
Elisabeth Moriarty

Chair, Litigation Department

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Elisabeth “Liz” Moriarty serves as Chair of Greenberg Glusker's Litigation Department. With more than three decades of experience, she has built a sophisticated media and entertainment litigation practice while also representing clients in high-stakes business disputes.

Liz helps clients navigate and resolve matters involving their most valuable businesses, creative works, and intellectual property, where the outcome can have a lasting impact on ownership, control, reputation, and enterprise value.

Media and entertainment litigation has long been the cornerstone of Liz's practice, where she represents production companies, talent, rights holders, financiers, and other industry participants. She is best known for complex rights disputes involving high-value entertainment properties, matters that frequently arise out of film and television production, distribution, licensing, digital media, and other commercial relationships unique to the entertainment industry, from development through commercial exploitation.

She has represented clients such as the Estate of J.R.R. Tolkien, Marvel Entertainment, the Estate of Bob Marley, and the rights holders to Winnie the Pooh in matters involving some of the entertainment industry's most iconic creative properties. Her practice also encompasses music, publishing, and television disputes, right of publicity and name, image, and likeness claims, and emerging issues at the intersection of intellectual property and artificial intelligence.

Beyond her entertainment practice, Liz maintains a commercial litigation practice representing businesses, founders, shareholders, partners, and LLC members in issues involving ownership, governance, fiduciary duties, and control of closely held businesses. She regularly handles business divorces, partnership conflicts, and other controversies involving the ownership and management of these enterprises.

Services

- Litigation
- High Net Worth & Probate Litigation
- Entertainment Litigation
- General Commercial Litigation
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- Artificial Intelligence

She also has substantial experience litigating the complex financial and business issues that arise in high-net-worth dissolution proceedings, particularly those involving business valuation, ownership interests, and the characterization of marital assets.

An accomplished trial lawyer, Liz served on the trial team representing Jeffrey Katzenberg in his landmark profit participation litigation against The Walt Disney Company and second-chaired the 14-week jury trial on behalf of bestselling author Clive Cussler in his dispute over the motion picture rights to *Sahara*. She has successfully represented clients through trial, arbitration, and appeal in cases where the stakes extend well beyond the courtroom.

Clients value Liz for her practical judgment, strategic thinking, and creative approach to solving difficult problems. She works closely with clients to understand both the legal issues they face and the business objectives that drive them, recognizing that successful litigation is measured not only by courtroom victories, but by achieving outcomes that advance their broader goals.

Community and Charitable Organizations

- Seven Arrows Elementary
 - Advisory Board (2017-present)
 - Board of Trustees (2010-2017)
- The Forgotten Dog Foundation

Awards

- *Legal 500*, US Elite Los Angeles - Commercial Disputes, 2026
- Nominee, Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards, *Los Angeles Business Journal*, 2025
- Legal Visionaries, *L.A. Times Studios*, 2025
- Leaders of Influence: Litigators & Trial Attorneys, *Los Angeles Business Journal*, 2023
- Top 100 Lawyers, *Los Angeles Business Journal*, 2022
- Southern California *Super Lawyers*, 2023
- *Southern California Super Lawyers Rising Stars (Arts/Entertainment)* 2005, 2006

Bar Admissions

- California

Court Admissions

- United States District Court for the Central, Northern, and Southern Districts of California
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Education

- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law (J.D., 1991)
- State University of New York at Albany (B.A., *summa cum laude*, 1988)

Representative Matters

Entertainment Experience

- Representing financier of a five-film slate in dispute with production company about misappropriation of production funds and manipulation of tax credit.
- Regularly represents the Estate of Bob Marley in a variety of matters involving intellectual property rights and music rights.
- Represented a film company and related parties in connection with a dispute with major studios regarding sequel and remake rights to certain theatrical motion pictures. The studios asserted exclusive rights that would have limited the value of the franchise. Through a detailed chain-of-title analysis, we demonstrated significant weaknesses in those claims, enabling our clients to pursue a transaction with a third party on favorable terms without resorting to litigation.
- Obtained summary judgment for a business management firm in a first-of-its-kind “idea theft” claim filed by a talent manager concerning the eligibility of touring musicians and bands to receive Shuttered Venue Operator Grants (“SVOG”), a COVID-19 relief program established during the pandemic.
- Advised on a complex chain-of-title analysis for a popular television series, focusing on First Negotiation/Last Refusal rights and their implications for rights ownership and future exploitation.
- Represented Marvel Entertainment, owner of the copyrights in Spider-Man, Iron Man and numerous other iconic characters in various matters involving intellectual property disputes, profit participation rights and general litigation.
- Represented the Estate of J.R.R. Tolkien in a landmark profit participation case against New Line Cinema for the “Lord of the Rings” film trilogy.
- Represented the Estate of J.R.R. Tolkien and Harper Collins in an action against Warner Bros. and The Saul Zaentz Company involving merchandising exploitation of J.R.R. Tolkien’s classic novels, *The Hobbit*, and the three volumes of *The Lord of the Rings*.
- Represented best-selling author Clive Cussler in his dispute regarding the motion picture version of the novel, “Sahara.”
- Represented Academy Award winning composer Hans Zimmer in a multi-faceted dispute with his long-time business partner.
- Represented the owners of merchandising and other rights in the Winnie the Pooh characters, in their breach of contract and fraud dispute against a major entertainment company for failure to pay royalties.
- Member of the team that successfully represented Jeffrey Katzenberg in his landmark action to recover his profit participation against The Walt Disney Company.
- Represented Roland Corporation, a leading manufacturer of electronic musical instruments and accessories, in various litigation to protect its copyright, trademark and trade dress rights in various products, and in a case of first impression involving copyright and trademark infringement.

High Net Worth Divorce Experience

- Represented a wife in her divorce proceeding against her husband, a Silicon Valley

billionaire, who is best known as the unofficial third founder of Google and originator of the code that powers the search giant.

- Represented high-net-worth hedge fund founder in divorce proceeding against his wife.
 - Represented high-profile restaurateur in divorce proceeding against his wife.
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Publications

July 24, 2023

Be Prepared: Using Public Relations to Manage a Dispute or Stop it in its Tracks

Los Angeles Business Journal

July 27, 2012

An Olympic Games only the sponsors could love

MarketWatch

July 24, 2012

To Avoid Trademark Headaches, Olympics Must Be Off-Limit

Law360 (subscription required)