Dear Who It May Concern,

The hardest part for an artist is starting out and stiking out on their own. With this come challenes such as how to become known and how to protect your work and how to stand above the crowd.

For protecting works, it's actually becoming easier in a global theater. With the use of tools such as google's reverse image lookup it is far easier to find where the work is being used and if it is being used in a way that is permisable.

However for artist the central issue concering copyright and registration is cost. Cost being the money and time spent in registering a work.

At its cheapest copyright is prohibitedly expensive for the individual artist particularily, young and impoverished artists. This is the main group that really needs to protection as they are often the ones hurt when works are stolen as they are unable to defend themselves as they canot afford lawyers or copyright fees.

Currently the fee for registration is $55.00. If I were a business this is an acceptable cost especially as something which I could report as a business expense. But for an individual making near minimum wage or struggling this is not something I would spend money on.

The process of filing also takes nearly a year, which suggests a hideous backlog.

For something so simple as uploading a file, paying a fee and waiting, Filing seems rather nasty and horrible for anyone involved, an automated process would be grealy appreciated which would reduce cost.

The fact that currently my works are protected simply because they exist is a godsend.

The main problem for an artist is people not understanding how copyright works.

It is not a huge fuss to aquire permission from the creator of the work to use their content. It is easy, you email them find out what they charge, and you pay them.

Howver when a work is published by someone who does not even bother crediting, or worse claims they made it, getting it removed is worse than pulling teeth(speaking as someone who's had to accomplish both)

Requiring registration would are reduce the amount of art that is published online. Artists love art and they love sharing it. However by removing the automatic protection you will cause us to close rank and cut the rest of the population from even knowing what we have created even exists.

A work of art is a conversation.
So why would you ever speak if you feel your words will be stolen.

Sincerely,

Megan "StarrySpelunker" Andrew
Student Artist of the Department of Architecture at Texas A&M univerity.