July 19, 2015

United States Copyright Office

RE: Notice of Inquiry on Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been a writer for over three decades, and have recently branched out into photography projects. Although the income potential from the latter is, at the moment, small, that potential rests upon a simple premise: I created these images, they belong to me, and I get to decide who uses them and under what conditions.

This means that copyright law and the enforcement thereof is the only thing that backs up any licensing agreements I make. These agreements, and the income derived from them, are the foundation of my business efforts. They are what I sell. The decision about whether or not to make these agreements – like the works themselves – belongs to me, and no one else.

I currently produce a photograph a day, which means I'll produce, at minimum, 365 visual works this year. As a means of building a platform for my nascent business, these works appear, with licensing statements appended, on several online venues: Facebook, tumblr, Twitter, and so on. The appended licensing statements specify that I do not allow commercial use of these works, or derivative works made from them. However, formally registering a work a day is cost prohibitive, so they'll be registered, *en masse*, at periodic intervals throughout the year. This does *not* mean they are orphaned works until then. Any attempt to sweep these up into a commercial database for use by a company would not only be a violation of my stated license, it would also be tantamount to stealing income from me, as would any form of extended collective licensing imposed without my specific consent.

The public has no right to use my work, because it's my work, and I get to make that decision. There is no infringement that I would consider to be "good faith" infringement, because only I get to decide – specifically, and with deliberate intention – who gets to use my work. No derivative works can be made from my work and sold, because, once again, that decision – like the work – belongs to me. Exclusively, without question, until I say otherwise.

Any legislation that impinges upon that ownership and threatens my sole determination regarding the use of my work is, quite simply, unacceptable.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Ian Wood