July 21, 2015

Catherine Rowland
Senior Advisor to the Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office

Dear Ms. Rowland,

I'm an a professional illustrator and I'm writing because my livelihood depends on copyright matters.

I have degrees in Art History and Illustration. I've attended multiple conferences, fairs and workshops through the years. I have invested a lot of money and time in my career. I've been working professionally since 2011.

It's extremely hard to be an illustrator these days… I'm afraid to share my work online because people are constantly and blatantly using it without permission, but the truth is that I NEED to upload my work online. My clients find me through Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram, etc. When talking to publishers, they always stress how important it's for them that authors and illustrators have an online presence… But how am I going to do that if I loose the rights of the works I share??

Please keep in mind that it's necessary for us artist to share our works and retain their rights. My work does not loose its value when it's published. For example, I make money by licensing the reproduction rights of my patterns and illustrations to companies that then will sell products with my art, and I share those illustrations online as a marketing strategy. My creations are still my own, and I can keep licensing their rights to other companies in an effort to make a living, pay my bills, and pay my taxes.

People infringing on my copyrights means a loss of income for me. I can't say enough how upsetting it is to find out that my work has been stolen and used without permission… How is it possible that every other profession is protected against theft but artist are not? I can't go to a restaurant, eat the food and leave without paying, so why are people able to come to my website, use my art and not pay for it?

Please, be fair. Help artists make a living. Respect my work as I respect the work of the people around me… Copyright matters.

Sincerily,

Diana Toledano.