



In answer to your query

DRAMATIC WORKS: SCRIPTS, PANTOMIMES, AND CHOREOGRAPHY

FL-119

Types of published or unpublished dramatic works that may be submitted for registration include choreography, pantomimes, plays, treatments, and scripts prepared for cinema, radio, and television. These works may be with or without music.

Generally, dramatic works such as plays and radio or television scripts are works intended to be performed. Dramatic works usually include spoken text, plot, and directions for action. Because of misconceptions about copyright registration for radio and television presentations, the following points require emphasis:

- The title of a program or series of programs cannot be copyrighted.
- The general idea or concept for a program is not copyrightable. Copyright will protect the literary or dramatic expression of an author's idea but not the idea itself.
- Registration for a particular script applies only to the copyrightable material in that script. "Blanket" registration for future scripts or for a series as a whole is not available. However, an unpublished collection of material may be registered with one application.

Choreography and pantomimes are also copyrightable dramatic works. Choreography is the composition and arrangement of dance movements and patterns usually intended to be accompanied by music. As distinct from choreography, pantomime is the art of imitating or acting out situations, characters, or other events. To be protected by copyright, pantomimes and choreography need not tell a story or be presented before an audience. Each work, however, must be fixed in a tangible medium of expression from which the work can be performed.

See the reverse side of this letter for details on registration procedures.

Deposit requirements depend on whether the work has been published at the time of registration. If the work is unpublished, send one copy of the work. If the work is published, send two complete copies of the best edition of the work:

- **SCRIPT:** The copy may be a manuscript, printed copy, film or video recording, or a phonorecord.
- **PANTOMIME:** The work may be embodied in a film or video recording or be precisely described in text or on a phonorecord.
- **CHOREOGRAPHY:** The work may be embodied in a film or video recording or be precisely described on any phonorecord or in written text or in any dance notation system such as Labanotation, Sutton Movement Shorthand, or Benesh Notation.

Registration of the work is normally effective on the day all the material is received in the Copyright Office in acceptable form.

Sincerely yours,

Register of Copyrights

Copyright Office fees are subject to change. For current fees, please check the Copyright Office website at www.copyright.gov, write the Copyright Office, or call (202) 707-3000.

Registering a Copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office

An application for copyright registration contains three essential elements: a completed application form, a nonrefundable filing fee, and a nonreturnable deposit—that is, a copy or copies of the work being registered and “deposited” with the Copyright Office.

A copyright registration is effective on the date the Copyright Office receives all the required elements in acceptable form.

Online Registration

Online registration through the electronic Copyright Office (eCO) is the preferred way to register basic claims for literary works; visual arts works; performing arts works, including motion pictures; sound recordings; and single serials.

Advantages of eCO filing include the lowest filing fee; the fastest processing time; online status tracking; secure payment by credit or debit card, electronic check, or Copyright Office deposit account; and the ability to upload certain categories of deposits directly into eCO as electronic files. To access eCO, go to the Copyright Office website and click on *electronic Copyright Office*.

Fill-In Form CO

The new fill-in Form CO is the next-best option for registering basic claims. Simply complete Form CO on your personal computer,

print it out, and mail it along with a check or money order and your deposit. To access Form CO, go to the Copyright Office website and click on *Forms*.

Registration with Paper Forms

Paper versions of Forms TX (literary works); VA (visual arts works); PA (performing arts works); SR (sound recordings); SE (single serials); and CON (continuation sheet for paper applications) are still available. However, these paper forms are not accessible on the Copyright Office website; staff will send them by postal mail upon request (limit of two copies of each form). Certain other applications *must* be completed on paper and mailed to the Copyright Office with the appropriate fee and deposit. These applications, available on the Office’s website by clicking on *Forms*, include Form RE (renewal of copyright claims) and forms for group submissions. For a complete list, see SL-35, *Registering a Copyright with the U.S. Copyright Office*.

See Circular 1, *Copyright Basics*, for complete details about copyright, deposit requirements, and registration procedures.

NOTE: Copyright Office fees are subject to change. For current fees, please check the Copyright Office website, write the Copyright Office, or call (202) 707-3000.

For Further Information

By Internet

Circulars, announcements, regulations, certain application forms, and other materials are available from the Copyright Office website at www.copyright.gov. To send an email communication, click on *Contact Us* at the bottom of the homepage.

By Telephone

For general information about copyright, call the Copyright Public Information Office at (202) 707-3000. Staff members are on duty from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, eastern time, Monday

through Friday, except federal holidays. Recorded information is available 24 hours a day. To request paper application forms or circulars, call the Forms and Publications Hotline at (202) 707-9100 and leave a recorded message.

By Regular Mail

Write to
*Library of Congress
Copyright Office-COPUBS
101 Independence Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20059-6304*