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Illustration
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U.S. Copyright Office

RE: Notice of Inquiry on Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works.

Dear Madam and/or Sir,

I am writing in response to your inquiry, and want to express that this possible change in copyright law that could change my life, and not in a good way. I read the five questions you posed, and I respectfully tried to answer them below.

I am a leading illustrator known for my inspirational and spiritual artwork. My published work (books, ebooks, calendars, website art, greeting cards, CD covers, magazine illustration) is into the millions of products and editions throughout the world, but, mainly in the United States.
Although, I have had very good professional success, it is very challenging to earn a good living doing what I do. So, my work is a work of love, as are my skills and dedication that I have applied over many years. It has been a sacrifice, in some ways for me and my family as I could have pursued a more lucrative field.

One of the ways I have sustained a living is by owning the copyright to all my work. My clients (authors, publishers, Creative Directors) really respect my ownership of what I create. Because I try to give my clients much more than 100%, they usually come back to me with "secondary usage" of my work. They realize the work is successful, so they want to take the image from a book cover and use it on a phone app., for instance. And I might not have gotten paid a lot for the first use, but because of the quality of my work, I get additional income from "secondary rights".

I have spent a great deal of time and money studying and educating myself on the legalities of copyrights, so I could continue my work as an artist, and hopefully add something good to the world. My book I illustrated for Louise L. Hay (You Can Heal Your Life) for instance, has sold millions, and many readers have expressed how my art has helped them.

The internet has helped empower artists to generate their own work and not rely so much on publishers and agents, and at the same time the downside is that it creates a space where my work can be shared, and downloaded without my knowledge and consent.

One of the few things artists like myself have "in our court", is our copyright. Most people still respect that. And we appreciate all the Copyright Office has done over the years to educate and stand up for copyright protection.

The other "digital" power we have is that in order to create high quality printed material, I have to provide the high resolution file to my client. The low resolution found on the internet usually is not good enough for publication.

If my copyright is not protected, and this new law is enacted, I will lose a lifetime of dedication, work and building a career and body of work that I can share with people. It is so unique to the American experience to have the opportunity to be an individual, who creates valuable and unique work, and to be protected and compensated for it. It is part of the American spirit of creativity and dynamism that must be loved, and fought for. We must protect the copyrights of artists, photographers, graphic designers. It is priceless.

Thank you for hearing my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Joan Perrin-Falquet
Wayne, PA