

Bulletin

ORGANIZATIONS OF FILM AUTHORS IN SERBIA



INTERVIEW :

Jana Vozarova

Director of Slovak CMO LITA



In every country, authors must fight for their rights, because the other side is always trying to diminish or cancel them

CONVERSATION
WITH THE AUTHOR

Milorad Glušica

Director of photography

UFUS | AFA

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Digital issue

Front cover photo:
Milorad Glušica shooting *White Lions*

Publisher:
UFUS AFA ZAŠTITA, Terazije 27/6
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EDITORIAL

Photo: Vojislav Gelevski



Stefan Gelineo

Director of UFUS AFA

Editorial

Copyright protection isn't just a national question in this day and age; it's a distinctly global one. In an era of rapid technological changes, advanced digital tools and systems which are increasingly designed to replace human labour, it is more important than ever to clearly recognise and value what is uniquely human – the creativity, imagination, and insight of the author – qualities beyond the reach of machines and algorithms.

No collective or trade union organisation can fight this battle alone. Our mission is shared: to ensure that copyright is respected and properly valued everywhere, without exception. What we need today is a strong, coordinated, and visible joint effort, together with a determined defence of the value of creative work on a European and global level.

During 2025, UFUS AFA signed 11 international agreements with counterpart organisations from eleven countries, as well as an agreement with the global umbrella body AVACI

(Audiovisual Authors' International Confederation). With our previous agreement with the European umbrella organisation, the Society of Audiovisual Authors (SAA), we are taking all necessary steps to guarantee that Serbian film authors enjoy the same level of protection as their European colleagues.

Cooperation among collective organisations enables a higher level of protection for authors, facilitates the exchange of best practices and ensures joint representation of interests at both European and global levels. In current circumstances, such networking is not only desirable – it is essential.

The recently published SAA report on copyright remuneration confirms what has been evident in practice: the scope of protection – meaning the forms of exploitation of artworks, therefore the ability of authors to receive remuneration – varies greatly from one national market to another. The lack of harmonised European legislation continues to prevent authors from securing fair compensation for every use of their work, with challenges particularly complex in the realm of online services and digital platforms.

Although royalties from the exploitation of copyright work on online services and platforms have surpassed €100 million for the first time in 2024, they still represent only 13% of total royalties. This figure is strikingly disproportionate to the central role which streaming now plays in the audiovisual industry. The SAA analysis highlights a significant gap between how audiences watch films and series and the amount of royalties authors receive in return.

We are entering a period in which determination, solidarity, and international cooperation will be essential to improving the position of audiovisual authors. UFUS AFA remains committed to strengthening the domestic protection system and aligning it with European standards, ensuring our authors receive fair and sustainable compensation for their work. Without strong copyright protection, there can be no stable, competitive, and creatively vibrant audiovisual sector.

INTERVIEW

Photo: Miro Miklas

**Jana Vozarova***Director of Slovak collective management organization LITA***In every country, authors must fight for their rights, because the other side is always trying to diminish or cancel them**

The Slovak collective management organization LITA represents the rights to the works of more than 2,500 Slovak authors. In addition to directors and screenwriters, LITA protects the copyrights of writers, translators, journalists, authors of dramatic and musical-dramatic works, works of visual art and photography, both in Slovakia and abroad through cooperation agreements signed with related organizations, including our UFUS AFA PROTECTION.

LITA director Jana Vozarova talks to the Bulletin about the challenges in protecting the rights of Slovak authors, the scope of that protection, streaming platforms, artificial intelligence and the importance of mutual cooperation.

You have been part of the LITA organization since 2001. In your opinion, what has been the organization's greatest success in the field of copyright protection over the past two decades?

I would be humble here, but I think our greatest success is that we are steadily improving the conditions for remunerating authors. Each year, LITA represents more authors and signs more reciprocal representation agreements, and I am grateful for each and every one of them. Last year, we also signed an agreement with UFUS AFA, and I am very glad that we have started Slovak-Serbian cooperation.

We communicate more and are increasingly accepted as a valid partner by users as well as within the international community. Our collections are growing little by little. The appeal from LITA and from authors has helped change the provisions of the Copyright Act in a way that is more favorable to authors. However, we are still on a journey, and there is much more to improve.



“I feel that the values expressed through intellectual property, culture, and the arts are often taken for granted by the public.”

What are the main challenges that LITA is currently facing in protecting authors' rights?

Online streaming platforms and AI are major challenges, as well as the difficult situation in the area of collective management in Slovakia. The times we are living in are perhaps too interesting - for a change, I would love to have time to work on development projects instead of constantly managing crises.

As a member of the SAA Board of Directors, you have insight into the position of audiovisual authors in Europe. What problems do they have in common?

In every country, authors must fight for their rights, because the other side is always trying to diminish or cancel them. I feel that the values expressed through intellectual property, culture, and the arts are often taken for granted by the public. Only a few people realize that for creators this is their profession, and that they should be able to earn a living this way. Unfortunately, many authors struggle to survive solely on their creative work..

Do filmmakers in Slovakia have sufficient knowledge of their rights and how to protect them? What is the general level of copyright awareness among people in Slovakia?

I see some shortcomings in this area. It would be great if Film & TV faculties at universities also prepared students in matters of copyright. Many freshmen have no knowledge of these issues when they start working on their first projects.

It is very helpful to have professional associations with which we can cooperate. However, not every profession has an association, or the association may not be very active. It all depends on the people involved. Even a few dedicated individuals can create a very dynamic professional organization. Such associations and LITA can mutually support each other in communication, education, and awareness-raising.

“Cooperation, the exchange of best practices, and learning from one another are essential for CMOs.”



“Unfortunately, many authors struggle to survive solely on their creative work.”

Overall, I would say that public awareness of copyright in Slovakia is similar to that in other countries.

LITA and UFUS AFA recently signed an Agreement on Reciprocal Representation. Do you think that film authors in the region face similar problems, and could stronger regional cooperation improve their position?

I believe there are many common problems, but also many differences. I am sure that Serbian and Slovak authors can cooperate very successfully, just as LITA cooperates with sister societies from other Eastern European countries. Cooperation, the exchange of best practices, and learning from one another are essential for CMOs.

Audiovisual authors are facing new challenges today. Streaming and online platforms, as well as AI companies, often refuse to pay royalties to authors, and we even hear dangerous ideas such as “delete all IP laws”. How can we win this battle with financial giants such as high-tech companies?

I promise I didn't know you were going to ask this question when I answered the previous ones. However, it shows that both we in Slovakia and you in Serbia perceive

these challenges very similarly. Since ancient times, there has been a proven recipe for such situations: united we stand, divided we fall.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share my views with the readers of the UFUS AFA Bulletin.

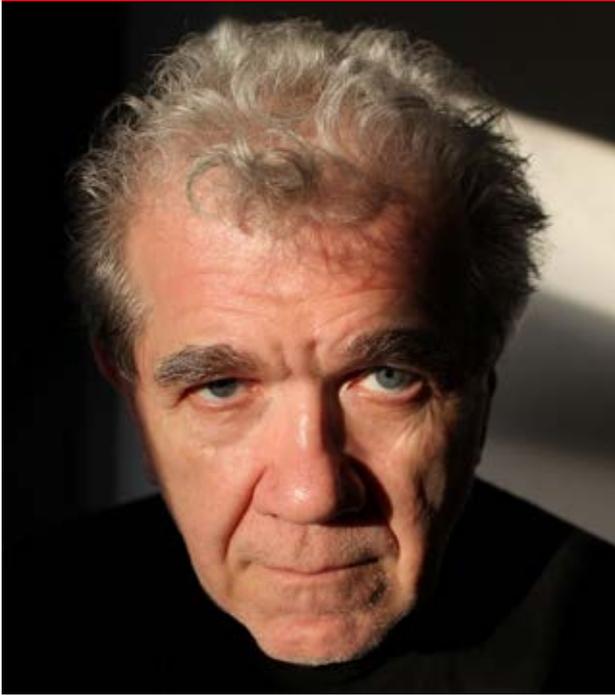


Jana Vozarova, photo: Miro Miklas



CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR

Photo: Private archive



Milorad Glušica

Director of photography, professor and member of the Board of Directors of UFUS AFA

Artificial intelligence is not a “persona” - I am a persona, and it can be my personal assistant

Multi-award-winning cinematographer and director of photography Milorad Glušica belongs to the first generation of Camera students at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade, where he later began his decade-long pedagogical work.

His signature as an author can be found on some of the most famous films and TV series (“How I Was Systematically Destroyed by Idiots”, “Strangler vs Strangler”, “The White Suit”, “The Covenant”, “A Better Life”, “Open Door” ...). During his extensive career, he collaborated with renowned artists such as Slobodan Šijan, Emir Kusturica, Miloš Radović, Lazar Ristovski, Predrag Velinović and others. In the early seventies, he began his work at Radio Television Belgrade (RTB), where he filmed a large number of documentaries and TV films, reportages, and features.

Milorad Glušica brought his rich experience as a director to our organisation as a new member of the UFUS AFA Board of Directors. In an interview for the Bulletin, Glušica recalled his filmmaking origins, his experiences, as well as changes the profession has been (and is still) going through.

Like many of our filmmakers, you took your first steps in filmmaking at the Academic Cinema Club. Can you tell us a bit about the importance of the Cinema Club for your personal development, as well as the development of cinematography in our country?

I would start with “Train Pulling into a Station” (Lumière Brothers, 1895). In my story, that same “film” train has left the station, and it’s still travelling. I stepped into one of its carriages in the mid-1960s. My station was the Academic Cinema Club. There, I could do everything as a filmmaker - writing, directing, filming, editing, and developing films myself. In agreement with my peers, I chose to dedicate myself to the art of cinematography. Within this environment, I experienced complete creative freedom: the freedom to explore, to exchange ideas, to make decisions - in essence, freedom in the very act of being. I think we were equal to our peers across Europe and in similar communities worldwide. We created films with a sense that there were no boundaries, no fear, no pain, no gravity, no winners or losers.

The club’s experimental projects opened new horizons. We ventured boldly into spaces which, at the time, could have seemed like ‘mistakes’, but actually represented steps toward a new perspective. I believe this spirit of exploration left its mark on our cinematography, and I am certain that my time at the club shaped me personally in the best possible way. After the cinema club, I enrolled in the Camera Studies program at the Academy of Theatre and Film (today’s Faculty of Dramatic Arts) in 1970. I was a first-generation student in the newly established department.



“Artificial intelligence is rapidly taking over, improving with lightning speed, and has entered our ‘playground’. It is moving towards completely taking over our roles, and we are often unwittingly enabling it.”

In view of how the cinematographer’s craft has changed over time, we also gain a clearer picture of the development of cinematography itself. What do you think the most significant changes in the profession are, and which aspects of the cinematographer’s role will remain the same?

Based on how the cinematographic image is created, I divide film history in three stages. The first is the “era of the native image”, lasting more than a century and still present today on a smaller scale. I call it “native” because it refers to images formed on celluloid; I find the term “analogue image” misleading. The second stage is the “era of the digital image,” which has defined the past two decades of this century. The third stage is the “era of the generative image,” created by artificial intelligence, from now on.

Each transition between these eras marks a fundamental, qualitative change. In the first era, progress was largely



Sa Emirom Kusturicom na snimanju filma “Zavet”

Davitelj protiv davitelja



quantitative while the essence remained the same: cameras, lenses, and filmstrips have improved; colour emerged; celluloid became more sensitive to light; lighting techniques advanced; and new methods for moving the camera were developed. In the second era, innovation centred on digital sensors and the expanding possibilities of digital image processing. In the third era, however, the process of image creation has been transformed: traditional tools have disappeared, and artificial intelligence has taken over the act of generating the image itself.

What was my experience of these changes? In the past, the camera was physically closer to the cinematographer - resting on their shoulder or pressed to the face, with its own distinctive sound. Through the viewfinder, the cinematographer directly observed events in front of the lens and was often the only one who truly knew what was happening in the frame: the actor’s expression, the play of light, the movement, the sharpness, the atmosphere.

With the arrival of digital technology, the camera has been ‘separated’ from the cinematographer. He is no longer the sole or privileged witness to the scene. The image now appears instantly and invites commentary. Yet this image, in my view, should be understood as just one element within the larger, complex whole of visual storytelling. The cinematographer, as creator of that image, carries within himself the vision, impression, and decisions that connect all the aesthetic dimensions of cinema.

In the future, the cinematographer will have the chance to fully embrace the role of author and artist in shaping



“Television networks are large, complex systems that operate on a scale ranging from daily tasks to marathon projects, like series. In all of these frameworks, you step into the role of a cameraman, but you often feel more like a technician. In film, however, you become an author in the truest sense.”

film images because at the moment when the craft itself seems to be fading, he will have the privilege of offering an authentic vision by daring to play with the ‘beautiful imperfection’, something generative photography does not yet recognise. The challenge is to seize that opportunity and step into the game.

You’ve done a lot of work for television. How does working in television differ from working on feature films, now and in the past? What is the current situation?

During my time at Radio Television Belgrade, I worked primarily as a documentary cameraman, often operating as a “one-man orchestra.” This phase was pivotal in my career; being alone with the camera taught me how to observe, interpret, and connect, granting me a profound sense of professional security and creative freedom. As I transitioned into feature films, I maintained that “camera and me” approach but expanded it to include “image and me”. The former is a matter of technical craft and skill while the latter is one of reflection and deep understanding.

Television networks are large, complex systems that operate on a scale ranging from daily tasks to marathon projects, like series. In all of these frameworks, you step into the role

of a cameraman, but you often feel more like a technician. In film, however, you become an author in the truest sense - creating with a singular vision and momentum. From a visual perspective, these are two very different ways of telling a story: The television image is mostly descriptive, realistic and authentic, yet often “flat” and lacking a horizon - it informs but rarely intrigues. A film image, on the other hand, has a transformative and cinematic dimension; it possesses volume, interprets space clearly, and offers a sense of horizon. In other words, magical.

Today, production is mostly shifting toward massive “entertainment services” and platforms characterised by the mass production of series, films and other audiovisual content. As the industry moves towards these new ‘playgrounds’, cinematic image creators will probably follow.



Kako sam sistematski uništen od idiota



Na snimanju filma “Zavet”

“Film is a team effort. Many creative decisions are made, and in our practice, directors rightly chart the course. Other authors also contribute their decisions to keep this “film boat” afloat.”

You began your film career with Slobodan Šijan, who you collaborated with several times on both television and film, and Predrag Velinović, Lazar Ristovski, as well as Emir Kusturica. What is the most important thing in the director-cinematographer relationship for this collaboration to be successful?

The first step is reading the script. This requires experience, but above all you need the ability to translate a literary template into images, which the visual identity of a film is built on. The next step is to synchronise my images and my concept with the director’s vision. This is where the important conversations begin, “fine-tuning” so we find the same wavelength. It begins with personal ideas, including other relevant works of art, and even films that can serve as references. When we get closer to an answer, that’s when it becomes a project for me. I begin research and rehearsals, with the intention of getting as close as possible to the agreed visual concept. The director sometimes also occasionally says: “do your story”. This can be a strong incentive. You get a free hand, but you have to remain consistent and wise enough to stay within the film’s visual and narrative setting. In contrast, the key role of the image is diminished - to create a unique experience in a coherent aesthetic and emotional sense.

It is important to emphasise that film is a team effort. Many creative decisions are made, and in our practice,

directors rightly chart the course. Other authors also contribute their decisions to keep this “film boat” afloat. The cinematographer and director have to support each other, with trust, perseverance, belief, and mutual inspiration.

How do you see the challenges of the modern age, especially artificial intelligence and technological innovation? Do you share the concerns of film colleagues around the world?

In the early eighties, I placed a personal computer on my desk with the intention of getting to know my future tool. I assumed that images would soon be created with “zeros and ones”, binary code -and this, of course, is what happened. On the one hand, this made creating instant images easier and opened up possibilities for processing and manipulation. On the other hand, it increased the distance from representation of essential thought processes which are key to arousing positive states in humans.

Artificial intelligence is rapidly taking over, improving with lightning speed, and has entered our ‘playground’. It is moving towards completely taking over our roles, and we are unwittingly enabling it. When I started following



Milorad Glušica, *Beli lavovi*



Milorad Glušica na predavanju, snimio Goran Basarić

its development a few years ago, I thought: “Okay, this will be my extra head”. I still think so today. Artificial intelligence is not a “persona” - I am the persona. It can be my personal assistant. If we are talking about abuse, the main culprits, at least for now, are people and their bad intentions. Legal frameworks and the adoption of protective measures aren’t developing fast enough, which can lead to serious confusion on a global level - in terms of authorship, authenticity, education, value standards, and perception itself. The bright side is that artificial intelligence is currently taking us back to Georges Méliès, at least briefly. The less we ask of it, the more capable our brains will be. And what if I am wrong?

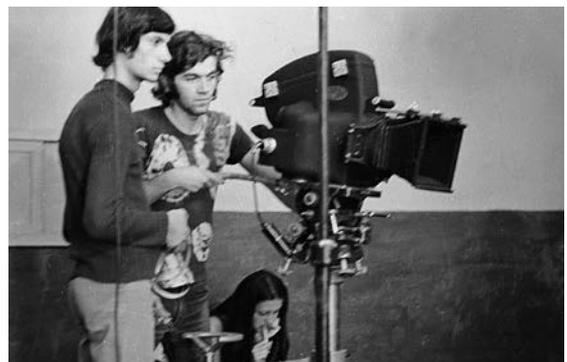
You have decades of teaching and mentoring experience behind you. What are the most important lessons you pass on to students that have stood the test of time?

More than half a century has passed since the Camera Department was founded. This period also connects me to the school, first as a student, then as a lecturer and professor. A technological revolution has taken place that irreversibly changed many things, so I guess the professorship can be divided into two “eras”: the one before the advent of the

Internet and digital images, and the current one, with a shorter lifespan, maybe.

In the first phase, the focus was on the craft. I insisted on bold experimentation and conquering unknown spaces. I often said: “The only mistake you can make is if you do not press the button on the camera.” A controlled mistake can be a powerful motivator and a path to liberation. Of course, I equally insisted on smart viewing and reflection, research and visual storytelling - a thought process that leads to what I would call the philosophy of the image.

In the second phase, the film image acquires a different visual quality, which affects its meaning and emotional range, and also acquires new cinematic properties. The narrative structure also changes, and with it our perception, which is an essential, vital change. The digital era has also brought us new visual thinking, a more global experience and combined intelligence. I often ask students: what is our role, is creativity being lost, are we still in charge of the art of the film image? My answer was always the same: everything remains as it was. It is important to master new tools, but also to preserve the sequence VISION-THOUGHT-DECISION-ACTION.



Milorad Glušica za vreme studija

“UFUS AFA PROTECTION currently represents a guiding light for our cinematography. The organisation is visible, respected and well-positioned both regionally and internationally, guided by a clear strategy and vision, supported by a dedicated team of professionals.”

You have been a long-time member of UFUS AFA Protection, and recently a member of the organisation’s Board of Directors. How much awareness exists among your colleagues regarding the importance of copyright protection today, and what could be improved?

The Organisation of Film Authors of Serbia currently represents a guiding light for our cinematography. Everything has stopped - we have become workers without a factory. The organisation may not be a factory, but it has become a true protector of authors and a bright light in our cinematography. The development of cable broadcasters has created more space for generating income through copyright, and our colleagues are very aware of this. There is some concern among younger authors about exercising these rights since television and telecommunications production services have, under current law, appropriated property rights. The organisation is actively working on introducing the basis of “fair compensation” into the Copyright Law, ensuring full protection for authors. The organisation is visible, respected and well-positioned both

regionally and internationally, guided by a clear strategy and vision, supported by a dedicated team of professionals. Transparency in its work is also a key strength. Looking forward, the most important challenge lies in recognising and adapting to rapid changes on the horizon, changes that are difficult to predict and may not always align with human needs.



Kino-klub



LEGAL ADVICE

Photo: Aleksandar Carević



Stevan Pajović

Attorney, "T-S Legal" Law Office

Legal aspects of digital entertainment: VoD, UGC and Catch-up TV

Introduction: The legal nature of interactive accessibility

In the digital era, the way audiences engage with visual productions has undergone radical change, and an interactive approach to making them accessible to the public is taking centre stage. Under the Law on Copyright and Related Rights, this constitutes a specific property right of the copyright holder. The Act defines it as making an audiovisual work available to the public by wire or wireless means in a manner which enables individuals access at a time and in a place individually chosen by them.

The key distinction from traditional broadcasting - when a media service provider delivers programs for simultaneous viewing according to a fixed schedule - lies in its individualisation and time flexibility. Audiences are no longer passive recipients of a signal; they become active participants who initiate the distribution of content at a time that suits them. Although the legal definition is straightforward, in practice, three dominant business

models have developed around this right, each with its own specific implications for licensing and fee collection.

Model I: Classic On-Demand Media Services

The first and most straightforward model is the traditional on-demand media service. Under the Law on Electronic Media, this is defined as a service provided by a media provider that allows users to watch programs at a time of their choosing, upon request, from a catalogue curated and organised by the provider itself.

Global giants such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and HBO exemplify this model. Here, the provider retains full editorial control: it decides which content enters the catalogue and hosts it on its own servers.

Exercise of Rights:

In the case of film production, rights are typically exercised on an individual basis. This is mostly practical - producers of high-budget films, with clearly established chains of title, can negotiate directly with platforms. Contracts are concluded individually, often with strict clauses on territorial scope and duration of availability. Because the number of parties involved is relatively small and the economic value of each work is high, collective management organisations are generally not necessary in this model.

Model II: Content exchange platforms (User-Generated Content - UGC)

The second model, the prototype of which is YouTube, has fundamentally changed the legal landscape. These platforms also provide access to content at a time and place chosen by the user, but the defining feature is that the content is created and uploaded by users rather than the platform itself.



This model has generated decades of legal uncertainty. The central dilemma is: who is responsible for the act of public communication (interactive availability)? Is it the user who uploads the video, or the platform that makes it accessible to millions? This ambiguity directly affected the holders of rights ability to control the use of their works, leading to a so-called “value gap” - platforms profiting from advertising on protected content while authors receive little or no compensation.

Legal challenge and liability:

Domestic law places the obligation to obtain permission before publishing on users. In practice, however, this is unrealistic. Millions of hours of content are uploaded daily, with no direct contact between authors and consumers. Often, users do not know who holds the rights, and authors only discover unauthorised use when detection algorithms flag their works.

(EU) Directive 2019/790 and leaving the “safe harbour”

In response to longstanding uncertainty, Directive 2019/790 on copyright in the Digital Single Market introduced a historic shift. Platform operators can no longer rely on the “safe harbour” defence, portraying themselves as neutral intermediaries. Instead, they are directly responsible for the content published by their users. Platforms must make every effort to obtain authorisation from rights holders, and if permission is not secured, they are obliged to prevent the work from being made available.

This reform significantly strengthens the position of authors, enabling them to negotiate with digital platforms from a position of greater leverage. Yet for the system to function effectively, rights must be exercised through collective management. Given the sheer scale of content and the impossibility of platforms negotiating with thousands of individual rights holders, collective management organisations have become indispensable. They provide the infrastructure for mass licensing and efficient fee collection, ensuring fair remuneration for authors in the digital ecosystem.

Model III: Catch-up TV

The third model is Catch-up TV, offered by cable and OTT operators. This service allows users to rewind and watch

programs that have already aired on linear channels, typically within a seven-day window.

Although the content has already been broadcast, the operator is legally performing a new act of exploitation - interactive availability. This enables users to access specific copyrighted works embedded in television programming (such as a song in a music show or a film) at a time of their choosing.

Exercising rights through collective management

Unlike the VoD model (Netflix), rights cannot be exercised individually in Catch-up TV.

- **Rights holders** (producers, directors, screenwriters) have no visibility into when or on which of hundreds of channels their work is replayed.
- **Operators** lack the technical capacity to track every individual copyrighted work across the vast hours of recorded programming they distribute.

Because of this information asymmetry and the sheer volume of works involved, collective management is the only viable solution. Organisations such as UFUS AFA Protection (and their counterparts elsewhere) can conclude umbrella agreements with operators, collect flat fees, and distribute remuneration to authors based on broadcast logs. Collective management thus acts as a bridge, enabling operators to legally provide a popular service while ensuring authors are compensated for uses that would otherwise remain “under the radar” of individual control.

Conclusion

Making audiovisual work available to the public interactively is a unique right that manifests itself in three distinct economic models. While VoD services rely on individual contractual freedom, UGC platforms and Catch-up TV services necessitate collective management as the only workable framework for legal compliance and efficient licensing. Recognising these differences is essential for rights holders seeking to safeguard their intellectual capital in a digital age.



Slobodan Šijan and Milorad Ghušica ("How I Was Systematically Destroyed by Idiots")



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