Freelance Illustrator

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July 17, 2015

Maria Pallante

Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20559-6000

RE: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress

Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (Docket No. 2015-01)

Dear Ms. Pallante and the Copyright Office Staff:

I am deeply concerned that the copyright law that I rely on to make a living may change. It's not easy to guard myself against infringement as a freelance illustrator, especially in this digital age. It's crucial that I own the copyright immediately upon completion of my work. It would be an impossible burden for me to register all of the thousands of works that I currently own...and prohibitively expensive. It would also be very difficult for me to get a lawyer to challenge an infringement.

I am able to make a living because I can sell limited rights to works, then sell them again or license the works after the term of the contract is up. My clients know that they must negotiate a new contract if they would like to reproduce the work. Without the current copyright law, my position of ownership would certainly be degraded, making it easier for clients to infringe.

I have to create mountains of work to be able to make a living, and documenting or registering work would require an assistant and another 40 hours a week to do. I don't know any illustrators who would have the time or resources for even the simplest online form. The idea that a private company would have access to my images, data, and client lists is terrifying.

Instead, I support Congressman Jerrold Nadler's American Royalties Too (ART) Act of 2015. Please listen to artists on this issue, the hard-working people who would be most effected by this.

Thank you,
Richard Faust