

Diana Ross TV Special

Airing date confirmed in ["New York Times"](#) ([archived](#)) ("on CBS-TV at 10 o'clock tonight [March 2, 1981])"

Johnny Harris, musical director, "Billboard" (July 2, 2009) ([mirror](#)) ([archived mirror](#))

In 1981 I was the musical director for the Diana Ross CBS TV special. Michael was one of the guests and we met to discuss the songs he would be performing. One of them was "Rock With Me" from the "Off The Wall Album." I remember Quincy Jones telling me at the time that the next album "Thriller" was going to be even bigger. He wasn't kidding.

David Winters, actor in "Westside Story" film ("A-Rab" character)

Diana Ross introduced us as he was to appear on her TV Special that Diana had; she also asked me to work on it with her. At the time I had been doing all of her stage and TV shows. Michael Jackson was to be a guest and when he turned up for rehearsals Diana introduced me to him. The first thing he said to me before even saying hello was "I know you", "I don't think so Michael", I said. He said "I watch you almost every week, you know "West Side Story" and he snapped his fingers and did a little step and smiled. I understood. From that moment on there was nothing to explain to each other, as we were both on the same wavelength.

He told me "it's my favorite film David or should I say A-rab" and he laughed "and I have loads of questions I'd like to ask you about it, if that's alright" Michael was very polite and respectful and he even seemed a little shy and withdrawn. He was a sweetheart and I certainly loved his work. A-rab was the role I played in the film "West Side Story".

Chris Cadman, author, "Michael Jackson the Maestro"

The performances of 'Rock With You' and 'Ease On Down The Road' both solo and as duets with Diana Ross were recorded at the old KTTV Studios. Michael asked The American Bandstanders to be the audience.

["New York Times"](#) (March 2, 1981) ([archived](#))

Diana Ross keeps her engine running all through her high-speed one-hour special on CBS-TV at 10 o'clock tonight, and what's more, she will probably have you throbbing, too.