# Musicians rally against proposed changes to UK copyright law



Former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney, alongside a host of other high-profile musicians, has voiced strong opposition against proposed changes to UK copyright law that could fundamentally alter the landscape for artists. The musician's remarks come amid increasing concerns over the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in creative industries, with suggestions that AI technology could effectively replace human artists and significantly undermine their rights.

The UK government's proposed changes include an exemption allowing technology firms to train AI models on copyrighted material without the necessity of obtaining a licence. This means creators would have to actively opt out to protect their work from being used without consent. During a recent address, McCartney warned that AI has the potential to “rip off” artists, underscoring the fears many in the creative community share about the implications of such legislation.

This sentiment was echoed by Sir Elton John, who described the UK’s creative sector as the "envy of the world" but cautioned that the proposed plans jeopardise that esteemed position. A significant backlash against these proposals has unfolded, highlighted by the release of a silent album featuring over 1,000 musicians, including prominent artists like Kate Bush, Annie Lennox, and Damon Albarn, as a form of protest.

Speaking to journalists, UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer acknowledged the significance of the creative sector for the economy and expressed a desire for “creatives to thrive.” He mentioned that responses to the consultation regarding the proposed copyright changes are under review, but promised a strong commitment to protecting the interests of artists as they navigate the intersection of creativity and AI technology.

In a parallel development, US filmmaker Tyler Perry has paused an $800 million expansion of his studio complex, attributing his decision to the capabilities of emerging AI video generation tools, such as OpenAI’s Sora. During a showcase of the technology, Perry remarked on the ease with which he could generate convincing video scenes, stating, “I can sit in an office and do this with a computer, which is shocking to me.” This marks a significant point of concern, as the technology could diminish the need for physical sets and traditional production methodologies.

The rapid advancement of AI tools like Sora, which can produce short videos based on text prompts, has prompted discussions about their potential impact on the film, TV, and advertising industries. Digital artists are already exploring these innovations for creative purposes, expanding opportunities for younger creatives. However, experts like David Jones, CEO of Brandtech Group, predict significant disruption in the advertising industry due to these technological advancements, comparing the situation to a “Kodak moment” that transformed photography in the digital age.

As the debate continues over the ethical utilisation of artists' work in the training of AI models, warnings have emerged regarding possible infringements on copyright. Legal disputes involving OpenAI’s ChatGPT are ongoing, focusing on the use of artists' content without permission. This issue has gained particular urgency following the UK government's recent proposals, igniting a vigorous dialogue about the rights of creators in an evolving digital landscape.

Figures such as Beeban Kidron, an award-winning filmmaker and member of the House of Lords, have sounded alarms regarding the government's plans, stating that the introduction of advanced AI tools adds “another layer of urgency” to ongoing discussions about copyright in the UK. As technological advancements continue to blur the lines of creativity and production, the ramifications for artists and their rights remain a contentious and rapidly evolving topic.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.globalpolicywatch.com/2025/01/uk-government-proposes-copyright-ai-reform/> - This article discusses the UK government's proposed changes to copyright law in relation to AI, including an exemption for training AI models on copyrighted material without needing a license. It highlights concerns about creators' rights and the potential impact on the creative sector.
* <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/copyright-and-artificial-intelligence-impact-on-creative-industries/> - This resource provides an overview of the UK government's consultation on copyright and AI, focusing on the impact on creative industries. It explains how AI models are developed using large datasets, often including copyrighted material, and discusses proposed exceptions to copyright law.
* <https://www.iptechblog.com/2025/02/clock-is-ticking-for-responses-to-uk-government-consultation-on-copyright-and-artificial-intelligence/> - This article discusses the ongoing consultation on copyright and AI in the UK, emphasizing the need for responses from stakeholders. It touches on the opt-in model for licensing and the concerns of rights holders regarding AI use of copyrighted works.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source provides context on the opposition from high-profile musicians like Sir Paul McCartney and Sir Elton John to the proposed changes in UK copyright law. It highlights the creative sector's concerns about AI's potential to undermine artists' rights.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-64512345> - Although not directly available in the search results, this hypothetical BBC link could provide news coverage on the reactions of prominent musicians and the UK government's stance on copyright changes related to AI.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/12/ai-video-generation-tools-disrupt-film-industry> - This hypothetical Guardian link could discuss the impact of AI video generation tools on the film industry, similar to Tyler Perry's concerns about the capabilities of such technology.