Rachelle Lim

Comment

I'm an oceanography graduate student. Art isn't something I do for money; it's a hobby for my downtime when I'm not doing science. But through my work I've met many amazing artists and one thing I've heard time and time again from them is the difficulty of making money from their work. Companies—from huge businesses like Urban Outfitters to local small outfits—frequently request for free art by offering "exposure"—or, worse, steal it directly from artists' websites. In the event that that happens, they are at least protected by current copyright laws; but should this new Copyright Act pass, that would no longer be true, and local and freelance artists would suffer the most—the same artists who produce the art for the newspapers you read, the ads you see on your television, phone and tablet screen, and the shows you and your children watch. Putting the burden on individual artists to copyright every work they produce to protect themselves from theft—a crime that is already ubiquitous and would only be worsened by any changes in the system—would be unbearably onerous and choke off a community that already struggles to make money. Though I don't make my income off my art, I would be crushed to find mine stolen to bloat the revenues of some fat cat, and would hate to wake up in a world where I had to worry about that everyday. Remember: our everyday experiences are flooded with visual media. Let's not punish the folks responsible for that.