

Fran Drescher
President
SAG-AFTRA

Duncan Crabtree-Ireland
National Executive Director and Chief Negotiator
SAG-AFTRA

Nyon, 17 July 2023

Dear Fran, dear Duncan
Dear members of SAG-AFTRA,

On behalf of UNI Global Union, and its affiliates from around the world, we write to express our strong solidarity with SAG-AFTRA in its strike against AMPTP. This fight for fair pay and for respect for a member's right to control the use of their likeness, voice and other attributes is just, timely and important for all workers. UNI is a global union federation for service workers which includes within our ranks UNI Media Entertainment and Arts, which is especially impacted by the changes within your industry.

Digital technologies have dramatically changed the entertainment industry and movement towards streaming was further accelerated during the pandemic. The residual formulas have not kept pace and, as a result, your members have seen their real salaries plummet.

On top of this, the employment of SAG-AFTRA members (and their long-term economic viability) is now threatened by the use of generative AI, which means that the likenesses and voices of SAG-AFTRA members could be used without compensation. This issue must be addressed through bargaining, and the studios' refusal to do so sets a terrible precedent for workers everywhere. It is a fundamental demand that the creative product of actors, writers and other creators must not be fed into the AI machine without permission and negotiation.

By launching the first strikes ever where AI is a key bargaining issue, the Writers Guilds and the SAG-AFTRA are on the frontlines of determining whether workers will share in the benefits of digitalization, or whether generative AI will be yet another tool to drive inequality. Indeed, the workers in the media industry are the first line of defence for workers everywhere regarding AI. Just as your members give life to the characters they create; your strike is giving voice to the millions of workers who want wages with dignity and fair work in a digital era.

There is no question that workers around the world are inspired and aware of your brave and strong steps. I can assure you that this strike is a global event. Around the world, everyone knows of "Hollywood," and they know that when the actors stand together, they are a powerful force indeed.

We wish you every success and will offer our concrete solidarity as requested! To borrow a phrase from our other sectors: When we fight, we win!

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruben Cortina'.

Ruben Cortina
UNI Global Union President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christy Hoffman'.

Christy Hoffman
UNI Global Union General Secretary