

THE ENTERTAINMENT SEEN

Act One

by Ken Covington

People Who Need People (The Saga of Michael J.)

It's incredible! For three generations we have been moved by the dancing, singing, captivating, voice from Gary, Indiana. From "I Want You Back" to "Billy Jean", he has motivated and captivated millions world wide with his God-given talent. Awesome might be a word not too large to describe the enigma known as Michael Jackson.

As a child, I learned to both love and hate Michael Jackson — love him and his brothers for the countless hours they spent transforming my childhood record player from something used for playing childhood fairytale recordings to "that darn humpin' and bumpin' music", according to Mom and Dad.

I'll never forget the day my ears received the initial shock of Jackson Five mania. I walked into my cousin's house, and there he was, filling every crack and corner of the house with that smooth, high-pitched dancing voice: Ducking, dodging and sailing up and down the scale effortlessly, backed by sizzling bass lines, snare accents and smooth back-up vocals. I paused in the doorway of his bedroom and just grinned and listened, listened and grinned. "Yes, I doo, naaa ohhh, ohhh, babybee..."

"Who's that man?" I asked. The whole house grew quiet. Then, in between laughs shared by the whole family, my cousin answered, "Ken, everybody knows who that is! That's The Jackson Five!"

That was one side — the "love" one. The hate one developed from all the attention that the girls showered on him. Heck, I can remember the Jackson Five posters on all the girls' rooms that I visited in my pre-teen days: the lunchroom discussions at the girls' table about how cute and fine he was, how he could dance, how "bad" his 'fro' was, etc. All the guys at my table agreed that we all hated him, and he wasn't nothin' but a regular dude with a big 'fro' and flashy clothes.

But, you can sure bet, we all oiled our 'fros' religiously at night and told our parents absolutely, under no condition, were we to visit the barber shop any more in life! Ever! "Nothing but balloon sleeve shirts and bell bottoms, Mom! You know, like Michael Jackson!" I'm sure a lot of moms can relate to that line then and now.

Well, times have changes, and so has our friend Mike: The rise and fall of The Jackson Five mania; cartoons and TV specials; albums — some good and some great — until one day the great rumor that "The Five" were no longer a reality and had gone their separate ways.

By that time, I wasn't into them enough to really be concerned. This was just another indication that my childhood days were gone forever.

In 1979, the album "Off the Wall" hit the market like a ton of gold



In the beginning, Michael just the way God made you forget there had ever been another Michael Jackson look.



1982: New nose, larger eyes and squared chin, along with cakeface make-up. His talent soon made you forget there had ever been another Michael Jackson look.



1987: "Bad" is a proper title for even more cosmetic changes. From Bad to Worse.

bricks. No one was happier than I that he still had the "magic". The album was produced by my idol, Quincy Jones, and had some of the best musicians and songwriters the business had to offer. It was truly one of the type of albums that one had to have.

The winter of 1982 was graced by a song penned by ex-Beatle Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson, duly named "The Girl Is Mine". It didn't particularly appeal to me, with the bubble-gum sound and lyrics. However, with persistent airplay, the darn thing became a hit, and I used to shudder when people would request it. The single was the first release from a forthcoming album named "Thriller". "Yeah," I thought, "named like a kiddie matinee. Betcha the albums junk!" Boy, was I wrong! Once again, I was to be stunned.

One day looking at Black Entertainment Television, my boy Donnie Simpson announced they were about to show M.J.'s latest video, "Billy Jean". When the video when off, I was stunned, mesmerized, sprung, even. On top of being danceable music, Michael had steps that set the world on fire, and the rest of the album... cuts for days! Once again produced by Quincy and including the best musicians and songwriters in the world, the album went on to make world history: The largest amount of albums ever sold in the history of man.

Along with this phenomenal success came the first bitter taste of mass media overkill. Michael Jackson, Michael Jackson, Michael Jackson. Along with the media overkill, came exposure of a different kind. I started to notice the cakeface make-up, the nose job and the fact that my boy in no way was grasping manhood in the same way as real people. Hanging out with babies at a miniature zoo and amusement rides in his back yard (I went to Encino to see for myself! Shhhhhhh!), soft, feminine-speaking voice, Mike was definitely of a different world.

At first, my reaction was to rationalize and understand. After all, from the age of 10 he was running from fans; but, on the other hand, so were his brothers. They seemed normal. But if there was a star of the show, it was Mike. Maybe that's why: The "Momma's Boy" syndrome. There's one in every crowd, but too much of anything isn't good.

I just couldn't figure it; but the more I tried to understand, the sorer I felt for him. Something was missing. What, I didn't know.

The Victory Tour: Michael didn't really want to do it with his brothers. Preceding the tour, there were new videos from the reunion album. We hardly saw or heard from Mike on any of the new projects. Funny...

In the meantime, Mike had fallen out with old friends. Why? That's his business. But when you alienate old friends, it signals change. The

quotes I've read from his old friends seem to say that they feel sorry for him, too. Maybe that's why he got new ones: Escape.

The new album "Bad": Michael's new look is terrible, looking like the darkest white guy I've ever seen, or, on the other hand, maybe a masculine Diana Ross. Taking a purely soulful look at the new album, I don't like it much. No excellent songwriters like Rod Temperton, Stevie Wonder, James Ingram or Paul McCartney — the best in the business. Quincy Jones produced the album, but I can't really hear his touch. I had to listen to the album over and over again until I found a few cuts I kind of liked. When I have to do that, it indicates no magic. That is what I have come to expect from Michael: Pure Magic — produced by Michael and those who work with him.

But looking closely at the facts, Michael keeps on shutting out those around him that help him stay real and, instead, he keeps putting those around him who probably help keep his head in the clouds and away from the real world. Let's check it out. First, no more Jackson Five — just Michael. Then no more Joe Jackson (management — his father), no talk shows and very few interviews. No more Jehovahs Witnesses (religion), and the list goes on.


What I'm trying to say, using Michael J. as an example, is what price does success really cost? We've seen him achieve the unachievable and, at the same time, lose his masculinity, lose touch with his family, his freedom, even his looks that used to drive his fans crazy.

Looking at what's left of him makes me know that money isn't everything, and, if I had to choose the most valuable thing in the world, it would be people — even the ones I don't particularly like. People really do need people to be close to them. With out that one on one, we are truly lost.

Michael Jackson has eliminated himself from the world around him, and I, for one, hope that someday his feet will touch the ground; that he'll grow up and once again the magic will flow. "I'm goin' back to Indeeeee-aaaana....."

Catlin Gabel Rummage Sale

This year's Catlin Gabel Rummage Sale is located at the Multnomah County Exposition Center, near Jantzen Beach. Sale times and dates are Friday, November 6, 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Saturday, November 7, 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; and Sunday, November 8, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. On Thursday, November 5, there is a special Pre-Sale from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (25% mark-up). Admission is free.



DORIS CAFE
3240 N. Williams
Now Open
287-9249
American & Mexican Foods
Owners: Jewell Thomas & Rosie A. Dean

Weekly Specials
Chitterlings
Neck Bones
Ox Tail
Pigs Feet

HRS. Tues. - Thurs. 12:00 noon - 10:00 p.m.
Fri. - Sat. 12:00 noon - 2 a.m.
Sun. 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

PINE STREET S.E. 9th AT THEATRE SANDY BLVD.

WHERE THE MUSIC IS ALIVE

HALLOWEEN PARTY

BUTTADE SURFERS DINOSAUR

SWORD SWALLOWERS JUGGLERS & OTHER VAUDEVILLIANS

SPECIAL EFFECTS LASER FANTASIES

BAND OF PEOPLE

OCTOBER 31

MAGICIAN

Portland's Largest Dance Floor Phone: 235-0027
Advance Tickets on Sale Now! Usual Outlets

Come Try Our Outrageous Food

Dinner:


- Stuffed Round Steak American Southern \$4.50
- Indonesian Pork \$4.50
- Chicken Gumbo, Creole \$3.50
- Terriakki Chicken Japanese \$3.50
- Canadian Hot Dog \$1.50
- Hot Dog With Chili \$2.00
- Kulbassy Sausage \$2.00
- Sausage With Chili \$2.50

J.B.'s Paradise Room
3530 N. Vancouver Ave.
288-1196

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
Zeta Sigma Omega Chapter

presents the
1987 Emerald Awards Banquet

Saluting Our
Black Men
"Character,
Commitment,
Community"



Date: October 24, 1987 Place: Red Lion Lloyd Center
Donation: \$25.00 per person
Time: 6:00 Cocktails • 7:30 Dinner

Emerald Awards Banquet

Zeta Sigma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. is proud to present the 1987 Emerald Awards Banquet Saturday, Oct. 24th at the Red Lion Lloyd Center. These awards will recognize and honor outstanding Black men throughout the community. The men being honored are: Dr. Edward Ward, medicine; Jimmy Walker, father; Thomas Vickers, education; Carl Talton, corporate; Antoine Stoudamire, youth; Roosevelt Robinson, law; E. Shelton Hill, senior citizen; George Hendrix, community service; George Bell, government.

The banquet address will be delivered by Regina Tyner, the NW Public Affairs Director of Contel Business Networks in Seattle, Washington.

The Emerald Awards program provides a unique opportunity to identify and applaud positive role models of the community.

The evening begins with a cocktail hour at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner and the program. Tickets are \$25 per person and are available by calling 288-1925.

Gulf Coast Seafood—Deli
5626 N.E. Union Avenue and Church
(One block north of Killingsworth)

DELIMENU EAT IN OR TAKE OUT

Lunch	\$3.85	Dinner	\$4.85
-------	--------	--------	--------

Lunch or Dinner includes House Fish, cole slaw and a choice of potato salad, fries or spicy yams.

CHOICE OF	CHOICE OF
Buffalo	Buffalo
Gar	Gar
Catfish	Catfish
	Halibut
	\$5.85
CHOICE OF	CHOICE OF
Oyster	Oyster
Shrimp	Shrimp
\$4.95	\$6.85

Combination... \$7.95
Shrimp/oyster/scallops/fish and choice of:
French fries, potato salad, cole slaw or spicy yams.

282-8825	Mon—Thurs.	11:00 am - 9:00 pm
PHONE ORDERS	Fri—Sat	11:00 am - Midnight
	Sunday	12:00 - 6:00 pm

SEAFOOD MARKET

ITEM	Price Per Pound	ITEM	Price Per Pound
Buffalo	\$2.29	Shrimp 21/25	\$9.49
Gar	\$3.29	Shrimp 26/30	\$8.39
Halibut	\$4.29	Louisiana Catfish Filet	\$4.59
Ling Cod	\$2.69	Oysters	\$4.99
Red Snapper	\$2.69	Scallops	\$8.99

You Buy — We Fry... \$2.00 per order

BRING IN THIS AD FOR INTRODUCTORY CATFISH LUNCH FOR \$3.35.
EXPIRES 10/31/87