

# quincy jones on fatherhood, down syndrome, and michael jackson

The winner of more than two dozen Grammys even has his own "Nobel Prize."

INTERVIEW BY MICHAEL LEDWITZ | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARC PISCOTTY

Quincy Jones' music has surely flowed through your speakers. He was the producer and conductor of the song "We Are the World" (the best-selling single of all time) and Michael Jackson's multiplatinum solo albums *Bad*, *Off the Wall*, and *Thriller* (the best-selling album of all time with more than 46 million copies sold, according to quincyjones.com). We recently sat down with Jones for an exclusive while he was in Denver as special guest and honoree for the Be Beautiful Be Yourself Jet Set Fashion Show to raise funds for the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, benefiting the Linda Crnic Institute for Down Syndrome.

**Denver Magazine:** How did you get involved with Down Syndrome?

**Quincy Jones:** John and Anna Sie are very cherished friends of mine. And with [their granddaughter Sophia], it got me to focus on it. I've dealt with ADD (attention deficit disorder) and dyslexia and autism and a lot of things before. But it got very personalized after I met Sophia because I just love her.

**DM:** Who is your favorite musician?

**QJ:** There's no such thing. Sinatra, Ray Charles, Michael Jackson, Louis Armstrong, (Count) Basie, Duke (Ellington), Elvis, Tony Bennett, Paul Simon — it's impossible. They're like my seven children. They're all different. I love them for different reasons.

**DM:** What about Michael Jackson's death?

**QJ:** I don't know how to process it because I don't know what's on his mind. There's a lot of pressure on him for the concerts. I don't know ... It's still surreal to me because my baby brother, part of my soul, is gone.

**DM:** What is your favorite thing that anyone's ever said about you?

**QJ:** That he's a good father. And my kids tell me that. And that's, to me, that's my Nobel Prize. My daughters write me letters that give me chills they're so beautiful ... "Thank you for believing in me, for the way you and mommy raised me, for believing in me before I even believed in myself" and all those kinds of things. My daughter just wrote me one like that — e-mail — it just made me cry. 📷

