

VH1's Emmy Award-Winning "Rock Docs" Franchise Announces New Programming Slate For 2014

NEW YORK, Jan. 16, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- VH1's Emmy Award-winning "Rock Docs" franchise returns with a brand new slate of original feature-length documentaries examining the intersection of music and culture. The new documentaries will premiere on VH1 in early 2014 and continue throughout the year.

Upcoming VH1 Rock Docs include **"Finding The Funk,"** which gives an insightful look into the history and evolution of funk music; **"Downloaded,"** centered on Napster and the industry-changing advent of music file-sharing; and **"The Tanning of America: One Nation Under Hip Hop,"** a four-part documentary series that examines how hip hop has transformed American culture. Other Rock Docs on tap will explore the electronic dance music (EDM) craze and soul singer Sharon Jones' inspirational journey following a life-changing cancer diagnosis.

"Finding the Funk," premieres on Tuesday, February 4th at 10PM* a unique geographical history of the booty-shaking genre. Narrated by Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson of The Roots, the film showcases how funk music's infectious groove paved the way for groundbreaking genres such as hip-hop and house music. The funk explosion is traced from Dayton, Ohio to Detroit via interviews with pioneers like Sly Stone, Bootsy Collins, George Clinton, Nona Hendryx, Nile Rodgers, Maceo Parker, Bernie Worrell, and Steve Arrington and their descendants Mike D, D'Angelo, Sheila E and Shock G. The documentary, directed by filmmaker and journalist Nelson George and produced by record producer Arthur Baker, premiered at the SXSW Film Festival in March 2013. It also screened at Hot Docs, Urban World, the Afro-Punk Festival and the Pan African Film Festival.

"The Tanning of America: One Nation Under Hip Hop," premieres Monday, February 24 through Thursday, February 27, airing at 11PM each night. The four-part, four-hour documentary series, based on a best-selling book by author, entrepreneur, advertising executive and record executive Steve Stoute, is a thorough examination of hip-hop as a cultural movement, whose profound influence in music, film, television, fashion, business, race relations and politics eventually paved the way for the election of Barack Obama. The series provides a visual history of the hip-hopification of America - what Stoute calls "tanning" -- from "The Jeffersons" to the Fresh Prince; from "Do the Right Thing" to "8 Mile"; from the streets of Compton to Madison Ave; from block parties to the Hamptons; and from rappers to entrepreneurs to icons. It unfolds in 4 one-hour episodes that together explore history's pivotal tanning moments from the 1970s to present day, and show how hip-hop is deeply woven into the American cultural fabric. The series is produced by filmmakers Billy Corben and Alfred Spellman of Rakontur.

"Downloaded," is slated to air fall 2014 and focuses on the advent of digital media sharing, including the rise of game-changing company Napster and its controversial online pioneers Shawn Fanning and Sean Parker. The digital revolution ultimately created a technology paradigm shift and upended both the music industry and music artists, and changed the world. The film features insights from such well-known artists and figures within the music industry as: The Beastie Boys' Mike D, Noel Gallagher, Henry Rollins, former Sony Music Chairman Don Ienner, former record producer and Island Records founder Chris Blackwell, Sire Records co-founder Seymour Stein, Grateful Dead lyricist, poet, essayist and "cyber libertarian" activist JP Barlow, Hilary Rosen, former CEO of the Recording Industry Association of America, Harvard law professor and political activist Lawrence Lessig and other industry executives, government officials and leaders in the world of civil and digital rights. The film, directed by Alex Winter, premiered at the SXSW Film Festival in March 2013 and screened at numerous film festivals to rave reviews in the past year. Variety called it "entertaining... and.... informative," the New York Times said "fascinating" and the LA Times said "a vigorous retelling of Fanning's and Parker's wildfire achievement and its ethical pitfalls."

The documentary on Electronic Dance Music will premiere in late 2014. It will examine the culture of the Electronic Dance Music (EDM) scene, as told by some of the most prominent personalities involved with the movement.

The documentary on Sharon Jones, to premiere in late 2014, follows the retro-soul singer as she faces the toughest challenge of her life: putting her career on hold to battle cancer. Directed by two-time Academy Award winner Barbara Kopple, the film follows Sharon through six months of chemotherapy and a triumphant comeback concert that caps an inspirational emotional journey. The documentary soundtrack will feature Sharon's original music.

VH1's Emmy Award winning Rock Docs are feature-length music documentaries focusing on a variety of today's popular genres, trends and views. Overseeing for VH1 are Brad Abramson, Stephen Mintz, Warren Cohen, Ben Zurier and Susan Levison. Rick Krim and Bill Flanagan are also executive producers on "Downloaded."

About VH1

VH1 delivers the ultimate mash-up of music, pop culture and nostalgia for adults who still want to have fun. VH1 is available in 99 million households in the U.S. VH1 also has an array of digital channels and services including VH1 Classic, VH1 Soul, VH1 Mobile and VH1.com and @VH1, the hub for all things music and pop culture. VH1 is a unit of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIAB), one of the world's leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. For more information, go

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