

Practice Areas

- Entertainment, Media and Communications
- Banking and Finance
- Intellectual Property
- Corporate

Education

- J.D., University of Virginia, 1985
- M.I.A., Columbia University, 1985
- B.A., Yale College, magna cum laude, 1978

Bar Admissions

- New York (1986)

W. Wilder Knight II

Of Counsel

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W. Wilder Knight II specializes in media, entertainment and related intellectual property areas. He has extensive experience in film, television and internet finance, including computer technologies as they relate to film, television, file sharing, distance learning and competency testing. Clients of Mr. Knight include many United States and European-based independent film producers (including producers of animation), a major German advertising agency as well as film distribution companies in New York and Germany.

Mr. Knight has negotiated deals with Muhammad Ali (in the branding area) and Brazilian soccer star Pele (in connection with a documentary film) and more recently an actor's agreement with Helen Mirren (in connection with a feature film being produced by his German clients). He has also been involved in negotiations for the financing of internet companies and internet projects. Most recently, Mr. Knight served as head legal counsel to the producers of *The Cove* (2010 Academy Award winning documentary produced by Fisher Stevens and Paula Dupre Pesman and directed by Louis Psihoyos), "co-producer" of *The Betrayal* (nominated for an Academy Award in 2009, directed by Ellen Kuras), "executive producer" of *Youth Knows No Pain* (HBO film) and "associate producer" of *Mad Hot Ballroom* (#7 documentary of all time, based on U.S. box office, produced by Amy Sewell and directed by Marilyn Agrelo). He was "Co-dependent" producer of *The A-Z of Soccer*, written and hosted by John Cleese. He was "executive producer" of *Love Comes Lately*, a feature film based on three short stories by Isaac Singer.

Mr. Knight works closely with several German law firms and several years ago assisted a German team performing a due diligence review of assets available for purchase as a consequence of the multi-billion dollar bankruptcy of the Kirch Group in Germany. He has also served as counsel to several major German publishing houses (including Bauer, Springer and Burda) at various times during the past two decades.

Mr. Knight's recent experience includes:

- Represented the borrower in a \$20,000,000 P&A financing of US distribution of \$50,000,000 European film
- Represented a lender in a \$15,000,000 financing for a slate of films produced by a New York independent film production company

- Involved in various litigations brought by German investors against Los Angeles-based feature film producers
- Negotiation of joint venture agreement between LA-based animation production company and Malaysian partners in the creation of an off-shore production facility
- Counsel, Private Placement: raising \$10,000,000 for LA-based animation production company
- Representation of several internet entrepreneurs in the establishment, operation and sale of their companies
- Representation of a major German advertising agency
- Counsel on independent feature films as well as documentaries
- Counsel to producers on financing of reality and drama television productions

Film Experience

Mr. Knight's producing credits include:

- *The Cove* legal counsel (2010 Academy Award winning documentary produced by Fisher Stevens and Paula Dupre Pesman and directed by Louis Psihoyos)
- *The Betrayal* co-producer (nominated for an Academy Award in 2009, directed by Ellen Kuras)
- *Mad Hot Ballroom* associate producer (#7 documentary of all time, based on U.S. box office, produced by Amy Sewell and directed by Marilyn Agrelo)
- *The Chain* producer (feature – thriller/murder mystery) co-producing with Jason Kliot and Joana Vicente.
- *The A-Z of Soccer* co-dependent producer (hosted and written by John Cleese)
- *Stolen* associate producer (directed by Rebecca Dreyfuss and produced by Susanne Ludwig)
- *Polynesian Power: Islanders in Pro Football* executive producer (produced by Jeremy Spear and Robert Pennington, broadcast on ESPN)

He has served as legal counsel to the producers of the following films

- *I'm Not Rappaport* (starring Walter Matthau and Ossie Davis, written by Herb Gardner and produced by John Penotti)
- *Wedding Banquet* and *Eat Drink Man Woman* (directed by Ang Lee, each film nominated for the "Best Foreign Film" academy award)
- *Amateur, Flirt* and *Simple Men* (directed by Hal Hartley)
- *High Art* (directed by Lisa Cholodenko - Winner of the Writer's award at Sundance 1998)
- *First Love, Last Rites* (directed by Jesse Peretz and produced by Scott Macaulay and Robin O'Hara)

- *Joe the King* (directed by Frank Whalley and produced by Scott Macaulay and Robin O'Hara, winner of the Writer's award at Sundance 1999 and starring Val Kilmer)
- *Trees Lounge* (directed by Steve Buscemi and produced by Kelley Forsythe and Sarah Vogel)
- *Half Past Autumn* (directed by St. Clair Bourne, documentary about the life of Gordon Parks)
- *Here I Stand* (directed by St. Clair Bourne, documentary about the life of Paul Robeson)
- *John Henrik Clarke: A Great and Mighty Walk* (directed by St. Clair Bourne)

Mr. Knight has worked on numerous international co-productions, including:

- *Flirt* (financing from Japan, Germany and U.S.)
- *Bye Bye Amerika* (German-American)
- *On the Run* (Portuguese-U.S., produced by Tino Navarro of Portugal)
- *Love the Hard Way* (German-American, starring Adrian Brody and directed by Peter Sehr and produced by Vif/Time/Wolfram Tichy and Open City/Jason Kliot and Joanna Vicente)
- *The Chateau* (filmed in France) produced by Scott Macaulay and directed by Jesse Peretz
- *Freeze Frame* (Ireland—UK, directed by John Simpson and produced by Michael Casey)

Projects presently in development on which Mr. Knight serves as counsel include various features to be shot in New York, Laos, Germany, Brazil and Lithuania as well as several documentaries.

Previous Positions

- Walter, Conston, Alexander & Green, Associate (1988-92)
- Ehlerman & Jeschonnek (Hamburg, Germany), Associate (1987-88)
- Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht, (legal research institute in Hamburg Germany), DAAD Grant Recipient for one year of study at Max-Planck-Institut (1985-86)

Publications

- Filmmaker Magazine, various articles on independent filmmaking and financing

Speaking Engagements

- Berlinale Film Festival
- Toronto Film Festival
- Cannes Film Festival
- Santa Cruz Film Festival (Bolivia)

- Rio Film Festival (Brazil)
- Film School of Cuba
- Hamburg Film Festival (Germany)
- Edit99 Post Production Congress (Germany)
- Avignon Film Festival (France)
- New York University (Tisch).

Teaching Positions

- Adjunct Professor, Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, Film Finance and Fundraising

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association

Distinctions

- Named as one of the leading film production and finance lawyers in the U.S. by *The Legal 500 – Intellectual Property, Technology, Media & Telecoms* (2007 edition)

Other Activities

- Board Member, Reel Works Teen Filmmaking, a not-for-profit that teaches filmmaking to New York high school students; the program has helped NYC students produce approximately 60 films, 5 of which have been nominated for Emmy Awards
- Board Member, International Institute for Mediation and Historical Conciliation (“IIMHC”) (Soon to be renamed: International Center for Conciliation (“ICC”), which proactively works in regions of the world where hostilities exist that have arisen from historical events or the stories told about such events; organization creates forums where such disputes between cultures and nations can be reconciled through an open examination and discussion of the historical record by leaders and future leaders of the opposing factions
- Board Member, The Terma Foundation, a U.S. not-for-profit led by Dr. Nancy Harris, delivers medical services, supplies and medical training for the benefit of the children of Tibet
- Long Distance Runner (5K and 10K races)

News

- Reel Works Ten Filmmaking Celebrates Nine Years Of Serving NYC Youth
- Pryor Cashman Client Ellen Kuras Wins Emmy Award for “The Betrayal (Nerakhoon)”
- Pryor Cashman Provided Legal Counsel To Oscar Winning Film The Cove
- Pryor Cashman Wins \$4 Million Award For German Film Distributor VCL Communications GmbH

- Pryor Cashman Client Ellen Kuras Nominated for Academy Award and Independent Spirit Award for “The Betrayal (Nerakhoon)”
- Pryor Cashman Acts As Counsel On The Betrayal, A New Film By Pandinlao Films
- Reel Works To Be Recognized At White House Ceremony
- Five Pryor Cashman Attorneys (Ferber, Janowitz, B. Rose, Zakarin and Knight) Named Top U.S. Lawyers By Legal 500
- Pryor Cashman Partner Jim Janowitz And Counsel Wilder Knight Named As Top Film Production And Finance Lawyers By Legal 500