

ROSS J. CHARAP

Partner



Ross J. Charap is an intellectual property attorney and copyright professional with a focus on the music industry for decades assisting clients with copyright transactions, licensing, and litigation.

He has built his practice on representing some of the most legendary musicians, songwriters, singers, lyricists, composers, record producers, and independent music publishers in the business. Ross assists his notable clientele in recapturing U.S. copyrights and licensing, selling, or purchasing valuable music assets. These transactions require industry-specific knowledge in order to accurately perform asset valuation, due diligence, negotiations, and drafting of agreements.

Over his career, Ross has closed transactions for assets worth over a total of \$1 billion. His work has also earned him recognition as a Billboard Top Music Lawyer from 2022 to present. He was originally recognized by Billboard for his work with Mick Jagger and Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones in helping to safeguard their entitlement to performing rights and mechanical royalties after exercising their termination rights. Ross was also instrumental in persuading the US Copyright Office to enact policy changes to ensure that the Mechanical Licensing Collective paid post-termination royalties to songwriters, resulting in many millions being paid out to songwriters like Jagger and Richards.

Ross previously served as in-house counsel for the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) for 25 years where he met and worked with many legendary songwriters and publishers. Indeed, after he went into private practice, some of his most notable clients, including prominent families and heirs from the Motown era, writers of the Great American Songbook, and members of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, asked him to represent them based on their ASCAP relationship with him.

Throughout his career, he has represented or currently represents: Harold Arlen and E.Y. “Yip” Harburg – “Over The Rainbow”; Mitchell Parish – writer of “Stardust” and “Moonlight Serenade”; Leroy Anderson – composer of “Sleigh Ride”; Rube Bloom – composer of “Fools Rush In” and “Give Me The Simple Life”; Mitch Leigh and Joe Darion – “The Impossible Dream”; Sam Lewis – writer of “My Mammy”, “Five Foot Two Eyes Of Blue (Has Anybody Seen My Gal?)”, and Ross’s personal favorite “How You Gonna Keep ‘Em Down On The Farm After They’ve Seen Patee?” written in 1919; Sylvia Moy – writer of “Uptight” and “My Cherie Amour” for and with Stevie Wonder; Jessye Norman – famed international opera diva; and Larry Smith, Sr. – known as the “Quincy Jones of Hip Hop” who wrote for Kurtis Blow and Whodini and who discovered, produced, and wrote for Run-DMC for their first two albums.

After leaving ASCAP and entering private practice in 1999, Ross was asked to do copyright enforcement work for The Harry Fox Agency (HFA), a music rights and royalties company founded by the National Music Publishers Association (NMPA). Ross went on to collaborate with the NMPA on anti-piracy efforts aimed at removing copyrighted lyrics from unlicensed websites and negotiating licenses for these lyrics’ use. These efforts created a new stream of royalty income which has generated hundreds of millions of dollars in additional revenue for music publishers and their songwriters over the past 20 years.

Prior to joining Barton, Ross was a Partner in the New York office of ArentFox Schiff LLP.

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Education

Cornell Law School, J.D.
Columbia University, B.A.

Admissions

New York
US District Court, Eastern District of New York
US District Court, Southern District of New York
Supreme Court of the United States

Professional Affiliations

American Intellectual Property Law Association
Board of Directors - Former Member
Copyright Law Committee - Former Chair
American Bar Association – Intellectual Property
Section
Broadcasting, Sound Recordings, and
Performing Artists Committee - Former
Chair
Copyright Society of the USA (CSUSA)
Member
Former Trustee
Former Officer

Practices

Business Transactions
Intellectual Property
Intellectual Property Litigation

Industry Experience

Entertainment
Media and Publishing

Honors

Billboard Top Music Lawyer, 2022 to present
Chambers USA, Media & Entertainment: Music -
Band 1, 2022 to present
The Legal 500 - Intellectual Property: Copyright,
2023 to present
Recognized by Best Lawyers in America, 2017 to
present
Martindale AV Peer Review Rated for 20 years
Selected to Super Lawyers, 2008 to present
Selected to *Managing IP's* IP Stars - 2024
Finance Monthly, 2015 Deal Maker of the Year

In the Media

“ArentFox Schiff Loses Rolling Stones IP Atty To Barton.” *Law360*. (April 8, 2025).

“Executive Turntable: Board Buildups at ASCAP and iHeart, Plus a Rolling Stone Lawyer Joins Barton.” *BillboardPro*. (April 4, 2024).

Featured in “Captain America’s Lawyer.” *Super Lawyers Magazine*. (September 2016).

Attorney Articles

“US Supreme Court Holds No Limit to Number of Years for Which Copyright Infringement Damages Are Recoverable Under the ‘Discovery Rule.’” Co-Author. *National Law Review*. (May 16, 2024).

“Mic Drop: Singer-Songwriter Forgoes Public Performance Royalties to Prevent Performances by ‘Cover Band’ Amidst Lawsuit.” Co-Author. *National Law Review*. (May 1, 2024).

“Proposed Copyright Office Rule Requires Payment of Music Royalties to Terminating Songwriters.” Co-Author. *National Law Review*. (November 4, 2022).

“Copyright Law Enters the Digital Age: The Music Modernization Act Is Now Law.” *Intellectual Property & Technology Law Journal*. (January 2019).

Presentations

“The Legacy of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby.” Panelist. Big Apple ComicCon. (March 11, 2017).

“Sounds like Copyright Infringement.” Speaker. Women In Music. (November 19, 2015).

“Copyright Reversion.” Speaker. The Duke Sports & Entertainment Law Society 3rd Annual Sports & Entertainment Law Symposium. (January 2013).

“Termination of Sound Recordings Created After January 1, 1978.” Speaker. New York City Bar Association - Entertainment Law Committee. (May 2010).

“The Realities of Negotiating a Music Publishing Agreement.” Speaker. New York State Bar Association - Entertainment, Arts, and Sports Law Section - Committee on Young Lawyers. (December 2006).