

"Rock & Soul" Magazine Interview

Date assessed by the fact that "The Jacksons just left the recording studio a few hours ago, completing their fourth album for Epic Records entitled 'Triumph'; They "finalised the recording of the Triumph album in June 1980" (Mike Smallcombe's "Making Michael")

Rock & Soul Magazine. Steve Manning. "The Jacksons Rule the World"

Who could believe that it's been over a decade since The Jacksons first burst on the music horizon. Those five little guys, who took the universe by storm way back then, are now mature young men who are well known in the entertainment world, highly respected, and, to say the least, quite wealthy.

During the ten years that The Jacksons have been delighting music lovers, beginning with their brand of "bubblegum soul" to the "rock pop" sounds of the 80's, their special musical formula have earned the group over 100 million record sales from Harlem, New York, to Manila, Philippines.

Three of the Jackson brothers — Jackie, Tito and Marlon - are married and have children. Michael, at 22, is one of the most sought after bachelors in the world. His heart belongs to no one: his first love is music. Randy, the youngest of The Jacksons, is now a handsome 19, and is considered to be the new sex symbol for the teenybop crowd.

The family is riding the crest of one of their biggest years ever. During 1979-80, Michael, Jackie, Tito, Marlon, and Randy have remained on the charts with their Destiny album. Michael Jackson has one of the largest selling LPs in recording history, releasing five singles from the smash Off The Wall album. Beginning with the self-penned and produced Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough to the heart throbbing She's Out Of My Life. Off The Wall has sold upwards of eleven million copies worldwide.

In this hard pressed economy many of rock's major Superstars failed to attract sell-out audiences this year. Well, The Jacksons completed a highly successful eight million dollar concert tour across America in several cities, like Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Los Angeles, where near riots broke out for tickets. The Jacksons had to book additional shows to satisfy their fans.

Success is not something The Jacksons readily talk about. "My brothers and I are very proud that we have done so well during the last year", Michael says. "There were many people in the industry who doubted our creative talents. There were those who told us we lacked the expertise and skill to write and produce our own album. Yes, I'm proud of our achievements, but I don't like to talk about them all the time because I always knew we could do it, once given the opportunity."

Michael is speaking to me for "Rock & Soul" from The Jacksons' sprawling two acre estate in Encino, California. The house has grown quite empty through the years as the other members of The Jacksons moved to their own respective homes. Michael now shares the elegantly appointed house with his parents, Joseph and Katherine Jackson, and the two Jackson sisters, LaToya, 24, and Janet, 14.

"I spend a lot of time at home, when I'm not in the studio. Usually. I enjoy taping vintage movies and television programs on my video recorder." Michael said. Continuing his comments about his homelife, he says, "As you know we have our own recording studio at home. I find myself

living in there at times. My father many years ago always felt that we should have our own studio. It's very special to me. Randy and I wrote Shake Your Body Down To The Ground there; I composed Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough there too."

Just recently, Michael, along with his beautiful sister, LaToya, worked on several tunes for her debut LP. Elaborating on the project. Michael said, "Toya and I originally wrote the tune 'Midnight Lover' for Donna Summer. We never got around to giving Donna the song, so when my father and manager, Joe Jackson, asked Toya about recording an album, we used the tune."

Michael Jackson should be called MIDAS MICHAEL; everything he seems to lend his golden hands and vocal chords to turns platinum and gold. LaToya Jackson, Kenny Loggins, Dave Mason, Minnie Riperton, and Kenny Rogers LPs are but a few of the records that Michael has sung background on or composed and produced. "It was a real pleasure to do vocal tracks for the Minnie Riperton album: she was an incredible lady." In addition to working with the artists already mentioned, word through the grapevine is that Michael may compose, produce and sing a tune on Stephanie Mills' next LP this winter.

The Jacksons just left the recording studio a few hours ago, completing their fourth album for Epic Records entitled "Triumph". The LP will be an extension of "Destiny". "We are really excited about our second album that we produced and composed. Literally. Triumph means 'to win', and The Jacksons as a whole are winning, not just winning with our career, but we are victorious", said Marlon. "Some of my favorite tunes on the album are the single 'You Are My Lovely One', 'Can You Feel It', 'Walk Right Now', 'Heartbreak Hotel', and 'Wonder Who'. It took us a little over six months to complete the album and my brothers and I are satisfied with the results."

One of the reasons "Triumph" took six months to complete was the almost fatal automobile accident of Randy Jackson. For a moment, the youngest Jackson brother was near death. Now fully recovered, Randy is almost like new again. Speaking of the accident of last March, when he felt he may not be able to walk again. Randy said, "I'm very thankful to God and my family that I pulled through the accident. I was really afraid that I would never be able to walk again, because my legs and ankles got crushed. My father found some of the best therapists to work with me. I would like to take this time to thank all my friends, fans, and the people. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all the flowers, their prayers, and get-well cards from around the world."

This year has been a personal triumph for Randy Jackson, particularly his miraculous recovery from the automobile accident. "It was a real joy to go back into the studio again. You know, one thing. I really appreciate life even more now."

The Jacksons' incredible recording career took off in the '70s and continued to soar. They ended the decade by reaching their musical "Destiny".

And now, The Jacksons are beginning the '80s with nothing less than a dazzling musical "Triumph".