

# 'Victory' tour a thriller to all

By Don Strausburger

In today's world of music, separated by generation gaps, what are the odds of seeing more than one generation attending the same concert? Or better yet, what are the odds of seeing four?

That unlikely sight was commonplace Saturday evening when the Jacksons brought their much-publicized tour to Philadelphia.

Over the past several months, the Jacksons have been helping to eliminate the age barriers considered normal in the world of contemporary popular music as they journey across the country on the "Victory" tour.

Not only have the Jacksons eliminated the age barriers, they have also managed to reduce the racial barriers which have long intimidated many music fans.

The show, performed to nearly 70,000 fans at JFK Stadium covered 15 years of the Jackson family's musical history from the early days of hits like "I'll Be There" to smash hits like "Billie Jean" and "Beat It" from Michael's multi-platinum album, "Thriller."

Unfortunately, the "Victory" tour lacks something that should be very important to its billing -- a song from the album that the tour is meant to promote. The only time the audience is exposed to the new album's music is when the video to the song, "Torture," is shown well before the concert even starts.

However, once the concert begins, the only word to describe the performance is "sensational." From beginning to end, the electricity generated by Michael and his brothers does not stop.

The concert begins with a modern version of "The Sword and the Stone," featuring the youngest brother, Randy, as the man destined to become King. After this opening, the remaining brothers come on stage breaking into "Wanna Be Startin' Something," followed by "The Things I Do For You," a more obscure cut from "Destiny."

After several selections from the more recent albums by the Jacksons, and especially Michael, the stage is turned over to Jermaine, who is possibly the most versatile performer of the family. Jermaine does three songs from two of his solo albums including the controversial song, "Tell Me

I'm Not Dreaming," a duet with Michael which was not released as a single because Epic Records feared that Michael's career might suffer from "overexposure."

Shortly after Michael's return, the older people in the crowd get a chance to reminisce with three of the Jackson Five hits from the early 1970s, including "I Want You Back" and "The Love You Save."

Although these classics are performed true to the originals, Michael's gospel-influenced ad-libs ends "I'll Be There" in a surprising blend of old and new styles, even if he does bleed for dramatic effect.

After this brief flashback, the group returns the audience to the high-tech world of modern music for the remainder of the concert which draws to a climactic ending with three of Michael's chart-topping hits: "Beat It," "Billie Jean" and "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough," which ends the musical portion of the concert. This is followed by a brief yet dazzling fireworks display bringing the evening to a close.

The only things more dazzling than the performance itself are the technical aspects of lighting and special effects. The lighting, aided by a continual flow of dry ice fog, provides an aesthetically pleasing image with its quickly changing color patterns.

The special effects are highlighted by lasers which are rarely but effectively used. The lasers are especially helpful in the amazingly intimate rendition of "Human Nature," in which they form a revolving flower of green and red light. Special effects are also achieved through the use of mechanical robots and even some elementary disappearing tricks.

Musically, the concert offers fantastic individual as well as group performances. All of the solos, both vocal and instrumental, are kept within the constraints of the original studio cuts without being identical. The band is extremely tight; the horns and guitars work together perfectly.

The most outstanding musical feature is the interplay of the harmonies in every song. Even in the featured songs of the early years, the harmony is excitingly fresh for those who remember the original versions.

After 15 years as a group, though, the Jacksons remain a predominantly visual rather than musical group. The group does a continual series of choreographed dance steps


both as a group and, especially in Michael's case, individually. Watching Michael dance continually for nearly two hours illustrates both his ability and his incredible stamina. Marlon, who does backup vocals, exhibits stage presence second only to Michael -- except Marlon is always on stage.

As mentioned earlier, the music of the Jacksons is very important in the reduction of the traditional boundaries established by race and age. The crowd in one section included a group of young black girls who danced and sang throughout the entire concert and four generations of another

family who equally enjoyed the concert but on a different level.

Although many people complained about the ticket price of \$29.75, everyone obviously felt that the show was worth the price. The "Victory" tour is well worth the price and should be included in everyone's list of all-time great concerts.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OCTOBER 11th</b> <b>"MAGNUM"</b></p> <p>This very talented Easton, PA Band comes back to Van Zants after spending the summer at the Shores best rooms. Their record has been played on radio stations along the whole East Coast.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OCTOBER 12 - 13</b> <b>"ALIEN"</b></p> <p>See Jim Morrison come back to life direct from the coffin in their famous Doors Show "The Resurrection of Jim Morrison" plus 2 sets of top 40 Dance Music.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OCTOBER 18-19-20</b> <b>"KINGS N QUEENS"</b></p> <p>2 ladies front this very talented Central PA Band. Their new E.P. features "Shake Me" and can be heard on FM-104.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>October 25 - 26 - 27</b> <b>"PUZZLE"</b></p> <p>Besides their fantastic Pink Floyd Show "Puzzle" offers a great Visual and Sound Act you'll want to see again and again.</p>

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