

ANNE ZEISER'S/ALEX GIBNEY'S DIRECTOR'S QUESTIONS
8/30/02

I. QUESTIONS FOR ALL DIRECTORS

THE MUSIC

- How and why did you become attached to this project?
- What is it about blues music that appeals to you?
- What is your first memory of the blues and why did it grab you?
- Has this music influenced your style as a filmmaker? If so, how?
- Why is music important in our lives?

YOUR FILM

- What stylistic or impressionistic choice did you make for creating this film?
- What about your personal style of filmmaking lends itself to telling the story of the blues?
- Through your film, what do you want to tell viewers about the blues?
- How did you choose what to include in your film and what couldn't you include that you wish you had?
- How/why did you choose the musicians to include in your film?
- What musical moment/s stand out in your mind during filming?
- What was the most fun for you in making this film?
- What went wrong . . . what didn't work?
- What was the most poignant/memorable moment during filming?

THE MISSION

- What do you hope most of all that audiences will get from watching your film?
- Why do you think learning about or knowing about the blues is important?
- Why is music important in our lives?
- Why do you think the blues resonate with kids today?
- Are there other genres of music that kids listen to that have roots in or connections to the blues?
- How will *The Blues* serve low-income or traditionally underserved populations?

II. QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORS

Martin Scorsese (in his role of Executive Producer)

- How did you come to the decision to undertake a major project about blues music?
- What pointed you in the direction of a multimedia project rather than only film?
- How were the other filmmakers chosen for this project? What perspective does each of the filmmakers bring to the project?
- Who are you hoping to reach with this music [and this project] and why is that important?
- The cornerstone of the thinking on this project derives from Willie Dixon's statement, "The blues are the roots; everything else is the fruits." Why is this true? [encourage MS to repeat the quote].
- How does *The Blues* help illuminate issues of race and identity today?
- As an Italian American who grew up in New York, how did blues music influence your life and filmmaking?
- Describe how you use music in your filmmaking? What does music add creatively when combined with other forms of art?
- How does this project connect with your other body of work?
- As Executive Producer of *The Blues* concert film, how will your approach compare with your approach to *The Last Waltz*?
- Why did you choose public television for this particular project? What do you think makes PBS valuable?
- How will *The Blues* help build audiences for this art form?
- Do you think that this project will raise public awareness of challenges that certain art forms face?
- Does the project seek to address an overlooked period?
- What's not in the series or films that you would have liked included?

Clint Eastwood

- Your introduction to the blues was through Fats Waller's music; what was it that so appealed to you about the music?
- Do you read music or do you play by ear?
- Why piano rather than another instrument?

Marc Levin, Clint Eastwood, Richard Pearce

- Why Chicago [New Orleans,/ Memphis] blues? What's unique about Chicago's[New Orleans'/Memphis'] kind of blues, history and people?
- How does Chicago's[New Orleans'/Memphis'] blues story move this larger story of the blues along?
- Tell us why people in Chicago[New Orleans/ Memphis] should be proud to see this film to show the country their city's role in this important music, and why should the country care?

Charles Burnett, Wim Wenders

(cut their comments together into a dialogue?)

- Tell us your thoughts about the musical tension between the sacred and the profane - between gospel and blues.

Mike Figgis, Richard Peace

- How did this interest in black music begin among Europeans?
- Which artist(s) do you consider most responsible for the crossover from black to white audiences?

#####