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Courtesy of Brian Clark

*Sheppard Mullin attorney Shaun Clark works a side job as a professional photographer, taking shots of soccer and wildlife.*

By Skylar Dubelko  
Daily Journal Staff Writer

**L**OS ANGELES — When Shaun Clark isn't practicing entertainment law, he can usually be found behind a lens.

"The practice of law comes first. ... It's what I really enjoy doing," Clark said. "Photography is kind of an escape."

The attorney first started taking photos in high school. Explaining he used to go to a lot of concerts, Clark said he wanted to have pictures of the bands he saw.

"But I didn't like the pictures that other people were taking," Clark recalled. He thought he could do better, so he borrowed an Olympus camera from his parents and began sneaking it into concerts, shooting photos of rock 'n' roll acts from the crowd.

"I ended up doing a pretty good job and selling them around my high school," he recalled.



Silverback gorillas



Grizzly bear

While earning a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Texas at Arlington, Clark started shooting photos professionally. Still shooting rock bands at the time, Clark said his work was featured in magazines such as Rolling Stone.

His stint as a rock photographer led him

indirectly to a career in law, Clark explained.

"I looked at the entertainment industry — the music industry — and I evaluated, 'Who is making all the money in this business?'" he said.

Nearly everyone he identified was "either a lawyer or a recovering lawyer," Clark said.

“Meaning they had been a lawyer, but now they’re doing something different.”

With his sights set on being an entertainment attorney, Clark put down his camera and moved west to attend Loyola Law School.

Now a partner in Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP’s Century City office, Clark handles “anything relating to the financing, development, production and exploitation of content.”

Of his photography, the attorney said he shoots whatever interests him.

A longtime soccer fan, Clark said, “I have a friend who runs a soccer website, and he offered to get me credentials to shoot soccer, so I started doing that about six years ago.”

Wanting to see his photos on more than just one site, Clark said he used connections to get his shots in front of the sports editor at Getty Images.

“They liked my shots,” he said.

As a Getty Images contributing photographer, Clark often shoots the Los Angeles Galaxy, the Los Angeles Football Club and the United States National soccer teams.

Noting he shoots one or two games most weeks, Clark said his credentials give him terrific access on the field.

“Then after the game, I go under the stadium and ... upload my best images,” he explained. “It’s a lot of fun to wake up in the morning, turn on the computer, and see my shots on ESPN or Sports Illustrated or the Guardian or MSNBC or Forbes or wherever.”

Mentioning he also shoots on assignment for Football.com, Clark said most of his work can also be found on his Instagram account, @ShaunClark-Photo.

Describing how he felt the first time he saw a soccer photo attributed to him, Clark said, “It took me back to the old days when I used to shoot rock ’n’ roll and my rock ’n’ roll photos were in the magazine. So it’s fun, it’s exciting.”

“For me it’s purely about the excitement and the pleasure and certainly not about the money,” the attorney added.

Joey Carson, the CEO of Elevator Studio, is a longtime friend and client of Clark’s and described the attorney as extremely loyal and empathetic. They first met in 2001 when Clark

was opposing counsel on a movie deal for Carson’s former company.

“I had a lot of interaction with him, but kind of across the aisle,” Carson recalled.

Although Clark was “vigorously representing his own client,” Carson said, “He didn’t have one of those scorched-earth policies. He was so nice and friendly to deal with.”

After the deal, Carson hired Clark as counsel.

“He did such a good job for his guy, but he also, at the same time, didn’t burn us on our side,” he added.

Explaining that often in Hollywood, “where [when] you’re up in your career, everyone is your friend, and when you’re down, you don’t hear from anybody,” Carson said, Clark is “one of those guys who is always there no matter what.”

Carson said he’d known Clark for years before he mentioned his interest in photography.

“But he was more than just into it. He was a professional photographer and could have had a career along those lines,” Carson said. He later found out that the attorney took annual trips to shoot wildlife.

“It’s not even a vacation. He goes and does that ... at the level of as if it was a full-time job,” Carson added. “So it’s just cool to see that.”

Asked if there are any similarities between being a photographer and being an attorney, Clark is quick to say no. For him, photography is an escape. “I pursue the photography to get to do cool things.”

Once a year, Clark gives himself “a pseudo-National Geographic assignment,” he said. “Just to see how I could do if I really worked for National Geographic.”

Most recently, he traveled to Alaska, where he spent five days photographing grizzly bears. And in 2016, the attorney traveled to Rwanda’s Volcanoes National Park to photograph silverback gorillas.

WPT Enterprises Inc. associate general counsel Allison Hushek has known Clark for about 20 years.

“I enjoy it so much more than even a [National Geographic] type post because ... the stories he writes below his Instagram posts [are] always interesting,” she said.



Ozzy Osbourne

Photos by Sean Clark



Landon Donovan

Hushek said Clark is tenacious. “He’s on the cutting edge of all media topics,” she explained. “And that’s why I hire him.”

According to Hushek, Clark dedicates himself to whatever he puts his mind to.

“So whether that’s lawyering or photography, he’ll dive in deep, which I always find a good quality in a person.” she explained. “If you’re going to do something, you should do it right.”