



Elvis Presley: four poses

The King joins Queen Mint striking series of Elvis coins

OTTAWA — The Royal Canadian Mint, that bastion of conservative money-makers, has tossed years of conservatism aside and is striking commemorative Elvis Presley coins in four poses.

There's the early Elvis in a pose from Jailhouse Rock. "Rock and roll reign begins," reads the inscription.

Next is Elvis in Hawaii. "Elvis: today, tomorrow and forever," says the inscription on the second one-ounce silver coin.

Third in the series is a gold record commemoration — Elvis on a coin designed to look like a miniature record.

And the piece de resistance, the largest coin ever struck by the mint, is a massive 10-ounce silver commemoration with three likenesses of The King surrounded by an American Eagle with its wings spread. "Elvis, welcome to my world," it reads in classic simplicity.

The coins are not legal tender.

An engraving of Graceland, Elvis' Memphis, Tenn., home until his death in 1977, adorns the flip side of all four coins.

Each of the one-ounce coins sells for \$69 while the giant 10-ounce Elvis, complete with velvet-lined wooden box produced by the mint, goes for \$325.

Mike Makri, owner of Toronto's

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Elvis still dead, but he's making a mint

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Legendary Coins, came up with the idea.

"I've always been a bit of a coin collector and a lot of my friends are Elvis fans.

"They told me they couldn't get Elvis coins anywhere, no one sells them, so I contacted the mint, got the rights from Graceland and that was it."

Mr. Makri had a U.S. designer come up with the likeness for the giant Elvis coin while artists for the mint did the other designs.

Murray Church, communications director of the mint, says workers like the Elvis coins.

"It's been a very fun project for the people who work here," he said in an interview yesterday.

"It's great — it's pop culture."

Mr. Church will take more of an active role himself in the story Aug. 16 when he heads down to Graceland for the anniversary of Elvis' death.

"There's no truth to the rumor I've been shopping for tight sequined pants," he says, laughing.

Mr. Church will present a set of the Elvis coins to the winner of a raffle for the Memphis Trauma Centre.

As well as helping the hospital, Mr. Church says it will be an opportunity to generate publicity among the 30,000 Elvis fans expected to flock to the city for the week-long festivities surrounding the anniversary of the tragic day.

From Canadian Press