

A photograph of Michael Jackson in a courtroom. He is wearing a dark suit with a gold badge on the lapel and has his hands raised in front of him. A person in a pinstriped suit is holding a handgun pointed at him. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in the courtroom.

EPILOGUE  
PART 1

THE  
TRIALS  
OF  
MICHAEL  
JACKSON

LYNTON  
GUEST



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# THE TRIALS OF MICHAEL JACKSON

By [Lynton Guest](#)

*“The Trials of Michael Jackson reveals the sensational events which led to the downfall of a megastar at the hands of the mighty Sony company and an obsessive but compliant prosecutor...”*



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lynton Guest entered the music business in 1967 aged sixteen. As a member of the group, '[Love Affair](#)', he had a number one hit in fourteen countries with one of the most iconic pop records of the sixties, '[Everlasting Love](#)'. This was followed by several further hit records.

He has since become an Honours graduate of King's College, London in Ancient and Medieval History and a graduate in Classical and Medieval Latin at the University of California, Berkeley.

Today, Lynton is a widely published journalist and [author](#). His latest works include [First Among Unequals](#), the biography of Viv Anderson, who was the first black footballer to play for England.

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## PREFACE

The following is the Epilogue contained in the second edition of *The Trials Of Michael Jackson*, published in 2009. This book has now sold out. Lynton Guest has made the Epilogue available free but advises that it should be read in conjunction with the first edition of *The Trials Of Michael Jackson*, which was published in 2006 and is still available from Amazon and all good retail outlets.





## EPILOGUE

As the whole world knows, Michael Jackson died on June 25 2009 at his rented home in Los Angeles. This is just about the only fact upon which most of us can agree. Once the story was out, the speculation machine swung into action with ever more lurid stories appearing in the world's press. At the same time something incredible happened. All round the world, people stopped what they were doing. Whatever the naysayers might claim in order to downplay the importance of Jackson's passing, the inhabitants of planet earth instinctively knew they had lost one of those artistic geniuses who come among us only too infrequently. Think Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, John Lennon and Marvin Gaye.

What follows is the Epilogue to Lynton Guest's 2009 book, 'The Trials of Michael Jackson'. He has given his permission for its inclusion on this site [www.13june2005.com](http://www.13june2005.com)

In writing this book I investigated how, in his later years, Michael Jackson was beset with trials and tribulations which, on the face of it, were unconnected to each other. There was the prosecution on child abuse charges, the downturn in record sales, the financial catastrophes and the struggles to retain ownership of assets such as Sony ATV, his back catalogue of recordings and Neverland. Yet far from being coincidental, everywhere we detected the hidden hand of the Sony Corporation attempting to orchestrate events. My account has never been refuted. If anything, the information I unearthed has gained ever more currency in the three years since the original book

## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

was published. Could it be that a continuation of the events I described, or something similar, was involved somehow in the singer's death? Given Michael Jackson's unbelievable life, that idea didn't seem so far-fetched as it otherwise might.

The televised memorial service from the Staples Center in Los Angeles was beamed round the world. In the UK, it was shown live on three channels. It was the same everywhere. In the wake of Jackson's death the airwaves, column inches and online postings were replete with tributes from hundreds of Jackson colleagues, friends and family. There was Rev. Al Sharpton, who organised the famous 'go back to hell, Tommy' incident in New York, discussed in Chapter 4 [of *The Trials of Michael Jackson 2006 and 2009*].

There was the psychic, Uri Geller, who had advised Jackson for a short period around the millennium, who took him to Exeter City Football club and who made the fateful introduction to Martin Bashir. There were employees past and present. There were all the family members. And there were many, many more.



## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

Most of them turned up at the Staples Center. The absence of two of Jackson's closest friends - Elizabeth Taylor and Diana Ross - caused some comment but generally speaking there was a huge turnout. Except that there was one glaring omission. Where was any representative from the Sony Corporation? Where were the press conferences by present Sony executives bemoaning the death of their greatest artist. The memorial show was populated almost entirely with people from Motown. Yet Michael Jackson spent a mere seven years with Motown, while he was signed to Sony for nigh on thirty years. It was with Sony that he had his greatest triumphs. And wasn't there a degree of acrimony in the parting of the ways with Motown? Yet here was a virtual Motown-fest. It was the first in a chain of strange occurrences.

So the question is: Why no Sony, who at first sight benefited most from Jackson's demise? In the days after the news rocked the world, sales of Michael Jackson's recordings went through the roof. In many territories his back catalogue comprised sixty percent of all music purchased. His videos were playing constantly on the music channels of the world. Sony was raking in money. My admittedly crude assessment is that within one month of his death, Michael Jackson's debt was all but eradicated, while Sony (and to a lesser extent Motown) cleared half a billion dollars. They were the great initial beneficiaries of Jackson's sudden departure from this earthly realm.

The honourable exception yet again was Paul Russell. From his retreat in Barbados he issued a eulogy to Jackson and spoke to the media to let them know how stunned and upset he was. He even provided some exclusive pictures of his years with the King of Pop which were printed in the British newspaper, the Sunday People. But that was it. Not a word emanated from the Japanese mega-corporation to suggest its executives were grieving with the rest of us. They must have been too busy rubbing their hands.

Sony had another reason to be cheerful. The original version of this book took great pains to unravel the story of Sony and Michael Jackson. One of the most important elements was the Sony ATV music publishing catalogue, which owns the rights to the songs of John Lennon and Paul McCartney. However, the issue of ownership was not totally resolved by the time the book went to print, although some evidence had emerged. What happened was this.



## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

Michael Jackson, after his acquittal, was forced to live a somewhat nomadic life. Shunned in his homeland, he wandered the world looking for some sort of salvation. The loans he had taken out would not go away, however, and the singer was forced to enter into an agreement with Sony, under which Sony assumed the debt in return for half of Jackson's shares in Sony ATV. The company also negotiated an option to purchase the remaining shares, an option which they could take up at any time of their choosing. These shares were transferred to a trust of which Jackson was a stakeholder. This convoluted structure enabled the King of Pop to say with just-about honesty, that he still "owned" his half of Sony ATV. But in reality the

whole company now belonged to Sony. Their desire to have complete control, put into motion years previously by Norio Ohga, was finally fulfilled.

The matter of ownership of Jackson's catalogue of recordings was put on the back-burner, and caused problems from time to time but Sony held all the aces. Then, with Michael Jackson finally out of the way permanently, Sony managed to be in a position to cash in on the man who inspired its leaders to buy CBS in the first place and make all that money.

Back cover of the book: "The death of one of the planet's greatest legends in June 2009 has generated unprecedented speculation, rumour and controversy."



## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

These days there is a macabre list of yearly earnings of dead stars. Most years it is topped by Elvis Presley but other notables, such as John Lennon and Frank Sinatra make regular appearances. In 2008, Elvis's earnings were easily the highest but it is Michael Jackson who is now set to head the 'dead stars' list by far for the next decade at least. Sony, no matter what problems might be experienced in other parts of its empire, will continue to benefit exponentially. Five years from now Sony's annual revenues from Michael Jackson related activities, including Sony ATV, will exceed five billion dollars.

Counter-intuitively, Michael Jackson's proposed comeback gigs in London could have put a dampener on Sony's profit stream. The singer's vast potential earnings from these concerts were set to transform his situation.



## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

When the gigs were announced, the world was stunned when almost three quarters of a million tickets were sold almost as soon as they became available. It was the biggest indication yet that Jackson could still occupy the top echelon of the showbiz pile. This was not what Sony wanted at all. They wanted a broken and weak Michael Jackson, one whom they could still control.

I shall return to this theme later. First I want to examine some of the claims and allegations that flourished in the immediate aftermath of Jackson's death. At first, it was assumed that Jackson suffered a fatal heart attack and that he died of natural causes. Meanwhile, the world's press chased anyone who had ever known the singer looking for stories, the more outrageous the better. Nowhere was this more so than in the British newspapers, most of which had a new Jackson headline every day. Some, such as *The Sun*, claimed to know the results of the autopsy, even before it was completed. The most authoritative provider of facts remained the American TMZ website, which was the first news outlet to report the star's death. TMZ repudiated *The Sun's* take on the autopsy, but gave some credence to a former Jackson nanny, Grace Rwaramba, who claimed that she had to "repeatedly pump his (Jackson's) stomach over the years" when he had too many prescription drugs in his system. Over the next couple of days most people focused on Jackson's legacy of great music. Others praised his skills as an innovative recording artist. The writer, Germaine Greer, told us that Jackson's contribution to dance was such that the way dance is now perceived and taught

has changed to take account of his unique talents, technique and ability.

There were other elements arising from the death. Who would get custody of the children? Who would administer the estate? Where would he be buried? Uri Geller claimed he had begged the singer to give up prescription drugs, saying, "I tried to drum sense into his brain. I told him, 'Michael, you are going to kill yourself.'" At the same time, a huge amount of work and reporting went into the memorial concert at the Staples Center. The request for tickets from all over the world was overwhelming. Jermaine Jackson revealed that "there are twenties of thousands just from the UK. We worked with the (Los Angeles) city authorities and they are trying their best with the time-frame we have and we are hoping everybody is safe."

It was reported that the Staples Center is owned by AEG Live, the company organising the London gigs and it was there that rehearsals for the show took place. AEG taped some of these rehearsals and the company released a small amount of video footage to the media. AEG's spin on Jackson's stilted performance in the video was that he simply wasn't going flat out while rehearsing but when necessary could turn it on, just like before. It looked worse than that to me. The TMZ website stated that AEG had invested almost "\$30 million dollars in advance costs related to the London performances". Again, according to TMZ, about half of this amount was insured. I find it hard to believe that any company, let alone one as experienced as AEG, would spend double in advance costs



## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

than they insured, particularly if Jackson were unable to perform at one or all of the concerts. The risk would be just too great. To date, Randy Phillips, the head of AEG, has been less than forthcoming over what arrangements were in place.

While all this was going on, something didn't seem right to me.

Of course thoughts persisted as to what caused the fatal heart attack. According to the respected celebrity biographer, Ian Halperin, it was "gruelling preparation for the 02 concerts in London" that ultimately killed him. A documentary shown on British television seemed to be claiming that Jackson had given up prescription

drugs in a bid to get fit for the London gigs and it was this sudden withdrawal that caused his cardiac arrest.

My memory turned to an incident that occurred in 2007 when Jackson was due to make a long-awaited comeback at the World Music Awards, held in Earls Court in London, where he was due to sing. Once again the media descended into an absolute frenzy. There had been talk of new recordings but as time passed nothing more had been heard of them, so attention was focused on the upcoming performance. What happened that night was something so unlikely it is a wonder that anyone believed it. But believe it they did. It fed the Michael Jackson myth-machine so well that nobody thought to

**Back cover of the book: "There are more questions than answers and the report by the Los Angeles coroner in August 2009 means that Jackson's death is now officially a homicide."**

## EPILOGUE CONTINUED

to look further than the lurid tale that accompanied the performance. Or rather the non-performance as it turned out.

At the appointed moment, there was no sign of Jackson on the stage. After World Music Awards workers were dispatched to discover what was going on, the singer was eventually found by Beyonce Knowles lying in the foetal position in his dressing room, unable to perform because, as he told Beyonce, he had “stage fright”. Now Michael Jackson had been performing almost from the day he was born. He may have suffered from many things in his life but stage fright was not one of them. When he eventually took to the stage he gave perhaps the most lacklustre performance of his career. To my admittedly untrained eye he looked totally stoned. Or worse! He displayed classic signs of poisoning. Was this a harbinger of things to come?

For *The Trials of Michael Jackson* Epilogue Part 2 please refer back to [www.13june2005.com](http://www.13june2005.com)

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## EPILOGUE

### PART 1

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Front cover of this Epilogue: Michael Jackson outside the court, photographer unknown, credit given to them.

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