

FAIR TRADE MUSIC

FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE

ANNOUNCING THE “FAIR TRADE MUSIC” INITIATIVE, WORLD’S SONGWRITERS AND COMPOSERS UNITE TO FORM A GLOBAL ADVOCACY NETWORK

Washington, DC, June 3, 2013: For the first time in music industry history, over 25,000 songwriters and composers from nearly fifty countries throughout Europe, North America, South America, and Africa have joined together to form a new, wholly independent advocacy Network for music creators. Its immediate goal will be the championing of a set of Fair Trade Music Principles designed to ensure transparency, fair compensation, and autonomy for music creators in an increasingly complex and non-transparent music business landscape.

The new group, characterized by its founders as a “Network of independent alliances,” will serve not only to support advocacy for music creator rights throughout the world, but as a source for the gathering, analysis and distribution of international legal and business information crucial to songwriters and composers. The founding members of the Network include the European Composer and Songwriter Alliance (ECSA), Music Creators North America (MCNA), the International Council of Creators of Music (CIAM), the Pan African Composers and Songwriters Alliance (PACSA) and the Alliance of Latin American Creators of Music (ALCAM).

As its first united action, the new Network has announced the international launching of its Fair Trade Music initiative. According to the group, “more than any other sector of the music community, the songwriter and composer community has been hit the hardest by the catastrophic losses that have financially decimated the music industry since the beginning of the 21st Century. Our Network recognizes the drastic need for music creators to independently analyze the reasons for these devastating setbacks, devise solutions that benefit creators as the bedrock of the music industry, and advocate for the implementation of those solutions with our own voices. The initial result of this process has been the formulation of the Fair Trade Music Principles, which provide a framework for ensuring that music creators can survive and flourish in the future, to the benefit of individual songwriters and composers, consumers, and culture in general. It is those principles that we have come together to champion.”

The Fair Trade Music Principles are as follows:

1. FAIR COMPENSATION -- Music business models must be built on principles of fair and sustainable compensation for music creators.
2. TRANSPARENCY--International standards must be developed and adopted that ensure efficient and transparent management of rights and revenues derived from the use of our works. These standards must apply to all entities that license such rights, and which collect and/or distribute such revenues.

3. RECAPTURE OF OUR RIGHTS--Music Creators must have the ability to recapture the rights to their works in a time frame no greater than 35 years, as is currently available to songwriters, composers and artists in the United States. The effect of recapture of rights must apply globally.

4. INDEPENDENT MUSIC CREATOR ORGANIZATIONS--Music Creators must have their own independent entities that advocate for, educate and provide knowledgeable support for members of their community, including aspiring songwriters, composers and artists. Music Creators speak for themselves, not through those with interests in conflict with them.

5. FREEDOM OF SPEECH--Music Creators must be free to speak, write and communicate without fear of censorship, retaliation or repression in a manner consistent with basic human rights and constitutional principles.

While the Fair Trade Music Principles are general in scope, the Network has already begun to engage in specific activities designed to address current and developing problems for music creators. These include advocacy in favor of the system of “exclusive assignment” of performing rights in musical works to performing rights organizations outside of the United States, opposition to non-transparent, direct performing rights licensing agreements currently being undertaken in the United States, and support for more robust and creative approaches to addressing the continuing, drastic problem of music theft.

Speaking on behalf of the Network, spokespersons and music creators **Alfons Karabuda** of ECSA, **Rick Carnes** of the Songwriters Guild of America and MCNA, **Eddie Schwartz** of the Songwriters Association of Canada and MCNA, and **Lorenzo Ferrero** of CIAM, all noted the historical significance of the Network’s formation. “Only a unified global music creator community can meet the challenges of survival in a fully internationalized music industry. It took many decades to accomplish the enormous task of organizing such a diverse geographic Network, but now having done so, we have embarked on a new course designed to ensure that the voice of the music creator is heard on every issue, loud and clear, throughout the world. We think for ourselves. We act for ourselves. And we speak for ourselves. We have many partners and allies, but ultimately, we take responsibility for our own futures. That is the new narrative, and it will be pursued in our own voice.”

For further information:

Rick Carnes: rickcarnes@songwritersguild.com (615) 500-5573

Lorenzo Ferrero: lorenzo.ferrero@ciamcreators.org +39 339 803 94 20

Alfons Karabuda: alfons.karabuda@skap.se +46707838823

Eddie Schwartz: eddie@songwriters.ca (615) 294-6372