

Harry and Meghan to lead 'Vax Live' fundraising concert

NEW YORK, April 28, (AP) — Prince Harry and Meghan will serve as the campaign chairs of Global Citizen's effort to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to medical workers in the world's poorest countries.

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex will appear at "Vax Live: The Concert to Reunite the World," to be taped Sunday at SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles and air on ABC, CBS, FOX, YouTube and iHeartMedia broadcast radio stations on May 8, Global Citizen, the anti-poverty nonprofit, announced Tuesday.

Harry and Meghan are also leading an effort to raise money for the vaccine-sharing program COVAX, which hopes to produce \$19 billion to pay for the vaccines for medical workers.

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will also appear during the broadcast as part of the "We Can Do This" initiative to increase confidence in COVID-19 vaccines. French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Croatian Prime Minister Plenković will also appear at the concert, which will be hosted by Selena Gomez and headlined by Jennifer Lopez.

Foo Fighters, Eddie Vedder, J Balvin and H.E.R. are also set to perform at the concert, with hosts Chrissy Teigen, David Letterman, Gayle King and Jimmy Kimmel and actors Ben Affleck, Nomzamo Mbatha, Olivia Munn and Sean Penn now also set to appear. The event is part of a growing chorus seeking wider, more equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. As of April, 60 nations had still not yet received any COVID-19 vaccines, Global Citizen CEO Hugh Evans told

the Associated Press.

"Last autumn, I called for the sharing of the doses ordered by our countries, to ensure both solidarity and health security," Macron said in a statement. "With the European vaccine sharing mechanism via the COVAX initiative that France is inaugurating, we are in concrete solidarity in the fight against the virus, which does not care about borders. Today I call on all my colleagues to join this momentum and make a commitment at Vax Live."

Also:

BARCELONA, Spain: Mid-sized cultural events could be held without social distancing — but with other precautions — after a pilot concert attended by 4,500 mask-wearing Spaniards who'd been screened for COVID-19 produced no significant outbreaks, event organizers argued Tuesday.

The medical team from a local hospital that oversaw the health protocols for last month's Barcelona show said an analysis of health data revealed six positive cases in the two weeks following the event among people who had attended the concert.

Organizers said none of the infected people required hospitalization and that four of them said that they believed the origin of their infection was from some place other than the concert.

According to doctor **Josep Maria Llibre**, the six infections are fewer than the average contagion spread for Barcelona at the time. He said the six infections would extrapolate to an incidence of 131 cases

per 100,000 people, when the city-wide tally over that same period was 260 cases per 100,000 inhabitants.

Health authorities gave special permission to allow up to 5,000 people into the show by Spanish rock group Love of Lesbian. Ticket-buyers underwent a same-day antigen test. If negative, they were allowed into the show that had no social distancing rules but did require the use of high-quality facemasks.

Barcelona local authorities were also present on Tuesday when the results were presented.

A group of concert organizers behind the initiative described it as a pilot program to help restart cultural events with the sector suffering after a year of pandemic restrictions.

"There is light at the end of the tunnel," organizer Jordi Herrueruela said about the results.

Also in Spain's northeastern Catalonia, the city of Girona is experimenting with a similar initiative to help hard-hit restaurants recover some business and people start venturing out.

Girona, a city of 100,000, near the French border, is in the second week of its "Open Girona" scheme, whereby people can go to select restaurants and other events after verifying they are low-risk for infections.

Using a phone app, participants either provide proof of being vaccinated, having had the virus at some point, or a negative antigen test taken at a specified pharmacy. Once cleared, users can dine at designated restaurants and attend select concerts and sporting events.

Music

Variety



This image released by Amazon shows Michael B. Jordan in a scene from Tom Clancy's 'Without Remorse.' (AP)

Film

'Creed' actor's potency reaches new, muscular heights

Jordan on power & 'Without Remorse'

By Jake Coyle

Michael B. Jordan's power on screen has taken many forms. His heavyweight force in "Creed." His capacity to inspire change as Bryan Stevenson in "Just Mercy." His raw fury in "Black Panther."

But Jordan's potency reaches new, muscular heights in "Without Remorse" a Tom Clancy adaptation that recasts Jordan as a globe-trotting action star. The film (which debuts Friday on Amazon Prime Video) is an updated origin story of Navy SEAL John Clark, Clancy's best-known character outside of Jack Ryan. Jordan is hoping it spawns a franchise.

The project has been around Hollywood for decades; Keanu Reeves and Tom Hardy are among those who have previously flirted with it. But Jordan saw the possibility to not only do a big-budget action thriller and perform a lot of his own stunts, but to tailor the film to today. He's a producer on the film via his company, Outlier Society Productions, a leading force in making Hollywood more inclusive.

Jordan spent much of the past year quarantined with his family and friends, a time he says has that has been reflective.

"The last few years I've been blessed to have a kind of non-stop career," says Jordan, speaking by phone from Los Angeles. "I kind of had a moment to look at myself and family, spend time with my nephew — things that I probably wouldn't have had as much time to do if I was running from one production to another."

But after the pandemic put a slight pause on one of the movies' biggest stars, Jordan is eager to embark on a new chapter. He recently filmed Denzel Washington's "A Journal for Jordan." He's prepping his directorial debut with "Creed III."

The 34-year-old spoke with The Associated Press the day after the verdict in the Derek Chauvin trial. Remarks have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: Last summer at protests following the death of George Floyd, you challenged Hollywood to commit to Black hiring. Have you seen any progress?

Jordan: From the projects that I've been involved with, I've seen a response to that. I'm not in the weeds with every production across Hollywood but I think there was a significant or meaningful response from the industry on certain levels to be held accountable. But

there's a lot of work to be done. We're not content with things we have or things that we see at the moment.

AP: Has anything about the past year changed your priorities?

Jordan: I went through a rollercoaster of emotions. The pandemic, the protests, this steady increase of police brutality and murders — it's been tough, man. You have a moment where things went our way yesterday and then hours later, you have another one. This past year has seen so much of that. Recharging my batteries was something that I didn't know I needed as much as I did. After taking that break, I feel more energized and prepared for the work to come — and that's in all areas. When it comes to being present for my community, my culture, for my business; in front of the camera, behind the camera; in the streets, in my home. It's given me an opportunity to be a better version of myself moving forward. I'm motivated. I'm recharged. I'm ready for all tasks at hand.

AP: In "Fruitvale Station," playing Oscar Grant, you acted out a version of a scene that keeps replaying.

Jordan: When you're Black and brown, it's something that can become a reality any day. Yeah, I had an opportunity to shine a light on a story, on a young man who had his life taken away from him by the hands of law enforcement. When we shot that movie, I guess it wasn't being seen as much as it is right now. The volume of what's been reported has increased, it's more a part of the popular conversation. But it's a lot. I think solidarity amongst our community and culture is at the highest point that I've experienced. It's driving us closer together. And people unified is a powerful thing.

AP: Do you ever find it difficult to balance any responsibility you feel and your own interests? Do you sometimes just want to make a movie without worrying about larger issues?

Jordan: I just made one! "Without Remorse" and "Journal for Jordan." I like all types of movies. From action thrillers to movies with a purpose. I got "Creed" coming up. I've been blessed to have a healthy balance. It allows me to have that comfortable balance between entertainment and activism. That's life, right? Trying to find a balance. You have moments in your life where you've got to do things for yourself, you've got to do things that feed your soul. And you've got to do things that feed your community, so you know the

person looking at you in the morning in the mirror. If you can find a way to balance all those things and be successful and leave an impact — and leave the world a better place. I think making people think is the power of cinema.

AP: "Without Remorse" had been in development hell for years. What drew you to it?

Jordan: I'm a gamer. I love playing videogames. I grew up playing (Tom Clancy adaptations) "Rainbow Six" and "Ghost Recon" before I even got introduced to the films. Man, I got an opportunity to play a character I used to envision myself playing, that I spent hours upon hours (laughs) in my room playing. Being able to step into the Tom Clancy universe and do an action movie where I do my own stunts. I was a kid in the candy store.

AP: You've talked about injecting yourself into a role like a Trojan horse. Was there anything especially that you wanted to bring to "Without Remorse"?

Jordan: It was a great collaboration between the studio, the producers, the director to create an origin story. It was cool to see a character that just is. There's no extra "This character is Black because of this and that." It's a movie about a guy, know what I mean?

AP: Like another upcoming film of yours, a new "Thomas Crown Affair," your character wasn't originally written as Black and had previously been played by white actors (Willem Dafoe and Liev Schreiber). Do you give any significance to that?

Jordan: There's a business behind this, as well. A lot of people don't understand the nuances of how movies get made — what (intellectual property) is at what studio, what IP is available, the value of a reboot versus doing something without that title. There's a lot of different factors to consider when you remake a movie or you do a movie. People would be surprised that race is very low on the totem pole when it comes to making some of those decisions. A lot of people speculate on these movie choices but what I pay attention to is: I really like the movie. The character's interesting. It's entertaining and I'm going to have fun making it. And representation is important. Somebody like myself playing a character like that in a world like that is also very progressive and entertaining. It's a nuanced decision to develop movies like that. Sometimes it's not that simple. Other times, it's not that complicated, either. (AP)

Features

ARABIC TIMES

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021

LOS ANGELES: Britney Spears has asked to address the court to talk about the conservatorship that has controlled her life and finances for 13 years, her attorney said Tuesday, and a judge scheduled a June date to hear from her.

Spears' court-appointed attorney, **Samuel Ingham III**, said in a hearing in Los Angeles Superior Court that she had asked to speak to the court soon, and agreed with Judge **Brenda Penny** on a June 23 date. He did not say what she would specifically like to say.

It would be the first known time in more than two years that the 39-year-old pop star has spoken in court. The last time, on May 10, 2019, the courtroom was sealed. None of what she said became public.

The judge may also close the June hearing to the media and public. But Spears, through Ingham, has been pushing for more transparency in the court proceedings and documents of the conservatorship.

Spears did not take part in Tuesday's hearing, and she very rarely attends them.

As with nearly every Spears hearing, about 50 fans from the so-called #FreeBritney movement picketed outside the downtown courthouse.

On Tuesday, they carried signs that read "conservatorship is slavery" and "This is toxic."

One woman, wearing a #FreeBritney T-shirt, had her head shaved during the demonstration in solidarity with Spears, who famously shaved her own head just before the conservatorship was put in place in 2008. (AP)

NEW YORK: It may be little consolation for the movie academy, but a more complete count by the Nielsen company pushed the Academy Awards audience to 10.4 million viewers on Tuesday.

A day earlier, Nielsen's preliminary estimate had Sunday's show at 9.85 million viewers. Either way, it's a record low for an event that not too long ago routinely reached more than 30 million people.

The Oscars were enough to give ABC a victory in the prime-time ratings with an average of 4.1 million viewers last week. CBS had 3.8 million, NBC had 3.5 million, Fox had 2.7 million, Univision had 1.4 million, Telemundo had 1.03 million. Ion Television had 970,000 and the CW had 530,000. Fox News Channel led the cable

networks with an average of 2.23 million viewers. MSNBC had 1.45 million, HGTV had 1.29 million, TNT had 1.15 million and ESPN had 1.1 million.

ABC's "World News Tonight" won the evening news race by averaging 8.1 million viewers last week. NBC's "Nightly News" had 6.5 million viewers and the "CBS Evening



Spears



Songz

News" had 4.9 million. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: R&B artist **Trey Songz** will not face charges in an alleged altercation with police officers at the AFC championship game in **Kansas City**, prosecutors announced Tuesday.

Mike Mansur, a spokesman for

the **Jackson County** prosecutor's office, said there is "insufficient evidence" to bring charges and that police were notified of the decision late last week. He declined to comment further.

Songz, whose real name is **Tremaine Aldon Neverson**, was arrested and jailed overnight in January. Police have said he scuf-

fled with officers during his arrest. Songz's representative, **Sydney Margetson**, declined to comment on the charging decision.

Authorities accused Songz of not following coronavirus protocols and other rules at the game between the **Kansas City Chiefs** and the **Buffalo Bills** at Arrowhead Stadium. (AP)