

VH1 Classic And VH1 Soul To Air “Wattstax” In Honor Of Isaac Hayes

NEW YORK, August 12, 2008 –“ VH1 Classic and VH1 Soul will air The Golden Globe nominated documentary “Wattstax” on Wednesday, August 13 at 8:00PM* in honor of soul singer Issac Hayes. Filmmaker Mel Stuart captured the August 20, 1972 Wattstax music festival known as “the black Woodstock” at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum in this epochal documentary. Memphis’s Stax Records commemorated the seventh anniversary of the Watts riots with this festival featuring powerful performances by Isaac Hayes, Albert King, Rufus and Carla Thomas, the Staple Singers, the Emotions, the Bar-Kays, and other greats of soul, R&B, and gospel—plus biting humor from a then little-known comedian Richard Pryor.

Wattstax brought out a rapt audience of 100,000 in a celebration of music, soul and the 1970’s “black is beautiful movement.” The documentary features exclusive interviews with Richard Pryor and Ted Lange among others and told the story of the 70’s Black experience through topical street interviews throughout Watts. The documentary closes with one of the most seminal moments in soul history, the late Issac Hayes performance of his classics “Theme from Shaft,” “Soulsville” and “Rolling Down A Mountain.”

VH1 Soul’s Isaac Hayes Tribute programming beginning Wednesday, August 13 – Sunday, August 17 will include:

• WATTSTAX –“ airs on Wednesday, August 13, Friday, August 15 and Sunday, August 17 at 8PM* each night

• SOUL DEEP “Southern Soul” – airs on August 13, 15 and 17 at 8PM* each night 2PM* and 10PM* each night

• Isaac Hayes video block following both programs

SOUL DEEP "SOUTHERN SOUL":

In the summer of 1967, Otis Redding performed in front of a 200,000-strong, mainly white, crowd at the Monterey Pop Festival. Five years after walking into Stax Records studio in Memphis as an unknown singer, he was now breaking into the mass white market and seducing its counter-culture without diluting his sound. This episode follows both Redding's rise, as he became the embodiment of Sixties soul music, and that of Stax Records as it crossed the racial divide at a time of segregation.

The sound of the South began to influence other labels. New York-based Atlantic Records' Jerry Wexler would bring his musicians south whenever they needed inspiration. Wilson Pickett's huge hit "In the Midnight Hour" resulted from a night in the Lorraine Motel in Memphis with Stax songwriter Steve Cropper and a bottle of "Jack". Once Wexler teamed performers Sam and Dave up with Stax writers Isaac Hayes and David Porter, classic hits emerged from their collaborations including "Soul Man" and "Hold On, I'm Comin'". A new black sound was on its way!

*All Times ET/PT