

# THE SAGE/PRIME GENTLEMEN MOVIE

## MICHAEL



There was – and is – no one like Michael Jackson.

Nearly 17 years after his death at age 50 in 2009, the pop superstar’s music and art continue to electrify, even as his unprecedented fame, shrouded in rumor and unsettling allegations, confounds and mystifies. He’s been exalted and excoriated, deified and dragged

through the mud, and yet he remains elusive, a contradiction whose truth, whatever it may be, will likely never be known. There’s little doubt that this is slick, celebratory biopic chronicling the rise of pop superstar Michael Jackson, from his musical beginnings in the 1960s to the heights of his 1980s fame.

The movie certainly wastes no time playing the hits. It picks up in 1966 with eight-year-old Michael and his brothers literally whipped into musical shape by taskmaster patriarch Joseph, all while saintly mother Katherine looks on. Christened the Jackson 5, the boys dance for pennies on the Chitlin’ Circuit, find Motown stardom with their miraculous early hits, and – faster than one of his signature spins – the emergent solo Michael is recording his breakthrough record “Off the Wall” with Quincy Jones and plotting world domination with “Thriller.” Doing an uncanny impersonation of his uncle, Jaafar Jackson- who shares Michael’s signature moves and his contagious smile – give a warm, sometime soulful performance. Whenever he’s performing – which is often – the movie finds its transformative charge by keeping the focus on the music, which remains among the wonders of the pop world.

Only occasionally does the movie evoke a sense of Jackson’s immense loneliness, an isolation that led him to create the fantasy world that would be his undoing. Intended as a victory lap for the emancipated solo star, the recreation of Jackson’s 1989 “Bad” performance bristles with defiance and rising aggression. Michael leaves us with an readable image of its subject – his eyes hidden behind an outstretched hand, his mouth locked in a hardened grimace, as though readying himself for a turbulent future to come. Perhaps it’s just as Jackson himself would have wanted – to remain a mystery.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**1:30PM *at the* PRIDE CENTER**

**FREE POPCORN and SODA**