

Jeffrey Epstein's associate Jean-Luc Brunel found dead in Paris jail cell

Kevin Reed
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French business partner and friend of deceased sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, Jean-Luc Brunel, was found dead in a Paris prison cell on Saturday. The Paris prosecutor's office said Brunel's death was being investigated and appeared to be a suicide.

Brunel, who had been charged with rape and jailed in 2020, was a member of Epstein's inner circle of associates and started a modeling agency called MC2 Models in New York and Miami in 2004 with investment funds from the billionaire financier. They had broken off contact following Epstein's 2008 guilty plea, conviction and sentencing to 18 months in prison for procuring for prostitution a girl below the age of 18.

Ghislaine Maxwell, who was recently convicted of sex trafficking with Epstein, originally introduced her billionaire boyfriend to Brunel, whom she had known since the 1980s when he was co-owner of the international agency Karin Models.

French officials said Brunel, 75, was found hanging in his cell at 1:30 a.m. at the historic La Santé prison, operated by the Ministry of Justice and located in a southern district of Paris. He was being held in pretrial detention on charges that he raped girls between the ages of 15 and 18. He was also under investigation as part of a government probe into the sex trafficking activities of Epstein in France that was begun in 2019.

In a statement, Brunel's legal team said Brunel was in "distress" about his incarceration and the denial by the authorities of his repeated requests for a provisional release from the prison. Giving credence to the suicide explanation for his death, the statement said, "Jean-Luc Brunel never stopped declaring his innocence. His decision was not guided by guilt, but by a deep sentiment of injustice."

Brunel is known to have traveled frequently with Epstein, who had an elite 8,000 square foot apartment

in Paris in one of the wealthiest sectors of the city and that overlooked the Arc de Triomphe. The apartment, which had a specially built massage room and was put on the market for \$14 million after the billionaire's death, was the location of social gatherings organized by Epstein and Maxwell that included liaisons between his super rich friends and underage girls.

Virginia Giuffre, the most prominent of Epstein's abuse victims who settled a lawsuit against Prince Andrew of the UK last week for an undisclosed amount, has said in court filings that Brunel would offer modeling jobs to girls as young as 12, take them to the US and "farm them out to his friends, especially Epstein." The court documents also include accusations made by Giuffre that Epstein sexually trafficked her to Brunel on "numerous occasions and in numerous places."

There was also evidence of Brunel's supplying Epstein with underage girls that was uncovered when a trove of court documents from 2004 and 2005 were unsealed shortly after Epstein's death. Written phone call messages retrieved from Epstein's Palm Beach mansion included in instance where a friend named "Jean-Luc" called about a "teacher for you to teach you how to speak Russian" who was "2x8 years old" and "not blonde."

Meanwhile, there were accusations against Brunel as far back as 1991 that he drugged and raped young women. Former Dutch model Thysia Huisman, told the *Times* on Saturday of Brunel's death, "It makes me angry, because I've been fighting for years. For me, the end of this was to be in court. And now that whole ending—which would help form closure—is taken away from me."

Anne-Claire Le Jeune, a lawyer representing Huisman and other victims, told the Associated Press

that she felt “Great disappointment, great frustration that (the victims) won’t get justice.”

Responding to the news of Brunel’s death, Virginia Giuffre tweeted: “The suicide of Jean-Luc Brunel, who abused me and countless girls and young women, ends another chapter. I’m disappointed that I wasn’t able to face him in a final trial to hold him accountable but gratified that I was able to testify in person last year to keep him in prison.”

Giuffre’s attorney Sigrid McCawley, said in a statement, “For the women who have stood up and called for accountability from law enforcement around the world, it is not how these men died, but how they lived, and the damage they caused to so many. The fight to seek truth and justice goes on.”

The fact that Brunel’s death is being attributed to suicide, just like Epstein’s, adds to further suspicions that there is an ongoing conspiracy within the ruling establishment to cover up the extent of the criminal sex trafficking operations of the capitalist elite that lasted for two decades. While the New York Medical Examiner declared Epstein’s death a “suicide by hanging,” an independent autopsy expert hired by the billionaire’s family showed that the injuries to his neck were consistent with strangulation by another person.

When accusations of Epstein’s sexual abuse of underage girls reemerged in a civil suit by two “Jane Does” in December 2014, Brunel sought compensatory damages in a Dade County, Florida court from the billionaire, saying he had been unfairly embroiled in the scandal and his modeling agency had suffered financially from the impact on his reputation.

Accusations contained in those court documents included evidence submitted by four victims, one of whom was Virginia Giuffre, that Epstein, Prince Andrew, US lawyer Alan Dershowitz and Brunel had forced her to have sex with them. The three men denied the allegations and Epstein’s lawyer said they were old and discredited.

The way this case was worked out shows the manner in which the criminal sex trafficking operation of Epstein and others was repeatedly swept under the rug by the US judicial system. In April 2015, the presiding judge ruled that the allegations against Prince Andrew and Alan Dershowitz were to be stricken from the case because Jane Doe 3 (Giuffre) and Jane Doe 4 were not part of the initial lawsuit and had no bearing on the

issues related to Epstein.

In her 2015 affidavit, Giuffre said, “Jeffrey Epstein has told me that he has slept with over 1,000 of Brunel’s girls,” adding that the men “loved orgies with kids — that is having sexual interactions with many young teenagers at the same time. Sometimes as many as 10 underage girls would participate in a single orgy with them. I personally observed dozens of these orgies.”

Julie K. Brown of the *Miami Herald*, who has covered the Epstein sexual abuse story for many years, wrote on Sunday morning that, just like Epstein, Brunel was reported to have attempted suicide previously while in jail. According to an anonymous source, Brunel had “tried to kill himself several times” and this was confirmed to the *Herald* by his attorney Mathias Chichportich, who said his client made “several suicide attempts” over the 14 months of his detainment.

However, the lawyer told the *Herald* that Brunel was not under any active suicide watch and was being held in what is known as the “vulnerable people area” of the prison which is for people who are at risk of facing violence, a common problem for detainees facing sexual assault charges. Following an attempted suicide during the Christmas holidays, a judge ruled Brunel’s “detention was no longer justified given the status of the prosecution,” Chichportich said. That decision was overruled a few days later and Brunel was sent back to jail.



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