

THE NATIONAL PARKS

America's Best Idea

A FILM BY KEN BURNS

12 X 60 HD



PBS

INTERNATIONAL

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"Majestic"—Washington Post

"There are millions upon millions of viewers who will love The National Parks. [...] And there's no reason they shouldn't."—New York Times

"Fascinating, sumptuous, a compelling tale to tell of greed, politics, violence and spirituality"—Telegraph

"The National Parks has more moments of beauty, adventurousness, eccentricity, and surprise than anything we're likely to see on television [...] You're in for a treat."—Entertainment Weekly

"It is, without a doubt, the most beautiful production ever made for broadcast television."—Tampa Tribune

The National Parks traces the history of "America's best idea" from their birth in the mid-1800s up to the present day. It is simultaneously a biography of compelling characters and a biography of the American landscape.

Filmed over the course of more than six years in some of nature's most spectacular locales—from Acadia to Yosemite, Yellowstone to the Grand Canyon, the Everglades of Florida to the Gates of the Arctic in Alaska—*The National Parks* is as much a story of people from every conceivable background—rich and poor; famous and unknown; soldiers and scientists; natives and newcomers; idealists, artists and entrepreneurs; people who were willing to devote themselves to saving some precious portion of the land they loved, and in doing so reminded their fellow citizens of the full meaning of democracy.

Among the lengthy cast of characters profiled in the series is James Mason Hutchings, one of the first people to promote Yosemite; John Muir, a religious mountain prophet who inspired generations of parks enthusiasts; George Masa, a Japanese immigrant whose photographs of the Great Smoky Mountains served in the fight to protect the region as a national park; and Stephen Mather, a wealthy businessman who used his personal fortune and genius to create a National Park Service. These historical accounts are paralleled with contemporary stories of people who continue to be transformed and inspired by the parks today. They include Gerard Baker, a Native-American park superintendent whose tribe has long considered the land sacred; Tuan Luong, a Paris-born Vietnamese rock climber and photographer who fell in love with the parks and dedicated himself to photographing all 58 national parks; and many others.

Using archival photographs, first-person accounts of historical characters, personal memories and analysis from more than 40 interviews, and breath-taking cinematography, the series chronicles the steady addition of new parks through the stories of the people who helped create them and save them from destruction.

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CREDITS

Director: Ken Burns

Writer, Producer: Dayton Duncan

A Production of Florentine Films and WETA-TV.

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