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The Movable Buffet

DISPATCHES FROM LAS VEGAS
BY RICHARD ABOWITZ

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Michael Jackson in Las Vegas

December 28, 2006 | 12:24 pm

The weirdest man in show business, Michael Jackson, arrived as a Christmas gift to Las Vegas. Review-Journal's Norm gets kudos for leading the pack on this story. Norm [reached deal maker Jack Wishna](#) right at the start who confirmed Jackson's arrival in Vegas on Saturday night. Wishna is not only a Jackson friend, he is also well connected in the resort corridor. Obviously, the question on every mind: will Michael Jackson be able to strike a deal like Celine Dion, Elton John and Prince to headline here? I think not.

Actually, reports had Jackson sniffing around Vegas back in 2003 for such a deal. [Back then I wrote](#) in Las Vegas Weekly that bringing Michael Jackson on as a headliner in Vegas would be too risky for any resort that could afford him. Though Jackson's asking price has probably dropped since then, I haven't changed my mind. (Last time, by the way, was before he was charged and tried and acquitted over accusations of child molestation.) I still don't think any major resort will want anything to do with Michael Jackson in 2007.

Still, if Michael Jackson isn't expecting a big payday from a casino at the start, if he is simply determined to headline in Vegas, there is another way. Jackson could four wall--- essentially rent a room from a resort and become his own promoter. It would be an amazing humiliation for Jackson to open without a resort to sponsor him. A major obstacle to renting is that this probably would require Jackson to find outside investors to replace the resort; investors who will pay the start up costs for renovating (or, to create) the venue and what would likely have to be a stage show worthy of someone who still believes he is the King of Pop. On the other hand, the major advantage of renting to Jackson is that it gives the property a feeling of safe distance from the project (while still benefiting from what is certain to be a staggering amount of free press). More importantly, renting reduces the financial risks to the resort of working with Jackson.

The appeal to both parties of a four wall should be obvious. Having a Michael Jackson show as a tenant would certainly be an appealing prospect for any casino in Las Vegas. The resort would get the benefits of a Jackson residency without taking on financial risks or facing the possible embarrassment of Jackson representing the resort as an official headliner. Renting also gives the 48 year-old Jackson an opportunity to prove that he is still both a draw and capable of offering regular professional and competent performances. If I had to bet, I would still say Michael Jackson in Vegas is never going to happen. But Las Vegas thrives off doing the dangerous, playing with the bad, creating thrillers and making off the wall deals.

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michael jackson might be a serial killer like richard rameriz(the night stalker of L.A.)

Posted by: ed | December 28, 2006 at 01:18 PM

Michael Jackson IS NOT THE CHILD MOLESTOR...

YOUR MOM IS, ED...

PEACE.

Posted by: Sean Vezina | December 28, 2006 at 02:42 PM

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Michael Jackson would be an asset to any resort. He shouldn't be prejudiced due to a court case in which he was found innocent. With a years practice I sincerely believe that Michael Jackson could return to his highly professional and fantastic performances of the 70's, 80's and 90's. How is the world possibly going to see the King of Pop make a comeback if nobody will give him a fully deserved 2nd chance?

Posted by: sian meadows | December 28, 2006 at 02:50 PM

Sean, you are right. Michael 'IS NOT THE CHILD MOLESTER' just A child molester, the child being the one to whom he paid millions for his silence.

Posted by: john hernandez | December 28, 2006 at 02:54 PM

Pdo, child molester its all true

Posted by: ANon | December 28, 2006 at 02:59 PM

those who hate him have done their worst to make him look bad all over the world but no matter what they say about michael he his an ANGEL in his own way.

Posted by: jessica | December 28, 2006 at 04:29 PM

I DONT THINK MICHAEL JACKSON IS A CHILD MOLESTOR, BECAUSE iF u read ABOUT his CHILD HOOD AND WOT HE A BIN THROUGHT IT SEEM HE WUD WANT TO BE DIFFRENT BUT IN THIS WORL PPL ONLY CARE ABOUT MONEY AND THAT IF IF U REALY DEEP DOWN THINK ABOUT IT . I WILL ADMIT I DO THINK HE WOULD OF SLEPT WITH THE KID BUT I DONT THINK HE WUD OF DONE ANYTHING WITH HIM AND YE PUTTING THE CHILD OVER THE BALCONY IS A MAD THING TO DO BUT I DONT THINK IT WEIRD LIKE PEOPLE SAY.

Posted by: codece | December 28, 2006 at 05:31 PM

Elvis was a controversial figure before the International signed him up.
I think MJ will be the same way.

Posted by: rick | December 28, 2006 at 05:38 PM

I CANT BELIEV THIS GUY WHO WROTE THIS ARTICLE...HE OBVIOUSLY IS A COMPLETE IDIOT.....MICHAEL JACKSON IS KING OF POP....IF MJ WAS PERFORMING EVERYONE WUD COME TO SEE... DA MAN HAS TALENT MORE THAN ANYONE WILL EVER HAVE.

IM NOT EVEN AN MJ FAN BUT IM AN HONEST PERSON AND I CANT IGNORE THE IGNORANCE AND BIASED IN THIS ARTICLE...ALL VERY UNFAIR AND UN PROFESSIONAL...

Posted by: farsheed | December 28, 2006 at 05:49 PM

a) Michael Jackson has been acquitted, for crying out loud;b) Michael Jackson has proved to be a great performer;c) Why not open the doors of Las Vegas to great performer?d) Those who like his work will pay to see him on stage; those who don't will see something else.Isn't that fair?

Posted by: Joseph Oliveira | December 28, 2006 at 06:14 PM

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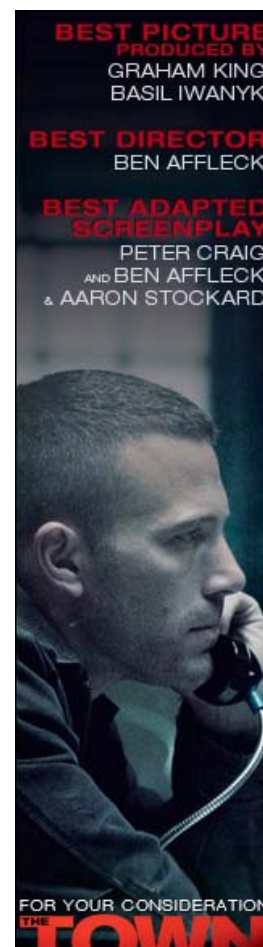
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Heal the world Michael, heal the world.

Posted by: Boom Boom | December 28, 2006 at 06:38 PM

I understand "The Vienna Boys Choir" is Michael Jackson's opening act!

Posted by: Bob Rhode Island | December 28, 2006 at 07:13 PM

To say that Michael Jackson can't strike a deal in Vegas is crazy. People from all over this earth flocked to California just to see that man walk in and out of a court house, do you honestly believe that no resort would want him performing for them? Do you not realize the millions upon millions of dollars Michael Jackson could bring to Las Vegas by performing there? Are you insane?

Posted by: Tara | December 28, 2006 at 08:28 PM

Michael Jackson will perform in Vegas - it's just a matter of time, and venue. MJ only has to stage a concert to prove to all the doubters out there that he is the King of Pop, and he can indeed SELL OUT any venue in any land through-out the world. Once, the crowds fill the concert - then the capitalist will revisit the possibility of offering MJ a contract comparable to Sir Elton, and Celine D.

If Vegas does not offer MJ a contract - then the King of Pop may be the first performer to hold a long term contract at a Indian Casino.....the possibilities are endless!

Posted by: Roy R. Mendiola | December 28, 2006 at 08:42 PM

MJ according to the Guinness Book of World Records is The Most Successful Entertainer of All Time. Most of the pop stars today do not even qualify to perform back-up for MJ. It really bothers me that in a country like the US of A, a man who has been FULLY acquitted on 10 counts in one of the most dehumanizing and public trials ever can still be portrayed in the manner this article has portrayed MJ...

Remember MJ has been in the business for 40 years and has been declared a 'has been' every decade since he launched his adult career; off the wall came after the Jacksons had seen better days; he used his own money to finance thriller the video because Sony did not believe in it... bad having sold over 30m was declared by many main stream pundits a failure by comparison to the 50m sales of thriller (give me a break)... dangerous was on the verge of outselling thriller until the accusations broke out and still manage to 30m... after the child molestation claims of 1993 his career was declared over by everyone... History came and has sold 15m, more than any album most other celebrated artists like Madonna could even dream of selling.. Sony gave up on Invincible and its sold 11m more anything Justin Timberlake has sold ever (on top of all the nerve racking publicity he attracts from MTV)...

MJ has given us great music consistently (can't say this for most other artists who have been around for just as long) for 40 years, unmatched live performances, set the standard for video format as we know, gave us Captain EO and we are the world.

This disrespectful type of writing that tries to undermine his greatness will be proven wrong because MJ is beyond media mediocrity...

MJ was a household name and Global Icon before CNN and MTV; there are places in the world today where these media houses are not known and MJ is...

Viva MJ; the living legend.

Posted by: chello | December 28, 2006 at 10:26 PM

Michael Jackson, unlike what stupid people think, is a great man who has been abused by drifters and gold diggers.

I would not like him to perform in Las Vegas as it feels as the last great deal for many artists.

Michael Rules!

Posted by: German | December 28, 2006 at 10:56 PM

MJ is my hero regardless of how people view him. He is the greatest talent/entertainer who ever lived in my lifetime!

Posted by: Dee Gamatero | December 29, 2006 at 12:17 AM

It'd be amazing to see him perform again, the man is exceptionally talented regardless of his personal troubles and he can entertain and draw in crowds like no other living entertainer. Yet, year after year his talent passes by without notice. We are all waiting with baited breath for that ultimate comeback, now make it happen!

Plus, he's been cleared of all wrong-doings and I see that the mom of the false accuser has now plead guilty to multiple fraud and perjury charges, so I'm definitely willing to give him the benefit of doubt since the evidence points towards innocence way more than guilty.

Posted by: Nate G. | December 29, 2006 at 12:51 AM

i dont care wot ppl say bout micheal jackson the ppl who r his fans no that he wudnt hurt a child he loves them 2 much well nobody whose nobody wud no that.the man who wrote that colum doesnt no wot he is talkin bout ne casino or ne where wud b lucky 2 have him.michael jackson is the greatest singer/sonngwriter/dancer... ne1 has eva seen and will eva see.im only 18 yrs old and ive loved him eva since i was 3 and always will ive grown up listening 2 him and ne1 who is in his presence is lucky. he is a music genius sooo... talented betterthen the likes of elvis presley and the talentless madonna he is a role model 2 ppl like usher and beyonce 2 ppl like britney and justin. he has broke sooooooooooooo... many world records and holds the record of the most music awards ilove him and always will.

Posted by: lauren | December 29, 2006 at 03:08 AM

Michael Jackson? Well, he will come and blow all of the Las Vegas acts away. Those who don't wanna see him because of some strange stories that surely has some truth and more falseness in them, are truly not seekers of genuine talent performances. I hope he includes guest artists like Stevie Wonder and Prince(?) etc and that he concentrates on stage life and not "media reality". To enter the hope of a bright future we have to let go of the darker past. We are not yesterday. We are today and hopefully we will become tomorrow. Futuristic visions from Django Novo - Swing Baby!

Posted by: Django | December 29, 2006 at 03:21 AM

Way back before the trial and the all of the bad publicity, Michael Jackson and Steve Wynn talked about performances at the Mirage -- this would have been, what, 1991 or so.

So, he's been working toward a Vegas act for YEARS, not just recently.

Posted by: Slothrop | December 29, 2006 at 07:14 AM

Why would anyone want to see this freak? How long before he molests a kid in Vegas & ends up getting what he deserves? Worn out celebrities with nowhere to go....oh wait there's always Vegas.

Posted by: imgern | December 29, 2006 at 08:52 AM

hi, i live in Cornwall that is in the UK if nobody knew, i am not a massive fan of michael jacksons music i obviously think he is a genius, but do you know something i feel so sorry for him i can also relate to his loneliness and withdrawel from society all of you are acting like you know him well none of us do leave him alone, the thing is you are all weirder than him, hes alright and that is coming from a celtic person like myself, not that any of now what that means but hey you are all american and two faced and are so raped up in everybody elses life you all forget about you own!!!!!!!

Posted by: louise | December 29, 2006 at 02:56 PM

Wouldn't the Middle Eastern people kick Michael out the Dubi the m-east gulf country if he was really a molester? Probably kill him? Has he stopped paying millions of dollars to the White bigot L Ron Hubbard of the scientology clan and of the superior being philosopher freemason occult? Is it by chance that the all white jury and police find him guilty? What about his Entourage Nation of Islam? Could that be a factor especially after 911?

Posted by: terry | December 29, 2006 at 07:50 PM

If the sayings "It is what it is and that's just what it is", or "What u C is what u get" are true then what seems to be the problem? The man has talent and it speaks for itself. One must learn that in life you must try to c the good in everyone, and be truthful to your inner self and set aside bias and prejudices and give him his due credit.

Posted by: Red | December 29, 2006 at 08:14 PM

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