Russell Smith
July 22, 2015

Dear Sirs,

I appreciate the opportunity to express my feelings toward the proposed copyright revisions as I understand them. I was informed by the American Society of Aviation Artists that you are looking into changes to the existing copyright law to make it more appropriate to today's times, in particular, the digital aspects of this world. Simply put, the proposed changes would negatively effect my ability to duplicate and protect my own creations, and as a direct result would have a negative effect on my income stream.

To give you some background on myself, I hold a degree in fine art from Georgia Regents University (formerly Augusta State University) and have been working as a full-time artist since 2001. Prior to 2001 I had worked as a part-time artist since 1992. I am a member of Oil Painters of America as well as an Artist Fellow in the American Society of Aviation Artists. I also currently serve as vice president of the American Society of Aviation Artists. My work can be found in collections around the world and I have been recognized by several publications including *American Art Collector, Aviation History, Flight Journal, Over the Front, Cross and Cockade* and the Italian publication, *JP4*. My work has also been the recipient of several awards and honors, and most notably is a three-time recipient of the "James V Roy" Award (Best of Show) in the American Society of Aviation Artists annual juried exhibition.

Copyright law is not an abstract legal issue for me. Much of my income is derived from the licensing of my images for public use, and as such it is the basis upon which much of my business rests. My copyrights protect my ability to license and distribute my own images, and infringement on my copyright is analogous to stealing money out of my pocket. It is very important to my businesses that I remain able to determine voluntarily how and by whom our work is used. My work does NOT lose its value upon publication. Everything that I create becomes part of my business inventory, and in the digital era my image inventory is more valuable to me than ever before.

Approving the changes proposed sets in motion a whole new paradigm where little profit is afforded the creator. I am against any changes or legislation that profits from the creative mind with little or no respect to the creator whether it is the visual arts, music, fashion design, book illustration, novels, publications, photography or any other creative act.

Once again, I'd like to give my appreciation to the Copyright Office for inquiring from the many talented artists of so many disciplines their thoughts about the proposed changes to be presented to Congress for consideration.

My creations are mine, and I would like to keep it that way. Please help me to maintain my ability to make a living creating my images. Please DO NOT pass the proposed legislation which threatens what, for me, is a valuable source of income.

Sincerely
Russell Smith
Artist/owner Russell Smith Studios