

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FILMS WE LIKE presents

**“THE OLD, WEIRD AMERICA: HARRY SMITH’S ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN
FOLK MUSIC”
&
“THE HARRY SMITH PROJECT LIVE”**



Films We Like is excited to announce A PAIR OF ALL-STAR TRIBUTES TO LEGENDARY FOLK ARCHIVIST & GRAMMY® WINNING ARTIST HARRY SMITH are **available for the first time on AppleTV and Amazon Prime starting on Sept 8th, 2020.**

The films capture the concert series curated by the legendary music producer and SNL alum Hal Willner, who sadly passed away on April 7th due to complications from COVID-19, months ahead of the release of a Willner produced T-Rex tribute album due out this fall. The rerelease of these remarkable concert films on AppleTV is sure to introduce a whole new audience to the life and work of Harry Smith.

The *Anthology of American Folk Music* is remains an enduring legacy of the inclusive spirit of Harry Smith’s work. His refusal to categorize music by race or creed was unheard of by music historians of the time, and represents an ethos that resonates to this day.

THE OLD, WEIRD AMERICA: HARRY SMITH'S ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC
2006 / 90 min / Dir. Rani Singh

Prepare for an eclectic musical journey through **The Old, Weird America**. The documentary film tracks the history of Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music* from its initial compilation of 78 records from rural Americana to its release on Folkways Records in 1952. Instrumental in helping inspire the urban folk revival of the 1960s, the Anthology continues to influence modern music. Rare archival footage and intimate interviews with legendary performers reveal the lasting impact of the Anthology and the remarkable personality of Harry Smith. The film includes performances, and interviews with **Elvis Costello, Beck, Sonic Youth, Beth Orton, Philip Glass, David Johansen, John Cohen, Greil Marcus**, and more. Join us for a wild ride through a remarkable musical landscape.

THE HARRY SMITH PROJECT LIVE
2006 / 120 min / Dir. Rani Singh

50 years after renowned musicologist, filmmaker and painter, Harry Smith compiled the definitive *Anthology Of American Folk Music*, music producer Hal Willner organized a series of concerts London's Royal Festival Hall (1999), St. Ann's Center in Brooklyn, NY (1999) and UCLA's Royce Hall (2001) that celebrated Smith's idiosyncratic vision, from Nick Cave's cathartic take on spirituals to Lou Reed's mesmerizing evocation of Blind Lemon Jefferson. *The Harry Smith Project Live* features 26 songs from these tribute concerts.

About Harry Smith and the *Anthology of American Folk Music*

In 1951, with patronage from Hilla Rebay of the Guggenheim Museum, Harry Smith moved to New York City where he compiled his most well known work the *Anthology of American Folk Music*. Issued in 1952 in three volumes, each in the form of a two-LP hinged set (Folkways FP 251–FP253), the Anthology includes eighty-four music tracks from commercially recorded 78 rpm records that included the genres of Appalachian folk, fiddle tunes, gospel, hillbilly, blues, and Cajun, and was accompanied by a handbook written and designed by Smith. Comprised of commercial recordings made between 1927 and 1932, the Anthology captured a short window in history when electronic recording made accurate reproduction possible and vernacular music was still being learned via the oral tradition, capturing un-adulterated vernacular traditions in their purest form.

The Anthology marks the first time a collection of music was curated and presented as a unified work of art. It was to become Smith's best-known work and an inspiration that triggered the folk revival of the 1960s, influencing **Joan Baez, Jerry Garcia** and **Bob Dylan**, among others. Its reverberations are still felt today.