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**Stanley Nelson's Acclaimed *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution* Premieres on Independent Lens
Tuesday, February 16, 2016 on PBS**

"Excellent. What is clear from this sober yet electrifying film is that the power of the Panthers was rooted in their insistence - radical then, radical still - that black lives matter." - A.O. Scott, *The New York Times*



Black Panthers from Sacramento, Free Huey Rally, Bobby Hutton Memorial Park in Oakland, CA, 1969. Credit: Courtesy of Pirkle Jones and Ruth-Marion Baruch

(San Francisco, CA) — Change was coming to America and the fault lines could no longer be ignored — cities were burning, Vietnam was exploding, and disputes raged over equality and civil rights. A new revolutionary culture was emerging and it sought to drastically transform the system. The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense would, for a short time, put itself at the vanguard of that change. Directed, produced and written by Stanley Nelson, ***The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*** premieres on *Independent Lens* Tuesday, February 16, 2016, 9:00-11:00 PM ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS.

The Black Panthers: Vanguard of The Revolution is the first feature-length documentary to explore the Black Panther Party, its significance to the broader American culture, its cultural and political awakening for black people, and the painful lessons wrought when a movement derails. Master documentarian Nelson goes straight to the source, weaving a treasure trove of rare archival footage with the voices of the people who were there: police, FBI informants, journalists, white supporters and detractors, and Black Panthers who remained loyal to the party and those who left it. Featuring Kathleen Cleaver, Jamal Joseph, and dozens of others, *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of The Revolution* is an essential history and a vibrant chronicle of this pivotal movement that gave rise to a new revolutionary culture in America.

“Stanley Nelson is one of our greatest chroniclers of American movements for justice and social change,” said Lois Vossen, *Independent Lens* executive producer. “From the ill-fated People’s Temple to the idealistic young volunteers of Freedom Summer, from the Native American uprising



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at Wounded Knee to the Black Panther movement, he brings these incendiary, game-changing movements to vivid life in a way that combines clear-eyed analysis with riveting, edge-of-your-seat storytelling.”

Visit the *Black Panthers* page on [Independent Lens](#), which features more information about the film. *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution* will be available on DVD and Blu-ray from PBS Distribution on February 16, 2016. The DVD and Blu-ray can be purchased by going to [ShopPBS.org](#) or 800-PLAY-PBS.

About the Filmmakers

Stanley Nelson (Director/Writer/Producer) is an Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker, MacArthur “Genius” Fellow, and member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Obama in August 2014. Nelson has directed and produced numerous acclaimed films, including *Freedom Summer*, *Freedom Riders*, *Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple* and *The Murder of Emmett Till*. He is also co-founder and executive director of Firelight Media, which provides support to emerging documentarians. Currently in production is *Tell Them We Are Rising: The Story of Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, the second in a series of three films Nelson will direct as part of a new multiplatform PBS series entitled *America Revisited*.

Laurens Grant (Producer) is a Peabody and three-time Emmy Award-winning producer and director who has been making films for more than a decade. Her latest documentary, *Jesse Owens*, won an Emmy for Outstanding Research and received two Emmy nominations, for Outstanding Historical - Long Form and Outstanding Music and Sound. Grant also produced *Freedom Riders*, which premiered at Sundance, won a Peabody, three Primetime Emmys, was featured on *Oprah*, and has clips featured in Lee Daniels’ film *The Butler*.

CREDITS

Directed, Produced and Written by
Producer
Editor
Associate Producer
Assistant Producer/Researcher
Assistant Editor
Cinematographers

Composer
Sound
Animators

Stanley Nelson
Laurens Grant
Aljeron Tunsil
Nicole London
Sam Aleshinloye
Rebecca Sherwood
Antonio Rossi
Rick Butler
Tom Phillips
JT Takagi
Molly Schwartz
Garry Waller



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About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 PM. The acclaimed series features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by Independent Television Service, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation: [facebook.com/independentlens](https://www.facebook.com/independentlens) and on Twitter [@IndependentLens](https://twitter.com/IndependentLens).

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