



## Divya Shahani

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### RELATED SERVICES

Corporate

Entertainment and Media

Financial Services

Mergers & Acquisitions

Technology, Entertainment and Media

### RELATED INDUSTRIES

Banking

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## Biography

Divya Shahani specializes in transactional, corporate and intellectual property matters in the entertainment industry. Divya represents clients ranging from film, television and commercial producers, institutional lenders, private financiers, distributors, new media start-ups, content creators, talent, music artists and producers, artist management companies, and event and hospitality companies. In particular, Divya supports the legal needs of productions from rights acquisition and development through until licensing and distribution. Having cut her teeth on the business side of the entertainment industry as an executive producer on various feature film projects, Divya's legal advice to her entertainment clients is informed by business strategy and practical realities.

Divya's practice focuses on the following areas:

**Film, television, commercial, digital media production:** as production counsel, supporting the copyright and contract legal needs of productions through rights acquisition, development, casting, pre-production, production, post-production, licensing and distribution phases. Such support includes acquisition of underlying rights, negotiation of talent and key creative deals, errors and omissions insurance review, product placement agreements, and licensing and distribution agreements.

**Operational legal needs in the entertainment industry:** supporting the operational legal needs of entertainment companies such as purchase, sale and licensing of intellectual property, financing, employment and independent contractor agreements and disputes, non-disclosure agreements, and various contractual disputes.

**Production financing:** representing lenders and borrowers in secured and unsecured lending transactions; representing equity investors and producers in private equity financing transactions.

**Music:** representing music artists and producers in transactions with record labels; representing music artists and production companies in master and synchronization licenses and composer agreements.

**Celebrity sponsorship:** advising on and representing celebrities and companies in various sponsorship transactions.

**Intellectual property:** advising on and representing artists and content creators in various intellectual property transactions and disputes, including copyright and trademark issues.

**Corporate:** advising on and representing companies and individuals in the entertainment and hospitality industry in respect of the formation and reorganization of for-profit and non-profit corporations, shareholder agreements and disputes, purchase and sale of shares, and purchase and sale of assets.

Divya is particularly passionate about supporting the legal needs of emerging artists, with a mandate to improve diversity and inclusion in the film and television industry. Over the past several years, Divya has also facilitated various legal workshops and seminars for content

creators at Artscape Daniels Launchpad, DOC Institute, Centennial College and Durham College. She has also been quoted in Playback Magazine and has been interviewed by etalk on more than one occasion.

Prior to joining Miller Thomson LLP, Divya was an associate at a reputable boutique entertainment law firm in Toronto and an executive producer.

## Notable matters

- Appointment of former eOne executive, Justin Rebelo, as CEO of A71 Entertainment
- POV Launches Production Assistant Training Program
- Official set-up of the non-profit organization Building a Legacy in Acting, Cinema & Knowledge (B.L.A.C.K.) Canada
- The sponsorship/brand partner deals for B.L.A.C.K. Ball, which is the annual TIFF gala held by the non-profit organization Building a Legacy in Acting, Cinema & Knowledge (B.L.A.C.K.) Canada
- Reorganization of the film distribution company, A71 Entertainment
- Production counsel and executive producer for the feature film “The Ballad of Audrey Earnshaw”
- Production counsel and executive producer for the feature film “The Cuban”

## Thought leadership

- “Covid-19: The legal fall-out”, C21Media, April 1, 2020
- Mentor, TO Webfest filmmaker mentorship event, July 11, 2019
- “Legal Primer at the Essentials Bootcamp: 4-Part Crash Course in the Essentials of Documentary Producing”, DOC Institute, July 3, 2019
- “Candid Conversations: Protecting Your Creativity”, Artscape Daniels Launchpad; Launchpad Learning Event; , June 8, 2019
- Panel speaker, “Sign on the Dotted Line: A Conversation About Contracts & Collaboration”, Artscape Daniels Launchpad in collaboration with Watrvision, November 29, 2018
- “Legal Primer at the Essentials Bootcamp: 4-Part Crash Course in the Essentials of Documentary Producing”, DOC Institute, July 4, 2018
- “Legal Primer at the Essentials Bootcamp: 4-Part Crash Course in the Essentials of Documentary Producing”, DOC Institute, July 5, 2017
- “Legal Primer at the Essentials Bootcamp: 4-Part Crash Course in the Essentials of Documentary Producing”, DOC Institute, July 13, 2016

## Community involvement

- Black Academy Committee, Building a Legacy in Acting, Cinema & Knowledge (B.L.A.C.K.) Canada
- Director on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Film Institute
- Director on the Board of Directors of Unsinkable
- Director on the Board of Directors of Breakthroughs Film Festival
- Events Committee, Bruce Bailey’s Fête Champêtre, A Countryside Gala in Support of The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

## Professional memberships

- Canadian Bar Association
- Ontario Bar Association
- Law Society of Ontario
- Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television
- Women in Film and Television

## Languages spoken

- English
- French

## Bar admissions & education

- Ontario Bar, 2013
- Certificate in Entertainment Law, Osgoode Hall Law School, 2014
- J.D., Osgoode Hall Law School, 2012
- B.A. (Honours Philosophy), McGill University, 2009