

**To:** [FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty](mailto:FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty)  
**Cc:** [info@copyrightalliance.org](mailto:info@copyrightalliance.org)  
**Subject:** Copyright and Me  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 23, 2010 6:05:56 PM

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Dear Ms. Espinel:

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

I am a professional photographer. I make a living entirely through photography, both making pictures and writing about the medium. My livelihood depends on my ability to earn income for my work.

In recent years, notable instances of copyright infringement by "artists" such as Shepard Fairey and Richard Prince (among unfortunately many others) have brought intellectual property rights issues to the fore. Unfortunately this has not served to clarify the issue. Artists, end users, lawyers and the public at large do not seem to fully grasp the issue of creators' rights. It is imperative that the US government work to protect the value of copyright, thereby ensuring the ability of artists, musicians, photographers, poets and artists of all types to earn an income--to survive--via their work.

To do this, I believe the general public must be informed more readily that if creators cannot survive from the sale of their works, those creators and the works we value will surely disappear. I believe clearer lines need to be drawn to help users understand the difference between truly fair use and infringement, the difference between transformative works and derivatives. I believe that when the general public understands the value it receives from creative works, as well as the need for creators to earn income from their works, as a society we will be less likely to tread on the rights of others.

Please do not devalue copyright, the rights of the creator, and the value of art in general.

Sincerely,  
William Sawalich  
Photographer  
St. Louis, MO