TODAY

foufsubjon fou » n vtjd

Robin Thicke song dispute continues

NEW YORK — Looks like the lines really are getting blurred.

BY - 01 NOVEMBER

NEW YORK — Looks like the lines really are getting blurred.

Robin Thicke's song Blurred Lines may be one of the year's biggest hits, but the song is the focus of a bitter dispute that has led to the family of the late Marvin Gaye filing a copyright lawsuit on Wednesday.

In August, Thicke and his two fellow songwriters, Pharrell Williams and Clifford Harris Jr. (also known as the rapper T.I.), sued the family of Marvin Gaye in a pre-emptive strike, saying that they expected Gaye's children to claim that Blurred Lines copied Gaye's 1977 hit Got To Give It Up.

The similarities between the songs — among them a smooth, retro beat and lots of falsetto —

have been noted by critics, and Thicke has acknowledged Got To Give It Up as an inspiration. But “being reminiscent of a ‘sound’ is not copyright infringement”, they claimed.

Two of Gaye’s children, Frankie and Nona, have responded with a countersuit, saying that not only does Blurred Lines infringe on their father’s copyright, another of Thicke’s songs, Love After War, copies a Gaye song, After The Dance.

According to the suit, a musicologist, Judith Finell, studied Blurred Lines and Got To Give It Up and found “a constellation of at least eight distinctive and important compositional elements” between them.

The Gayes also sued Sony/ATV Music Publishing, which controls the EMI publishing catalogue that includes Gaye’s songs. The Gayes accused Sony/ATV of breach of contract and of fiduciary duty by taking sides against the family in the dispute and trying to intimidate them into dropping the case.

According to the Gayes, Sony/ATV tried to convince them that their case was frivolous, and that the company’s chairman told the family that they were “killing the goose that laid the golden egg” by pursuing the case.

In a statement, Sony/ATV said that another musicologist had determined that Blurred Lines did not infringe on Got To Give It Up, and also defended its corporate role as a steward for songwriters.

“We take our role in protecting the works of all of our songwriters from infringement very seriously,” the company said. “And while we very much treasure the works of Marvin Gaye (who died in 1984) and our relationship with the Gaye family, we regret that they have been ill-advised in this matter.”

Both suits seek unspecified damages. THE NEW YORK TIMES