

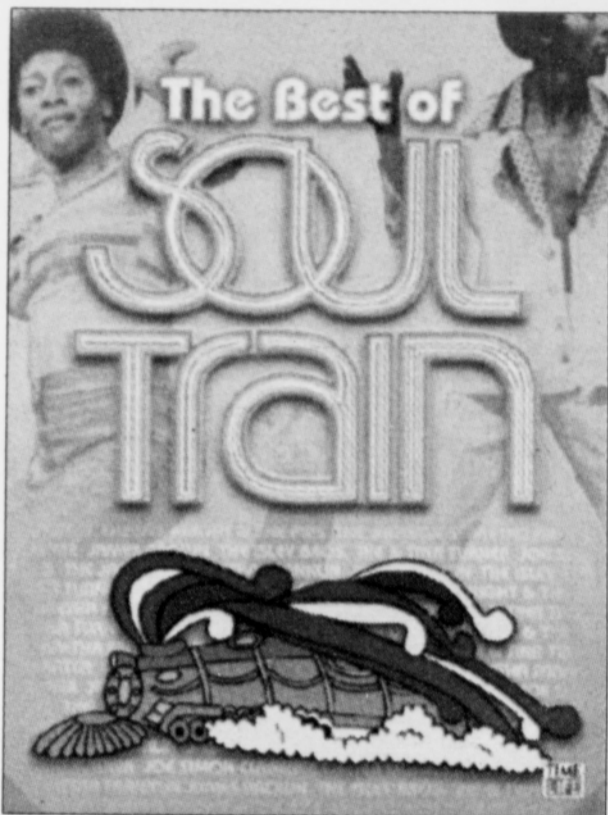
Best of Soul Train

Celebrating 40th anniversary

Time Life commemorates the 40th Anniversary of Soul Train with "The Best of Soul Train" 3-DVD boxed set hitting retail store Aug. 31 for the very first time.

The release celebrates the culturally significant American institution that became a national launch pad for showcasing the latest names in soul music, outrageous fashion and hip dances - making Soul music a mainstream global genre.

"The Best of Soul Train" presents an amazing and rare collection of performances from the Soul Train archives, many of which haven't been seen in over 30 years, including exclusive performances from Soul Train's most acclaimed era (1971 - 1979) by The Jackson Five, Marvin Gaye, The O'Jays, Smokey Robinson, Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Sly & The Family Stone and more.



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'Roots' Producer Made TV History

Diversity was at heart of titan's work

(AP)--David L. Wolper, whose landmark 1977 miniseries "Roots" engrossed the nation with its saga of an American family descended from an African slave, has died. He was 82.

Wolper also was known for producing multicultural TV sitcom hits like "Welcome Back, Kotter" and "Chico and the Man."

During his lengthy career, he produced the children's classic "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" and demonstrated his showman instincts with New York's 1986 extravaganza celebrating the Statue of Liberty centennial and the 1984 Olympic Games ceremonies in Los Angeles.

But "Roots," based on the best seller by Alex Haley, was perhaps his best-known accomplishment. The ABC series was seen in whole or part by 130 million people — more than half the country — when it ran for eight nights in 1977.

The miniseries chronicling Kunta Kinte, enslaved as a teenager in 18th-century West Africa to be sold in America, and his descendants represented a different kind of family story, one told from the black perspective. It was based on Haley's novel, a Pulitzer Prize-winner that mixed accounts of his own ancestors with fiction.

Among the large cast were John Amos, Ben Vereen, Leslie Uggams, Cicely Tyson, Olivia



David L. Wolper

Cole, Madge Sinclair and Richard Roundtree. Newcomer LeVar Burton, who played Kinte as a youth, became an instant star. The series won a slew of honors including nine Emmy Awards and a Peabody Award.

In 2002, Wolper produced a 25th-anniversary special on the impact of "Roots," which aired on NBC after ABC turned down the idea.

"I think it was an important milestone in the history of television," then NBC Entertainment President Jeff Zucker said at the time. "It introduced the miniseries. It showed what you could do if you had the courage of your convictions to put something on like that."

Wolper also produced several other miniseries, including the 1979 sequel "Roots: The Next Generations," "The Thorn Birds" and "North and South."

Before becoming a titan in the miniseries genre, Wolper had a series of highly successful TV documentaries, including the Emmy-winning "The Making of the President 1960."



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