7/23/2015

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Valerie Morone
Artist/Illustrator
83 Doe Court
Brick, NJ 08723

Maria Pallante Register of Copyrights U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E. Washington, DC 20559-6000

RE: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (Docket No. 2015-01)
Dear Ms. Pallante & U.S. copyright Office Staff:

I am a professional artist with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Illustration. I have worked as a greeting card artist at Hallmark Cards for seven years. For the past 26 years I have worked as a freelance illustrator from home while raising my children. I have designed greeting cards, gift bags, stickers and many other products. I have also done some work for animated short films and have illustrated books. In the last few years I have been working on paintings and hope to sell fine art and perhaps even license the work for use on products.

I am requesting that you please keep the copyright act written in 1976 as is, which automatically protects the artist's work against infringement as soon as the work is created without need to register or give notice.

Even under present circumstances people and corporations still occasionally try to take advantage of artists and "steal" our work by either featuring it on products or selling copies without the artists' knowledge or payment for use. With current law we are able to get compensation for this and have time after the fact to file a copyright to fight it in a court of law. Copyright law is the basis on which my and other artists business rests. Our livelihood depends on being able to retain the copyright to anything we create and sell certain rights of usage for various products to various companies. An individual or company infringing our work is no different than stealing our money.

This new copyright act would limit our rights and would be extremely costly to have to register every piece of artwork we have ever done or will ever do. It will make it easier for individuals and corporations to use our artwork without compensating us.

Our copyrights are the products we license. When we create a piece of art we are now protected. If an individual or corporation wants to use it or put it on a product they have to agree to the terms of use and compensate the artist for each use. We are able to sell the rights of use each time with each contract and each company or individual, allowing us to make a living with the art that we spent years developing and countless hours creating and in most cases many years of art school or college learning. Everything an artist creates becomes part of our business inventory.

In the digital era inventory is more valuable than ever before. The internet poses an increased risk for art without appropriate credit to be shared, making it imperative for the Copyright Office to continue to recognize the ownership of these works. Many if not all of us communicate by or advertise our artwork for sale via the internet. Sometimes we share our work for viewing through social media. Our work does not lose value upon publication. Please don't allow corporations or individuals to be able to so easily steal our artwork by passing the Orphan Works and Mass Digitization Bill.

Thank you for your time in reading my concerns.

Valerie Morone
Artist/Illustrator