July 20, 2015

RE: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress
Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (Docket No. 2015-01)

Maria Pallante and the Copyright Office Staff:

Thank you for taking the time to read through these concerns sent in by concerned artists.

Currently I am a sophomore in college unsure of where life is heading and where I will be in terms of my career in a couple of years, but I am absolutely certain that this Orphan Works Copyrights Act will not prove fruitful in a path that is already fraught with so much difficulty. While it is already difficult enough finding a source of income in the art fields, passing this act would be an insult to the hard work and dedication – as well as the years of training – the majority of artists persevere through in order to gain a stable situation with their careers. Allowing others to make use of images that were created through hours of work and concentration as well as a passion for their practice without any benefits given back to the artist would pull out the ground from under many an artist's feet.

Copyright, while already a tricky concept to navigate through in the arts is also a major reason why any source of income that an artist has through their work exists. Copyright allows them to collect revenue by selling prints or selling their work. By taking that away and making it necessary to register their works in order to retain ownership is a thoughtless action.

Furthermore, as this act could affect any number of visual items such as photographs, it would be a concern with the matter of privacy. Any family's pictures and any pictures uploaded online could be considered “unregistered” and corporations or any random stranger could take it and use it for their own purposes; whether it be advertisement or promotion. They could even register the photo as theirs. This brings about a large amount of alarm. To think that an act could possibly take away any ownership someone has over any visual material of theirs that they do not submit for registration is staggering.

Though large corporations and businesses would likely only see this as a little bump in the road of their ongoings, I believe that this act would be a huge detriment to struggling artists or those self-employed who have no corporate backing and no protection from possible theiving of their work. And though most people think little about the struggles of artists and what copyrights mean to them, I do believe that more people should pay attention to this act as it not only affects those who work with visual media, but also those who post pictures online.

I am troubled to think that the act of the Copyrights Office would go forward in a direction that would make it easier to override copyright limitations instead of protecting artists and creators. If anything, I believe that the office should be focusing on acts that would make it much more difficult to take others works instead of something that would essentially banish all obstacles for those wishing to make profit from the works of others.

Please help keep the work of artists in the United States profitable and thriving.

Sincerely,

Na Rae Lim