

Authors Guild and SFWA Reach Agreement with *Galaktika* Magazine on Infringement Claims

NEW YORK, NY, July 21, 2017 — The Authors Guild and Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) announced today that they collaboratively reached an agreement with a Hungarian science fiction magazine, *Galaktika*, which for years had been reprinting stories of American and British science fiction writers without their permission. Under the terms of the agreement, Metropolis Media, *Galaktika*'s publisher, promised to seek permission for any works they use in the future and to compensate the authors whose works were published without permission. *Galaktika* has agreed to pay each author whose work it infringed fair compensation, with the fee to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. (Please refer to the end of this post for more information about how to contact *Galaktika*.)

The agreement comes as a result of efforts by the Guild, SFWA, literary agents, and authors to hold *Galaktika*'s publisher accountable for reproducing copyrighted works in print and online issues of the magazine in violation of the authors' rights. The organizations became involved last fall after literary agent/lawyer Jonathan Lyons (a member of the Authors Guild) brought it to the Guild's attention. "After we realized the extent of the problem," said Authors Guild executive director Mary Rasenberger, "it quickly became clear that a collective response from the author community was needed to fully address the problem. The Authors Guild exists to take action in situations like this." SFWA had already been working to resolve members' claims through its Grievance Committee, but realized that a joint effort by both organizations was more likely to yield results for all affected authors.

Pursuant to the agreement, Metropolis provided the Guild and SFWA with a list of all unauthorized stories that appeared in *Galaktika*'s past issues. It also confirmed its commitment to seek permission before publishing copyrighted works in the future and to remove all infringing works from their online media. Most importantly, the agreement legally obligates Metropolis to offer a reasonable fee for each infringed work, to be agreed in good faith individually with those authors whose works were infringed in *Galaktika*. The agreement does not settle any author's particular claims, but sets a benchmark for transparency and gives individual authors leverage in pursuing their claims. Moreover, Metropolis Media will not be released from the claims of infringement that the Authors Guild and SFWA might bring until all of the authors' individual claims have been settled to the Guild's and SFWA's reasonable satisfaction. To that end, SFWA will be publicizing the list of authors and estates that are owed money and contacting them individually when possible.

"Metropolis Media was an open and attentive negotiating partner," said Rasenberger. "We're confident that it will address individual claims honestly and in good faith. While ignorance of the law is not an excuse, Metropolis's willingness to compensate the authors whose rights were violated and to respect authors' rights going forward is a step in the right direction. The Authors Guild will keep an eye on Metropolis Media to ensure that it abides by the terms of the agreement and fairly treats authors whose works they have used and will use in the future." SFWA, whose connections in the science fiction and fantasy community run very deep, will also be monitoring Metropolis's commitment to negotiate in good faith.

Cat Rambo, President of SFWA, added, "In today's complex publishing world, the writers often get overlooked. SFWA is pleased to be working with the Authors Guild in order to represent the interests of writers and defending their rights."

Authors (or agents representing authors) whose works have been infringed in *Galaktika* may contact Dr. Katalin Mund with their claims. She can be reached at mund.katalin@gmail.com. Authors Guild

members can also contact the Authors Guild at staff@authorsguild.org for help negotiating their settlements. SFWA members who believe that *Galaktika* is not living up to this agreement should contact John E. Johnston III at griefcom@sfga.org.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS GUILD

The Authors Guild has served as the collective voice of American authors since its beginnings in 1912. Its over 9,000 members include novelists, historians, journalists, and poets—traditionally and independently published—as well as literary agents and representatives of writers’ estates. The Guild is dedicated to creating a community for authors while advocating for them on issues of copyright, fair contracts, free speech, and tax fairness. Please visit www.authorsguild.org.

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ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY WRITERS OF AMERICA

Founded in 1965, SFWA Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization for published authors and industry professionals in the fields of science fiction, fantasy, and related genres. SFWA informs, supports, promotes, defends, and advocates for all writers of the SFF community. Visit www.sfga.org for more information.

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