



*"Why is it that nobody understands me, yet everybody likes me?"*  
– Albert Einstein –

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PREMIERES FIRST SCRIPTED SERIES **GENIUS**

**Starring Geoffrey Rush as Albert Einstein**  
**and Executive Produced by Academy Award Winners Brian Grazer & Ron Howard**  
**Premieres Monday April 24 at 8.30pm**

**Supporting Cast Includes Emily Watson, Johnny Flynn, Samantha Colley,  
T.R. Knight, Seth Gabel and Vincent Kartheiser**

View trailer [here](#)

Though his scientific endeavours continue to inspire awe, few know the entire story of the tumultuous private life of the 20th century's most brilliant icon, Albert Einstein.

Premiering **Monday April 24 at 8.30pm (AEST)**, National Geographic's new 10-part global event series, **GENIUS** — the channel's first scripted series — reveals how Albert became Einstein, exploring his extraordinary professional achievements along with his volatile, passionate and complex personal relationships.

From Fox 21 Television Studios, whose recent "The People V. OJ Simpson: American Crime Story" dominated every TV awards contest and critics' list, Imagine Television, the producer of "24" and "Friday Night Lights," and OddLot Entertainment, who earlier this year produced the Academy Award®-nominated film "Hell or High Water," the series is based on Walter Isaacson's book "Einstein: His Life and Universe" and is executive produced by **Brian Grazer, Ron Howard** and **Gigi Pritzker**, with Howard making his scripted television directorial debut with the first episode.

Featuring Einstein's lovers, enemies and fellow scientific luminaries, the all-star cast includes **Geoffrey Rush** ("The Kings Speech," "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Shine") as the celebrated titular scientist, **Johnny Flynn** ("Clouds of Sils Maria," "Song One," "Lovesick") as Albert in the years before he rose to international acclaim and **Emily Watson** ("Theory of Everything," "The Book Thief") as his second wife — and first cousin — Elsa Einstein.

**GENIUS** tracks Einstein's rise from humble origins as an imaginative, rebellious thinker, through his struggles to be recognised by the establishment, to his global celebrity status as the man who unlocked the mysteries of the cosmos with his theory of relativity. Delving deeper, the series follows Einstein's alternately exhilarating emotions and heartlessness in dealing with his closest personal relationships, including his children, his two wives and the various women with whom he cheats on them.

The series is set against an era of global unrest over the course of two world wars. Faced with rising anti-Semitism in Europe, surveillance by spies and the potential for atomic annihilation, Einstein struggles as a husband and a father, not to mention as a man of principle, even as his own life is put in danger.

***“I have no special talents, I am only passionately curious.”***

The series begins in Einstein’s (**Flynn**) teenage years, when he opposes his father and drops out of school in Germany to go to university in Switzerland. His love of women and passion for theoretical physics blossom after he breaks the heart of his first love, Marie Winteler (**Shannon Tarbet**, “A Promise,” “Virtuoso”), to pursue his mysterious and elusive fellow physics student Mileva Maric (**Samantha Colley**, “Victoria,” “The Crucible”). Their whirlwind romance puts them at odds with teachers and leads to an unexpected pregnancy, forcing both to set aside grand dreams and Einstein to take a mundane job as a patent clerk at the urging of his close friend Michele Besso (**Seth Gabel**, “Salem,” “Fringe”). Striving in earnest to break into the scientific establishment, Einstein publishes five original papers in one year, catching the eye of many, including the scientist who will go on to become his fiercest adversary, Dr. Philipp Lenard (**Michael McElhatton**, “Game of Thrones”).

As World War I looms and his marriage begins to crumble, Einstein throws himself into an affair with his first cousin Elsa. Shifting global politics draw him into increasingly politicised scientific circles, causing friction with friends and fellow scientists like Fritz Haber (**Richard Topol**, “Covert Affairs,” “Elementary”) and Max Planck (**Ralph Brown**, “Alien 3,” “TURN: Washington’s Spies”). Taking a moral stand, Einstein refuses to support Germany’s war effort. When war descends and borders are shut down, he is prevented from going to his sons in Switzerland when they need him most.

***“I never think of the future. It comes soon enough.”***

Einstein’s (**Rush**) fortunes rise after the war when relativity is proven right. On the verge of becoming an overnight celebrity, Elsa (**Watson**) demands he marry her to avoid the scandal such scrutiny will bring. Fighting with Mileva for a divorce, Einstein also has to contend with the roller coaster of fame. After a tense interview with consulate official Raymond Geist (**Vincent Kartheiser**, “Mad Men,” “Saints & Strangers”), he escapes a rising tide of anti-Semitism and seeks sanctuary in the United States as an immigrant.

Living and teaching in Princeton, New Jersey, Einstein continues to be besieged on all sides. His fractious relationship with his children and grandchildren weighs on him, he ends up in bed with Russian spy Margarita Konenkova (**Ania Bukstein**, “Game of Thrones”) and must cope with J. Edgar Hoover’s (**T.R. Knight**, “Grey’s Anatomy”) personal vendetta to bring him down. He also faces possibly his biggest challenge ever: the pressure to set aside his lifelong pacifism in the hopes of stopping Hitler’s conquest of Europe. While his journey is far from easy, Einstein still manages to find hope and inspiration before his death, in the form of a young girl learning to understand the world. As Einstein famously said, “The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”

Filmed in Prague, Czech Republic, where Einstein lived and taught early in his career, the series also features a raft of scientific superstars from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including Marie and Pierre Curie, Wilhelm Rontgen, Carl Jung, Werner Heisenberg and more. **GENIUS** premieres globally in April on National Geographic in 171 countries and 45 languages.

**GENIUS** is executive produced by Imagine’s Brian Grazer, Ron Howard and Francie Calfo, and co-produced by Anna Culp; showrunner, executive producer and writer is Ken Biller; from OddLot Entertainment, Gigi Pritzker and Rachel Shane are executive producers and Melissa Rucker is co-producer; Sam Sokolow and Jeff Cooney from EUE/Sokolow are also executive producers. Writer Noah Pink, who adapted the series for the screen, is co-executive producer. For National Geographic, Carolyn G. Bernstein is executive vice president and head of global scripted development and production. The series is produced by Fox 21 Television Studios, Imagine Television and OddLot Entertainment.

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### **About National Geographic Partners LLC**

National Geographic Partners LLC (NGP), a joint venture between National Geographic and 21st Century Fox, is committed to bringing the world premium science, adventure and exploration content across an unrivaled portfolio of media assets. NGP combines the global National Geographic television channels (National Geographic Channel, Nat Geo Wild, Nat Geo Mundo, Nat Geo People) with National Geographic's media and consumer-oriented assets, including National Geographic magazines; National Geographic studios; related digital and social media platforms; books; maps; children's media; and ancillary activities that include travel, global experiences and events, archival sales, licensing and e-commerce businesses. Furthering knowledge and understanding of the world has been the core purpose of National Geographic for 128 years, and now it is committed to going deeper, pushing boundaries, going further for consumers... all while reaching over 730 million people around the world in 171 countries and 45 languages every month. NGP returns 27 percent of its proceeds to the non-profit National Geographic Society to fund work in the areas of science, exploration, conservation and education. For more information visit natgeotv.com or nationalgeographic.com.

### **About Fox 21 Television Studios**

Fox 21 Television Studios is a production unit housed within Fox Television Group devoted to making creatively ambitious scripted and unscripted series for all distribution platforms. Fox 21 Television Studios is responsible for the for the Emmy and Golden Globe-winning sensation from Ryan Murphy, Nina Jacobson and Brad Simpson "The People V. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story" (with FX Productions), the Emmy and Golden Globe winning "Homeland," starring Claire Danes and Mandy Patinkin, the critically acclaimed "The Americans" (with FX Productions) starring Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell, "Dice," from Scot Armstrong, Sean Furst, Bryan Furst, Richard Shepard, Bruce Rubenstein and Andrew Dice Clay, "Queen of the South," executive produced by David T. Friendly and Natalie Chaidez, and "Chance" from Kem Nunn, Alexandra Cunningham, Lenny Abrahamson, Michael London, and Brian Grazer. Upcoming series include "Genius" (with Imagine, OddLot Entertainment and EUE/Sokolow) from Ron Howard, Brian Grazer, Francie Calfo, Gigi Pritzker, Rachel Shane, Sam Sokolow, Jeff Cooney, Ken Biller and Noah Pink, "Seven Seconds" from Veena Sud, and Ryan Murphy's latest anthology, "FEUD: Bette and Joan," starring Oscar winners Jessica Lange and Susan Sarandon.

### **About Imagine Entertainment**

Imagine Entertainment was founded in 1986 by Ron Howard and Brian Grazer to create independently produced feature films, television programs and other original programming. Imagine Entertainment has been honored with more than 60 prestigious awards including 10 Academy Awards and 42 Emmy® awards. Past productions include the Academy Award Best Picture winner *A Beautiful Mind*, as well as Grammy Award Best Film winner *The Beatles: Eight Days A Week – The Touring Years*. Additional films *Get on Up*, *Rush*, *J. Edgar*, *Frost/Nixon*, *American Gangster*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *Apollo 13*, *8 Mile*, *Liar, Liar*, *Backdraft*, and *Parenthood* to name a few. Upcoming films include *Lowriders*, *The Dark Tower*, and *American Made*. Television productions include Fox's *Empire* and 24 franchise, Nat Geo's *MARS* and *Breakthrough*, NBC's *Parenthood*, NBC's *Friday Night Lights*, Fox's and Netflix's *Arrested Development*, as well as HBO's *From the Earth to the Moon*, for which Howard and Grazer won the Emmy® for Outstanding Mini-Series. Upcoming television productions include Fox's *Shots Fired* and Nat Geo's *Genius*. Ron Howard and Brian Grazer began their collaboration in 1985 with the hit comedies *Night Shift* and *Splash*, and continue to run Imagine Entertainment as chairmen.

### **About OddLot Entertainment**

Founded in 2001 by producer Gigi Pritzker, OddLot Entertainment is a film and television production company that develops, produces, finances and arranges distribution for quality commercial properties for the U.S. and international markets. OddLot teams with first-class filmmakers and provides them with resources that go far beyond equity investment to produce a range of high-quality films. Most recently, OddLot produced the Academy Award®-nominated film *HELL OR HIGH WATER* written by Taylor Sheridan and starring Jeff Bridges, Chris Pine and Ben Foster, for CBS Films. OddLot's past releases include the 2010 Academy Award®-nominated drama *RABBIT HOLE* starring Nicole Kidman; *THE WAY WAY BACK* starring Steve Carell; "Drive" starring Ryan Gosling; the futuristic sci-fi film *ENDER'S GAME*; and Jon Stewart's directorial debut, *ROSEWATER*. OddLot CEO Gigi Pritzker is part of a consortium that launched the film studio STX Entertainment founded by producer Robert Simonds. OddLot has a preferential co-producing, financing and development deal with STX. The company is based in Los Angeles, California and is a subsidiary of Madison Wells Media, a diversified premium content company.

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