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CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT Tel: 800.772.0399 Fax: 866.928.5051 MAR 2 2 2012 5 Attorneys for Plaintiff, 6 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA Jack Russell 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA 24770DW (DBX) 9 10 JACK RUSSELL 11 Plaintiff, COMPLAINT FOR TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT, TRADEMARK 12 DILUTION, UNFAIR COMPETITION, AND 13 INJURY TÓ BUSINESS REPUTATION ٧. 14 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL** 15 16 MARK KENDALL, AUDIE DESBROW, MICHAEL LARDIE, BIGG TIME 17 ENTERTAINMENT, INC. and DOES 1-10 18 Defendants. 19 20 21 Plaintiff, JACK RUSSELL, by his attorneys, as and for his complaint against Defendants, MARK KENDALL, AUDIE DESBROW, MICHAEL LARDIE, and BIGG TIME 23 ENTERTAINMENT, INC. (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Defendants" or individually 24 by Last Name), alleges as follows: 25 26 JURISDICTION AND VENUE 27 28 COMPLAINT FOR TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT, TRADEMARK DILUTION, UNFAIR COMPETITION, INJURY TO **BUSINESS REPUTATION**

- 1. This is a civil action seeking injunctive relief and damages for federal trademark infringement/false endorsement, federal trademark dilution, and federal statutory unfair competition under the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1051, et seq. (the"Lanham Act"), and specifically 15 U.S.C. § 1125, and California state common law trademark infringement, injury to business reputation and interference with prospective economic advantage, and statutory unfair competition.
- 2. This Court has original subject matter jurisdiction over the federal claims in this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, 28 U.S.C. §§ 1338(a) and (b), and 15 U.S.C. 1121, and supplemental jurisdiction over the state law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).
- 3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Defendants, all of whom, on information and belief, reside in the State of California. In addition, Defendants do business in the State of California and have performed as "Great White" within the state, and events giving rise to the cause of action have occurred within California.
- 4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b), in that, on information and belief, all defendants reside within the State of California, and Defendants Mark Kendall and Audie Desbrow reside in this district, and Defendant Bigg Time Entertainment, Inc. has a principal place of business within this district. Additionally the principal events complained of have and will occur in this District.

NATURE OF THE ACTION

5. This is an action for preliminary and permanent injunctive relief and damages arising from Defendants' infringement of the Federal and California state statutory and common law rights of Plaintiff JACK RUSSELL and his common law trademark of the band name "GREAT"

WHITE". Plaintiff is the founder and lead singer of the musical group "Great White".

Throughout the group's existence, he has been the primary creative director of the band. He determined the band's membership, signed most all of its contracts, gave nearly all of the band's publicity interviews, and determined the band's creative direction. He has been the sole member is the only original member of the band to continuously perform with the group throughout its existence. He is also the sole member to exercise control over the quality of the groups service. Accordingly, Plaintiff is the owner of the common law trademark in the name "Great White".

6. The individual Defendants, MARK KENDALL, AUDIE DESBROW, and MICHAEL LARDIE seek to perform, promote and market themselves as the musical group "Great White", without Plaintiff's consent, and have recently announced that they will release an album under that name. By performing and announcing their intent to record an album under the name "GREAT WHITE", Defendants have infringed upon and diluted the value of the trademark rights owned by Plaintiff. Further, Defendants have, both individually and through their agents, intentionally defamed Plaintiff and injured his business reputation and ability to contract by stating to promoters and to the general public that he is unable to perform as a musician, and by wrongfully threatening to file legal action against any venue or promoter that books Plaintiff to perform.

7. Defendant BIGG TIME ENTERTAINMENT, INC., acts as the talent agency promoting and booking the individual defendants as the band "Great White" without Plaintiff's consent. BIGG TIME ENTERTAINMENT INC. is a California Corporation with a principal place of business in Los Angeles, California. BIGG TIME ENTERTAINMENT, INC. has assisted and profited from the individual defendants infringement and dilution of Plaintiff's common law trademark, and has assisted and profited from individual defendants attempts to wrongfully injure Plaintiff's business reputation and ability to contract.

- 8. Plaintiff Jack Russell is the founder and lead singer of the band Great White. Mr. Russell founded the band in 1978. It was originally called "Dante Fox" until the name was changed to "Great White" in 1982. Over the past thirty years, the band experienced astonishing success, and also faced difficult challenges. Through both success and difficulty, Jack Russell was the one constant member of the band. Mr Russell was the primary creative director of the band. He determined the band's membership, signed most all of its contracts, gave nearly all of the band's publicity interviews, determined the band's creative direction, and exercised the power to both dissolve and reform the band. While the band's membership has changed substantially over the past thirty years (over 20 musicians have played with the band in various capacities in that time), Jack Russell has *always* been the lead singer and creative director of the band. Until recent events that form the basis of this lawsuit, there has never been a "Great White" without Jack Russell.
- 9. Defendant Mark Kendall is the lead guitarist of the band currently promoting itself as "Great White". Mr Kendall was a member of the original "Great White" in 1982, but resigned from the band in 2000. Plaintiff hired Ty Longley to replace Kendall, and continued to perform as "Great White" and "Jack Russell's Great White" after Mr. Kendall quit the band. Plaintiff later hired Kendall to perform as part of "Jack Russell's Great White" at the end of 2002. In 2010, Plaintiff took a temporary absence from the band to recuperate from major surgery. During that time, Mr. Kendall played guitar for the band 'Great White" with a number of temporary fill in vocalists. After Plaintiff announced that he had recuperated from surgery, Mr. Kendall, along with defendants Lardie and Desbrow, filed a trademark application for the name "Great White" with the United States Patent and Trademark Office without plaintiff's knowledge and consent in an attempt to lay claim to the band name. Mr Kendall has since continued to perform with other vocalists under the name "Great White" without plaintiff's consent. On information and belief, Mr Kendall is a resides in San Bernardino County.

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resides in Los Angeles County.

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caused by such defendants. These fictitiously named defendants along with the defendants named above, are herein referred to collectively as "Defendants."

12. Plaintiff is unaware of the true names and identities of DOES 1 through 10, inclusive, and therefore sues these defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will amend this complaint to allege their true names and capacities when ascertained. Plaintiff is informed and believes and therefore alleges that each of the fictitiously named defendants is responsible in some manner for the occurrences herein alleged, and Plaintiff 's injuries as herein alleged were proximately

information and belief, Defendant Lardie resides in Sacramento County, and Defendant Desbrow

and booking the individual defendants as the band "Great White" without Plaintiff's consent.

BIGG TIME ENTERTAINMENT INC. is a California Corporation with a principal place of

profited from the individual defendants infringement and dilution of Plaintiff's common law

trademark, and has assisted and profited from individual defendants attempts to wrongfully

injure Plaintiff's business reputation and ability to contract.

business in Los Angeles, California. BIGG TIME ENTERTAINMENT, INC. has assisted and

Defendant BIGG TIME ENTERTAINMENT, INC., acts as the talent agency promoting

Defendants Michael Lardie and Audie Desbrow were not members of the original "Great

COMPLAINT FOR TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT, TRADEMARK DILUTION, UNFAIR COMPETITION, INJURY TO **BUSINESS REPUTATION**

FACTS COMMON TO ALL CLAIMS

- 13. Plaintiff Jack Russell is the founder and lead singer of the band "Great White". From the band's inception, he exerted primary creative control over the band, made the hiring and firing decisions for the band, signed nearly all of the contracts for the band, coined the name for the band, and performed nearly all of the interviews for the band. Other band members, including Defendants, came and went, but Plaintiff has continuously been the lead singer and director of the band. Until recently there had never been a "Great White" without Jack Russell, who is undeniably the face and voice of the band, and indisputably owns the trademark to the name
- 14. Plaintiff started the band in 1978 under the name "Dante Fox", and later changed the name to "Great White" in 1982. In 1982, the band consisted of Plaintiff, Defendant Mark Kendall, Lorne Black and Gary Holland.
- 15. "Great White" spent the next several years developing a following, releasing albums, and touring. As with most bands, the lineup of musicians changed over time. In 1985, Plaintiff fired Gary Holland and hired Defendant Audie Desbrow to replace him. Plaintiff also hired Defendant Michael Lardie in late 1985 to play keyboards and guitar, after the release of their third studio recording "Shot in the Dark".
- 16. In 1987, the band achieved mainstream success with the release of the album "Once Bitten..." which by 1988 had sold over one million copies and was certified "Platinum". Over the next five years, the band toured and released two more albums: "...Twice Shy" released in 1989 sold over two million copies, and "Hooked" released in 1991 sold over half a million copies, which was followed by the album "Psycho City" in 1992. During this period, the band lineup, again like most bands, continued to change. Lorne Black was replaced by Tony Montana, who was in turn replaced by other bassists, and studio musicians were also hired for recording sessions.

28. On March 17, 2012, Defendants announced that they would be releasing an album entitled "Elation" as "Great White" on May 18, 2012. Release of the album will irretrievably alter the discography of the band "Great White", tarnishing and diluting the trademark, reputation, and goodwill that Plaintiff has developed over 30 years.

29. Defendants market their musical performances, CDs, DVDs, other recordings and band memorabilia the same types of wholesale, retail and distribution channels and to the same classes of purchasers as Plaintiff's products and services.

30. Defendants' wrongful use of Plaintiff's mark is likely to cause confusion, mistake, or deception in the minds of the public, and will result in the dilution and tarnishment of the mark. Defendants' infringement constitutes a willful and malicious violation of Plaintiff's trademark rights, aimed at preventing Plaintiff from continuing to build a business around a mark that he has long possessed and depriving him of nearly 30 years of goodwill.

31. Defendants do not own the trademark to the name Great White. It is well settled in the Ninth Circuit that, with respect to trademark disputes over ownership of band names, "a person who remains continuously involved with the group and is in a position to control the quality of its services retains the right to use of the mark". *Robi v Reed*, 173 F.3d 736, 741. As with the

prevailing party in *Robi*, Plaintiff "founded the group, gave the group its name, managed the group, and is the only member who has continuously performed with the group" throughout its existence. *Id.* Accordingly, it is Plaintiff, not Defendants, who owns the right to the "Great White" trademark.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT

(15 U.S.C. § 1125(a))

- 32. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 31 of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.
- 33. Plaintiff, as the sole member of the band who was consistently present in the group and maintained control over the quality of the services of the group throughout the majority of its existence, owns the common law trademark to the name "Great White".
- 34. By intentionally using Plaintiff's "Great White" common law trademark in commerce to promote their musical performances, record and sell music, and sell other items displaying Plaintiff's mark without Plaintiff's permission, Defendants are deliberately, intentionally and willfully infringing upon Plaintiff's common law trademark, and the goodwill associated by the public with Plaintiff's mark, diluting the value of the mark and creating confusion in the mind of the consuming public regarding which band they will be seeing perform, or buying music or other memorabilia from, when they see the name "Great White".
- 35. Upon information and belief, if not preliminarily and permanently enjoined by this Court, Defendants will continue to advertise and display, and will sell, distribute and otherwise exploit Plaintiff's common law trademark for their own commercial use in violation of Plaintiffs' rights under the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a) for which Plaintiffs have no adequate remedy

at law. 1 2 SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION DILUTION OF UNREGISTERED TRADEMARK 3 (15 U.S.C. § 1125 (c)) 4 Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 31 5 36. of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.. 6 7 8 37. Defendants' deliberate, intentional and willful use of the "Great White" to promote their live musical performances, and to record and distribute records, CDs, and DVDs of those 10 performances under the name "Great White, has resulted in actual dilution of the mark by 11 blurring and tarnishment, in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1125(c). Defendants have blurred and tarnished the distinctive quality and goodwill of the "Great White" mark by their creation of a 12 second band under the same name as Plaintiff's mark that markets itself as the "authentic" band, 13 to the detriment of Plaintiff. 14 15 38. 16 By reason of the foregoing, Defendants have deliberately, willfully and knowingly 17 diluted and threatened to further dilute the rights of Plaintiff in his common law trademark in 18 commerce, in order to intentionally deceive and mislead consumers and the public at large, and 19 to willfully usurp the goodwill and reputation associated with the Plaintiff's mark. 20 21 39. Upon information and belief, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined by this 22 Court, Defendants will continue to dilute, and to cause serious and irreparable harm and damage 23 to the reputation and goodwill associated with Plaintiff's mark for which Plaintiff has no 24 adequate remedy at law. 25 THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION FALSE DESCRIPTION 26 27 40. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 31 28

COMPLAINT FOR TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT, TRADEMARK DILUTION, UNFAIR COMPETITION, INJURY TO

of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

41. Defendants' wrongful use of Plaintiff's mark is such a colorable imitation and copy of Plaintiff's trademark established in the entertainment-related market for consumer products that Defendants' use thereof in the context of entertainment is likely to cause confusion, or to cause mistake, or to deceive consumers as to the affiliation, connection or association of Plaintiff's products, or to deceive consumers as to the origin, sponsorship or approval by Plaintiff of the Defendants' counterfeit products. Plaintiff avers that Defendants' use of the mark "Great White" comprises a false description or representation of Defendants' business or products under 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a) (Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act).

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION FEDERAL UNFAIR COMPETITION (15 U.S.C. § 1125(a))

- 42. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 31 of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.
- 43. Defendants' use of Plaintiff's mark to promote and market their live performances, to record and sell records, and to sell other products bearing the mark places them in direct competition with Plaintiff's live performances and sales of goods bearing the mark and constitutes Unfair Competition pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a). Defendants' use of Plaintiff's mark is likely to cause confusion, mistake and deception among consumers and will result in continued dillution and tarnishment of the mark. Defendants' unfair competition has caused and will continue to cause damage to Plaintiff, and is causing irreparable harm to Plaintiff for which there is no adequate remedy at law.
- 44. Upon information and belief, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined by this Court, Defendants will continue to unlawfully advertise and exploit the Plaintiffs' mark, causing plaintiff irreparable damage and injury for which Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION COMMON LAW TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT (California Common Law)

Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in Paragraphs 1 through 31

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of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

accordingly has supplemental jurisdiction over said claim.

- 46. This cause of action under California state common law is separate and independent of the federally-based causes of action previously set forth herein, but it is between the same parties and is based on the same operative facts as set forth in the prior causes of action; this Court
- 47. As set forth above, Plaintiff resides and does business in the State of California, where he owns and owns common law trademark rights throughout the United States in the "Great White" trademark for purposes of musical performances and the sale of goods related to those performances
- 48. The use of Plaintiff's mark by Defendants in connection with the promotion of their live musical performances and with the advertising, sale and distribution of CDs, DVDs, electronic musical downloads, clothing and other memorabilia without Plaintiff's permission, in the State of California and elsewhere in the United States, is likely to cause and has caused confusion among consumers as to the source of Defendants' products, and purchasers thereof will likely associate such products as originating with Plaintiff, all to the detriment of said Plaintiffs.
- 49. Upon information and belief, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined by this Court, Defendants will continue their aforesaid willful and deliberate infringement of Plaintiffs' trademark in the name "Great White"

SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION CALIFORNIA UNFAIR COMPETITION (Cal. Bus. Prof Code 17200 et seq) creates a likelihood of injury to Plaintiff's business reputation because any adverse reaction by the public to Defendants and the quality of its products and the nature of its business will injure the business reputation of Plaintiff and the goodwill that he enjoys in connection with his mark "Great White". Also, the confusion created in the mind of the public regarding which band is the authentic Great White injures Plaintiff's business reputation. Additionally, Defendants' repeated false statements regarding the ability of Plaintiff to perform as a musician and threats of unjustified litigation have injured his business reputation and interfered with Plaintiff's business contracts and ability to contract. All of the foregoing have caused damage to plaintiff.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, plaintiff prays for judgment against DEFENDANTS, as follows:

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- The Defendants, MARK KENDALL, AUDIE DESBROW, MICHAEL LARDIE, BIG TIME ENTERTAINMENT, INC. and their agents, officers, employees, representatives, successors, assigns, and all other persons acting for, with, by, through or under authority from Defendants, and each of them, be preliminarily and permanently enjoined from:
 - (a) Using Plaintiff's trademark or any colorable imitation thereof;
 - (b) using any trademark that imitates or is confusingly similar to or in any way similar to Plaintiff's trademark "Great White," or that is likely to cause confusion, mistake, deception, or public misunderstanding as to the origin of Plaintiff's products or his connectedness to Defendants.
 - (c) that Defendants remove Plaintiff's trademark from any and all websites under their control and remove all references to being the "Official" Great White

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The Defendants be required to file with the Court and serve on Plaintiff within thirty (30) 2. days after entry of the Injunction, a report in writing under oath setting forth in detail the manner and form in which Defendants have complied with the Injunction;

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1	3.	That Defendants be held liable for all damages suffered by Plaintiff resulting from the
2		acts alleged herein;
3	4.	That Defendants be compelled to disgorge to Plaintiff all profits derived from the illegal
4		acts complained of herein;
5	5.	That Defendants be ordered to remove all defamatory material injurious to Plaintiff's
6		business reputation from any websites under their control;
7	6.	For an order pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1119 cancelling any registration for the mark "Great
8		White" obtained by defendants subsequent to the initiation of this action;
9	7.	For damages not less than \$ 500,000 and to the extent permitted by law;
10	8.	For such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.
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14	Dated:	March 22, 2012
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19		Brian Acree
20		Attorney for Plaintiff
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