

We admire individuals with that 'special little something': the ability to create and be creative. *Invent, design* truly innovative tools, objects or services. Although we think creativity is a recent phenomenon, it isn't. As far back as the eighteenth century, the English writer Horace Walpole wrote that being creative means taking a rationally uncontrolled path to see things differently, to discover novelty in the known, to find innovation in the usual. He believed it was travelling with the mind that sparked new intuitions and new ideas.

Words that immediately conjure up an imaginary world. But Accatino brings us back to earth with a bang. In the real world people ask: "Sorry, but... what is it you really do?" The question isn't asked by your next door neighbour, but by the friend who came with you to see the design of the most important exhibition in the world. The real world is the disappointment on your

mother's face when the concierge says: "When's your son going to get a real job?" But above all, the real world involves being ruthlessly exploited (why, do creatives sleep? *Of course not...* you're slaves to design, a new social group); it means being *young* until you're forty when you're offered your first real contract, halleluja!

In an interconnected world in which only interconnection keeps you up-to-date Accatino wants ideas to be protected too. A creative should be able to at least decide if he wants to protect his idea, or like a *passionate visionary* let it go free and be shared. But do we have the right tools to achieve this goal? Not at present. This prompted Accatino to write the "Open Letter to creatives and intellectual workers" in 2011: to ensure that laws protecting creative ideas were passed.

The letter was immediately signed by creatives such as Annamaria Testa, Giampiero

Solari, Pablo Echaurren, Stefano Disegni, Antonio Barrese, Pasquale Diaferia and Bad Avenue. We shouldn't forget to mention that the moment the letter was posted online it went viral and became the most read 'news item of the week'. In 2013 it developed into a Petition asking the Government *in primis*, to safeguard ideas and rewrite the law on copyright. All this led to the TED held in Rome and presented by Accatino. It can be seen and heard [here](#). The colour of this battle? Yellow, and since it involves creatives, not just any old yellow, but Pantone Yellow C. Please don't make a mistake!

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ACCATINO

CREO ERGO SUM

“*The current copyright act didn't fall from heaven. It was drawn up by the very powerful music and publishing industry of the late nineteenth century, and sponsored by Casa Ricordi and by bigwigs like Verdi, Puccini or Verga to protect the interests of musicians, writers and publishers. The problem is that it hasn't changed since then.*”

Telos: You are an author, scriptwriter and writer. But you are first and foremost a creative. A creative who fights for recognition, protection and respect for the expertise and rights of publicists, web masters, copywriters, artistic directors, graphic artists, communicators, programmers and video makers. Do you think that Italy is really ready for a change in "mentality, vision" and ... rules?

Alfredo Accatino: No-one's ready for change. No-one has ever been ready for change. That doesn't mean we shouldn't encourage, support and defend change. If we'd asked contemporary consumers what they thought about *Impressionism* or *Cubism* undoubtedly these genres would never have developed. Just think of the current law on copyright. It didn't fall from heaven. It was drawn up by the very powerful music and publishing industry of the late nineteenth century, and sponsored by Casa Ricordi and by bigwigs like Verdi, Puccini or Verga to protect the interests of musicians, writers and publishers. The problem is that it hasn't changed since then. It's turned rights into privileges for the chosen few, for a caste; and it doesn't apply to new professions, new media and new languages.

It's never helped creativity to blossom in Italy.

The work of a creative and the protection of copyright go hand in hand; in Italy this inevitably means the SIAE (Italian Society of Authors and Publishers). If we wanted to "revamp" the law governing copyright what would be the most important and urgent thing to do?

First of all I'm wondering whether the SIAE, a black hole full of debts, has the right to manage all copyright, because today most of their profits are used to pay for their countless local offices and members of staff who go around bars and outdoor dance halls to check the musical bordereau and wedding receptions. We need to extend copyright to many creative fields and digitalise everything. We also have to protect commercial creations. Or the ownership of an idea, perhaps by leaving it free, but this has to be a choice not an imposition. Because nowadays if you have an idea, you don't know how to register or protect it in Italy... you have to hide it behind the word "Format", even if it's an entrepreneurial project or the mechanism in a game. You have to trust in something called "certified date". As a result, if you write a tune for a product you'll even be paid for 70 years from the moment you die.

But if you write a claim for that product or develop the key concept that will make the brand different to all other brands, you won't be entitled to anything except the initial payment: few, cursed and immediately. Ideas have no legal value. In Italy abstract patents or software ideas don't exist. And



Alfredo Accatino, is one of the most famous and award-winning Italian creatives. Creative Director & Partner at *Filmmaster Events* where he has worked since the nineties, Alfredo has created and produced some of the most important events in Italy and abroad: *Ceremonies for the Olympic Games and Paralympics in Turin 2006*, *Flag Handover Salt Lake City 2002*, the shows to launch the *Fiat 500* (2006) and *VW Golf* (2013), *Ceremonies for the Mediterranean Games and Dubai World Cup*. In 2015 he wrote and staged *Enigma* (the first of a series of permanent technological shows developed for the international market), the Opening Ceremony of *Expo Milano 2015*, *La divina Bellezza - Discovering Siena*, and has published the book *The Events Master* (Adc). Writer, polemicist, blogger, he is the author of humorous books (*I swear I tell the Lie, I will be boorish, Insults have made history, Imbeciles*), publications on communication (*The Events Dictionary*), and education in images and arts (Hi Art, Edart, The Imaginary museum). He has written TV programmes and fiction for RAI (*Il Generale, Viva Colombo, Ordinario Straordinario, Pavarotti & Friends*) and Mediaset (*Calzedonia Summer Show*). In 2009 and 2014 Accatino was voted Creative of the Year at the Bea - Best Event Award. Since 2011, together with the movement *Rivoluzione Creativa*, he has worked to ensure recognition of creativity, research, the safeguard of creative professions and the reform of the Copyright Act. His motto? " *I don't know whether to laugh or cry. Insure, I laugh!*"

there's no jurisprudence, in other words rulings that can help other judges make their own decision as it happens in the United States. For example the Facebook case when Mark Zuckerberg was accused of intellectual theft by his university colleagues, the Winklevoss twins, Cameron and Tyler, who were looking for a 600 million USD settlement and walked away with "only" sixty-five.

In short, this is what I'm asking:

- Application of copyright to new categories, expressive forms and technologies in order to reduce unfair treatment that ignores technological and social progress;
- Legislative upgrade and inclusion of "software idea" and "abstract patent," concepts which currently have no juridical relevance or protection;
- New deposit/certified date procedure so that anyone can access deposit systems. Freedom to apply copyright or offer it using free-software procedures, but retaining ownership;
- Reformulation and codification of copyright for commercial creativity (communication, events, performances, web, publishing) pursuant to the *Bertotti against Fiat* ruling (n.3508/2011 Turin Tribunal) acknowledging intellectual property rights in advertising communications;
- Reform/replacement of SIAE with a new juridical protection society. Or the possibility, as in other countries, to have several agencies that manage, collect and promote creative activities.

The fight began on 16 October 2011 when we shared the "Open Letter to creatives and intellectual workers". A document written on the spur of the moment, but one which, for the first time, proposed to not only safeguard and protect the rights of a transversal category of professionals working in all fields of creative expression, but also to reform the copyright act. A great story you can read on www.creativi.eu

"In Italy you can say one thing and completely the opposite. No-one remembers what politicians, entrepreneurs, football players, criminologists and futurologists said six months ago." This sentence was taken from your caustic, amusing book "Imbecilli" (Imbeciles). Has a communicator to bear in mind this Italian habit?

I wrote it as the introduction to my book, but it's the pure and simple truth. Each time I've been involved, for one reason or another, in a news item and have ended up in print, or known about people or facts to do with a story, I've discovered inaccuracies, sometimes paradoxical inaccuracies in the news article. Almost as if inaccuracies were inherent in providing information. So now when I read a story, I'm always very doubtful. And I've very few certainties.

Every and all public figures exploit the public's weak memory. Convinced that all those words will drift away, like tears in rain.

The media should publish earlier statements by politicians and opinion leaders more often, it would improve coherence and accuracy. They should publish them every now and then to remind people that words are like stones, at least that's what I think.

As a professional, did you ever have to change your mind?

Changing your mind, whether it's at work or in life, is a *sine qua non* of life, and we shouldn't deny it. We need to accept it and make allowances.

And at times make an effort to change one's mind.

Sometimes I think that in the last few years I've been dozens of different people, some of which I'm now ashamed of. But they all made me who I am. And helped me doing what I'm doing in the best possible way.