



## **Movie Extra Tropfest Filmmaker's Guide to Music and Copyright**

**Have you ever wondered whether it's ok to use other people's music in your film?  
Or how to get permission to use music in your Movie Extra Tropfest film?**

This guide aims to answer these questions and give you an idea of how you can and can't use music in your Movie Extra Tropfest films.

### **Some Basics**

**What's copyright?** Copyright is an automatic protection that applies to the expression of original ideas. It protects your work from being used in an unauthorised manner. It also means that other people's films, music, photographs, artworks and written texts are protected from unauthorised use as well.

**Who owns copyright?** Generally the author of a work – the principal director of a film or the composer of a song - owns copyright in the expression of their original ideas. However they may not be the sole owner of copyright in that film or song. For example, if you are the principal director of your film, you own copyright in the cinematographic film itself but a number of other people may own copyright in elements of your film, like the music or soundtrack you use.

**What rights does copyright give you?** Copyright gives the owner exclusive rights to generally:

- (a) make a copy of their work;
- (b) show or play their work to the public; and
- (c) communicate their work to the public, for example by making it available on the internet.

This means that if you want to do any of these things with a protected work you must first get the copyright owner's permission. Likewise, other people need permission to use your work!

**Are there any exceptions to copyright protection?** There are limited exceptions to that allow you to use other people's work without their permission. For example, you can copy or use other people's work without infringing of copyright if:

- ❖ One of the 'fair dealing' exceptions applies, namely:
  - It must be used for one of the following purposes: criticism and review, news reporting, parody and satire, or research and study; and
  - The use of the work must be 'fair'.

Fair dealing exceptions are quite narrow, so don't assume that they will automatically apply. It's often safer to ask for permission to use the work.

- ❖ You own a legitimate copy of a song and copy it for your own **private and domestic use** – this doesn't apply to use within your film.



## **When I am making my Movie Extra Tropfest film how do I do the right thing with other people's music? Q's & A's**

### ***What should I keep in mind when choosing music?***

Music should be one of the first things you consider when planning your Movie Extra Tropfest production - the last thing you want to do is limit the life of your film by making hasty music choices or leaving this till the last minute. It is a good idea to try to use local music in your film. This means that local musicians and composers can benefit from Movie Extra Tropfest, as well as every one else, and it is usually easier to organise and may be more economical. You should be aware that well known and published music can be very expensive to use.

### ***Can I use someone else's music in my Movie Extra Tropfest film?***

Yes, as long as you have obtained permission to use the music from all of the copyright owners. There is generally more than one owner of copyright in any given musical track. The composer who wrote the music owns copyright in the musical works. The lyricist who wrote the lyrics owns copyright in the literary works. The artist who performed the music owns copyright in a sound recording of their live performance. Finally, the maker of the recording (typically a record company) owns copyright in the sound recording.

As a practical guide, to use music legally in your film you should:

1. contact the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners' Society (AMCOS) on 1300 852 388 to obtain the correct licence for the use of the musical work; and
2. contact the Licensing Department of the relevant record company to obtain permission for the use of the sound recording.

When obtaining a licence to use the music it is important to note that you are not just asking for a "festival clearance" of the music since the demand for Movie Extra Tropfest films extends beyond the night of the festival. You will need to have cleared rights to use the piece of music in "all media" and in "all territories" (see Movie Extra Tropfest Entry Form T&Cs) in order to make your film eligible for inclusion in the network broadcast and any distribution that may follow the festival.

### ***What about if I record my own version someone else's song to use in my Movie Extra Tropfest film? Do I still have to get permission?***

Yes even if you record your own cover version of a song, you must still get permission from the owner of copyright in the musical works in order to use it in your Movie Extra Tropfest film. This can usually be done by contacting AMCOS on 1300 852 388 or by contacting the relevant music publisher directly. Similarly, if you arrange or transpose someone else's music you may first obtain their permission to include it in your Movie Extra Tropfest film.

### ***Do I need permission to film a live performance of music?***

Yes, performers also have rights under the Copyright Act and permission must be sought to film a live performance of music, as well as live performances of dramatic and literary works, circus acts and dance. In order to validly enter Movie Extra Tropfest you must have written consent from all performers, by asking them to sign the release form available on the Movie Extra Tropfest website.

### ***Why should I bother to ask for permission to use music in my Movie Extra Tropfest film?***

There are a number of reasons why you might want to think twice about using music in your Movie Extra Tropfest film without seeking permission. Firstly, as a filmmaker, you have first hand experience of the time, effort and money that goes into creating, whether it is a film, a song or a painting. Using another creator's work without permission undervalues the blood, sweat and tears that have gone into the creation process, and while some artists may be happy for their music to feature in films, others may not - they have a right to be asked.



In addition, Movie Extra Tropfest's terms and conditions make it clear that you must obtain copyright clearance for music or other material that you use in your film in order to submit a valid entry.

There are also legal implications. While using music without seeking permission may seem like the quick and easy option, you should be aware that under the Copyright Act, infringement of copyright by illegally copying protected music attracts maximum criminal penalties of \$60,500 or 5 years imprisonment per infringement.

### **Respect copyright**

Copyright protects your film from being used without your permission. It also protects the work of numerous other creators who are similarly passionate about their music, artworks, literary works or films. Copyright protects your work – make sure you respect others'!

### **Need more information?**

Movie Extra Tropfest	<a href="http://www.tropfest.com">www.tropfest.com</a>	<a href="mailto:mail@tropfest.com">mail@tropfest.com</a>	(02) 8011 0290
APRA AMCOS	<a href="http://www.amcos.com.au">www.amcos.com.au</a>	<a href="mailto:amcos@amcos.com.au">amcos@amcos.com.au</a>	(02) 9935 7900
Music Industry Piracy Investigations	<a href="http://www.mipi.com.au">www.mipi.com.au</a>	<a href="mailto:mipi@mipi.com.au">mipi@mipi.com.au</a>	(02) 8569 1177