



GARDEN COURT CHAMBERS

# Thalia Maragh

YEAR OF CALL: 2009, 1999 (JAMAICA), 2017 (TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS)



Thalia's practice at the English Bar has been predominantly defending in serious crimes and acting for bereaved families in Article 2 inquests. She has a growing international practice.

"She is very diligent and hard-working, an eloquent and dynamic advocate."

CHAMBERS UK, 2024 (INQUESTS & INQUIRIES)

"Thalia is fearless, clever, hardworking, and very committed."

LEGAL 500, 2024 (INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES)

"I think she is exceptional for the ease with which she relates to and communicates with lay clients. She's got a natural ability to help them understand the most intricate and complex in a simple but accurate way."

"Very committed and hard-working; she's a real champion for her clients."

CHAMBERS UK, 2022 (INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES)

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"Thorough, tenacious and empathetic, and always willing to challenge legal boundaries on behalf of clients."

LEGAL 500, 2022 (INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES)

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"Extremely thorough, hardworking and dedicated to her clients. She is passionate in her advocacy and astute in conference with others."

LEGAL 500, 2021 (INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES)

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If you would like to get in touch with Thalia please contact the clerking team:

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## CRIMINAL DEFENCE

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Thalia has over 15 years of experience as a criminal advocate. She has defended in a range of offences including murder, rape, historical sexual offences and other violent crimes.

### NOTABLE CASES

Past notable cases can be viewed below. [Click here to see a list of recent notable cases.](#)

#### ***R v Junior Kettle***, Central Criminal Court

D was charged with kidnap x 2; false imprisonment x 2 and murder in a six-handed cut-throat trial which ran from 18th September to 30th November. The allegation was that he was part of an organised crime group which abducted and detained a well-known Turkish DJ and his girlfriend and thereafter tortured him to death. D was acquitted on all counts.

***R v Zaman***, Birmingham Crown Court

Conspiracy to Murder - defendant acquitted. Led junior in 3 ½ months long trial which involved extensive PII and disclosure applications, abuse arguments arising from the conduct of WMP in the police investigation.

***R v A***, Sheffield Crown Court

Allegations of historical rape and sexual assaults (12 counts) - defendant acquitted. The trial judge commended Thalia for the sensitivity with which she conducted her cross examination of the complainant.

***R v T***, Wood Green Crown Court

Allegation of rape - defendant acquitted. The defence called expert evidence of secondary transfer of DNA in response to the crown's reliance on evidence of the defendant's DNA on the complainant's body.

***R v B***, Aylesbury Crown Court

Allegation of rape - defendant acquitted.

***R v Marshall***, Central Criminal Court

s18, (stabbing) - defendant acquitted - self defence raised.

## INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

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Thalia is currently instructed on behalf of bereaved, residents and survivors in the Public Inquiry into the Grenfell Tower disaster.

Thalia acts for bereaved families in Article 2 inquests.

She is developing a public inquiries practice and has acted for campaigners against child sexual abuse who were designated core participants in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).

Thalia has also acted for bereaved families in Coroner's Court proceedings in Jamaica and is an advocate for the reform of Jamaica's Coroner's Court proceedings.

Thalia is currently acting for Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry. See press coverage: [iNews](#), [BBC News](#)

## NOTABLE CASES

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**UK Covid-19 Inquiry** Thalia is currently acting on behalf of Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice UK in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry. See press coverage: [iNews](#), [BBC News](#)

**Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry** Thalia is currently instructed on behalf of bereaved, residents and survivors in the Public Inquiry into the Grenfell Tower disaster.

**Hillsborough Inquests** Thalia acted for bereaved families in the Hillsborough inquests where the jury concluded that the 96 Liverpool football fans were unlawfully killed. She was a member of the pathology team for 77 of the 96 which examined the pathology and medical evidence relevant to the timeline of death and medical cause of death.

**Inquest into the death of Ann Marie Cox (2009)** City of London Coroner's Court. Ann Marie died at HMP Holloway. The jury was critical of the prison's nursing staff's failure to administer Ann Marie's anti-psychotic medication which contributed to the deterioration of her health and their falsifying of her medical records to record that the medication had been administered, reported in [the Guardian](#).

**Inquest into the death of Jean Charles De Menezes.** Her work included reviewing disclosed documents, schedules of evidence, attending conferences with Counsel and attending a Pre-Inquest Review.

**Inquest into the death of Lexy Williams (2009)** North London Coroner's Court. The jury returned a narrative which was critical of the MPS's pursuit policy. She was junior to Heather Williams Q.C. at the inquest.

## INTERNATIONAL CRIME AND CONFLICT LAW

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Thalia has a growing international practice, appearing in the Privy Council and advising on the merits of appealing to the Privy Council, particularly criminal convictions and cases which raise constitutional law issues. She has also appeared before the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) as junior counsel to Leslie Thomas KC.

### NOTABLE CASES

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### International Practice: Privy Council Appeals

***Grant v The Queen*** [2007] 1 AC 1. Successful appeal against murder conviction where the constitutionality of the Jamaican Evidence Act provision relying on statement of absent witness was challenged.

***Tapper v The Queen*** [2012] 1 WLR 2712. Criminal appeal, whether a delay in proceedings was in breach of the constitutional right to due process.

***Phipps v DPP and AG*** [2012] UKPC 24. Appeal against murder conviction.

***Commissioner of Police and Another v Steadroy Benjamin*** [2014] UKPC 8, Criminal law appeal which considered the right of a citizen to institute criminal proceedings and the power of the of the DPP to discontinue criminal proceedings.

***Turks and Caicos Islands (Court of Appeal)*** [2017] Thalia was instructed for the defence in an appeal against a murder conviction in the TCI.

## ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

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***John Mussington and Jacklyn Frank v Development Control Authority and ors*** [2024] UKPC

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In this case two Barbudans challenged by way of judicial review the Antiguan government's decision to grant planning permission for a new airport on the island on Barbuda. Their challenge was dismissed in the Caribbean court on grounds that they lacked standing to bring the claim. That decision was the subject of a successful appeal to the Privy Council. Thalia was a member of the legal team instructed in the case. Judgment was handed down on 27 February 2024 and can be read [here](#). The Board decided that the appellants were entitled to standing and remitted the case back to the Caribbean courts where the case will now proceed to trial. When giving judgment the privy Council made the important pronouncement on standing in environmental cases:

‘57. Where an application for judicial review involves issues of environmental concern it is not necessary that the applicant demonstrates an expertise in the subject matter. All that is required is that they demonstrate some knowledge or concern for the subject. So an amateur ornithologist or bird-watcher might raise a concern about the potential loss of a bird's habitat; or a fisherman about the effect of a hydro-electric scheme on fish; or a local historian about the effect on an archaeological or historical site; or a local resident on the loss of a local beauty spot frequented by the local community. In *Walton* Lord Hope in effect asked the rhetorical question, “Who speaks for the ospreys?”. The answer is whoever can demonstrate a genuine interest in their

fate.'

## BACKGROUND

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Thalia was called to the Jamaican Bar in 1999 where she maintained a mixed criminal and civil liberties practice at the private bar. She defended in cases ranging from murder, firearm offences and sexual offences.

Thalia also worked as the staff attorney for The Independent Jamaican Council for Human Rights (a Jamaican based human rights NGO) from 2005/6 before pursuing an LLM in international crime and human rights at King's College London.

In 2009 she was called to the Bar in England and Wales, and later in 2017 in the Turks and Caicos Islands. She worked at Birnberg Peirce and Partners before transferring to the Bar in 2009.

## TRAINING AND SEMINARS

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Thalia is a Middle Temple Advocacy Trainer and has written Human Rights training programmes and conducted Human Rights Training with Correctional Officers in Jamaica.

Thalia Maragh conducted legal empowerment training for Ogiek community in Kenya in 2024.

Thalia spoke at the Universally Manchester Festival, run by the University of Manchester, on 'The Limits to Equality - Access to Justice & Scandal' on 10 June 2024.

## AWARDS

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Thalia was a recipient of the British Chevening Scholarship (2006/7)

## APPEARANCES

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1. 28 June 2023 - Voices of Windrush Festival - The Black Civil Rights movement in the UK - An analysis of the Struggle and Resistance through the ages.

## EDUCATION

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LLM (Human Rights and International Criminal Law) King's College (London), Merit (2007)

Certificate of Legal Education, Norman Manley Law School, Jamaica (1999)

LLB (Hons) University of the West Indies (Cavehill) Barbados (1997)

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

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Criminal Bar Association

INQUEST

Jamaica Bar Association

Advocates Association (Jamaica)

Howard League for Penal Reform Trustee

If you would like to get in touch with Thalia please contact the clerking team:

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