



PRESS RELEASE
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THE WHITE HOUSE: IN TUNE WITH HISTORY
PREMIERES ON PBS
PRESIDENTS' DAY, FEBRUARY 17

Documentary by Emmy Award-Winning Producer John Goberman
Highlighting Music Performed and Heard in the White House
From Presidents John Adams to George W. Bush

Narrated by Sam Waterston

For Immediate Release — *The White House: In Tune with History*, an engaging documentary profiling the music and musicians who have performed at the White House during the past two centuries, will premiere on Presidents' Day, Monday, February 17, 2003, at 10:00 p.m. on PBS (check local listings). The one-hour documentary is produced by the White House Historical Association, and John Goberman in association with WETA, Washington, D.C. Sam Waterston narrates.

Music, from high art to homegrown, reveals the cultural history of the White House by profiling the diverse musical tastes of past and present administrations. Since the United States Marine Band, known as the "President's Own," performed on New Year's Day 1801, the White House halls have echoed with the sounds of classical, folk, opera, jazz, blues, country and western, and rock and roll. *In Tune with History* vividly documents unique stories in the White House that have been called "the poetry of politics," when the red carpet of music turns the ordinary into the enchanted.

Highlighting moments that are both familiar and less well known, the film is unusually moving and fun at the same time, offering rarely seen film clips that reveal the human side of the White House. From classical, to country and western, to pop and jazz, America's house has exhibited the sounds of strings, to trumpets, guitars, brass and a marching band. Along the way, presidents have performed from Jefferson on violin to Truman and Nixon on piano to Clinton on saxophone. Eleanor Roosevelt invited Marian Anderson to sing and Betty Ford realized her dream of dancing with Fred Astaire. When the unstoppable Pearl Bailey pulled a surprised President Sadat of Egypt onto the dance floor and Van Cliburn enticed Mikhail Gorbachev to break into song, they assisted in sealing the bonds of extraordinary international relationships.

An important part of American heritage, this musical presidential history interweaves many traditions, including glimpses of black tie evenings, afternoons on the lawn, swinging on the dance floor, and renditions of *Hail to the Chief*. Those on stage and in the audience that recount their personal experiences include Isaac Stern, Willie Nelson, Marta Casals Istomin, Geoffrey Holder, and Mary Chapin Carpenter.

Other commentators include presidential historians Doris Kearns Goodwin and William Seale, and *Time Magazine*'s venerable journalist Hugh Sidey. Their insights explaining how music was used throughout White House history include the attempt by Theodore and Edith Roosevelt to glamorize a still provincial White House by inviting cellist Pablo Casals and other stars to perform and how Abraham Lincoln, after the Civil War, used a song to begin reuniting a broken nation. Casals returned nearly 60 years later to perform for the Kennedy administration.

The White House Historical Association, chartered in 1961, is a non-profit historical and educational organization that plays a vital role in preserving the White House and recording its unique history. To enhance the appreciation of the president's home, the association has published and distributed more than eight million books, as well as videos and other educational materials. Since its founding, the association has contributed more than \$20 million for the preservation of the White House.

John Goberman, executive producer, has received nine primetime Emmy Awards, three Peabody Awards, six Sigma Alpha Iota Awards, and the first Television Critics Circle Award for Achievement in Music. Mr. Goberman has been nominated for an Emmy more than 47 times. His producing credits include the film *Distant Harmony*, *Pavorotti In China*, films for museums across the country, and numerous opera, ballet and concert telecasts from major performing arts institutions both here and abroad. He has also been the executive producer of *Live From Lincoln Center* since he launched the series 25 years ago. He developed the video and audio techniques and technology by which concerts, opera, ballets and plays can be telecast during live performances without disruption of performances and audiences.

Sara Lukinson, co-producer and writer, is a television documentary producer whose work focuses on programs about the arts. She has been the film biographer for the Kennedy Center honors for the past 18 years producing and writing all of the film portraits of the five artists from the performing arts who are selected each year. She has won two Emmy awards and two Writer's Guild of America awards.

WETA Washington, D.C. is the third-largest producing station in the public television system. WETA's other productions and co-productions include *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, *Washington Week*, *On Stage* and documentaries by filmmaker Ken Burns, including *The Civil War* and *Baseball*. Sharon Percy Rockefeller is president and CEO. More information on WETA and its programs and services is available on the Web site at www.weta.org. The broadcast presentation of *The White House: In Tune with History* is made possible by the Annenberg Foundation in support of the WETA Program Trust.

For more information about *The White House: In Tune With History* visit www.whitehousehistory.org. For review copy contact the White House Historical Association at pressinfo@whha.org.