

Dear Mr. Gowers

I have recently been following with interest the debate about the extension of copyright. I am very concerned that those record labels (eg. Naxos, Sepia, ASV Living Era, Flare, Memoir etc) that are dedicated to re-issuing vintage music that I like and which is out of copyright are in jeopardy of going out of business.

I feel strongly that the copyright period should not be extended. The following includes some of the reasons:

1. The recordings from these CD releases are very difficult if not impossible to find elsewhere.
2. Great care and attention is given to the artwork including the cover art, which clearly has been carefully sourced.
3. The liner notes are well-researched and written by experts and really give listeners lots of important and valuable information about the artist and the recording data.
4. These CDs, usually selling for around 8 pounds each, represent good value for money: they generally include extra photographs and more information on the sleeve notes than is typical for releases of this calibre.
5. These releases are often of rare recordings. They represent a labour of love and stand out in a market that puts out the same old fodder again and again. The major record labels are the worst culprits in releasing time and time again CDs like The Best of Perry Como, Vera Lynn or Bing Crosby featuring the same old chestnuts (roasting on an open fire, no doubt!)
6. As all consumers vote with their pockets – the prices of these CDs are fair and reasonable. If these companies had to pay recording royalties as well as the composer royalties currently in place, it might well not be economically feasible for them to release these CDs anymore.
7. In an era where everything is geared to charts and expensive DVDs and MP3 players and digital downloads, these CDs cover recordings that I as a consumer want to own and have not been able to find elsewhere.
8. Through these companies I have been able to access wonderful recordings from stage musicals of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, recordings that the majors who own the masters have never seen fit to issue themselves. I have also discovered artists from a past era via these CD releases. But for these smaller labels, such recordings would surely be lost forever. So, besides giving great pleasure, they are also 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.

In conclusion, I very much hope that your review will take full account of these points, so that these labels may long be allowed to continue to bring their wonderful music into my life.

Yours sincerely

*Chris Wood*