Law, Technology and the Arts Symposium: The WIPO Copyright Treaties: 10 Years Later - Introduction

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LAW, TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS
SYMPOSIUM: THE WIPO
COPYRIGHT TREATIES: 10 YEARS LATER

INTRODUCTION

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In 1996, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) adopted two treaties pertaining to copyrights in the digital age—the Copyright Treaty and the Performances and Phonograms Treaty. As a result, legislatures from signatory countries, including the U.S., adopted various revisions to their copyright legislation. In the U.S., this included the enactment of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act as well as attempts to draft legislation to protect proprietary interests in valuable commercial databases. The year 2006 marked the tenth anniversary of the treaties. The 2006 Law, Technology and the Arts Symposium (co-sponsored by the Frederick K. Cox International Law Center) provided a ten-year retrospective on the legal and policy issues underlying the adoption of the treaties and the ramifications of the implementation of relevant treaty provisions into local law.

The symposium organizers were again lucky enough to have the Case Western Reserve Law Review editors contribute to the organization of the symposium and publish the symposium proceedings in the Law Review. This publication includes some of the papers from the symposium, as well as some other related articles that were not derived from work presented at the symposium.

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Contributions from symposium speakers include papers presented by Professor David Vaver, who at the time of the symposium held a chair in Intellectual Property and Information Law at Oxford University and served as Director of the Oxford Intellectual Property Research Centre, and who is now a professor at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University in Toronto. Other contributions are from Ms. Gwen Hinze, International Affairs Director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and Professor Mark Davison, Professor of Law at Monash Law School. These speakers contributed truly international perspectives on matters relating to important developments in digital copyright law since the implementation of the 1996 WIPO treaties. A full webcast of the symposium, including remarks by the symposium keynote speaker, Professor Ruth Okediji, William L. Prosser Professor of Law at the University of Minnesota, is available at http://law.case.edu/Lectures.aspx?lec_id=128.

The symposium itself was a truly unique contribution to international and comparative academic and practical debate about important developments in digital copyright law over the past decade, and this Law Review publication will hopefully help shape debate in these areas for years to come. Special thanks are due to Elizabeth LeBlanc and Frank Esposito, Jr., previous Editors in Chief of the Law Review, and Steven Day, the Executive Symposium Editor for this symposium, for their efforts in putting this publication together. Additionally, all of the law review students who worked on the symposium and the publication are to be congratulated on their hard work to make these papers available to readers of the Law Review. In particular, the symposium organizers would like to thank Ms. Amanda McMurray Roe, who completed work on the symposium edition of the Law Review in 2009–2010 due to unforeseen problems in the earlier publication process. Her hard work and dedication to resolving some earlier difficulties have brought this volume to fruition. We thank her and hope readers enjoy this volume.