

THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY OF PHIL SPECTOR

Directed by Vikram Jayanti Produced by
Vikram Jayanti & Anthony Wall



USA / UK / 2008 / 102 Minutes

Press Kit

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THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY OF PHIL SPECTOR

In a 50-year career stretching back to his first hit in 1958, *To Know Him is to Love Him*, Phil Spector has never given a substantial filmed interview – until now.

Director Vikram Jayanti was given unprecedented access. Spector is filmed in his own home - literally his castle - before the piano he bought with John Lennon for *Imagine*. He discusses his relationship with music greats from the girl groups of the Sixties through to The Beatles and Tina Turner. He also talks about his troubled personal life, his sense of being hounded and the anger and rage which helped him to develop his art, long before it was recognized as anything other than mere pop music.

THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY OF PHIL SPECTOR is an exploration of one of the single most important careers in popular music. Spector's classic hits dramatized and articulated teenage life, his "little symphonies for the kids" soundtracked a generation.

Phil Spector transformed rock n' roll; John Lennon told him "you kept rock n' roll alive for the two and a half years that Elvis was in the army". With *Be My Baby*, *You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'*, *River Deep – Mountain High*, Spector was the first music producer as star. He went on to produce The Beatles' *Let It Be*, the great solo work of John Lennon and George Harrison and even The Ramones.

Interwoven with the court recording of his trial last year, the film casts a spotlight on the creative mind of a troubled genius and dissects Spector's classic recordings from the perspective of his own inner world.

PHIL SPECTOR QUOTES FROM FILM

On loneliness and rage:

“They ostracised me in high school. They had nothing to do with me. I was not popular, we were poor but the rest of the school was wealthy, middle class white Jewish kids who were very stuck up.”

“I was just a loner and was always treated with contempt; they [the establishment] never considered me with the same respect that they considered Berlin or Gershwin... but that just builds up the anger and the rage which made you do better, made you do a lot better.”

On his art and the ‘Wall of Sound’:

“Most producers don’t create, they interpret. When I went into the studio I created a sound that I wanted to hear... and I always compare it to what Da Vinci did when he went to a blank canvas... and I always considered it not rock n’ roll, I always considered it art.”

“The Spector sound took a lot of work and creativity, and it was a bitch to get.”

“...pain is just there, it’s a constant. It’s hurt – hurting is a natural phenomenon with art.”

On his first hit *To Know Him Is to Love Him*:

“Nobody knew it was about my father and nobody knew it was about death, and it was a love song to somebody up beyond.”

On Brian Wilson:

“I’d like to have a nickel for every joint he smoked trying to figure out how I got the *Be My Baby* sound. You know he is demented about it.”

On working with The Beatles:

Spector recalls when he first met John Lennon: “He did say that ‘Oh, Spector kept Rock ‘n’ Roll alive for the two and a half years that Elvis was in the Army’ which was very flattering.”

On *Let It Be*: “I went in there with a very clear attitude, I wanted this to be a great farewell album. I knew they were breaking up; I knew they were never going to come back together again. I knew there was going to be no reunion.”

"A lot of people said I offended George Martin --*Sir* George Martin. He had nothing to do with those tapes, as I see it and I heard it. If he did, he should be ashamed of himself. They were everywhere -- they were not cared for, they were not guarded...it was like finding garbage. I worked with strangers in a hostile environment, hostile press, hostile people, all-Beatle lovers who thought I was taking their group away. They all wanted their own people to do it, their producers to do it. It was not an enviable task.

"I don't think that McCartney was very secure, that I went in there for a few months and did what they couldn't do in two years with those tapes. John

On George Harrison's *My Sweet Lord*: "It's just a matter of convincing the artist that you are on the same level with them, and I believe what George was saying for these moments I was with George I became a part of George. You can do things that have art as its basis that are not in your heart, but are in your soul."

On his "infamous" hair:

"...it was a tribute to Albert Einstein and Beethoven – it was done in jest, but I was wearing my hair like Albert Einstein in those days....That day it got a little extreme."

On his beliefs:

"...I don't let myself get depressed. Depression is a wasted emotion to me like pity, it's a wasted emotion."

"I envy the little old lady who sits in front of the TV and believes and holds her hand up to the screen and says Amen. Yes and believes that she is gonna get to Heaven and believes there's a thing there after.... When little Phillip [his son] died, I may not believe in God but I know there's a Devil. You know, I mean, I wish I believed. I wish to hell I believed."

About his first trial:

On the jury selection: "45% of them wrote down they believed I was guilty and 20% of them wrote down I was insane. Based upon their pre-trial publicity over the last four years."

"I am hounded now. I'm very much hounded..."

Vikram Jayanti – Producer / Director

Vikram Jayanti's documentary credits include co-producing *WHEN WE WERE KINGS* (directed by Leon Gast & Taylor Hackford), which premiered at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival, winning a Special Jury Prize, before winning the 1996 Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary.

Jayanti's film, *BRITNEY SPEARS SAVED MY LIFE*, which he directed about Britney Spears superfans in Britain, premiered on BBC3 on July 5, 2009, with great success.

In March 2009, he completed *SNOWBLIND*, which he directed, a theatrical documentary for Discovery Films about a blind girl racing the legendary Iditarod, the 1,200 mile dogsled trail in Alaska. It had its International Premiere at the Toronto Film Festival in September 2009.

On BBC2, during 2006 and 2007, Jayanti had three hit series (produced with John Stroud) of half-hour comic documentaries featuring the Hairy Bikers' global food adventures. Penguin Books' *THE HAIRY BIKERS COOKBOOK* was published in April 2006 and was an immediate bestseller, and when the third series launched in March 2007, with bigger viewer numbers than ever, *THE HAIRY BIKERS RIDE AGAIN* was also a bestseller.

During this period, Jayanti also produced and directed *LINCOLN*, (a.k.a. *The Darkness of Abraham Lincoln*), a feature documentary epic about President Lincoln's famous melancholy, premiered on History Channel USA in January 2007. Controversial and based in emerging scholarship, it became one of History Channel's most successful specials ever.

Before the Lincoln film, Jayanti directed the BBC/World Documentary Fund's *GAME OVER: Kasparov and the Machine* (Toronto Film Festival 2003) about chess champion Garry Kasparov's controversial 1997 loss to the IBM super-computer Deep Blue. Its theatrical release in the US was by ThinkFilm.

In 2003, he also produced and directed two comic documentaries for Universal Television: *SICK HUMOR*, and *THE GOLDEN GLOBES: Hollywood's Dirty Little Secret*.

In 2002, he produced and directed *THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE*, about the legendary events in the 1914 World War I trenches, another huge hit for History Channel. He directed *JULIAN SCHNABEL LOOKS AT HELL*, about the New York artist and self-styled genius, for the BBC. He also produced, for BBC Arena, *ESTONIA DREAMS OF EUROVISION!*, Marina Zenovich's tragicomedy about the new Europe.

In 2001, Jayanti produced and directed, for BBC Arena, *JAMES ELLROY'S FEAST OF DEATH* (Toronto 2001), which won the 2002 Royal Television Society's award for best documentary of the year. It also won Montreal's prestigious ArtFIFA (Festival International du Film sur l'Art) award for Best Arts Documentary. In the US, the film had an extended successful run on Showtime, the premium cable channel.

That year, he also produced Julian Simpson's *I CONFESS!*, about criminal psychology, for Britain's Channel 4; and he produced (with Steven Soderbergh executive-producing) Marina Zenovich's *WHO IS BERNARD TAPIE?*, about the

notorious French tycoon-politician-crooner-actor-felon (for BBC and Sundance Channel).

Jayanti's feature doc for Channel 4, *THE MAN WHO BOUGHT MUSTIQUE*, with Joseph Bullman (Toronto 2000), had a long theatrical run in the US. It won the British Indie for Best Documentary of 2000, and was nominated for a BAFTA and an RTS.

Other Jayanti documentaries include *ONE GENERATION MORE* (producer, with Joan Churchill directing, 1989, for BBC); *I AM A SEX ADDICT* (producer/director, 1993, with John Powers, for BBC); and *TRIPPING* (producer/director, 1999, for Britain's Channel 4), using Ken Kesey's 1964 Merry Pranksters footage archive, and with Hunter Thompson, Fat Boy Slim, Marianne Faithfull, Malcolm McDonald, Jarvis Cocker, Jann Wenner and other rock & roll luminaries.

Jayanti has served on Juries for the RTS, BAFTA and the Sundance Film Festival. He has helped conduct several of the Sundance Institute's summer documentary labs and workshops, and has also done master classes in South Africa, Belgium and the Sheffield doc festival, among other places.

Beyond *WHEN WE WERE KINGS*, his other Sundance Film Festival premieres have included *IN HER OWN TIME* (producer Jayanti, director Lynne Littman, Sundance 1986), about ultra-Orthodox Jews in Los Angeles, and *INNOCENTS ABROAD* (producer Jayanti, director Les Blank, Sundance 1992) about American tourists in Europe.

He was a consulting producer on *PROJECT KASHMIR* (2008), directed by Geeta Patel and Senain Kheshgi), and on *BORN INTO BROTHELS* (directed by Zana Briski & Ross Kauffman). *BORN INTO BROTHELS* won the Audience Award at Sundance 2004 and then the 2005 Academy Award, for Best Documentary Feature.

Before becoming an independent filmmaker in 1988, Jayanti worked for eight years at the Center for Visual Anthropology at the University of Southern California, where he taught a graduate seminar in anthropological documentary producing, and produced films such as *Ziveli: Medicine for the Heart*, 1982, about Serbian-American folk music in Chicago, based on the work of faculty colleague Dr Andrei Simic & directed by Les Blank, and *In Her Own Time*, 1985, about the final fieldwork of cultural anthropologist Dr Barbara Meyerhoff.

His production company VIXPIX Films Ltd is based in London and Los Angeles.

Arena

Anthony Wall / Producer

Anthony Wall has directed and produced films for the acclaimed BBC Arts strand *Arena* for thirty years. Since 1985 he has also been the Series Editor.

Arena films have won nine British Academy Awards, six Royal Television Society Awards, an International Emmy, the Prix Italia and the Special Medallion at Telluride for “a consistent contribution to cutting edge documentary”.

Its distinctive opening titles - a message in a bottle - signify an aspiration to imagination, wit and to stretch the scope of the documentary form.

Arena addresses arts and culture high and low, from the story of Elvis through his food in *The Burger and The King* to *Tales From Robben Island*, featuring Nelson Mandela.

The works of Harold Pinter, the song *My Way*, *The Chelsea Hotel*, *Nations and Nationalism* and *Punk and The Pistols* have all received the *Arena* treatment.

Major profiles have included *The Orson Welles Story*, *Clint Eastwood*, *William Burroughs*, *The Life and Times of Count Luchino Visconti* - and *James Ellroy's Feast of Death*, directed by Vikram Jayanti.

In 2005 Wall co-produced the multi award-winning *Bob Dylan: No Direction Home*, directed by Martin Scorsese. The same year BBC television honoured Wall and *Arena* with a documentary and a season of *Arena* classics: *Arena at 30*. In *Broadcast Magazine* of that year *Arena* was voted one of the fifty greatest television programmes of all time.

Recent successes have included the first ever documentary about Brian Eno, and *Cool*, a meditation on the origins of the word in the cool jazz epoch of the 1950s.

Arena's films are constantly in demand from festivals all over the world.

“*Arena is the oasis in the sea of insanity that is television*”
- Werner Herzog, Telluride

CREDITS

THE SONGS

(ALL PRODUCED BY PHIL SPECTOR)

To Know Him Is To Love Him (1958)
The Teddy Bears

Spanish Harlem (1960)
Phil Spector

He Hit Me (And It Felt Like A Kiss) (1962)
The Crystals

He's A Rebel (1962)
The Crystals

Chapel of Love (1963)
Darlene Love

Da Doo Ron Ron (1963)
The Crystals

Then He Kissed Me (1963)
The Crystals

Be My Baby (1963)
The Ronettes

Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah (1963) Bob
B. Soxx and the Blue Jeans

You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin' (1964)
The Righteous Brothers

River Deep - Mountain High (1966)
Ike and Tina Turner

Let It Be (1970)
The Beatles

The Long and Winding Road (1970)
The Beatles

Mother (1970)
John Lennon

God (1970)
John Lennon

My Sweet Lord (1970)
George Harrison

Crippled Inside (1971)
John Lennon

I Don't Wanna Be A Soldier (1971)
John Lennon

Imagine (1971)
John Lennon

Bangla Dhun (1971)
Ravi Shankar

Woman Is The Nigger Of The World (1972)
John Lennon

Special Thanks to

Ian Dodd, Vikki Dunn, The Farm Group
Allan Campbell David R. Evans May
Miller Regan Morris Karen Pakes David
Willis

Film Archive Courtesy of

Buena Vista Television Clips &
Footage Dick Clark Media Archive
Reelin' in the Years Productions LLC
Research Video Inc Tony Palmer

Trial Footage Courtesy of
COURT TV

Director of Photography
Maryse Alberti

Sound
Alan Barker

Camera Assistant
Benjamin Bloodwell

Colourist
Perry Gibbs

Sound Mixer
Nigel Edwards

Online Editor
Tamer Osman

Production Runner
Rebecca Savage

Production Team Assistants

Serena Kenyon
Sarah Seth

Production Coordinator

Guro Eide

Line Producer, Los Angeles

Alex Cooke

Production Manager

Daisy Robertson

Associate Producer, VIXPIX

Mike Snaith

Associate Producer, Arena

Rosemary Tratt

Film Research

Andrew Wright

Additional Research

Nico Wasserman
Kimberlee Hillyard

Onscreen critical texts courtesy of
MICK BROWN Author of *Tearing Down*
The Wall Of Sound

Film Editor

Emma Matthews

Producers

Vikram Jayanti
Anthony Wall

Director

Vikram Jayanti

A BBC ARENA/VIXPIX
FILMS PRODUCTION

Arena Series

Editor

Anthony Wall
BBC

Music Producer Guilty of Killing Actress

By SOLOMON MOORE
and RANDAL C. ARCHIBOLD

LOS ANGELES — Phil Spector, the rock music impresario behind hits like “Da Doo Ron Ron,” and “You’ve Lost that Lovin’ Feeling,” was convicted Monday of murdering a struggling actress at his mansion in 2003 after a night of drinking.

Mr. Spector, 68, faces at least 18 years in prison. The jury, ending a five-month trial, reached its decision after 27 hours of deliberating whether he shot the woman in a fit of anger or, as his lawyers argued, merely witnessed her suicide.

In addition to second-degree murder, the jury found Mr. Spector guilty of illegally discharging a firearm.

This was the second murder trial in the case; the first ended in a hung jury in 2007. Mr. Spector has been out on bail for most of the last six years, but was immediately taken into custody after the verdict on Monday.

Mr. Spector came into court looking frail and sullen. He wore a long blue overcoat, a bright red tie, and a shaggy shoulder-length hairstyle. Gone were his psychedelic glasses and the swagger that carried him through decades at the top of the pop music scene.

Mr. Spector whispered only a few words to his lawyers. As a court clerk read the verdict, he leaned forward intently. His face betrayed little emotion throughout the proceeding.

The family of the actress, Lana

Clarkson, who was 40, reacted with relief and embraces. They declined to speak to reporters gathered at the Los Angeles Superior Court downtown.

Mr. Spector, who was inducted in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1989, was famous for his Wall of Sound, lush orchestrations heard on an array of hits in the 1960s and 1970s with groups like the Ronettes. He worked with the Beatles, Tina Turner, the Rolling Stones and others but had receded from the public stage and in recent years was known as much

A rock legend with a penchant for firearms and drunken threats.

for his eccentric behavior — he has been often photographed wearing a large fright wig — as for his talent as a producer.

And according to at least five women who testified in court, Mr. Spector also had a frightening penchant for firearms and drunken discourses — often mixing them.

On Feb. 3, 2003, Ms. Clarkson’s body was found in the foyer of Mr. Spector’s eccentric, castle-style mansion in Alhambra, a Los Angeles suburb. She had been shot in the mouth. Prosecutors said Mr. Spector had tried to clean up the murder scene. De-

fense lawyers argued that Ms. Clarkson’s Hollywood ambitions had been frustrated, that she had been suicidal and that she had turned the gun on herself.

The previous trial ended in September 2007, when a jury deadlocked 10 to 2 in favor of conviction.

The verdict was a victory for Los Angeles prosecutors who have endured high-profile defeats in celebrity murder trials, including the acquittals of O. J. Simpson and the actor Robert Blake.

Alan Jackson, a deputy district attorney who rose to national prominence as the Spector case played out on Court TV, now truTV, was the prosecutor in both trials.

Just as in the Simpson case, the Clarkson family is pursuing a wrongful-death civil suit against Mr. Spector, which has been pending while the criminal case proceeded.

Ms. Clarkson starred in a 1985 cult hit, “Barbarian Queen,” and had a bit part in “Fast Times at Ridgemont High” in 1982.

She was working as a hostess at the House of Blues on the Sunset Strip when Mr. Spector visited, struck up a conversation and took her out drinking.

They finished the night at his mansion, known as the Castle, but, when she spurned his advances and tried to leave, he shoved a gun in her mouth and pulled the trigger, prosecutors said.

The prosecutors argued that



POOL PHOTO BY AL SEIB

The music producer Phil Spector, left, was found guilty of second-degree murder in the 2003 shooting death of an actress, Lana Clarkson, at his home. A previous trial ended in a hung jury.

this fit a pattern of Mr. Spector's drinking and threatening women with guns over decades.

"I want to acknowledge the many women who testified and presented a picture of Phil Spector," said Steve Cooley, the Los Angeles County district attorney, after the verdict.

Mr. Spector, prosecutors said, essentially confessed when he emerged from the home, gun in

hand, and told his limousine driver, "I think I killed somebody."

The defense disputed the accusations on several fronts, including the account of the limousine driver, Adriano De Souza.

They noted that Mr. De Souza was a Brazilian immigrant not fully proficient in English and said he might have misquoted Mr. Spector, who they suggested might have actually been telling

him to "call somebody." A gurgling fountain nearby and the driver's fatigue and hunger from working all night may have added to confusion, they told jurors.

Mr. Cooley said Monday that he had no idea how much money the county had spent to convict Mr. Spector.

"We just get the job done," Mr. Cooley said. "We don't really keep track of that."



POOL PHOTO BY JAE C. HONG

The music producer Phil Spector, left, on Friday in Superior Court in Los Angeles. He was sentenced in an actress's murder.

Music Producer Draws Term Of 19 Years to Life for Killing

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The music producer Phil Spector was sentenced on Friday to 19 years to life in prison for the murder of Lana Clarkson, an actress who was shot through the mouth in his home six years ago.

Mr. Spector, 69, looked straight forward and showed no emotion as Judge Larry Paul Fidler of Superior Court ordered a term of 15 years to life for second-degree murder plus four years for personal use of a gun.

Before the sentencing, Ms. Clarkson's mother, Donna, spoke of her daughter's fine qualities, sense of humor, intelligence and dedication to acting.

The judge also ordered Mr. Spector to pay \$16,811 in funeral

expenses, \$9,740 to a state victims' restitution fund and other fees.

Mr. Spector gained fame decades ago for what became known as the Wall of Sound recording technique that changed rock music. Ms. Clarkson, who was 40 when she died, had been best known as the star of Roger Corman's 1985 cult film classic "Barbarian Queen."

Ms. Clarkson's body was found in Mr. Spector's home in a Los Angeles suburb in February 2003. Defense lawyers argued that she had killed herself. Mr. Spector's chauffeur, who was the key witness at the trial, said he had heard a gunshot and then saw Mr. Spector emerge with a gun and heard him say, "I think I killed somebody."

Mr. Spector, who was convicted on April 13, had two trials with essentially the same evidence. His first, in 2007, ended with a deadlocked jury.

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on the Op-Ed page
seven days a week.
The New York Times

Guilty Spector faces long prison sentence

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Rock music producer Phil Spector was convicted yesterday of second-degree murder in the shooting death of a film actress at his mansion six years ago, a verdict that will send him to prison for at least 18 years barring a successful appeal.

A Superior Court jury returned the verdict after about 30 hours of deliberations. The jury had the option of choosing the lesser charge of involuntary manslaughter but did not do so.

The panel also found Spector guilty of using a firearm in committing a crime.

Spector exhibited no reaction to the verdict. His attorney argued that he should remain free on bail pending the May 29 sentencing, but Judge Larry Paul Fidler remanded him to jail immediately.

Second-degree murder carries a penalty of 15 years to life in prison. The use-of-a-gun enhancement adds 3, 4 or 10 years in prison, according to the district attorney's office.

Defense attorney Doron Weinberg said the case was swayed by what he called the judge's erroneous rulings, particularly one that allowed five



AP FILE PHOTO

Lana Clarkson was found dead of a gunshot wound in Spector's house in 2003.

women from Spector's past to testify. He said it would be the basis for appeal and a request for a new trial.

Spector's young wife, Rachelle, sobbed as the decision was announced. It was Spector's second trial. The first jury deadlocked 10-2, favoring conviction in 2007.

Lana Clarkson, 40, star of the 1985 cult film "Barbarian Queen," died of a gunshot fired in her mouth as she sat in the foyer of Spector's mansion in 2003. She met Spector only hours earlier at her job as a nightclub hostess.

Prosecutors argued Spector had a history of threatening women with guns when they tried to leave his presence. The defense claimed she killed herself.

The murder case was a flash

from Hollywood's distant past, a reminder of the 1960s when Spector reigned as the hit maker supreme with such songs as the Righteous Brothers' "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" and the Ronettes' classic, "Be My Baby."

Spector, 69, who had long lived in seclusion at his suburban Alhambra "castle," was out in Hollywood when he met Clarkson on Feb. 3, 2003, at the House of Blues. The tall, blonde actress, recently turned 40 and unable to find acting work, had taken a job as a hostess. When the club closed in the wee hours, she accepted a chauffeured ride to Spector's home for a drink. Three hours later, she was dead.

Spector's chauffeur, the key witness, said he heard a gunshot, then saw Spector emerge holding a gun and heard him say: "I think I killed somebody."

During the trial, Weinberg disputed whether the chauffeur remembered the words accurately. In closing arguments, he listed 14 points of forensic evidence including blood spatter, gunshot residue and DNA, which he said were proof of a self-inflicted wound. "It's very difficult to put a gun in somebody's mouth," he said.



The many faces (and hairdos) of Phil Spector, on display throughout his two trials. Photo above is from yesterday.

