

King, Holmes, Paterno & Soriano

K

ing, Holmes, Paterno & Soriano, LLP is honored (but not necessarily humbled) by its selection for this *HITS* special issue on prominent music-law firms. With one of the largest music practices in the world, including 12 experienced transactional entertainment lawyers and eight overqualified paralegals, the firm has provided decades of service to talented recording artists, songwriters and producers, as well as independent labels, music publishers, merchandise companies and personal managers. Supporting the entertainment practice is a robust litigation department, spearheaded by **Howard King** and **Henry Gradstein**, which has handled some of the most significant music cases over the last 20 years, includ-

ing *Metallica v. Napster*, *Flo & Eddie v. SiriusXM Radio* and *Pharrell Williams v. Bridgeport Music*. Rounding out the firm is a seasoned corporate team, well-versed in structuring complex corporate transactions on behalf of entertainment and other clients.

The business experiences of the KHPS professionals—contributing to their value as counselors to clients—include **Peter Paterno's** stint as the first President of **Hollywood Records** (he signed **Queen!**), **Susan Hilderley's** former role as EVP/Head of Business Affairs at **Inter-scope**, and other lawyers and paralegals who previously held important industry positions at **Sony Music**, **Virgin Megastores**, **Warner Music Group**, **UTA**, **Rhino Records**, **Capitol Music Group**, **HBO** and **UMG Latin**.



L-r: Peter Paterno, Debra McCulloch, Howard King

KHPS KING, HOLMES, PATERNO
& SORIANO, LLP

Laurie Soriano

ROLE AT THE FIRM: “Since King, Paterno and Holmes started practicing law together during the dark ages, I had to bust my way into a controlling position in the firm. No one actually wanted to be in control, so this didn’t turn out to be as hard as I thought it would be. In reality, in addition to building my wonderful practice, I have enjoyed nurturing and encouraging the professional development of many of our music lawyers and paralegals.”

PRACTICE: “From legacy acts like **Carole King**, **Carly Simon** and **Taj Mahal** to newer, highly successful acts like **Travis Scott**, **Frank Ocean**, **twenty one pilots** and **Kim Petras**, along with perennially dynamic artists like **Karen O** and **Yeah Yeah Yeahs**, **Train**, **Amie Mann** and **Marilyn Manson**, as well as long-time client **Billy Steinberg**.”

MEMORABLE PROJECTS: “The development from the ground up of the *Beautiful* musical, based on the life of Carole King; overseeing the litigation after the **Guns N’ Roses** audience riot in St. Louis; and working on the strategy for and deployment of Frank Ocean’s self-release of his album, *Blonde*.”

Jacqueline Sabec

MUSICAL MOMENTS: “As a classically trained musician, I’ve been honored to work with many “jam bands” such as **The Grateful Dead**, **the Disco Biscuits**, **Railroad Earth** and **ALO**, who are masters of their instruments and the art of connecting with each other and their fans in a live setting. It took several years of bumpy behind-the-scenes work to make the Dead’s 50th anniversary ‘Fare Thee Well’ concert come together. Being on stage with **Phil**, **Bob**, **Bill** and **Mickey** in Chicago and peering out at a sea of fans belting out “Not Fade Away” with undeniable love and devotion made it all worth it. I have some great footage of that moment.”

Leslie Frank

ON MAKING THE MOVE FROM SAN FRANCISCO:

“The firm gave me the opportunity to work with incredible established artists like **Metallica**, **The Offspring** and **Avenged Sevenfold**. Along the way, I developed a practice that includes **Steve Aoki**, **Zedd**, **Skrillex** and **TOKiMONSTA**.”

ROLE IN CLIENTS’ LIVES: “I’m part of the team. I protect their instincts, solve problems and often figure out how to do novel things on call. I once handled a client’s lease of a Canadian train. I didn’t predict that when I went to law school.”



■ LAURIE SORIANO



■ JACQUELINE SABEC



■ LESLIE FRANK

Debra McCulloch

(Lead Paralegal and Head of the Publishing Admin Department)

ON THE PARALEGAL WORLD: “We spend a great deal of time clearing our artists’ songs and recordings, with each paralegal devoted to specific artists. We also administer publishing for dozens of songwriters, including the **Creeping Death** catalog, one of the largest independently administered catalogs in the world.”

MEMORABLE PROJECTS: “One of the most interesting projects was handling the original artists agreements and supervising clearances on the **Grammy-** and **Oscar-**winning film *O Brother Where Art Thou?*”

Rights, clearances and publishing sounds routine, but it’s actually a fresh hell every day.”

Peter Paterno

ON MAINTAINING REPRESENTATION FOR LEGACY ARTISTS SUCH AS METALLICA, DR. DRE AND PHARRELL WILLIAMS:

“I always assume I am going to be fired, which keeps me motivated. For the longest time, I thought Metallica kept me as their lawyer because **Lars** and **James** used to sleep on my couch. But after 15-20 years, I think they determined I was a pretty good counselor, especially when I was able to get them out of their **Elektra** deal and into their own label. With **Dr. Dre** and **Pharrell**, as with other clients, I think they realized that I was available 24/7 to provide legal and business advice, especially as their profiles expanded beyond production and into merchandise, fashion, publishing, owning their own record companies and, last but not least, a little business called **Beats by Dre**.”

ON WHAT POSSESSED HIM TO GET A MASTER’S DEGREE IN MATHEMATICS AT HARVEY MUDD COLLEGE:

“I wasn’t toking or drinking like many of my contemporaries, so I needed the crutch of achievements in mathematics as a diversion. Maybe it now seems stupid, but it did afford me an opportunity to write software for **NASA** training that makes the most complex corporate transactions less challenging.” ■