



1941

British PM Winston Churchill launches his "V for Victory" campaign

1913

Billboard publishes earliest known "Last Week's 10 Best Sellers among Popular Songs" Malinda's Wedding Day is #1

1866

Tennessee is 1st to ratify 14th Amendment to the US constitution, guaranteeing civil rights

1848

1st US women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls NY, organised by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott



Bahraini tailor designed special garbs for the King of Pop



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THE INTERVIEW



Special designs signifying Michael's signature jackets



Sketches given by Jermaine to Babu

TDI | Manama

Mehr Jan

If you look hard enough and decide to explore the quiet alleys and unpretentious corridors, you would be able to discover stories of sheer amusement. This is one of those accounts that managed to affiliate a global icon to a Bahraini tailor.

With a larger than life persona, the 'King of Pop' Michael Jackson remains one of the most well-known musicians to have ever existed. Everything about him was distinctive and shone of his individuality-be it his dance, his music or what he wore...everything had to stand out. Which is why it comes as no surprise that his immaculate wardrobe reflected sleek tailoring craftsmanship from around the world and interestingly some of the attire in which he strutted his stuff in the final years before his death, come from a quaint shop located in Bahrain's very first

traditional souq 'Bab Al Bahrain.'

Michael Jackson had visited the Land of Pearls for the very first time in 2002 alongside his brother Jermaine Jackson. Due to his high profile and security concerns, the musical legend wasn't able to roam around freely, but that didn't stop Jermaine from enjoying the island's hustle and bustle, especially the rush of excitement you get from exploring the many shops situated in Bab al Bahrain, also known as the Gateway to Bahrain. Roaming around in a plaid shirt, baggy jeans and dark shades, he was hardly recognizable and during his exploration stride, a small shop with men's suits on display caught his eye. Impressed by what he saw, Jermaine walked into the modest tailor shop 'Babu Choice' and asked the owner 'Babu' to create a suit for him in a day. If he liked what he saw, he will place a sizeable order.

Unbeknownst to who Jermaine was, Babu was pledged to his work ethics and got to work.

The fourth sibling in the Jackson clan kept true to his word when he was left utterly satisfied by the final product. He ended up ordering more than 80 suits of a net worth of BD100,000, many of which were for Michael Jackson and Babu was left flabbergasted knowing Jermaine's association with the King of Pop.

The shop and its crewmen worked continuously for 2 months straight on this prodigious order. "He was certain on what he liked and quickly chose the materials from the shop to work upon," Babu shared with the Tribune. Specific in his style and keen to make his and his brother's wardrobe standout, Jermaine brought sketches and drawings to show Babu how the clothes were to be designed, including creating a special outfit for Michael for stage performances, consisting of his signature 'jacket and pants' look. Determined to keep the designs exclusive and to ensure they won't be repeated, Jermaine would tear up the pictures or take

them back once the design was discussed. However, a few sketches got left behind at the shop which Babu has filed now as souvenirs to this once in a lifetime experience. Spending hours at the shop, Jermaine told Babu he felt welcomed here. "He was very humble and liked the warm ambience; he even invited me to attend Michael Jackson's upcoming concerts in India and Malaysia," Babu reminisced.

One of his Michael Jackson's remaining suits was picked up in 2009 by his close friend, the very same day Michael's death was announced to the world. Shocked, Babu managed to get a phone call made to a heartbroken Jermaine that fateful day. "He started crying as soon as I spoke; we may have had the language barrier but I felt for him as a brother, for all those great memories of him coming to my store and appreciating my work, came running back to me. We haven't spoken ever since, but I hope to meet Jermaine again," Babu said.

REVAMP

Kuwait City

You've experienced even a slight, fleeting inter- in the burgeoning Middle Eastern art scene, dances are you've already come across Najd er. Her work is distinguished by the eerily oxical; sometimes with jarring balaclavas in pink tones, and other times, abaya-clad ladies lly lit by fluorescent LED lights. With an affi- "mixing things up and challenging [herself]", uxtapose precisely manicured nails against y of struggle and aggression and vibrant florals 'ban cemented roadsides.

at could this also be?" Najd Al Taher says, s the unrelenting question in the back of my any space. What inspires me most is the archi- of a space, the lines, and the concrete blocks." then, that the visual artist, videographer and is found fully immersed in the varying dust-concrete tones of the Kuwaiti metropolis, her city, in her latest campaign with PUMA.

heard us. While Najd has been deftly tight-rop- fine line between striking and unnerving for he two-time Crossway Foundation award-win- unterculturist has just partnered with athlei- rtuosos, PUMA, on a conceptual youth collec- tively named 'Suede Guerrillas'.



A work by Najd Al Taher

"Suede represents PUMA and its classic sneaker, iconic in sub-cultures like hip hop, and 'Guerrillas' represents the grassroots nature of the Suede Guer-

rillas - young creatives authentically creating and curating to disrupt the norm," says Najd.

As an organic, self-styled, boundary-stretching

crew of creative youths from the Middle East, Najd tells us, "The Suede Guerrillas are a resounding message to the younger generation that everything is possible. Never change yourself or what you believe in. Never give up on your dreams."

With this never-before-seen space for youth collaboration, especially at the hands of a sportswear behemoth such as PUMA, Najd comments, "It's absolutely admirable of PUMA. There are so many young, striving creatives out there like myself who are giving it their all trying to make a difference, and what PUMA is doing is helping achieve that." She continues, "Suede Guerrillas is a chance to inspire and be inspired, to grow as artists and creatives alike, and that, to me, is priceless."

With a satisfyingly geometric (and literally edgy) video teaser already under her belt, Najd tells us, "The content I'm creating for this campaign carries an important message; everything around us matters. It's all about channelling power from the things around us that we might take for granted." And the gleaming piece of wisdom, "If you really look, you can always create something out of nothing."

Najd is currently working on not one, but two new series that "combine conceptual photography, installations and performance art" which are due to be released soon. Needless to say, we're excited.