Book Symposium Introduction: Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Copyright, Law and Policy in Africa

By:

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April 27, 2020

I am proud to present this book symposium on my new book titled Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Copyright, Law and Policy in Africa *(*Routledge, 2020). According to Professor Caroline Ncube in the foreword, this book is an important and timely contribution to the discussion of music platforms and is the first work that considers multi-sided platforms from the perspectives of copyright, competition and privacy under South African and Nigerian laws.

What are multi-sided music platforms and why are they important? Simply put and from the book's perspective, multi-sided music platforms are online platforms (places) where interactions between various market participants (sellers, buyers, consumers, customers, advertisers etc.) occur. These online or digital platforms provide an avenue for authors and copyright owners to

disseminate their copyright-protected music content for free and also have listeners (the general public) access such content free-of-charge. Advertisers then pay the owners of these platforms for access to the platform and access to the users of the platform (copyright owners and listeners).

Multi-sided music platforms are important because they are conduits for the distribution of many products and services. Music; films; books and other literary works; games; videos etc. are shared and downloaded on multi-sided platforms. There is global discourse around the activities of multi-sided platforms from various perspectives. And, because most of the content available on multi-sided platforms are protected under copyright law, much of the discourse understandably engage with how nations may apply copyright law to address the activities of multi-sided platforms. Also, competition law and privacy/data protection law and how to apply them to regulate some of the activities of firms that own these multi-sided platforms have also occupied the minds of researchers, industry stakeholders, regulatory authorities and policy and legal advisors.

Apart from focusing on music in the context of multi-sided platforms, one of the things that have been noted about Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law is its "Global South comparison" (to borrow from the discussion with Professor Adam Haupt). This was deliberate. Indeed, a major motivating factor for the book was to "balance the jurisdictional equation" as it were, given that much of the discourse about multi-sided music platforms have focused on countries in the Global North especially the EU and the US. The book therefore focuses on two key African countries – Nigeria and South Africa.

This book symposium is intended to draw out perspectives from many quarters: legal research, cultural anthropology, media and entertainment, film, music, regulatory and enforcement perspectives. Accordingly, the next few days present views from a line-up of experts who have offered their unique perspectives on various aspects of the book. Dr Desmond Oriakhogba is a law lecturer at the University of Benin and a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Cape Town. Dr Eleonora Rosati is Associate Professor of Intellectual Property Law at Stockholm University and Of Counsel at Bird and Bird. Veit Erlmann is a professor of Anthropology and Ethnomusicology at University of Texas at Austin and the author of *Lion's Share: (Re)making South*

African Copyright. (Forthcoming from Duke University Press). Dr Ayoyemi Lawal-Arowolo is an Associate Professor of Law in Babcock University, Ilesha-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria.

The symposium will close with a "stakeholder view" bringing perspectives from speakers at the panel discussion held in Lagos, Nigeria on the broader theme: The Digital Creative Economy in Africa. These speakers include: myself; Wangi Mba-Uzoukwu (Regional Director of M-Net West Africa); Bisi Olabanji (Legal Advisor US Department of Justice's International Computer Hacking and Intellectual Property (ICHIP) Regional Program, US Embassy Abuja); Muna Martins (General Manager, Freeme Digital); Ekene Som Mekwunye (Filmmaker and Adjunct Faculty, Pan-Atlantic University); Obi Ezeilo (Director of Prosecutions, Nigerian Copyright Commission). These stakeholders in the digital creative economy bring perspectives from regulatory and enforcement frameworks, films, music and the entertainment industry, generally.

Contributors

Veit Erlmann: Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Cultural anthropology perspectives

Desmond O Oriakhogba: Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Reasons why the work is a ground-breaking work of scholarship from the African continent

Ayoyemi Lawal-Arowolo: Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Afrocentric perspectives

Eleonora Rosati: Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Why platform specificity and Global South focus matter

Chijioke Ifeoma Okorie: Multi-sided music platforms and the Law: Reflections on the panel discussion on the digital creative economy

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