

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7355, April 03, 1992]

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL LIVING TREASURES, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MANLILIKHA NG BAYAN, AND THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL FOLK ARTS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR PURPOSES`

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the Manlilikha ng Bayan Act.

SEC. 2. *Policy and Objectives.* - It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State to preserve and promote its traditional folk arts whether visual, performing, or literary, for their cultural value, and to honor and support traditional folk artists for their contribution to the national heritage by ensuring that the artistic skills which they have painstakingly cultivated and preserved are encouraged and passed on to future generations of Filipinos.

The objectives of this Act shall be as follows:

- a. to acknowledge the importance of traditional folk artist as singular conduit between skills of the past and the future;
- b. to revitalize a community's artistic tradition thereby protecting a valuable facet of Philippine culture;
- c. to provide mechanisms for identifying and assisting qualified traditional folk artists to transfer their skills to the community; and
- d. to create opportunities for popularizing their works locally and internationally.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For the purpose of this Act, Manlilikha ng Bayan shall mean a citizen or a group of citizens engaged in any traditional art uniquely Filipino, whose distinctive skills have reached such a high level of technical and artistic excellence and have been passed on to and widely practiced by the present generation in his/her community with the same degree of technical and artistic competence.

"Traditional Folk Art" refers to expressions of distinctiveness and artistic quality created to serve a decorative and/or utilitarian or sociocultural functions of traditional folk artists commonly known for such works.

SEC. 4. *Criteria and Qualifications.* - To become a Manlilikha ng Bayan, the candidate must satisfy the following minimum criteria:

- a. *Technical and creative skill* - The candidate must possess a mastery of the tools and materials needed by the art, and must have an established

reputation in the art as master and maker of works of extraordinary technical quality;

- b. *Artistic quality* - The work of the candidate must be outstanding aesthetically, and he/she must have consistently produced over a significant period, works of superior quality;
- c. *Community tradition* - The candidate must have transferred and/or willing to transfer to other members of the community, skills in the folk art for which the community has become nationally known;
- d. *Folk art tradition* - The candidate must have engaged in a folk art tradition that has been in existence and documented for at least fifty (50) years; and
- e. *Character and integrity* - As a precious treasure of the country the candidate must command the respect and admiration of the country for his character and integrity. The implementing agency may require additional criteria and qualifications in pursuance of the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Award and other Incentives.* - The award given to the Manlilikha ng Bayan shall be called Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan.

In addition, the following incentives shall be enjoyed:

- a. *Plaque/Medal* - The awardee shall each receive a commemorative plaque and/or medal, a duplicate set of which is to be donated to and permanently displayed in the pertinent provincial museum or largest cultural center in order to broaden community awareness of the significance of our traditional folk arts and to accord them the recognition they richly deserve;
- b. An initial grant of One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) and Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00) a month thereafter for life, shall be given, unless the Commission after due hearing finds good reason to discontinue the grant arising from violations of pertinent terms and conditions herein stated.

This grant may be increased whenever circumstances so warrant provided that the increase shall not be given retroactive effect;

- c. *Documentation* - All surviving samples of works by the awardee shall be catalogued and photographed, and his/her work methods and shall likewise be documented;
- d. A vocational course using materials, tools, methods and designs of the awardee may be offered at the nearest arts and trades school through the cooperative efforts of the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, and a private foundation and/or private corporation, to effect the transfer of his/her skills and the preservation of folk art tradition;
- e. A feasibility study of converting the awardee's art into a specialized cottage industry in the awardee's province, preferably in the recipient's barangay or town, may be undertaken by the Department of Trade and Industry in collaboration with private investors; and
- f. The recipient shall be invited to Manila-based and regional cultural events that salute the importance of traditional folk arts in the Filipino cultural heritage;

SEC. 6. *Duties and Responsibilities of Awardees.* - The Manlilikha ng Bayan is a link between the past, in which his/her traditional folk art found fertile soil for growth, and the future, during which he/she seeks his/her art to be permanently sustained. It becomes his/her responsibility therefore to undertake the following: