July 21, 2015

U.S. Copyright Office

Orphan Works

Dear U.S. Copyright Office,

It is my understanding that there is proposed legislation in Congress that will affect how artists are able to control the use of their artwork and their right to copyright of their original works.

It is imperative that I be able to own copyright of my artwork since I am in the business of licensing use rights of my artwork to manufacturers and have been doing so since 2004. Licensing artwork is my profession full-time. I am paid quarterly royalties based on a percentage of the sales of the products displaying my artwork. Any law that would steal away or limit my rights to my own creations, illustrations or photographs would make it impossible for me to earn a living licensing rights of my artwork to third parties.

I currently hold a Masters of Fine Art from Northern Illinois University. I have active licenses with three major jigsaw puzzle companies, greeting card and makers of gift related items. The only way I can license the use rights of my artwork to manufacturers is if I am the sole holder/owner of copyrights of my original artwork.

Any infringement on my rights of copyright of my artwork is the same as stealing money from my business. Without control over how my artwork is used, I have no business whatsoever. All artwork I produce becomes an integral part of my business inventory. Upon publication of my artwork, no value is lost in my images.

In this digital age, artists' inventory and copyright ownership is more crucial than ever before.

Please do not pass any laws that could in any way jeopardize the rights of artists or photographers to ownership of their works. It is difficult enough to earn a living as an artist---why make it impossible?

Sincerely, Ms. Lori Schory