

Dear Mr Gowers,

We have been following with interest the debate on the current review of intellectual copyright.

We have been in the music business for almost thirty years as a specialist outlet for musical theatre cabaret and nostalgia. Alongside the big companies such as Sony EMI Universal etc we also work with a number of small independent labels who specialise in reissuing and in some cases releasing for the first time, recordings that are out of copyright. There is no doubt that should the copyright be extended these small independent labels would not be able to issue the works that they do.

I think the first issue here is that there are a number of small independent companies who would almost certainly be forced out of business should the copyright period be extended. An interesting position to be placed in by a government who have so recently been seen to be concerned about the large companies swallowing the small independent traders. My company would certainly lose a valuable range of music which may not sell in vast quantities, (if it did the big labels would be producing it), but to collector and lovers of music it is invaluable. In losing this we would also lose some our specialist status, making it more difficult to compete with the large chains.

Through these companies our customers and indeed ourselves, have access to wonderful recordings from stage musicals of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, recordings that the major record labels, who own the masters, have never seen fit to issue themselves. These labels keep alive artists from a past era through these releases, covering a wide range of male and female artists who may otherwise be lost to new generations of music lovers. If not for these smaller labels, these recordings would surely be lost forever so what they are doing is helping preserve important and historical recordings from which we are able to trace the evolution of popular music and the history of our music theatre.

We feel that the musical world is a richer place so long as these recordings are able to be released. If they are not I have no doubt that the likes of Sir Cliff Richard and Sir Elton John will be richer individuals. How much nicer to enrich a whole range of people with a love of music.

Yours sincerely,

Melanie Tranter, General Manager
Michael Nelligan.
John Hutchinson.
Richard Cooper.
Chris Geopfert
Andrew Truluck.
Dom Matica
Teresa Lynch.
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