

Original Polaroid cover shot from Michael Jackson 'Thriller' LP to star at Dec. 9 auction

Alternate cover shots and the camera that celebrity photographer Dick Zimmerman used at the photo shoot will also be sold

LOS ANGELES, UNITED STATES, December 6, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On December 9, 2023, Blackwell Auctions will offer one of the most significant collections in music and pop culture history: a group of original, one-of-a-kind Polaroid test pictures from the photo shoot of Michael Jackson's Thriller LP, plus the Hasselblad camera that took the photos.

This iconic collection comes directly from the personal archive of Dick Zimmerman, a prominent Hollywood celebrity photographer who rose to fame in the 1980s-'90s. Zimmerman worked directly with Jackson on two other projects, the ET album in collaboration with Steven Spielberg, and the exclusive wedding photo session with Michael and Lisa Marie Presley.

Even now, more than four decades after the Thriller shoot, Zimmerman's memories of the day are indelible. "I've never met anybody quite as polite as Michael. His childlike way was very interesting. Michael didn't have an ego. He was a very shy individual. But when he took breaks from shooting, he'd



stand in front of a large mirror performing dance moves, and he became a different person. He was unusual, almost like from another planet. His maturity showed when he performed."

Zimmerman said that in spite of Jackson's electrifying command of any audience while performing onstage, the young star seemed camera-shy at the photo shoot. "Michael had a little trouble confronting the camera, believe it or not. To get his attention off the camera, a tiger cub was brought in. It turned out to be a great diversion for him. His attention went totally to playing with it." Two of the five Polaroid shots to be auctioned actually depict Jackson holding the young feline.

Prior to the digital era, Polaroid test shots were a common tool used by professional photographers. They provided a quick way to preview a scene before committing it to film. The Polaroid shots offered in the auction, including the test shot taken only seconds prior to the photo ultimately chosen for the Thriller cover, are each, by definition, one of a kind. Notably, the test cover shot marks the first-ever image captured of Michael Jackson wearing the now-iconic white suit.

"The cultural importance of this collection of images, as well as the camera, truly cannot be overstated," said Edwin Bailey of Blackwell Auctions. "The Thriller cover is one of the most widely distributed and immediately recognizable photographs ever taken. It's quite a privilege to offer these Polaroids, as well as the camera that captured them. All of the items have been held in Dick Zimmerman's personal collection since 1982 and will make their auction debuts on December 9th."

A letter of authenticity from Zimmerman accompanies each of the Polaroid photographs and the camera. Also each photo will convey to its new owner with a release of photographic copyright from Zimmerman (note: personality rights may apply).

Zimmerman concluded: "As an artist, I'm proud to have played a part in creating the best-selling album ever. Undoubtedly, collectors of entertainment memorabilia and celebrity photographs would understand that the test photos and camera from the Thriller shoot are important pieces of music history. Blackwell's auction presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bid on them."

As a tribute to Michael Jackson's philanthropic legacy, a portion of the proceeds from the sale of these historic pieces will be donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities.

For additional information, visit www.blackwellauctions.com or contact Blackwell at 727-546-0200. Online bidding is available through LiveAuctioneers, Invaluable, Bidsquare, HiBid and through the Blackwell Auctions app (IOS and Android), as well as absentee and by phone.

Never bid at an auction before? We've set up a personalized Concierge line at 727-242-1939 to walk you through the process safely and easily.

Amanda Kent
Boundless Media USA
+1 517-377-6624
[email us here](#)

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