

## **The Danish Writers Guild**

### **The guild:**

The Danish Writers Guild represents about 310 members, which are all professional screenwriters, play writers and translators. Over the last year we have experienced a small increase in the number of members, mainly because many comedians are beginning to join the guild as well. It is still a membership requirement to be a professional screenwriter, but many comedians in Denmark are also screenwriters for sit-coms and films, which makes them suitable as members.

In August 2011 the guild recruited an extra legal adviser to support the negotiations on the individual contracts. The members' contracts are being negotiated more and more individually, and this has generated a large workload. We have now experienced a huge relief in the daily work at the office and it has also generated a lot of visibility for the guild, because we have more time to focus on political work as well. We have been more active on different hearings and cooperation between other organizations, which has been beneficial for the guild and the members.

Last year we sent out a survey to our members studying their work conditions and working environment. The study especially showed that our members were dissatisfied with the work conditions at the Danish TV-station, TV2. TV2 took this very seriously and arranged a meeting with the writers explaining their visions and audience. TV2 has decided to be more outgoing and wants to prioritize the writer's conditions. The meeting was very successful.

### **Copydan:**

We are challenged on the internet based TV (hbb-tv) because the Danish public service broadcaster (DR) is beginning to transmit the signal through the internet. Our collective agreements with Copydan only cover retransmission. We are starting to take a position the matter so that we are prepared to negotiate more suitable agreements with the television distributors. It is Copydan who negotiate these agreements on behalf of the member guilds.

Copydan has submitted a new proposal to the Ministry of Culture to change the law so it covers the area more up-to date. We have not received a response on that yet.

We are also working on covering the rights used on new platforms such as Netflix. Netflix recently aired in Denmark and the terms for TV-series on Netflix has not been agreed with the writers. We are taking a position on that now, and we will soon be negotiating with the producers.

### **Society of copyright organization**

is an organization for all copyright organizations and unions in Denmark. We coordinate views on copyright issues and in some cases we write coordinated answers on hearings from the Ministry of Culture.

### **Copyright Denmark**

is another Collective cooperation that reacts on copyright criticism and secures a coordinated and continuous response on copyright issues in the media and other public relations.

### **The Copyright Alliance**

is an association working to secure the rights for the copyright owners. It used to be called The Antipiracy Group, but changed the name so it would have a friendlier tone. The Alliance also

represents producers. They try cases at the court if necessary and are working more determined on the legal matters of the copyright and illegal downloads.

In 2011 The Alliance worked really hard to establish a Letter Model against the illegal download on the internet. The intension was to "scare" the users of illegal activity on the internet by sending letters to the users telling them that their activity was illegal and they had to stop the activity immediately. Short after the model was presumed ready, we had a change of government and the new government did not support the model. The new Minister of Culture believes in legal business models and wants to establish different forums and information campaigns instead of coordinated legal steps against the illegal downloads.

The Alliance is very active on this matter and participates in most of the new initiatives grounded by the Minister.

**Nordic Writers Guild:**

We also work with the Nordic Writers Guild (NDU) which counts the writers guilds of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. [www.NordicWritersGuild.com](http://www.NordicWritersGuild.com).

**Directive on the collective management of copyright.**

The Danish Writers Guild has commented on the directive through hearings with the Ministry of Culture. We have taken the position that the directive is against the subsidiarity principle, mainly because it can have fatal consequences for our guild. We are supportive of the transparency that is stated in the directive, however it is a lot of detailed information that we will have to overturn. We are concerned that the guild will be included in the definition of a collective society, because of our position regarding the money flow that comes from Copydan to the right holders through our guild. We are the only country in the EU with this system and we do not think that it has been the intension, from the EU commission, to cover the guild. However we have to state that this is a possibility that can have serious consequences for our little guild.

Copydan will probably be covered by the directive so we will have to live up to the demands of transparency coming from Copydan. We already follow guidelines from Copydan, so that would be the most obvious to do. That will probably also be the outcome of this directive.

For all Danish organizations it has been crucial to maintain our license agreements. Many of our agreements through Copydan are possible because of the license agreement and are very important for the maintenance of our system.