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Shein Uses AI To Steal Popular Designs, Suit Claims

By **Elliot Weld**

Law360 (September 12, 2025, 8:38 PM EDT) -- Fast-fashion e-commerce giant Shein is facing a suit in California federal court by a Florida artist who claims the company uses artificial intelligence and other automated technology to dredge the internet and steal popular works to be misappropriated for profit.

Alan Giana filed a proposed class action Thursday in Los Angeles that seeks an injunction against the Chinese company headquartered in Singapore from copying designs and images as well as monetary damages.

"Shein's on demand 'fast fashion' business model relies on rapid mass production, generating thousands of new products per day. To churn out new items at such a fevered pitch, in many instances, identical copies of copyrighted works are transmitted directly by Shein's algorithm-based design system or other systematic methods to Shein's factories for production, with no human intermediary or compliance process to ensure that the designs are not the property of others," the suit said.

Shein uses AI, algorithms, data mining and other automated methods to locate designs to find artwork that is used on clothes and home goods, Giana says. At times, Shein copies an entire piece of jewelry or painting and sells it for a fraction of the cost, whereas other times it takes a design and "slaps it on a different product," according to the suit.

Giana, who says he's worked for 40 years producing licensed artwork for book covers, magazines, board games and CDs, accuses Shein of pirating his works and hampering his sales.

"In many instances, the pirated versions of Mr. Giana's artwork are so popular on Shein that the pieces promptly sell out," the suit said.

According to Giana, Shein is opaque on purpose about the algorithms it uses to capture information about consumer trends, but press coverage makes it clear that it uses technology to "ingest and process huge amounts of data" on fashion trends on TikTok and other social media sites.

Giana says Shein has a history of creating exact copies of other designers' works and notes that the company has faced lawsuits in the past alleging just that from Ralph Lauren, Oakley and independent designers. Earlier this week, Shein reached a **settlement** with a group of independent designers accusing it of copyright infringement and racketeering.

Giana gives an example of his artwork "coastal escape," which depicts beach chairs on a deck, surrounded by flowers, with a view of a sailboat and lighthouse in the distance. The exact painting can be found on Shein's website under "Beach Print DIY Diamond Painting Without Frame," the suit says.

Other works have been copied the same way, Giana says, such as his copyrighted image "Winter Barn III," which appears on Shein's site when searching for a puzzle depicting a "Christmas House."

"Our class action alleges that Shein's core business model is based on the systemic theft of intellectual property," Giana's attorneys Wes Griffith and Justin Nematzadeh said in a statement Friday. "We are eager to advocate on behalf of Mr. Giana and fellow victims of this alleged systematic infringement."

Shein did not immediately respond to requests for comment Friday.

Giana is represented by Wes Griffith of Almeida Law Group LLC, Justin Nematzadeh of Nematzadeh PLLC and Derrick Moore of Moore Law Group PLLC.

Counsel information for Shein was not immediately available.

The case is Giana v. Shein Distribution Corp. et al., case number 2:25-cv-08637, in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

--Editing by Janice Carter Brown.

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