



Robert A. Darwell

Partner

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PRACTICE AREAS

- Entertainment, Media and Technology
- International Practice

INDUSTRIES

- Art
- Entertainment, Media and Technology
- Fashion, Apparel and Beauty
- Sports
- Video Game

OVERVIEW

Robert Darwell heads the firm's internationally acclaimed Transactional Entertainment, Media and Technology Practice Group, which was recently ranked by U.S. Legal 500 in its top tier. He is a partner in the firm's Century City and New York offices.

Areas of Practice

Mr. Darwell enjoys a global practice representing major motion picture studios, television networks, independent producers, new media companies, financial institutions, investors, financiers and other institutional and individual entertainment, media and convergence clients around the world in connection with all aspects of the development, production, acquisition and distribution of motion pictures, television programming, video games and other content.

Mr. Darwell's extensive knowledge of, and experience with, the legal and business aspects of the entertainment industry allows him to provide clients with specialized services including copyright and other intellectual property matters, clearance/rights issues, complex chain of title review and analysis, employment and guild matters, and bank and other forms of single and multiple picture production financing, including international joint ventures, co-productions, output deals and tax driven financings.

Mr. Darwell counsels on, structures, and negotiates a wide variety of agreements including for the option and acquisition of literary property rights; revenue sharing agreements; affiliation agreements; library acquisitions; strategic alliances; agreements relating to equity investments in media companies; first look agreements; licensing and merchandising; sports and other live events; videogame development and publishing arrangements; book publishing; recording, soundtrack, and music publishing deals; and executive employment agreements.

Mr. Darwell also represents and counsels advertisers and agencies in preparing endorsement and sponsorship agreements, licensing and protecting intellectual property rights, reviewing and clearing advertising copy for use in online and off-line media, complying with privacy concerns, preparing advertising agency and media agreements, and advising clients in complying with claims substantiation, ambush marketing,

co-promotions, branded entertainment and state and federal regulations governing contests, sweepstakes and other promotions.

Mr. Darwell is also the founder of the firm's Fashion, Apparel and Beauty practice. He has represented labels, designers, retailers and manufacturers around the world, including Gucci, Chanel, Versace and Cavalli in matters involving advertising, marketing, counterfeiting and intellectual property licensing. Interested parties should visit the firm's fashion blog at www.fashionapparellawblog.com.

Pursuing his long time passion for the arts and Sheppard Mullin's rich art history, Mr. Darwell also established the firm's art law practice, representing artists, galleries, museums, and sponsors. The firm's art law blog can be accessed at www.artlawgallery.com.

EDUCATION

- J.D., Georgetown University Law Center, 1988, *magna cum laude*
- B.A., Arizona State University, 1985, *summa cum laude*
- French Language Program, Sorbonne (University of Paris), 1985

ADMISSIONS

- California
- U.S. District Court of the Central District of California

LANGUAGES

- French

EXPERIENCE

Representative Experience

- Lead entertainment counsel to Comcast in connection with its multi-billion dollar acquisition of NBC Universal.
- Represented Disney on the sale of Miramax library.
- Represent French television powerhouse Banijay Entertainment in expanding its reality television empire by acquiring Bunim/Murray Productions and completing the deal to form Angel City Factory.
- Counsel to City National Bank in connection with a series of off balance sheet financing transactions for video game titles.
- Represented IAC in connection with its deal with Ben Silverman to form Electus.
- Representation of Focus Features with respect to its co-development/co-financing venture with Random House to form Random House Films.
- Represented Los Angeles Clippers in connection with multi-year telecast rights agreement.
- Lead outside counsel representing Walt Disney Company in connection with the separation of Bob and Harvey Weinstein from Miramax.
- Legal counsel to producer in the sale, distribution and/or acquisition of numerous recent high profile motion pictures, including "Albert Nobbs", "Jane Eyre", "The Grey", "Away We Go", "Oceans", "Slumdog Millionaire", "The Duchess", "The Queen", "Hostel", "The Descent" and "Lord of War".

- Rendered services in connection with the development, financing, and/or production of motion picture projects such as "Disconnect", "Rampart", "The Details", "Takers", "Taking Woodstock", "127 Hours", "Obsessed", "Che: Guerilla and the Argentine", "Babylon A.D.", "Milk", "Brokeback Mountain", "We Own the Night", "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind", "Lost in Translation", "21 Grams", and television projects such as "The Nine Lives of Chloe King", "The Secret Life of an American Teenager", "La Cenicienta", and "Soap Talk".
- Entertainment counsel to USA Networks in connection with its sale of its entertainment assets to Vivendi Universal.
- Represented ABS as promoter of Manny Pacquiao boxing event in Manila, Phillipines.
- Counsel to Union Bank in connection with its overall Winchester Credit facility.
- Represented South Korean developer in connection with MGM theme park.
- Represented France Animation/Moonscoop in its acquisition of a majority interest in animation company Mike Young Productions.
- Counsel to private equity investor involved in Legendary slate financing arrangement at Warner; counsel to Rogue Pictures in connection with Intrepid slate financing with Rogue/Universal; and counsel to Focus Features in respect of its Twins multi-picture state financing arrangement.
- Structure and negotiate key Telemundo strategic alliances with Globo, Argos, and TV Azteca.
- Entertainment Counsel to USA Networks in connection with its acquisition of Polygram domestic library and merger with October Films to form USA Films.
- Outside general counsel to The Broad Stage.

HONORS

- 20 Most Important People to Meet at AFM, *The Hollywood Reporter*
- Power Lawyer, *The Hollywood Reporter*
- One of Top 100 Lawyers in California, *Daily Journal*
- Best Lawyers in America, Advertising and Entertainment categories
- One of 40 Who's Who in Law?, *LA Business Journal*
- Southern California Super Lawyer
- Best of the Bar, Media and Entertainment, *Los Angeles Business Journal*
- Lawdragon 500 Leading Lawyers In America, *Lawdragon Magazine*
- Attorney of the Year, Entertainment, *California Lawyer*
- Transactional Entertainment Rating, *Chambers and Partners*
- 500 New Worlds, New Stars, *Lawdragon*
- 3000 Leading Lawyers in America, *Lawdragon*
- Leading Lawyer, *Legal 500 US*
- Which Lawyer?, Practical Law Company, Media, 2011

MEMBERSHIPS

- Former Co-Chair, Beverly Hills Bar Association Entertainment Law Section
- Past President, Premier Patrons of the American Cinematheque
- Board Member, Planning Committee for the UCLA Entertainment Law Symposium

ARTICLES

- Congress Has Designs For Piracy Prevention Legislation, *Daily Journal*, August 9, 2011
- Horse Racing Industry Faces Unique Challenges In Regulating Use of Drugs, *Street & Smith Sports Business Journal*, November 8, 2010
- Green Sports Facilities Are Becoming the Gold Standard, *Sports Litigation Alert*, July 2, 2010
- Donating An Art Collection Can Be A Challenge, *On Wall Street*, November 1, 2009
- The Dirty Dozen - Part 2, *Daily Journal*, September 29, 2009
- The Dirty Dozen - Part 1, *Daily Journal*, September 22, 2009

SPEECHES

- Beijing International Film Festival - Sino-European Co-Productions
- Cannes Film Festival - Slate Film Financing
- Miami International Film Festival - Bank, Bonding and Insurance Panel
- Milan Fashion Week - Celebrity Endorsement Deals
- Rio Film Festival - North American Production Incentives
- Shanghai International Film Festival - Doing Deals with A List Talent
- UCLA Entertainment Law Symposium - Celebrity Endorsements and Licenses
- Zurich Film Festival - Making Movies and Generating Revenue in Today's Environment

EVENTS

- Annual Global Media Update: New Frontiers
- Fashion Week Fall 2011
- The Business of Art: A Forecast for 2011
- Annual AFM Global Media Update
- Foreign Affairs: A Global Media Update (2006 - 2010)