

A Candle for Michael Newsletter

Issue #131 - March 2024

Sharing MJ news and comment from the World Wide Web

ISSN 2981-9857



Editorial

No matter what happens in the world of Michael Jackson's legacy, one thing is certain, it seems that controversy is never far away. In this instance I am referring to the sale of a portion of Michael's Mijac music catalogue to Sony. Twitter/X ran hot with angry fans commenting about this when the story broke. I don't understand the Estate's thinking, and while it does seem contrary to what Michael wanted, the industry has changed in ways that were unimaginable when Michael was still with us. So, until I see the fine print, or hear an explanation from either party, or read an official announcement, I have no further comment on the matter. But, I understand where those who are upset about this are coming from. Details as known are included in the News Items.

On a happier note, the first image of Jafaar Jackson playing Michael in the biopic currently being filmed caused considerable excitement because of Jafaar's close resemblance to his uncle in the image – one that echoes Michael's on stage appearance during his Dangerous World Tour. Here's hoping the actual movie will live up to the expectations raised by this official "teaser" image, taken by the same photographer who photographed Michael's final rehearsal on the night of 24 June 2009.

Wishing you peace and happiness and a very happy month of Michaeling!

Kerry Hennigan

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Global MJ Pilgrim ("I'm with the doll")

Editor 'A Candle for Michael Newsletter' ISSN 2981-9857

Admin: Michael Jackson's short film 'Ghosts' fan group

Blog: <https://kerryhennigan.wordpress.com>

Columnist: <https://michaeljacksonstudies.org/>

- **MJ: the Musical celebrates 2 years on Broadway**
Last month the cast and crew of MJ: the Musical in New York celebrated the show's second anniversary on Broadway. The celebrations included a cake from Carlos Bakery, which was brought onstage after the curtain call as reported by [Playbill](#). Their article includes a short video and photos of the occasion.
- **...and prepares to open in London!**
Excitement is building ahead of the opening of MJ: the Musical in London's famous West End theatre district on 6 March with the original Broadway cast member Myles Frost starring in his Tony Award-winning role as Dangerous era MJ. Also posted on [Instagram](#) was video footage of Myles reunited with MJ movement specialists Rich + Tone in preparation for the London performances. "They always carry the passion and intention of Michael with them everywhere they go," Myles said. Tickets can currently be booked for the evening and matinee shows through the official [website](#).
- **Biopic filming in LA causes a social media stir**
Photographs of Jaafar Jackson in the role of his real-life uncle Michael Jackson for the *Michael* biopic have been causing a stir amongst fans and the media. Shooting in locations in Los Angeles, Jaafar has seen made up to look like Thriller era Michael and was depicted as MJ from his Dangerous tour in an official image shared by Michael's official online account and shared by Michael's son [Prince](#) who wrote: "This project has had so many special moments for me and everyone involved. This photo was taken by my dad's concert photographer @kevinmazur who was there for my dad's last rehearsal and Jaafar's first performance." [Colman Domingo](#) and [Nia Long](#) as Joseph and Katherine Jackson have also been seen on set with Jaafar. Another cast member was announced this month with Top Gun: Maverick actor [Miles Teller](#) taking on the role of John Branca.
- **Legal update on Robson/Safechuck cases.**
Thanks to MJJ Repository we have a comprehensive update, including copies of court documents from the Robson and Safechuck cases, including the changes to legal representation on both sides, which for the Michael Jackson companies (i.e. the MJ Estate) now includes both Tom Mesereau and Susan Yu who successfully defended Michael in 2005 and who have past experience of both Wade and James before they changed their stories. The MJ defence team no longer objects to the consolidation of the cases due to the similarities in witnesses and claims. The Robson/Safechuck lawyers have notified of anticipated delays because of intending to subpoena "reluctant and international parties." MJJ Repository also notes that Wade and James "specifically note a willingness to conduct mediation, common in pre-trial settlements." So much for it not being about the money. As expected, the MJ defence team did not indicate any desire for mediation or other alternative resolutions. MJJ Repository is continuing to share new, complete episodes of the E! News 2005 trial reenactments on YouTube on a regular basis. "These reenactments coupled with the actual trial transcripts that will be made available in an enhanced format offer a very good picture of what the 2005 trial consisted of and why Michael Jackson was fully exonerated..." Support MJJ Repository's work through [Patreon](#), or follow on [Twitter](#) for a summary thread of the latest information "with a few side observations and interpretations."
- **Spotlight on MJ's shirt for Black History Month**
Last month was Black History Month in the US and as part of that celebration, the official MJ Online team highlighted one of Michael's performance shirts created by Bill Whitten which is on display at the National Museum of African American Culture in Washington DC. The post reads, "If you are visiting the National Museum of African American History and Culture for #BlackHistoryMonth, don't miss the Michael Jackson items on

Calendar of MJ Events

Ongoing – [MJ ONE by Cirque du Soleil](#), Las Vegas.

Until 9 June – [MJ: The Musical](#), New York City

Until 3 Mar – Photographic exhibition: [MJ: Stage of Michael Jackson](#) at Earth Plaza, Yokohama, Japan

27 Feb – 3 Mar – MJ the Musical on tour – Salt Lake City, UT

5 Mar – 10 Mar – MJ the Musical on tour – San Diego, CA

6 Mar – 14 Sep – MJ the Musical UK opens in [London](#)

12 Mar – 17 Mar – MJ the Musical on tour – Tempe, AZ

19 Mar – 31 Mar – MJ the Musical on tour – Costa Mesa, CA

25 Mar – Major Love Prayer www.majorloveprayer.org

10 Apl – 28 Apl – MJ the Musical on tour – Tucson, AZ

10-24 Apl – MJ: the Musical on tour – Denver CO

28 Apl – [The Wiz](#) at Lido Cinemas Hawthorn, Melbourne, Vic

30 Apl – 5 May – MJ The Musical on tour – Des Moines, IA

7 – 12 May – MJ: the Musical on tour – Kansas City MO

14-26 May – MJ: the Musical on tour – Minneapolis MN

28 May – 6 Jun – MJ: the Musical on tour – St. Louis, MO

11 – 16 Jun – MJ the Musical on tour – Buffalo, NY

18 Jun – 7 Jul – MJ the Musical on tour – Boston, MA

9 – 14 Jul – MJ: the Musical on tour – Grand Rapids MN

16 Jul – 11 Aug – MJ: the Musical on tour – Cleveland OH

13 Aug – 8 Sep – MJ: the Musical on tour – Washington DC

4 Dec – 32 Jan 2025 – [MJ: the Musical](#) opens in Hamburg

Feb 2025 – MJ: the Musical opens in Sydney, Australia

18 April 2025 – “Michael” biopic premieres.

News of Note

• Sony buys stake in Michael’s music catalogue

Last month *Billboard* reported that the Sony Music Group has purchased a half share of Michael’s publishing and recording masters catalogue. It is estimated that Sony will pay something in the order US\$600 million for its stake in Mijac which has been valued between 1.2 and 1.5 billion US dollars. Sony’s deal with the MJ Estate does not include royalties from the Broadway play and other theatrical productions featuring Michael’s music. *Billboard* also notes his increased popularity on streaming platforms. “Sales and streams of Jackson’s music grew steadily from 1.07 million album equivalent units in 2020 to 1.47 million in 2023 — up 37% over those three years — according to *Luminate*. That outpaced the overall U.S. music market for album consumption units, which grew 22.9% during that time period. Outside the United States, Jackson is arguably even more popular. In 2023, consumption of his music grew 38.3% to 6.5 billion on-demand streams, up from 4.7 billion streams in 2021.” The article suggests that with the release of the *Michael* biopic next year, streams and sales of Michael’s music will increase.

• King of Popcorn movie nights announced

Heal LA has announced a King of Popcorn Movie Night Series at Hayvenhurst in 2024. Presenting sponsor for the series is Julien’s Auctions. The movie night dates are June 22, July 20, August 31 and Dec 7. Tickets can be purchased for one or more movie nights directly from [Heal LA](#).

display including one of his Victory Tour shirts. Michael recalls his wardrobe people were annoyed with him on this tour. “I found myself swinging my jackets around and slinging them into the audience. I know I shouldn’t do it, but you can’t just control it.” Access the entry for the shirt on the museum [website](#).

• Walk on role in MJ movie up for auction.



From the Heal Los Angeles Foundation and Charitybuzz comes the opportunity to bid for a walk-on role in the upcoming Michael Jackson biopic, *Michael*, in support of Heal Los Angeles. As promoted by [Heal LA](#) and Michael’s son Prince, “This once-in-a-lifetime package will include an on-set experience, behind-the scenes

access, and dinner with [@PrinceJackson](#). Proceeds raised will directly support our continued dedication to youth programs. This is just the first chance for you to be a part of the #MichaelMovie experience so continue to follow and share our official hashtag for more exciting things to come, and most of all, thank you for supporting the Heal Los Angeles Foundation! Bidding is live now through March 11th at: Charitybuzz.com/MichaelMovie”

• Short film award for Bigi at film festival

Michael’s youngest son, ‘Bigi’ Jackson who expressed a desire to be a film director at a young age, won the 2023 Grand Jury Prize for Best Drama at the Santa Monica Film Festival last month. His big brother posted a group photo celebrating Bigi’s directorial and screenwriting debut (while also wishing him a happy birthday on 21 Feb) The film is titled *Rochelles*, which is about two friends who are put at odds when a prestigious restaurant makes them compete for a coveted position in its kitchen. Bigi now has his own entry on the International Movie Database website ([IMDB](#)).

• Paris attends Paris Fashion Week and Grammys

Paris Jackson has attended events during Paris Fashion Week which commenced 26 Feb and runs until 5 March. She has worn a variety of stunning outfits, prompting *People* magazine to publish an article with photos of every single outfit. Access it [here](#). Earlier in February Paris walked the red carpet at the *Grammy Awards* show and attended the afterparty.

• Smooth Radio highlights MJ’s Super Bowl show

Last month when the Super Bowl was receiving its annual publicity glut, Smooth Radio, which never seems to miss an opportunity to post something positive about Michael Jackson, published an article about his performance at the Super Bowl held at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California in 1993. “One of his most memorable and iconic performances was the halftime show at Super Bowl XXVII in 1993, which marked a turning point in the history and evolution of the Super Bowl spectacle,” the article says, describing the show as a “cultural phenomena.” Read the full article (with video) [here](#). [Siedah Garrett](#) also shared her memories of 31 years ago, posting, “I loved being onstage with him, and this one was EPIC!”



A Candle for Michael Newsletter – ISSN 2981-9857
Issue #131, March 2024. Editorial comment, layout and design © Kerry Hennigan 2024, Port Adelaide, Australia