July 21, 2015

United States Copy Right Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20559-6000

To whom it may concern:

I am a full time, professional artist and have been so since graduating from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in1996. I am a member of numerous professional organizations a well as sitting on the boards of two national organizations, including the American Artists Professional League, The Atlanta Fine Arts League, Society of Animal Artists, Catherine Lorillard Wolf Art Club and the National Association of Women Artists, to name a few. I have received numerous awards and accolades for my work including two gold medals for my pastels.

My work is fine art commissioned portraiture and landscape paintings, sold through brokers, galleries and on my on-line website. It's important to me that lawmakers understand that my copyrights are another source of income for me through licensing of my images and print sales. Powerful lobbyists and corporate lawyers have "testified" that once an artist's work has been published it has virtually no further commercial value and should therefore be available for use by the public, allowing them to financially benefit from my hard work. This is completely untrue and I would ask them to present any working, professional artist who agrees with this "opinion". Copyright law is not an abstract legal issue, but the basis on which my business rests. This means that allowing the general public, massive corporations and unscrupulous businesses to infringe upon my work is government sanctioned theft of my hard earned money.

It's important to me and my business that I remain able to determine, solely and voluntarily and not by a forced "registry" as to how and by whom my work is used. My work DOES NOT lose its value once it is published. And by NOT registering each of my works with a for-profit, commercial "registry", my work should not be considered orphaned and available to the public at will because I am not willing to pay a fee. Instead, every piece I create becomes part of MY *business inventory*.

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By allowing my un-registerd artworks to be “orphaned” puts an undue pressure on me, both by time and financially to pay high fees to register each of my creative works, (which to date number in the thousands) or risk the strong possibility of having my work harvested on-line and then copyrighted in someone else's name as derivative work. The abuses that will come from “good faith” infringers will be astronomical.

The demand for reform has come largely from internet firms with deep pockets and lobbyists whose main goal is to make more money by supplying the public with unfettered access to artists’ copyrighted work, all without having to pay the artists who created the works. Why should my hard work and talent be easily accessible to someone wanting to make a quick buck off of it?

In today’s digital era the U.S. Copyright Office, the House of Representatives and the Senate should be looking out for the individual artist rather than the large corporations, lobbyists and legal scholars allied with and paid for by them, who are looking to exploit the hard work of others for their own financial gain.

I strongly disagree with the one sided “The Next Great Copyright Act” and hope that others in the Congress will agree.

Sincerely and respectfully,

Lisa Gleim-Jonas
Artist