David Gest found dead at 62: Liza Minnelli's ex husband discovered after 'unexplained' death in London hotel

David Gest, the reality TV star and former husband of Liza Minnelli, has been found dead in a five-star London hotel in "unexplained" circumstances.

The 62-year-old music producer's body was discovered at the luxury Four Seasons hotel, in Canary Wharf, on Tuesday morning.

Scotland Yard said the death of the star - who was due to begin a UK tour of a musical called David Gest Is Not Dead, But Alive With Soul this summer - is "unexplained" and a post-mortem examination will be carried out.

Police were called to the hotel, in Westferry Circus, at about 10.15am.

Paramedics were called, but Gest was pronounced dead at the scene.

It is believed that Gest's death is not being treated as suspicious and detectives are understood not to have found any obvious causes at the scene.

The former Celebrity Big Brother star was married to Minnelli from 2002-2003, but they only officially divorced in 2007.

Gest was also known for being a close friend of the late Michael Jackson.

The TV personality was a familiar face on British TV, appearing in I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here! in 2006 and in Celebrity Big Brother earlier this year, which he exited after only 13 days due to ill health. He also appeared on ITV's Grease Is The Word.

Gest was due to tour the United Kingdom in a musical show called David Gest Is Not Dead, But Alive With Soul, starting in York on July 1.

The name was inspired by an incident in the Celebrity Big Brother House when American reality star Tiffany Pollard mistakenly believed Gest had died rather than David Bowie.

Friend Imad Handi said: "It is with great sadness that I can confirm that David Gest has died today.

"David was truly larger than life. He was not just a huge talent and a dear friend but a showbiz icon.

Mr Handi added: "I know he will be missed by millions of fans around the world, and particularly in Britain, who came to love his charm and blistering one-liners.

"If I may steal the words of one eminent critic, David was a natural star and a genuine celebrity. I will miss him desperately."

Gest married Minnelli in March 2002 in a star-studded ceremony with Michael Jackson as best man and Elizabeth Taylor as maid of honour.

Before filing for divorce, Gest sued Minnelli for assault, claiming that she had beaten him so badly during alcoholic rages that she caused him nerve damage and caused him to be treated in hospital for five days.

Minnelli also sued Gest, claiming her estranged husband had stolen at least $2 million she earned while performing in shows he produced.

The pair ended their dispute in 2007 when their lawyers filed court papers saying they had settled their differences and agreed to get divorced without fault

Gest grew up with Jackson and his brothers in California, and was close friends with the family.

He was a successful producer and in 2001 his television special on the 30th anniversary of the launch of Jackson's solo career was the highest rated in history.

In a recent interview with the BBC, ahead of one of his shows in Eastbourne, he spoke frankly about not wanting to be famous while he was married to Minnelli.

He said: "There's a part of me that never wanted to be quote 'a celebrity' when I was married - I can't remember the woman's name."

Prompted by the interviewer that it was Minnelli, he responded: "I knew it was Elizabeth. I never wanted to be in the public eye. It's very hard when you wake up each day and there's press outside your house.

"I would never want to live that type of life, I live a very simple life."

Earlier this year, Gest spoke to The Grimsby Telegraph about where he wanted to be buried.

He said: "I will never go back to LA; I will die here and want to be buried in York. I love this country much more than my own."

Celebrities' shock at death of 'loyal dear friend'

Writing on Twitter, Myleene Klass described Gest as "wonderfully kind" and "extremely generous":