

The Cosmopolitan Review

By YVONNE DELANEY MITCHELL

I, much like the rest of the world, am shocked and saddened by the passing of Michael Jackson. I, much like the rest of the world, have been a Michael Jackson fan since "I Want You Back." There wasn't a recording that he made, whether solo or with his brothers, that I didn't like. When 45s were popular, we would even play the flip side, as the music was that good. For those of you who read the "Cosmopolitan Review" weekly, you will remember it was not too long ago when I recanted how it was a Michael Jackson record that made me get up out of my bed and create my own party in my living room, as the party that my upstairs neighbors were having wouldn't let me sleep. All I needed was to hear Michael say, "Yeeeah" one time, and I was there.

Though, of course, I had never met Michael Jackson, I felt as though he and I were close friends and one that I had just run into. It was only the weekend prior. Charles was out of town and Julia was across the hall playing with her friend Liana. The weather was bleak, and what better thing to do than to curl up and watch a good movie? Believe it or not—what was on you ask?—it was "The Jacksons: An American Dream." (Or is it an "American Story?") Either way, I watched it from beginning to end, remembering how this was my favorite group; well, next to The Whispers, they're my favorite.

Watching the movie took me back to the first time I saw it. I was in Cuba. It was my first night there and after having eaten and buying my own bottle of rum, which only cost \$5 and was so smooth and sweet—made from the country's natural sugar cane—that you don't even need a mixer, I decided to stay in and watch television. What was on but "The Jacksons: An American Dream". (Or is it an "American Story?") I thought it was hilarious that I had to go all the way the Cuba to see the Jackson Five movie. Anyway, I loved it then and loved watching it again. So after having reacquainted myself with the family, their music and their story, hearing news of his passing really hit hard.

Call him weird, but Michael was a class act. He didn't have to take his clothes off, curse, act like a fool or put someone else down to lift himself up. Though his look underwent several changes, some not always pleasing, he always sang with his heart and never lost his soul. Call him confused, but while most of us struggle to define who we are, he knew who he was. Did you hear him on one of his interviews where in defense of himself he stated, "That's not me. That's not who I am," or in song, "I'm a lover, not a fighter"?

True talents that they were, I never remember the Jacksons having to fight to "cross over" on the charts. They transcended race, creed and color. I also recently watched the movie "The Temptations." Crossing over in order to make it to the big time and playing the big clubs was a key turning point in the career of groups like The Temptations, Diana Ross and The Supremes, and Marvin Gaye, just to name a few. I suppose those were the groups that broke ground for The Jacksons. But isn't that what generations do for one another: help make a way, not hinder?

While the whole affair is very sad, it has also been a very insightful time for me, as while listening to Michael's recordings as the radio stations pay tribute, I find myself looking back as to what I was doing at that time in my life when a particular song came out. What I have discovered is Michael Jackson's music has spanned various times and stages of my life. Gee, I guess I've come a long way, baby. I think Michael would be proud to see just how much he has influenced people and united the world: people in France walking en masse as they did the moonwalk, sculptures in the sand along the beaches in India, hoards of people gathering in front of the world-famous Apollo. Michael is missed everywhere, and there is no one to take his place—at least not yet.

Call him non-descript, but I thought he was very self-assured, a creature of nature (did you see his favorite tree where he would climb and perch himself amidst the branches and write song after song?) and always carried a taste of that Motown sound that would let you know that though he had traveled the world, he never forgot his roots.

So now, he travels the universe. Too large for this life alone. I still wish someone had been there to watch over him, nurture him, and inspire him so he wouldn't have had to do it all alone and die such an early death. I miss you Michael. Your songs will live forever. Amen.

Until next week...kisses.

Moët celebrates outstanding community service

Moët Hennessy USA recently celebrated the outstanding community service contributions of the New York Chapter of 100 Black Men of America Inc. at Tavern on the Green by presenting the chapter with its prestigious Hennessy Privilege Award during the prominent organization's national convention in New York City.



Top row, L to R: Noel Hankin Sr., VP Multicultural Relations, Moët Hennessy USA; Mark Cornell, president, Moët Hennessy USA, who presented the award; Phillip Banks, president, New York Chapter of 100 Black Men of America Inc.; and Andrew Glaser, Sr. VP Business, Moët Hennessy USA. Bottom row: The original founders of the New York Chapter of 100 Black Men of America Inc., founded in 1963

Father's Day cooks aid computer kids

Annual Harlem event expands to new location

The New York City component of the nation's largest Father's Day celebration—Real Men Cook—was held in Harlem on Father's Day.

This 20th anniversary community cookout took place at the Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Building Pavilion, 125th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard.

Real Men Cook has a national mission of raising positive images of African-American men. This is accomplished by displaying the culinary skills of local fathers, husbands, brothers, coaches, teachers, entrepreneurs, varied professionals and others.

Hosted in New York City by



Father and son join in to cook for Real Men Cook. Cyril Cassel of HCCI and son Adissa

Real Men Charities and the NYC Mission Society, this event will also benefit the Computer

Clubhouse of Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement Inc. (HCCI).

HCCI is a secular consortium of 90 local congregations with a

Thirteen-year-old Omar Diallo recently won praise for his 3-D live-action science fiction film, "The Adventures of Sharky Lo," at the International Computer



Darryl T. Downing; Lou Myers, TV actor; and Reece McEwen

combined 60,000 congregants dedicated to the physical, economic and cultural revitalization of the Harlem community.

Lucille McEwen, HCCI president and CEO, states that the "Computer Clubhouse provides an inviting setting where young people can temporarily shed their stress-filled backgrounds and immerse themselves in a high-end technological studio environment."

Ms. McEwen adds, "The result is a constant flow of imaginative technological projects using a wide array of professional software, as well as green screen technology and robotics."

This year, two of the HCCI Computer Clubhouse members have won special recognition, according to Fred Riedel, the program coordinator.

Network Annual Conference in Albuquerque.

Christine Davis, 17, an original Computer Clubhouse member, recently won multiple college scholarships and will be attending Fairleigh Dickinson University in the fall. Davis attributes much of her success to her many years and hard work at the Computer Clubhouse.

Marko Nobles, the event manager, states, "For years now, Real Men Cook has been a great example of the celebration of fatherhood. It gives our community a chance to celebrate fathers and real men."

The HCCI Computer Clubhouse will have a "show and tell" booth to familiarize the community with how it helps Harlem youngsters explore their own ideas, develop skills and build self-confidence through creative use of technology, explains Mr. Riedel.