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"'Beauty and the Beast' revels in joy and enchantment. Its classicism feels unforced and fresh, its romance neither winks nor panders. I almost didn't recognize the flavor: I think the name for it is joy."

THE NEW YORK TIMES
A.O. SCOTT

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USA TODAY
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THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE
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OCTOBER 24, 2017



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Behind the Camera

Clients of Bell & Co. include filmmaker Steven Soderbergh, a multihyphenate producer, director and cinematographer.

← “Because we pay the bills, we know everything about a client and the clients know this,” says Bell. “My clients can lie to their therapist, their doctor and their wife. But because we see all cash expenses, the clients can’t lie to me.”



STEVE BILLS

Partner, Bills & Stoll

Not much has changed since Bills and firm co-founder Peter Stoll set up their own shop in 2016 following the death of their longtime partner Bob Philpott in March 2015. They still handle a mix of high-profile actors, producers, directors, writers, entrepreneurs and high-net-worth families, and the basic principles of business management still apply. “It sounds funny to say it so simply, but a key aspect of success is you have to spend less than you make,” says Bills. “Everybody wants to do that, but not everybody can control their spending. They don’t always distinguish between needs and wants.”



JOHN BLAKEMAN

Partner, MGO

Blakeman’s strategy for his roster of A-list actors, writers and directors continues to evolve with the fast-changing industry, seeking out additional revenue streams — from commercials and consumer goods to digital-first shows — to keep incomes on pace in the face of shrinking individual paydays. “The best investment anyone can make is in their primary residence,” says Blakeman. “That’s something



I stand on a soap box and try to get clients to do. If they think they want to do stocks or their friend has this amazing restaurant/club idea, I’m saying, ‘No, they don’t. This is what you want to do.’”



DAVID BOLNO

Partner, Nigro, Karlin, Segal, Feldstein & Bolno

Bolno believes that the expertise repertoire of business managers must broaden. That’s because tech opportunities for clients are exploding in areas including virtual reality and augmented reality, and options in traditional investments have mushroomed, too. “We’re effectively the CFO of our clients’ world,” he

says. “As a CFO, you can’t be pigeonholed in just tax and accounting. You have to take a broader view of their financial picture.” He covers music, TV and film; clients include Drake, Pharrell Williams and Will.i.am. “There is so much deal flow coming at us every day, the industry has become more challenging,” Bolno says.



ANTHONY BONSIGNORE

Partner, Altman, Greenfield & Selvaggi

When clients unexpectedly shop for pricey art, a car or a house, Bonsignore says he lays out the scenarios ranging from conservative best case to worst case. “A huge part of what we do is managing expectations

knowing they have X amount of dollars to live on” to stay solvent, he says. His clients are primarily actors, writers and directors, including writer-director Noah Baumbach, Sterling K. Brown, Dakota Johnson, John McEnroe and Andrew Rannells. “I have clients whose careers take off suddenly,” says Bonsignore. “It’s extremely rewarding to see the clients grow financially, set goals and then achieve those goals.”



CHRIS BUCCI

Partner, Savitsky Satin Bacon & Bucci

Millennials using apps for banking can manage simple finances and Bucci says he sometimes advises them to wait a bit before adding the expense

of a business manager. He adds that a business manager makes sense later when the millennials’ lives become more complicated “whether it’s for tax planning, creative financial planning, cash flow management or estate planning.” His name was just added to the shingle of the firm, which he co-manages. His clients include athletes, actors, directors, writers, producers and executives. He believes in parameters. “I’ve been asked to be matchmaker by a client, but that’s definitely outside my wheelhouse,” he says.



MATTHEW BURKE

Managing partner, Singer Burke

Burke oversees operations →



← for the 45-year-old firm, which built its foundation on TV writers, producers and showrunners from series ranging from “Cheers,” “Married ... With Children” and “ER,” to more recent hits such as “Shameless,” “The Walking Dead” and “The Handmaid’s Tale.” Burke happens to have an online minister’s license, which he used to officiate at the wedding of one of his co-workers, as well as to marry a longtime client in a domestic partnership about to lose WGA health coverage. “They came in with their child and I married them in my office,” says Burke, who joined the firm in 1990. “It was very sweet.”



BRANDY DAVIS

Partner, MGO

Davis’ client list includes big-name TV writer-producers such as Peter Lenkov (“Hawaii Five-0”) and Shonda Rhimes (“Grey’s Anatomy,” “Scandal”), prolific

film producer Roberto Orci (“Star Trek”) and director F. Gary Gray (“Straight Outta Compton,” “The Fate of the Furious”). “A lot of people wanted to get out of the stock market after [President] Trump got elected because they were very nervous,” Davis says. “In some ways, that wasn’t the smartest move, but if they’re going to be fretting every day and it’s going to be impacting their ability to be creative and do what they need to do, then there is a lot at risk.”



ANNA DERPARSEGHIAN

Managing Partner, PTD Business Management

DerParseghian was a 15-year-old with plans to be a bio major when she saw a business management firm’s “file clerk wanted” posting in her high school’s career office, and it changed her life. Five years later, she moved from that job to PTD, where 17 years later her clients

include a long list of actors, writers and comedians, many of whom are increasingly working abroad. “The biggest thing is to make sure we’re keeping them as good citizens in the countries that they visit and they comply with all the tax requirements, and we watch out so they don’t leave money on the table,” she says.

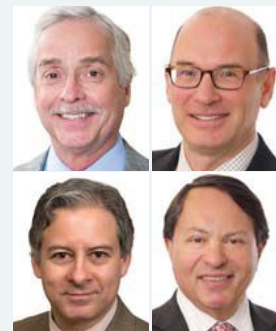


PATRICK DUNN

Partner, Dunn, Pariser & Peyrot

Dunn’s clients include household names such as director James Cameron, actor Randall Park (“Fresh off the Boat”) and “Mad Men” creator Matthew Weiner, as well as producers, production companies, screenwriters, athletes and an increasing number of tech companies. Among these are leaders in the virtual reality and augmented reality space. “It seems that AR is really taking hold in a big way, because there seem to be more applications that can use

it right now,” says Dunn, who is CFO of the nonprofit trade org the Advanced Imaging Society. “VR is fantastic technology, but I think some of the companies are still grappling with how best to monetize.”



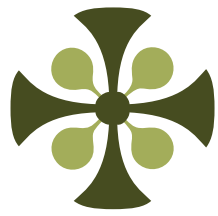
**ARTHUR (ARTY) ERK
ARNIE HERRMANN
ERROL WANDER
VICTOR WLODINGUER**

Partners—Entertainment & Business Management, Citrin Cooperman

The quartet finds that the revenue mix for music clients swells to roughly 75% from concerts these days, up from 50% a decade ago. “The profit centers are now touring,

Friendly Repartee
“Fresh off the Boat” actor Randall Park, right, shown here with guest actor Michael Bolton, is a client of Patrick Dunn.

merchandise, sync licenses and sponsorships,” says Wlodinguer. Synchronizations are deals for attaching tunes to visual media. Other growing income streams include talent curating and consulting for festivals. “Activities like crowdfunding, meet-and-greets (special access at concerts) and being active on social media cultivate a stronger relationship with fan bases that helps extend careers,” says Wander. Erk handles music clientele including the late Michael Jackson, KISS and Meat Loaf for royalty audits. Herrmann is co-leader of the firm’s entertainment, music and sports group handling Maria Bartiromo, Matt Lauer, Liam Neeson, Martin Scorsese and chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten. Wander covers musicians, songwriters, producers, Hollywood talent, production companies, talent agencies, and stylists, including singer-songwriter Gavin DeGraw and stylist Micaela Erlanger. Wlodinguer leads the firm’s →



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← jurisdictions, but getting such documentation typically requires up to eight weeks. “It’s a consequence of production being nomadic,” he observes. Moving official domiciles for short times increases risks of tax audits, he cautions. His clients include Aaron Paul and Weird Al Yankovic. Shapiro, who is sole owner, also operates a payroll company. Sometimes waiting for paperwork to clear is a “good” problem, he says, “because it means clients are working, but they are slow to get paid.”

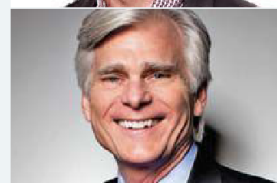
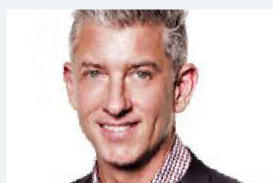
“
Entertainment has expanded beyond film and TV and live theatrical into leveraging IP.”

Richard Singer



RICK SHEPHARD

Founding Partner, Shephard McIlwee Tinglof



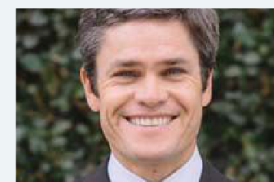
**JOHN MCILWEE
MARK TINGLOF**

Partners, Shephard McIlwee Tinglof

The stock market is at an

all-time high and generating wealth, but McIlwee cautions stocks can tank and employment in Hollywood is increasingly choppy. For example, short-order TV series proliferate, leaving talent with uncertain paychecks over the long run. He advocates keeping 18 months of financial powder dry via high-yield cash investments as many clients endure “the ups and downs of the industry.” Shephard manages the company, and also handles Courteney Cox, Laura Dern, Jon Favreau, Kurt Russell and Ben Stiller. McIlwee’s clients include actors, directors, and executives, such as Andie McDowell and daughter Rainey Qualley, Jane Lynch, director Matt Reeves, and Francois Arnaud. Tinglof’s clients are producers, directors, writers and actors, including director Michael Engler, producer-directors Richard Heus and Alan Poul, and Jeff Kleeman, who runs Ellen DeGeneres’ company. He also handles family offices for non-entertainment clients and their foundations. Says McIlwee

of solid liquid investments: “I wish they were sexier, but they bring calm if there’s a storm.”

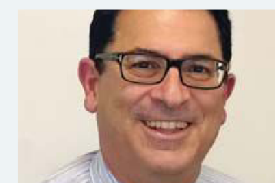


RICHARD SINGER

President, SB Capital Management, Singer Burke

Singer presides over his firm’s SEC-registered investment arm, servicing what he terms “creative entrepreneurs,” including writers, directors, producers, music composers, studio execs, agents, personal managers, attorneys and videogame industry pros. “The entertainment industry has expanded beyond film and TV and live theatrical into leveraging IP to create comic books, games and startup technology companies, as well as to leverage technology to distribute their

content, so you have to be somewhat entrepreneurial to capitalize,” explains Singer. The son of Singer Burke’s now-retired founder, Sandy Singer, he joined his father’s firm in 2002 after spending eight years as an investment manager and market analyst for various Tokyo-based companies.



MICHAEL L. SLOAN

Partner and co-founder, WG&S

As Hollywood talent increasingly crosses over media, such as movie stars doing TV, Sloan says that business managers have to jump the rails too. This means extending tax planning, insurance, estimating cash flow, and business planning for talent’s side enterprises →

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← personal matters, from estate planning to parking tickets. The consistency extends to their physical offices in West L.A., which they've occupied for 30 years of their 42-year partnership. "If a client has a setback, we feel it as if it were family," says Mainstain. "I think that gets through to them and they've been loyal because of that." Longtime clients include writer-director Ron Shelton ("Bull Durham"), who's been with them for 40 years; actor Michael Keaton ("Birdman"); writer-producer Aaron Sorkin ("The West Wing"); composer Sean Callery ("Homeland"); and producers Jordan Kerner ("The Smurfs") and Peter Traugott ("The Brave"). They also service behind-the-scenes players from cinematographers to agents, as well as doctors, lawyers, and sports figures such as boxer Manny Pacquiao. As for long-term investments, they tend to favor real estate, which consistently rises in value, and to avoid art. "Art is a guessing

game and you lose the cash flow while you're holding it, and then when you sell it, there's a capital gain [tax]," says Tanner. "If a client happens to be interested in art, they're on their own."



ADAM YORKSHIRE

Partner, Music Industry Group, MGO

Yorkshire's practice is narrowly focused on music and sports, but the scope of his clients within those worlds is broad, encompassing artists, producers and managers working in rock, rap and EDM, and a growing stable of athletes from the four major leagues (NBA, NFL, MLB, NHL). He prides himself on forward-looking investment strategies, but sometimes his clients tax his capabilities with

such requests as helping them clone themselves or shopping for a unicorn. "The way I took it is, if you want something that doesn't exist outside of books and movies, just call me," he laughs.



JASON ZAYON

Partner, Armanino

In days of old, clients would wait two or three weeks to receive by mail their personal-budget reports; today they monitor them in real time on mobile apps. "They're used to seeing everything on their phones," says Zayon. "My clients are always texting me," particularly the younger digital natives. He adds that the clients who closely crafted their personal budgets like being clued in

constantly wherever they are. His clients include Hollywood executives, writers, producers and directors, and also high-net-worth individuals outside of entertainment. Zayon has a personal credo: "In most cases, trust is earned. With us, trust is required."



**AARON ZIMMER
ELAINA KOGAN**

Tax Partners, Singer Burke

Zimmer and Kogan head up Singer Burke's tax department,

servicing a mix of writers, directors, producers, actors and managers, as well as doctors, lawyers, real estate agents and other pros. Their job has gotten more challenging due to the increasingly global nature of their clients' work, but the basics don't change. "The key is to focus on planning and educating clients about the different tax law changes and opportunities for them to reduce their overall tax liability," says Kogan, who's been with the firm since 2003. Zimmer, who's been in the business more than 40 years, says some plans are tough to make these days as everyone waits to find out what will happen with the Republican tax plan being discussed in Congress. "For example," says Zimmer, "for wealthier clients doing estate planning, not knowing whether there's going to be an estate tax or not or if they're going to eliminate the gift tax makes it all very precarious."

**Profiles by Todd Longwell
and Robert Marich**



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