial medal on the occasion of Juilliard's 100th commencement ceremony in May 2005.

Alison Chernick

Director

[@ItzhaktheFilm](#)

Alison Chernick is a New York-based writer and director. In award-winning documentaries profiling major contemporary artists, Chernick has captured the thoughts and processes of this century's most prolific artists. Creating a bridge between contemporary art and film, Chernick's first feature, *The Jeff Koons Show*, premiered at the five Guggenheims, the Smithsonian and the Walker. She completed her second feature-length documentary on contemporary artist Matthew Barney, entitled *Matthew Barney: No Restraint*, which premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 2007 and was acquired for theatrical distribution. The Tate Modern commissioned her to do a film on Roy Lichtenstein to accompany his retrospective in 2012. Her short film *The Artist is Absent* on artist/designer Martin Margiela premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2015 and screened at The Museum of Modern Art. Her most recent feature, *Itzhak*, on violinist Itzhak Perlman was the opening night film at the Hamptons International Film Festival in 2017 and

shown in over 200 theaters nationwide. *Itzhak* will have its exclusive U.S. broadcast premiere on ***American Masters*** October 22 on PBS. The film is also in theaters worldwide.

Chernick is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant award (2017), a New York Women in Film and Television's Loreen Arbus Disability Awareness Grant and Woman of Her Word Audio Description Grant, a Patricia Highsmith-Plangman residency award and other honors.

Michael Kantor

American Masters Executive Producer
[@mkantorfilm](#)

Michael Kantor joined ***American Masters*** as the series' executive producer in April 2014 during its 28th season on PBS, and founded its theatrical imprint American Masters Pictures in January 2016. American Masters Pictures was represented by three films at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival: *Norman Lear: Just Another Version of You*, *Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise* and *Richard Linklater – Dream is Destiny*. Current releases include *Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story* and *Itzhak*. An Emmy and Peabody Award-winning filmmaker, Kantor has worked on projects for PBS, HBO, Bravo and 20th Century Fox. His PBS series include *Broadway: The American Musical* (hosted by Julie Andrews), *Make 'Em Laugh* (hosted by Billy Crystal) and *Superheroes: A Never-Ending Battle* (hosted by Liev Schreiber). Kantor also wrote, directed and produced the award-winning profile *American Masters: Quincy Jones: In the Pocket* and served as executive producer of *Give Me the Banjo* with Steve Martin. He is president of Almo Inc., a company that distributes the American Film Theatre series, including Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance*, starring Katharine Hepburn, and Chekhov's *Three Sisters* with Laurence Olivier. Kantor has co-authored three books, serves as a Tony nominator, and hosts the *American Masters Podcast*.

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