Dear Copyright Office:
My name is Iris Compiet and I am writing to you as a professional illustrator from the Netherlands, since the new copyright law currently considered by the U.S. Congress, if enacted, would have a negative impact on the business of illustrators, photographers, fine artists and visual artists from all fields worldwide.
I have studied at the university of Art in Breda and graduated Cum Laude.
I have been working as a professional freelance illustrator since 2009 and have always relied on acquiring new customers by presenting my work on the internet. My website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr account are tools I use to reach out to new clients. I work mainly for book publishers, game developers, collectors and self-publish my own stories.
I have illustrated several books for all ages, designed character for animations and artwork for film, and licensed rights of use for my work to publish in magazines and cards. I have participated in several gallery shows in America, have been published in important annuals and have won awards for best Fantasy novel in the Netherlands.
You can view a sample of my work on my website http://www.eyeris.eu.
As an artist it it's not always easy to earn a living from our work or to enforce copyright protection of our work. However, current legislation in most countries enables us to prove ownership of our work through the simple act of publishing it under our name.
While the proliferation of the internet has afforded artists the ability to reach new audiences across the planet, it has also served as one of the greatest impediments for an artist's livelihood. Digitization has allowed for an artist's work to be exponentially shared and therefore almost impossible to exert complete control over how it is used. Most of the time our images are utilized simply as decoration on social media sites. But just as often our names and copyright information are unlawfully removed, rendering our images particularly vulnerable to orphaning and thus appropriation. It is almost daily that I read about a fellow artist's work being monetized by an unscrupulous third party with zero profit or credit being afforded the creator.
Right now, the burden of proof is on the infringer who must prove that they have rights of use to an image if accused of copyright infringement. But this new proposed legislation, if enacted, would transfer the burden of proof onto the creator, who is now required to document proper registration of their work if infringed upon; something that almost every creator outside the United States has never done, and might not learn to do until it is too late – a tremendous pressure to prove something that is already a matter of course.
Generally, a client will not only commission an illustration from me, but also license exclusive rights of use for a specific time, area and purpose. If my work can be assumed „orphaned“ from the moment of creation, I can no longer give my client a guarantee that they have the exclusive rights of use to it. As a direct result of that, I lose money.
For the illustrator, copyright law is not an abstract legal issue, but the basis on which our business rests. Everything that we create, whether for a client or for our own

personal indulgence, becomes part of our business inventory. And in the digital era, inventory is more valuable to artists than ever before.

The proposed copyright reform would result not only in artists losing their livelihood, but also in much fewer visual art being shared publicly by its creators for fear of infringement, which in the long run would mean less images being published; and thus diminishing variety and quality of our visual culture.

Please reconsider how the 2015 Orphan Works and Mass Digitization Report could have potentially disastrous effects on not only the field of illustration, but on the future creation of quality art in the public realm.

With best regards,

Iris Compiet