July 20, 2015

Maria Pallante
Register of Copyrights
U. S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20559-6000

Re: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress
Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (80fr23054)

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.

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

Simply put, sharing our creations so that prospective buyers & customers involves the Internet. Which means we can easily lose control over how and when our works are used and shared. Often leaving the creator out of the process, while others gain from our labors.

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

Keeping control of our created visual works. Our voices are lost in the vastness of works which so many artist are fighting to get back.

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

Money, plain and simple. Individual artists have limited resources in gearing their work to the masses. Registering each and every piece becomes the single hardest part. Photographers registering an entire portfolio from a single wedding can consist of 2,000 - 5,000 photos. The logistics simply do not exist to allow a meaningful adherence to this.

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

Tracking down the original creator of works, is probably the most difficult. Once images are shared, original sources vanish. Coherent watermarks & tags help, but are not perfect.

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

From where I work, as a freelance artist, I constantly feel the weight of of copyright stack against me. Large agencies & companies which are better funded and connected, getting the better representation. I know people who are at companies and those who are freelancers. Feeling our intellectual property getting taken from us, hurts us, and those that will follow. The industry suffers.

Please. Please. Please consider the smaller, underrepresented voices of freelance artists who lack the resources to fund campaigns & be heard as loudly. Please, consider the rising youth of our nation who will be burdened with a law that no longer covers the talents they possess, unless they have deep, well funded pockets.

Thank you,

Brian "Buckaroo" Ballinger

A freelance photographer & artist. Some of us enjoy working on a smaller scale, it improves the quality of our life & passion to pursue our creative selves.