Joy Kroeger Beckner, Sculptor – Society of Animal Artists
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July 17, 2015

Maria A. Pallante
Register of Copyrights and Director U.S. Copyright Office

Dear Maria and your constituents,

As a sculptor for the past 25 years, I have had my fair share of intellectual property theft. I had marked each piece in an edition with my name, the © sign and the date and the number of the piece. At the time I had no idea that I needed to register each piece with the US Copyright Office. After the events below I dutifully filled out the appropriate forms and sent them to the US Copyright Office. The office, in time, sent me proof that my bronzes had be registered and are protected.

I was first alerted to copyright infringement of my work in 2010. Maybe I was lucky. I did not feel lucky at the time. At least THREE pieces had been knocked off, two of which happened in China. My sleuthing led me to a Chinese distributor in Memphis. A third was found on a European auction house site, but who knows where it was "made?" China??? Later, this past year, a friend alerted me to another piece, using my own photograph, on Alibaba! They had the nerve to use my photo!!! Well, they hadn't actually made any, but were fishing for orders. Alibaba took the images off their site and off two manufacturer's sites within about two weeks. THAT was much easier than the months I spent on the first encounter with intellectual property theft.

PLEASE, keep your American Artists' Intellectual Property (sculptures, paintings, drawings, etc., protected from Copyright infringement!!! Think about it ... would you want someone stealing your art ideas and not being punished, and, your not being PAID for what they might sell? I don't think so...

Remember the Golden Rule: Appreciate your artists and keep the copyright laws exactly like they are! Please allow us to punish the culprits who steal our work, and ideas!

Sincerely,

Joy Kroeger Beckner
www.joybeckner.com