

Brooklyn songwriter muddies John Waters

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A [Grammy-winning Brooklyn](#) songwriter is suing oddball director [John Waters](#) for not only stealing his song "[Santa Claus is a Black Man](#)" - but making fun of it too.

Theodore (Teddy) Vann alleges in a complaint filed in [Brooklyn Federal Court](#) that he rejected Waters' request to include the song on a holiday album because the creator of "Hairspray" and "Pink Flamingos" is not considered mainstream. Waters went ahead and used the song anyway on "A John Waters Christmas" released in 2006 by [New Line Records](#).

Worse, according to the suit, Waters ridiculed the song in interviews, calling it "crackpot carol" and a "Christmas lunatic song."

Vann, who won a Grammy in 1992 for co-writing "Power of Love" with the late [Luther Vandross](#), is seeking unspecified monetary damages. He wrote the song in 1973 as a gift to his daughter, Akim.

"Mr. Waters is going to be forced to come to Brooklyn and explain to a jury how he stole the song," said Vann's lawyer [Kenneth Thompson](#) of Thompson Wigdor & Gilly. "You can't just steal someone's song because you have power and money."

A spokesman for [Time Warner](#), the parent company of New Line Records, had no immediate comment.

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