

ADVERTISEMENT

RAMBLING REPORTER

HOME > BUSINESS > BUSINESS NEWS

Why Hollywood Keeps Quitting on Harry and Meghan

Plus, how an Echo glitch turned Alexa into a "commie operative" and Dimitri, the million-dollar maitre d', rides off into the Sunset (Tower).

BY EDITED BY BENJAMIN SVETKEY, EDITED BY JULIAN SANCTON SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 10:00AM



Would you work for Harry and Meghan? Ex-employees say run away. ADOBE STOCK (2); SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE; KARWAI TANG/WIREIMAGE

ADVERTISEMENT

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

The top scoops on the goings-on around town — what industry insiders are really talking about

EMAIL

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

By providing your information, you agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and our [Privacy Policy](#). We use vendors that may also process your information to help provide our services. // This site is protected by reCAPTCHA Enterprise and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

ADVERTISEMENT



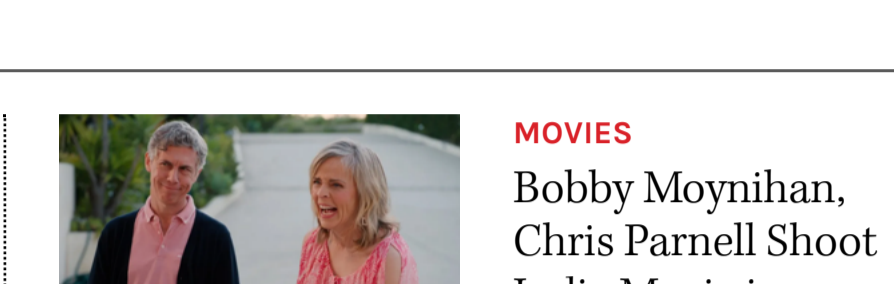
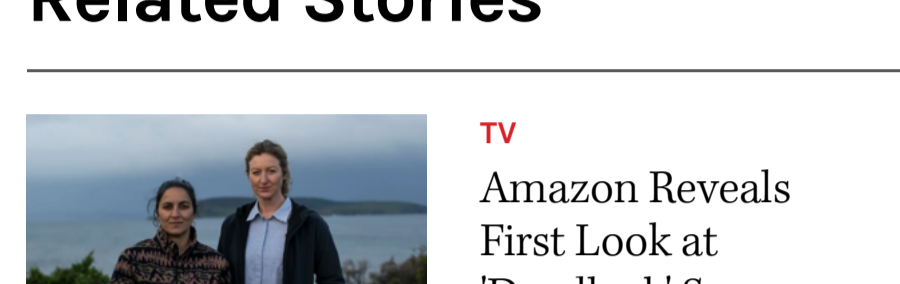
Why Hollywood Keeps Quitting on Harry and Meghan

Looks like Harry and Meghan have done it again — they've chewed up yet another American adviser.

Josh Kettler, the Santa Barbara-based consultant who'd been serving as chief of staff to the Duke and Duchess, reportedly resigned in August — after just three months on the job — becoming the latest member of the ever-expanding "Sussex Survivors Club," as some former employees have taken to calling themselves. Before Kettler, there was Toya Holness, who was their global press secretary until 2022, and Christine Weil Schirmer, the onetime Pinterest communications director who quit as Harry and Meghan's PR head in 2021. Samantha Cohen, Markle's top aide and private secretary, departed the same year.

ADVERTISEMENT

Related Stories



ESSENTIAL READS



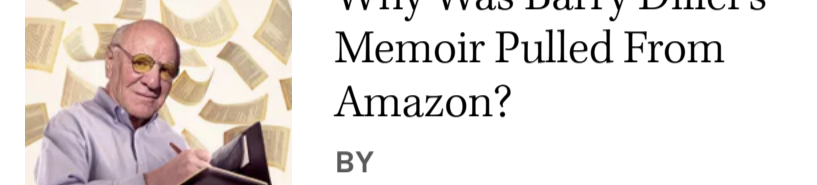
Why Hollywood Keeps Quitting on Harry and Meghan



'Megalopolis' Finds a Fall Guy for AI Trailer Snafu and Hollywood Cries Foul



Can Joaquin Phoenix Be Replaced, or Is Todd Haynes' Gay Love Story Doomed?



Why Was Barry Diller's Memoir Pulled From Amazon?

Pharrell, For Real

THE DEFINITIVE VOICE OF ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Subscribe for full access to The Hollywood Reporter

SEE MY OPTIONS

Earlier, there was Keleigh Thomas Morgan, a Sunshine Sachs partner who started repping Meghan when she was still a commoner (well, a TV star on *Suits*), adding Harry to her client roster when they became engaged and then helping them set up their own internal comms operation when the couple moved to California.

(Sources tell *Rambling Reporter* that Morgan stopped repping them around 2020, because the Sussexes stopped paying Sunshine Sachs for its services, though the PR firm denies that was the case.) Other members of the Survivors Club include Catherine St-Laurent, who lasted a year as head of the Sussexes' charity Archewell; Archewell COO Mandana Dayani; content chief Ben Browning (who got Harry and Meghan's documentary on Netflix before bolting for FilmNation); and marketing chief Fara Taylor.

Why'd they all leave? What explains the churn? "Everyone's terrified of Meghan," claims a source close to the couple. "She belittles people, she doesn't take advice. They're both poor decision-makers, they change their minds frequently. Harry is a very, very charming person — no airs at all — but he's very much an enabler. And she's just terrible."

In 2018 Markle's treatment of two royal aides prompted Buckingham Palace to investigate the then-princess for "bullying behavior." Though the results of the inquiry were never released, Markle denounced the effort as a "calculated smear campaign." But some of the couple's stateside staff-members also reserve special bile for Markle, whose reported penchant for noisy tantrums and angry 5 a.m. emails has earned her the in-house moniker "Duchess Difficult." "She's absolutely relentless," says one source. "She marches around like a dictator in high heels, fuming and barking orders. I've watched her reduce grown men to tears."

ADVERTISEMENT

Their unsparing portrait of her is in marked contrast with the kinder, gentler image Markle has been painting of herself. In recent years the former princess has become an ardent admirer of best-selling Texas self-help author **Brené Brown**, who urges readers to cultivate gratitude and joy in their lives. While touring Colombia with her husband last month, Markle said her new attitude of gratitude had lead her to a "chapter of joy." "If you're going to be grateful for your life, you have to be grateful for all aspects of it," she said.

And in a recent episode of her *Archetypes* podcast, Meghan spoke about the challenges she has faced asserting herself and overcoming her natural reticence in professional situations. "I find myself covering and tiptoeing into a room and — the thing I find most embarrassing — when you're saying a sentence and the intonation goes up, like it's a question. And you're like, 'Oh my God, stop stop like whispering and tiptoeing around it. Just say what it is that you need. You're allowed to set a boundary. You're allowed to be clear, it doesn't make you demanding. It doesn't make you difficult, it makes you clear.'"

Harry and Meghan's current spokesperson declined to comment.

Did an Echo Glitch Turn Alexa Into a "Commie Operative"?

There are obviously smarter ways to pick a presidential candidate than asking your AI assistant whom to vote for, but apparently some undecideds have been doing just that. And what Alexa has been telling them has the MAGA world even more agitated than usual. Until a week ago, if you asked Alexa why you should vote for Donald Trump, the bot would reply, "I cannot provide content that promotes a specific political party or a specific candidate." But if you asked her why you should vote for Kamala Harris, Alexa would serve up an array of reasons for picking the Democrat, including that "she is a female of color with a comprehensive plan to address racial justice and inequality throughout the country." Not surprisingly, Trump supporters have been going ape over the discrepancy, with country star turned MAGA superfan John Rich denouncing Alexa on X as a "commie operative" and Trump spokesperson Steven Cheung accusing Amazon of "BIG TECH ELECTION INTERFERENCE!" According to Amazon, though, Alexa has no political views of her own and the glitch, likely caused by a recent upgrade, "was quickly fixed." Now when asked whom to vote for, Alexa keeps her ideology to herself. "Quite frankly," she says, "I don't think bots should influence elections."

ADVERTISEMENT

Dimitri the Maitre D' Sails Off Into the Sunset (Tower)

At Tower Bar, what's old is new again. After six years at Jeff Klein's tony San Vicente Bungalows, Dimitri Dimitrov is returning as the majordomo of Tower Bar, the VIP-filled eatery at Klein's Sunset Tower Hotel where the 75-year-old Macedonia-born maitre d' got his start in Hollywood 20 years ago. "Dimitri played an instrumental role in making Tower Bar what it is, and the guests missed him terribly," says Klein. "Our regulars will be thrilled that he's back." Those regulars include everyone from Jennifer Aniston to Tom Ford to Elon Musk (who convinced Dimitri to buy a pile of Tesla stock in 2010, said to be worth millions today). Says Dimitri: "It's historic to go back to this landmark hotel. To be asked, at my age — it's just incredible." Dimitri, by the way, will also be the subject of a documentary about his iconic role as Hollywood's most famous host, to be shot by Grant Singer, director of last year's Netflix crime thriller *Reptile* and son of Marty Singer, Hollywood's most famous libel lawyer. Klein, meanwhile, has been busily supervising the debut of two SVB offshoots, one in Santa Monica (slated to open in November) and the other in New York's West Village (Gabe Dole, SVB's peripatetic membership maven, will be moving to NYC this fall to oversee its completion). Says Klein, "It's been a whirlwind, but we are staying on top of it."

[Read the full story here.](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

This story appeared in the Sept. 11 issue of *The Hollywood Reporter* magazine. [Click here to subscribe.](#) **THR**

READ MORE ABOUT: INTERNATIONAL / MEGHAN MARKLE / PRINCE HARRY

THR NEWSLETTERS
Sign up for THR news straight to your inbox every day

SUBSCRIBE

MORE FROM THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

MATTEL Citing 'Barbie' Success, Mattel Gives CEO Ynon Kreiz a \$15M Stock Retention Grant	PRODUCTIVITY MEDIA INC. Film Financier Productivity Media Suspends CEO Amnid Money Probe (Exclusive)	THR, ESQ Murdoch Family Succession Battle to Remain Behind Closed Doors
STEPH CURRY Steph Curry's Next Splashy Move: An Acting Career	MEGAN ELLISON Annapurna Interactive Video Game Staff Resigns (Report)	THE ANIMATION GUILD Entry-Level Guilders Are Most Susceptible to Disruption by AI, Animation Guild Says

ADVERTISEMENT

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

sheknows 1. Prince Harry & Meghan Markle Made This Announcement Mere Hours After Kate Middleton's Cancer Update Video	SPY The Best Yoga Mats for Any Practice, According to Instructors 6 MONTHS AGO	Robb Report Art Basel Miami Beach Opens with a Bang 7 YEARS AGO	VIBE How To Watch 'Power Book II: Ghost' Online, Stream On Starz For Free 18 HOURS AGO
VIBE 2. JAY-Z Explains Why Kendrick Lamar Was Chosen To Perform At Super Bowl Halftime Show			
Sportico 3. Tennis Prize Money Tracker 2024: Which Player Has Earned the Most?			
ARTnews 4. Rebecca Horn, Legendary Artist Whose Sculptures Aspired Toward Alchemy, Dies at 80			

	Subscriber Support Get the Magazine Customer Service Back Issues E-edition Access	The Hollywood Reporter About Us Media Kit Careers Contact Us Accessibility	Legal Terms of Use Privacy Policy California Privacy Rights Privacy Preferences AdChoices Your Privacy Choices	Follow Us FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM X YOUTUBE
	Newsletter Sign Up Enter Your Email SUBSCRIBE >			Have a Tip? Send us a tip using our anonymous form. SEND US A TIP >