

Kanye West faces lawsuit over "Bound 2" sample

Written by Alexis Taylor, Special to the NNPA from The Afro-American Newspaper



Ricky Spicer was just 12 years old when he sang about being "Bound" to fall for the girl of his dreams on the 1971 album "2+2+1= Ponderosa Twins Plus One."

Now 56, the retired Cleveland native has resurfaced—not to restart his career but to defend his old work from "Yeezus."

Spicer filed a lawsuit on Dec. 23 against Kanye West, who he alleges sampled his voice without his authorization or consent to produce the song "Bound 2."

Roc-A-Fella Records, Inc., Universal Music Group, Inc., Island Def Jam Music Group, Rhino Entertainment Company doing business as Rhino Records, and Kanye Omari West are all listed as defendants in the suit.

"Mr. Spicer was the lead vocalist when the group recorded 'Bound.' His voice can distinctly be heard throughout the song, including its chorus, which contains the following words sung by Mr. Spicer: 'Bound, bound; Bound to fall in love,'" Spicer's suit alleges.

Spicer is demanding a trial by jury in a Manhattan Supreme Court, according to documents released by the New York County Clerk.

According to the complaint, Spicer is the only member of Ponderosa Twins Plus One both living and able to take up the issue, as Alvin and Alfred Pelham are deceased and Kirk and Keith Gardner are both currently in prison.

The lawsuit alleges that Spicer was never adequately compensated for his recordings as a child with Ponderosa Twins Plus One, though he did go on to work briefly with Gladys Knight and James Brown.

According to court documents, Spicer was listening to the radio one day this year when he heard his own voice singing back to him.

"The chorus, which contains Mr. Spicer's lead vocal, is heard at least four times throughout 'Bound 2' including the beginning, middle and end of the song," the complaint states. "Mr. Spicer's voice is sampled exactly as he recorded it and his voice, altered by the defendants, is also heard several times."

The song is the final track on West's sixth studio album, "Yeezus," which according to court documents sold more than 327,000 copies during its first seven days on sale.

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Spicer seeks an immediate injunction to stop "any further unauthorized use or exploitation of plaintiff's name," along with damages, reasonable costs, and attorney fees.