FAIR TRADE MUSIC INTERNATIONAL

PRESS RELEASE

Pia Raug and Rick Carnes announced as recipients of the 2026 Fair Trade Music International Award for outstanding contribution to music creator rights

9 November 2026 – Buenos Aires, Argentina: Fair Trade Music International (FTMI) has announced Danish singer-songwriter and poet, Pia Raug, and renowned Nashville songwriter, Rick Carnes, as recipients of the 2026 FTMI Award for outstanding contribution to music creator rights. The presentation was made by FTMI chair Marco Foley during the International Council of Music Authors (CIAM) general assembly in the Argentinean capital.

The first FTMI Award recipient is a Danish composer, singer-songwriter, poet and novelist, Pia Raug. She began her songwriting career in 1973 before releasing her gold-certified album "Hello Little Dream" in 1978. Four decades of songwriting and live performance followed, with her work extending across genres and traditions. She is perhaps best known for the song "Rainy Day in November" which has become a national treasure in her native Denmark.

Pia made an equally significant impact on the rights of music creators, beginning with her appointment in 1987 to the board of DJBFA, now known as AUTOR and the largest association for Composers and Songwriters in Denmark. Delegate positions at a number of music organisations followed before her 25 year commitment to authors' rights progressed with senior roles at the Nordic Council Music Prize, the Danish Music and Arts Councils and the Danish Film institute. In 2003 she was elected as the first woman president of the International Council of Music Creators (CIAM). Here Pia served two terms before stepping down to become vice president of the European Council of Artists and chair of KODA's board of directors. As an award-winning music creator, advocate and activist, Pia Raug has made a huge contribution to the lives of working music creators both in Denmark and abroad.

"Thank you so much for this award, this token of your respect and even more so, of your remembrance for the work that I did along with my colleagues," said Ms Raug, before offering advice for fellow activists. "Please do not forget your own music, even if you are becoming effective in your advocacy work. You have to make your own composing and writing a priority for the politicians to hear you."

The second FTMI Award recipient is the renowned Nashville songwriter and lifelong music rights activist, Rick Carnes. His career began as a touring musician in 1960s Memphis, during the Stax/Volt soul era. In 1978 he moved to Nashville with his wife, Janis, and together they forged a celebrated musical partnership, recording for RCA, Elektra Asylum, Warner and MCA. As a

writer, his work has appeared on two double-diamond hits and an incredible 40 platinum albums with songs recorded by Garth Brooks, Conway Twitty, Alabama, Loretta Lynn and Dean Martin.

Rick turned that experience into advocacy and following 18 years on the board of the Songwriters Guild of America (SGA), was elected as its president in 2003; a role that he still holds today. During this time, Rick became the recognized spokesperson for songwriter issues on Capitol Hill, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee and fighting on behalf of music creators for fair remuneration and music licensing reform. He became vice president of the National Music Council in 2004 and communications chair of the Music United Coalition in 2005. He has lectured on commercial songwriting at Middle Tennessee State University, is the vice president of Music Creators North America (MCNA) and has served on the board of Fair Trade Music International since its inception.

Rick is an amazing songwriter, a tireless advocate for music creator rights and there is nobody more worthy of this accolade. Following receipt of this award, Rick will move to an advisory position at FTMI where the board is delighted for the opportunity to retain his expertise and experience.

“I want to thank the Fair Trade Music guys for giving me this award,” said Mr Carnes. “I seldom win anything in terms of accolades, apart from the occasional game of chess now and then. But of all the awards I might have gotten throughout my career, I think that this is the one I appreciate the most.”

Fair Trade Music International is an independent, not-for-profit organization, headquartered in Toronto and led by an international board of professional music creators and industry experts. The FTMI movement has existed for nearly two decades, beginning at Ottawa university in 2007, spreading to the Songwriters Association of Canada in 2010 before reaching MCNA and CIAM. Today FTMI counts many of the world’s largest music authors’ societies among its supporters.

FTMI works to combine global networking, education and awareness initiatives that promote the emergence of an ethical, sustainable and transparent music ecosystem. The annual FTMI Awards are perhaps the best known of these initiatives and were launched to celebrate the outstanding contributions that individual creators, campaigners and law makers are making to the cause of fair remuneration in music. Now in their fourth year, the awards have been presented at ceremonies in Rio de Janeiro, Montréal and Johannesburg to six exceptional recipients from Cape Verdi, Germany, Argentina, Japan, South Africa and South Korea. Planning for next year's FTMI Awards will commence in Spring 2027.

Learn more at www.fairtrademusicinternational.org.

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