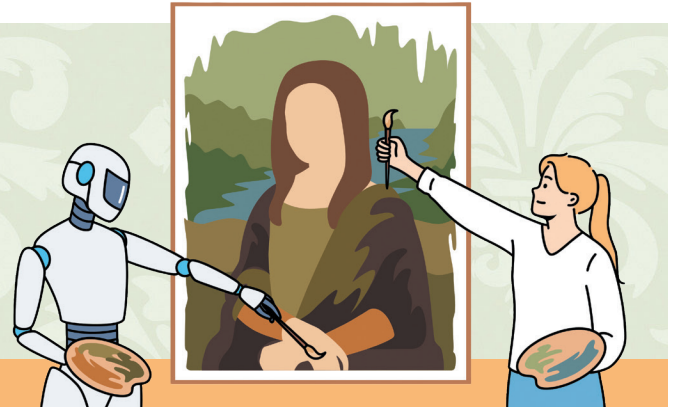


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TOP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAWYERS 2026



HONORING TOP ATTORNEYS WORKING IN PATENT, TRADEMARK AND COPYRIGHT LAW



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LOS ANGELES

Devin McRae can trace the start of his 24-year trajectory in IP litigation to a single case. Early in his practice, he took on the defense of a studio and producer against copyright infringement claims involving a reality television series. The experience sent him deeper into copyright doctrine than any prior matter had.

"I dove deep into copyright law more so than any other subject I had litigated, and I had never enjoyed working on a case as much as that one," McRae said.

The case required him to navigate the line between protectable and non-protectable expression — territory that turned on the extrinsic test for substantial similarity. Mastering that analysis gave him a foundation he has returned to across the decades since. "That case I would say put me on the trajectory that finds me here," McRae said.

That trajectory has led McRae to a practice centered on holding parties to their agreements and obligations in the entertainment and IP space — a world he describes as at once ethereal and contentious.

In one matter, he represented a screenwriter whose personal managers had exploited their position of trust, resulting in reduced compensation and diminished writing credit on a major film. *McLeod v. Zero Gravity Management et al.*, 24-3266 (9th Cir., filed May 22, 2024).

The district court granted summary judgment to the defense, a result McRae found deeply misguided. The Ninth Circuit reversed nine days after oral argument, and the matter reached a confidential resolution. "The case was significant to me due to the principles involved, chief among them the fight to enforce agreements and fiduciary duties upon sharp-elbowed

operators with large power advantages and weaker consciences," McRae said.

McRae also represents a film director asserting the right to complete a film on terms previously negotiated with the producers — terms that include the execution of his creative vision. The case remains active. *Goldin et al. v. MATW, LLC*, 2:25-cv-12306 (C.D. Cal., filed Dec. 29, 2025).

A third matter sits on appeal, fully briefed and awaiting oral argument. *Carde v. Endeavor Group Holdings, Inc.*, B335338 (Cal. App. 2nd, filed Jan. 10, 2024).

The case raises issues in the contractual law of ideas, an area McRae describes as both technically demanding and consequential for creators navigating the entertainment industry.

Across his caseload, a consistent theme emerges: clients who have been denied what they were owed by parties willing to disregard agreements for financial gain. For McRae, the measure of success is not abstract — it is the client's experience of a system that produced a fair outcome.

As for the industry itself, a Ninth Circuit judge may have said it best at the close of oral argument in one of McRae's appeals: "Hollywood is always interesting. I'll just leave it at that."