

Creators Conference, 23rd and 24th February 2015

The 2015 edition of the Creators Conference kicked off on 23 February 2015 at the Bozar Centre for fine Arts with a series of concerts and performances by Simon Darlow (UK), Pixel (Norway), Loney Dear (Sweden), Tamara Obrovac Transhistrria ensemble (Croatia) and concluded with DJ COQO. The next day was dedicated to panel discussions and offered networking opportunities for about 400 participants. Under the title “Composing the Future #2025”, creators and music business representatives as well as Brussels based stakeholders debated the role of copyright, culture and the digital single market and the context of ensuring Europe’s cultural diversity. Keynotes and speeches were made among others by EU Commissioner Tibor Navracscis (Culture and Education), Adina Ioana Vălean (Vice-President of the European Parliament), and Mrs. Farida Shaheed (UN Special Rapporteur on cultural rights). All affirmed the importance of a strong legal regime for authors in order to ensure and promote further creation of artistic works in Europe. It was repeatedly stressed that authors have only collectively the necessary power to ensure that users fairly return value for the exploitation of copyright protected works.



(Creators Conference session 2015)

A further important topic of the conference was the upcoming EU review of the copyright acquis. MEP Dietmar Köster and UK film music composer Michael Price discussed in this regard the role of copyright and the value chain related to the exploitation of musical works. The lack of responsibility of network service operators when enabling access to works protected under copyright was strongly criticized. MEP Köster pointed out that trade unions should be reinforced and that the EP needs to examine how to implement a collective bargaining system in order to ensure a fair remuneration for creators.



(From the left: Michael Price, Dietmar Köster, Patrick Ager)

As for the review of EU copyright law Mr. Köster affirmed that the particularity of the author’s rights system in continental Europe must remain a prerequisite when striving for an EU digital single market.

Further speakers included Maria Martin Prat (EC Copyright Unit), MEP Mary Honeyball and MEP Julia Ward, as well as music writers and freedom activists such as Ramy Essam (songwriter and Tahir Square veteran), Maria Marcus (songwriter), Alfons Karabuda (composer and ECSA President), Ruta Vitkauskaitė (composer and student), and Matthias Hornschuh (composer). The Creators Conference concluded with a performance by the European Contemporary Composers Orchestra (ECCO), which performed five pieces composed by five different composers throughout the ECSA network.



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ECSA General Assembly, 25th February 2015

The ECSA General Assembly and committee meetings were held in the framework of the conference on 25 February 2015. Patrick Ager was announced as new ECSA Secretary General taking up his position on 1 March 2015. Prior, Mr Ager served as directing manager of the design forum in Salzburg. Before joining ECSA as Secretary General from 2010-2014 he worked in the Austrian Foreign Ministry on EU budgetary affairs and as Research Fellow at the Parliamentary Assemblée of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.