



# MUSIC IN THE DIGITAL AGE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE | DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND ARTISTS' RIGHTS

ATHENS, OCTOBER 22-24, STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION CULTURAL CENTER

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

**Music in the Digital Age: Streaming & Artificial Intelligence** has been a three-day international forum organized by APOLLON (Greek CMO for musicians' neighboring rights) and FIM (International Federation of Musicians). Against the backdrop of **AI-generated content and the dominance of streaming platforms**, the conference examined how **revenue models, legal frameworks and artistic labor are being reshaped** in a digital economy that prioritizes scale over sustainability.

Bringing together artists, journalists, industry professionals, legal experts, academics, policy makers and technologists, the event focused on three core questions:

- How to build **sustainable and equitable compensation** models in a saturated streaming market?
- How to protect creators' rights when **AI is trained on and competes with their work?**
- What role should legislation play in **securing ethical AI and fairer digital markets** without stifling innovation?

Featuring an opening speech by **Yiorgos Andreou**, a keynote from **Chris Castle** (Artists Rights Institute) and speakers **Patricia Riera Barsallo** (AISGE), **Marc Du Moulin** (ECSA), as well as Andreou and Castle, this session, moderated by **Ioan Kaes** (AEPO ARTIS), delivered a powerful and unified consensus, framing the unregulated development of generative AI as an existential threat for artists.

## F. GENERATIVE AI | THE CREATORS' PERSPECTIVE

### 1. Key Themes and Arguments

The second session presented a unified and urgent stance from creators and their advocates, framing the current unregulated development of generative AI as **an existential threat to human artistry** and a form of **mass intellectual property theft**. The consensus was that Big Tech's approach constitutes a **deliberate and large-scale infringement that requires immediate, robust legislative and contractual intervention**. The situation was characterized not as a negotiation but as a "street fight" for the future of creative professions and culture itself.

#### 1.1. The Infringement Has Already Occurred

It was argued that the debate should not be about future use, but about **remedying the massive, unauthorized scraping of copyrighted works** that has already taken place. Chris Castle asserted that AI labs' reliance on "fair use" is an implicit admission of infringement, as "fair use" is an affirmative defense against such a claim. This unauthorized ingestion of data from the entire internet, including pirate sites, was labeled as **"theft"**.

#### 1.2. Rejection of "Opt-Out" in Favor of "Opt-in"

Panelists universally **condemned the "opt-out" model** proposed by tech companies and embedded in frameworks like the EU's TDM exception. They argued it is an absurdly **complex and impractical** system that wrongly places the burden of protection on the creator. The only acceptable path forward is a **mandatory "opt-in" system**, requiring explicit, prior **consent and fair remuneration** before any work is used for training an AI model.

### 1.3. Beyond Copyright: Protecting Personhood and Artistic Identity

The discussion stressed that **the threat extends beyond copyright infringement.**

- **Personality Rights:** Performers' voices, images, and likenesses - their "working tools" - are being replicated without consent, directly replacing jobs in sectors like voice acting and dubbing.
- **Moral Rights:** The right to protect the integrity of a work and the right of attribution are gaining new importance as AI generates content that mimics, distorts, or falsely attributes work to human artists.
- **Style and Persona:** The use of "style prompts" (e.g., "a guitar solo in the style of Eric Clapton") was cited as proof of AI developers' intent to commercially exploit an artist's unique, un-copyrightable identity and persona.

### 1.4. The Ethical and Civilizational Threat

Yiorgos Andreou framed the issue in humanistic terms, arguing that allowing AI to imitate the creative process is a form of "**deliberate plagiarism**" that devalues art from a profound "work of art" into **mere "content."** He warned that substituting core human qualities with a "mathematical array" threatens a "peculiar Auschwitz" where **creators are rendered economically obsolete and morally exterminated** if a machine can do their job cheaper.

### 1.5. Unfair Market Competition

AI-generated content creates a **dual economic threat:**

- It competes directly with human-made music on streaming platforms, potentially **diluting the royalty pool** shared by human creators.
- It is often marketed as "royalty-free" background music for businesses, directly **undercutting the licensing market** that sustains collective management organizations and their members.



## 2. CORE POSITIONS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

- **Transparency and Accountability:** AI developers must be legally compelled to disclose all works used to train their models.
- **Consent and Remuneration:** An explicit "opt-in" framework is non-negotiable. Fair, collectively managed remuneration must be established for both the "input" (training) and "output" (generated content).
- **A Retroactive Remedy:** Since the infringement has already happened on a massive scale and models cannot be "untrained," a retroactive financial solution is necessary to compensate creators for the past unauthorized use of their work.
- **Strengthened Legal Protections:** Legislation must go beyond copyright to protect personality rights (voice, likeness) and strengthen moral rights to prevent unauthorized imitation and distortion.
- **Exclusion from Creation:** A strong position was taken that AI should be a tool for human creators, but it should not be permitted to generate "original" works of art that compete with human creations.