**Michael Jackson rules the Forbes list of 2013 Top Earning Dead Celebrities**

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Just as they do each year around Halloween, the people at Forbes magazine have compiled the list of "Top Earning Dead Celebrities" for the past year. And this year's king of the dead money-makers is no stranger to the title of "king." With his estate pulling in nearly three times more than the estate of [Elvis Presley](http://www.examiner.com/topic/elvis-presley), also no stranger to be called "The King," the "King of Pop," [Michael Jackson](http://www.examiner.com/topic/michael-jackson), reclaimed his throne atop the "Top Earning Dead Celebrities" list that he's topped two other times since his death in 2009.

Michael Jackson's estate is a money-making machine, garnering $160 million in the past 12 months. It claims within its holdings not only the rights to the late pop icon's songs but also a 50 percent share in the Sony/ATV song catalog, which includes hits by The Beatles, Lady Gaga, and Taylor Swift among others. But, as [Forbes magazine noted](http://www.forbes.com/sites/dorothypomerantz/2013/10/23/michael-jackson-leads-our-list-of-the-top-earning-dead-celebrities/) Oct. 23, the Jackson estate took in most of its money over the past year (through October 2013) via two Cirque de Soleil shows that have grossed over $300 million: The touring show *Immortal* and the Las Vegas-centered *One*, the latter of which sports a hologram of the (dead) star of the show performing "Man In The Mirror."

Jackson took back the top spot from Liz Taylor. The Oscar-winning actress -- and friend to Jackson as well -- [took the honors in 2012](http://www.examiner.com/article/elizabeth-taylor-is-2012-s-top-earning-dead-celebrity) with a $210 million haul, most of which came through auctions. She fell to fourth place in this year's line-up, scoring a mere $26 million.

The dead celebrity that used to rule the "Top Earners" list, Elvis Presley, still managed a respectable $55 million for the past year. As mentioned, second-place pulled just a little more than a third of what Michael Jackson earned.

Third place for the second consecutive year was "Peanuts" creator Charles Schultz. The rights to his "Peanuts" characters and an upcoming movie starring Charlie Brown and the gang helped his estate pull in $37 million.

Rounding out the top five was Bob Marley, the laid-back reggae singer who might actually be rolling in his grave at the thought that his name has been associated with so many capitalist ventures. Products licensed to his name earned his estate a total of $18 million.

The list is composed of thirteen dead celebrities (in keeping with the tongue-in-cheekiness of issuing it just before Halloween while playing into the dreaded superstition angle as well). A new name made the list this year -- Latina singer Jenni Rivera. She died in December in a tragic plane crash and her music, as happens with most performers when they die, not only received plenty of airplay but sold very well also. Accrording to Forbes, she clocked in at number twelve, tied with martial arts actor Bruce Lee, at $7 million. Rivera sold almost as many records after her passing as she did during her lifetime (over 880,000). On top of that, the last season of her reality show was a hit and her autobiography, *Unbreakable: My Story, My Way*, has sold nearly half a million copies. And since [an autobiographical movie is in the works](http://www.eonline.com/news/471201/jenni-rivera-s-daughter-chiquis-is-going-to-play-the-late-singer-in-upcoming-movie), the Mexican-American songstress just might remain on the list come next year.

To make Michael Jackson's triumph over the nonliving money-makers even more complete, the King of Pop also dominated the living moneymakers. This year's queen of the top earning celebrities (listed in Forbes' "[Top Earning Celebrities](http://www.forbes.com/sites/dorothypomerantz/2013/08/26/madonna-tops-2013-list-of-top-earning-celebrities/)"), Madonna, raked in $125 million from June 2012 to June 2013.

The late King of Pop was a commercial and pop culture icon for four decades, not only ruling record charts with hits with his brothers in the Jackson 5 but as a solo artist as well. Although later in life, he seemed to be more of a tabloid caricature of his former self, just the mention of a tour could get the media buzzing. He was planning a comeback but "final" tour when he died in late June 2009 from toxic levels of several prescription drugs and propofol, a drug normally used as an anesthetic. His untimely death was mourned around the world and his legacy as a pop music legend has only seemed to grow in the four years since his passing -- as the Forbes "Top Earning Dead Celebrities" list attests.

Besides topping the [Forbes list](http://www.examiner.com/topic/forbes-list) this year, Michael Jackson was also tops in 2010 and 2011.

http://www.examiner.com/article/michael-jackson-rules-the-forbes-list-of-2013-top-earning-dead-celebrities