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21 Attorneys for Plaintiffs

22 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
 23 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
 24 WESTERN DIVISION

25 ABKCO MUSIC, INC.; BIG MACHINE
 26 MUSIC, LLC; BOOSEY & HAWKES,
 27 INC.; CHERIO CORPORATION;
 28 CONCORD MUSIC PUBLISHING LLC;
 CONCORD MUSIC GROUP, INC.;
 DOWNTOWN MUSIC PUBLISHING
 LLC; HIPGNOSIS SFH I LIMITED;
 HIPGNOSIS SONGS GROUP, LLC;
 KOBALT MUSIC PUBLISHING
 AMERICA, INC.; MPL
 COMMUNICATIONS, INC.; MPL MUSIC
 PUBLISHING, INC.; PANTHER MUSIC
 CORP.; PEER INTERNATIONAL
 CORPORATION; PEERMUSIC LTD.;
 PEERMUSIC III, LTD.; POLYGRAM
 PUBLISHING, INC.; RODGERS &
 HAMMERSTEIN HOLDINGS LLC;
 PULSE 2.0, LLC; RESERVOIR MEDIA
 MANAGEMENT, INC.; SONGS OF
 PEER, LTD.; SONGS OF UNIVERSAL,
 INC.; SOUTHERN MUSIC PUBLISHING
 CO., INC.; SPIRIT MUSIC HOLDINGS,
 INC.; UNIVERSAL MUSIC – MGB NA
 LLC; UNIVERSAL MUSIC – Z TUNES
 LLC; UNIVERSAL MUSIC CORP.

CASE NO.

**COMPLAINT FOR DIRECT
 COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT,
 CONTRIBUTORY COPYRIGHT
 INFRINGEMENT, AND
 VICARIOUS COPYRIGHT
 INFRINGEMENT**

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Mitchell

1 UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING,
2 INC.; UNIVERSAL MUSICA, INC.,

3 Plaintiffs,

4 v.

5 ROBLOX CORPORATION,

6 Defendant.

7 Plaintiffs ABKCO Music Inc., Big Machine Music, LLC, Boosey &
8 Hawkes, Inc., Cherio Corporation, Concord Music Publishing LLC, Concord
9 Music Group, Inc., Downtown Music Publishing LLC, Hipgnosis SFH I Limited,
10 Hipgnosis Songs Group, LLC, Kobalt Music Publishing America, Inc., MPL
11 Communications, Inc., MPL Music Publishing, Inc., Panther Music Corp., Peer
12 International Corporation, Peermusic Ltd., Peermusic III, Ltd., Polygram
13 Publishing, Inc., Rodgers & Hammerstein Holdings LLC, Pulse 2.0, LLC,
14 Reservoir Media Management, Inc., Songs of Peer, Ltd., Songs of Universal, Inc.,
15 Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc., Spirit Music Holdings, Inc., Universal Music
16 – MGB NA LLC, Universal Music – Z Tunes LLC, Universal Music Corp.,
17 Universal Music Publishing, Inc., and Universal Musica, Inc. (collectively,
18 “Plaintiffs”), by their attorneys, for their Complaint against Defendant Roblox
19 Corporation (“Roblox”), allege on personal knowledge as to matters relating to
20 themselves and on information and belief as to all other matters, as set forth below.

21 **NATURE OF CASE**

22 1. Plaintiffs are major and independent music publishers that create,
23 produce, acquire, license, and otherwise exploit musical compositions, both in the
24 United States and internationally. Collectively, Plaintiffs have invested significant
25 resources developing, marketing, and licensing countless iconic musical
26 compositions and modern hit songs, including, among many others, the music
27 catalogs of Imagine Dragons, deadmau5, Ed Sheeran, Ariana Grande, and the
28 Rolling Stones. Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and their representative

1 songwriters, bring this action seeking redress for Roblox’s willful copyright
2 infringement.

3 2. Roblox owns and operates an online video game platform and game
4 creation system marketed specifically to *young children and teens*. A publicly
5 traded company valued at over *\$55 billion*, Roblox has built that value on the
6 backs of unpaid music creators, flagrantly disregarding its responsibilities under
7 copyright law and systematically committing, encouraging, and inducing the
8 infringement of copyrighted musical works on a massive scale, which infringement
9 Roblox monetizes for substantial profits.

10 3. Roblox purports to create a “safe” online environment for its users,
11 consisting mostly of children under the age of 13.¹ In truth, Roblox actively preys
12 on its impressionable user base and their desire for popular music, teaching
13 children that pirating music is perfectly acceptable.

14 4. Roblox engages in copyright infringement on a massive scale by
15 deliberately creating a centralized synchronization (or “sync”) library of unlicensed
16 songs to be distributed, streamed, publicly performed, and incorporated into game
17 content. In creating this library, Roblox reproduces each song included therein,
18 charging users to upload music to be incorporated into their games. Roblox is fully
19 aware that it is required to obtain licenses to exploit copyrighted music on its
20 platform, including obtaining necessary reproduction, sync, and public
21 performance licenses, but willfully refuses to do so. Roblox is taking for itself
22 Plaintiffs’ creative and financial investments without permission and without
23 compensation, on a platform that earns revenue only for Roblox and its users.

24 5. Roblox is well aware that its platform is built and thrives on the
25 availability of copyrighted music. As Jon Vlassopoulos, Roblox’s global head of

26 ¹See Sec. & Exchange Comm., Form S-1 Registration Statement of Roblox
27 Corporation, p. 21 (Nov. 19, 2020),
28 [https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1315098/000119312520298230/d87104d
sl.htm](https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1315098/000119312520298230/d87104dsl.htm).

1 music, publicly stated just last year: “We want developers to have great music to
2 build games. We want the music to be, not production music, but really great
3 [commercial] music.”² (Alteration in original). To that end, Roblox *actively*
4 encourages its users to upload audio files containing copyrighted music and
5 incorporate them into game content on the Roblox platform. Roblox advertises the
6 importance of music in games and makes it easy for users to upload, share, and
7 stream full-length songs.

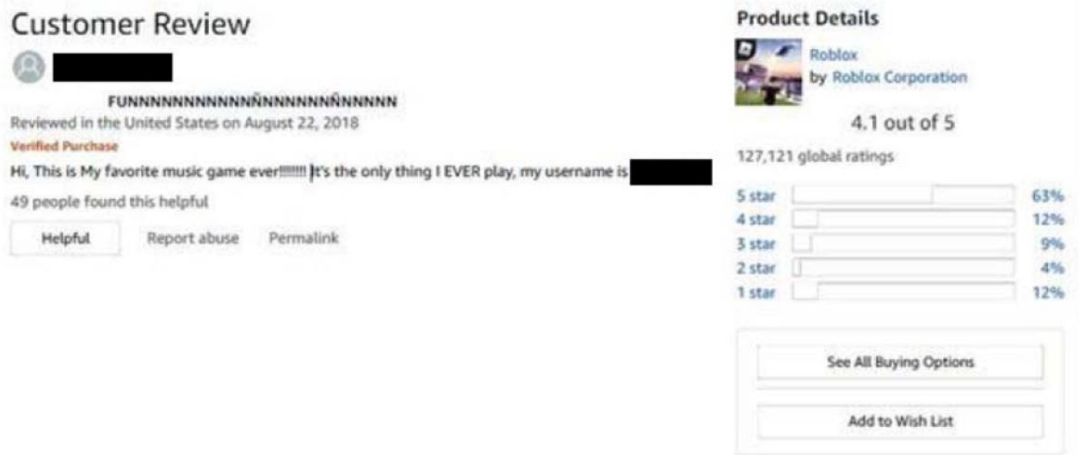
8 6. For instance, Roblox develops, sells, and endorses game items such as
9 “Boomboxes” and “Game Passes” that enable users to listen to music in games,
10 and which Roblox expressly promotes with taglines such as “Play the hottest jams
11 on ROBLOX all over town.” Such items have spawned a cottage industry of third-
12 party websites devoted to indexing and compiling the copyrighted music hosted by
13 Roblox to facilitate discovery and sharing of “the hottest jams.”

14 7. Critically, Roblox deliberately charges users for, and profits from,
15 every song that a user uploads to Roblox’s unlicensed library. In turn, Roblox
16 allows its users the option of advertising and charging others for access to a variety
17 of other items, including items specifically developed for playing copyrighted
18 music, such as Boomboxes and Game Passes, and games that feature popular
19 songs, and takes a commission on every transaction. By utilizing “Robux,” the
20 virtual currency that users must purchase from Roblox to upload music, Roblox
21 has created a thriving business and economy directly and consciously built on
22 infringement. Roblox’s clear goal is to incentivize its users to upload popular hits
23 and sought-after songs. Indeed, Roblox admitted in a recent disclosure filing that
24
25

26 ² See Stuart Dredge, *Roblox Head of Music Tells Labels and Artists: ‘We’re open*
27 *for business!’*, Musically (July 23, 2020),
28 <https://musically.com/2020/07/23/roblox-head-of-music-tells-labels-and-artists-were-open-for-business>.

1 “[w]e primarily generate revenue through the Roblox Platform, based on the direct
2 sale of Robux to users.”³

3 8. By offering access to the copyrighted content that users pay to upload,
4 Roblox drives a tremendous and growing number of users to its service. Roblox
5 currently averages 36.2 million active users *per day*, with a total user base of over
6 200 million. The availability of unlicensed popular music (such as that of
7 Plaintiffs) on Roblox not only attracts paying users—it retains them. Users
8 regularly report that the availability of music on Roblox is what keeps them
9 coming back, including one user who reported that Roblox was their “favorite
10 music game ever!!!!!!”:



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19 9. There is no question that Roblox has the right and ability to stop or
20 limit the infringement on its platform. But Roblox refuses to do so, so that it can
21 continue to reap huge profits from the availability of unlicensed music. While
22 Roblox touts itself as a platform for “user-generated” content, in reality, it is
23 Roblox—not users—that consciously selects what content appears on its platform.
24 Roblox is highly selective about what content it publishes, *employing over a
25 thousand human moderators to extensively pre-screen and review each and*

26
27 ³ See Sec. & Exchange Comm., Form S-1 Registration Statement of Roblox
28 Corporation, p. 113 (Nov. 19, 2020),
<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1315098/000119312520298230/d87104dcl.htm>

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