

Last night was sadly yet another 'I remember where I was when' moments along with those of Kennedy, Elvis, Lennon and Marvin which punctuate my memory; another of our brightest stars has dimmed and left us far too soon.

Somehow, perhaps because of Michael's vulnerability and his legal and financial problems of recent years, the news of his heart attack from the celebrity blog TMZ being broadcast by SKY News late last night seemed strangely inevitable but nonetheless a sad and tragic loss of one so talented.

His music touched all of our lives whether or not you are a fan; as I unquestionably am.

Like many of his Motown 'label-mates' his songs were the soundtrack of my adolescence, they evoke memories of first kisses and of first loves; 'I want you back'; 'ABC'; 'Never can say goodbye'; these songs transport me instantly back into a more innocent and wonderful place.

Having recorded a few mediocre albums with his brothers in the 70s, there came the rebirth of this great talent. I remember hearing a track that came into our office at EMI Publishing from the US, 'She's out of my life', not penned by MJ but sung in his inimitable style with soul and feeling that only a very few artists can ever really deliver! The 'Off The Wall' album helped reintroduce Michael to a new generation and stayed on my turntable for the next 6 months.

Then came 'Thriller' which exploded onto our screens in the early hours of the morning and the MTV generation instantly embraced him as the new messiah, adapting the flagging disco sound with his mentor Quincy and transforming the beats into credible 'dance' music which sparked a new generation of clubbers to hit the dance floor!

Every song on the album a gem, no party was complete without at least half of this masterpiece being mixed from one 12" extended remix into the next. Two decades on and 'Billie Jean' still kicks ass! the rest as they say is pop history, the BAD album, the 'Billie Jean' Moonwalk and the millions spent on videos, plastic surgery and an insatiable appetite to spend money; the Peter Pan image in danger of becoming irredeemably tarnished.

However his legions of fans never deserted him as evidenced by the sell out O2 concerts which are sadly now not to be!

Michael thank you for the rich legacy you gave us, your music will live on for many generations to come.

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