Dear Catherine Rowland or to whom it may concern.

I´m a Freelance artist and diploma designer from germany.
It might be questionable why i as a german resident am writing this letter but i believe that the pass of the laws and enforcements that will take place for the existing copyright laws could act as a strong role model to other countries. It also has a great relevance because it would affect the whole market aswell since the internet let´s us have a borderless area to work and act in. Not that i can only associate with the other artists and their statements in the US that i heard so far, after trying to see the issue from another point of view, the points aiming towards a higher purpose like creating an overview by mass digital registration or raise of control by privatizing can be easily debilitated.
Google, other online search machines and inverted image searches like tineye offer great services to figure out originators of (art)pieces/visual content. For controlling issues the artists themselves and further more the community of artist acts as a great tool.
To speak from own experience, i was contacted more than 10 times from other artists or people from the community which i´ve never met before, informing me about copyright violation on my work and i´m a rather small fish. Artists in my field take it pretty serious if people don´t give credit or violate copyright. Sites like wallpaper.com who get into focus because of not having rights to artworks but making money of of them spread like wildfire. Where it get´s critical though is, when the artist has to step in and has to fight to make things right.

As an artist and creator of visual content such as illustrations, the copyright is my opportunity to keep the control of usage under my personal aims. A design or an illustration is a personal solution to a given problem by the artist. These solutions can be put so close to the creator that you can say that you see a part of him especially when doing personal work. As the creator of such a carrier it is essential that i have the opportunity to control the course of my creations, backed by a legislative authority. By the gain of power of the internet and graphic programs art theft became an issue growing hand in hand for every artist in the world. It is already hard and close to impossible to keep art in its particular paths and if violated can only be restricted through time consuming actions. Programs like Photoshop (which is a professional tool but named here because best known. There are free softwares easily available which can be used aswell) make it very easy to get rid of watermarks, signatures or anything similar that ensures a easy visual detection of originality/origin. These programs also have the ability to create custom actions that would allow to literally create orphan works by the masses. Copyright must remain under the hands of the artist and only under the hands of the artist as its creator. Therefor art theft should be put under greater sentence and easier handling towards violators through the artist and the executive force. By putting copyright under a personalized lobby the ownership by the artist is lost and therefore missed its purpose. For nearly 3 decades the copyright ownership was given to the creator and it must stay with him to give the individual the right of control since he/she is the origin or the part that gives birth to an idea in the physical world.
A digitization of artwork for register purpose for an artist like me, who is working in this field for a fairly short amount of time after looking at well known artist, is close to impossible regarding the amount of sketches, Work in progress pieces or pieces that have to go through revision while communicating with a client and also find ways to

the internet. Surely not manageable for someone working in this field for a longer time and with a higher rate of commissions. The process of creating is energy draining and time consuming enough as it is and in the end the product would take a lack in quality and even if just in an small amount can not be tolerated. This would create a threat towards artist and commission giver and by that endangers the reputation and income of the artist.

A significant challenge for monetizing and license visual (art) content for me is always to make clear why my prices are what they are. Customers especially in a highly commercial area and businesses usually don´t have a good insight and don´t see the work or the time needed to create or solve problems given under the give tasks and demands of the client. This is if there is no art director or someone similar involved. Also to show or to make clear that what is bought is skill aquired during a large amount of hours. To make clear that this is part of the price can be a challenge aswell.

When enforcement is needed it can be tricky to get a grasp of the person in charge, the violator. Also the amount of time and foremost money needed can be challenging, especially if there is no financial backing which is always a big point for artists. If you´re one of the thousands who struggle making a living of their art hiring an attorney which is needed then, is a step which can be a thing of impossibility.

The registration can be also a money issue if the artwork is not commercially used and making money after completion. Normally the point of usage in the contract between commission giver and artist is enough to handle normal or even special circumstances.

Most significant challenges for someone who wants to make legal use of an (art)piece can be making out who was the creator and getting in contact with the person. That is if they don´t use signatures or a signing that can not be red. Also if they use alter egos for their works can lead to not being found by a potential client.

It should be easier to get rid of infringement of copyright with the copyright in the hand of the artist. Probably easy said but that´s the issue brought to point.

Finally i want to say the way copyright was handled so far was meant to enforce the artist and back him/her in case of infringement or prevent such. Copyright has to stay within the artist to make sure that he/she can make a living of of what i think is his/her calling in life. Please keep in sight that the individual, the artist is the thing that should favor in this issue and this can be ensured at least by keeping things more like they are and have been for so long now.

Thank you.

Best regards
Deryl