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## '21 Jump Street' Screenwriter Awarded \$438K in Spat With Ex-Lawyer



Karl Walter/Getty Images

Michael Bacall



A Los Angeles judge upheld an arbitration award in Michael Bacall's favor and denied a motion to reconsider her decision.

Screenwriter Michael Bacall has been awarded nearly half a million dollars in a dispute with his former lawyer/manager after a Los Angeles judge declined to overturn his decision to confirm an arbitration award.

The *21 Jump Street* scribe in March 2017 [sued Jeffrey Shumway](#), claiming Shumway continued representing him after his state bar status became "inactive" in 2014. Bacall said Shumway had represented him since the late 1980s (when he was a child actor with small roles on series like *The Wonder Years* and *Punky Brewster*) and tricked him into signing a contract to formalize their relationship in 2016 when he was unauthorized to practice law.

AAA arbitrator Michael C. Donaldson in March awarded \$201,025 in returned fees for work performed between Jan. 1, 2016, and May 26, 2017 — plus \$207,861 for Bacall's attorneys' fees and \$29,745 in expert witness fees in connection with the dispute.

Bacall's lawyers Bryan Freedman and Sean Hardy in April petitioned the court to confirm the arbitration award. Shumway's attorney James Fitzgerald filed a petition to vacate the award, arguing Donaldson had "gone rogue" and exceeded his powers by determining that their contract was illegal and subject to rescission and finding Shumway had been practicing law without a license.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ruth Kwan on Tuesday denied a motion for reconsideration of her July decision to confirm the arbitration award. Kwan found that Shumway's arguments regarding Donaldson's alleged overstepping don't fall within the narrow exceptions that allow an award to be vacated and that he did not exceed his power as an arbitrator.