University of Colorado Denver

College of Arts & Media

Travis Vermilye, MFA
Department of Visual Art

1250 14th Street, Suite 800E
Campus Box 177
P.O. Box 173364
Denver, CO 80217-3364
Office: 303-315-1503
Fax: 303-556-4880
Email: travis.vermilye@ucdenver.edu

July 2, 2015

U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20559-6000

To whom it may concern,

I am a medical illustrator/animator and a professor at the University of Colorado Denver in the College of Arts & Media. I have a vested interest for myself, my colleagues, and my students in the future direction of copyright law regarding orphaned works.

What are the most significant challenges related to monetizing and/or licensing photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations?

Monetization post production should rely on the artist's personal choice to put their work out there for license or use according to his/her wishes. Instead artists work, simply by the act of creating a website for self promotion, almost immediately becomes prone to theft and misuse.

What are the most significant enforcement challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators?

Many artists are not clear on copyright law or the need to register their works with the copyright office to help protect themselves. Also, the costs associated with registration can be prohibitively expensive for non-commercial artists whose work may be used illegally without permission.

What are the most significant registration challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators?

A national, searchable registry of visual work could be a useful tool with which to tie creators to their work. Perhaps an effort should be made to appropriate funds toward such a tool.

What are the most significant challenges or frustrations for those who wish to make legal use of photographs, graphic art works, and/or illustrations?

The most significant challenge is the inability to find the original artist for permissions due to blatant theft and image manipulation.

What other issues or challenges should the Office be aware of regarding photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations under the Copyright Act?

Overt legalese. Copyright law is something that is horribly misunderstood by a vast majority of creative artists and end users of their work. Clear, simple language that provides creators and potential patrons of creative works is absolutely necessary. I would love to see something akin to 'Copyright Law for Dummies' put out and disseminated by the copyright office.

Warmest regards,

Travis Vermilye
Assistant Professor | Digital Design
Department of Visual Art | College of Arts & Media
University of Colorado Denver