

TOP BOUTIQUES

IN CALIFORNIA 2017



Alex Drecun / Special to the Daily Journal

From left, Ekwon Rhaw, Sharon Ben-Shahar Mayer, Ariel Neuman and Gary Lincenberg of Bird, Marella, Boxer, Wolpert, Nessim, Drooks, Lincenberg & Rhaw P.C.

COMPLEX CIVIL AND WHITE COLLAR CRIMINAL LITIGATION

Bird, Marella, Boxer, Wolpert, Nessim, Drooks, Lincenberg & Rhaw P.C.

When it comes to zombie fiction, there's a few things more important than the brains.

In essence, that's the basis of claims filed by Bird, Marella, Boxer, Wolpert, Nessim, Drooks, Lincenberg & Rhaw P.C. attorneys on behalf of the creator of the AMC Network series "The Walking Dead" and four of the show's producers. Bird Marella contends in a complaint written by firm principal Ronald J. Nessim that AMC

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breached contract by cheating the plaintiffs out of profits from the show.

Given the show's massive profits, the lawsuits filed in New York and California could be the largest profit participation dispute in TV history. A verdict in favor of the plaintiff could earn Bird Marella's clients hundreds of millions of dollars. *Kirkman v. AMC Film Holdings LLC*, BC672124 (L.A.

Super. Ct., filed Aug. 14, 2017).

"Our complex litigation practice is unstoppable and our white collar practice remains as hot as ever. We are now on the shortlist for many companies in their bet-your-company cases," said Paul Chan, the firm's managing principal. "Few firms can match our trial experience and long record of wins in both jury trials and arbitrations."

Firm principal Gary Lincenberg said the firm successfully draws on the wide breadth of experi-

ence shared between its members, which "contrasts with many litigation-specialty firms who rely on one rainmaker."

He and fellow principal Ariel Neuman are about to begin a three-month trial defending a Fortune 150 company against what they believe to be overzealous charges filed in connection to an oil spill in Santa Barbara. Meanwhile, principals Ekwon Rhaw and Jeremy Matz are spearheading the firm's representation of defendants involved in the 1MDB investigation.

The case alleges that funds from the Malaysian government were inappropriately used to produce films, buy expensive cars, and woo Hollywood insiders, among other expenditures. With \$3 billion assets at stake, the case could be one of the largest criminal forfeiture cases on record. *United States of America v. Any rights to profits, royalties and distribution proceeds owned by or owed to JW Nile*, 16cv5364 (C.D. Cal., filed July 20, 2016).

"There are few boutiques in the United States that have the national and international footprint that our firm has," Rhaw said. "We try cases throughout the country and handle lawsuits and investigations that touch virtually every continent on the globe."

Neuman said that the firm has made an effort to ensure that its youngest members get the relevant experience they need, a sentiment he shares with principal Sharon Ben-Shahar Mayer.

"Our firm is committed to support its younger partners and views its multi-generational base as key to its longevity and continued success," Mayer said.

— Steven Crighton