Concerts 101

In addition to paying royalties for radio spins and the use of musical compositions on TV and in Cinemas, SOCAN also pays royalties when your compositions are performed live in concert. This revenue is payable whenever your compositions are played live as a part of a concert - that is, an event where live music is the focus or the primary reason for the public to attend. Anything from a large outdoor music festival to a club/bar performance or even a house concert can be considered a concert. Concert royalties are often the first earnings new members receive from SOCAN.

How SOCAN pays for live performances:

Concert royalties are determined by SOCAN’s distribution rules for all eligible concert performances, but some conditions do apply.

1. The presenter or venue needs to have paid their SOCAN licence fee.

Since SOCAN pays your concert royalties out of the license fee we’ve received for that particular concert, getting that revenue in the door is paramount. We can’t make a royalty distribution until we have the money to pass on to you. In most cases, SOCAN's live concert license (Tariff 4A) is a percentage of gross ticket receipts. Most venues and presenters who regularly stage concerts are licensed by SOCAN.

2. For shows in clubs and bars, a minimum cover or ticket price of $6 must be in place.

The $6 minimum cover helps demonstrate that the public is there primarily to hear your music - in other words, that the event they are paying to see is a concert.

What we need from you:

While promoters and other concert presenters regularly notify SOCAN of performances, we rely to a great extent on information supplied by you. In order to file for royalties, members are required to submit a Notification of Live Music Performance (NLMP) form that provides details about their performance. These forms are available online at or at any SOCAN office. As well, proof of performance is required in order to submit an NLMP form, such as a ticket stub, newspaper clipping, program, contract or letter/email from the promoter – something to prove that the performance took place. Members have up to one year after a performance to submit this information to SOCAN.

When you will get paid:

If the documentation you’ve sent us is complete and if the promoter pays the licence fee promptly, you can expect to be paid approximately nine months after your live performance.

If you have any questions about this or any other topic, contact SOCAN at 1-866-30.SOCAN or go to www.socan.ca