

American MASTERS

thirteen
WNET NEW YORK

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press information



PBS

AMERICAN MASTERS
is produced for PBS
by Thirteen/WNET
New York

Production Bios

AMERICAN MASTERS Pete Seeger: The Power of Song

JIM BROWN

Director

Three-time Emmy Award-winning producer/director Jim Brown is responsible for some of the most popular and critically acclaimed television documentary programs of the last two decades. He heads Jim Brown Productions, LLC and Ginger Group Productions, Inc., film and television production companies specializing in cultural and social documentaries, concerts, home videos, DVDs, CDs, records and electronic press kits. His production companies have produced award-winning television programs for ABC, Fox, Discovery, Travel Channel, Disney Channel, Showtime, PBS, Nickelodeon, Bravo, Universal Music Group, Sony BMG, Rounder Records, Warner Music/Rhino Records, Universal Studios, Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus, Walt Disney's World on Ice, Children's Television Workshop, the Country Music Hall of Fame, Experience Music Project, Concert Productions International and Live Nation.

Currently, Brown is producing and directing a biographical documentary for theatrical release on world-renowned actor/musician/political activist Harry Belafonte and a series of films for the Grammy Museum now under construction in Los Angeles.

Pete Seeger: The Power of Song garnered several four-star reviews during its theatrical release and was included on Roger Ebert's list of best documentaries of 2007. Other recent productions include *A Tribute to the Teachers of America*, an all-star concert special for PBS (2007); *American Roots Music: Chicago* for WTTW (2006); *Isn't This a Time!*, a feature documentary centering around a historic concert at Carnegie Hall (2005); *Peter, Paul and Mary, Carry it On: A Musical Legacy*, a record-breaking fundraising special for PBS and a DVD release by Warner Brothers; *The Three Pickers* for PBS's *Great Performances* series and a CD and DVD release by Rounder Records nominated for two Grammy Awards; *American Roots Music: A Portrait of Marc and Ann Savoy* for Louisiana Public Broadcasting (2002); *American Roots Music*, a four-part series that aired on PBS in 2001 (nominated for two Emmy Awards; First Place Music Documentary, U.S. International Film and Video Festival; Best Historical Recording, Association for Independent Music; gold-selling home video/DVD); and *An Evening with Harry Belafonte and Friends* for PBS (1997). Brown also produced and directed 10 hour-long specials on luxury homes and super yachts for the Travel Channel between 2003 and the present.

Other music specials, concerts and musical documentaries produced and directed by Brown include *In the Spotlight with Mary Chapin Carpenter*; *Child of Mine: Songs To Our Children*, Cable Ace Award Winner for Best Music Special; the Emmy Award-winning *We Shall Overcome: Songs of the Civil War*, co-produced with Ken Burns; *A Vision Shared: A Tribute to Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly*,

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cited by *TV Guide* as the best music special of the year; and *The Weavers: Wasn't That a Time!* (Emmy Award and numerous international awards), released theatrically by United Artists, televised in 16 countries and broadcast regularly on PBS over a 12-year period.

Brown has worked with countless musicians, including Harry Belafonte, B.B. King, Keith Richards, Bonnie Raitt, Earl Scruggs, Odetta, Tom Paxton, Michael Bolton, Bruce Springsteen, Johnny Cash, Mary Chapin Carpenter, David Sanborn, Carole King, Gloria Estefan, John Mellencamp, Tony Bennett, U2, Flaco Jimenez, Keb' Mo', All 4 One, Little Richard, Buddy Guy, Robert Junior Lockwood, James Cotton, Dionne Warwick, Randy Travis, Willie Nelson, Kathy Mattea, Dwight Yoakum, Mark Knopfler, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson, Merle Haggard, Hank Williams Jr., Chet Atkins, Ricky Skaggs, Emmylou Harris, Trisha Yearwood, Wynonna Judd, Ralph Stanley, Gillian Welch, Doc Watson, Robert Mirabal, Floyd Westerman, Robbie Robertson, Dave Grusin, John and Bucky Pizzarelli, Edwin Hawkins, Mavis Staples, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Cissy Houston, Peter, Paul & Mary, Judy Collins, Kate and Anna McGarrigle, Travis Tritt, Taj Mahal, Joan Baez, Richie Havens, Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Bethany Yarrow and Rufus Cappadocia, Holly Near, Maura O'Connell, Ellis and Jackson Marsalis and Jon Secada. Brown has also worked with notable luminaries such as presidents Clinton, Bush, Ford and Carter; Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, President Hugo Chavez, Colin Powell, Danny Glover, Bill Cosby, Rosie O'Donnell, Whoopi Goldberg, Tim Robbins, Cynthia Nixon, Diahann Carroll, John Travolta, Oprah Winfrey, Richard Dreyfus, Jimmy Smits, Elmo and Big Bird of *Sesame Street* and Brooke Shields.

Brown is also an associate professor at New York University's Kanbar Institute of Film and Television at Tisch School of the Arts.

MICHAEL COHL

Producer

Michael Cohl is responsible for four of the five top-grossing concert tours of all time and is the world's pre-eminent tour promoter, retail marketer and producer. Launching his career as a local concert promoter in 1969, four years later Cohl founded Concert Productions International and quickly became a driving force on the Canadian music scene, gaining expertise in almost all facets of entertainment – music, theater, sports, and multimedia.

As a prolific producer and innovator of film and television programming, tens of thousands of global concerts as well as tour and branded merchandise for more than 150 artists, Cohl's current and past clients include The Rolling Stones, U2, Pink Floyd, Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Stevie Wonder, Prince, The Who, Genesis and Crosby Stills Nash & Young. Cohl has created or produced a range of events, including ABC's *Wide World of Sports* professional figure skating championships; The Jackson's 1984 *Victory* tour featuring Michael Jackson; the *First Choice Rocks* pay TV series; IMAX's most successful concert film, *Rolling Stones Live at the Max*; and the world's highest-selling music DVD, *Rolling Stones Four Flicks*.

In 1989, Cohl developed the concept of "package" touring with the Stones' *Steel Wheels* tour. He also assisted in the development and exploitation of the lucrative aftermarket – books, television specials, videos, films, and merchandise. This format led to Cohl receiving the promoter of the year award several times from various trade publications and industry associations. In 2002, he received Juno's Walt Grealis Special Achievement Award, presented to Canadian music industry builders; the same year he was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame. In November

2004, he was the first recipient of *Billboard* magazine's Backstage Pass Legend of Live Award, given to an individual who has significantly impacted the touring industry in a lasting way. The tours themselves have also garnered many other industry staging and production awards. In 2005, Cohl received a star on Canada's Walk of Fame as well as his first Tony Award as a co-producer of the year's Best Musical, Monty Python's *Spamalot*.

Concurrent to concert touring, Cohl was involved with several theatrical events, including the Toronto productions of *The Lion King*, *Hairspray*, *The Producers*, and Broadway's *La Cage Aux Folles*. His recent theatrical portfolio includes the West End's *The Woman in White* and the stage production of *The Lord of the Rings* that opened in London last spring.

At the 2003 conclusion of the Stones' tour, *40 Licks*, Cohl launched his music DVD label and its first title, *Rolling Stones Four Flicks*, collected multiple artistic and sales awards. In 2004, he produced the documentary, *Isn't This a Time!*, featuring The Weavers, Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie. He also produced documentaries on music legends Pete Seeger and Harry Belafonte.

Cohl also brought Canada on board as a participant in the *Live 8* global series of simultaneous day-long concerts. Promoted by Cohl, the Stones' 2005 *A Bigger Bang* world tour offered fans the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the show from onstage boxes built directly into the stadium stage set. A highlight of the tour was two performances by the band at the Beacon Theatre in New York City, which were filmed by Academy Award-winning director Martin Scorsese for the upcoming feature *Shine a Light*, which Cohl is producing.

In 2006, Cohl also produced tours for The Who and Barbra Streisand. In 2007, the Stones released the *Biggest Bang* DVD, a four-disc set produced by the band and Cohl. In addition, Cohl is co-producing the theatrical sensation *Fuerzabruta*, from the Argentinean creators of *De La Guarda*. This September, Cohl will promote Genesis' tour *Turn it on Again*, their first in 15 years.

WILLIAM EIGEN

Producer

William Eigen is a film producer, award-winning writer and music event promoter. For the past 35 years, he has instituted cross-cultural programs with universities and colleges around the country to bring master musicians from the far corners of the world to concert in an effort to understand and appreciate the world language of music. He is an award-winning screenplay writer (McKnight Foundation Fellow) as well as novelist and travel writer. He has produced several feature films, including *Isn't This A Time!* (2005), *Pete Seeger: The Power of Song* (2007) and the soon-to-be released *The Secret Life of Harry Belafonte* (2008).

SUSAN LACY

Series Creator and Executive Producer

Susan Lacy has been an award-winning originator of primetime public television programs since 1979. As the creator and executive producer of *AMERICAN MASTERS*, she has been responsible for the production and national broadcast of more than 140 documentary films about our country's artistic and cultural giants, those who have made an indelible impact on the American landscape. Now in its 21st season on PBS, *AMERICAN MASTERS* has garnered unprecedented awards and is consistently recognized by television critics as "the best biographical series ever to appear on American television."

In addition to her producing role, Lacy is an award-winning filmmaker. Her 2004 *Judy Garland: By Myself* earned her an Emmy Award for writing and an Emmy nomination for directing. She wrote, directed and produced *Joni Mitchell: Woman of Heart and Mind* (IDA nomination for Outstanding Documentary) and *Leonard Bernstein: Reaching for the Note* (Emmy Award and DGA nomination). She produced the Peabody Award-winning *Paul Simon: Born at the Right Time*, directed and produced *Rod Serling: Submitted for Your Approval*, directed and produced *Lena Horne: In Her Own Voice* and was one of the producers on the widely acclaimed *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan* – all for *AMERICAN MASTERS*.

Under her leadership, *AMERICAN MASTERS* received the Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2004. Lacy is also the recipient of five Primetime Emmys for *Lillian Gish: The Actor's Life for Me*, *Broadway's Dreamers: The Legacy of The Group Theater*, *Unknown Chaplin*, *Buster Keaton: A Hard Act to Follow*, and *Edward R. Murrow: This Reporter*. In addition to eight Peabody awards for *John Hammond: From Bessie Smith to Bruce Springsteen*, *Unknown Chaplin*, *Buster Keaton: A Hard Act to Follow*, *Paul Simon: Born at the Right Time*, *Alexander Calder*, *F. Scott Fitzgerald: Winter Dreams*, *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan*, and *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*, she received Grammy awards for *Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Heart* and *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan*, 31 additional Emmy nominations and three Oscar nominations. *No Direction Home* was also honored with the 2007 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for excellence in broadcast journalism.

Lacy's career in public television began in 1979, as deputy director of performance programs at Thirteen/WNET New York. She was senior program executive for *GREAT PERFORMANCES* and worked as director of program development with *THE AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE*, where she was a founding member. Lacy then ran the East Coast office of Robert Redford's Sundance Institute from 1984 to 1987. She was a consulting producer at Time-Life Video during the launch of Time-Warner's new initiatives in long-form documentary production. Lacy also led programs at both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Lacy was one of the select 2005 honorees at the Museum of Television & Radio's "She Made It" event, which recognized 50 exceptional women who have made an indelible impact on the media landscape. She serves on the board of governors of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and is a trustee of the Independent Documentary Association. Lacy is a member of the Directors Guild of America, the Writers Guild of America, the Independent Features Project and New York Women in Film & Television. She has a BA in American Studies from the University of Virginia, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and an MA in American Studies from George Washington University. She was a Graduate Teaching Fellow, a Smithsonian Fellow and completed a residency at the American Academy in Rome. In 1994, she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Long Island University and in 1996, she was named Distinguished Alumnus of the Year at Mary Washington College, the women's college of the University of Virginia.

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