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WAY OF THE BLUES DOCUMENTARY TELEVISION SERIES

1. INTRODUCTION

Produced by EMMY AWARD winning Co-creators of READING RAINBOW (Cecily Truett Lancit, Larry Lancit, and Lynne Brenner Ganek), WAY OF THE BLUES is a magazine format documentary series consisting of 13 one-hour programs that will, for the first time, provide a comprehensive chronological, historical and cultural overview of America's most unique and prolific music genre: THE BLUES. Hosted on locations across the country by EMMY AWARD winning film and tv actor, director, and producer, LEVAR BURTON, WAY OF THE BLUES will take viewers on an adventurous musical journey. The series will transport audiences from past to present to discover how and why The Blues became the roots of today's American musical genres: Gospel, Jazz, Rock'n'Roll, Country, Soul, Motown, Hip Hop and Rap.



2. NOT A STANDARD BLUES TREATMENT

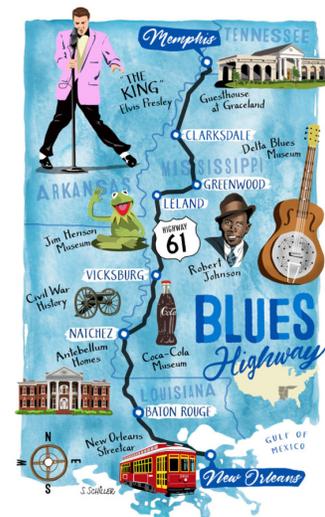
WAY OF THE BLUES is more than just a well-researched historical sequence of events. It is an examination of the human spirit, a deeply felt emotional experience steeped in the culture, the places, and the people who lived the music and still live it today. It carries a message of survival, a distinctly American story with beginnings as relevant in today's times as it was when it started in the cotton fields of the Delta.

This emotional lens on American history is both disturbing and uplifting; both painful and beautiful. Producers hope that all who view this series have been so engaged as to be brought to a new place of understanding of the African American experience, the boundless life force of human creativity, and the resilience of the human spirit; further, that such understanding may lead to a greater acceptance of our American diversity, our uniquely American music, and greater sense of unity in the shared American identity.

WAY OF THE BLUES differs from prior productions about The Blues in that LeVar Burton is a personal guide for the viewer, offering an opportunity for vicarious emotional and sensory experiences that are, quite simply, entertaining. Emulating the curiosity and engagement of Anthony Bourdain, combined with the archival imagery and narrative style of Ken Burns, WAY OF THE BLUES' magazine format will provide rich imagery and constant music. Cooking an authentic meal in a slave shack over a wood stove with an African American chef; hearing the poetry of enslaved women put to music by contemporary musician Rihannon Giddens; learning how to make a cigar box banjo or diddleybow; hopping a train car north, or a riverboat south just as early Blues musicians did -- such segments blend in to the program content with a sense of curiosity and a feeling of being immersed in the times and places and with people of The Blues. Viewers will be engaged and involved in the many dimensions of The Blues in a curious, creative and unpredictable journey with travel companion and friend, LeVar Burton.



Of course the series will also depend on historical images, archival recordings and old film clips; interviews with Blues greats, past and present; celebrity appearances and live performances; dramatic re-enactments – all will be artfully combined to tell the story of our nation's greatest indigenous music and the extraordinary musicians behind it. Starting in the Delta and spreading up and down the Mississippi, LeVar will explore THE BLUES cities: Clarksdale, MS, Memphis, St. Louis, New Orleans, Chicago, New York and many hoots and hollows in between. A special animated mapping technique will be used consistently throughout the series to help viewers understand the “where and the how” of The Blues evolution and its influences on who we are as a musical nation today.



3. PROJECT SCOPE AND EPISODE CONTENT

Each of the 1-hour programs in the 13 part series represents a continuum of carefully researched and sequenced Blues history; the series is guided by this historical infrastructure and brought to life by the many side trips and segments that enrich and deepen the meaning of the timeline. Program titles include:

1. SERIES INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW: WHAT ARE THE BLUES AND WHY WE ARE HERE. This becomes the opening prelude to “FROM FREEDOM IN AFRICA TO SLAVERY BLUES”
2. “PLANTATION MUSIC TO MUSICAL GUMBO”

3. "THE MUSIC MOVES ACROSS THE NATION"
4. "RADIO SINGS THE BLUES"
5. "TALES OF THE RIVERSIDE HOTEL"
6. "JUKE JOINTS AND BARBER SHOPS"
7. "GREENWICH VILLAGE AND NEW YORK CITY BLUES 1920'S-1960'S"
8. "FROM COUNTRY BLUES TO CITY BLUES 1930'S TO 1950'S"
9. "CITY BLUES to ROCK & ROLL, SOUL and SOUTHERN ROCK 1950's-1970's"
10. "THE BLUES GO INTERNATIONAL"
11. "DECLINE AND REVIVAL OF THE BLUES, 1970s to 1985"
12. "CONTEMPORARY URBAN BLUES"
13. "KEEPING THE BLUES ALIVE: FUTURE OF THE BLUES"

4. PRESTIGIOUS PARTNERS

A. A CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY HEINZ COLLEGE/COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS CAPSTONE PROJECT IN THE MASTER OF ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM based in Los Angeles, CA.

Producers will collaborate with program leaders and students to develop research and analytic studies to inform development strategies. These may include audience data, platform choices



**Master of
Entertainment
Industry
Management**

and optimization, market and industry demand, format options and distribution approaches. Students will present their findings to selected Entertainment Industry leaders from the world's leading media companies. This extremely valuable strategic assistance will assist in placing

WAY OF THE BLUES as a highly competitive and noteworthy project with access to entertainment industry thought leaders and decision makers.



B. GROUND ZERO BLUES CLUB Clarksdale, MS. One of the top Blues venues in the world, GZBC has been recognized universally as an iconic Delta destination transporting visitors with its food, ambience and performances by the world's leading Blues performers. GZBC, owned by Bill Lockett and actor Morgan Freeman, will be the primary live performance venue for the series.

- C. **THE BLUES FOUNDATION.** A significant relationship agreement with The Blues Foundation will provide support and guidance on overall content approach, including further development of the Board of Advisors to include preeminent scholars, institutional leaders, producers and writers on The Blues. WAY OF THE BLUES will have a fulsome collaboration with The Blues Foundation to assist with recommendations for both recognized and emerging artists, audience testing and feedback, and overall guidance and wisdom in order to earn their prestigious imprimatur.

The Blues Foundation



5. Executive Production Team



A. Sherri G. Sneed
Producer/Writer/Consultant

...known as the **director of possibilities** is a universe of energy unto herself. Where you see just an idea, she sees unlimited potential and translates that potential into creative opportunities. Working with Sherri is like riding on a magic carpet of possibilities. Combining tenacity, humor, insight, and 30 years of experience (and contacts!) in the worlds of entertainment, business, and finance, Sherri G. Sneed has proven to be an invaluable asset to any project!

After a successful career on Wall Street, Ms. Sneed forged her path in the television industry managing content from conception through delivery on the Lifetime TV show “Doctor’s Sunday”. Credits include; Producer on “The View” ABC-TV, Associate Producer “The Ricki Lake Show” Syndication, and Manager of Rights & Clearances on “Martin” Fox Broadcasting Company. Feature Film credits from Production Coordinator to Executive Producer; “Jungle Fever”, “Malcolm X”, “Poetic Justice”, “Out of Sync”, “Once Upon a Time...When We Were Colored”, “Spirit Lost” and “Celeste Dreams”. Sherri has also produced a series of Special Events & Award Shows for Ebony Magazine.

As a Development & Production Executive Sherri had the privilege of being

impactful as:

Project Director, The City of Los Angeles John Singleton Short Film Competition

President, NetNoir Digital Entertainment

President, Magic Johnson Entertainment

Vice President Original Programming, Tim Reid Productions

Vice President of Production, United Image Entertainment

Director of Business Affairs, John Singleton/New Deal Production

During the current global pandemic of 2020, Sherri has written her first screenplay, developing an adult socio-political animated series and is the Executive Producer of the Instagram Live Show “He Said...She Said” with hosts Bill Bellamy & Star Jones that streams Mondays 6pm PT, 9pm ET and archived on IGTV.

With a keen eye for details, tech savvy knowledge, integrity and discretion, Sherri is fondly known for her love of research, writing skills, innovative thinking and proactive solutions rising to the occasion to get the job done with a pleasant demeanor!



B. Henry Neal Woods
Executive Producer

Mr. Woods is the leader of the H N Woods Consultancy and former President of HNW International, Inc., a multi-faceted business and economic development organization firm specializing in urban neighborhood revitalization, business development and community development.

He successfully completed joint ventures in Chicago, Detroit, New Orleans, Tampa, and Los Angeles. Additionally, Mr. Woods consulted with the Atlanta Economic Development Corporation to provide expertise that culminated in the development of the Magic Johnson Theater and revised Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Inner-City Games with the City of Atlanta.

Mr. Woods served over 10 years within the banking industry, from Loan Officer, Assistant Branch Manager to Business Development Officer, for such institutions as United California Bank, Community Bank and Family Savings Bank. Mr. Woods has received numerous honors and awards, including Who's Who Among Black Americans – 1994, Rebuild L.A. Award – 1994, Who's Who in California – 1986, Outstanding Young Man in America – 1986, as well as a host of commendations from former California Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy, former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, former Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell, and former State Senator and now Congresswoman Diane Watson. Mr. Woods was an honor graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from Mississippi Valley State University. He also attended University of California at Los Angeles Extension (UCLA) and American Institute of Banking.

Mr. Woods is expert at building relationships between parties to expedite and successfully complete a variety of projects in the media business. His contacts and relationships are varied and wide ranging, resulting in the formation of working partnerships beneficial to parties with common interests.