

Contacts:

Natasha Padilla, WNET.ORG

212.560.8824, [padilla@wnet.org](mailto:padilla@wnet.org)

## **New public television special pays tribute to beloved comedy icon Soupy Sales**

***Soupy Sales: The Whole Gang is Here features classic sketches from 1960s and 1978 children's series***

***Exclusive Broadcast Premiere Saturday, April 24 at 6 p.m. on WLIW21***

***Nationwide beginning Monday, July 26 and throughout August on public television (check local listings)***

*SPLAT!* That's the sound of one of the more than 20,000 pies legendary comedian Soupy Sales got hit in the face with over his half-century-long career. Born Milton Supman on January 8, 1926, in Franklinton, North Carolina and raised in Huntington, West Virginia, Soupy would go on to make over 5,000 television appearances before succumbing to cancer on October 22, 2009 in the Bronx, New York. Most famous for his 1960s children's TV series *The Soupy Sales Show*, Sales became a beloved icon of Baby Boomer generation kids and their parents with his unpredictable sketches, slapstick humor, witty puns, and puppet gags — almost all of which resulted in a pie in the face.

On **Saturday, April 24 at 6 p.m. WLIW21** presents the exclusive broadcast premiere of ***Soupy Sales: The Whole Gang is Here***. A loving tribute to the late entertainer, the one-hour retrospective features the funniest moments from the 1964-1966 run of *The Soupy Sales Show*, filmed in black and white from New York City, and 1978's *The New Soupy Sales Show*, filmed in color from Los Angeles — many of which haven't been seen in over 30 years. Memorable sketches include a restaurant pie-fight between Soupy, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis, Jr. and Trini Lopez, Soupy pitching Alice Cooper a singing bug for his opening act, the legendary naked lady gag, Soupy's Words of Wisdom, "Do the Mouse," and plenty of laughs from Soupy's puppet gang — White Fang, Black Tooth and Pookie the Lion — and the outrageous characters that showed up at his door. Other guest appearances include Dick Clark, Frankie Valli, Fess Parker, Dick Van Patten, and William B. Williams, plus a rare 1966 TV pilot called *The Hooper* starring Soupy and Donald O'Connor. Distributed by WLIW21 in association with WNET.ORG, ***Soupy Sales: The Whole Gang is Here*** will air nationwide on public television stations beginning Monday, July 26 and throughout August (check local listings).

Written and directed by Long Island native Marino Amoruso (*Of Moose & Men: The Rocky & Bullwinkle Story, Pride & Passion: The Italians In America, Frank Sinatra: The* --OVER--

*Man & The Myth*), ***Soupy Sales: The Whole Gang is Here*** also features interviews with TV historian Joe Varsalona and comedian “Uncle Floyd” Vivino, who not only was inspired by Soupy as a child, but also was his good friend. “There were literally hundreds of episodes to go through,” states Amoruso. “I tried to select the clips that best represented Soupy’s total body of work.”

“The thing that set Soupy apart from all the other kids’ shows was that it was totally crazy and unstructured,” says Vivino. “Every other show we watched as kids was very formatted. With Soupy, you never knew what was going to happen.” Varsalona recalls Soupy as “this crazy uncle who was there hanging out with the kids and playing along with us. That’s what I loved about his show.” Vivino concurs, “Soupy talked to you like he was your friend. You felt invited into his world.”

Airing daily, *The Soupy Sales Show* and *The New Soupy Sales Show* produced more than 320 episodes combined over four years, and were enjoyed by children and adults of the first Television Generation and beyond countless times in syndication. Soupy’s irreverent, off-beat humor and goofy shtick also influenced many future comics, from Paul Reubens’s Pee-Wee Herman character to shock jock Howard Stern, whom Soupy shared the radio airwaves with from 1985-1987 on WNBC-AM.

***Soupy Sales: The Whole Gang is Here*** follows in the tradition of past public television comedy programming, including WLIW21’s *SCTV Golden Classics* and *The Best of Red Skelton*, THIRTEEN’s *Make ‘Em Laugh*, and British comedy favorites including Monty Python, *As Time Goes By* and *Keeping Up Appearances*.

A Morada Vision Production. Executive Producers: Marshall Blonstein. Producer: Myra Weinstein. Associate Producer: Dan Weinstein. Writer, Director and Editor: Marino Amoruso. A presentation of WLIW21 in association with WNET.ORG.

#### **About WNET.ORG**

New York public media company WNET.ORG is a pioneering provider of television and web content. The parent of Thirteen, WLIW21 and Creative News Group, WNET.ORG brings such acclaimed broadcast series and websites as [Worldfocus](#), [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [Charlie Rose](#), [Wide Angle](#), [Secrets of the Dead](#), [Religion & Ethics Newsweekly](#), [Visions](#), [Consuelo Mack WealthTrack](#), [Miffy and Friends](#), and [Cyberchase](#) to national and international audiences. Through its wide range of channels and platforms, WNET.ORG serves the entire New York City metro area with unique local productions, broadcasts and innovative educational and cultural projects. In all that it does, WNET.ORG pursues a single, overarching goal – to create media experiences of lasting significance for New York, America and the world. For more information, visit [www.wnet.org](http://www.wnet.org).

.....