

Elvis Presley The Last 24 Hours

[Music Video Distributors]



According to figures from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), Elvis Presley is still one of the highest-selling recording artists of all time. Twenty-seven years after his death, Presley's contribution to rock-and-roll history is still being documented, as are other aspects of his life. His untimely demise is the subject of the recent release of the film, "Elvis Presley-The Last 24 Hours." Based on first-hand interviews with the "Memphis Mafia," this DVD, produced by Mike Parkinson, offers an uncensored look into how the rock legend died at the age of 42. As an added bonus, there is a second disc in the package, a gospel tribute to Elvis that was recorded by his back-up band, the Jordinaires, who performed with him for over 14 years, and who are heard on his biggest hits. The set also includes a medley of his songs, including, "Don't Be Cruel," and "Good Luck Charm."

A tale unfolds, delivered by those who were among Presley's closely associates. All give similar accounts of an exploitative manager, Colonel Parker, working Elvis literally to death, while ignoring the singer's sometimes near

comatose state in the months prior to his demise. A particularly haunting moment of the film is seen when one of those who worked with Elvis reports that Parker said to him, "All that matters is that he gets on that stage tonight." Parker had great financial worries, resulting from his relentless gambling addiction. Witnesses in the film state he would often lose a million-and-a-half dollars in one night in Las Vegas, and then would want Elvis to do more shows, so he would have more money. Fifty percent of the money that Elvis was paid for touring would go to Parker. Presley had a physically grueling tour schedule, and it wreaked havoc on his health. Additionally, Elvis suffered from maladies including high blood pressure and a high blood sugar level.

The night before his death, Elvis contacted his dentist to obtain pills. His physician, "Dr. Nick," the infamous Dr. George Nichopoulos, who accompanied him on tour, would later lose his license to practice medicine due to his gross improprieties in supplying Elvis with drugs. Bodyguard Jerry Shilling states in the film that he confronted and threatened the doctor, saying, "If I ever see him (Elvis) again," in such a drugged-out state, that he would see he Of those interviewed in the film, the most engaging was Larry Geller, Elvis' hairdresser, who also served as a, "spiritual advisor," for Presley. His many stories throughout the film were nothing less than totally engrossing. All of those interviewed in the film clearly had a great love for Presley, but felt powerless as far as getting Elvis to face his demons and take time off from touring.

-Phyllis Pollack