

America's Music Legacy: Blues, America's Music Legacy: Soul and America's Music Legacy: Folk

Each of these entertaining new releases, running about two hours apiece, contains a filmed record of a mid-1980s gathering of around 20 esteemed musical performers from the three titled fields. Hosts Brock Peters (*Blues*), Isaac Kennedy (*Soul*) and Theodore Bikel (*Folk*), introduce the well-known artists, as they perform old favorites along with some surprises. Interviews are mixed in between songs, as singers recount their personal and professional histories.

The sets serve as time capsules for some legendary acts; for example, in *Blues*: B.B. King, Joe Williams and, in films clips, Bessie Smith, Count Basie and Big Joe Turner; in *Soul*: James Brown, Ben E. King, Gladys Knight, Carla Thomas, Percy Sledge, Otis Redding; and in *Folk*: the Limeliters, New Christy Minstrels, Hoyt Axton and Doc Watson.

By Boo Allen / Film Critic