

Why Katy Perry is Fighting for Right to Live in LA Convent

Katy Perry, who grew up the daughter of Protestant pastors and rose to fame with the hit song "I Kissed a Girl," may get her chance to live in a former Roman Catholic convent in Los Angeles—after a judge tentatively blocked its sale to someone else.

Attorneys for the pop singer and the Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles faced off in court on Thursday against lawyers for a group of nuns who live at the property and a restaurateur trying to buy it from them.

Perry has offered to purchase the majestic 8-acre (3-hectare) property, built in the style of a Roman villa, for \$14.5 million.

But the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary have rebuffed the 30-year-old performer, accepting a competing \$15.5 million bid of restaurant owner Dana Hollister.

The archdiocese, asserting that the restaurateur is out to take advantage of the five nuns, filed a lawsuit in June claiming it had the final say over disposition of the property for the nuns' benefit.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge James Chalfant tentatively sided with church officials, voiding the sale to Hollister but stopping short of ruling that the archdiocese could sell the former convent to Perry.

For the time being, the judge said he would allow Hollister to lease possession of the property for \$25,000 a month in rent. And in a last-minute twist, an archdiocese attorney told the

judge that Perry wished to submit a competing bid to rent the property.

"We'll have a battle of potential lessees of this property for the benefit of the sisters," Chalfant said.

The judge, expressing concern the property is maintained and the nuns' needs are met, set a Sept. 15 hearing for attorneys to present arguments on who should ultimately occupy it.

Perry, a former Christian singer who crossed into the pop mainstream on the strength of such hits as "I Kissed a Girl" and "Firework," and is known for her playful but sexually frank persona, wants to buy the grounds of the former convent to live there, her attorney, Michael Starler, told reporters.

The five surviving nuns from the convent hope to share net proceeds of a sale, said their attorney, Bernie Resser.

"Obviously, Catholic nuns are not particularly enamored of the image that Katy Perry puts out," he said outside the court.

The judge indicated the lawsuit could drag on for another two years.

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