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Program companion website:  
[www.pbs.org/independentlens/july64/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/july64/)

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## JULY '64 EXPLODES OLD NOTIONS OF THE ROCHESTER RIOT THAT TOUCHED OFF 1964'S "LONG HOT SUMMER."

Premieres on the Emmy Award-winning PBS Series *Independent Lens*

Hosted by Edie Falco

Tuesday, February 14, at 10 PM (Check Local Listings)

(San Francisco)—When Hurricane Katrina ripped the roof off New Orleans, the nation stopped in its tracks, riveted to images of the city's primarily black and poor residents left to fend for themselves. Shocked by the abject poverty and terrible conditions suddenly visible to the entire world, voices cried out against the injustice of the situation. But those conditions-poverty, lack of opportunity and poor education-and the violence they spawn are nothing new.

JULY '64 explores what happened at a street dance in Rochester, New York, one hot July night when a routine arrest took a turn for the worse and ended with the National Guard being called to a northern city for the first time during the era of the Civil Rights Movement. Released to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the event, JULY '64 uncovers new information about an often-overlooked episode in American civil rights history and uses this historic event to question why race remains a central issue in America today. As part of Black History Month on PBS, JULY '64 will be broadcast on *Independent Lens*, hosted by Edie Falco, on Tuesday, February 14, at 10 PM.

What later came to be known as the Rochester Riot touched off 1964's "long, hot summer" of riots in small and mid-sized northern cities. As did the riots in many of those cities, the three days of unrest and civil disobedience in Rochester provoked actions that reverberate to this day.

Directed by Carvin Eison and produced by Chris Christopher, JULY '64 uses a combination of historic archive footage, contemporaneous news reports and newly collected interviews to dig deep into the causes and effects of the disturbance. Analyses by Dr. James E. Turner of Cornell University and others, including national political commentator and former Gannett News reporter Jack Germond, place the events in Rochester in a national context. Among those who appear in the documentary are musicians Chuck and Gap Mangione, State Assemblyman David Gantt (NY), Mayor William A. Johnson Jr., Rev. Dr. Arthur Whitaker of Harvard University, Minister Franklin Florence, Constance Mitchell, and others.

The narrator is distinguished actor Roscoe Lee Browne an Emmy Award winner, a Tony nominee and narrator of two Oscar-nominated films.



JULY '64 features a never-before-released live recording of Duke Ellington performing "Night Creature" with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in an Arranger's Holiday Concert at the Eastman Theater in Rochester. With Ellington at the piano, "Night Creature" was recorded on August 6, 1964—less than two weeks after the events recounted in JULY '64. After learning that Ellington's 1964 summer tour schedule had included a stop in Rochester, Eison and Christopher did some digging and discovered the "Night Creature" recording in the archives of the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music Sibley Library. By working closely with David Peter Coppin, Special Collections librarian, Eison and Christopher were able to secure permission to use this special and historically unique recording as the score for JULY '64.

JULY '64 is a production of ImageWordSound, presented by Independent Television Service (ITVS), the National Black Programming Consortium and WXXI-TV, with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Additional funding was provided by the legislature of the state of New York, sponsored by Assemblyman Gantt, and the Housing Education Fund of the Rochester Area Community Foundation.

The companion website for JULY '64 ([www.pbs.org/independentlens/july64/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/july64/)) features detailed information on the film, an interview with the filmmakers and a discussion guide as well as links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, to preview clips of the film, and more.

The images found in this release are available to the press as high resolution downloadable photos with captions at [www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos/](http://www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos/)

**PAGE 1:**  
**Left:** Police grapple with man, and hit him with nightsticks.  
 Photo: University of Rochester and the Democrat & Chronicle /ITVS  
**Center:** Police escort arrested man during riot.  
 Photo: University of Rochester and the Democrat & Chronicle /ITVS  
**Right:** National Guard moving into the city.  
 Photo: University of Rochester and the Democrat & Chronicle /ITVS

**PAGE 2:**  
**Left:** Police speak to emotional man.  
 Photo: City of Rochester, New York/ITVS  
**Center:** Arthur's Pharmacy on Joseph Ave., after the riot.  
 Photo: City of Rochester, New York/ITVS  
**Right:** Producers of JULY '64, Christine Christopher and Carvin Eison.  
 Photo: Courtesy of Christine Christopher and Carvin Eison/ITVS

