& HISTORYMAKERS HONORS
SMOKEY ROBINSON: Legendary singer and prolific songwriter Smokey Robinson discusses his contributions to music during an interview with journalist Gwen Ifill at The HistoryMakers fundraiser An Evening With Smokey Robinson in Chicago at Northwestern University Law School’s Thorne Auditorium. Robinson, whose real first name is William, reveals how he got the nickname “Smokey,” and discusses his impact on R&B-pop music, his former drug problem and what inspired some of the hits that he wrote for himself and other Motown artists, including The Temptations’ My Girl.

Suzanne de Passe, a filmmaker and former Motown executive, hosts the program that also features performances of Robinson’s hits by Teena Marie, Howard Hewett and Musiq Soulchild. The interview will air on PBS stations in February. The HistoryMakers, a nonprofit organization, is the nation’s largest Black video oral history archives of achievers in every field. “These are stories of determination. Success against all the odds and the true voices of inspiration,” says founder and executive director Juheanna Richardson.

NEW MICHAEL JACKSON
FILM, MUSIC: The world’s fascination with the late superstar Michael Jackson continues with the release of the highly anticipated musical documentary This Is It for a limited two-week run, featuring rehearsal footage for his planned London concerts. It was filmed shortly before the entertainer’s death on June 25. Jackson is also on the airwaves with the new single This Is It, featured on the documentary soundtrack. "This Is It." Jackson sings backed by his brothers. "Here I stand. The light of the world. I feel grand." His 1988 autobiography, Moonwalk, has just been reissued with a new foreword by Motown founder Berry Gordy, who describes Jackson as "simply the greatest entertainer that ever lived." Photographer Todd Gray releases a new photo book, Michael Jackson: Before He Was King, a collection of 100 images, most never-before seen shots of Jackson from 1974 through 1983.