July 22, 2015

Dana Weekley
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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 and Copyright Office Staff:

I'm a designer. I use my designs to help people find the magic in this world. This is my skill, my gift, and I can't imagine doing anything else.

Many people have already written to you, on behalf of all artists, to illustrate in detail the issues we deal with in the marketplace. I concur with that collective voice and add this perspective.

What I witness is an overall ignorance, from corporations, lawyers and the public, about the life of the working artist. Most of us are common people, working with our skills and talent to earn a living, like anyone else. The internet is the easiest, least expensive way for us to share what we create. Almost every business now has a web-presence. But uniquely, because of the nature of our work as artists, we deal with theft daily. I draw a comparison to retail stores and doctors' offices. Would it make sense for us to walk in and help ourselves to goods and services without paying for them simply because they're available? And how do you imagine these businesspeople would react, especially if our government sanctioned such actions? Some may criticize my analogy, but if you look closely, under the surface, you'll see that we – artists, retailers, doctors, congresspeople, attorneys and every human who works for a living – are all the same: working, living lives, raising families, expecting to thrive by offering our skills, talents and creations to those who desire or need them, with protection by our government from theft and harm. We're in this together.

We, as artists, have all experienced the gut punch of discovering our creations published without permission or remuneration. Yet we continue to create and share for the benefit of all.

Please consider the issues at hand from all angles, including the heart-centered human side, before making any final decisions. Our lives, our families, our communities and the world depend on it.

Thank you,
Dana Weekley
NineTomatoes