



## **When Judges Cry Foul Play – Ruling On Rock Star Prince’s Estate**

The battle for the estate of the late great rock star Prince, who died in April this year, looks set to make any Jeremy Kyle programme seem like an afternoon tea party by comparison.

Prince, whose death shocked the world, was a unique and creative musical force who had accumulated assets worth up to \$300million (£227 million) in his successful career as a singer, songwriter, arranger and multi-instrumentalist, with over 30 albums to his name.

The DNA laboratories in his native Minnesota will be kept busy as they genetically test a host of people claiming their right to inherit a part of Prince’s wealthy estate.

Kelly Mercel, a Wills Trust and Probate specialist at leading and award winning regional law firm Pictons says “This is an interesting case and so far a judge has rejected claims by 29 people claiming to be heirs of Prince and therefore entitled to a share in his substantial assets.

“When someone dies without having made a valid Will their estate passes in accordance with the intestacy rules which are set out by statute law. Locating the deceased’s rightful heirs who are entitled to inherit from an estate under these rules can be difficult, lengthy and costly. It is also important to note that the intestacy rules may not be what you expect. For example, if you are married with children your whole estate does not necessarily pass automatically to your surviving spouse.

“Cases such as this highlight the importance of having a valid Will in place, regardless of your age, to ensure that you decide who inherits from your estate after you have died.”

Prince’s death was reported as an accidental overdose of the painkillers he had been taking to combat the severe knee and hip pain he was suffering after years of active performing. Prince was once married to his backing dancer Mayte Garcia and tragically their first child died a week after he was born and a second miscarried. Their relationship broke down soon after and they divorced. Since then Prince apparently did not have any other children and did not leave a Will.

To date the claims of 29 people have been thrown out by the judge, Kevin Eide, including a prisoner who said Prince is his father and a woman who said she and Prince had been secretly married. The judge has since ordered genetic tests to be

carried out on four siblings or half siblings and a niece and grand niece who claim to be related to the late singer.

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