TONI ★ STARR

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I am an artist, working in acrylic, pencil, watercolor and other reproducible two-dimensional media. The images I create are unique, one of a kind work, out of my own imagination. These images I feel are my own property to handle in the way I see fit. They do not belong to anyone else. They cannot and should not be used to benefit anyone else unless they have my permission to do so. I feel that my personal integrity is at risk if anyone could use my images to promote a product or an idea that I find offensive, or I find unacceptable to my way of life. This is what could happen and very likely will happen if the Office of Copyright amendments take place.

I have found it daunting to copyright my work and found that it really did not matter because even if they are copyrighted, those who will steal, will do it anyway. However to make the regulations more lax would definitely impair my ability to have a say in a court of law if my images were used without my permission or in a manner that was inappropriate or offensive to me. Overall, who would find the court system the way it is now to be friendly to artistic viewpoints anyway? However, I would want to know that if I was challenged that I would have the ability to protect my images from misuse.

I have been a victim of outright plagiarism in the past but at the time there were no copyright lawyers who would take on an impoverished artist on this one shot deal. But the pain is still there, after all these years. Please do not make it easier for someone to steal an artist's ideas, or their viewpoint—that is like stealing their life.