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Chris Nolan's 'Dark Knight Rises' Agency Fight Moves to Arbitration (Exclusive)

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The dispute over which agency -- CAA or WME -- is entitled to millions of dollars in commissions from the Batman director moves away from public court.



Christopher Nolan

On Tuesday, *The Dark Knight Rises* director **Christopher Nolan** dismissed a lawsuit against his former agency CAA and current agency William Morris Endeavor. *The Hollywood Reporter* has learned that the dispute will instead be handled before a three judge panel in arbitration.

The legal action was filed last September and was intended to suss out who should receive commissions for his work.

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Nolan left CAA last year to follow his agent **Dan Aloni** to WME. The defection caused a

problem for Nolan. Both agencies claimed they are entitled to the millions of dollars that he and his wife and producing partner received from the last blockbuster Batman movie. CAA contended that it should be paid for projects initiated while he was a client while WME said that as his agency of record when *The Dark Knight Rises* was released, it deserved the money.

Since the lawsuit was filed on behalf of the Nolans by attorneys **Bryan Freedman** and **Brian Turnauer** of Freedman & Taitelman, the parties have met privately to discuss the situation. Nolan's lawyers requested and got extensions of time to serve the agencies. Neither side made any big claims in open

court, and Nolan preferred to have the two agencies hash out the differences without taking a position on which side was going to get the commissions.

It appears that the agencies prefer to deal with the case in private arbitration.

The development follows the move of Aloni's own \$5 million lawsuit against CAA to arbitration. The talent agent contends being denied a bonus payment and other compensation owed to him from his representation of top clients including Nolan. That case ended up in arbitration after a judge determined the terms of Aloni's arbitration clause applied to the dispute.

In the fight over Nolan commissions, there was no court ruling on arbitration. It happened instead by the consent of the parties.

The Aloni dispute is scheduled to be heard by a private judge in the fall.

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