

Sammy Davis Jr. Enterprises, Inc. Files Lawsuit Against Mrs. Sammy Altovise Davis, Jr.



Los Angeles, CA – In response to a lawsuit filed in Dallas last month by Mrs. Sammy Altovise Davis, Jr., Sammy Davis, Jr. Enterprises, Inc., The LaRoda Group, Barrett LaRoda and Anthony Francis have filed their own lawsuit against Mrs. Sammy Altovise Davis Jr. and Burt Boyar, et. al., in the United States District Court in the Central District of California (Case No. CV08-00411).

A sad turn of events, it all began when Barrett LaRoda was introduced to Mrs. Altovise Davis by Anthony Francis back in 2000. The image and celebrity value of her husband's estate had greatly diminished, and Francis thought LaRoda might be able help. A once iconic entertainment figure, Sammy Davis Jr. had achieved international star power and was a civil rights trailblazer during his lifetime. But severe mismanagement was fading his institutional memory and his name value drew little branding power and less income.

LaRoda recognized this state of affairs as not only a tremendous tragedy that had befallen Mrs. Davis but also a loss to the collective memory of not only Black Americans but America at large. As the CEO of the LaRoda Group (www.LaRoda.com), Barrett LaRoda is an entertainment industry veteran and producer of worldwide music events. His roster includes Stevie Wonder, rap artist Doug E. Fresh, saxophonist Najee and the Tobago Jazz Festival. He therefore began to

utilize his expertise, business savvy and industry contacts to effect the course of history and salvage the legacy of one the world's greatest entertainers. Taking Mrs. Davis under his wing and into his home even, they eventually established Sammy Davis Jr. Enterprises, Inc.

LaRoda's successful efforts on behalf of Sammy Davis, Jr. include a live stage show currently running in all of the casinos on the life of Sammy Davis, Jr.; the first branded on-line casino on the internet, the first of its kind in history; and most recently, the inclusion of Sammy Davis, Jr. in a national Applebee's commercial.

Matters took a turn for the worse after negotiations with a major studio regarding the life story of Sammy Davis Jr., that included Jane and Burt Boyar, co-writers of the autobiographies *Yes I Can* and *Why Me?* hit a road block.

It is LaRoda's belief that Mrs. Davis is being unwisely counseled. Cites LaRoda, "The entire situation saddens me to no end. As African Americans, it is crucial that we uphold the integrity of our heroes and maintain control of how our history is told. Mrs. Davis is like a mother to me. It is heartbreaking that she has let others come between us."

A statement issued by Mr. LaRoda's attorneys, Jay M. Coggan, Esquire, Los Angeles and David H. Harper, Esquire, Dallas, reads, "There are so many in the entertainment industry as well as mutual close friends and family members, who can attest to the fact that over the years, Mr. LaRoda and Mr. Francis have provided for Althea Davis financially and emotionally, in an effort to bring resources and to bring stability to her life. It saddens both Mr. LaRoda and Mr. Francis to think that as they are about to realize all of their collective objectives and goals with Mrs. Davis, namely, producing a biopic on the life and times of Sammy Davis, Jr., that Mrs. Davis has allowed strangers to come between them."

“As an entertainment industry executive for over 20 years, Mr. LaRoda has represented many entertainers. He has significant expertise in the area of intellectual property licensing. He has never been accused of financial mismanagement nor has ever been accused of misrepresenting his credentials or qualifications.”

“Clearly, Mr. LaRoda and Mr. Francis expected much more from Mrs. Davis. They sincerely love her, and hope that together, they can all put this behind them, and proceed to preserve and celebrate the legacy of a legend, Sammy Davis, Jr.”