Instruction: Read and answer the questions below

Remembering Don Cornelius

So how would we answer the question, “What would the world be like without Don Cornelius?”

Well we might now be living in a world without any funk, soul, R&B, or hip hop.

Having a smooth and deep voice, Cornelius was best known for the catchphrase that he used to close the show: "... and you can bet your last money, it's all gonna be a stone gas, honey! I'm Don Cornelius, and as always in parting, we wish you love, peace and soul!" After Cornelius’s departure, it was shortened to "...and as always, we wish you love, peace and soul!” and was used through the most recent new episodes in 2006.

Originally a journalist inspired by the civil rights movement, Cornelius recognized that in the late 1960s there was no television venue in the United States for soul music. In the 1970’s, Don Cornelius changed television and America as the creator, host and producer of Soul Train. From 1971 to 2006 hundreds of artists were given a stage and an arena by Cornelius. James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Tina Turner even Michael Jackson all started out on The Soul Train stage. But Cornelius was much more than just a TV host.

Don Cornelius gave life to hundreds of silent voices, pioneering, and above all, opening the possibility for entire genres of music to be heard. He was able to take the sounds and beat of African American music and essentially make it America’s music.

As well as giving new artists a stage to perform, he gave the dancers on his show freedom. From the dancers’ point of view, Cornelius was seen as the street dancers emancipator, enabling dancers to give birth to hundreds of different dance styles all throughout the 70’s 80’s and 90’s and into the new millennium.

But it wasn’t only about the music, as one viewer put it: “During the 70’s Cornelius represented more than music, he represented a new way to be black.”

“Cornelius and his show Soul Train gave us a new vision away from the stereotypical life of bad neighbourhoods and crime which was often depicted during the 70’s. But what was most important was that he empowered people. Don Cornelius empowered us to break stereotypes. Overall, it was one of the most positive experiences I ever had.”

He must have known what he was doing because Soul Train was the longest running nationally syndicated show in history, running from 1971 through 2006. He stepped down as host in 1993 but remained the executive producer and creative visionary until the show closed in 2006.

From creating pop culture to the music world, Cornelius had an immeasurable impact that will still be felt 100 years from now.
1) What was the name of Don Cornelius’ TV show?

2) What did Don Cornelius wish to the viewers?

3) What was Cornelius` first job?

4) What did he create with his show?

5) Why was Cornelius called the “street dancer emancipator”?

6) In the 70’s what did Cornelius do?

7) Why was Cornelius a positive experience?

8) When did “Soul Train” finish as a TV show?
ANSWERS are highlighted below

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