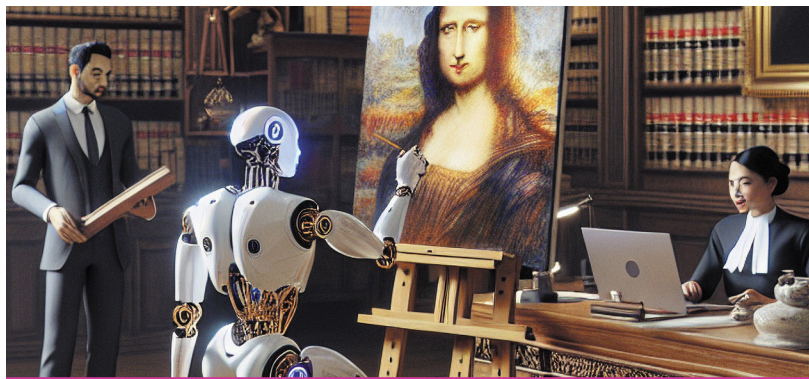


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TOP ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE LAWYERS 2024

Michelle Ybarra

With a wealth of experience in copyright, patent and class action law, Michelle Ybarra has become a formidable advocate for AI clients, navigating the complexities of litigation in a rapidly evolving field.

Since December 2019, Ybarra has been at the forefront of cases involving AI, a time when public understanding of AI capabilities was still burgeoning.

“My first case involving AI was highly technical and concerned the architecture of chips used to train neural networks,” she said. “I worked closely with my team and our experts to understand the subject matter, which was dense. I had a standing call with a technical expert that I would prepare for each week by studying whatever technical papers or materials we were going to discuss. It was a bit like being back in school, but with a world-renowned computer scientist as my professor.”

Currently, Ybarra is actively defending OpenAI against multiple copyright and class action lawsuits, which are pivotal in setting precedents for the use of copyrighted works in training large language models. These cases are not only crucial to Ybarra but are also of significant importance to the broader context of generative AI's future and its impact on global interactions. *Authors*

Guild et al v. OpenAI Inc. et al., (S.D.N.Y., filed Sept. 19, 2023).

“AI technologies and capabilities are evolving rapidly, but litigation is notoriously slow,” she said. “When the ground is constantly shifting beneath you, that can pose some unique challenges. You need to be considering not just the facts as they are today, but also what they’ll look like tomorrow and two years from now as the industry moves forward.”

Ybarra was also part of the team that defended Google in a landmark \$1.6 billion AI patent infringement lawsuit filed by Singular Computing. *Singular Computing LLC v. Google*, 1:24-cv-10008, (D. Mass., filed Jan. 2, 2024).

The case, which centered around allegations of Google’s TPUs being developed from Singular’s patented technologies, was a high-stakes battle that concluded with a settlement just hours before the closing arguments in January 2024. The Kecker team also successfully invalidated some of the patent claims through the inter partes review. This resolution was critical for Google, ensuring the continuation of their TPU technology, a cornerstone of their AI expansion.

Ybarra said some of the biggest legal issues facing the AI industry are being teed up right now.



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“Those include the copyright cases currently pending against generative AI companies, as well as privacy suits challenging the use of consumer data in AI products,” she said. “But these cases won’t be the end of it. The AI revolution is at our doorstep, and the changes it will usher in over the next two to four years will create a host of new legal issues that we can’t even imagine yet.”