July 6, 2015

Dear Copyright Office,

My name is Martin Wickstrom, I´m a professional illustrator with more than 10 years of experience, mainly in publishing and advertising.

Previous clients include Scholastic, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Panasonic, Time Entertainment and Saab. In 2014 I was awarded by *Creative Quarterly* and featured in their magazine.

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the new US Copyright Act – particularly the *Orphan Works* – and the devastating effects the passing of this law would have in my professional field.

To me, the current copyright law is not an abstract issue but rather a necessary foundation which enables me to make a living as an illustrator, as well as the very basis upon which my business rests.

My copyrights are the products I offer and sell in the market, thus infringing on my work is simply stealing revenues from me. My work does NOT lose it´s value upon publication. I often re-sell work or use it to build up an online portfolio, which is my main marketing tool in the highly competitive field of commercial art.

As recent as February this year, I came across an old illustration of mine that was posted – and sold on a commercial website – by an illustrator in Turkey. As this was an obvious copyright infringement, I contacted both the illustrator and the director of the website that was selling my work illegally. The issue was settled, and the image removed from the website, however this episode clearly illuminates the importance of the current copyright protection.

In today´s digitized market, illustrators´ and graphic designers´ inventory is more vulnerable and valuable than ever before. **It is absolutely essential that the current copyright protection is maintained.**

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Martin Wickstrom
Illustrator & Designer
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