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Michael Jackson: The Life and Times of the King of Pop - 1958-2009 [Video]
Video review of Michael Jackson: The Life and Times of the King of Pop - 1958-2009

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Michael Jackson: The Life and Times of the King of Pop - 1958-2009

Score: **40%**
Rating: **Not Rated**
Publisher: **RockCity Entertainment**
Region: **1**
Media: **DVD/1**
Running Time: **79**
Genre: **Documentary/Miscellaneous**
Audio: **English**

Watching this DVD was an exhausting, draining experience. To summarize it at this point would probably have you walking away all too quickly. So, I'll simply start from the beginning. The opening credits are way too long and resemble someone's Youtube tribute to Michael Jackson. Stock photos of Michael Jackson are flashed on the screen while credits roll and a song plays. In fact, someone seems to have dug up a midi file of "Rock with You" from the early 90's somewhere in the dark recesses of their computer just for this purpose. The production value is one thing, but the real joke here is that the people in these credits, Janet Jackson, Brooke Shields, Magic Johnson, Stevie Wonder, and others, do not actually end up doing or saying anything exclusive to this DVD. In fact, the names in the credits are of people who show up in footage that RockCity pulled from other sources, mainly Michael Jackson's nationally televised funeral and memorial service. The last time I checked, credits were usually for people who did some work in the production or at least provided an interview.



It only goes downhill from there. The actual content of the DVD begins with a replay of the 911 call where one of Michael's staff called for Michael being unconscious and not breathing. Look, I love Michael's work, but I'm no raving fan. Still, I had to stop the DVD in disgust at this point. This is *not* a classy way to start your tribute. One does not play the 911 call from the death of one's mother in tribute to them, much less their hero. To add to the creepy factor, one of Michael's slow, soulful songs plays in the background while you listen to this and watch footage of the emergency team back the ambulance away from his home. Of course, to show their pride in this production, the RockCity logo is repeatedly flashed over all of this stuff too.

Following that, the DVD delves into a collection of clips mined from the internet, people's DVRs, and other less than legitimate sources. I kid you not, one clip has both the Entertainment Tonight and the CBS network logo still attached to it. There is little in the way of transitions here. There are certainly no segways, no narration. The flow of the DVD goes from footage from Michael's memorial service to home videos from Michael's ranch to interviews on the street to clips from news specials.

The only parts of the DVD that are probably original (and also likely to have been used with permission) are the interviews with fans. The interactions with the ordinary people that were Jackson's biggest fans are touching at times, and simply curious people-watching material at other times. There aren't many other productions on the life of Michael that would interview the many people dressing up as Michael, foreign tourists, and even the Los Angeles Police Department (fittingly uncooperative with the request to sing one of Michael's songs for the camera). For this, I do give the DVD credit.

This feels like a fan's personal collection of Michael footage. There are clips from the memorial service as well as from Michael's home videos. There's a water balloon fight with Michael, Macaulay Culkin, and Janet Jackson. There is a rare interview where Michael sets the truth straight about some of the popular rumors surrounding him. There's plenty of

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shaky, paparazzi-like footage of Michael simply waving from a limo, or shopping with his family. The problem with all this is that it's being packaged and sold as a legitimate, professional production. It's not. Editing is poor, it seems like no effort was made to obtain clean copies of any footage, and little was done to organize or tie anything together. Also, the memorial service, the one thing the DVD could have relied on to tell Michael's story, is chopped up and cut down. You can almost feel the drag-and-drop, cut-and-paste signature of Windows Movie Maker on this entire production. The only way to recommend this DVD is if you need to have something, anything Michael, and you need it now. Otherwise, you should probably wait for a more polished production, or simply scour the internet, as these folks did.

-Fights with Fire, GameVortex Communications AKA Christin Deville

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