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# Will a Los Angeles Jury Award \$125 Million in Punitive Damages ... for Dolls?

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Plaintiffs in a likeness misappropriation lawsuit are asking a Southern California jury to award \$125 million in punitive damages — more than double a prior punitive damages award that the District Court reduced to \$1. On June 23, 2026, attorneys for musical artists Clifford “T.I.” Harris, Tameka “Tiny” Harris, and their company, OMG GIRLZ, LLC, asked a jury to award them \$125 million in punitive damages in their case against MGA Entertainment, Inc., in which MGA had previously been found liable to the plaintiffs for \$17.8 million in profits from sales of dolls that misappropriated the plaintiffs’ likenesses.

Plaintiffs' counsel's pitch for \$125 million more than doubles a prior punitive damages award of \$53.6 million, which had been reduced by the United States District Court for the Central District of California in July 2025, finding that the plaintiffs' evidence fell short of "showing willfulness, intent, or conscious disregard with respect to MGA's conduct" and "that the maximum punitive damages award sustainable by the proof is \$1."

After such a rebuke by the District Court, what would embolden a plaintiffs' lawyer to more than double the amount of punitive damages requested in a retrial of the punitive damages question? Perhaps it was a report issued by Lex Machina the week before the retrial analyzing multiple exceptionally large awards of damages by juries in Los Angeles Superior Court from 2023 to 2025, at least two of which reached nearly \$1 billion each. Unlike the case against MGA involving only economic harm, many of these eye-popping damages awards were to compensate plaintiffs physically injured by consumer products, accidents, and even a sexual battery, and in some of the cases were later reduced by the courts.

OMG GIRLZ's attorneys argue that punitive damages of this amount are warranted due to MGA's continued sales of infringing dolls, the popular L.O.L. Surprise! O.M.G Fashion Dolls, after liability was established and after MGA had assured the court that it had stopped selling the dolls, as well as MGA's alleged pattern and practice of infringing third parties' intellectual property rights.

Nine-figure awards of damages are unprecedented in cases involving the misappropriation of likenesses. Until the OMG GIRLZ case, the largest verdict in a right of publicity case was for \$9.6 million in 2020 in the case of *Hansen v. Coca-Cola Co.* in San Diego Superior Court, but that verdict was later reversed, and the case was retried, resulting in a verdict of \$4.4 million.

The enormity of the punitive damages award the plaintiffs are seeking after already being awarded multiple millions of dollars in compensatory damages makes this very high-stakes litigation engendering creative and aggressive strategies. During the second day of testimony in the trial, defense counsel asked the District Court to declare a mistrial based on an argument that plaintiff's counsel had improperly introduced hearsay evidence of a finding by a court in the UK that MGA's CEO was an unreliable witness. The court denied the defense's motion for a mistrial, but allowed the parties to brief the arguments further.

Will a Southern California jury award anything close to \$125 million in punitive damages — even against an allegedly serial infringer? The District Court scheduled only three days of trial for presenting evidence, exclusive of jury selection, opening statements, closing arguments, and jury deliberation, so the answer may be revealed within the next week.

Los Angeles County Superior Court was among the country's top sites for awarding big civil damages in recent years, according to a Lex Machina report. The analysis, which looks at some of the largest damage awards secured, found that the court delivered a number of so-called nuclear verdicts from 2023 to 2025.

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