The Mormon wives are back in full swing

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor

Dirty sodas were not the only thing bubbling up on season 5 of "The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives."

Following the recent domestic violence investigation involving Taylor Frankie Paul and ex-boyfriend Dakota Mortensen, viewers were able to see the events leading up to the scandal that caused production to be halted.

Due to this abrupt ending, there was very little about the situation featured in this season. I will say that I was rather disappointed by this, having been an invested viewer since day one.

Every season follows a different large issue within the group, but I would argue that this was the most chaotic despite it being the shortest.

The season started with Paul right after she got back from filming "The Bachelorette." This was already dramatic as Paul proceeded to meet up with Mortensen which as everyone knows, is never good.

Their relationship is extremely toxic and gets harder to watch every season.

It was quite clear to me throughout the course of the five episodes that, as the other women noted, Paul was much more interested in the men she was seeing than the friends that have been there for her.

The women have always aimed to promote female empowerment, especially within their community where that is not widely spoken about.

But in this environment where all they do is fight, it is apparent that the Mormon wives have a lot of work to do if they want to get back to where they started.

On a more positive note, we got to see the successful career moves that the members of MomTok have made.

Whitney Leavitt was shown making her Broadway debut in "Chicago."

As viewers we got to see Mayci Neely speak more about her memoir and Jen Affleck shared her journey with wanting to release music.

Another large plot point this season was the ongoing feud between Leavitt and Affleck.

Last season we got to see the tension that followed them being on "Dancing with the Stars" together.

In a one-on-one conversation, Affleck shared that she felt as though Leavitt could have been more supportive and that she was not listening to her perspective.



PHOTO | INSTAGRAM

"The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives" season 5 cast photo posted on Aug. 26.

Affleck seemed to go into this with a closed mind, and I was not surprised that their issues were not resolved.

One thing I was grateful for was the lack of screen-time that DadTok received this time around.

Since season 3, the husbands and boyfriends have been promoting their platforms on the show and I was sick of it. While we did still see them, especially when it came to Mortensen and Paul's on again off again relationship, it was not nearly as much as in previous seasons.

In the last two episodes, a fight between Mathews, Neely and Paul shook the friend group. Neely and Mathews felt as though Paul was not being a good friend to them and makes me question even more where their friendships with Paul are today.

They seemed to have resolved this particular issue as Paul broke down about Mortensen again and the women rallied around her in support. But we have yet to see what happened after the newest scandal which leaves me with so many questions.

But my biggest question of all is: will MomTok survive this?

Met Gala cancels exhibit months in advance

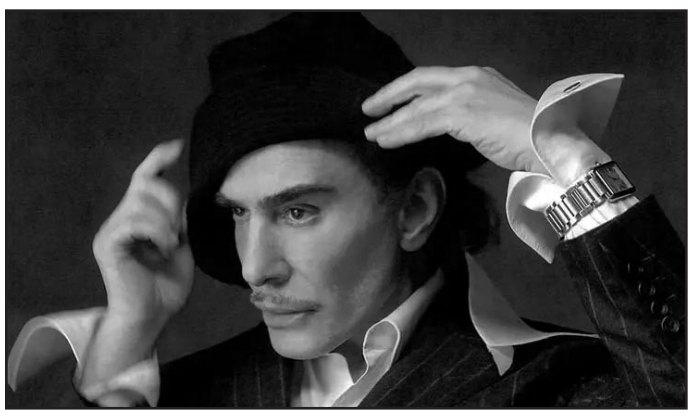

PHOTO | INSTAGRAM

Fashion designer John Galliano.

By Valentina Toro
Managing Editor

Fashion is supposed to make people uncomfortable sometimes. It challenges what society considers beautiful, acceptable and even appropriate. So, when controversy surrounds one of fashion's most influential designers, avoiding the conversation entirely feels like the wrong response.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art recently canceled its planned 2027 Costume Institute exhibition, "John Galliano: Horizons."

The exhibition was supposed to examine the career of John Galliano, the designer known for his work at Givenchy, Dior, Maison Margiela and his own label.

The decision did not come without reason. Galliano has a disturbing history that should never be ignored when discussing his career.

In 2011, Galliano was convicted in France after making antisemitic and racist remarks. Dior fired him following the controversy, and he later apologized for his behavior. More than a decade later, those actions continue to follow him and they should be part of any serious examination of his legacy.

But acknowledging what Galliano did and examining his work are not mutually exclusive.

That is where I disagree with canceling the exhibition.

The Met had an opportunity to create something more complicated than a celebration of a famous designer. It could have shown Galliano's influence on fashion while forcing visitors to confront the actions of the person responsible for those designs.

There is also an important difference between recognition and admiration.

A museum displaying someone's work does not have to mean that the institution approves of everything that person has done.

Still, I understand why the exhibition felt like an honor to some critics rather than an examination. Galliano would have been one of only a few living designers to receive a solo Costume Institute exhibition.

Connecting that exhibition to the Met Gala, an event filled with celebrities, designer gowns and international attention, could easily make the moment feel celebratory.

The timing created another problem. The traditional first Monday in May, when the 2027 Met Gala would take place, falls on Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Considering Galliano's history of antisemitic remarks, criticism of the exhibition became even more understandable.

The Met should have reconsidered how it presented Galliano. I just do not believe cancellation was the only answer.

Museums should be places where difficult history can be examined instead of simplified. Galliano has undeniably influenced fashion, and removing an exhibition does not erase that influence. It also does not erase what he said.

Instead, the exhibition could have placed those two realities beside each other.

Visitors could have looked at the craftsmanship, theatrical designs and decades of work while also learning about the controversy that changed Galliano's career.

That would allow audiences to decide for themselves how much an artist's behavior should affect the way people view their art.

People constantly debate whether art can be separated from the artist. There may never be one answer that works for every situation, and Galliano is an example of why the question is so difficult.

The Met did not need to forgive him, defend him or pretend his past never happened. It needed to tell the entire story.

Canceling the exhibition may have prevented Galliano from receiving an honor some believe he does not deserve, but confronting his legacy — the brilliance and the ugliness together — could have created a conversation fashion still needs to have.

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Dolly Parton's impact

By McKenzie Staggers
Contributor

On Aug. 25 country singer and songwriter Dolly Rebecca Parton passed away at 80 years old. The singer was well known for her philanthropy work, her very own theme park and her country music catalog. The news of her passing has affected fans across the world. Despite the grief of her passing, fans are keeping her spirit alive through sharing some of her famous quotes, posting her recipes, reposting her songs and sharing how much the singer means to them.

The singer grew up in a small log cabin on the banks of the Little Pigeon River in Sevier County, Tennessee with eleven other siblings.

At age ten she started performing at The Cas Walker Show in Knoxville, Tennessee.

In 1957, at age 13 the singer would go on to record her first ever single "Puppy Love" on Goldband Records. The single would later go on to be released in 1959.

That is the same year the singer made her debut on the Grand Ole Opry stage performing, "You Gotta Be My Baby." Later, in 1966, the singer is signed to a combined publishing house and Monument Records. This is when her first full-length album, "Hello, I'm Dolly" was released to Monument Records. In the following year, she would make appearances on The Porter Wagoner Show.

By 1968, she would release her first solo single "Just Because I'm a Woman" which would become the title of her next album.

The songwriter would later decide to protect the financial rights to her music catalog, including her single "I Will Always Love You." This would set the stage for the smart and clever business control she had in the music industry.

The musician's legacy also includes the Imagination Library program, that has distributed over 200 million books to children globally. The singer said she created the program because her father never learned how to read.

In 1986, the singer also opened her own theme park Dollywood in her hometown.

The passing of the singer has been a massive loss for the country music community.

I would say that I was sad to hear about her passing, having been invested in her music and artistry for years.

Her career has had so many successful milestones, but I would argue that her philanthropic work was one of the most impactful contributions she has made during her career.

Along with her philanthropic work, the singer always stressed the importance of kindness and love.

I think, especially with the state of the world that the most important thing fans can do right now to keep her spirit alive is spread love and kindness.

Since her passing, I have been left with so many questions about the future of country music.

But my biggest question is how will the country music industry move forward?