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ENTERTAINMENT & ARTS

Taylor Swift is sued by a showgirl, and drops video on a Hollywood ‘It Girl,’ Liz Taylor



Taylor Swift faces a “Life of a Showgirl” legal battle and drops an unusual “Elizabeth Taylor” music video. (Mert Alas & Marcus Piggott)



By Emily St. Martin
Staff Writer | Follow

April 1, 2026 8:32 PM PT

- Las Vegas performer Maren Wade is suing Taylor Swift over “The Life of a Showgirl” merch, claiming infringement of her decade-old trademark.
- Wade created “Confessions of a Showgirl” as a column in 2014, trademarking it in 2015 before building it into touring productions nationwide.
- The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rejected Swift’s trademark application, finding it confusingly similar to Wade’s established brand.

The life of a showgirl wouldn’t be complete without a few lawsuits, and who knows that better than Taylor Swift and Elizabeth Taylor?

On Monday, the “Bad Blood” singer was hit with a trademark infringement lawsuit regarding her most recent album, “The Life of a Showgirl.” Real-life Las Vegas showgirl and writer Maren Wade, born Maren Flagg, alleges that Swift knowingly disregarded her claim to a similar name.

According to the lawsuit, Wade launched the column “Confessions of a Showgirl” in the Las Vegas Weekly in 2014. The column eventually became a live show, which became a touring production. “Over the course of a decade, Confessions of a Showgirl grew into a brand encompassing performances, writing, and digital media — built by one person, city by city and show by show,” reads the lawsuit, which

adds that Wade took the show across the country, and used the brand when appearing on television and podcasts.

Wade as a performer herself respects Swift's right to creative expression, according to the suit, "and nothing in this action challenges it." The filing argues that "whatever [legal] protection might attach to creative expression, it does not immunize Swift's separate decision to adopt a confusingly similar designation as a trademark, affix it to goods, and deploy it as a source identifier in commerce."



MUSIC

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Oct. 2, 2025

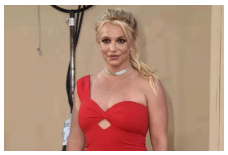
In 2015, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office registered "Confessions of a Showgirl" and named Maren Flagg as the owner. And according to the suit, in November 2025, the office refused an attempt by Swift's team to register "The Life of a Showgirl" based on a likelihood of confusion with Wade's established brand.

Patent attorney JD Harriman told The Times in a statement that although the trademark office did reject Swift's mark, she voluntarily suspended the "Life of a Showgirl" application while a separate trademark application for "Showgirl" moved forward.

“This case isn’t about the music, and it may not even be about confusion,” Harriman said. “Wade’s own complaint concedes she’s not challenging the album itself — only merchandise. And before filing, she was publicly hashtagging Swift’s album and calling herself a fan.”

Jaymie Parkkinen, an attorney for Wade, told The Times in an emailed statement that Maren spent more than a decade building Confessions of a Showgirl.

“She registered it. She earned it. When Taylor Swift’s team applied to register The Life of a Showgirl, the Trademark Office refused, finding Swift’s mark confusingly similar,” Parkkinen said. “We have great respect for Swift’s talent and success, but trademark law exists to ensure that creators at all levels can protect what they’ve built. That’s what this case is about.”



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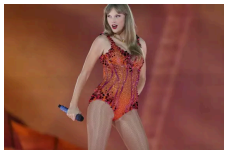
Wade’s team argues that since Swift’s 12th album dropped last year, search results are dominated by Swift, and even though Wade established her own showgirl brand a decade ago, her brand is now seen as affiliated with Swift’s.

“The Life of a Showgirl is one designation among more than 170 active or pending trademark registrations managed by Defendant TAS on behalf of Swift, spanning names, phrases, and commercial designations across one of the most extensive trademark portfolios in the entertainment industry,” reads the suit.

Swift’s broader enterprise “does not depend on the continued use of any single designation,” the suit continues. “By contrast, Confessions of a Showgirl is the sole trademark under which [Wade] has built her professional identity for more than a decade. It is not one mark among hundreds. It is the only one she has. The continued erosion of that mark threatens the entirety of Wade’s brand.”

In other Swift news, the Grammy winner dropped the music video for “Elizabeth Taylor” on Tuesday.

The video features archival film clips of the latter starlet — also known for high-profile legal battles, media scrutiny aimed at her love life and larger-than-life fame — rather than the songstress herself, who does not appear in the video.



MUSIC

Taylor Swift promises ‘Life of a Showgirl’ won’t be her last hurrah — or her last album

Oct. 6, 2025

The video, which has been exclusively released via Spotify Premium and Apple Music, includes scenes from “Father of the Bride,” “Rhapsody,” “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” “Cleopatra,” and “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?” among other classic films starring Taylor. The homage also has old press footage of the Oscar winner.

Back in October, Swift told BBC radio that if she mentions a real person in her songs, she warns them ahead of time, and in the case of someone like the late movie star, she asked the Taylor estate for permission to pay homage with the song.

“If it’s Elizabeth Taylor,” she said, “we go to their family and her estate and let them know, and they were lovely about it.”

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Emily St. Martin is an entertainment reporter on the Fast Break Desk. Before joining the Los Angeles Times, she contributed to the New York Times, InStyle, Cosmopolitan, BBC, Vice and Los Angeles Magazine. She also previously worked at the Hollywood Reporter, and served as the digital features editor at Southern California News Group. In 2025, she won first place for best editorial with the L.A. Press Club.

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