

EUROPE FOR CREATORS

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - TUESDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER 2018

CALL TO EUROPE

Europe, look at us,
we are here,
we have come to see you,
we, the storytellers
who make you dream, laugh, shudder, reflect,
who can jostle you, annoy you
who know how to move you to tears.

We have come to tell you about these digital Ogres,
the major Internet platforms.
We loved them so much when they started up.
But in ten years they have changed so much.
These Ogres became powerful because we made them gods of our everyday lives
They feed on our works
without ever being satisfied.
They disseminate them without any respect for them.

The Ogres bet on our being afraid to denounce these practices,
being afraid of challenging them.
How many of us remain silent for fear of reprisals?
Digital Ogres rely on our dispersion and our special interests.
But look at us, we're all here,
people from the world of music, theatre, press, cinema...
United in the same determination to defend free and independent creation.

Europe, we need you

Remember our German friends who in 2013 wanted payment for the press titles on Google news.
Google's answer was simple.
German newspapers would no longer be indexed on their service.

Remember our Spanish friends who in turn asked for a fee for news articles featured on Google news in 2014.
Google's answer?
To shut down its service throughout Spain.

Remember our European publisher friends when Amazon wanted to impose a single price for books in 2014
The ones who stood up to Amazon saw their books removed from the great Merchant's online store, until a petition from writers around the world made them back down.

This is how Ogres behave.

They impose their rules, those of the strongest,
they don't like being dictated to,
they don't pay taxes in our countries,
nor for the work of the creators who generate their value
nor do they want any opposing power to challenge them.

Europe, today we need your support.
Individually, we are nothing, insignificant,
but together, under your banner, we will be strong.
We need your voice and your authority to defend us.

We are talking about machines that censor content if the text was voted on.
The word makes us shudder, we, the Europeans
who have experienced the worst violence and true censorship.
But how can we accept the meaning of the words to be hijacked to this extent?
No one will be prevented from speaking online.
Oh, some works won't be used on the Internet if the big Platforms refuse to pay for the
audience they generate?
But this is not censorship, it's just greed.
This is our argument.
The refusal to pay for profits from the dissemination of works on the Internet is not the
defence of freedom of expression, but the defence of freedom of exploitation.
Everyone lives from his or her work,
There is no altruism when one has to eat and find somewhere to live.

And don't let anyone tell us that the citizens of the world
won't be able to create GIFs or other games from our works!
That's not serious!
Humour will obviously continue to exist, there is even a right to protect it.
Let's keep the sense of history and proportion.
We want art to thrive on the Internet,
to be broadcast, listened to,
and even ridiculed or rehashed.

Europe, you will soon be appearing before the voters to explain your action,
look at us.
We will be there to cast our votes in the elections, yes we will. Not the Giants of the Internet.
You represent us, you are not there to defend the Ogres against your children.
We have come to put our fate in your hands
because we have faith in you.

If the Copyright Directive is not passed tomorrow,
how long before we'll have another opportunity
to have a means to argue with the big Internet platforms?
In three years? In 10 years? Never? These are historic opportunities that musn't be missed.

**Europe, support your children,
creators of your beautiful and great Union!
Give us the means to negotiate our rights
with the big machines that think they are gods,
while they are just highways.**

It's the call of citizens, creators, and Europeans,
it's our call to you, Europe.