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8					
9	THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT				
10	FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA				
11	Alfonso Ribeiro, an	Case No. 2:18-cv-10412			
12	individual,				
13	Plaintiff,	Complaint			
14		1. Direct Infringement of			
15	V.	Copyright			
16	Epic Games, Inc., a North	2. Contributory Infringement of Copyright			
17	Carolina corporation; and Does 1 through 50 , inclusive,	3. Violation of the Right of			
18	Defendants.	Publicity under California			
19	Detendantis.	Common Law; 4. Violation of the Right of			
20		Publicity under Cal. Civ.			
21		Code § 3344; 5. Unfair Competition under			
22		Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §			
23		17200, et seq.;6. Unfair Competition under			
24		15 U.S.C. § 1125(a)			
25					
26		Demand for Jury Trial			
27					
28					

Plaintiff Alfonso Ribeiro, ("Plaintiff" or "Ribeiro"), by and through
 his undersigned counsel, asserts the following claims against Defendant
 Epic Games, Inc. ("Epic") and Does 1 through 50 (collectively referred
 to as "Defendants"), and alleges as follows:

 $\mathbf{5}$

I. OVERVIEW

6 1. Through its unauthorized use of Ribeiro's highly popular 7 signature dance ("The Dance" or "Dance") in its smash-hit, violent video 8 game, Fortnite Battle Royale ("Fortnite"), Epic has unfairly profited 9 from exploiting Ribeiro's protected creative expression and likeness and 10 celebrity without his consent or authorization.

11 2.Ribeiro is an internationally famous Hollywood star, known 12for his starring role as Carlton Banks from the hit television series The 13Fresh Prince of Bel-Air and as host of America's Funniest Home Videos. 14Ribeiro created his highly recognizable "Dance," that has also been 15referred to by the public as "The Carlton Dance," which exploded in 16popularity and became highly recognizable as Ribeiro's signature dance 17internationally. The Dance is now inextricably linked to Ribeiro and 18 has continued to be a part of his celebrity persona.

3. Defendants capitalized on Alfonso Ribeiro's celebrity and 1920popularity by selling The Dance as an in-game purchase in Fortnite under the name "Fresh," which players can buy to customize their 2122avatars for use in the game. Although misleadingly labeled in Fortnite, 23the emote, as they are called, was immediately recognized by players 24and media worldwide as Ribeiro's The Dance. Epic did not seek, much 25less obtain, Ribeiro's consent to use, display, reproduce, sell, or creative 26a derivate work based upon The Dance or Ribiero's likeness. Epic did 27not seek, much less obtain, Ribeiro's consent to use, display, reproduce, 28

sell, or creative a derivate work based upon The Dance or Ribeiro's
 likeness.

3 4. Since being released in or around September 2017, Fortnite 4 has become among the most popular video games ever with sales far in $\mathbf{5}$ excess of \$1 billion. Indeed, Fortnite made approximately \$318 million 6 in May 2018 alone, the "biggest month ever for a video game." As a free-7to-play game, Fortnite derives its sales through in-game purchases. Epic cannot profit from Ribeiro's hard-earned fame by its intentional 8 9 misappropriation of Ribeiro's original content and likeness. Epic cannot 10 increase the value of its main product by faking endorsements by 11 celebrities. Ribeiro seeks injunctive relief and damages, including, but 12not limited to, Epic's profits attributed to its misappropriation of The 13Dance and Ribeiro's likeness.

14

II. THE PARTIES

15

5.

Ribeiro resides in Los Angeles, California.

Epic is a North Carolina business corporation with its
principal place of business at 620 Crossroads Boulevard, Cary, NC
27518. Epic is the creator and developer of the Fortnite video game
franchise, which was first released in July of 2017.

7. The true names and identities of the defendants herein sued
as Does 1 through 50, inclusive, are unknown to Ferguson, who
therefore sues those defendants by such fictitious names. When the
true names of those defendants have been ascertained, Ferguson will
amend this complaint accordingly. Each of the defendants aided and
abetted and is responsible in some manner for the occurrences herein
alleged, and Ferguson's injuries were proximately caused thereby.

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1 8. At all times herein mentioned, each of the defendants was 2 acting as an agent, servant, employee or representative of defendants, 3 and, in doing the things alleged in this Complaint, was acting within 4 the course and scope of that agency, service, employment, or joint 5 venture.

6 7

III. SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION AND VENUE

8 9. The Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action
9 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), 28 U.S.C. § 1332
10 (diversity), and 28 U.S.C. § 1367 (supplemental jurisdiction).

10. Venue is proper in this District under A) 28 U.S.C. § 12 1391(b)(2) (federal question jurisdiction), because a substantial part of 13 the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred in this District; 14 and B) 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b)(1) and (c) (personal jurisdiction), because 15 all defendants are subject to personal jurisdiction in this State and at 16 least one in this District.

17

A.

IV. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

18

Ribeiro and the Creation of The Dance

19 11. Raised in the New York City borough of the Bronx, Ribeiro
20 has been acting since the age of eight, gaining notoriety and prominence
21 in particular for his dancing. Ribeiro starred in the Broadway musical
22 The Tap Dance Kid in 1983, released a single called Alfonso Ribeiro –
23 Dance Baby in 1984, appeared as a dancer in a Pepsi commercial with
24 Michael Jackson in 1984, and authored a dance instruction book in 1985
25 called Alfonso's Breakin' & Poppin' Book.

12. In 1991, Ribeiro created The Dance and first performed it on
 The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air during the episode Will's Christmas Show.

Twenty-seven years later, The Dance remains distinctive, immediately
 recognizable, and inextricably linked to Ribeiro's identity, celebrity, and
 likeness.

4 13. Since its conception in 1991, The Dance has maintained its popularity. Ribeiro continues to perform The Dance, even inserting it $\mathbf{5}$ 6 during his famous performance in 2014 as part of his victorious run on 7the hit television show *Dancing with the Stars*. Ribeiro is constantly 8 inundated with requests to perform The Dance; he has performed it on 9 numerous occasions at the behest of both the public¹ and celebrities. Indeed, in 2016, the recording artist Justin Timberlake and NBA 10 11 superstar Stephen Curry, performed The Dance, alongside Ribeiro, at 12the popular American Century Celebrity Golf Tournament.²

13 14. A 2013 video by the BBC including Will Smith and his son
14 Jaden Smith, Jeffrey Allen Townes (DJ Jazzy Jeff), and Ribeiro
15 performing The Dance has garnered over sixty-nine million views on
16 YouTube.³

17 15. The Dance has become synonymous with Ribeiro, who is 18 unanimously credited with creating The Dance. Ribeiro has also been 19 interviewed several times about the creation of The Dance and how to 20 properly perform it. Accordingly, The Dance is a part of Ribeiro's 21 identity and The Dance's unique movements readily evoke a connection 22 to Ribeiro.

23

27 Bel-Air, NBC, https://www.nbcsports.com/video/alfonso-ribeiro-justin-timberlakestephen-curry-do-carlton.

 ¹ BlackAmericaWeb.com, Alfonso Ribeiro: "Please Stop Asking Me To Dance", https://blackamericaweb.com/2013/08/13/alfonso-ribeiro-please-stop-asking-me-todance (quoting Ribeiro as stating "[P]eople walk up to me and they say 'Do the dance").

^{26 &}lt;sup>2</sup> NBC Sports, Stephen Curry and Justin Timberlake are Shown by Alfonso Ribeiro how to Properly do "the Carlton" That Ribeiro made famous on "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," NBC, https://www.nbcsports.com/video/alfonso-ribeiro-justin-timberlake-

³ The video can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwS14TiO7Pk.

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B. Fortnite: The Most Popular Video Game Ever

16. Prior to releasing Fortnite, which has become among the most popular and successful video games ever, Epic developed two popular video game franchises: Unreal and Gears of War. Since releasing the first Gears of War game in 2006 Epic released several subsequent Gears of War video games, and the franchise has made over \$1 billion in total sales.

8 17. In or around 2011, following the release of the third Gears 9 of War installment, Fortnite began from an Epic internal video game 10 "hackathon," a gathering of Epic developers to brainstorm ideas and 11 create games in a short period. Although the Fortnite game was not 12 developed during the hackathon, the idea to merge building games (*i.e.*, 13 Minecraft) and shooter games (*i.e.*, Gears of War or Call of Duty) 14 emerged during the hackathon.

15In or around July 2017, Epic released the initial version of 18. 16Fortnite as a paid early-access video game in the "Battle Royale" genre. 17However, by September 2017, after PlayerUnknown's Battlegroundsa game which occupied the same genre as Fortnite-became a 18 19worldwide success, Epic released Fortnite Battle Royale, a free-to-play 20third-person shooting game on the Windows, macOS, PlayStation 4, and 21Xbox One platforms. Epic subsequently released Fortnite on the iOS, 22Nintendo, and Android platforms on April 2, 2018, June 12, 2018, and 23August 9, 2018, respectively.

19. Similar to PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds, Fortnite
utilizes the battle royale genre where a large number of players, alone,
in pairs, or groups, compete to be the last player or group alive. Indeed,
similar to Battlegrounds and Gears of War, Fortnite features the use of

weapons and violence, that players use to eliminate the competition by
 attacking and shooting them.

3 20.As a free-to-play video game, Epic allows players to 4 download and play Fortnite for free. Epic's revenue from Fortnite comes $\mathbf{5}$ from in-game transactions where players can purchase virtual 6 currency, called "Vinderbucks" or "V-Bucks." The players in turn use 7V-Bucks via the "Item Shop" to purchase customizations for their in-8 game avatars, including new characters, pickaxe modifications, glider 9 skins, clothing, and emotes (dances or movements). Fortnite also sells 10 "Battle Passes" or additional levels that allow you to unlock skins, 11 gliders, and emotes unique to that Pass. Fortnite offers four pricing 12levels for purchasing V-Bucks (in U.S. Dollars):

13 1) 1,000 V-Bucks for \$9.99;

14

- 2) 2,500 (+300 Bonus) V-Bucks for \$24.99;
- 15 3) 6,000 (+1,500 Bonus) V-Bucks for \$59.99; or

16 4) 10,000 (+3,500 Bonus) V-Bucks for \$99.99.

17 21. There are four types of emotes: common emotes, uncommon
18 emotes, rare emotes, and epic emotes. The rarer the emote, the more
19 expensive or harder it is to obtain. Uncommon emotes cost 200 V20 Bucks. Rare emotes cost 500 V-Bucks. And Epic emotes cost 800 V21 Bucks.

22 22. To start, Fortnite provides each player with the "Dance 23 Moves" emote, a common emote, for no compensation. Players can then 24 obtain other emotes by purchasing and playing additional levels in 25 Battle Passes (950 V-Bucks each) that come with emotes unique to that 26 Pass, or by purchasing certain emotes directly with V-Bucks. On some 27 occasions, Fortnite sells Battle Pass emotes directly, without requiring 28 the player to purchase the Battle Pass.

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1 23.Emotes are incredibly popular and are fundamental to $\mathbf{2}$ Fortnite's success. Players purchase emotes, alongside clothing and 3 skins, to personalize their Fortnite experience. Emotes have also 4 become popular outside Fortnite. Professional athletes in soccer and other sports have based their celebrations on Fortnite emotes. Young $\mathbf{5}$ 6 adults, teenagers, and kids also post videos of themselves on YouTube 7 and social media performing emotes under various hashtags, including 8 #fortnitedance or #fortnitevideos. Upon information and belief, Epic 9 intentionally induces others to perform these dances and mark them 10 with those hashtags, which give attribution to and endorse Fortnite the 11 game.

12 24. Upon information and belief, Epic creates emotes by copying
13 and coding dances and movements directly from popular videos, movies,
14 and television shows without consent. Epic does so by coding still
15 frames of the source material.

1625.Epic has consistently sought to exploit African-American 17talent, in particular in Fortnite, by copying their dances and movements 18and sell them through emotes. Epic has copied the dances and 19movements of numerous African-American performers, including, 20among others, the dance from the 2004 Snoop Dogg music video, "Drop It Like It's Hot" (named the "Tidy" emote), 2 Milly's "Milly Rock" dance 21(named the "Swipe It" emote), the dance performed by Will Smith on 2223the television show The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air (named the 24"Rambunctious" emote), the dance in Marlon Webb's popular "Band of the Bold" video (named the "Best Mates" emote), Donald Faison's 2526signature dance seen on the NBC television show Scrubs (named the "Dance Moves" emote), and, most pertinent here, Alfonso Ribeiro's The 2728

1 Dance. Upon information and belief, Epic did not seek consent or $\mathbf{2}$ authorization to use any of these movements or dances.

3

26.Soon after its release, Fortnite became an international 4 phenomenon. The game eclipsed 10 million players merely two weeks $\mathbf{5}$ after its release; 125 million players by July 2018. In November 2018, 6 Bloomberg announced that Fortnite had 200 million player accounts across all platforms. 7

8 Fortnite's popularity has translated into record in-game 27.9 sales for Epic. Analysts have estimated that since its release, Fortnite 10 has generated between \$1 billion to \$2 billion in revenue through in-11 game purchases such as emotes. In May 2018, Fortnite broke its own 12record by generating approximately \$318 million in revenue, the biggest 13month ever for a video game. In fact, nearly 80 million people played 14Fortnite in August 2018. Because of Fortnite's success, Epic's estimated 15valuation rose from about \$825 million to about \$5 billion. Bloomberg 16estimates that Epic's valuation could grow to \$8.5 billion by 2018's end.

1728.Upon information and belief, Epic will likely continue 18adding popular emotes to Fortnite without the artists' or creators' 19consent or approval to attract more players and add to its quickly-20growing revenue.

21

С. Fortnite's Unauthorized Use of The Dance

2229.On January 2, 2018, Fortnite released the Fresh emote into 23its Item Shop. Players could purchase the Fresh emote for 800 V-Bucks.

2430. The Fresh emote is identical to Ribeiro's The Dance. If 25obtained or purchased, the Fortnite player's avatar can perform The 26Dance during Fortnite gameplay. The reaction from many players 27worldwide was immediate recognition of the emote as embodying The 28Dance and, in turn, Ribeiro. Indeed, by naming the emote "Fresh," Epic intentionally induced a direct connection between the in-game purchase
 and the show where The Dance started, *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*.
 That connection implied an endorsement of that in-game purchase by
 Ribeiro.

5 31. Epic developed the Fresh emote to intentionally mimic6 Ribeiro performing The Dance.

7 32. Epic did not seek to obtain Ribeiro's authorization or consent
8 for its use of his likeness and The Dance for the Fresh emote.

- 9 33. Moreover, Ribeiro did not give Epic express or implied
 10 consent for its use of his likeness and The Dance for the Fresh emote.
 11 Epic also did not compensate Ribeiro for its use of his likeness and The
 12 Dance for the Fresh emote.
- 13 34. Upon information and belief, Epic added the Fresh emote to
 14 intentionally exploit the popularity of Ribeiro and The Dance without
 15 providing Ribeiro any form of compensation.

16 35. Epic profited from its improper misappropriation of The 17Dance and Ribeiro's likeness by, *inter alia*: 1) selling the infringing 18 Fresh emote directly to players; 2) advertising the Fresh emote to attract additional players, including Ribeiro's fans or those persons 1920familiar with The Dance to play Fortnite and make in-game purchases; 213) using Ribeiro's fame to stay relevant to its current players to 22incentivize those players to continue playing Fortnite; 4) impliedly 23representing that Ribeiro consented to Epic's use of his likeness; 5) 24intentionally causing the erroneous public association between the 25Fresh and The Dance; 6) creating the false impression that Ribeiro 26endorsed Fortnite; and 7) inducing and/or contributing to the 27performance and misattribution of The Dance by others.

28

1 36. Upon information and belief, Epic uses The Dance, and other $\mathbf{2}$ dances, to create the false impression that Epic started these dances 3 and crazes or that the performer who created them is endorsing the 4 Indeed, Epic induces others and/or contributes to their game. performance and false attribution of The Dance. Fortnite Players have $\mathbf{5}$ 6 posted thousands of videos of themselves performing the "Fresh" emote 7with the hashtag, #fortnitedance, without referencing The Dance or crediting Ribeiro as The Dance's creator and owner. Accordingly, upon 8 9 information and belief, Epic actively and knowingly directs, causes, 10 induces, and encourages others, including, but not limited to, its 11 designers. suppliers. distributors. resellers. players. software 12developers, and repair providers, to misappropriate Ribeiro's likeness 13and The Dance.

14 37. Prominent artists, including Chancelor Johnathan Bennett,
15 known as Chance the Rapper, and Terrence Ferguson, known as 2
16 Milly, have also publicly disapproved of Epic's practices, and advocated
17 for Epic sharing profits with the artists that created these dances.

18 38. Epic has made a fortune from unlawfully and unfairly 19 misappropriating Ribeiro's and other artists' creative expression, 20 likeness, and endorsement without crediting or compensating these 21 artists. Ribeiro thus brings this lawsuit to prevent Fortnite from 22 further using his likeness and The Dance, and to recover the revenue 23 rightfully owed to him.

24

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

25 (For Direct Infringement of Copyright Against All Defendants)

39. Ribeiro hereby repeats and realleges the allegations set
forth in paragraphs 1 through 38 above, as though fully set forth herein

1 40. In 1991, Ribeiro created The Dance and first performed it on $\mathbf{2}$ The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air during the episode Will's Christmas Show. 3 On or around August 15, 2006, the segment of The Fresh Prince of Bel-4 Air during which Ribeiro performs The Dance was published to $\mathbf{5}$ YouTube where it can be accessed by millions of people. The video 6 shows Ribeiro, as Carlton Banks, performing The Dance to the tune of Tom Jones "It's Not Unusual." 7

8 Ribeiro is the undisputed creator of the wildly popular and 41. 9 immediately recognizable Dance. YouTube videos depicting Ribeiro's 10 performance in The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air are the original depictions 11 of The Dance.

1242. Ribeiro is in the process of registering The Dance with the 13United States Copyright Office. On December 15, 2018, Ribeiro 14submitted an application for copyright registration of three variations 15of The Dance and assigned Copyright Office case numbers 1-167226013364, 1-7226013290, and 1-7225814191.

1743. Defendants have infringed and continue to infringe Ribeiro's copyrights in The Dance by selling The Dance emote as an in-game 18purchase, under the name "Fresh" that, if purchased, a player can use 1920to make his or her avatar perform during Fortnite gameplay; 21substantially copying The Dance in digital form to the Fortnite game; 22advertising The Dance in its promotional materials; and creating the 23Fresh emote as a derivative work of The Dance.

24

44. Defendants did not seek to obtain Ribeiro's permission for 25its use of The Dance for the Fresh emote. Nor have Defendants 26compensated or credited Ribeiro for their use of The Dance.

27Moreover, Defendants actively and knowingly directed, 45.28caused, induced, and encouraged others, including, but not limited to, 1 its players, designers, suppliers, distributors, resellers, software $\mathbf{2}$ developers, and repair providers, to misappropriate Ribeiro's likeness and The Dance. 3

4

46. Defendants' acts of infringement have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and with indifference to $\mathbf{5}$ 6 Plaintiff's rights.

7Defendants' willful and continued unauthorized use of The 47.Dance has caused and will continue to cause confusion and mistake by 8 9 leading the public to erroneously associate the Fresh emote offered by 10 Epic with The Dance in violation of 17 U.S.C. §§ 101 et seq.

As a result of Defendants' conduct, Ribeiro has been 11 48. 12damaged by being precluded from receiving his rightful share of the 13profits earned by Epic for its improper and unlicensed use of Ribeiro's 14exclusive copyrights in The Dance in Fortnite.

1549. Ribeiro is entitled to permanent injunctive relief preventing 16Defendants, and their officers, agents, and employees, and all related 17persons from further using The Dance and engaging in other acts in violation of Copyright law. 18

1950. As а direct and proximate result of Defendants' 20infringement of Plaintiff's copyrights and exclusive rights under 21copyright, Ribeiro is also entitled to recover damages, including 22attorneys' fees, and any profits obtained by Defendants as a result of 23the infringements alleged above, in an amount according to proof to be 24determined at the time of trial.

25In doing the acts herein alleged, Defendants acted 51.26fraudulently, willfully, and with malice, and Ribeiro is therefore 27entitled to punitive damages according to proof at the time of trial. 28

1 SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION $\mathbf{2}$ (For Contributory Infringement of Copyright Against All 3 **Defendants**) 4 52.Ribeiro hereby repeats and realleges the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1 through 51 above, as though fully set forth herein. $\mathbf{5}$ 6 Ribeiro is in the process of registering The Dance with the 53.7United States Copyright Office. On December 15, 2018, Ribeiro submitted applications for copyright registrations and assigned 8 9 Copyright Office case numbers 1-7226013364, 1-7226013290, and 1-10 7225814191. 11 54.Defendants have infringed and continue to infringe Ribeiro's 12copyrights in The Dance by selling The Dance emote as an in-game 13purchase, under the name "Fresh" that, if purchased, a player can use 14to make his or her avatar perform during Fortnite gameplay; 15substantially copying The Dance in digital form to the Fortnite game; 16advertising The Dance in its promotional materials; and creating the 17Fresh emote as a derivative work of The Dance. 18 55.By providing the Fresh emote necessary for its players to 19commit direct copyright infringement, Defendants have and continue to 20materially contribute to the unauthorized reproductions and 21distributions by its players of The Dance. 2256. Defendants did not seek to obtain Ribeiro's permission for 23its use of The Dance for the Fresh emote. Nor have Defendants 24compensated or credited Ribeiro for their use of The Dance. 25Moreover, Defendants actively and knowingly directed, 57.26caused, induced, and encouraged others, including, but not limited to, 27its players, designers, suppliers, distributors, resellers, software 28

developers, and repair providers, to misappropriate Ribeiro's likeness
 and The Dance.

58. Defendants' acts of infringement have been willful,
intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and with indifference to
Plaintiff's rights.

59. Defendants' willful and continued unauthorized use of The
Dance has caused and will continue to cause confusion and mistake by
leading the public to erroneously associate the Fresh emote offered by
Epic with The Dance in violation of 17 U.S.C. §§ 101 et seq.

10 60. As a result of Defendants' conduct, Ribeiro has been 11 damaged by being precluded from receiving his rightful share of the 12 profits earned by Epic for its improper and unlicensed use of Ribeiro's 13 exclusive copyrights in The Dance in Fortnite.

14 61. Defendants' conduct is causing and, unless enjoined and
15 restrained by this Court, will continue to cause Plaintiff great and
16 irreparable injury that cannot be compensated or measured in money.
17 Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law. Pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 502,
18 Plaintiff is entitled to injunctive relief, prohibiting further contributory
19 infringements of Plaintiff's copyrights.

62. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' infringement of Plaintiff's copyrights and exclusive rights under copyright, Ribeiro is also entitled to recover damages, including attorneys' fees, and any profits obtained by Defendants as a result of the infringements alleged above, in an amount according to proof to be determined at the time of trial.

63. In doing the acts herein alleged, Defendants acted
fraudulently, willfully, and with malice, and Ribeiro is therefore
entitled to punitive damages according to proof at the time of trial.

1 THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION $\mathbf{2}$ (For Violation of the Right of Publicity Under California 3 **Common Law Against All Defendants**) 4 64. Ribeiro hereby repeats and realleges the allegations set $\mathbf{5}$ forth in paragraphs 1 through 63, above, as though fully set forth 6 herein. 765. Through their use of The Dance as an in-game dance emote 8 that can be purchased as the Fresh. Defendants misappropriated 9 Ribeiro's identity. The Fresh emote depicts Ribeiro performing The 10 Dance. 11 66. Upon information and belief. Defendants created the Fresh 12emote by capturing and digitally copying Ribeiro performing The Dance. 13Defendants then utilized the digital copy to create code that, if 14purchased, allows player avatars to perform The Dance. 1567. Defendants did not seek or obtain Ribeiro's authorization or 16consent for its use of his likeness or The Dance for the Fresh emote. Nor 17have Defendants compensated or credited Ribeiro for their use of his likeness or The Dance. 18

1968. Defendants used Ribeiro's likeness and The Dance to 20generate significant wealth by: 1) selling the infringing Fresh emote 21directly to players; 2) advertising the Fresh emote to attract additional 22players, including Ribeiro's fans or those persons familiar with The 23Dance to play Fortnite and make in-game purchases; 3) using Ribeiro's 24fame to stay relevant to its current players to incentivize those players 25to continue playing Fortnite; 4) impliedly representing that Ribeiro 26consented to Epic's use of his likeness; 5) intentionally causing the 27erroneous public association between the Fresh and The Dance; 6) 28creating the false impression that Ribeiro endorsed Fortnite; and 7)

inducing and/or contributing to the performance and misattribution of
 The Dance by others.

69. As a performance artist, Ribeiro exploits his identity by
performing in shows, events, and with the media. Ribeiro was damaged
by Defendants' conduct as he was prevented from reaping the profits of
licensing his likeness or The Dance to Defendants.

7 70. Defendants' conduct caused and will continue to cause
8 confusion and mistake by leading the public to erroneously believe that
9 Ribeiro consented to the use of his likeness or The Dance in the Fortnite
10 game.

71. Ribeiro is entitled to permanent injunctive relief preventing
Defendants, and their officers, agents, and employees, and all related
persons from further using his likeness or The Dance.

14 72. Ribeiro is also entitled to recover damages, including any
15 profits obtained by Defendants as a result of the infringements alleged
16 above, in an amount according to proof to be determined at the time of
17 trial.

18

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

19 (For Violation of the Right of Publicity Under Cal. Civ. Code § 20 3344 Against All Defendants)

73. Ribeiro hereby repeats and realleges the allegations set
forth in paragraphs 1 through 72, above, as though fully set forth
herein.

74. Through their use of The Dance as an in-game dance emote
that can be purchased as the Fresh, Defendants misappropriated
Ribeiro's identity. The Fresh emote depicts Ribeiro performing The
Dance.

28

T5. Upon information and belief, Defendants created the Fresh
 emote by capturing and digitally copying Ribeiro performing The Dance.
 Defendants then utilized the digital copy to create code that, if
 purchased, allows player avatars to perform The Dance.

5 76. Defendants did not seek or obtain Ribeiro's authorization or 6 consent for its use of his likeness or The Dance for the Fresh emote. Nor 7 have Defendants compensated or credited Ribeiro for their use of his 8 likeness or The Dance.

9 77.Defendants used Ribeiro's likeness and The Dance to 10 generate significant wealth by: 1) selling the infringing Fresh emote 11 directly to players: 2) advertising the Fresh emote to attract additional 12players, including Ribeiro's fans or those persons familiar with The 13Dance to play Fortnite and make in-game purchases; 3) using Ribeiro's 14fame to stay relevant to its current players to incentivize those players 15to continue playing Fortnite; 4) impliedly representing that Ribeiro 16consented to Epic's use of his likeness; 5) intentionally causing the 17erroneous public association between the Fresh and The Dance; 6) 18 creating the false impression that Ribeiro endorsed Fortnite; and 7) 19inducing and/or contributing to the performance and misattribution of 20The Dance by others.

78. As a performance artist, Ribeiro exploits his identity by
performing in shows, events, and with the media. Ribeiro was damaged
by Defendants' conduct as he was prevented from reaping the profits of
licensing his likeness or The Dance to Defendants.

25 79. Defendants' conduct caused and will continue to cause
26 confusion and mistake by leading the public to erroneously believe that
27 Ribeiro consented to the use of his likeness or The Dance in the Fortnite
28 game.

1 80. Ribeiro is entitled to permanent injunctive relief preventing $\mathbf{2}$ Defendants, and their officers, agents, and employees, and all related 3 persons from further using his likeness or The Dance.

4

81. Ribeiro is also entitled to recover damages, including any profits obtained by Defendants as a result of the infringements alleged $\mathbf{5}$ 6 above, in an amount according to proof to be determined at the time of 7trial.

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- 9

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Unfair Competition Under Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200)

10 Ribeiro hereby repeats and realleges the allegations set 82. 11 forth in paragraphs 1 through 81, above, as though fully set forth 12herein.

1383. misappropriating Ribeiro's likeness through By the 14improper use of The Dance, Defendants have engaged in business acts 15or practices that constitute unfair competition in violation of Cal. Bus. 16 & Prof. Code. § 17200.

1784. As a result of Defendants' violations, Defendants have unjustly enriched themselves by: 1) selling the infringing Fresh emote 18 19directly to players; 2) advertising the Fresh emote to attract additional 20players, including Ribeiro's fans or those persons familiar with The 21Dance to play Fortnite and make in-game purchases; 3) using Ribeiro's 22fame to stay relevant to its current players to incentivize those players 23to continue playing Fortnite; 4) impliedly representing that Ribeiro 24consented to Epic's use of his likeness; 5) intentionally causing the 25erroneous public association between the Fresh and The Dance; 6) 26creating the false impression that Ribeiro endorsed Fortnite; and 7) 27inducing and/or contributing to the performance and misattribution of 28The Dance by others.

1 85. As a result of Defendants' conduct, Ribeiro has been $\mathbf{2}$ damaged by Defendants' conduct as he was prevented from reaping the 3 profits of licensing his likeness or The Dance to Defendants.

4

86. Ribeiro is entitled to permanent injunctive relief preventing $\mathbf{5}$ Defendants, and their officers, agents, and employees, and all related 6 persons from further using his likeness or The Dance.

787. Ribeiro is also entitled to recover damages, including any 8 profits obtained by Defendants as a result of the misappropriation 9 alleged above, in an amount according to proof to be determined at the time of trial. 10

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SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION (Unfair Competition Under 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a))

13Ribeiro hereby repeats and realleges the allegations set 88. 14forth in paragraphs 1 through 87 above, as though fully set forth herein. Since debuting The Dance, The Dance has exploded in 1589. 16popularity. The Dance has become synonymous with Ribeiro, who is 17unanimously credited with creating the dance that bears his famous first role of Carlton Banks from The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air. Ribeiro 18 19has also been interviewed several times about the creation of The Dance 20and how to properly perform it. Accordingly, The Dance is a part of 21Ribeiro's identity and the dance's unique movements readily evoke 22imagery of Ribeiro's famous performances of The Dance.

23

Defendant's copying and relabeling of Ribeiro's The Dance 90. 24has caused confusion, deception, and mistake by the creation of the false 25and misleading impression that Defendants were the creators of The 26Dance or that Ribeiro was somehow affiliated, connected, or associated 27with Defendants or provided sponsorship or approval to Defendants. 28

1 91. Defendants have further misrepresented the nature, $\mathbf{2}$ characteristics, qualities and origin of The Dance. Defendants have 3 diluted Ribeiro's signature Dance by inducing others to flood the 4 Internet with videos with performances of The Dance without any $\mathbf{5}$ attribution. Defendants have tarnished Riberio's signature Dance by 6 incorporating it, without permission, into a violent video game.

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7As a result of Defendants' conduct, Ribeiro is damaged by 92. 8 Defendants' exploitation of his likeness through 1) selling the infringing 9 Fresh emote directly to players; 2) advertising the Fresh emote to 10 attract additional players, including Ribeiro's fans or those persons 11 familiar with The Dance to play Fortnite and make in-game purchases: 123) using Ribeiro's fame to stay relevant to its current players to 13incentivize those players to continue playing Fortnite; 4) impliedly 14representing that Ribeiro consented to Epic's use of his likeness; 5) 15intentionally causing the erroneous public association between the 16Fresh and The Dance; 6) creating the false impression that Ribeiro endorsed Fortnite; and 7) inducing and/or contributing to the 17performance and misattribution of The Dance by others. 18

1993. Ribeiro is entitled to permanent injunctive relief preventing 20Defendants, and their officers, agents, and employees, and all related 21persons from further using The Dance.

2294. Ribeiro is also entitled to recover damages, including 23attorney's fees, as a result of the infringements alleged above, in an 24amount according to proof to be determined at the time of trial.

> -20 -Complaint

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

2 As to the First Cause of Action:

1

- For an order restraining Defendants from using, selling, or
 displaying Ribeiro's copyright in the Fortnite game;
- 5 2. For an award of damages according to proof;
- 6 3. For punitive and/or exemplary damages;
- 7 4. For attorney's fees and costs;

8 As to the Second Cause of Action:

- 9 5. For an order restraining Defendants from using, selling, or
 10 displaying Ribeiro's copyright in the Fortnite game;
- 11 6. For an award of damages according to proof;
- 12 7. For punitive and/or exemplary damages;
- 13 8. For attorney's fees and costs;

14 As to the Third Cause of Action:

- 15 9. For an order restraining Defendants from using, advertising,
- promoting, marketing, selling or offering for sale Ribeiro's
 likeness in the Fortnite game;
- 18 10. For an award of damages according to proof;

19 As to the Fourth Cause of Action:

- 20 11. For an order restraining Defendants from using, advertising,
- promoting, marketing, selling or offering for sale Ribeiro's
 likeness in the Fortnite game;
- 23 12. For an award of damages according to proof;
- 24 13. For punitive and/or exemplary damages;
- 25 As to the Fifth Cause of Action:
- 26 14. For an order restraining Defendants from advertising, promoting,
- 27 marketing, selling or offering for sale Ribeiro's copyright and 28 likeness in the Fortnite game;

1 15. For an award of damages according to pro-	1	15. H	For an award of	f damages	according to	proof;
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- 2 16. For punitive and/or exemplary damages;
- 3 17. For attorney's fees and costs;
- 4 As to the Sixth Cause of Action:
- 5 18. For an order restraining Defendants from advertising, promoting,
 6 marketing, selling or offering for sale Ribeiro's copyright and
 7 likeness in the Fortnite game;
- 8 19. For an award of damages according to proof;
- 9 20. For punitive and/or exemplary damages; and
- 10 21. For attorney's fees and costs;

11 As to All Causes of Action:

12 22. For costs of suit; and

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13 23. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem proper.

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15 Dated: December 17, 2018 Respectfully Submitted,
16 Pioreo Bainbridge Book P

Pierce Bainbridge Beck Price & Hecht LLP

By: <u>/s/Carolynn Kyungwon Beck</u> Carolynn Kyungwon Beck Attorneys for Plaintiff Alfonso Ribeiro

1	JURY TRIAL		
2	Plaintiff Alfonso Ribeiro requests a trial by jury on all issues to		
3	which it is entitled a jury.		
4			
5	Dated: December 17, 2018	Respectfully Submitted,	
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7		Hecht LLF	
8 9		By: <u>/s/Carolynn Kyungwon Beck</u> Carolynn Kyungwon Beck	
10			
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21			
40		23 -	