

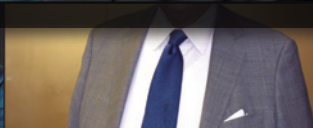
LITIGATION BOUTIQUES **HOT LIST**

A SPECIAL REPORT



ALEXANDRA SHAPIRO AND CYNTHIA ARATO

SHAPIRO ARATO



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They may be small, but their cases are as big as they come. This week, we spotlight 10 litigation boutiques with up to 50 lawyers who enjoyed stand-out accomplishments in 2015. These firms, located on either coast or points in between, secured key victories—whether in monetary terms or by establishing important precedent at the trial or appellate level. Most of the wins were on the defense side, and the outcomes affected banking and finance sectors, pharmaceuticals and life sciences, international law, employment law, technology, manufacturing and more.

Their clients often are heavyweights, including major sports leagues, pop artists and industry leaders. We also asked these attorneys to provide some insight into what's made them successful, and the advice they've found most useful in steering their careers. Some practitioners received words of wisdom while they were mere children; others did so when they were still in law school or just starting to practice law.

The NLJ based its Litigation Boutiques Hot List selections on nominations submitted by the firms themselves and our own reporting.

Shapiro Arato

An international copyright battle over an acclaimed 20th century American author's work. A headline-grabbing case for New York's iconic Madison Square Garden. A landmark insider-trading ruling.

It may sound like the bailiwick of Big Law. Instead, the high-profile cases featured the nine-lawyer New York shop Shapiro Arato.

Founded in 2009 by Alexandra Shapiro and Cynthia Arato, both veterans of global

firms, the young litigation boutique has developed a mature docket and produced results that a firm of any size would be proud of.

"Our clients get a small team of lawyers who are really dedicated to their case," said Arato, who represents Jay Z's Roc Nation, which won attorney fees after getting a copyright suit junked last year, among other big names in entertainment.

Arato, a former partner

at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, secured a key win for the J.D. Salinger Literary Trust, which was able to stop a U.S. publisher from selling abroad a collection of short stories that had become part of the public domain in the United States.

The firm's strategy led to an injunction in Germany, and the publisher ultimately abandoned its U.S. case after Arato secured a favorable early ruling in federal court.

"I think that she's one of the

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brightest, most effective litigators I've met," said Edward Grauer, outside general counsel for Cash Money Records Inc., one of Arato's clients.

Alexandra Shapiro, a former Latham & Watkins partner who clerked for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, was part of the team that got Anthony Chiasson's insider-trading conviction tossed in *U.S. v. Newman*, a ruling with wide-ranging implications. She was co-counsel on the appeal with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison and Morvillo LLP.

It was one of the many turnarounds Shapiro has engineered for white-collar defendants facing prison time. In a case of two Connecticut women prosecuted for hosting "Gifting Tables," social events that prosecutors called Ponzi schemes, Shapiro got

involved after they had been sent to prison. She was able to get them out on bail post-sentencing, and then got the multiyear prison terms vacated. (Re-sentencing is pending.)

Then there's Shapiro's "labor of love," her work on Level the Playing Field, which is pursuing legal avenues to open up the political system, specifically debates, to third-party candidates.

"She's diligent, she's honest, she cares," said Peter Ackerman, the New York businessman and chairman of Level the Playing Field. Ackerman, who has worked with his share of large, elite firms in his finance career, added: "I don't believe our representation could possibly improve because she had more horsepower in a bigger organization."

—GINNY LAROE

FIRM FACTS

- **Sole office:** New York
- **Total attorneys:** 9
- **Partners:** 3
- **Associates:** 5

BEST ADVICE
RECEIVED

"A client who worked in-house once told me that she tries to remember that people read her emails on their phones and don't want to scroll down," Cynthia Arato said. "Her words brought home what I've always known. Be concise and let every word 'tell.' I picture those phones when I write, whether it's an email to a client or a brief to a court." Arato added, "My writing is better for it."

