JAN ECKARDT BUTLER ARTIST

7803 S 28th West Ave, Tulsa, OK 74132

July 20, 2015

U S PATENT OFFICE
RE: Notice of Inquiry on Certain Visual Works

Dear U S Patent Office

The new laws about Orphan Works and copyright will affect visual artists in many ways, all of them terrible for the artists themselves.

I am an artist and art teacher. I already hold a copyright on some of the ceramic figures I make. *
I hold degrees from Knox College, and Penn State University. I have been a practicing artist from 1973 to 2003 and have been an art teacher from 2003 to the present. I researched and applied for a copyright for the figures I make believing that only by registering with the U. S. Copyright office would I be protecting my artwork from greedy unscrupulous copiers who would want to make money off my ideas. In fact I was contacted many times by foreign "entrepreneurs" wanting me to send them pictures or samples for which they would pay….and then certainly would find hundreds of Chinese hands to "make" copies of my handmade sculptures.
I realize that the copyright I hold may not really protect me in court against a large international company with money to outspend me. But maybe it will be a deterrent. Now if this new Orphan Works law makes it easier for everyone to copy my ideas, my business as an artist and owner of my own ideas is null and void. And trying to prove that my ideas are my own will be practically impossible. Especially in the internet age where pictures travel and multiply

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faster than ever before and now anyone with internet access can pretend to be an original artist.

It is at the basis of our self-interest as artists that we can voluntarily determine how and when to let others use our visual ideas. Everything we make becomes part of our inventory. In fact many of us send our work out on consignment. Our inventory is often in the showroom or back room of an art gallery or shop. So in effect, we have given over some control to trusted gallery owners already. By changing the current Copyright Laws this relationship between artist and gallery owner is in jeopardy. It negatively affects more people and businesses than just individual artists.

The changes proposed to this copyright law will be very, very bad for visual artists. This law should not go into effect.

* Registration Numbers: VA 603 060 through VA 603 065 valid on March 25, 1993

Sincerely,

Jan Eckardt Butler
Artist