



hidden archives



Few subjects in the archive world attract more interest from public and specialist alike than musical performance footage. It may not be the easiest to use in terms of underlying rights, but until recently, just tracking down the sources has been quite a task. Now, fortunately, more great footage is surfacing. Rochester, NY-based Historic Films has now turned up some. Its president, Joe Lauro can explain.

Historic Films Archive has been offering a wide variety of historical

archival and musical performance footage since its inception in 1991. Through the years, Historic Films has represented such collections as FOX MOVIE TONE outtakes and unused footage (1919 - 1934, and 1942-1944), as well as AMERICAN PATHE NEWS, and owns all rights to the important American Musical variety programmes *THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW* (with its partner SOFA Entertainment) and *DON KIRSHNER'S ROCK CONCERT*. While offering a comprehensive library of over thirty thousand of hours of circa 1895 - 1980 news and lifestyle footage, the collection that Historic Films' president Joe Lauro is most proud of is its vastly varied and comprehensive musical performance and entertainment footage library. "We have been feeding the infomercials of the world with short 15 second pop music clips for over 10 years, and have been a chief supplier of jazz, blues, country and gospel footage to most of the music related documentaries that have been in production throughout those years. It has been finding and restoring rare footage of juke joints, blues bars, camp meetings and other Afro-American lifestyles of the twenties, thirties and forties that has been my primary goal as of late" says Joe. "It is no longer difficult to find a vintage clip of Muddy Waters singing *Mannish Boy*, but it is still a challenge to find appropriate lifestyle footage which shows the blues clubs and joints which this music was primarily performed in during its heyday". Historic Films has found such images in its representation of such collections as that

of legendary Howlin' Wolf drummer Sam Lay, and various collections of circa 1940's and 50's colour Afro-American family home movies. These collections offer the rare images that go along with the music of the blues and jazz. Historic Films' exclusive representation of Memphis' Center For Southern Folklore also allows its clients rare glimpses of black migration from the south, and Afro-American owned businesses of Beale Street in the 1940s.

As of April 1 of 2005, Historic Films is the exclusive representative of a small library of television programs owned by the legendary New York DJ, Murray 'The K' Kaufman. Murray 'The K' was the most influential East Coast DJ with his ever popular *The Swinging Soiree* overnight radio program on WINS New York. Murray became the unofficial American spokesman for The Beatles thanks to touring American groups who were the opening acts at Beatles concerts in Great Britain (before the Beatles arrived in America). When Beatles' manager Brian Epstein asked for advice, those performers advised Brian to get in Murray 'The K's' good graces if he wanted The Beatles to succeed in the United States. New York was the market they had to own and Kaufman owned New York in the ratings. Of course, once The Beatles arrived, Murray and the group were inseparable. He broadcast from their hotel room, accompanied them to their first show in Washington D.C., co-hosted their second show at Carnegie Hall, and went with them to Miami for the third leg before joining them in England and emceeing a Wembley Stadium concert. At that concert, he also met The Rolling Stones, suggesting later that they cover an American R&B hit *It's All Over Now*, which became their first number one hit in the United States.

The library of television shows which Historic Films is now licensing consists of three programmes. The

first and most significant is a 1965 Who's Who of Pop music entitled IT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING BABY., one of Murray's trademark lines. The programme was produced by Murray for the Federal Government's Office of Economic Opportunity as an appeal to inner-city youngsters to let them know about job opportunities through the New Chance Program. The show, which was arguably (fifteen years before MTV) the first music video, attracted national headlines and censure of United States congressmen who deplored the use of public funds to broadcast "jungle music". The programme features amazing performances by The Supremes, The Ronettes, The Drifters, The Temptations, Patty LaBelle and the Bluebells, The Dave Clark Five, Herman's Hermits, The Righteous Brothers, Martha and the Vandellas, Mary Wilson, Little Anthony and the Imperials, Johnny Rivers, Ray Charles, Jan and Dean, Cannibal and the



Howlin' Wolf drummer Sam Lay 1961

as 'The Fifth Beatle' certainly added extra appeal. These programmes are important not only for the great performances, but because they illustrate the power and influence of AM radio on the pop culture of the mid to late 1960s."

For information regarding the Murray 'The K' library or other collections found at Historic Films contact Mark Heidemann, Director of Research, or visit the website.

Headline Pics: Left and right, Murray 'the K' and centre, Mahalia Jackson performing at the Harlem Festival in Central Park in 1969

historicfilms.com



1928 banjo from Pathe Collection

Headhunters and Gary Lewis and the Playboys. Much of the footage was shot live on state at the legendary Brooklyn Paramount Theatre, while other performances were live remote from various beaches (Jan and Dean), Detroit auto factories (Martha and the Vandellas), and under a boardwalk at Coney Island (The Drifters).

Murray's second programme, simply entitled MURRAY 'THE K' IN NEW YORK, was filmed in early 1967 in color and features performances by The Doors, Aretha Franklin, The Association, Richie Havens and others.

Historic Films's president Joe Lauro states "We are delighted to handle this library representing the TV work of the great Murray 'The K'. As a kid growing up in Brooklyn, Murray was unavoidable if you listened to the radio, and his moniker



Ray Charles