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REAL ESTATE | THE MARKET

For Sale: The Homes of Music Legends

Many homes once owned by famed musicians and entertainers—from Billie Holiday to Bob Hope—are on the market, but a big name doesn't guarantee a sale.



Michael Jackson's onetime Las Vegas compound is on the market for \$9.5 million. PHOTO: WORLDWIDE PROPERTIES MIAMI BEACH

By **BETH DECARBO**

Updated Oct. 5, 2016 6:13 p.m. ET

For \$38.50, you can tour a home that was once owned by a famous musician. For \$9.999 million, you can live in one.

On Thursday, the doors of Paisley Park, Prince's home in Chanhassen, Minn., will open to tourists eager to see the 65,000-square-foot property, which the pop musician owned until his death in April. Tickets start at an "early purchase" price of \$38.50 for a self-guided tour and go up to \$100 for a guided "VIP tour" with access to more rooms.

Music aficionados who would like a more permanent keepsake can buy Billie Holiday's onetime townhouse on Manhattan's Upper West Side, listed for \$9.999 million—initially listed for \$12.95 million and reduced to \$11.495 million.

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Two properties once owned by Michael Jackson are also for sale, as is the onetime home of jazz musician Alice Coltrane, wife of legendary saxophonist John Coltrane. Homes

once owned by Frank Zappa and Miles Davis have recently sold and are no longer available.

Do homes with legendary prior owners sell faster or for more money? Not necessarily, said Ryan Serhant, a real-estate agent with Nest Seekers International who currently has the Billie Holiday townhouse listing.

“It’s just added publicity. It got into multiple publications that it might not have gotten in if it were just any listing,” said Mr. Serhant, who also stars in “Million Dollar Listing New York,” a reality show on Bravo.

The current marketing material doesn’t mention the Holiday provenance, and Mr. Serhant only recently learned of its celebrity tie from a reporter. “The sellers never mentioned it to me,” he said.

“They were more focused on just selling” the home, which had long sat on the market with a previous real-estate firm—one that widely promoted the connection to the singer. “The Billie Holiday name didn’t sell it the first time,” Mr. Serhant said.

In June, several publications ran articles about Miles Davis’s onetime Manhattan apartment hitting the market, but the news had little impact on the eventual buyers, who only learned of its claim to fame from the agent at the showing, said Kristina Ojdanic, an agent with the Corcoran Group who, with her brother, Goran Ojdanic, had the listing.

Davis, a jazz trumpeter and composer who died in 1991, once lived in a townhouse on Manhattan’s Upper West Side that was later divided into nine apartments.

Ms. Ojdanic’s clients purchased one of those units, which was listed for \$495,000 and sold for \$500,000 in August. The buyers, whom she declined to name, were parents who purchased the apartment for their daughter.

“She seemed to be enamored of the whole building and the charm of the apartment,” Ms. Ojdanic said. The Davis connection “added to the appeal to her.”

The home of another famed entertainer drew a different kind of clientele. Architectural aficionados flocked to the futuristic Palm Springs, Calif., estate designed by famed architect John Lautner and built by comedian Bob Hope and his wife, Dolores, in 1980, said Patrick Jordan, an agent with Patrick-Stewart Properties, Bennion Deville Homes.

The property, which measures 23,366 square feet and is routinely called “the spaceship house,” because of its mammoth curved roofline and smooth exterior, was listed for \$24.999 million and is now under contract. Mr. Jordan declined to disclose the names of the buyers and the purchase price because the sale hasn’t closed.

“The Hopes built the property as their dream house—as we wrote about extensively in the marketing material,” Mr. Jordan said. “Did it bring a particular kind of caliber of buyer? Absolutely.”

With the Hope listing, the architecture itself had the star power. Mr. Jordan said the Hope home had about 60 showings to qualified buyers. “I would say 98% of them were from the U.S.,” he added, and many of them had heard about the home’s unique design or even visited it as guests in the past.

Hope started out in vaudeville in the 1920s and may not be widely known to younger generations. “A 20-year-old may say, ‘Who’s that?’” Mr. Jordan said.

Current celebrities have far more cachet, Mr. Serhant, the Nest Seekers agent, said. “Will somebody pay more for a Billie Holiday home? Probably not,” he said. “If you have a Kardashian or a Jenner or an Alec Baldwin living in a place or staying there, the media exposure is much higher.”

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