Monday, July 6, 2015

Dear U.S. Copyright Office,

I am a professional artist and make my living by leveraging the copyrights associated with my artworks. I license my copyrighted works to individuals, small businesses, large corporations, and licensing organizations. Leveraging my copyright is a critical legal issue on which my business rests.

Though I earned a Bachelor degree in music from Cornish College of the Arts and have toured North and Central America as a musician with four CDs to my credit, I also create visual art installations, jewelry, and still images for galleries and museums including the Seattle Art Museum. All this work depends on my ability to leverage my copyright as I see fit.

My copyrights are the products I license. Wether it is the still or video images of the visual art I license, or the audio and music I license, If I don't control the copyright to my works my power to negotiate is vastly reduced, I am placed at much higher risk in this age of indemnification, or my seat at the creative table is simply given to someone who does control their own rights.

It is critically important to my businesses that I remain able to determine voluntarily how and by whom my

work is used.

My work does NOT lose its value upon publication. Rather, publication most often leads to increased awareness and increased value of my work.

Everything I create becomes part of my business inventory. I track all my copyright and licensing so I know who has paid or should be paying me to use my works in part or whole. This is how my money is made.

In the digital era, inventory is more valuable to artists than ever before.

Please remember the common good. We are best served by a level playing field. The Orphan Works Act is NOT a level playing field. It would tear rights from the hands of individual artists. It forces our newly diminished rights under the auspice of commercial registries, large corporations, and conglomerates.

Copyright protection helps ensure that great ideas and great culture thrive in a free society. If we lopside the system to favor the few and forget the many, we are sure to suffer as a people for such folly.

Please, do not enact the Orphan Works Act.

Sincerely,

Nathan Owen Brown

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