

Actress Julia Ormond Accuses Harvey Weinstein of Battery in Lawsuit

Ms. Ormond also sued Creative Artists Agency, which represented her at the time, and Disney, which owned Mr. Weinstein's Miramax.



By Nicole Sperling and Brooks Barnes

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The actress Julia Ormond, known for “Legends of the Fall” and “Sabrina,” accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual battery in a lawsuit filed on Wednesday in a New York court, claiming that the former film producer forced her to give him oral sex during a business meeting in 1995.

Ms. Ormond also sued Creative Artists Agency, which represented her at the time, saying in the complaint that two of its senior agents cautioned her from speaking out — and informed her of the “going rate” for settlements paid to women who accused Mr. Weinstein of sex crimes. She said the sum was \$100,000.

Lawyers for Ms. Ormond said her complaint was the first to sue the powerful agency for what the suit claims was CAA's role in covering up and enabling Mr. Weinstein's behavior.

Mr. Weinstein, now 71, was convicted in 2020 by a New York jury on charges of rape and criminal sexual assault and sentenced to 23 years in prison. He was later convicted of similar crimes in Los Angeles and sentenced to 16 years, to be served after his New York term. Mr. Weinstein has denied the claims against him, saying all encounters were consensual, and is appealing both convictions.

“Harvey Weinstein categorically denies the allegations made against him by Julia Ormond, and he is prepared to vehemently defend himself,” Imran H. Ansari, a lawyer for Mr. Weinstein, said in a statement. Mr. Ansari added that the lawsuit was “yet another example of a complaint filed against Mr. Weinstein after the passing of decades.”

CAA called Ms. Ormond's claims “baseless” and said it would “vigorously refute them in court.”

In a statement, a spokeswoman for the agency said a lawyer for Ms. Ormond had approached CAA in March and asked for \$15 million in exchange for Ms. Ormond's not making the allegations against CAA public. The demand was rejected, the statement said.

“Knowing these allegations to be untrue, the agency then retained attorney Loretta Lynch and her law firm, Paul Weiss, to defend the company,” the statement said. “Their review found nothing to support Ms. Ormond's claims against CAA.”

“CAA admits that they hired Loretta Lynch to ‘defend’ them,” Douglas Wigdor, a lawyer for Ms. Ormond, said by email in response to CAA's statement. “It's not surprising, therefore, that she found nothing to support our client's claims.” He added, “Rest assured, we will expose the real facts.”

Ms. Ormond's complaint, filed in New York Supreme Court, also named the Walt Disney Company and Miramax, which Disney owned from 1993 to 2010. Ms. Ormond claimed the companies also knew about Mr. Weinstein's predation and failed to protect her from him.

Disney declined to comment. Miramax, now owned in part by Paramount Global, did not respond to requests for comment.

According to the complaint, CAA secured a two-year production deal between Ms. Ormond and Miramax. She claims that Mr. Weinstein sexually assaulted her in 1995 after a business dinner. According to the suit, Mr. Weinstein said he would discuss a project she was interested in only at the apartment that Miramax had provided for Ms. Ormond as part of her deal.

At the apartment, the suit said, Mr. Weinstein stripped naked and forced Ms. Ormond to give him oral sex.

Afterward, Ms. Ormond told her agents, Bryan Lourd, now the chief executive of CAA, and Kevin Huvane, now a co-chairman of the agency, about what had occurred, according to the complaint.

“Rather than take Ormond's side and advocate for her interest, they suggested that if she reported Weinstein to the authorities, she would not be believed, and he would seriously damage her career,” the complaint said.

Ms. Ormond did not pursue further action, the complaint said, but Mr. Weinstein terminated her contract at Miramax. CAA also transferred her to a younger, less experienced agent, diminishing her career potential, the lawsuit said.

In a statement, Ms. Ormond said her lawsuit was a “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.”

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