Dear Ms. Pallante,

I am writing to ask that you create policy to protect visual authors and their exclusive

rights, and support a sustainable environment for professional authorship.

As a creator of visual images, I feel it is harmful to myself and others in my field for copywrites of artwork to be removed. Artists such as myself rely heavily upon owning our own works and controlling where and how they are used and distributed.

The biggest challenge to monetizing/licensing my work is to keep control of where it appears and who uses it, and to keep my copyright notice and contact information associated with the work. From what I have heard from other artists, companies routinely remove watermarks and copyright information from the pieces artists create for them, and there are always people who steal the works and post them as their own; there is nothing I or many other artists can do to prevent a work of art from being "orphaned."

As Maria Hartsock suggests:

> If the Copyright Office is sincere about protecting rights of creators, it should make it illegal toremove a watermark, illegal to remove metadata, illegal to remove copyright information, and alsoillegal to mass digitize any works not in the public domain without written permission from thecreator, all with stiff financial penalties. The Copyright office should make all of its registered imagessearchable by image, not just by textual data. If Google and Bing can do it, so can the Copyright Office.In addition, the suggestion of a text-based 'Notice of Use' of a work assumed to be 'orphaned' wouldbe useless. I personally have several images titled 'Stages of Acne' - there are subtle differencesamong them and I have difficulty telling them apart solely from a text description. The only realprotection for creators is to eliminate the concept of orphan works altogether. No work is an orphan,it all has been created by someone, even if a 'potential user' doesn't know who it is.

I agree with all of the things Hartsock states here, and would suggest the same.

While I, personally, have not registered all of my works of art with the Copyright Office, I know that for many artists it would be physically impossible to photograph, document, and resubmit all of their hundreds - or even thousands - of individual works of art. In part due to the sheer volume, but also due to the fact that, in many cases, they no longer have a copy of the published versions of their works. If a clearing house is to be used for image searches, it should be the Copyright Office, as many artists have already registered their works there.

I am deeply troubled by the idea that "potential users" of my art would have equal rights to my work as I, the creator, do. They do not. If I - as the creator - creator do not want my image licensedbeyond the original use, re-used, re-purposed, re-imagined, re-combined, that is my prerogative. If Iwant to sell an image once, then let it collect dust, that is my choice - it is my choice and my right, not that of some "potential user" to claim otherwise. If I want to create an image, put it on my website, and never license it at all, that is also my choice. 'Potential users' do not have any rights to my images - I do. If a 'potential user' - individual or company - wants to further their business by using imagery, and can't find an image they can legally use, then they can do what individuals and companies have done for the decades before electronic file sharing - commission a new one and keep illustrators working.

Sincerely,

Alissa Weinman

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