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TOP 100 2021

CHRISTOPHER C. MELCHER

WALZER MELCHER LLP
LOS ANGELES
FAMILY LAW

— TOP 100 —



When the pandemic and lockdowns first arrived, Melcher, a prominent family law attorney, took on a project: He built a tele-vision-style studio in an unused office in his firm's building.

Melcher said his main source of new clients is referrals from attorneys who attend some of the many seminars he gives on family law topics. But

when the pandemic put a halt to large gatherings, he determined to switch to online presentations to reach those attorneys.

He studied YouTube how-to videos and bought professional quality equipment, including lights, sound-attenuating blankets and a DSLR camera. "I geeked out on this audio and video stuff because it was so interesting to me."

Soon, he realized he could use his new, broadcast-quality studio for video appearances, depositions, Zoom meetings and media interviews. "I found myself sitting in that room all day long on Zooms. I never expected that to happen. I thought it was just going to be to put on webinars."

These days, Melcher is as busy as ever. He declined to discuss his most famous current client, except to confirm that he does represent Kanye West in the divorce action filed by Kim Kardashian. *Kardashian West v. West*, 21STFL01626 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed Feb. 19, 2021).

In another divorce case, he is an expert witness on fees for the wife of rapper and producer Dr. Dre. *Young v.*

Young, 20STFL05624, (L.A. Super. Ct., filed June 29, 2020).

Melcher has taken on a number of appellate matters in family law.

His best-known case might still be his state Supreme Court win in 2017 for Frankie Valli, lead singer of the 1960s' Four Seasons, on a community property issues. *Marriage of Valli*, 58 Cal.4th 1396 (Cal. 2014).

As a friend of the court, he was part of a very similar victory last July in a decision holding that real property acquired by spouses in joint tenancy is nonetheless community property. In *re Marriage of Brace*, 9th Cal.5th 903 (Cal. 2020).

Melcher has also been using his office studio to good effect to offer commentary to news outlets on topical legal issues, such as the Britney Spears conservatorship. "My dream job is to just do legal commentary, not necessarily limited to family law, but on any legal issue," he said. "I like to take those complex legal problems and explain them in terms that an interested reader would want to see."

— Don DeBenedictis