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7	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT							
8	WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON AT SEATTLE							
9	RBW STUDIO, LLC,	No. 2:24-cv-00763						
10	Plaintiff,	COMPLAINT FOR PATENT INFRINGEMENT AND UNFAIR						
11	V.	COMPETIT						
12	WEINSTEIN AU, PLLC, THE RUSHING COMPANY, L.L.C., EITEL ASSOCIATES,	JURY DEMAND						
13	LLC, COLUMBIA HOSPITALITY, INC., and LAKE UNION PARTNERS SEATTLE, LLC,							
14	Defendants.							
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16	I. NATURE OF THE ACTION							
17	1. This case involves the practice of deliberately copying, misappropriating and/or "knocking off" high-quality, design-level lighting products protected by United States patents							
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19	to maximize profits for companies engaged in the construction of luxury hotels.							
20	2. The Complaint arises under the patent laws of the United States, Title 35 of the							
21	United States Code. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action under 35 U.S.C.							
22	§ 271 <i>et seq.</i> , 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).							
23	3. The Plaintiff's patent claims arise out of Defendants' importing, making, using,							
24	offering for sale, and/or selling a light fixture ("Accused Light Fixture") that infringes a							
25	patented chandelier light fixture and bulb created by Plaintiff RBW Studio, LLC ("RBW"), an							
26	award-winning lighting design and manufacturing company based in Kingston, New York.							
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4. In addition to the above, before the patent for the light fixture at issue was
 granted, the Defendants engaged in unfair competition under the Washington State Consumer
 Protection Act through the bad faith misappropriation of the proprietary design of the light
 fixture at issue, as well as the misappropriation of the Plaintiffs' skill, experience, labor and
 financial resources invested in the design and development of the same.

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II. THE PARTIES

7 5. RBW is a Delaware and New York limited liability corporation with a principal
8 place of business at 575 Boices Ln, Kingston, NY 12401. RBW creates, manufactures, markets
9 and sells a range of unique light fixtures incorporating novel designs that are protected by
10 United States patents. RBW previously did business under the name of Rich Brilliant Willing,
11 LLC.

12 6. Defendant Weinstein AU, PLLC ("Weinstein") is an architecture firm with a
13 principal place of business at 2200 Western Ave., Suite 301, Seattle, WA 98121.

7. On information and belief, Weinstein designed and specified the Accused Light
Fixture that infringes RBW's patented designs, and that was installed in at least one location,
at The State Hotel ("State Hotel"), a luxury hotel at 1501 2nd Ave, Seattle, WA 98101. On
information and belief, this included designing and specifying a light fixture that Defendant
Weinstein knew was a knockoff imitation of RBW's proprietary designs so that Defendant
Weinstein could decrease costs to itself and Defendants Eitel and/or Lake Union Partners.

8. Defendant The Rushing Company, L.L.C. ("Rushing") has a principal place of
business at 1725 Westlake Ave N, Suite 300, Seattle WA 98109.

9. On information and belief, Rushing is an architectural and interior design firm
that designed the interiors of the State Hotel in collaboration with Defendants Weinstein, Lake
Union Partners and Eitel Group, LLC, as well as non-party Vida Design.
<u>https://rushingco.com/projects/the-state-hotel-2nd-and-pike/</u>.

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1 10. On information and belief, non-party Vida Design ("Vida") of 107 SE
 2 Washington St., Portland, OR 97214 was involved in the specification and design of the
 3 Accused Light Fixture.

4 11. Defendant Eitel Associates, LLC ("Eitel") has a principal place of business at
5 401 N. 36th St., Ste 104, Seattle, WA 98103.

6 12. On information and belief, Eitel owns and operates the State Hotel and continues
7 to use the Accused Light Fixture designed, sourced and installed by Defendants Weinstein and
8 Rushing, and non-party Vida, in State Hotel's Ben Paris restaurant that is featured on the
9 website of the Ben Paris restaurant's home page: <u>https://benparis.com/</u>. *See also*:
10 <u>https://www.guestreservations.com/the-state-hotel-</u>

seattle/booking?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw26KxBhBDEiwAu6KXt1egl5uJKacS9Zoe
 DygV2iNLHvfGz8STIKLddZm5IqG 9a7QjGhDSxoCLMsQAvD BwE&ctTriggered=true.

13 13. Defendant Columbia Hospitality, Inc. ("Columbia") is a hotel management
14 company with a principal place of business at 2200 Alaskan Way, Suite 200, Seattle, WA
15 98121. On information and belief, Columbia was involved in the development and
16 management of the State Hotel.

17 14. Defendant Lake Union Partners Seattle, LLC ("Lake Union") is a limited
18 liability company with a principal place of business at 401 N 36th St., Suite 104, Seattle, WA
19 98103.

15. Upon information and belief, Weinstein and Rushing were involved in obtaining
a quote from Plaintiff RBW for a Cinema chandelier which spurred the Defendants to fashion
their own knockoff of the same for use in the State Hotel.

23 16. Upon information and belief Lake Union is a part owner and/or operator of the
24 State Hotel and continues to use the Accused Light Fixture in the State Hotel.

17. Non-party iWorks ("iWorks") is a lighting manufacturing firm with a principal
place of business at 2501 South Malt Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90040.

18. On information and belief, at the Defendants' direction, iWorks designed,
 manufactured and sold the Accused Light Fixture to Eitel, Lake Union, and/or Columbia that
 infringes RBW's patented designs and that was installed in at least one location, at the State
 Hotel.

III. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

6 19. The Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants because Defendants have
7 continuous and systematic contacts with Seattle and/or are incorporated in Washington and/or
8 have their principal places of business in Seattle, and do business in this District.

9 20. Each of the Defendants has a regular and established place of business in this
10 District where they have imported, made, used, sold, and/or offered for sale the Accused Light
11 Fixture.

12 21. The Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this matter pursuant 28 U.S. Code
13 § 1338(a) and (b), as well as 28 U.S. Code § 1367(a).

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IV. BACKGROUND FACTS

15 22. RBW is an award-winning, independent design and manufacturing company
16 headquartered in Kingston, New York. RBW is a brand for architects and designers looking for
17 high quality light fixtures. The history and philosophy of RBW is available on the web at the
18 URL https://rbw.com/about-us.

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23. Among RBW's innovations is the Cinema[™] chandelier, a light fixture which has a distinctive triple-tier configuration, each tier having unique spherical bulbs positioned around the periphery thereof, as shown in the images below from RBW's website.¹



12 24. RBW, at the time doing business as Rich, Brilliant, Willing, LLC, first began
13 development on the design of the subject CinemaTM chandelier in 2016.

25. RBW protects its innovations with U.S. design patents.

15 26. On March 9, 2017, RBW filed an application for a patent applicable to the design
16 of the Cinema[™] chandelier at issue. (March 9, 2017 Patent Application attached hereto as Ex.
17 "A"; see Figs. A19 and A22-A25).

Prior to applying for the patent (Ex. A) for the Cinema[™] chandelier, RBW
invested substantial financial resources, time, skill, labor and expertise into the research and
development of the design and the production of its Cinema[™] chandelier.

21 28. The Cinema[™] chandelier is protected by RBW's U.S. Patent No. D851,806
22 ("the '806 Patent"). The '806 Patent was duly issued by the United States Patent and Trademark
23 Office on June 18, 2019 and is assigned to RBW. A copy of the '806 Patent is attached as
24 Exhibit "B".

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¹ Downloaded from <u>https://rbw.com/products/cinema-468/121212-pf14-27-</u> <u>1_triac_120v</u>

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29. The unique spherical bulb of the Cinema[™] chandelier is protected by RBW's
 U.S. Patent No. D1,004,180 ("the '180 Patent"). The '180 Patent was duly issued by the United
 States Patent and Trademark Office on November 7, 2023 and is assigned to RBW. A copy of
 the '180 Patent is attached as Exhibit "C".

30. On November 9, 2017, after the original design patent application (Exhibit A)
had been filed for the CinemaTM chandelier, but before the patent was issued, RBW, under its
predecessor trade name Rich Brilliant Willing ("Willing"), provided a quote for the CinemaTM
chandelier to Defendants Eitel, Weinstein, and/or Rushing for the Defendants' consideration
for use in the State Hotel. *See* Exhibit "D". Accordingly, as of November 9, 2017, Defendants
Eitel, Weinstein, and/or Rushing were on actual notice of RBW's design for the CinemaTM
chandelier.

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31. On information and belief, Rushing, Weinstein, Eitel and Vida were consideringRBW's Cinema[™] chandelier for use in the interior design of the State Hotel.

32. For reasons unknown to RBW, Defendants Eitel, Weinstein, and/or Rushing
declined RBW's quote and did not purchase a CinemaTM chandelier from RBW.

In late 2022 or early 2023, a person known to RBW visited the State Hotel for
reasons unrelated to this dispute. While visiting at the State Hotel, that person discovered the
Accused Light Fixture in the Ben Paris restaurant of the State Hotel. That person reported to
RBW that it appeared to be a copy of the Cinema[™] chandelier was being used at the State
Hotel. For that reason, RBW began to investigate.

34. On information and belief, after Defendants Eitel, Rushing and Weinstein
obtained the quote (Ex. D) for RBW's Cinema[™] chandelier, and after they reviewed the
purchase price of same, rather than obtain the subject proprietary chandelier from the Plaintiff,
Defendants Rushing, Weinstein, Eitel and Lake Union, directly and/or through Columbia,
knowingly, intentionally and in bad faith engaged one or more contractors to create the Accused
Light Fixture based on the design of the genuine RBW Cinema[™] chandelier, and offered it for

sale and/or sold them to Defendants Eitel, Columbia and/or Lake Union as a cheaper substitute of the authentic RBW Cinema[™] chandelier that they had initially inquired about to RBW.

35. On information and belief, the Defendants' knockoff of the Cinema[™] chandelier was created and/or designed by iWorks. Exhibit "E" is a true and correct copy of an engineering drawing, obtained by RBW during its investigation, for a "Pendant" chandelier for the State Hotel (labeled Job# 32529-001 for "Wizard Electric/State Hotel).

7 36. On information and belief, the photograph in the lower left-hand corner on page
8 2 of Exhibit E is a photograph of RBW's CinemaTM chandelier that iWorks misappropriated for
9 its own use.

37. On information and belief, the Accused Light Fixture was installed and used at
the direction of Rushing, Weinstein, Eitel and/or Lake Union, and now continues to be used in
the State Hotel's Ben Paris restaurant, under the direction of Defendants Eitel and/or Lake
Union.

38. On September 22, 2023, non-party Mike Edwards ("Edwards"), a Washington
electrical contractor, upon information and belief was called upon by Rushing, Weinstein,
and/or Eitel, to repair the Accused Light Fixture for the State Hotel. Edwards contacted RBW
to obtain a part necessary to fix the Accused Light Fixture, confirming that there is actual
confusion between the Accused Light Fixture and the genuine Cinema chandelier.

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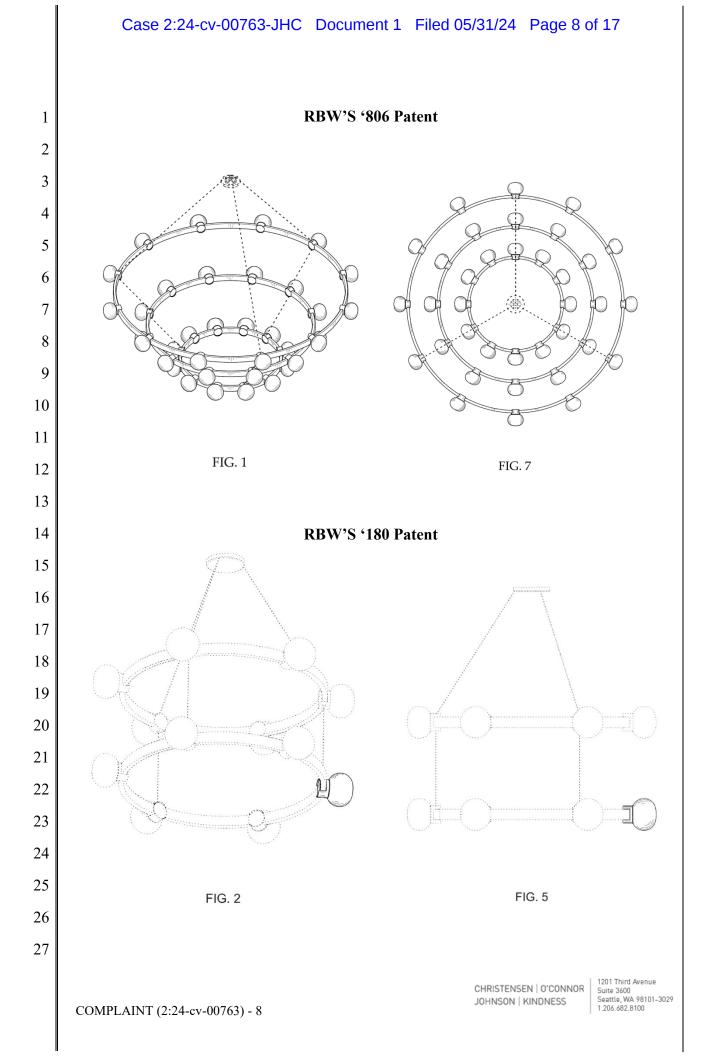
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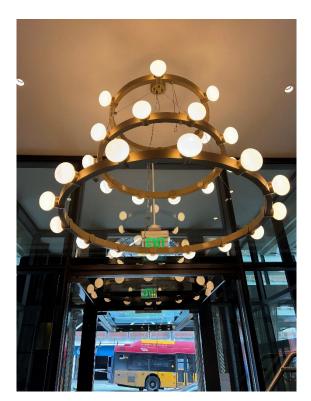
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CLAIM FOR DIRECT PATENT INFRINGEMENT BY ALL DEFENDANTS

39. Paragraphs 1-38 are incorporated by reference as though alleged herein. The
Defendants infringe the '806 and '180 Patents because the Accused Light Fixture is
substantially the same in overall appearance as the design claimed and shown in the drawings
of the '806 and '180 Patents. Representative drawings from the '806 and '180 Patents are
compared below to the Accused Light Fixture:



Accused Light Fixture



40. On information and belief, instead of utilizing RBW's Cinema[™] chandelier,
Defendants Weinstein, Rushing, Eitel and/or Columbia specified, sourced and directed the
manufacture of an unauthorized knock-off copy (the Accused Light Fixture) for use in the State
Hotel.

41. On information and belief, iWorks, Rushing, Vida and/or Weinstein quoted Eitel
and/or Columbia a substantially reduced price for the Accused Light Fixture manufactured and
supplied by iWorks compared to the price quoted by RBW for the CinemaTM chandelier.

42. On information and belief, iWorks, acting as Defendants' agent and at
Defendants' direction, designed, manufactured, caused to be manufactured and/or imported the
Accused Light Fixture after it had been designed by Weinstein, Rushing and/or Vida.

43. On information and belief, Defendants Eitel and/or Columbia purchased and
installed the Accused Light Fixture in the State Hotel's Ben Paris restaurant where it is still
displaying and using it.

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44. The Defendants Weinstein and Rushing infringed RBW's '806 and '180 Patents
 by directing iWorks to copy, manufacture, import, offer to sell, and sell the Accused Light
 Fixture that is substantially the same in appearance as the design claimed in the '806 and '180
 Patents, such that an ordinary observer, giving such attention as a purchaser usually gives,
 would be induced to purchase one supposing it to be the other.

6 45. Defendants Eitel, Lake Union and/or Columbia infringed, and continue to
7 infringe, RBW's '806 and '180 Patents by using in the Ben Paris restaurant of the State Hotel
8 the Accused Light Fixture that is a colorable imitation of the designs claimed in the '806 and
9 '180 Patents. Defendants Eitel and/or Rushing advertise its continuing use of the Accused Light
10 Fixture on the following State Hotel and Rushing websites:

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https://rushingco.com/projects/the-state-hotel-2nd-and-pike/

• <u>https://www.statehotel.com/gallery.php#(grid|popup)=images/gallery/g</u> allery-Ben-Paris-Bar.jpg.

46. On October 5, 2023, in an effort to avoid litigation, RBW sent Lake Union a
cease and desist letter identifying the infringement it was aware of at the State Hotel and
demanding information regarding the manufacturer and other companies involved in the
infringing conduct. This letter contained copies of RBW's various design patents, including the
'806 Patent, covering the Cinema[™] chandeliers, demonstrating the validity of Plaintiff's
claims.

47. Notwithstanding the October 5, 2023 letter and enclosed patents, Defendant
Eitel though their counsel, in an email dated December 22, 2023, rejected any merit in RBW's
claim and declined to provide the information requested by RBW regarding the parties involved
in the infringing installation.

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48. In response, RBW wrote to Defendant Eitel's counsel in an email dated January3, 2024 attaching a copy of RBW's '180 Patent that issued on November 7, 2023.

49. Despite the January 3, 2024 email, the Defendants Eitel, Columbia and/or Lake 1 2 Union continue to use the Accused Light Fixture at the Ben Paris restaurant of the State Hotel demonstrating the continuing and willful nature of their infringement. 3

- 50. On information and belief, despite RBW's cease and desist letters, Defendants Eitel, Rushing and/or Lake Union have continued to promote their work using the State Hotel's Ben Paris bar displaying the Accused Light Fixture.
- 51. 7 RBW has been damaged by Defendants' infringement and is entitled to at least 8 the statutory remedy of an accounting and disgorgement of the Defendants' profits based on 9 sales of the Accused Light Fixture, as well as RBW's lost profits.

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52. 10 The damage to RBW is ongoing and irreparable, and RBW is entitled to injunctive relief to end Defendants' infringement. Despite RBW's letter to Defendants 11 12 identifying a known infringing installation, Defendants have failed to remove the Accused 13 Light Fixture at the State Hotel, provide an accounting of their sales, information about manufacturers involved in the sales, or other information as to whether additional installations 14 of Accused Light Fixtures have taken place at other of its projects. 15

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VI.

- **CLAIM FOR UNFAIR COMPETITION UNDER WASHINGTON CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT**
- 53. Paragraphs 1-52 are incorporated by reference as though alleged herein.

54. In addition to, and separate from, the above-described Patent Infringement claim, the Defendants engaged in unfair competition under the Washington Consumer Protection Act (RCW 19.86.020) through the misappropriation of RBW's information, research, time, skill, labor, expertise, experience and monetary investment expended in the design and development of the CinemaTM chandeliers prior to the time the patent was issued.

55. The principals and employees of RBW began research into and work on the design of the Cinema[™] chandelier at issue in 2016. The principals and employees of RBW who developed the CinemaTM chandelier are all experienced designers with at least four (4) year design and/or mechanical engineering degrees, and often with extensive experience in lighting design.

56. The principals and employees of RBW applied their education, years of skill,
knowledge and expertise of lighting design and the lighting industry in developing and
finalizing the design of the Cinema[™] light fixtures, including the subject Cinema[™]
chandeliers.

7 57. RBW invested substantial time and labor in the design of the Cinema[™]
8 chandeliers. RBW paid these professionals wages for their work in the design and development
9 of the Cinema[™] chandeliers.

10 58. In addition to the time, skill, expertise and labor RBW invested in the design of 11 the subject light fixtures, RBW invested financial resources in the development of the design, 12 including payment for research related to the development of the chandeliers and payment for 13 3D prints and laser scanning used in the development of the product. RBW invested further 14 resources in identifying and compensating the vendors involved in the creation of the product, 15 as well as the creation of tooling and/or parts used in the manufacture of the subject fixtures.

16 59. RBW's investment of time, labor, skills, expertise and financial resources in the
17 research and development of the CinemaTM chandeliers were time, labor, expertise and
18 resources that could not be invested in the development of other products during that same
19 period of time resulting in an opportunity cost to RBW that can only be recovered through the
20 successful sale and marketing of the CinemaTM chandeliers.

60. In order to protect its above-described investments into the design and
development of the Cinema[™] chandelier, RBW applied for a design patent on March 9, 2017
(Ex. A).

61. As reflected in Figures A.19 and A.22-25 of Ex. A, part of the collection of light
fixtures which were the subject of the design patent application was the Cinema[™] chandelier,
a light fixture which has a distinctive triple-tier configuration, each tier having unique spherical

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bulbs positioned around the periphery thereof, which is the design of the Cinema[™] chandelier at issue in this litigation.

62. In November of 2017, after RBW applied for the patent but before it was issued,
Weinstein and/or Rushing, who upon information and belief, were acting as agents on behalf
of Eitel, Lake Union and/or Columbia, approached RBW with regard to using the Cinema[™]
chandelier in the State Hotel.

63. At all times relevant hereto, Rushing and/or Weinstein, acting in their capacity
as agents of the Defendants, knew the CinemaTM chandelier had been designed by RBW, that
RBW had expended information, time, labor, skills and other resources in the research,
development and manufacture of the CinemaTM chandelier, and that the design was proprietary
to RBW.

64. Further demonstrating the Defendants' awareness that the subject light fixture
was the proprietary design of RBW into which RBW had invested time, skills labor and other
resources, was the decision by Defendants Rushing and/or Weinstein, to seek a quote
specifically from RBW (as opposed to some other source) for Cinema[™] chandeliers for use in
the State Hotel.

17 65. Upon information and belief, in an effort to save money on the quote for the
18 Cinema[™] chandeliers quoted by RBW, the Defendants misappropriated the information, time,
19 skill, experience and financial resources invested by RBW in the research, design and
20 development of the Cinema[™] chandeliers, by copying the proprietary design of the same and
21 having it manufactured by iWorks for use in the State Hotel, instead of purchasing the
22 chandelier pursuant to the quote they received from RBW.

23 66. The above-described efforts were undertaken by these Defendants in bad faith 24 with the full knowledge that RBW was the owner and developer of the design at issue and with 25 the specific intention of misappropriating the information, time, expertise, skill, labor and 26 financial resources invested by RBW in the research and development of this propriety design 27 for the Defendants' own use and without the permission of, or compensation to, RBW.

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67. The Washington Consumer Protection Act prohibits all "unfair methods of
 competition and unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce."
 RCW 19.86.020.

4 68. RBW is, and was at all material times, a 'person' within the meaning of RCW
5 19.86.010(1).

6 69. The Defendants' conduct constitutes an unfair method of competition and an
7 unfair act or practice in the conduct of trade or commerce in violation of RCW 19.86.020
8 because the Defendants misappropriated the information, time, skill, experience and financial
9 resources invested by RBW in the research, design and development of the CinemaTM
10 chandeliers, by copying the proprietary design of the same and having it manufactured by
11 iWorks for use in the State Hotel, instead of purchasing the chandelier pursuant to the quote
12 they received from RBW.

The Defendants' acts or practices occurred in the conduct of trade or commerce
because Defendants knowingly, intentionally and in bad faith engaged iWorks and/or other
contractors to create the Accused Light Fixture based on the design of the genuine RBW
Cinema chandelier, and offered it for sale and/or sold them to Defendants Eitel, Columbia
and/or Lake Union as a cheaper substitute of the authentic RBW CinemaTM chandelier that they
had initially inquired about to RBW.

The Defendants' conduct implicates the public interest because it has the
capacity to injure others. There is a likelihood that additional plaintiffs have been, or will be,
injured in the same fashion as RBW as a result of the Defendants' conduct. Specifically, there
is a likelihood that the Defendants will misappropriate additional plaintiffs' information, skills,
experience, time, labor, resources and monetary investment into the research, design,
development and manufacture of other products.

72. The Defendants' conduct injured, and is likely to injure, RBW's business and
property in violation of RCW 19.86.020, both by direct diversion of sales from RBW to

Defendants, loss of customers, and by a lessening of the goodwill associated with RBW's
 products.

3 73. Defendants' conduct directly and proximately caused injury to RBW's business,
4 because but for the Defendants' unfair or deceptive practice, RBW would not have suffered an
5 injury.

6 74. As a result of the above, RBW seeks treble damages against the Defendants in
7 the amount of the lost profits on the quote submitted to the Defendants, as well as treble
8 damages in compensation for the Defendants' misappropriation of the information, time, skills,
9 labor and money invested by RBW in developing the design and final product in an amount to
10 be proven at trial. RCW 19.86.090. RBW further seeks to enjoin further violations of RCW
11 19.86.020 and recover from the Defendants its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs. *Id.*

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VII. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court find in its favor and against Defendants,and that the Court grant Plaintiff the following relief:

1. A judgment that the Defendants have infringed the '806 Patent;

2. A judgment that the Defendants have infringed the '180 Patent;

3. Damages adequate to compensate for Defendants' infringement of the '806 and
'180 Patents, including the disgorgement of its total profits under 35 U.S.C. §289;

Judgment awarding Plaintiff all damages, including lost profits, costs, and
 interest, and further including treble damages based on any infringement found to be willful,
 under 35 U.S.C. § 284, with prejudgment interest;

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An accounting of the Defendants' profits;

6. An order and judgment permanently enjoining the Defendants and its officers,
directors, agents, servants, employees, affiliates, attorneys, and all others acting concert with
them, and their parents, subsidiaries, divisions, successors and assigns, from further acts of
infringement of the '806 and/or '180 Patents;

1	7. A judgment declaring this case to be exceptional and awarding Plaintiff its							
2	reasonable attorneys' fees under 35 U.S.C. § 285 or as otherwise allowed by law;							
3	8. A judgment for damages for unfair competition and misappropriation to							
4	compensate Plaintiff for Defendants' misappropriation of its investment of time, money, labor,							
5	skills and other resources expended in the design and development of the light fixture at issue							
6	in an amount to be proven at trial;							
7	9. An order requiring Defendant Eitel, Lake Union and/or Columbia to remove the							
8	Accused Light Fixture from the State Hotel pursuant to RCW 19.86.090;							
9	10. An order and judgment requiring the Defendants to pay the costs of this action,							
10	including attorneys' fees, as provided for by RCW 19.86.090; and							
11	11. Awarding Plaintiff such other and further relief as this Court deems just and							
12	proper.							
13	VIII. DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL							
14	Pursuant to Rule 38(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and LCR 38(b), RBW							
15	requests a jury trial on all issues triable to a jury.							
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17	Dated this 31 st day of May, 2024.							
18								
19	CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS ^{pllc}							
20								
21								
22	s/John Whitaker							
23	John Whitaker, WSBA No. 28,868 John D. Denkenberger, WSBA No. 25,907							
24	1201 Third Avenue, Suite 3600 Seattle, WA 98101-3029							
25	Telephone: 206.682.8100							
26	E-mail: john.whitaker@cojk.com, john.denkenberger@cojk.com, litdoc@cojk.com							
27								
	CHRISTENSEN 0'CONNOR Suite 3600 JOHNSON KINDNESS 201 Third Avenue Suite 3600 Seattle, WA 98101-3029 1.206.682.8100							

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