To whom it may concern;

I am an artist who has worked both commercially and in the fine arts. I have worked as a graphic designer and as an illustrator. I am currently a professional artist showing in galleries and museums around the globe as well as an arts administrator running a non-profit arts collective for older women in the arts. I have facilitated the growth of emerging artists and have reinvigorated the careers of artists who had otherwise been put on hold, so to speak.

My professional work experience as an artist begins in the 1980s and shall continue until I can no longer hold a brush or stylus. In other words, art is and has been my career for 3 decades.

While I never was afforded the opportunity to obtain a formal education, I never let the institutions get in the way of my self-education practice. Something that continues to this very day. Regardless of a formal arts degree, I am a highly accomplished digital artist and community arts activist, leader and innovator. I have been a founding member of two non-profits, Echo Park Arts & Festival and The Haggus Society. In addition I have sat on various boards, such as the Highland Park Neighborhood Council (Arts & Culture Chair), Lummis Day Community Foundation (curator for visual arts), and Highland Park Chamber of Commerce (arts to business liaison).

I currently partner with several known artist business mentors, including Renee Phillips of Manhattan Arts International, Bonnie Glendinning of Thriving Artist Academy, among others in the arts coaching industry.

My work has been published in magazines and books such as Condé Nast's Baku magazine, various arts catalogs, on the PBS/KCET website, in small press publications such as Black Scat Press in California. My story and innovation in developing arts communities has been credited in books such as Brainard Carey's book, "New Markets For Artists: How To Sell, Fund Projects, And Exhibit Using Social Media, DIY Pop Ups, eBay Kickstarter And Much More (Allworth Press NY).

Needless to say, regardless of any sort of educational lack, I am an accomplished artist and business woman.

Which brings me to my concerns about this recent attack on artist copyrights. I have based an entire 30 years career on my rights to my product, my art. This is not some abstract legal issue, but the basis upon which my career, i.e., the way I buy groceries, feed my family and pets, pay my mortgage, and maintain my existence with, hopefully, some sort of plan for retirement. Without the support, licensing of my product, my art, I am unable to live. Period.

My work is not some sort of commodity that can be tossed out into the public domain without dire consequences for me and my family. Art is how I live and participate in this economy. It is my business. Period.

The argument that art loses its value upon publication is absurd. All one has to do is look to the fine arts market, focus upon the high end auctions, and you'll see that no matter how many times a Jeff Koonz work is published it is still worth millions to the right

buyers. In this digital age, publication on the internet is essential to building a brand. This Orphans Act steals brands away from the artists. Branding, as any savvy business person knows is essential for advertising. Which is, you know, publishing.

Even in social media, there are controls for the “publisher” in regards to how images are shared. If I don’t want you downloading my images from Facebook, and other outlets, I have the option to stop you. Although, yes, good internet thieves know how to screen capture. And taking someone’s art off the internet and using it, is indeed theft.

Everything I create visually, is what I consider my art inventory. It is part of my branding and identity. In this digital era, my brand and identity are more important than ever. It is what differentiates me from the rest of the arts industry and community. My visuals are my voice, and my voice alone. To that end, I make the decisions where, how, and who is allowed to use my work, what fees will be established and for how long the user is allowed to use the work. Or in the case of my fine art, if they can publish or show my work once it has been sold and what percentage I receive for subsequent sales of said work. As you may know, in California we defend this copyright vehemently.

In addition, forcing the artist to register all their works is cost prohibitive and time consuming. I alone have many thousands of works of art I’ve created over the past 30 years. I don’t know that I could afford to register everything I’m manifested over these years. As it stands, I’m not a Jeff Koonz.

Artists may be fortunate enough to do work they love, but this does not make what we do less valuable in the greater sense of business and economy. There is a lot of mythology surrounding the perception of what it means to be a working artist. We have historically been ripped-off, abused, maligned and considered commodity by patrons, employers, the government, friends, and family. You don’t treat your doctor’s skills and services like this, nor your auto mechanic, so please, please don’t do this to artists.

You’ll have a us all in bankruptcy.

Thank you.

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