Ann Pember, AWS
Water Edge Studio
14 Water Edge Road Keeseville, NY 12944 (518) 834-7440 pember@frontiernet.net
www.annpember.com

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I am a practicing artist with a BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art. My career spans 47 years of producing art, first commercially and then as a fine artist, producing paintings for exhibition and sale. My paintings have been selected for 230 national juried exhibitions and have won more than 60 awards. They have been featured in more than 40 books and publications. I am also an author and teacher of my techniques of painting in watercolor. My first copyrighted hardcover book was released in 2000 by F & W Publications and is now almost sold out. I've self produced three books more recently as digital files on a CD, or for download from my website. I have two teaching videos professionally produced by Creative Catalyst Productions. All of these products are for sale on my website. I am greatly disturbed to hear of the proposed change in copyright law concerning Orphan Works. There is little enough protection of one's creative works under present law and I urge you to decline this new erosion of personal rights to one's creations. I make a living from the sale of my creations and do not want the unapproved use and sale of my works. Early in my career under previous law, my designs were stolen and used to create a product line. I was paid a small amount by the agent I had been working for to sell individual designs to various companies. He did not divulge that he would use them instead to start his own company based on my designs and I had no recourse.

Upon recent online searches I found numerous sites exploiting my products; hardcover book and DVD's for free download in full. There are also sites selling poor copies of my art. These infringements are affecting my own sales and stealing my money. It would cost a fortune for me to proceed legally against these unlawful sales of my creations. Please retain all rights for authors and artists and require licensing and permission of commercial uses of these works. In this fast growing age of digitized works and electronic growth it is vital to continue protecting those who create works of art.

Thank you for your careful and fair consideration of all the issues involved in any changes to copyright law.

Sincerely,
Ann Pember, AWS