

# Performers' Rights in Sri Lanka: An Insight into Singers Melancholia

In the realm of music, where creativity and passion intertwine, the rights of performers hold paramount importance. These rights safeguard the interests of musicians, singers, actors, and other artists who bring their unique talents to life on stage and in recordings. In Sri Lanka, a vibrant tapestry of musical traditions, performers' rights have gained increasing recognition, paving the way for a more equitable and sustainable music industry.

## Legal Framework for Performers' Rights in Sri Lanka

The legal framework protecting performers' rights in Sri Lanka is primarily enshrined in the **Copyright Act, No. 36 of 1979**, which was subsequently amended by the **Copyright (Amendment) Act, No. 28 of 1994**. These statutes establish the following fundamental rights for performers:



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by B.K. Bazhe

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## **1. Economic Rights**

\* The exclusive right to reproduce, distribute, and communicate recordings of their performances to the public \* The right to receive royalties from the exploitation of their recordings

## **2. Moral Rights**

\* The right to be identified as the performer in connection with the use of their recordings \* The right to prevent the distortion or mutilation of their recordings

## **3. Related Rights**

\* Neighboring rights, which grant performers special protection against unauthorized broadcasting, public performance, and the making of derivative works based on their recordings

## **Challenges Faced by Sri Lankan Performers**

Despite the legal framework, Sri Lankan performers often encounter challenges in enforcing their rights. Some of the most prevalent obstacles include:

### **1. Contractual Issues**

Unfair contracts, particularly with record labels, can deprive performers of their rightful share of royalties and other benefits.

### **2. Unauthorized Use of Recordings**

Unauthorized copying and distribution of music recordings, especially online, have led to a significant loss of income for performers.

### **3. Lack of Awareness**

Many performers are unaware of their rights and may inadvertently sign away their interests or fail to take legal action when their rights are violated.

#### **The Collective Management Organization: SLSAS**

To address these challenges and strengthen the protection of performers' rights, the **Sri Lanka Singers Association (SLSAS)** established the **Sri Lanka Singers Association Society (SLSASS)** in 1998. SLSASS is a collective management organization (CMO) that represents the interests of singers and other performers in Sri Lanka.

SLSASS plays a crucial role in:

- \* Collecting and distributing royalties on behalf of its members
- \* Enforcing performers' rights and pursuing legal action against infringers
- \* Raising awareness and educating performers about their rights

#### **Singers Melancholia: A Tale of Creativity, Passion, and Resistance**

In the heart of Sri Lanka's music scene, a group of talented singers has emerged, captivating audiences with their melancholic melodies and poignant lyrics. Known as **Singers Melancholia**, this collective has become a symbol of resilience and the indomitable spirit of Sri Lankan performers.

Their music, deeply rooted in traditional Sri Lankan melodies, explores themes of love, loss, and the human condition. Singers Melancholia's performances are characterized by their heartfelt vocals, intricate harmonies, and a mesmerizing stage presence that leaves listeners spellbound.

However, the path to success for Singers Melancholia has not been without its challenges. Like many Sri Lankan performers, they have faced unfair contracts, unauthorized use of their recordings, and the relentless pursuit of profitability over artistic integrity.

Undeterred, Singers Melancholia has remained steadfast in their commitment to their craft and the protection of their rights. They have actively engaged with SLSASS to ensure that their voices are heard and their interests are safeguarded.

Performers' rights are essential for a thriving music industry in Sri Lanka. The legal framework and the efforts of collective management organizations like SLSASS have made significant progress in protecting the interests of singers and other performers. However, challenges remain, and continued vigilance is needed to ensure that performers receive fair compensation for their contributions to Sri Lanka's rich musical heritage.

Singers Melancholia serves as an inspiring example of creativity, passion, and resilience in the face of adversity. Their story underscores the importance of performers' rights and the need for a collective voice to advocate for the protection of these rights.

As the music industry evolves, it is imperative that the rights of performers are recognized and respected. Only then can Sri Lankan music flourish and

continue to captivate audiences around the world.



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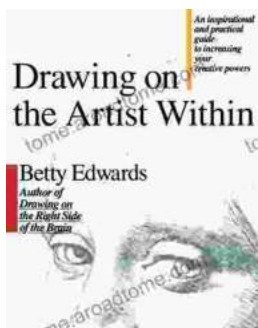
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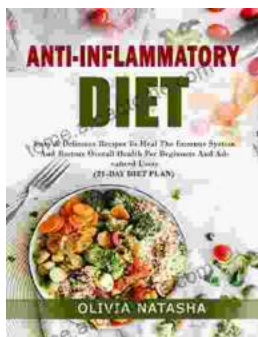
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