

"Street" Pepsi Commercial

Bob Giraldi, director

"Michael was very much involved in the execution of everything, from the choreography to the location scouting. He really knew what worked."

"Rock & Soul" magazine (Winter 1984)

The scene was similar to those on many other commercial shoots: a form of organized madness. But the energy on the set of Pepsi-Cola's newest commercials was electrifying. The most popular entertainers in the world--Michael Jackson and his five brothers--were there. And they were performing to the sound of a "New Generation".

The two spots the Jacksons completed in California this week have already been called "historic" and "the most eagerly awaited television event since the Super Bowl." Making them took enormous amounts of time, energy, and commitment by a large and talented group of people.

"The work that went into these commercials is phenomenal", said Alan Pottasch, senior vice president of creative services for Pepsi-Cola. "Especially when you consider the time pressures we were under."

With plans for the ads in the works since December, various production crews put in 8,000 man hours scouting locations and arranging for the shoots. "People literally worked around the clock", Pottasch added. Seven days a week, non-stop."

Finally, the "Annie" set at The Burbank Studios and the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles were selected as the two shooting locations. On these two sets, to the tune of "Billie Jean", Pepsi and The Jacksons set out to make advertising history.

With filming underway, the hard work continued. The first two days were spent under glorious blue skies on Burbank's back lot, where Broadway's "Tap Dance Kid", Alfonso Ribeiro, joined his idol, Michael Jackson, for a sizzling street dance. With Michael's five brothers and eleven of Alfonso's friends also dancing to Tony Award-winner Michael Peters's choreography, the number proved to be pure magic.

"Right On" magazine (June 1984)

The second commercial is a street scene. The Jacksons meet a group of young kids who are dancing in the streets. Michael encounters a lad who is dressed like him and imitating his dance steps. The youngster featured in the commercial is a new friend of Michael's. He's Alfonso Ribiero, who is currently starring on Broadway in "The Tap Dance Kid". That is where Michael spotted the twelve-year-old dancing wonder.

Tony Award-winning choreographer, Michael Peters, put together the high-energy street dance... The two commercial spots were both directed by music video wizard Bob Giraldi.