

Edmonton

'Smear dressed up as a lawsuit': Defendants respond to money-for-sex lawsuit against Oilers owner

'The whole point of this so-called litigation is to use publicity rooted in falsehoods to inflict damage'

[Andrea Huncar](#) · CBC News · Posted: Apr 13, 2017 7:43 PM PDT | Last Updated: April 13, 2017



Model and actress Greice Santo accuses Edmonton Oilers owner Daryl Katz of offering her money for sex in a defamation lawsuit. (CBC, supplied)

A lawsuit accusing Edmonton Oilers owner Daryl Katz of offering money for sex to a Hollywood actor is "a smear dressed up as a lawsuit," says a court document filed Thursday seeking to have the case dismissed.

...has already seeking to have the case dismissed.

The allegation is contained in a motion filed with the New York Supreme Court in response to a defamation lawsuit launched earlier this month. It cites four reasons for dismissing the case, calling the allegations salacious and false.

- [**Brazilian model accuses Edmonton Oilers owner of offering money for sex**](#)

"The whole point of this so-called 'litigation' is to use publicity rooted in falsehoods to inflict reputational damage — and that also is its genesis," the motion states.

The motion was filed by U.S. public relations firm G.F. Bunting+Co, the company accused of defamation in the lawsuit which was launched on April 2 in New York by professional gambler R.J. Cipriani.





R.J. Cipriani and Greice Santo accused Daryl Katz of proposing a sex-for-money deal. (Supplied)

He's the husband of Brazilian actor and model Greice Santo, who appeared in the TV series *Jane the Virgin*. Cipriani, who goes by the name Robin Hood 702, accused G.F. Bunting+Co in the defamation suit of falsely telling the New York Post he tried to extort money from Katz, the billionaire owner of the Oilers.

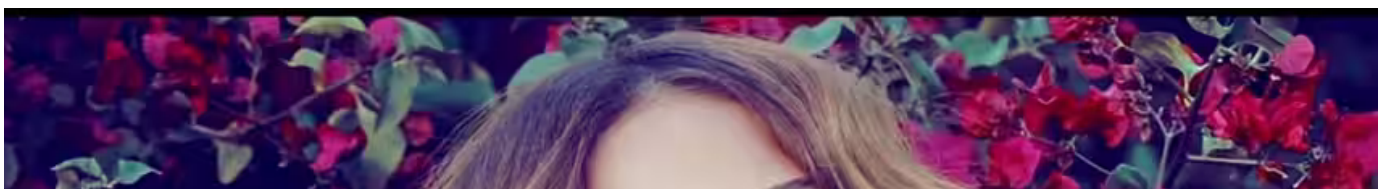
Cipriani said the claim derailed a story he had pitched about his wife receiving wire transfers totalling \$35,000 from a company owned by Michael Gelmon, a Katz associate.

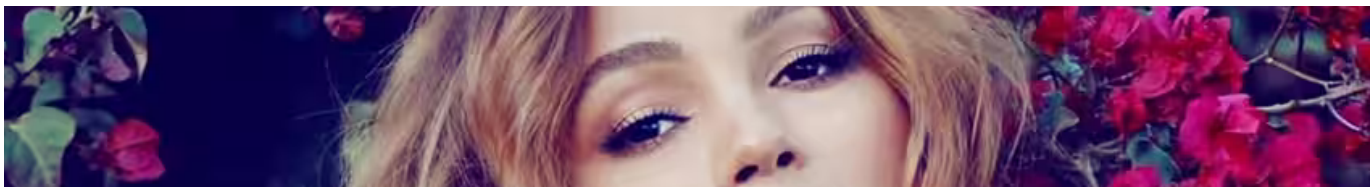
Santo and her husband accuse Katz of offering to pay \$20,000 per day to see her up to six times a month for sex and companionship, a proposal she says was largely facilitated through Gelmon in what began as discussions about helping her acting career.

She says when they found out she told a mutual acquaintance about the proposal, she was threatened. Gelmon warned her that Katz's head of security indicated they would make sure she didn't work in Hollywood again, she said.

Gelmon has declined to comment.

Santo filed a complaint in July 2016 with police in Hawaii, where the initial offer was allegedly made during a photo shoot several months earlier. But the complaint never resulted in criminal charges.





An April 11, 2016 recording provided by Greice Santo in which she said Daryl Katz's associates threatened to prevent her from ever working in Hollywood again.

7 years ago 1:53

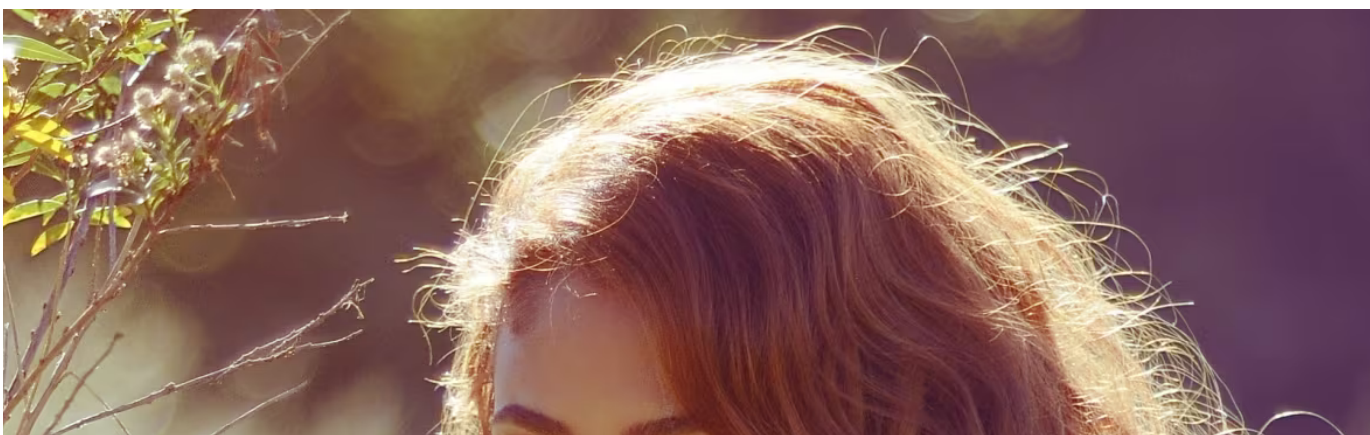
A phone conversation between Greice Santo and Michael Gelmon Santo said is from April 2016.

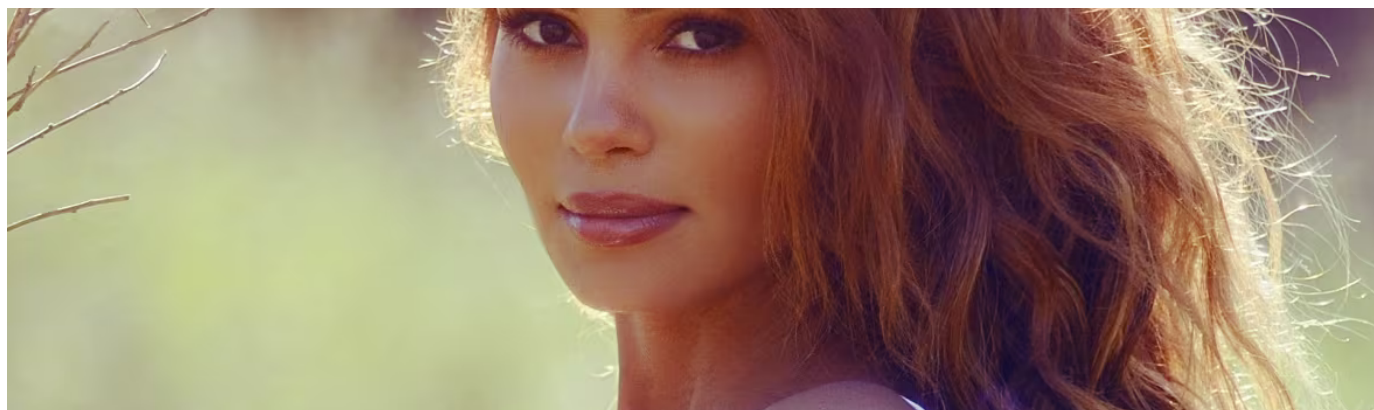
Extortion plot true

The motion to dismiss says the most important reason to dismiss the defamation suit is that the allegation that Cipriani "hatched an extortion plot against Mr. Katz — was, and remains, true."

The document says Cipriani's effort to "extract a multimillion-dollar 'settlement' from Mr. Katz" based upon "a bogus" legal claim of "alienation of affection" from his wife constitutes extortion.

Describing efforts to extract a large settlement as "extortion" is not defamatory under New York law, the motion adds.





The motion to dismiss says Cipriani's effort to "extract a multimillion-dollar 'settlement' from Mr. Katz" based upon "a bogus" legal claim of "alienation of affection" from Santo constitutes extortion. (Supplied)

The motion also says the case should be dismissed because Cipriani cannot prove the public relations firm behaved in a "grossly irresponsible" manner when communicating with a *New York Post* editor. As well, Cipriani cannot allege the company acted in bad faith since communications with the editor arose in a "privileged context" of providing accurate information to the public, the document states.

The motion was filed with a copy of a letter dated July 9 sent to Cipriani from a law firm representing Gelmon "with the concurrence of lawyers for Mr. Katz."

The letter accuses Cipriani of demanding more than \$3 million from Katz while threatening "to publicize false allegations." It says evidence suggests that Santo "may have been your accomplice or accessory" and suggests she asked Gelmon and Katz for money.

Model sent Katz 'provocative' pictures

"In 2016, around Easter time, Ms. Santo sent provocative pictures of herself to Mr. Gelmon, along with suggestive messages," the letter says. "She sent Mr. Katz an unsolicited Valentine's Day message."

Both Santo and Cipriani have denied they were seeking financial gain from Katz.

"I would love him [Katz] to fly in to L.A. on his private jet and apologize for trying to turn me into a prostitute — that's all," Santo told CBC in an interview last week.

- ['It's not about the money,' says Hollywood model accusing Oilers owner of trying to pay her for sex](#)

Cipriani declined comment on the motion to dismiss. But his lawyer Peter Gleason called it "absolutely ridiculous" that the motion calls the defamation lawsuit "a smear campaign dressed up as a lawsuit."

Gleason said his client is "the victim of slander," adding, "I will zealously oppose their motion and will have our day in court."

- [Oilers owner Daryl Katz now in the movie business](#)

[CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) | [About CBC News](#)

[Corrections and clarifications](#) | [Submit a news tip](#) | [Report error](#) ▼

Popular Now in News

1 U.S. indictment alleges multiple Indian assassination plans across North America

880 reading now

2 Federal government reaches deal with Google on Online News Act

520 reading now

3 Hamas says 3 Israeli hostages, including an infant, are no longer alive

431 reading now

4 Spyware being used by 13 federal departments, documents show

429 reading now

5 Doctor took \$100K loan to work in northern Manitoba town, left before contract was up: court documents

326 reading now

©2023 CBC/Radio-Canada. All rights reserved.

Visitez [Radio-Canada.ca](https://www.radio-canada.ca)