Maria Pallante
Register of Copyrights
US Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave, SE
Washington DC 20559-6000
Re: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congres
Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (Docket No. 2015-01)

Dear Ms. Pallante and US Copyright Office,

I hope you're well. I would like to write a brief letter to comment on how the proposed "orphan works" bill will adversely affect me and others like me.

I have been working as a professional freelance illustrator since 1995. I graduated with the highest possible qualification of a First Class degree in graphic design from the UK's most prestigious design institution, Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design in London, where I was also an Associate Lecturer for 10 years. I am now based in California, working for clients all over the world.

I have worked for many high-profile corporate clients such as Tiffany & Co. of New York, The BBC, UNITED airlines and the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group. I also work regularly for a variety of well-known magazines, such as TIME, Vanity Fair, VOGUE, Conde Nast Traveller, The Boston Globe and The Wall Street Journal. I work for many university clients, such as the Princeton Alumni weekly magazine, Middlebury College, Tufts, and Yale.

I have illustrated 16 children's books, painted murals all around the globe, and installed and created window displays for high-end stores in many cities. I have exhibited my work all over the world, in solo shows, and in both small and large group shows, and participated in several international juried artist residencies.

In summation, I have been fortunate thus far to have a rich and varied body of work, in various media, having had the opportunity to work with numerous prestigious clients on the global stage, making my living through creating images, and licensing the usage of them through copyright.

For illustrators, our copyrights are our assets. Licensing them is how we make our livings. Copyright law is not an abstract legal issue, but a real day-to-day concern. I need to protect my work, and my livelihood.

While researching this law and the proposed changes, I found out that Copyright Law was first instituted with the Statute of Anne in Great Britain in 1710. At that time, it was believed that control of the world belonged to those with the best maps; hence those maps needed governmental protection. I make a lot of my annual income from creating illustrated maps for various magazines, because when they are re-used by other magazines, I am paid again for that use. I couldn't survive if those re-usage fees were taken away.

“Potential users” should not have the rights to my images. Only I should. It just isn’t fair otherwise. This is a very emotional issue for all visual artists. For artists to survive, we must retain the full rights to the works we create.

Thank you for reading my letter and I ask you to recommend that visual art be excluded from any orphan works provisions Congress writes into the new copyright act.

Sincerely,

Mariko Jesse
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