

# Report

## ***Copyright for Directors: Do We Want It? Can We Get It?***

D&D Guest, 15 February 2015

Ivor Benjamin, Cesia Leon, Piers Haggard

Notes from discussion:

Whatever we think, there is no legal copyright in the UK for theatre / live media directors - even though it is there for writers, designers, musicians, etc. The script is copyright of the author, but stage directors are not mentioned in the 1988 Copyright and Patents Act and theatre is not an “artifact” that can be resold (like a script or a film); a theatre performance is ephemeral, like smoke. There is no provision to copyright a “mutable experience” (yet).

The only ways theatre directors can get copyright is by a change in the Act or a case in court where a directors work is blatantly copied (case law). It is possible that the prompt copy or a film of the show could act as a copyright “record”, but it's never been proved in court.

Directors do have “moral rights” in European law - but in the UK that only means the right to be recognised (credited) as a creator - or to insist your name is removed from the credits if you don't like what has been done with your show.

In the very near future there will be much more live streaming of theatre / live performance, both as video and as “virtual reality” (3D capture and transmission). This

use of directors' work needs better protection now.

Stage Directors UK (SDUK) could / should campaign to promote the reality of the existing situation and to change it.

Over to you... :-)

**Tags:**

theatre director, Performance, live streaming, Cesia Leon, Theatre, Piers Haggard, moral rights, Ivor Benjamin, copyright, performance, THEATRE, 1988 Copyright Act, SDUK, theatre, stage director