

Dear Mr Gowers

I am writing to support the small production companies who delight musical theatre aficionados with their beautifully restored CDs of old musicals produced at a price that can be afforded. Naxos, Sepia, ASV Living Era, Flare, Memoir etc all give a genuine service to those smaller markets which would not be given by huge companies like EMI and BMG. This niche market of

vintage musical theatre would not be of any interest to those whose main interest is mainstream pop and major classics.

The CDs sold by the little companies for around £8 are absolute gems with cover artwork carefully designed for the era in which the musical was first produced and with liner notes researched thoroughly and written by experts to give a rounded view and full information of the origins, artists and performances involved in each piece. Somehow, they also find rare photographs to include and each release is greeted with delight by those who collect and appreciate them.

These companies do not simply release "Best Of...." as the major ones do but create a truly high quality product.

If the copyright period is extended to 95 years, all those glorious musicals of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s will have very little hope of remaining available to the public. Because they are a specialist interest, the companies that produce them cannot afford to pay royalties to those artists still living, but in every case of one of the companies I know, any artist who contacts them is freely given as many copies of the CDs as they would like and in every case have said they prefer this to the actual royalties.

I would like to quote my own CD reviewer from my magazine, Musical Stages. In the current issue, considering four new releases, he says "It is such a pleasure to write in praise of these recording treasures that I would "almost" be willing to pay to do it! Sepia really is providing all of us with a recording library of unique musical theatre works. You get the lot. Excellent re-mastering, superb graphics and comprehensive album notes." So you see, we need these labels to continue just to ensure the survival of the musical theatre pieces.

I would be grateful if you will keep these comments in mind. It must surely be possible to structure any change to exclude these very special releases from the proposed extension of copyright.

Yours sincerely

Lynda Trapnell

Editor/Proprietor

Musical Stages Magazine