



PODCAST #22 – SHOW NOTES

MUSIC HAS VALUE

Hey creatives!

You're listening to podcast #22 of the **Coffee With Camilla** podcast where we discuss the music industry! I'm your host Camilla Kleindienst with Banner Music in Nashville TN.

Today we are going to discuss the monetary value of music.

Obviously when you are a songwriter, performing artist, musician, graphic artist, stylist or whatever — you know there is value because either you are being paid for your work or you know someone who is. This is a real industry / real businesses with people who make a living making music or involved in the entertainment world.

But views on Monetary value of songs and music differ a lot across the board in our industry. And some would say the monetary value of music has devalued since the internet has developed to this level. Others might argue due to “controls and controllers” within the industry the value of songs and music was over inflated in the 1980's & 1990's and where we are now (or coming out of) was simply a correction that all industries go through as technology is developed and barriers are broken down. With either scenario, the results are the same, we in the music and entertainment industry must find ways to continue our work and make a living.

I imagine folks from a lot of different industries would say the same thing about their industry. Such as Camera Companies - Recording Studios - Brick & Mortar boutique stores - Heating/Cooling companies - Newspaper & Book Printers etc. Technology advances have really changed these industries as well. The consumer would say for the better - the creators & business owners in these fields might not agree.

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There is something unique about our industry; we constantly battle these issues/opinions:

- Most people, including decision makers, consider themselves a music expert because they have been enjoying music all their lives.
- Music is not something to be owned by anyone.
- Music/Songs are “out there” in the sound waves and isn’t really a product because it can’t be held in hands or delivered in a shipping box.
- Music is easy to create.
- Once music is released, it shouldn’t have to be purchased or licensed.
- Musicians, songwriters, producers etc don’t really have jobs, they are just out there trying to make a buck on their hobby.

Let’s tackle each of these opinions one at a time:

Everybody’s An Expert:

It’s really not fair to say “Everybody” because I have run into a few people who say, *“I know nothing about music, but...”* then they go on to say they love or don’t love something about a song. But within our industry - there are very talented people with positions of authority who make decisions on songs/musicians/producers/artists every day. They base their decisions on their experience, professional opinion and “gut” most of the time and the opinions of their staff/team members. When you are a songwriter, musician, producer or artist trying to connect with those personalities, and to land a positive result or “cut” or “deal” with one of them, you have to realize each individual has their own opinion and “gut check” so trying to tailor your songs or music to each individual personality preference will create a lot of frustration. Because at the level of the “decision maker” there are a lot of individuals at each company. So when there are so many “layers” of decision makers and various companies, you can see how there are so many experts with authority to get your songs/projects through. These are the true gatekeepers and recognized experts.

But there are other people who consider themselves an expert, even if they don’t say they are. These are the people who don’t necessarily have a career in making decisions in our industry, but you run into for whatever reason and are wanting to

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work with them in some way. They know less about our industry than you do yet they weigh their decisions heavily on their knowledge or opinion. This is very frustrating but if you have a need from them, you have to try to frame your needs and issues in a way that they feel respected although you know they aren't the expert in our industry that they think they are.

Music Shouldn't Be Owned:

This is one of the most frustrating issues I deal with. But there are really people out there, that really believe all music should be NON owned, for the benefit of the "world" and copyright ownership should be done away with. This is real. So when I run into people who question ownership of copyrights - which is usually when they don't want to pay for a usage, I simply say music is property like any other property you own, such a land. It is managed and paid for each use. Be on the lookout and remember you are a property owner when you own songs!

Songs/Music is a product?

Yes! You can't touch it because its sound waves but its really a product to be licensed. Licensing music is a real business and it's frustrating when you run into people who want to use your music for their event or business but don't see it as a real product that must be paid for. Everything is negotiable as far as rates and time frame of usage, and sometimes you can offer a "gratus" license but never forget, your songs/music is real property, a real product that deserves respect and monetized.

Music is Easy to Create (so what's the big deal)

After I roll my eyes and say in my head, "*Then you create it yourself*" I try remember that I'm talking to someone outside the industry that believes they are an expert. If you run into this opinion, as best you can, inform the individual of the truth that songwriters/artists/producers work hours and hours to create the music or song. Creating great music is painstaking crafting and developing and shouldn't be dismissed as "easy". And therefore not valuable.

Once Music Is Released, It Shouldn't Have to Be Purchased or Licensed

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This is a real concept I hear from time to time. *“I love the songs from the band “Chicago” or “Bon Jovi” and I want to put them in my film or release them on my CD or digital release but I don’t feel I should be required to secure a license. After all those songs are old and everybody knows them and those bands are super rich and can afford to let me use their songs.”* This opinion is similar to others I’ve mentioned and really the most annoying to me. The fact that an item or piece of property is very popular, will help your career or product be more successful make the value of the song by “Chicago” or “Bon Jovi” MORE valuable, not less. The fact that a person wants to use the known song actually confirms the value of the property, not diminishes it. Songs are property, Owned by Someone (or a business) and have real value. Using it without a license is unlawful with real consequences.

Musicians, songwriters, producers etc don’t really have jobs, they are just out there trying to make a buck on their hobby.

This is so far from the truth that it blows my mind. In every industry there are “hobbyists” and “professionals” and sometimes levels of productions/producers in between the two. Think on that a second. Don’t you know someone that isn’t working in the concrete industry or plumbing or electrical industry for a full time living but are out doing it as a side job contractor? But at the same time you know of people who are working full time in those occupations too? There are people in all industries doing this. So in our industry there are musicians, songwriters, producers, performing artists that are in their field FULL TIME, making a living as a REAL career. They are professionals working in their field of trade becoming an expert in their craft. Then there are others doing it as a side job and yes, others who do it for fun as a hobby. Never forget to respect all levels in our industry. It’s easy to respect the professionals with credentials but remember, we are in this together as an industry and we can find ways to respect everyone.

REAL Scenario:

Just a few weeks ago a couple of our staff songwriters wrote a song, created a directional work session recording and we hired a band, producer and vocalist to record the track. This was all done with a specific corporation in mind. We pitched the track to a corporation whose top level executive (founder) loved the song. He had mentioned he tried to use a well known rock band song in his production but

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“couldn’t get clearance” so our song would work perfectly. But when I began discussing the license of the song he began to backtrack and didn’t really want to use the song. The license rate we discussed wasn’t the problem, he didn’t want a 2 or 5 year “use” term. He wanted a perpetual use and preferred an exclusive use. Of course I couldn’t license the song under these terms. So the executive of the corporation “passed” on licensing our song, we ended on good terms so who knows what the future will be on that business relationship but the song and production is solid and I believe we will find a place for this song with favorable licensing terms for our song. But think about this. As the copyright owner, I could have, just to make a “buck” licensed the song to this corporation under his terms. I could have accepted the rate, provided an exclusive, perpetual license. But isn’t that very similar to actually owning the copyright? I couldn’t relicense it because it would be “exclusive” and I would have no way to regain control over the song because of the “perpetual license”. So the value of that song is reduced to the one time license. Make sense? This is not a good plan. So I passed on the opportunity to license for better licensing terms down the road.

Thank you for listening to podcast #22 of the **Coffee With Camilla Podcast Titled: *Music Has Monetary Value***. I hope I have touched on a few items for you to think about. Never forget what you are doing has real monetary value and our industry is stronger by your belief in that.

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We’ll talk again soon! Stay Creative