

## FACT SHEET

**TITLE:** **THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY**  
[TV-G] [Stereo TBA] [CC]

**LENGTH:** 1/60 Base and Pledge; 1/90 Pledge Event

**NOLA CODE:** BINC

**CATEGORY:** Music & Entertainment

**OFFERED:** Premium Service 21

**EXPECTED RELEASE:** February 27, 2010

**CONTRACT TERMS:** Eight releases to be completed by March 31, 2013. A release is defined as unlimited use within seven days.

**PROGRAM SUPPLIER:** Crew Neck Productions

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** Celebrated crooner Bing Crosby was an entertainment icon, capturing the hearts of fellow celebrities and fans around the world through his remarkable songs and memorable film and television appearances. **THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY** presents many of the entertainer's best performances from his classic network specials, which aired from 1954 to 1977, including recently discovered, digitally restored footage and clips that have not been seen since their original broadcast. The program seamlessly blends full-song performances and duets with enlightening interviews from his wife Kathryn, daughter Mary, film critic Leonard Maltin, television personality Regis Philbin, music legend Andy Williams, performer/musicologist Michael Feinstein and more.

**PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS:** Use above description for guide listings. A press release will be posted to PBS Connect and [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org). Color photography will be available via email and will also be posted on [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org).

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**FACT SHEET**

**COPYRIGHT DATE:** © 2010 HLC Properties Ltd.

**PRODUCTION CREDITS:** Director: John Scheinfeld  
Producer: John Scheinfeld, Robert S. Bader

**BROADCAST HISTORY:** World Television Premiere

**RELATED MERCHANDISE:** Individual viewer purchase:  
Recordings by Bing Crosby are available in retail outlets nationwide.

Pledge:  
Program DVD: "The Legendary Bing Crosby" with over 35-minutwes of bonus material; APT Exclusive CD, "Bing Sings the Great American Songbook"; related CD box set: "The Bing Crosby CBS Recordings 1954-56" (7 CDs) Limited Edition Collection.

**.WEB SITE:** [www.bingcrosby.com](http://www.bingcrosby.com)

**VIEWER INQUIRIES:** [www.APTonline.org](http://www.APTonline.org)

**COMMUNICATIONS CONTACT:** Kerry Taylor  
(617) 338-4455, ext. 121  
[Kerry\\_Taylor@APTonline.org](mailto:Kerry_Taylor@APTonline.org)

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(617) 338-4455, ext. 121  
Kerry\_Taylor@APTonline.org

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY,  
FEATURING CLIPS UNSEEN SINCE ORIGINAL BROADCAST,  
PREMIERES ON PUBLIC TELEVISION IN FEB. 2010**

*Vintage footage includes collaborations with Louis Armstrong, Fred Astaire, Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, David Bowie, Carol Burnett and more!*

BOSTON (Jan. 15, 2010) – With his smooth voice and easy-going style, legendary performer Bing Crosby crooned his way into the hearts of fellow celebrities and fans and around the world. His prolific talent across multiple entertainment platforms earned him three Academy Award nominations and one Oscar, 38 No. 1 hits, numerous gold and platinum records, and countless other honors. Now, fans will delight in the release of a new public television special devoted to the iconic entertainer, **THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY**, set to premiere in February 2010 (check local listings). Produced and directed by Emmy and Grammy nominee John Scheinfeld, the program presents many of the entertainer’s most memorable performances from his classic network specials, which aired from 1954 to 1977, including recently discovered, digitally restored footage and clips that have not been seen since their original broadcast.

The program seamlessly blends full-song solo performances and duets with enlightening interviews with Bing’s wife, Kathryn, daughter, Mary, film critic Leonard Maltin, television personality Regis Philbin, music legend Andy Williams, and performer / musicologist Michael Feinstein. Their commentary provides intimate insight into the life and career of Crosby, while the noteworthy collection of clips capture this timeless entertainer at his best ... singing, dancing, and joking around on stage.

Enjoy Crosby’s enduring solos – including “I Love Paris,” “Swanee,” “Ol Man River,” and “It Had to Be You” – and reminisce about the golden days of Hollywood with unforgettable performances featuring Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Fred Astaire, Andy Williams and more. Songs range from popular jazz standards to classic holiday numbers, including a famous collaboration with rock star David Bowie on “The Little Drummer Boy.” All of the performances are filled with Crosby’s trademark charm, effortless grace, and versatile talent.

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## THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY / 2

## PRESS RELEASE

A highlight of the program includes a special effect medley of songs showcasing three Bing Crosbys on stage at once, singing and dancing together as a talented trio. Another standout moment is a remarkable version of the most successful record of all time, "White Christmas," which blends three clips of Crosby singing the timeless classic at different points in his career.

A new Bing Crosby CD featuring rare and unreleased performances, unfamiliar to even the most ardent Crosby collectors, will be available to public television viewers exclusively through August 31, 2010 and then released in September to the general public through Collectors' Choice Music.

**THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY** is produced and directed by John Scheinfeld, who most notably directed, wrote and produced the feature film documentary *The U.S. vs. John Lennon*. Throughout this career, Scheinfeld has spearheaded multiple projects for A&E, National Geographic, network television and more. For public television he has produced *Sinatra: Classic Duets*, *Vintage Sinatra*, *Bob Hope: The Road To Laughter*, *Andy Williams: My Favorite Duets*, *Rosemary Clooney: Girl Singer*, and *Jack Paar: Smart Television*. He is known for crafting skillful and poignant retrospectives of iconic artists featuring some of their most classic and memorable performances.

**THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY** is presented by Crew Neck Productions in association with American Public Television's Premium Service, a co-production, co-financing and acquisition fund that provides fundraising specials to member stations, now in its 21st season. With the financial backing of their public television client stations, APT Premium Service has secured many of public television's most prestigious and highest-rated programs.

### **About American Public Television**

American Public Television (APT) has been a leading distributor of high-quality, top-rated programming to America's public television stations since 1961. In 2009, APT distributed 56 of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles. Among its 300 new program titles per year are prominent documentaries, dramatic series, how-to programs, children's series and classic movies, including *Spain...on the road Again*, *Rick Steves' Europe*, *Worldfocus*, *Globe Trekker*, *Simply Ming*, *America's Test Kitchen From Cook's Illustrated*, *Lidia's Italy*, *P. Allen Smith's Garden Home*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Doc Martin*, *Rosemary & Thyme*, *Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison*, *Liza's at the Palace....* and *John Denver: The Wildlife Concert*. APT also licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service. In 2006, APT launched Create™ – the TV channel featuring the best of public television's lifestyle programming. For more information about APT's programs and services, visit [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org).

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## SONG LIST

### THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY

#### ACT 1

“I Love Paris” (Bing solo)  
“Swanee” (Bing solo)  
““OI Man River” (Bing solo)  
MEDLEY (Special effect – Three Bings):  
“Pennies From Heaven”  
“June In January”  
“I’m An Old Cow Hand”  
“Play A Simple Melody”  
“Now You Has Jazz” (with Louis Armstrong)

#### ACT 2

“Mama Don’t Allow It” (with Jose Feliciano)  
“Married” (with Carol Burnett)  
“It Had To Be You” (Bing solo)  
“I Believe In You” (with Bob Hope)  
“The Oldest Established” (with Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin)

#### ACT 3

“Sing” (with Fred Astaire)  
“Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral” (Bing sings to Regis Philbin)  
“Pennies From Heaven” (Regis sings to Bing)  
“Swingin’ On A Star” (with Andy Williams)  
“Where The Blue of the Night Meets The Gold of the Day” (Bing solo)  
“The Little Drummer Boy/Peace on Earth” (with David Bowie)  
“White Christmas” (three clips of Bing at different points in career)

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### **Bing Crosby** **By Gary Giddins**

To most Americans, he was the eternal Crooner: a much celebrated and beloved performer of unparalleled popularity. Yet Bing Crosby was far more than that: He was an architect of 20th century entertainment, a force in the development of three industries that barely existed when he came into the world: recordings, motion pictures, and broadcasting. As the most successful recording artist of all time; an abiding star of movies, radio, and television; and a firm believer in the wonders of technology, he helped to transform and define the cultural life not only of the United States, but of the world.

When Harry Lillis Crosby was born, on May 3, 1903, to a working-class Catholic Irish-Anglo family with deep roots in the American Northwest, there was little reason to think he would amount to much. Though an obviously intelligent and conscientious student, his primary interests were sports (he won many swimming medals), school plays, and music--he played drums (not very well), sang, and whistled. At Gonzaga University, he decided to study law because he could think of nothing better at the time and it pleased his parents. He left law school two months before graduating.

Music lured him away. It had always been part of the Crosby household. His father, who played mandolin, led the family in song and bought one of the first phonographs in Spokane, Washington. Harry was the fourth of seven siblings. Nicknamed Bing for his love of a newspaper parody, "The Bingville Bugle," he listened to everything; he attended the vaudeville shows that came through town, regaling his friends afterward with detailed accountings of each act. He landed a backstage job when the legendary Al Jolson performed in Spokane, and studied his every gesture from the wings.

A younger boy named Al Rinker sealed Bing's fate, asking him to play drums in his five-piece dance band. When the other fellows in the group, the Musicaladers, heard him sing, they didn't much care how he played the drums. Even at that age, Bing had a mellifluous, solid baritone with good range, a steady sense of time, and a casual charm. With his uncanny memory, Bing could learn songs after hearing them once, though he never learned to read music.

After the band broke up, Bing worked locally with Rinker, who accompanied him on piano. In 1925, Al suggested that they pool their funds and drive a broken-down flivver to Los Angeles, where his sister--the not-yet-celebrated jazz singer Mildred Bailey--might get them a job. She got them an audition, which was all they needed. Bing and Al toured in one vaudeville show after another, up and

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down the West Coast, until a couple of musicians from Paul Whiteman's band chanced to hear them. Within a year after leaving Spokane, Crosby and Rinker were under contract to the most famous orchestra in the country. They were on their way to New York.

Despite a few setbacks and a too-eager embrace of big city temptations, Bing refined his style. He was inspired by his idol and lifelong friend, Louis Armstrong. Whiteman teamed Bing and Al with a pianist and songwriter, Harry Barris, calling them the Rhythm Boys: They became the first successful jazz vocal group. Yet it was Crosby's way with a song that most impressed Whiteman's arrangers and musicians, who lobbied for more Bing solos.

The word was out: Bing brought something new to American song: rhythmic excitement, virile authority, emotional candor. The best jazz musicians of the day accepted him as one of their own. He recorded with Bix Beiderbecke and Duke Ellington. Soon, every major American songwriter, among them Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Hoagy Carmichael, Johnny Mercer, Jimmy Van Heusen, and Johnny Burke, were writing songs for him.

Within a few years, the Rhythm Boys left Whiteman. Then Bing left the Rhythm Boys. Working in nightclubs and headlining in theaters, Bing was the first vocalist to use the microphone as an instrument, enabling him to communicate subtle emotions and musical nuance. When he appeared at the Coconut Grove, the movie community flocked to hear him. Producer Mack Sennett hired him to make a series of comedy shorts. William Paley, of the fledgling CBS network, gave him a daily radio show. Paramount Pictures brought him to Hollywood to star in *The Big Broadcast*; the studio quickly signed him to a three-picture deal that grew into a 20-year association.

Meanwhile, record executive Jack Kapp, using Bing's loyalty to him as a come-on, found backing to start his own company, Decca, which saved the then moribund industry by lowering the price of records. Kapp convinced Bing that he was more than a jazz or ballad singer, encouraging him to sing every kind of song and positioning him as the voice of America--home grown, unaffected, unassuming, and irresistible.

Bing's popularity really took off a year later, when NBC asked him to take over its faltering program, *The Kraft Music Hall*. Bing turned it into the archetypal broadcast variety show, a template still in use today. The public and critics loved him. At a time when radio was dominated by schooled, oratorical voices, Bing sounded like the guy next door. People trusted him: Instead of pandering to the presumed tastes of the masses, Bing combined pop, jazz, opera, and classical music. He was as much admired for his unique brand of slang, offbeat sense of

unruffled disposition as for his singing. In the dark days of the Depression, Bing was a beacon of optimism.

He became still more of a national force during World War II, touring at home and abroad, making a record number of V-Discs, selling a record number of war bonds, personally answering thousands of letters from servicemen and their families. Bing's radio show regularly attracted an audience of 50 million--an unheard of number. He starred in the Road movies, with Bob Hope, one of the most durable, profitable, and imitated comedy series in film history. In 1944, Bing won an Academy Award for his performance as Father O'Malley in Leo McCarey's *Going My Way*. At the end of the war, an army poll declared him the individual who had done the most to boost wartime morale.

The postwar years represented the peak of Bing's success. Between 1946 and 1948, he revolutionized the entertainment industry. Having recorded shows on transcription discs for soldiers, he now insisted on prerecording his radio show. In those days, all radio programs were broadcast live and NBC took him to court. Bing won and moved to ABC - which, thanks to Bing, now became a major competitor for CBS and NBC. After he produced the first prerecorded radio series, other entertainers quickly followed suit. *Billboard* called Bing's gamble the most important show business story since the invention of talking pictures.

But Bing realized that transcribed sound (recorded on large lacquered discs) did not sound as good as a live broadcast. When he heard about a former army engineer John Mullin, who was experimenting with tape-based recording, Bing offered to sponsor him. Using the early tape machines, he converted his studio to tape, allowing him to record and edit his program. As he and his engineer experimented with the new medium, they introduced such broadcasting devices as canned laughter and applause. The entire business followed his lead in turning to tape, which remained the industry standard until the advent of digitalization nearly 35 years later.

Bing continued to make hit records and movies into the 1960s, at which time he began to slow down, reserving most of his work for television, including a series of variety specials, frequent appearances as host of *The Hollywood Palace*, television movies, and an annual Christmas show that became a national tradition. He spent more time on the golf course and at the race track – devoting himself to the two sports he helped pioneer by creating the first celebrity pro-am golf tournament and taking the lead in building the Del Mar race track.

Bing's first wife, Dixie Lee, the mother of his first four sons, died in 1952. During the next few years, he was regularly gossiped about in newspaper columns as he

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romanced several of Hollywood's most beautiful women. In 1957, he married Kathryn Grant, a young actress and singer he had met on the Paramount lot. Together they had two sons and a daughter. The Crosby family became the focus of his Christmas program, and of his historic return to the stage, in 1976, performing in Los Angeles, New York, London, Oslo, and elsewhere. When he died on a golf course in Madrid, on October 14, 1977, he was mourned the world over. On that day, Major League Baseball honored him by pausing for a moment of silence at the start of the World Series game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and New York Yankees. No other entertainer has ever won the hearts of so many and held them for so long.

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## PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

### JOHN SCHEINFELD PRODUCER

Emmy and Grammy nominee John Scheinfeld is a respected writer, producer and director of documentaries, bringing a broad spectrum of experiences and interests to pop culture, music, historical and spiritual projects for broadcast, cable and theatrical exhibition.

Most notably, Scheinfeld directed, wrote and produced the feature film documentary *The U.S. vs. John Lennon*. It was an official selection of the Venice Film Festival, the Telluride Film Festival, the Toronto International Film Festival and the London Film Festival and was subsequently released in theaters worldwide and on DVD.

He has just completed production on a new feature film documentary, directing, writing and producing *We Believe*, a celebration of hope, loyalty, faith and the extraordinary love affair between a great city, Chicago, and its baseball team, the Cubs. It will be released theatrically in February 2010 followed by DVD in time for Opening Day.

In addition, Scheinfeld is completing production on *Heaven*, a compelling, inspiring and thought-provoking documentary film about how the world's foremost religions view Heaven and how certain people/groups within those religions live their lives to get there.

On the heels of a Grammy nomination for producing 2005's *Beautiful Dreamer: Brian Wilson and the Story of SMiLE*, Scheinfeld directed, wrote and produced the feature-length documentary *Who Is Harry Nilsson (And Why Is Everybody Talkin' About Him)?* The film had its world premiere at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival, and was also an official selection of the Seattle International Film Festival and Mods and Rockers Film Festival. The film will see worldwide distribution in 2010.

Also in 2006 Scheinfeld wrote, produced and directed *Electric Youth: Teen Stars in the Music Business*, a 2-hour special for A&E for which he received an Emmy nomination as writer.

Previously he wrote, produced and directed *The Divine Bette Midler*, a special 2-hour episode of A&E's award-winning BIOGRAPHY series. He also wrote, produced and directed *No Fighting in the War Room...or...Dr. Strangelove and*

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## PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

*The Nuclear Threat* for Columbia Pictures Entertainment, a compelling documentary with extraordinary commentary from Bob Woodward, Spike Lee, Roger Ebert and Robert McNamara. He also wrote, produced and directed two critically acclaimed documentaries for The National Geographic Channel, *Tomb of Jesus* and *In The Name of Heaven*.

In partnership with David Leaf, Scheinfeld produced an 8-part/four-hour documentary, *Norman Lear's TV Revolution*, distributed by Sony. With producing partner Leaf, he wrote, produced and directed a five-part miniseries for BRAVO, *The 100 Greatest Television Characters*. Also with Leaf, he wrote, produced and directed numerous retrospectives for public television (*When I Fall in Love: The One & Only Nat King Cole*, *Sinatra: Classic Duets*, *Vintage Sinatra*, *Bob Hope: The Road To Laughter*, *Andy Williams: My Favorite Duets*, *Rosemary Clooney: Girl Singer*, and *Jack Paar: Smart Television*). In 2003, he wrote and, with David Leaf, produced and directed a special two-hour installment of A&E's BIOGRAPHY series on Andy Williams, narrated by Kelsey Grammer (it was the second highest-rated BIOGRAPHY of the year).

In 2002, Scheinfeld wrote, produced and directed the MYSTERIES series for TLC (*Mysteries of The Sphinx*, *Mysteries Of Stonehenge* and *Mysteries Of Noah And The Flood* and *Mysteries Of Easter Island*).

Previously, Scheinfeld and Leaf wrote, produced and directed *The Unknown Peter Sellers* for American Movie Classics, *Jonathan Winters: On The Loose* for PBS (named Show Of The Week by PEOPLE magazine), *The Bee Gees: This Is Where I Came In* (a special 2-hour installment of A&E's BIOGRAPHY series), *Dean Martin: That's Amore*, *Jimmy Durante: The Great Schnozolla*, *Happy Holidays: The Best Of The Andy Williams Christmas Shows* for PBS and *The Unknown Marx Brothers* for The Disney Channel.

Scheinfeld also writes dramatic scripts for prime time television. He created and wrote pilots for new drama series: FBC/Warner Brothers (*In Security*), FBC/Twentieth Century Fox Television (*Windy City*), NBC/Universal Television (*Zero To Hero*), ABC/Spelling (*Stayin' Alive*), a two hour MOW/pilot for first-run syndication (*Allied Force*) and an MOW/Pilot for UPN/Paramount (*Nothing But Trouble*). He was also Executive Producer of an MOW/pilot for CBS, *Intrigue*, shot entirely on location in Europe, starring Scott Glenn.

Earlier in his career Scheinfeld was an executive with both Paramount Pictures Television and MTM Enterprises where he developed and supervised the production of pilots and new network series. He received a B.A. in Communications and Sociology from Oberlin College and holds an M.F.A. in Radio/Television/Film from Northwestern University.

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