Mark Paulik
Illustrator
609 West Stocker Street Unit 105
Glendale, CA 91202
www.wanderingpilot.com

7-20-2015

U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20559-6000

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to you as a professional artist/illustrator working for over 40 years. I have produced work in both print and digitized form for Magazines, Newspapers, Comic Books, Children's Books, Websites, Video Games, and Animation.

I write to you in regards to a proposed law that might replace all existing copyright law. From what I understand The Copyright Office has issued a special "Notice of Inquiry on Visual Works" wherin they are asking visual artists respond to five questions:

1. What are the most significant challenges related to monetizing and/or licensing photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations?

As the sole income provider for my family I need to maintain revenue streams to keep and maintain a basic standard of living. My artwork is a valuable resource that produces income for me and my family. Any attempt to replace our existing copyright laws with a system that would benefit internet companies would endanger my ability to make a living.

2. What are the most significant enforcement challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators?

The changes to current copyright law makes it ultimately easy for anyone or any organization to declare any and all of my work as an "orphaned work" by simply changing some small portion of the work and/or simply removing my name from the work. They could therefore declare the work as "orphaned" and use it as they see fit without compensating me for the time it took to produce the work.

3. What are the most significant registration challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators?

Having to register any sketch, thumbnail, doodle, painting and any other work past and present would impose a significant finacial burden I am not prepared to absorb.

In this nightmare scenario, if the government passes this legislation, the end result will be that artists like myself will find ourselves paying through the nose to maintain our images and significanly reduce my standard of living for my family.

4. What are the most significant challenges or frustrations for those who wish to make legal use of photographs, graphic art works, and/or illustrations?

I take no issue with anyone wanting to post copies of my work so long as they list me as the original author. I afford this same respect to any artist or author on my own website and blog.

5. What other issues or challenges should the Office be aware of regarding photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations under the Copyright Act?

I support Congressman Jerrold Nadler’s American Royalties Too (ART) Act of 2015. Though it might not be a perfect solution to the current black hole that is reprographic licensing in the US, but it contains a provision that would create an honest visual arts collecting society that would begin returning lost royalties to artists.
This would at least start to bring transparency, accountability and justice to artists' secondary licensing rights, and I thank the Copyright Office for recommending this bill to Congress.

Sincerely,
Mark Paulik