

Sultanate Decree

No. 97/65

For the issuance of Censorship Law of Artistic Works

We Qaboos bin Said, the Sultan of Oman

After having reviewed the Basic Statute of the State issued under the Sultanate Decree No. 96/101.

And the Censorship Law on Artistic Works issued under the Sultanate Decree No. 76/45.

And the Sultanate Decree No. 77/20 defining the competencies of the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture.

And the Sultanate Decree No. 97/15 approving the Organizational Chart of the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture.

And as required by the public interest:

We resolved the following:

Article (1): Censorship on Artistic Works shall be governed by the provisions of the accompanying Law.

Article (2): The Minister of National Heritage and Culture shall issue the resolutions necessary to implement the Provisions of this Law.

Article (3): The Sultanate Decree No. 76/45 referred to shall be cancelled, any provision that contravenes the attached Law or contradicts its provisions shall be cancelled.

Article (4): Licenses Existing related to Artistic Works at the time of issuance of this Law shall continue until the end of their term.

Article (5): This Decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall come into effect as of the date of its publication.

**Qaboos bin Said
Sultan of Oman**

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Censorship Law on Artistic Works

Article (1): The following words shall have the meanings specified for each of them unless the context requires otherwise:

(a) Ministry: Ministry of National Heritage and Culture.

(b) Minister: Minister of National Heritage and Culture.

(c) Artistic Works: Audiovisual Works.

(d) Conversion: is converting the artistic work from one type to another such as converting a story to a movie, a theatrical work to a radio or television work or vice versa.

(e) Performance: Acting, theatrical or rhythmic performance by the performer or the actor, as well as singing by the singer before the public so that the work can be directly seen or heard as the case may be, provided that this is to be done in a public place.

(f) Trading: To launch the work to the market and trade it among the public for commercial use and to be after the licensing of the work.

Article (2): The artistic works are subject to the censorship whether directly performed or recorded on tapes, CDs or any other technical means in order to protect public order, public morals and the supreme interests of the State.

Article (3): None of the following works related to artistic works may be performed without the Ministry's licenses:

First: Photographed, recorded, copied or converted for the purpose of exploitation.

Second: Imported or supplied.

Third: Distributed, rented, traded or sold.

Fourth: Advertised them by any means of advertising.

Article (4): The Ministry shall produce, display, sell, license the production, display, sell or prevent artistic works, within its competence.

Article (5): Trading, selling or displaying non-original artistic works without an official **authorization** from the producer or agent approved in the Sultanate is prohibited.

Article (6): The competent authority of the Ministry shall censor the artistic works.

Article (7): The Minister may form a committee of specialists to assist the competent authority in the artistic works censorship.

Article (8): The Provisions of this Law shall apply to all the artistic works that are displayed in public places and the buildings related to the ministries, institutions, companies and public entities operating in the Sultanate, except for the following displays:

(a) Displaying of artistic works only for educational or cultural and educational purposes where the concerned ministries censor such artistic works in accordance with the substantive rules issued by the Ministry regarding the censorship of artistic works.

(b) What is displayed in places subject to the diplomatic immunity.

(c) The artistic works imported or produced for the purpose of broadcasting on the Radio and Television of the Sultanate of Oman.

Article (9): The applicant shall submit to the Ministry a copy of the artistic work required to be licensed in addition to specifying the place and date on which it will be displayed and performed. The application shall be decided within three months from the date of its submission, during which the license shall be approved or disapproved, and in case of disapproval, the applicant shall be notified in writing.

Article (10): The applicant shall meet the following conditions:

- (a) To be Omani National.
- (b) To be 21 years old at least.
- (c) To be of good behavior.
- (d) No convictions of a felony or offense of dishonor have been issued against him, unless he was rehabilitated.

Article (11): Where the applicant is a legal person, it shall be of Omani Nationality, or operates in the Sultanate of Oman and registered with the Commercial Registry at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Article (12): Personal license may not be assigned to third party except with the approval of the Ministry which may specify the entities that may use the license, and the license will be valid for the following periods:

- (a) Five years for display, performance or radio.
- (b) One year for importation, exportation, registration or advertising.
- (c) Three months for exportation and apply only for country (s) stated therein.

Article (13): License renewal may be requested for another period thirty days at least before the end of the period. The Ministry shall decide that request fifteen days before the end of the license, either by approving or disapproving the license renewal, and in case of disapproval, the applicant shall be accordingly notified in writing.

Article (14): Licensee may not make any amendment, alteration or addition to the licensed work and may not use what has been decided to be excluded or not advertised.

Article (15): The Licensee shall:

First: Mention the license number and date in all the announcements issued for the licensed work.

Second: Print the license of display or trading including its number and date in a prominent place on the artistic work.

Article (16): A license that previously issued may be cancelled by a reasoned decision at any time if new circumstances arise and so require. A new license may be issued without fees after the necessary deletion, addition or modification to the artistic work.

Article (17): Fees are imposed on all what is subject to censorship in accordance with the Provisions of this Law, and after the approval of the Ministry of Finance to determine the fees due for reviewing the required artistic work, the license issuance or renewal, the Minister shall issue its decision.

Article (18): The artistic works that are imported for educational or cultural purposes, or those supplied as a way of exchange among the Sultanate of Oman and other countries in implementation of cultural agreements concluded with them for similar treatment, shall be exempted from the fees mentioned in the preceding Article.

Article (19): No places for artistic works display may be created without a permission by the Ministry. The place must comply with health conditions and preventive procedures that guarantee the safety and comfort of the public and the technical equipment related to the display and specified by the competent bodies, and the Ministry must verify such conditions before issuance the said permission.

Article (20): Decisions issued regarding the artistic works may be appealed before the Grievance Committee, which is formed by the Minister's decision.

Article (21): The Grievance Committee is competent to consider the following:
Decisions rejecting the artistic work license.

The decisions issued to stop the shooting, recording, displaying, selling or performing the artistic work in addition to the decisions issued to close the places in which the same is performed.

Any other decisions issued about artistic works.

Article (22): The grievance must be submitted within fifteen days from the date of receiving the decision by the concerned party. Grievance Committee shall decide the matter of grievance within thirty days at the most from the date of receiving the grievance, and the decisions are issued by the majority, and the Committee raises its recommendations to the Minister for approval, whose decision in that regard shall be final, then the appellant shall be informed by a registered letter.

Article (23): The Ministry may create the rules and regulations required to determine the age groups that are not allowed to watch the licensed artistic work.

Article (24): The Ministry may, in case of violating the Provisions of this Law, stop shooting, recording, displaying, selling or performing, in addition, it may also close the place in which the violation occurred, reserve the artistic work and refer the matter to the competent court within one week from the date of closing the place.

Article (25): A person who violates the provisions of paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of Article (3) of this Law shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years and a fine not less than Omani Riyal (1000) and not more than Omani Riyal (2000) or one of these two penalties, and the penalty shall be doubled in case of repeated violation.

Article (26): A person who violates the provisions of paragraph 4 of Article (3) and Article (14) shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months and a fine not less than Omani Riyal (500) and not more than Omani Riyal (1000) or one of these two penalties.

Article (27): The Ministry may cancel the license in case of repeated violation of the provisions of This Law.

Article (28): The Minister shall issue a decision to appoint competent employees to implement the Provisions of this Law and to have the powers of judicial control, and to have the right of access to places subject to the Provisions of this Law to verify the implementation of its Provisions.

Article (29): An artistic work, where appropriate, may be referred to a committee formed by the Minister's decision of a selected group of clerics, intellectuals and artists to evaluate its technical, religious and cultural level.

Article (30): The Provisions of this Law shall not apply to the artistic works imported to the purpose of personal use, and those who imported them and approved to be copied and used for commercial or trading purposes shall be punished by the penalty mentioned in Article (25) of this Law.