

Screen Actors Guild's FOREIGN ROYALTIES PROGRAM

Screen Actors Guild is committed to making sure actors are compensated for their work, no matter where in the world it is seen. Over recent years, the Guild has succeeded in claiming money that is owed to our members in the form of foreign royalties—fees collected in foreign countries to compensate actors when films and television programs are used for private copying, video rental and cable retransmission.

Since the 1980s, various countries have adopted laws imposing levies on blank videocassettes, recording equipment, home video rentals and, in some cases, cable retransmissions, to ensure fair payment from the private copying, rental and other use of artists' work. The same laws authorized private collecting societies to distribute the funds collected to creative talent.

Originally, the major studios claimed 100 percent of the foreign levies attributable to writers, directors, and actors under the work-for-hire provisions of US copyright law and the related provisions of the collective bargaining agreements with the Directors Guild of America, Writers Guild of America and Screen Actors Guild.

Through lengthy negotiation, SAG resolved the producers' copyright claims and entered into agreements with organizations representing the major studios and independent producers, culminating in an arrangement today that ensures an equal share of levy proceeds are designated for actors.

Since the inception of these agreements, the Guild has collected slightly more than \$8 million and has distributed a small portion of the funds. Because of the complexity of allocating lump-sum payments to the performers who are eligible to receive them under collecting society rules, it was necessary to design and develop special enhancements to the Guild's computer systems to handle these allocations. Guild staff recently advised the Board of Directors that they expect the program will begin making significant distributions to members before the end of the year.



Although a few individual performers have collected for themselves, the vast majority of actors simply cannot do so due to a complex collecting process that may involve negotiation and, in some cases, even litigation requiring retaining counsel in foreign countries to force the distribution of collected royalties. If those performers are successful in their claims for payment, they can also find themselves subject to claims or even lawsuits raised by producers who allege the payments belong to them under US copyright law. It is for this reason that Screen Actors Guild, at the instruction of its National Board of Directors, has pursued and will continue to pursue these claims on behalf of its members.

In order to ensure that member dues money does not substantially

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Have a Seat!

NOT EVERYONE CAN GET THEIR NAME IN LIGHTS, but anyone can get top billing with their name proudly displayed on a chair or front-row sofa in the new Screen Actors Guild Foundation Actors Center.

Whether this enduring and impressive gift is for you or to commemorate someone's birthday, anniversary or continued success, a tax-deductible donation to the Have a Seat! campaign (\$500 per chair, \$3000 per sofa) ensures that you, or the star in your life will be permanently honored at Actors Center screenings and seminars. Your generosity will move the Foundation closer to building this dream center, a one-of-a-kind resource for actors. Plus, a donation to the Have a Seat! campaign ensures your invitation to the gala opening.



For more information, visit the SAG Foundation Web site at www.sagfoundation.org or call (323) 549-6708.



subsidize the cost of this program, the Guild uses a small deduction from the lump sums remitted by the collecting societies, as well as interest accrued during the payment allocation process, to defray administrative and legal costs associated with the program. In order to make sure the Guild is able to remit any payments that may be due to you, it is critical for the Guild to have your correct contact information, so log on to the member Web site and verify that your profile is accurate. ■
