

"This is It" Announcement

Michael Jackson. speech transcript

Thank you all. This is it! These will be my final shows in London. And when I say this is it, I mean it, because I will be performing the songs that my fans want to hear. This is the final curtain call. I will see you in July and...

I love you. I really do, you have to know that. I love you very much; from the bottom of my heart. This is it! See you in July!

News of the World (March 8, 2009) ([archived](#))

Pop legend Michael Jackson was told to beat it when he turned up in the lobby of his posh hotel looking like a Rockin' Robin.

Staff thought the... star looked off his face as he lurched around the Lanesborough Hotel near Hyde Park in the early hours of Wednesday [March 4, 2009].

He had to be held up by minders and led back to his suite, but friends refused to blame it on the booze-insisting he was simply jet-lagged, unable to sleep and suffering from stage-fright ahead of his big comeback announcement at the O2 Arena on Thursday.

A hotel source said: "Michael shocked us with his behavior.

"He was wandering around the lobby in the early hours looking completely spaced out.

"The security team had to help him back to his room. It was not what we were expecting at all.

"He was asking staff for DVDs to watch in his room as he was having problems sleeping. I am not sure he knew what time it was."

The 50-year-old singer - famous for his trademark moonwalk - made a series of frantic calls to his mum Katherine, 79, in the US for reassurance. The source added: "Michael spent the first two days just shut away in his suite, trying to get his head around his comeback.

"But it was clear he was quite nervous about the whole thing.

"He had a series of long chats with his mum, seeking assurances that everything was fine. Even though he is 50, he seemed to need his mum's words to keep him focused."

Jackson also declared he wanted to make his peace with Paul McCartney. The pair fell out when Jackson outbid him for the rights to the Beatles songs.

The source added: "He was asking for Sir Paul's number, but nothing came of it."

Jackson, who went to see the hit musical Oliver on Friday, stayed in the top floor of the Lanesborough in a £7,500-a-night suite along with his guards, four kids and their nannies

He is hoping to break Prince's 21-night record for the most consecutive gigs at the O2 and has confirmed 10 shows in July, with others expected to be announced soon.

A source said: "Michael is determined to prove he can still do it."

And 350,000 fans who have registered to buy tickets clearly think they've Got To Be There to see it.

Tim Leiweke. AEG president and CEO. "Billboard" (March 5, 2009) ([archived](#))

AEG president and CEO Tim Leiweke revealed that Michael Jackson is set to perform 20 to 25 shows at London's O2 Arena and that the singer is "very focused." Leiweke was speaking

during his keynote Q&A session at the Billboard Music & Money Symposium at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City.

"The man is very sane, the man is very focused, the man is very healthy," Leiweke said of Jackson. "I think he has been dragged through the mud."

As reported earlier, the run of Jackson shows, set to begin on July 9, will be announced at a press conference later today (March 5).

The shows will be promoted by AEG Live, which also put together Prince's record-setting run of 21 sellouts at the O2 that grossed more than \$22 million. The Spice Girls, Take That, and Kylie Minogue all have played multiple nights at the London arena, and Britney Spears has an eight night run scheduled for June. AEG operates the O2 venue.

Leiweke told the Billboard Music & Money audience: "We'll announce 10 shows. I think you'll see 20, 25 dates at the O2. His production budget is... Wow."

"Despite everything you read about him, he was fine," added Leiweke. "The man took a physical for us to go do these concerts."

Leiweke also confirmed that it has taken some time to get Jackson to agree to the deal. Jackson has not released a studio album or played a full concert since 2001. His last major tour was the "HIStory" World Tour in 1996-1997.

"We spent two years working with Michael trying to get him comfortable with this," said Leiweke. Asked why the comeback was being staged in London at the O2, Leiweke commented: "It's the most important venue in music today. With all due respect to the Staples Center and the [Madison Square] Garden, the O2 is where you went to see Led Zeppelin reunite."