Jujubee Illustrations LLC
Julie Olson, Owner and Professional Illustrator
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July 2, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Julie Olson and I have been a freelance illustrator for seventeen years creating art for everything from board games, to magazines, to websites, to books. I paid for my own college education and graduated with a BFA in Illustration in 1998. I am registered as a limited liability company and run my business just like any small business owner. My art is my source of income and I rely on that income to help support my family of four children.

It has come to my attention that there is an effort launched to change the copyright law to allow for Mass Digitization of artists' intellectual property, extend collective licensing to replace our voluntary business agreements with clients, and overall strip the rights we have over our art after it has been published. This has already been happening illegally and it seems the people doing it have finally joined together and thrown enough money at the law makers to try and say what they are doing is legal. Saying stealing is legal certainly doesn't make it right.

If the copyright law is changed to allow for the proposed alterations, thousands of small business owners, artists, and the like, will no longer be able to earn a living. The copyright law is not some abstract legal issue, but the basis on which my business (and the thousands of others like it) rests.

The copyrights of my work ARE the products I license. Therefore, infringing on artists' work is like stealing our money. It is important to our businesses that we remain able to voluntarily determine how and by whom our work is used. My work does NOT lose its value upon publication. I sell the rights for someone to use my art in certain publications for a certain period of time. Once that contract is up, I still own the product (the art) and can then allow others to use that art for their purposes upon agreement. When companies or people use art they did not create themselves or contract the use of, they are stealing another person's intellectual creation. Everything I create becomes part of my business's inventory and then I sell the use of that inventory to others. That is the livelihood of my business. And now, in this digital era, inventory is more valuable to artists than ever before.

Imagine a costume rental company created some beautiful, original costumes and then rented out a costume to a customer. Then that customer wore the rented costume, came back to the company and said, "Ok, now that I've worn this and used it, I'm just going to give it away to someone else to use. You already got your money out of it by me renting it. It's no more use to you." And that costumer walks away with the costume. The renter at the rental company calls the police and says, "A customer of this description just stole one of my costumes." That customer would then be charged with stealing property.

The same is true with using art. A customer should not be allowed to pay for the use of art only one time and then allow the world to use it for free in perpetuity. Please do not allow this proposed copyright law alteration to take place. It is stealing and will ruin the livelihood of many people.

Sincerely,

Julie Olson, Professional Illustrator