

Transcontinental Media

In the understanding that our members will make independent choices regarding the conditions of their freelance employ, the Writers' Union of Canada is pleased to lend its support to the complaint brought against Transcontinental Media's new "Master Author Agreement" by the Professional Writers Association of Canada (PWAC).

Earlier this summer, Transcontinental Media began sending a new freelance contract titled – "Master Author Agreement" – to the many writers who contribute to Transcontinental Media's publications, including *Canadian Living*, *More*, *Elle Canada*, *Homemakers*, and *Vancouver Magazine*.

The Professional Writers Association of Canada has four primary concerns with Transcontinental Media's "Master Author Agreement":

1. The Master Agreement grants copyright of each work to the author but then undercuts this copyright by licensing the following extraordinary rights: "The ongoing non-exclusive right to do in respect of the Work any other act that is subject to copyright protection under the Canadian Copyright Act (including, without limitation, the right to produce and reproduce, translate, develop ancillary products, perform in public, adapt and communicate the Work, in any form or medium) as well as to authorize others to do so on behalf of or in association with the Publisher."
2. The agreement is permanent. Once signed, it covers all future work for Transcontinental publications.
3. Transcontinental has no intention of compensating freelancers for the many additional uses of their work. In essence, the company wants to keep on paying what it's been paying for decades for basic first publication rights but now get unlimited rights to the work for the same price.
4. The Master Agreement is one-sided. It makes no mention of payment terms, kill fees, provisions for libel suits, and other important issues that are part of any balanced contributor's agreement.

On July 16, Dave Johnston (PWAC) and Derek Finkle (CWG) along with their legal counsel, Iain MacKinnon, met with Jacqueline Howe, Transcontinental's Group Publisher and vice president for English Canada and Pierre Marcoux, Transcontinental Media's senior vice president of the business and consumer solutions group, to discuss their concerns about the new Master Author Agreement. Six weeks after that meeting Pierre Marcoux stated that Transcontinental does not intend to make any changes to the contract at the present time.

In response to Transcontinental Media's line in the sand position, PWAC and other organizations are campaigning to oppose Transcontinental's Master Author Agreement.

For additional information:

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