

KEN BURNS

The New York Times calls Ken Burns “the most accomplished documentary filmmaker of his generation.” Ken Burns’ film-career debuted with the Oscar-nominated history on the Brooklyn Bridge, one of America’s most beloved monuments. It was the beginning of a remarkable career in documentary filmmaking dedicated to exploring one deceptively simple question: “Who are we – as Americans?” Ken Burns is a spellbinding speaker who enralls lecture audiences with a fascinating view of America. In his presentation, “Sharing the American Experience,” Burns explores fundamental questions about the soul of the nation and helps us understand how our historical and cultural roots shape who we are as Americans. He gives history an immediacy that more conventional approaches lack. “We dim the great lamp of history with the mistaken notion that the only *real* history is wars, generals, and presidents,” says Burns. “Often, to get a truer sense of who we are, where we’ve been, and by extension where we’re going, we need to look at our past from the bottom up ... to the so-called ordinary people whose lives and examples animate the very best in us.” Ken Burns has since produced a string of landmark television series for Public Broadcasting; *The Civil War*, *Baseball*, *Thomas Jefferson*, and *Lewis and Clark: Journey of the Corps of Discovery*, and his most recent; *JAZZ*, a 10-part series examining this most American of art forms. His films are the highest rated series in the history of American Public Television and have been received nearly every major film and television award imaginable: the Emmy Award, Grammy Award, Peabody, and the duPont-Columbia Award, just to name a few. When commenting on his films, critics talk in terms of “epic filmmaking” and “heroic television.” Columnist George Will says “If better use has ever been made of television, I have not seen it and I do not expect to see better until Ken Burns turns his prodigious talents to his next project.”