July 20, 2015

U.S. Copyright
Orphaned Works

Dear U.S. Copyright Office,

My name is Michele Schweitzer. I'm a 25 year old U.S. citizen and a recent college graduate, with a Bachelor's degree in Arts. I've been an artist ever since I could pick up a pencil, and have been developing my craft for the past 10+ years, working to get into the industry with my love and passion to create artworks and characters.

I take great pride and effort in the work I produce. Because of this, I find this supposed change of the copyright act quite disturbing. I've found and learned that it's difficult to become an established artist. It's even more difficult with the constant threat of thieves that profit on things - such as digital art, paintings, and photos - that they didn't put their heart and soul into making or bringing to life.

As an American citizen whose spent much time and money in school to develop the working tools needed to survive, I find that the passing of this bill will be not only a destructive loophole for people who don't fully appreciate the creative process, but a slap in the face to hard working American citizens as a whole.

To basically say that nothing we make is worth anything, and that anyone can just use whatever they want with no consequences or even a thought as to the people they hurt, is that not spitting on the American way, to fight for our right to live and make a profit on what we do as citizens? Is that not a crime against the people who struggle every day to survive, especially in a tough economy?

As an artist looking to find a way in the industry, to do what I love to do the most and make what only I can make, I strongly advise against the Orphans Act and its loopholes against artists who work from their souls as well as their brains. To take the impact of the creative process away and turn the art industry into nothing but a sweatshop is an insult to not just artists, but to everyone who works for their living.

Sincerely,
- Michele Schweitzer