

### MICHAEL JACKSON, THE KING IS DEAD

# Pinoy mourn the loss of a pop icon

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL  
AJPress

LOS ANGELES – When Fil-Am Haid-ee Villar-Poquiz heard that Michael Jackson passed away on Thursday, she was in disbelief.

Like thousands of Jackson fans, she followed the news and continued to refresh Internet news story about the King of Pop. When she read that his body was transported to the Ronald Reagan Medical Center at UCLA, she had to go and pay her last respects.

"I was just so sad *parang* it actually dawned on me that 'Oh my God not with such a talent like that' because I just feel so sad," said Villar-Poquiz, a 40-year-old Human Resource manager in Santa Monica. "I just kept telling my friends I have to be there, I have to be there. I know his body is still there."

Villar-Poquiz joined hundreds of fans at UCLA medical center mourning Jackson's death. Many stood in front of makeshift memorials. One woman sat on the ground and wept openly clutching a pink pillow with Jackson's face on it.

Standing in front of Jackson's Hollywood Walk of Fame star, Fil-Am Liza David paid her respects Thursday night.

"I think Michael Jackson's passing is kind of our generations Elvis passing," she said to the Asian Journal. "I grew up during the Thriller era and I remember the Motown concert when he first did the moonwalk. Everyone just went crazy and he just blew up after that."

Jackson, referred to as the King of Pop, passed away on June 25 after collapsing in his rented home in Holmby Hills.

According to a UCLA statement, it is believed that the 50-year-old Jackson suffered cardiac arrest in his home. However, the cause of his death is unknown until results of the autopsy are released.

"His personal physician, who was with him at the time, attempted to resuscitate Jackson, as did paramedics who transported him to Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center," said the King of Pop's brother Jermaine Jackson during a press conference. "Upon arriving at the hospital at approximately 1:14pm, a team of doctors, including emergency physicians and cardiologists, attempted to resuscitate him for

a period of more than one hour but were unsuccessful."

Doctors at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center pronounced the pop superstar dead at 2:26 pm. He was 50 years old.

#### RP mourns Jackson's death

Jackson was an extremely popular musician in the Philippines. More than 50,000 Filipinos attended Jackson's HIStory concert tour in Manila in 1996. It was his only visit to the Philippines.

Former first lady of the Philippines, Imelda Marcos, cried when she heard the news.

"Michael Jackson enriched our lives, made us happy," Marcos said in a statement. "The accusations, the persecution caused him so much financial and mental anguish. He was vindicated in court, but the battle took his life. There is probably a lesson here for all of us."

Even Pinoy politicians reminisced about the influence Jackson had on them while they were growing up.

"I tried to dance like him but I just couldn't," said Senator Francis Escudero to the Inquirer.net.

According to ABS-CBN, TV host Jojo Alejar shed tears on nationwide TV as he shared his admiration for the late King of Pop.

"I guess pretty much *yun talaga, ganun kalaki yung influence niya sa aking career*," he said before imitating some of Jackson's patented dance moves.

Singer Gary Valenciano also cried when he heard the news.

"In some ways it's like part of me has died too. He was an inspiration to me. I still wonder if he ever read the letter I wrote him when he performed here. It was the least I could do for all the years

that he inspired me," he said in a statement to ABS-CBN.

And the 1,400 Cebu inmates who made headlines worldwide with their reprisal of Jackson's Thriller video will recreate their dance in tribute to the 13-time Grammy Award winner.

Officials from the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center officials said that the performance would be held this weekend inside the

provincial jail in Cebu.

Jackson was a global icon who inspired a generation of musicians with his all-around unique style of performing.

The seventh of nine kids, Jackson began his music career at an early age. He was a member of the Jackson 5 when Motown Records signed the group in the 1960's.

But he became a star when he pursued a solo career.

His 1982 album Thriller remains the best-selling album of all time, selling more than one hundred million copies worldwide.

From the height of his success came a downward spiral.

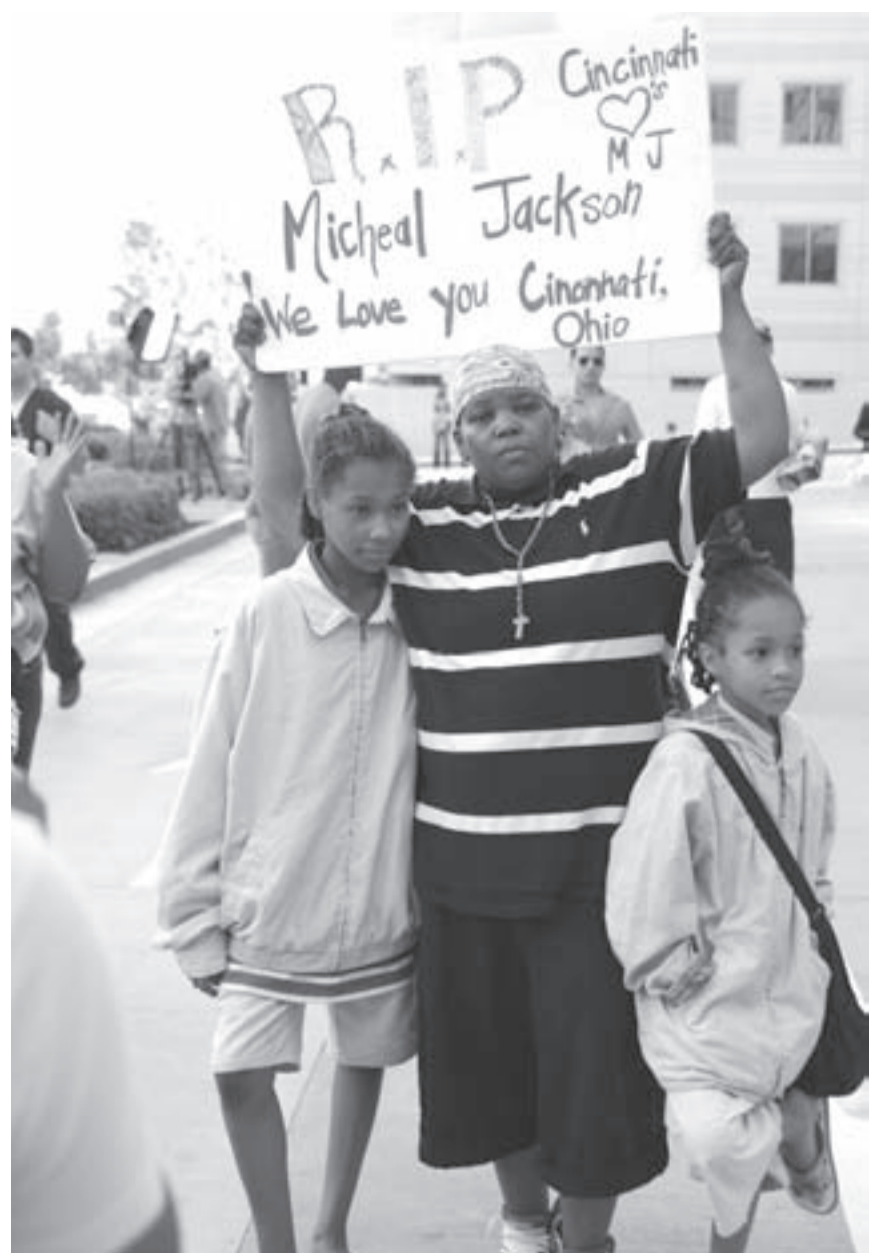
In the 1990's, his popularity waned. Tabloids followed the king of pop constantly and nicknamed him, "Wacko Jacko" accusing him of child molestation, quirky behavior, questionable marriages, and children they say were not even his. Jackson had three children, Prince Michael I, Paris Michael and Prince Michael II.

He was also beset with legal lawsuits and deep in debt.

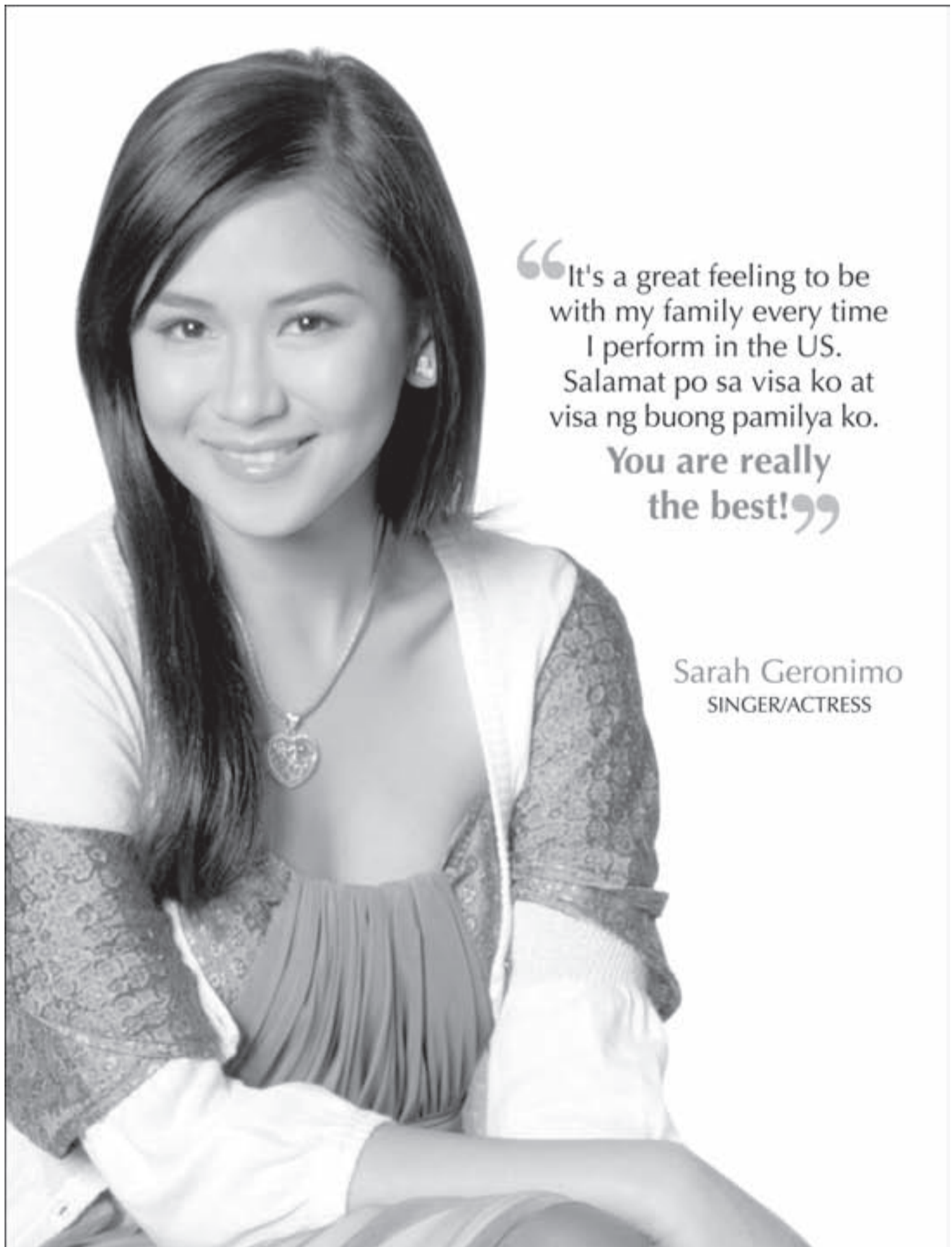
Before he passed away, he was attempting to make a comeback with his last world concert tour in London.

Although Jackson's personal behavior was questionable, his legacy in music will never be forgotten. Fans will always remember him as the King of Pop.

"No one can ever replace Michael Jackson. Michael Jackson will always be Michael Jackson. No matter what happens, no matter how long it will take, he will always be an icon in our hearts...no one can replace his talents," said Villar-Poquiz. ■



Fans mourn the death of pop star Michael Jackson at the UCLA Medical Center. The 'King of Pop' died Thursday after being stricken at his rented home in Holmby Hills. Photo by Allen Palos



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