



JOHNETTA PAYE ESQUIRE

ENTERTAINMENT NOVEMBER 2, 2016

Money matters to Lil Wayne, even when 'Black Lives Matter' movement doesn't



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MJB WANTS NO MORE
DRAMA: IN DIVORCE,
ALIMONY RATES MAY
CAUSE DRAMA ANYWAY



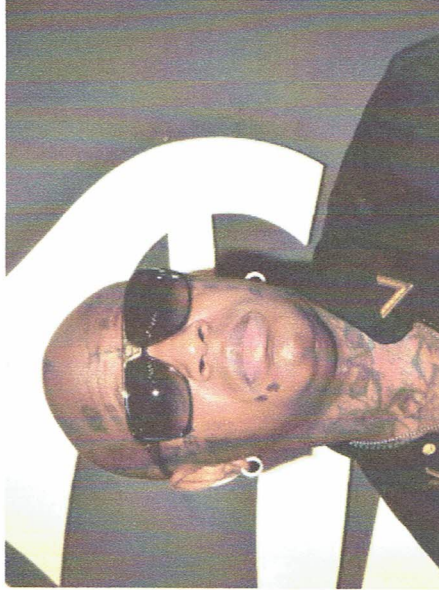
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Lil Wayne has managed to ruffle feathers recently with outspoken opinions criticizing the **Black Lives Matter movement** and saying **racism doesn't exist**. But his feathers are just as ruffled during the two-plus-year lawsuit with his surrogate father, Bryan "Birdman" Williams. If it's starting to feel like this monetary situation between Lil Wayne and Birdman (aka Baby) has been going on for awhile, that's because it has. The flawed business relationship was brought up sparingly on the reality show "Music Moguls," but judging from the interview with Power 105's The Breakfast Club, Baby has summed up their current status as "**kosher**."

“Tha Carter V,” Lil Wayne’s upcoming twelfth album, is starting to take on the mysterious release date of a Dr. Dre-like album. Only instead of the issue being about perfectionism, this album release is reportedly about contractual and financial issues alone, including a [\\$51 million lawsuit](#).

“To all my fans, I want u to know that my album won’t and hasn’t been released bekuuz Baby & Cash Money Rec. refuse to release it,” Lil Wayne tweeted. “I want off this label and nothing to do with these people but unfortunately it ain’t that easy ... I am a prisoner and so is my creativity.”

Excerpt from Getty Images



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But that tweet was in December 2014, and two years later, he's still there. And the lawsuit is still pending. Is this much of a surprise coming from Cash Money Records? Not really, especially considering Tyga had already been honest on [The Breakfast Club](#) about never receiving a check from the label.



Locked into a contract that doesn't pay (Photo

credit: Pixabay)

But how can someone be signed to a label without being paid by that label? Branding may be part of it. It's simple enough to use a record label name while making money from fashion lines, marketing/promotion opportunities, touring, mixtape releases, club appearances, reality shows, etc. That is, assuming that these kinds of job opportunities are not mentioned in the contract as a requirement to deduct percentages from.

In the case of the Lil Wayne and Young Money, LLC vs. Birdman and Cash Money dispute, this is all about show me the receipts. Lil Wayne's complaint alleges that Cash Money breached two different contractual agreements Wayne signed with the label.

Recommended Reading: ["A Timeline Of Lil' Wayne's Star-Crossed 'Tha Carter V'"](#)

Cash Money allegedly failed to pay Wayne \$20 million

Lil Wayne claims cash money was obligated to pay him \$10 million dollars when he delivered the completed album "I Am Not a Human Being" to the label. Wayne alleges he also owed \$10 million dollars for the completed "Carter V" album.

Allegedly, Cash Money does not have the money owed to Lil Wayne **"because Universal Music Group has been redirecting royalties** due to Wayne in order to pay back its own \$100 million advance to Cash Money, of which \$60 million is un-recouped, according to court documents."

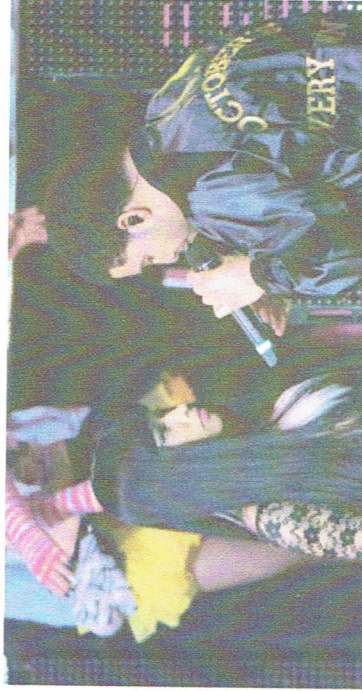
Typically, an artist does not receive a check until the record label has recouped all funds advanced to the artist. Lil Wayne negotiated terms into his contract so that his royalty and profit payments would not be used to pay back debt Cash Money owed to Universal Music Group. According to court documents, Lil Wayne's contract with Cash Money stipulated that monies due to Lil Wayne could not be cross-collateralized to pay back advances or debt belonging to Cash Money.

Lil Wayne's complaint does not address if he received advance funds by Cash Money or Universal Music Group that they are entitled to recoup. If Weezy still has unpaid advances, that would impact the \$20 million he was contractually entitled to receive for his last two albums.

Lil Wayne earned portion of profits generated from Cash Money/Young Money artists

Under the [Cash Money/Young Money joint venture agreement](#), Lil Wayne's profits were to be divided "51%-49% between Cash Money and Carter, and ownership of all the Young Money Label property, (e.g., master recordings, copyrights, intellectual property, good will) similarly would be owned 51%-49% between Cash Money and Carter, respectively."

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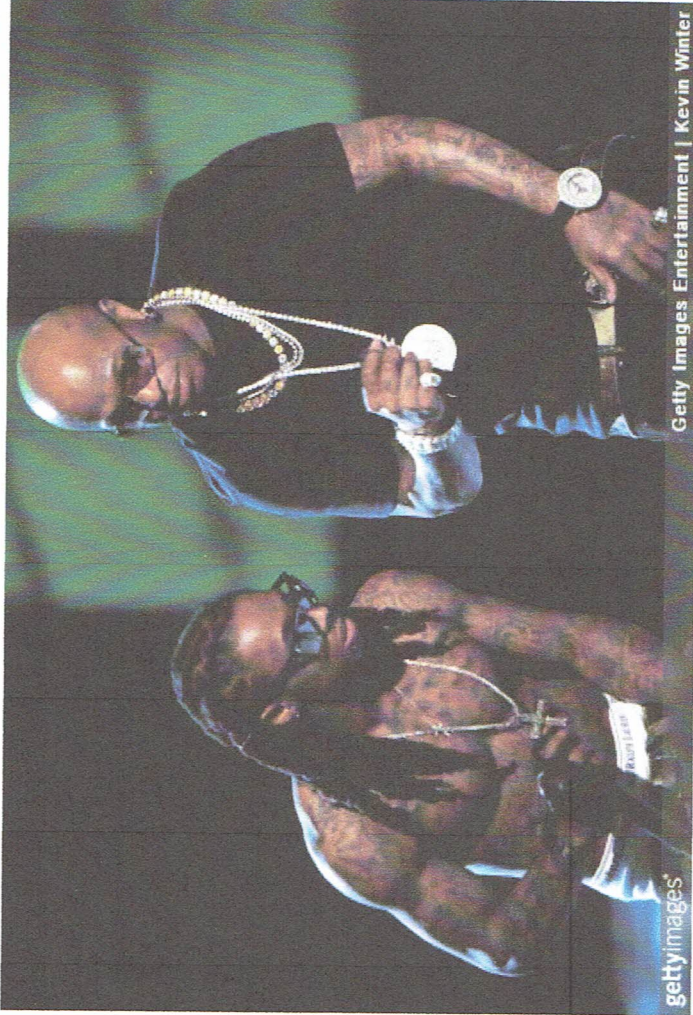


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With artists like Drake and Nicki Minaj signed to the Cash Money/Young Money roster, it's easy to believe that Lil Wayne would be rolling in cash. According to Forbes, Drake's last album "Views" went **double platinum**. But where is the money? How can Drake get paid from albums he released under the label and Lil Wayne can't get his fair share? These are questions Weezy's legal team hopes will be answered through an accounting of Cash Money and Universal Music Group's financial records.

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Lil Wayne's ordeal is a reality check for up-and-coming artists about why numbers matter. It's about reading all terms of an artist's recording or distribution agreement to understand how and when the artist is entitled to receive payments. The way certain contracts are drafted may lead to an artist never receiving compensation for songs created and released.

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And if all of this is true, the "music math" contained in Lil Wayne's contracts are not adding up.

Have more questions about artist recording contracts and distribution agreements?

Contact [J. Paye & Associates](#) today.

Shamontiel L. Vaughn contributed to this blog. Find out more about her at [Shamontiel.com](#).

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