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U.S. Copyright Office

To Whom It May Concern,

I was saddened to hear that once again the Orphan Works Act is back on the table. I am an illustrator and designer. I am a commercial artist. I've been a commercial artist in one form or another since I was in my early 20's (over 10 years). I went to the University of Miami and graduated at the top of my class in the College of Arts & Sciences. I later went on to teach as a member of the 2004 Teach For America Corps, and used art as a means to reach my most vulnerable students when I taught Reading and Language Arts.

I'll be honest. I didn't think I could make a living as an artist. This myth is perpetuated and substantiated by things like the Orphan Works Act which deem our work, when shared, as worthless. It's not right, and I hope to explain why the Orphan Works Act would put an undue burden on the individual artist, and why it should not be enacted.

Illustration and Design has been my career for over 10 years. Once I realized that my creative work was worth something, I began to put it to use. I worked as an in-house illustrator where my work was licensed and purchased by big companies like 3M and MotelOne (in Germany) and used in their adverts, websites, and promotional materials. It was so cool to see my work in the world!

I market my work by showing it on social media, my blog, and my website so new clients see my latest work. Without having automatic copyright on my work, how else would I show my work? By enacting the Orphan Works Act you are essentially saying that all of my images are worthless which is untrue! They are the very source of my income and help add value to so much in the world. Every single image that I share has value to me and potential clients. Each element of my work, every motif, every hand-painted texture has the potential to become something in the world... the pattern on your shower curtain, the printed motif on your favorite mug or dish, the funny creature on a child's birthday card, etc.

It's important that we as commercial illustrators and designers maintain the ability to market ourselves via online publishing and sharing our work without fear that our work will be misappropriated. It places an undue burden on the artist if this were allowed. Even a registration system is an undue burden on us. I am a prolific illustrator. Seriously! I draw every day. I illustrate, paint, and design every single day. It would be prohibitively expensive if I had to register the thousands of illustrations and creative works I created in a year.

We already have a burden when our work is copied and our inherent copyright is often the only legal leg we have to stand on when confronting infringement. There have been so many cases as of late where the indie artist has to confront major corporations who have used their images on their products without their knowledge or consent... because they can make a profit off of their

work. See what I mean? Our work is valuable! Why would the U.S. Copyright Office consent to give away my inventory for free when that's my livelihood?

Sincerely,

Adriana Hernandez
Illustrator & Designer