

= The Notorious B.I.G. =

Christopher George Latore Wallace (May 21 , 1972 ? March 9 , 1997) , better known by his stage names The Notorious B.I.G , Biggie , or Biggie Smalls , was an American rapper . He is consistently ranked as one of the greatest and most influential rappers of all time .

Wallace was raised in the Brooklyn borough of New York City . When he released his debut album Ready to Die in 1994 , he became a central figure in the East Coast hip hop scene and increased New York 's visibility in the genre at a time when West Coast hip hop was dominant in the mainstream . The following year , Wallace led his childhood friends to chart success through his protégé group , Junior M.A.F.I.A. While recording his second album , Wallace was heavily involved in the growing East Coast ? West Coast hip hop feud .

On March 9 , 1997 , Wallace was killed by an unknown assailant in a drive @-@ by shooting in Los Angeles . His double @-@ disc album Life After Death , released 16 days later , rose to No. 1 on the U.S. album charts and was certified Diamond in 2000 , one of the few hip hop albums to receive this certification . Wallace was noted for his " loose , easy flow " , dark semi @-@ autobiographical lyrics and storytelling abilities . Two more albums have been released since his death . He has certified sales of 17 million units in the United States .

= = Life and career = =

= = = 1972 ? 94 : Early life , arrests , career beginnings and first child = = =

Born in St. Mary 's Hospital in Brooklyn on May 21 , 1972 , as the only child of Voletta Wallace , a Jamaican preschool teacher , and Selwyn George Latore , a welder and small @-@ time Jamaican politician . His father left the family when Wallace was two years old , and his mother worked two jobs while raising him . Wallace grew up in the Clinton Hill section of Brooklyn , New York City on 226 St. James Place near the border of Bedford @-@ Stuyvesant , considered at the time to be within the latter neighborhood 's boundaries . At the Queen of All Saints Middle School , Wallace excelled in class , winning several awards as an English student . He was nicknamed " Big " because of his overweight size by age 10 . He said he started dealing when he was around the age of 12 . His mother , often away at work , did not know of her son 's drug sales until Wallace was an adult .

At his request , Wallace transferred out of the Roman Catholic Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School to attend the state @-@ funded George Westinghouse Career and Technical Education High School , which future rappers DMX , Jay @-@ Z and Busta Rhymes also attended at the time . According to his mother , Wallace was still a good student , but he developed a " smart @-@ ass " attitude at the new school . At seventeen , Wallace dropped out of school and became further involved in crime . In 1989 , he was arrested on weapons charges in Brooklyn and sentenced to five years ' probation . In 1990 , he was arrested on a violation of his probation . A year later , Wallace was arrested in North Carolina for dealing crack cocaine . He spent nine months in jail before making bail .

Wallace began rapping when he was a teenager . He entertained people on the streets and performed with local groups the Old Gold Brothers and the Techniques . After being released from jail , Wallace made a demo tape under the name Biggie Smalls , a reference to a character in the 1975 film Let 's Do It Again as well as his stature ; he stood at 6 feet 3 inches (1 @. @ 91 m) and weighed as much as 300 to 380 pounds (140 ? 170 kg) according to differing accounts . The tape was reportedly made with no serious intent of getting a recording deal , but was promoted by New York @-@ based DJ Mister Cee , who had previously worked with Big Daddy Kane , and was heard by the editor of The Source .

In March 1992 , Wallace was featured in The Source 's Unsigned Hype column , dedicated to aspiring rappers , and made a recording off the back of this success . The demo tape was heard by Uptown Records A & R and record producer Sean Combs , who arranged for a meeting with

Wallace . He was signed to Uptown immediately and made an appearance on label mates , Heavy D & the Boyz ' " A Buncha Niggas " (from the album Blue Funk) . Soon after signing his recording contract , Combs was fired from Uptown and started a new label . Wallace followed and in mid @-@ 1992 , signed to Combs ' new imprint label , Bad Boy Records .

On August 8 , 1993 , Wallace 's longtime girlfriend gave birth to his first child , T 'yanna . Wallace had split with the girlfriend for some time before T 'yanna 's birth . Wallace wanted his daughter to complete her education , despite being a high school dropout himself . Wallace said that if his mother had promised him what he promised his daughter , everything she wanted , Wallace would have been not only a graduate but also at the top of his class . He continued selling drugs after the birth to support his daughter financially . Once Combs discovered this , he forced Wallace to quit .

Later in the year , Wallace gained exposure on a remix to Mary J. Blige 's single " Real Love " , under the pseudonym The Notorious B.I.G. He recorded under this name for the remainder of his career , after finding the original moniker " Biggie Smalls " was already in use . " Real Love " peaked at No. 7 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and was followed by a remix of Blige 's " What 's the 411 ? " . He continued this success , to a lesser extent , on remixes with Neneh Cherry (" Buddy X ") and reggae artist Super Cat (" Dolly My Baby " , also featuring Combs) in 1993 . In April 1993 , his solo track , " Party and Bullshit " , appeared on the Who 's the Man ? soundtrack . In July 1994 , he appeared alongside LL Cool J and Busta Rhymes on a remix to label mate Craig Mack 's " Flava in Ya Ear " , reaching No. 9 on the Billboard Hot 100 .

= = = 1994 : Ready to Die and marriage = = =

On August 4 , 1994 , Wallace married R & B singer Faith Evans after they met at a Bad Boy photoshoot . Five days later , Wallace had his first pop chart success as a solo artist with double A @-@ side , " Juicy / Unbelievable " , which reached No. 27 as the lead single to his debut album .

Ready to Die was released on September 13 , 1994 , and reached No. 13 on the Billboard 200 chart , eventually being certified four times Platinum . The album , released at a time when West Coast hip hop was prominent in the U.S. charts , according to Rolling Stone , " almost single @-@ handedly ... shifted the focus back to East Coast rap " . It immediately gained strong reviews and has received much praise in retrospect . In addition to " Juicy " , the record produced two hit singles : the Platinum @-@ selling " Big Poppa " , which reached No. 1 on the U.S. rap chart , and " One More Chance " featuring Faith Evans , a loosely related remix of an album track and its best selling single .

Busta Rhymes claimed to have seen Wallace giving out free copies of Ready to Die from his home , which Rhymes reasoned as " his way of marketing himself . " Around the time of the album 's release , Wallace became friends with Tupac Shakur , also a rapper . Cousin Lil ' Cease recalled the pair being close , often traveling together whenever they were not active in furthering their careers . According to him , Wallace was a frequent guest at Shakur 's home and they constantly spent time together when Shakur was in California or Washington , D.C . It was claimed by Yukmouth , an Oakland emcee , that Wallace 's style was inspired by that of Shakur . Wallace also formed a friendship with Shaquille O 'Neal , O 'Neal remembering his first time hearing Wallace , during listening to the song " Gimme the Loot " , where Wallace mentioned him in the lyrics and thereby attracted O 'Neal to his music . O 'Neal requested a collaboration with Wallace , which resulted in the song " You Can 't Stop the Reign " . Sean Combs related that Wallace would not do collaborations with " anybody he didn 't really respect " , adding that Wallace paid O 'Neal " respect by shouting him out . " Daz Dillinger said in 2015 that Wallace and he were " cool " . Wallace would travel to meet with him , Dillinger remembering serving him weed and recording two songs with him .

= = = 1995 : Junior M.A.F.I.A. , Conspiracy and coastal feud = = =

In August 1995 , Wallace 's protégé group , Junior M.A.F.I.A. (" Junior Masters At Finding Intelligent Attitudes ") , released their debut album Conspiracy . The group consisted of his friends

from childhood and included rappers such as Lil ' Kim and Lil ' Cease , who went on to have solo careers . The record went Gold and its singles , " Player 's Anthem " and " Get Money " both featuring Wallace , went Gold and Platinum . Wallace continued to work with R & B artists , collaborating with R & B groups 112 (on " Only You ") and Total (on " Can 't You See ") , with both reaching the top 20 of the Hot 100 . By the end of the year , Wallace was the top @-@ selling male solo artist and rapper on the U.S. pop and R & B charts . In July 1995 , he appeared on the cover of The Source with the caption " The King of New York Takes Over " , a reference to his Frank White alias from the 1990 film King of New York . At the Source Awards in August 1995 , he was named Best New Artist (Solo) , Lyricist of the Year , Live Performer of the Year , and his debut Album of the Year . At the Billboard Awards , he was Rap Artist of the Year .

In his year of success , Wallace became involved in a rivalry between the East and West Coast hip hop scenes with Shakur , now his former friend . In an interview with Vibe in April 1995 , while serving time in Clinton Correctional Facility , Shakur accused Uptown Records ' founder Andre Harrell , Sean Combs , and Wallace of having prior knowledge of a robbery that resulted in him being shot five times and losing thousands of dollars worth of jewelry on the night of November 30 , 1994 . Though Wallace and his entourage were in the same Manhattan @-@ based recording studio at the time of the shooting , they denied the accusation . Wallace said : " It just happened to be a coincidence that he [Shakur] was in the studio . He just , he couldn 't really say who really had something to do with it at the time . So he just kinda ' leaned the blame on me . " In 2012 , a man named Dexter Isaac , serving a life sentence for unrelated crimes , claimed that he attacked Shakur that night and that the robbery was orchestrated by James Rosemond aka Jimmy Henchman .

Following his release from prison , Shakur signed to Death Row Records on October 15 , 1995 . Bad Boy Records and Death Row , now business rivals , became involved in an intense quarrel .

= = = 1996 : More arrests , Tupac Shakur 's death and second child = = =

Wallace began recording his second studio album in September 1995 . The album , recorded in New York , Trinidad , and Los Angeles , was interrupted during its 18 months of creation by injury , legal wranglings and the highly publicized hip hop dispute in which he was involved . During this time , he also worked with R & B / pop singer , songwriter and producer Michael Jackson for the HIStory album . Lil ' Cease claimed in 2013 that Wallace denied his wishes to meet Jackson , citing that he did not " trust Michael with kids " .

On March 23 , 1996 , Wallace was arrested outside a Manhattan nightclub for chasing and threatening to kill two autograph seekers , smashing the windows of their taxicab and then pulling one of the fans out and punching them . He pleaded guilty to second @-@ degree harassment and was sentenced to 100 hours of community service . In mid @-@ 1996 , he was arrested at his home in Teaneck , New Jersey , for drug and weapons possession charges .

In June 1996 , Shakur released " Hit ' Em Up " , a diss song in which he claimed to have had sex with Wallace 's wife (at the time estranged) and that Wallace copied his style and image . Wallace referred to the first claim about his wife 's pregnancy on Jay @-@ Z 's " Brooklyn 's Finest " where he raps : " If Faye (Faith Evans , his wife at the time) have twins , she 'd probably have two ' Pacs . Get it ? 2Pac 's ? " However , Wallace did not directly respond to the record during his lifetime , stating in a 1997 radio interview that it was " not [his] style " to respond .

Shakur was shot multiple times in a drive @-@ by shooting in Las Vegas , Nevada , on September 7 , 1996 , and died six days later on September 13 , 1996 of complications from the gunshot wounds . Rumors of Wallace 's involvement with Shakur 's murder were reported almost immediately . A two @-@ part series Chuck Philips wrote for the Los Angeles Times in 2002 , " Who Killed Tupac Shakur ? " , based on police reports and multiple sources reported that " the shooting was carried out by a Compton gang called the Southside Crips to avenge the beating of one of its members by Shakur a few hours earlier " and that Wallace paid for the gun . His family publicly denied the report , producing documents purporting to show that the rapper was in New York and New Jersey at the time . The New York Times called the documents inconclusive , stating :

The pages purport to be three computer printouts from Daddy 's House , indicating that Wallace

was in the studio recording a song called Nasty Boy on the night Shakur was shot . They indicate that Wallace wrote half the session , was In and out / sat around and laid down a ref , shorthand for a reference vocal , the equivalent of a first take . But nothing indicates when the documents were created . And Louis Alfred , the recording engineer listed on the sheets , said in an interview that he remembered recording the song with Wallace in a late @-@ night session , not during the day . He could not recall the date of the session but said it was likely not the night Shakur was shot . We would have heard about it , Mr. Alfred said . "

Moreover , Philips ' article was based on multiple sources . As the Assistant Managing Editor of the LA Times Mark Duvoisin wrote : " Philips ' story has withstood all challenges to its accuracy , ... [and] remains the definitive account of the Shakur slaying . " Faith Evans remembered her husband calling her the night of Shakur 's death and crying due to him being in shock . Evans added , " I think it ? s fair to say he was probably afraid , given everything that was going on at that time and all the hype that was put on this so @-@ called beef that he didn ? t really have in his heart against anyone . " Wayne Barrow , Wallace 's co @-@ manager at the time , said Wallace was recording the song " Nasty Girl " the night Shakur was shot . Shortly after Shakur 's death , he met with Snoop Dogg , who claimed that Wallace played the song " Somebody Gotta Die " for him , in which Snoop Dogg was mentioned , and declared he never hated Shakur .

On October 29 , 1996 , Faith Evans gave birth to Wallace 's son , Christopher " C.J. " Wallace , Jr . The following month , Junior M.A.F.I.A. member Lil ' Kim released her debut album , Hard Core , under Wallace 's direction while the two were having a " love affair " . Lil ' Kim recalled being Wallace 's " biggest fan " and her being " his pride and joy . " In a 2012 interview , Lil ' Kim said Wallace prevented her from doing a remix of the Jodeci single " Love U 4 Life " by locking her in a room and according to her , Wallace stated that she was not " gonna go do no song with them , " likely because of the group 's close affiliation with Tupac and Death Row Records .

= = = 1997 : Life After Death and car accident = = =

During the recording sessions for his second album , tentatively named " Life After Death ... ' Til Death Do Us Part " , later shortened to Life After Death , Wallace was involved in a car accident that shattered his left leg and temporarily confined him to a wheelchair . The injury forced him to use a cane . He and Lil ' Cease were arrested for smoking marijuana in public and had their car repossessed . Wallace chose a Chevrolet Lumina rental SUV as a substitute , despite Lil ' Cease 's objections . The vehicle had brake problems before the accident but Wallace dismissed them . According to Lil ' Cease , Wallace 's leg was shattered when they hit a rail along with Lil 's Cease 's jaw . Wallace spent months in a hospital following the accident and had to complete therapy . Despite his hospitalization , he continued to work on the album . The accident was referred to in the lyrics of " Long Kiss Goodnight " : " Ya still tickle me , I used to be as strong as Ripple be / Til Lil ' Cease crippled me . "

In January 1997 , Wallace was ordered to pay US \$ 41 @,@ 000 in damages following an incident involving a friend of a concert promoter who claimed Wallace and his entourage beat him up following a dispute in May 1995 . He faced criminal assault charges for the incident which remains unresolved , but all robbery charges were dropped . Following the events of the previous year , Wallace spoke of a desire to focus on his " peace of mind " . " My mom ... my son ... my daughter ... my family ... my friends are what matters to me now " .

= = Death and funeral = =

Wallace traveled to Los Angeles in February 1997 , to promote his upcoming second studio album and film a music video for its lead single , " Hypnotize " . The album , Life After Death , was scheduled for release on March 25 , 1997 .

On March 7 , he presented an award to Toni Braxton at the 1997 Soul Train Music Awards in Los Angeles and was booed by some of the audience . The following evening , March 8 , Wallace attended an after party hosted by Vibe magazine and Qwest Records at the Petersen Automotive

Museum in Los Angeles . Other guests included Faith Evans , Aaliyah , Sean Combs , and members of the Bloods and Crips gangs .

On March 9 , Wallace left in a GMC Suburban SUV at 12 : 30 a.m. (PST) . By 12 : 45 a.m. (PST) , the streets were crowded with people leaving the event . Wallace 's SUV stopped at a red light at the corner of Wilshire Blvd & South Fairfax Ave 50 yards (46 m) from the museum . A dark colored Chevrolet Impala SS pulled up alongside Wallace 's SUV . The driver of the Impala , a black male dressed in a blue suit and bow tie , rolled down his window , drew a 9mm blue @-@ steel pistol and fired at the SUV . Four bullets hit Wallace . His entourage rushed him to Cedars @-@ Sinai Medical Center , where doctors performed an emergency thoracotomy , but he was pronounced dead at 1 : 15 a.m. (PST) , six months after Tupac Shakur was killed .

Wallace 's autopsy was released to the public in December 2012 , over a decade after his death . According to the report , three of the four shots were not fatal . The first bullet hit in his left forearm and traveled down to his wrist ; the second hit him in the back , missing all vital organs , and exited through his left shoulder ; and the third hit his outer left thigh and left through his inner thigh . The report said that the third bullet struck " the left side of the scrotum , causing a very shallow , 3 ? 8 inch [10 mm] linear laceration . " The fourth bullet was fatal , entering through his right hip and striking several vital organs , before stopping in his left shoulder area . That bullet struck his colon , liver , heart and upper lobe of his left lung .

Wallace 's murder remains unsolved and there are many theories regarding the identities and motives of the murderers . Immediately after the shooting , reports surfaced linking Wallace 's murder to the murder of Tupac Shakur , because of the similarities in the drive @-@ by shootings and the involvement of Shakur and Wallace in the East Coast ? West Coast hip hop rivalry . In 1997 , Los Angeles Times authors Chuck Philips and Matt Laitt reported that the key suspect was a member of the Crips acting in service of a personal financial motive .

Biggie 's funeral was held on March 18 , 1997 at the Frank E. Campbell Funeral Chapel in Manhattan . There were among 350 mourners at the funeral , including Queen Latifah , Flava Flav , Mary J. Blige , Lil ' Kim , Lil ' Cease , Run ? D.M.C. , DJ Kool Herc , Busta Rhymes , Salt @-@ N @-@ Pepa , DJ Spinderella , Foxy Brown , Sister Souljah and others . After the funeral , his body was cremated and the ashes were given to his family .

= = Posthumous releases = =

Sixteen days after his death , Wallace 's double @-@ disc second album was released as planned with the shortened title of Life After Death and hit No. 1 on the Billboard 200 charts , after making a premature appearance at No. 176 due to street @-@ date violations . The record album featured a much wider range of guests and producers than its predecessor . It gained strong reviews and in 2000 was certified Diamond , the highest RIAA certification awarded to a solo hip hop album .

Its lead single , " Hypnotize " , was the last music video recording in which Wallace would participate . His biggest chart success was with its follow @-@ up " Mo Money Mo Problems " , featuring Sean Combs (under the rap alias " Puff Daddy ") and Mase . Both singles reached No. 1 in the Hot 100 , making Wallace the first artist to achieve this feat posthumously . The third single , " Sky 's The Limit " , featuring the band 112 , was noted for its use of children in the music video , directed by Spike Jonze , who were used to portray Wallace and his contemporaries , including Sean Combs , Lil ' Kim , and Busta Rhymes . Wallace was named Artist of the Year and " Hypnotize " Single of the Year by Spin magazine in December 1997 .

In mid @-@ 1997 , Combs released his debut album , No Way Out , which featured Wallace on five songs , notably on the third single " Victory " . The most prominent single from the record album was " I 'll Be Missing You " , featuring Combs , Faith Evans and 112 , which was dedicated to Wallace 's memory . At the 1998 Grammy Awards , Life After Death and its first two singles received nominations in the rap category . The album award was won by Combs ' No Way Out and " I 'll Be Missing You " won the award in the category of Best Rap Performance By A Duo Or Group in which " Mo Money Mo Problems " was nominated .

Wallace had founded a hip hop supergroup called The Commission , which consisted of Jay @-@

Z , Lil ' Cease , Combs , Charli Baltimore and himself . The Commission was mentioned by Wallace in the lyrics of " What 's Beef " on Life After Death and " Victory " from No Way Out but never completed an album . A song on Duets : The Final Chapter titled " Whatchu Want (The Commission) " featuring Jay @-@ Z was based on the group .

In December 1999 , Bad Boy released Born Again . The album consisted of previously unreleased material mixed with guest appearances including many artists Wallace had never collaborated with in his lifetime . It gained some positive reviews but received criticism for its unlikely pairings ; The Source describing it as " compiling some of the most awkward collaborations of his career " . Nevertheless , the album sold 2 million copies . Wallace appeared on Michael Jackson 's 2001 album , Invincible . Over the course of time , his vocals were heard on hit songs such as " Foolish " by Ashanti and " Realest Niggas " in 2002 , and the song " Runnin ' (Dying to Live) " with Shakur the following year . In 2005 , Duets : The Final Chapter continued the pattern started on Born Again , criticized for the lack of significant vocals by Wallace on some of its songs . Its lead single " Nasty Girl " became Wallace 's first UK No. 1 single . Combs and Voletta Wallace have stated the album will be the last release primarily featuring new material .

= = Musical style = =

Wallace mostly rapped on his songs in a deep tone described by Rolling Stone as a " thick , jaunty grumble " , which went deeper on Life After Death . He was often accompanied on songs with ad libs from Sean " Puffy " Combs . On The Source 's Unsigned Hype , his style was described as " cool , nasal , and filtered , to bless his own material " .

Allmusic describe Wallace as having " a talent for piling multiple rhymes on top of one another in quick succession " . Time magazine wrote Wallace rapped with an ability to " make multi @-@ syllabic rhymes sound ... smooth " , while Krims describes Wallace 's rhythmic style as " effusive . " Before starting a verse , Wallace sometimes used onomatopoeic vocables to " warm up " (for example " uhhh " at the beginning of " Hypnotize " and " Big Poppa " and " whaat " after certain rhymes in songs such as " My Downfall ") .

Lateef of Latyrx notes that Wallace had , " intense and complex flows " , Fredro Starr of Onyx says , " Biggie was a master of the flow " , and Bishop Lamont states that Wallace mastered " all the hemispheres of the music " . " Notorious B.I.G. also often used the single @-@ line rhyme scheme to add variety and interest to his flow " . Big Daddy Kane suggests that Wallace didn 't need a large vocabulary to impress listeners ? " he just put his words together a slick way and it worked real good for him " . Wallace was known to compose lyrics in his head , rather than write them down on paper , in a similar way to Jay @-@ Z.

Wallace would occasionally vary from his usual style . On " Playa Hater " from his second album , he sang in a slow @-@ falsetto . On his collaboration with Bone Thugs @-@ n @-@ Harmony , " Notorious Thugs " , he modified his style to match the rapid rhyme flow of the group .

= = Themes and lyrical content = =

Wallace 's lyrical topics and themes included mafioso tales (" Niggas Bleed ") , his drug dealing past (" 10 Crack Commandments ") , materialistic bragging (" Hypnotize ") , as well as humor (" Just Playing (Dreams) ") , and romance (" Me & My Bitch ") . Rolling Stone named Wallace in 2004 as " one of the few young male songwriters in any pop style writing credible love songs " .

Guerilla Black , in the book How to Rap , describes how Wallace was able to both " glorify the upper echelon " and " [make] you feel his struggle " . According to Touré of The New York Times in 1994 , Wallace 's lyrics " [mixed] autobiographical details about crime and violence with emotional honesty " . Marriott of The New York Times (in 1997) believed his lyrics were not strictly autobiographical and wrote he " had a knack for exaggeration that increased sales " . Wallace described his debut as " a big pie , with each slice indicating a different point in my life involving bitches and niggaz ... from the beginning to the end " .

Ready to Die is described by Rolling Stone as a contrast of " bleak " street visions and being " full of

high @-@ spirited fun , bringing the pleasure principle back to hip @-@ hop " . Allmusic write of " a sense of doom " in some of his songs and the NY Times note some being " laced with paranoia " ; Wallace described himself as feeling " broke and depressed " when he made his debut . The final song on the album , " Suicidal Thoughts " , featured Wallace contemplating suicide and concluded with him committing the act .

On Life After Death , Wallace 's lyrics went " deeper " . Krims explains how upbeat , dance @-@ oriented tracks (which featured less heavily on his debut) alternate with " reality rap " songs on the record and suggests that he was " going pimp " through some of the lyrical topics of the former . XXL magazine wrote that Wallace " revamped his image " through the portrayal of himself between the albums , going from " midlevel hustler " on his debut to " drug lord " .

Allmusic wrote that the success of Ready to Die is " mostly due to Wallace 's skill as a storyteller " ; in 1994 , Rolling Stone described Wallace 's ability in this technique as painting " a sonic picture so vibrant that you 're transported right to the scene " . On Life After Death Wallace notably demonstrated this skill on " I Got a Story to Tell " , creating a story as a rap for the first half of the song and then retelling the same story " for his boys " in conversation form .

= = Legacy = =

Considered one of the best artists in hip hop music , Wallace was described by AllMusic as " the savior of East Coast hip @-@ hop " . The Source magazine named Wallace the greatest rapper of all time in its 150th issue in 2002 . In 2003 , when XXL magazine asked several hip hop artists to list their five favorite MCs , Wallace 's name appeared on more rappers ' lists than anyone else . In 2006 , MTV ranked him at No. 3 on their list of The Greatest MCs of All Time , calling him possibly " the most skillful ever on the mic " . Editors of About.com ranked him No. 4 on their list of the Top 50 MCs of Our Time (1987 ? 2007) . In 2012 , The Source ranked him No. 3 on their list of the Top 50 Lyrical Leaders of all time . Rolling Stone has referred to him as the " greatest rapper that ever lived " . In 2015 , Billboard named Wallace as the greatest rapper of all time .

Since his death , Wallace 's lyrics have been sampled and quoted by a variety of hip hop , R & B and pop artists including Jay @-@ Z , 50 Cent , Alicia Keys , Fat Joe , Nelly , Ja Rule , Eminem , Lil Wayne , Game , Clinton Sparks , Michael Jackson and Usher . On August 28 , 2005 , at the 2005 MTV Video Music Awards , Sean Combs (then using the rap alias " P. Diddy ") and Snoop Dogg paid tribute to Wallace : an orchestra played while the vocals from " Juicy " and " Warning " played on the arena speakers . In September 2005 , VH1 held its second annual " Hip Hop Honors " , with a tribute to Wallace headlining the show .

Wallace had begun to promote a clothing line called Brooklyn Mint , which was to produce plus @-@ sized clothing but fell dormant after he died . In 2004 , his managers , Mark Pitts and Wayne Barrow , launched the clothing line , with help from Jay @-@ Z , selling T @-@ shirts with images of Wallace on them . A portion of the proceeds go to the Christopher Wallace Foundation and to Jay @-@ Z 's Shawn Carter Scholarship Foundation . In 2005 , Voletta Wallace hired branding and licensing agency Wicked Cow Entertainment to guide the estate 's licensing efforts . Wallace @-@ branded products on the market include action figures , blankets , and cell phone content .

The Christopher Wallace Memorial Foundation holds an annual black @-@ tie dinner (" B.I.G. Night Out ") to raise funds for children 's school equipment and supplies and to honor the memory of the late rapper . For this particular event , because it is a children 's schools ' charity , " B.I.G. " is also said to stand for " Books Instead of Guns " .

There is an oversize portrait mural of Wallace as Che Guevara on Fulton Street in Brooklyn a half mile west from the star 's old block . A fan petitioned to have the corner of Fulton Street and St. James Place , near Wallace 's childhood home renamed in his honor , garnering support from local businesses and attracting more than 560 signatures . The Notorious B.I.G. ' s children C.J. and Ty 'anna are set to star in an animated series called House of Wallace .

= = = Biopic = = =

Notorious is a 2009 biographical film about Wallace and his life that starred rapper Jamal Woolard as Wallace . The film was directed by George Tillman , Jr. and distributed by Fox Searchlight Pictures . Producers included Sean " Diddy " Combs , Wallace 's former managers Wayne Barrow and Mark Pitts , as well as Voletta Wallace . On January 16 , 2009 , the movie 's debut at the Grand 18 theater in Greensboro , North Carolina was postponed after a man was shot in the parking lot before the show . The film grossed over \$ 44 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 worldwide .

In early October 2007 , open casting calls for the role of Wallace began . Actors , rappers and unknowns all tried out . Beanie Sigel auditioned for the role , but was not picked . Sean Kingston claimed that he would play the role of Wallace , but producers denied it . Eventually it was announced that rapper Jamal Woolard was chosen to play Wallace while Wallace 's son , Christopher Wallace , Jr. was cast to play Wallace as a child . Other cast members include Angela Bassett as Voletta Wallace , Derek Luke as Sean Combs , Antonique Smith as Faith Evans , Naturi Naughton formerly of 3LW as Lil ' Kim , and Anthony Mackie as Tupac Shakur . Bad Boy released a soundtrack album to the film on January 13 , 2009 ; the album contains hit singles of B.I.G. such as " Hypnotize " , " Juicy " , and " Warning " as well as rarities .

= = Discography = =

Studio album

Ready to Die (1994)

Collaboration album

Conspiracy (with Junior M.A.F.I.A.) (1995)

Posthumous studio albums

Life After Death (1997)

Born Again (1999)

Compilation albums

Duets : The Final Chapter (2005)

Greatest Hits (2007)

Notorious (2009)

= = Awards and nominations = =