

Written Statement by Rick Beato – AI, Transparency, Explainability, Intellectual Property, & Copyright Forum

To: Senator Charles Schumer, Senator Rounds and Esteemed Members of the Bipartisan Committee

From: Rick Beato

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Subject: Insights on AI, Transparency, Explainability, and Intellectual Property in the Music Industry

My name is Rick Beato, a music expert, producer, and YouTube content creator with a following of 3.8 million subscribers. My career spans roles as a session musician, lecturer, songwriter, and producer, including co-writing the hit song "Carolina" in 2013. I have previously contributed to U.S. Senate hearings on digital copyright, emphasizing my expertise at the intersection of music and digital media.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the music industry, offering new possibilities in music creation and production. However, this innovation brings complex challenges, particularly regarding intellectual property rights. The core issue is the ambiguity around training AI models on artists' works and determining the ownership of new, AI-produced music.

The crux of the issue in AI-generated music lies in the balance between the rights of the original artist and those of the AI user. When an AI is trained on a specific artist's works, it assimilates their distinctive style and creative expressions. However, the opacity in AI training datasets often obscures the contributions of these original artists, making it challenging to ascertain and appropriately credit their influence. While the AI user plays a role in directing the AI's output, it is essential to prioritize the recognition and compensation of the original artist. The current legal framework inadequately addresses this imbalance, often leaving the creators of the source material without due acknowledgment or remuneration. Enhancing transparency in AI training datasets is crucial for ensuring that the original artists' contributions are not only recognized but also fairly compensated.

Music sampling, where portions of a sound recording are reused, mirrors the use of existing works in AI-generated content. Both require careful navigation of copyright laws, including permissions and potential royalty sharing. The concept of 'fair use' and 'transformative work' further complicates this legal landscape.

The legal frameworks governing AI in music are evolving. There is a pressing need for clear guidelines on rights allocation in AI-generated content. Ethically, the use of an artist's style without consent raises concerns, especially given AI's capability to replicate these styles accurately.

Proposed Solutions for a Balanced Ecosystem

1. **Licensing Framework for AI Training Data:** A compulsory licensing scheme could regulate the use of copyrighted works as training data, ensuring fair compensation and streamlined access for AI developers.
2. **Attribution and Acknowledgment Policies:** Mandating clear attribution to original artists in AI-generated works and including this acknowledgment in metadata can help preserve the rights and recognition of original creators.
3. **Transparency in AI Training:** Advocating for transparency in AI training datasets is crucial for assessing copyright issues and ensuring ethical use.

Conclusion

The intersection of AI and music presents a frontier of both extraordinary creative potential and complex legal challenges. As we navigate this new terrain, balancing innovation with the protection of intellectual property rights is paramount. The solutions proposed herein aim to foster a fair and transparent ecosystem for artists, creators, and AI developers alike. I look forward to contributing further to this crucial dialogue.