

SOUL!

2023

Producing to Power in the 21st Century

Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 7 p.m.
Wallis Annenberg Hall Forum
University of Southern California

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- *SOUL!* was a variety/talk show that aired on public television from 1968 to 1973.
- *SOUL!* was produced and hosted by Ellis Haizlip.

SOUL!

SOUL! was a variety/talk show that ran on public television from 1968 to 1973. Created and hosted by Ellis Haizlip, it was a nationally broadcast show featuring Black artists and activists, including many who were involved with the Black Arts Movement and Black liberation movements. *SOUL!* featured live performances by artists across disciplines—including avant garde dancers and poets as well as early performances by Patti LaBelle, Ashford & Simpson, Al Green, and many others—and interviews with activists and community leaders such as Kathleen Cleaver and Betty Shabazz. *SOUL!* presented a two-hour conversation between Nikki Giovanni and James Baldwin.

SOUL! presented Black artists across disciplines, genres, and aesthetics, as well as interviewees with diverse political and religious views. It was Haizlip's vision that *SOUL!* would present the "fluidity of Black thought and Black identity," Melissa Haizlip, Ellis's niece and the producer of the documentary *Mr. SOUL!*, told *The New Yorker*.

PANELISTS

MELISSA HAIZLIP: Producer, director, and writer of *Mr. SOUL!*

MARA BROCK AKIL: Storyteller, producer, and entrepreneur

TENDO NAGENDA: Producer and developer

STEPHANIE TARVARES-RANCE: Co-founder of the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival

MIKI TURNER (moderator): Photojournalist and professor at USC Annenberg

ELLIS HAIZLIP

Ellis Haizlip (1929–1991) was the creator, executive producer, and host of *SOUL!* He was the first Black producer at the New York public television station WNDT.

Haizlip was born and grew up in Washington, D.C. He became involved in theatre while a student at Howard University, and then moved to New York and started producing theatrical and dance productions there, as well as in Europe and the Middle East. Among his theatre credits were plays by James Baldwin and Langston Hughes and a concert tour by Marlene Dietrich.

After *SOUL!*, Haizlip remained active in public television and Black arts scenes. He produced a 1978 PBS series called *Watch Your Mouth*, about a language-skills class in an NYC high school, and later worked as the director of special programs at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem, a research library that is part of the New York Public Library system.

Haizlip died of lung cancer in 1991. His *New York Times* obituary described him as “a leading producer of black cultural events and mentor of black artists.”

THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT

The Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and '70s was one of the most important and influential artistic movements of twentieth-century America. Sometimes described as the cultural arm of the Black Power movement, the Black Arts Movement was made up of Black poets, dancers, writers, theater and film artists, and others whose creative work explored and advanced Black pride, Black power, and Black liberation. Key figures in the Black Arts Movement included movement founder Amiri Baraka as well as Ntozake Shange, Gil Scott-Heron, Gwendolyn Brooks, Nikki Giovanni, Audre Lorde, Maya Angelou, and Sonia Sanchez, among many others.

Ellis Haizlip was involved in the Black Arts Movement and prominently featured BAM artists on *SOUL!*

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ⦿ What is the role of television in reenforcing social norms or creating social change?
- ⦿ What do you want to see more of on television?
- ⦿ What does “Producing to Power” mean to you? What are some of the potential impacts of Producing to Power?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- ⦿ Events and classes at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism annenberg.usc.edu
- ⦿ Events and classes at the USC School of Cinematic Arts cinema.usc.edu



Stan Lathan, Ellis Haizlip, and Melvin Van Peebles on the set of *SOUL!*

USC ANNEBERG INCLUSION INITIATIVE

Led by professor Stacy L. Smith, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative at USC conducts extensive research and reporting to develop targeted, data-driven solutions to address inequality in film, television, and media.

- ⦿ Current studies: Inclusion in the Director’s Chair, Muslims in Popular Films, Inequality in Popular Films, Mental Health in Popular Storytelling, Inclusion in Animation, Critics Choice 2
- ⦿ Advocacy and Action:
 - Accelerator Programs: Opportunities to directly address disparities and support young filmmakers and creatives
 - The Inclusion Rider: Legal language for ending Hollywood’s epidemic of invisibility

For more info and to read reports from the initiative, visit annenberg.usc.edu/research/aii.



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- Upcoming Visions and Voices events, including
 - [2/8 Uprooted: The Journey of Jazz Dance](#)
 - [2/15 A.I.M by Kyle Abraham: An Untitled Love](#)
 - [2/21 An Evening with Nikole Hannah-Jones](#)
 - [2/22, 3/5, and 3/22 John Singleton film screenings](#)

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

Adam Sexton of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS

- Aniko Bodroghkozy, [Equal Time Television and the Civil Rights Movement](#) (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2012).
- Aymar Jean Christian, [Open TV: Innovation beyond Hollywood and the Rise of Web Television](#) (New York: NYU Press, 2018).
- Kathleen Fearn-Banks, [Historical Dictionary of African-American Television](#) (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006).
- Linda Goss and Clay Goss, [Jump Up and Say! A Collection of Black Storytelling](#) (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).
- Devorah Heitner, [Black Power TV](#) (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2013).
- George H. Hill, [Ebony Images: Black Americans and Television](#) (Carson: Daystar Publishing Co., 1986).
- David L. Moody, [The Complexity and Progression of Black Representation in Film and Television](#) (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016).
- Gayle Wald, [It's Been Beautiful: Soul! and Black Power Television](#) (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2015).
- Frank B. Wilderson III, [Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms](#) (Duke Univ. Press, 2010).
- Kristal Brent Zook, [I See Black People: The Rise and Fall of African American-owned Television and Radio](#) (New York: Nation Books, 2008).

DATABASES

- [African American Studies Center \(Oxford\)](#)
- [ProQuest History Vault: Black Freedom Struggle in the 20th Century](#)
- [African American Communities](#)
- [Black Freedom Struggle in the United States: Challenges and Triumphs in the Pursuit of Equality](#)
- [Black Thought and Culture](#)

JOURNALS

- [Black Camera: The Newsletter of the Black Film Center/Archives](#)
- [Black American Study](#)

