To: US Copyright Office

Re: 2015 Orphan Works and Mass Digitization legislative changes to the Copyright Act

I am writing to express my grave concerns and opposition to changes in the copyright act that affect my control of my art work. It is my understanding that with the proposed changes I would lose control of who "owns" my work and put up for grabs any of my work that was not legally registered.

I am a professional fine artist, working in watercolor, mixed media and digital painting, and have worked as such since the mid-1970's. I have a BFA in studio art, and an MA in art education. I have won several dozen awards in national, regional and local art shows, and my work is in both private and public collections.

As a visual artist, I need to expose my work to potential collectors and that means that I put my work online (on my website, www.fountainstudio.com), publish it in print catalogs, art magazines, art books, etc. with the express purpose of advertising it to the buying public.

Right now, the LEGAL DEFAULT is that I own the copyright to my images, even if not filed with the copyright office, and that is the way the law should remain. Unregistered works are not orphans!

If I want to grant someone the right to a particular image to make a poster from, or greeting cards, or a calendar, or a limited number of prints, I have control over that use, and can grant it *without losing ownership of the art work.* That control is critical to my earning income from my work. *Simply because images of my work have appeared in print or online does NOT mean that those works have no further commercial value.* I may give someone the one-time right to use an image for a calendar, but since I retain ownership of the art/image, I can at some future time, grant someone else the right to make a limited edition print, or perhaps use the image on a greeting card. I am able to earn income EACH TIME I contract with someone to use my art image. What this new legislation proposes is nothing short of theft.

Please consider that (1) many artists are very prolific in the number of works they produce, and to register each work would be not only time-consuming but (depending on the registration fee, very expensive). (2) many working artists have a "day" job because they can't live on their art income. To further infringe on their ability to earn income from their art is not fair or ethical.

I sincerely hope you will not change the copyright law in such a manner as to take away my right to own and control the use of my art.

Thank you,

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