Actress Julia Ormond Has Filed a Lawsuit Against Harvey Weinstein, Her Talent Agents at CAA, and Others

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ON BACKGROUND (Not for Quotation)

Actress Julia Ormond has filed a lawsuit against disgraced film producer Harvey Weinstein, his employers, Miramax and Disney, and Ormond's exclusive talent agents, Creative Arts Agency ("CAA"), for the sexual assault she experienced by Harvey Weinstein in 1995. Thanks to the passage of the Adult Survivors Act, Ormond is now able to finally hold accountable the powerful institutions that could have prevented Weinstein's assault, and the parties that failed to protect her and retaliated against her when she spoke up.

Although Harvey Weinstein is behind bars, this is the first time CAA is being held responsible for their involvement in his crimes. Ormond trusted her CAA agents—Bryan Lourd and Kevin Huvane—to put her best interests first, and they knew from other young, vulnerable actresses that Weinstein was a sexual predator. As talent agents in the entertainment business, CAA had a duty to care for Ormond and warn her of unsafe or dangerous situations. Instead, CAA advised her to meet with Weinstein privately knowing there was a high risk of her being sexually harassed and assaulted. And when she told her agents at CAA what Weinstein had done to her, instead of advocating for her and supporting her, they doubted her account, suggested that she would not be believed if she reported, shared with her the going rate for settlements of sexual assault claims against Harvey Weinstein, and told her that reporting the assault would damage her career and anger Weinstein and lead to a lawsuit against her for libel if she talked to anyone. Soon thereafter, CAA side-lined Ormond, dramatically diminishing the standard of work they performed, an act of retaliation that substantially impacted both her career and her well-being.

The case is brought by attorneys Douglas H. Wigdor and Meredith A. Firetog of Wigdor LLP, Kevin Mintzer and Laura L. Koistinen of the Law Office of Kevin Mintzer, P.C., and Isabelle Kirshner and Effie Blassberger of Clayman Rosenberg Kirshner & Linder LLP. In addition to Ormond, Wigdor LLP and the Law Office of Kevin Mintzer have represented eight other victims of Harvey Weinstein: Zelda Perkins, Rowena Chiu, Dominique Huett, Tarale Wulff, Kaja Sokola, Wedil David, Aimee McBain, and Dawn Dunning.

Summary of the Complaint

By the mid-1990's, Julia Ormond had secured multiple leading roles in major films, and in 1995 she was featured on the cover of the *New York Times Magazine* in an article about her emerging stardom. She was being represented by talent agents at CAA, who had facilitated for Ormond a film production deal with Miramax, the prominent studio owned by Disney. What she did not know, however, was that Miramax's co-chairman, Harvey Weinstein, was a sexual predator who systematically targeted the

women actors he encountered. But the men at CAA who represented Ormond knew about Weinstein, and Weinstein's employers at Miramax and Disney knew as well.

In December 1995, while her career was peaking, Julia Ormond became yet another victim of Harvey Weinstein. She and Weinstein were at a business dinner, but Weinstein said he would only discuss the project back at the apartment Miramax had provided for Ormond as part of their deal with her. Once in the apartment, Weinstein stripped naked and sexually assaulted her.

Ormond made it clear to Weinstein that his behavior was completely unacceptable, and she would not tolerate it. When Ormond felt Weinstein soon after started to retaliate against her, so she reached out to CAA and told them what had transpired including the assault and fear of retaliation, but they clearly were not surprised. Instead of helping her, or being empathetic and supportive, they told her she would not be believed if she reported. Incredibly, her agents were able to provide her the going rate for settlements against Weinstein for sexual assault, but warned her that it wouldn't be worth her while as coming forward would further anger Weinstein, and suggested that she would face libel suits and Weinstein would retaliate harshly against her if she spoke up.

Although Ormond did not pursue any further action, Weinstein nonetheless retaliated and Miramax terminated her contract ceasing commitments to the projects in development. Then CAA suddenly transferred her to a younger, inexperienced agent, and no longer was working on her behalf, significantly lessening and changing their representation of her.

The damage to Ormond's career because of Weinstein's assault and the aftermath was catastrophic both personally and professionally. More than twenty-five years later, still haunted by memories of the assault and trauma, as well as the sexual assaults and rapes she learned that Weinstein committed after he assaulted her, Ormond is deeply troubled by the fact that these sexual assaults were entirely preventable by Miramax, Disney and CAA.

ON THE RECORD QUOTES

Statement from attorneys Douglas H. Wigdor, Partner at Wigdor LLP, and Effie Blassberger, Partner at Clayman Rosenberg Kirshner & Linder LLP:

"Our client has suffered tremendously both personally and professionally due to the assault by Harvey Weinstein, and the failure from Disney, Miramax and CAA to prevent it and to appropriately respond when she reported what happened. She feels completely betrayed by CAA for its knowing disregard for her safety and well-being, and looks forward to holding accountable the people and institutions that enabled Harvey Weinstein's horrific and predatory behavior."

Statement from Plaintiff Julia Ormond:

"After living for decades with the painful memories of my experiences at the hands of Harvey Weinstein, I am humbled and grateful to all those who have risked speaking out. Their courage and the Adult Survivors Act has provided me a window of opportunity and way to shed light on how powerful people and institutions like my talent agents at CAA, Miramax and Disney enabled and provided cover for

Weinstein to assault me and countless others. I seek a level of personal closure by holding them accountable to acknowledge their part and the depth of its harms and hope that all of our increased understanding will lead to further protections for all of us at work."

The Complaint can be read here.

Any questions can be directed to attorneys Douglas H. Wigdor (dwigdor@wigdorlaw.com), Effie Blassberger (blassberger@clayro.com) or Wigdor LLP Communications Manager Courtney Cormican (ccormican@wigdorlaw.com).

PRESS COVERAGE

10.4.23 Variety

10.9.23: Rolling Stone Interview

10.11.23: CNN

10.4.23: New York Times

10.4.23: Forbes.com

10.4.23: CNN.com

10.4.23: People.com

10.4.23 Hollywood Reporter

10.4.23: USA Today

10.4.23: Entertainment Weekly

10.5.23 BBC

10.5.23: DailyBeast

10.5.23: Time