

From: [REDACTED]
To: FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty
Cc: info@copyrightalliance.org
Subject: intellectual property infringement
Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 7:13:08 AM

Dear Ms. Espinel,

The Copyright Alliance has informed me of this welcome invitation from the Obama Administration to share my thoughts on my rights as a fine arts professional and creator.

As a professional artist in this age of the internet, it is vital that my intellectual property rights are protected because my images are on the internet via my website and image-hosting site on Flickr in order to be seen and promote my work, but they can also be mis-appropriated without my permission and used for all sorts of purposes that I may or may not ever hear about. It is currently a catch 22 situation that in order to get my work seen I must present it on the internet, and yet that is where people have and will take it and use it without my permission.

In several instances I have found my work and reference images being used (sometimes for profit) without my permission, and I have requested that the images be removed. This is frustrating and unnerving as in some cases the work is being shown for a purpose I would never agree to, and also my work can be making money for someone and I will never see any compensation for the theft. Artists are sometimes successful in protecting their work and sometimes not.... we often have no recourse if someone chooses not to listen. Artist friends of mine have asked for their work to be removed from improper usage and have been laughed at and told that there is nothing they can do.

I work with professional artists, photographers, and other creative professionals every day in my studio space at The Metropolitan Center for the Visual Arts (VisArts at Rockville) and we all share concerns about promoting our work and protecting it from improper use. If protections are in place and enforced, it will make many individuals think twice before pirating imagery and using work without permission, and hopefully it will improve the likelihood that individuals will compensate me appropriately for image use. This is something the general public needs to be educated about as many people have no idea how challenging it is for artists to protect their work.

Artists are the collective soul of this nation, and we deserve every protection possible as we work and create on a daily basis for a lifetime.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Judith Olivia HeartSong
painting, mixed media, murals

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