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July 20, 2015

U.S. Copyright
Orphan Works

Dear U.S. Copyright Office,

Briefly, I am a Freelance Illustrator and Graphic designer with 5+ years of experience in the field. I attended the Kansas City Art Institute and studied Illustration.

Copyright is an essential asset to me as a freelancer and commodified my valuable time and effort. Infringement of my work is not just an act of stealing images I have created, but stealing money from my pocket.

I work hard to rally in clients, create exemplary works of art and maintain a particular image on the internet. These efforts are met with a decent pay that barely supports me as is and the stability of this system I have is completely on the backbone of Copyright laws. I can choose who can use my work under what circumstances and for what duration at a fee that is fair both to me and the publisher. Without this, I would have to pull back the reigns on my internet presence (where much of my commissions come from) for fear of my work being stolen and used without my consent.

If the work of artists as a whole is released to being essentially public domain, the value of works of commercial (and frankly fine) art would artificially plummet. No longer would a company need to seek out the artist and pay them a fair fee or shop around for an artist that was more in their price range. Companies would be able to skim the best of the best for no fee, diminishing the incentive for artists to create excellent craft and making an already challenging field unnecessarily more challenging.

Through Copyright I am able to keep my work and my time as an investment in myself, continuing to build a sensible business model. Without those protections, my work and my time may invest in people I don’t know and who have no concern whatsoever for my well being.

For these reasons, I cannot and will not support the diminishing of the protections I receive through Copyright. It’s not just a simple right, it’s my entire livelihood at stake.

Sincerely,

Jake Joslyn