



A REPORT ON FILMS RESTRICTED IN KENYA

BY

KENYA FILM CLASSIFICATION BOARD

Introduction

Part III of films and stage plays act empowers the board to examine and classify film, all films meant for public exhibition or distribution must be approved by the Board.

After completion of examination of film the Board may approve the film to the public while imposing age restriction, approve it for exhibition to the public subject to such editing as it thinks proper or refuse to approve it to the public.

When a film is not suitable for general exhibition the following age restriction may apply Parental Guidance (PG) unsuitable for person under the age of 16 (16) and for adult only.

The Board may also approve a film for public consumption as long as some scenes as it thinks proper are edited. This scenario might not work because most film nowadays are in digital format and re editing it is very complex and costly and some clients would rightly refuse. Where the Board refuses to approve the film for public

Restriction of film

Section 16(4) of the part III of Film and Stage Plays Acts stipulates that the Board shall not approve a film or a poster which in its opinion tends to prejudice the maintenance of public order or offend decency or the public exhibition or display of which in its opinion for any other reason be undesirable in the public interest.

Over the years the Board has restricted number of films, the Board has restricted the following films:

1. *Otto the Blood Bath*

This is a Kenyan film was restricted on 8th May 2009; the film was restricted because of the following reason;

- The film was too horrific, even to an adult it had too much blood.
- The film had prolonged scenes of dead human characters.
- The use and blood, horror, death and occultism in film were found to be undesirable in the public Interest.

2. Bane

The Board declined to approve this film for public exhibition and distribution on 23rd October 2009, this decision was made on the following grounds;

- Violence and crime were explicit and often unbearable even to an adult
- There were prolonged scenes of horror, occult and cannibalized body parts
- The themes of crime presented in the film were capable of inciting crime; also the theme of horror and cannibalism encouraged a section of community to harm another section therefore a threat to public order and morals.

3. Movie 43

This is a Hollywood production was restricted on 20th march 2013, the film contained explicit sexual scenes and high level of profanity.

4. Paradise Love

This film was produced by an Australian film maker and shot here in the country in the coastal region. The film was restricted on 8th of April 2013.

- It was restricted because it had extreme element of sexual immorality, exposure of genital, it also portrayed Kenyan youth especially at the coast as tools of sexual exploitation.

5. This Is the End

This is a Hollywood production was restricted on 4th October 2013 on the following grounds;

- The film glorifies and normalizes homosexuality.
- The film was also blasphemous as it offended the Christian religion.
- It had prolonged and explicit scenes of nudity, sex, obscenity and drug abuse.

6. *The Wolf of Wall Street*

This is also a Hollywood production which was restricted on 15th January 2015; the decision to decline approval for the film was on the following grounds.

- The film had prolonged and explicit sexual scene both heterosexual activity and homosexual
- It had continuous depiction of nude women without context.
- The overall theme in this film was glorification and glamorization of white collar crime, drugs and alcohol abuse.
- The film also had theme of profanity in regard to Christian religion.

7. *Stories of Our Lives*

This film is a Kenyan production it was restricted on 6th October 2014, the film was deemed undesirable for the reasons;

- The overall theme of the film is to promote homosexuality .it has graphic, lewd scenes of nude men engaging in sexual activity.it has scenes of High school students engaging in lesbianism and portray sex as the norm for teenagers.
- The film depict the country as a nation with an active gay and lesbian community who are oppressed
- The film basically rallies the nation to accept homosexuality as human rights.
- It offends the larger Kenyan community

8. *Shades of Grey*

Shades of Grey are a Hollywood production based on the series of novels shades of grey. This film was restricted on 9th February, 2015 on the following grounds;

- It was noted that the film contains explicit erotic scenes featuring element of sexual practices involving bondage, dominance and submission.
- The film also has subtle aspect of gender violence which remain unresolved in the end.

9. Magic Mike XXL

It is a sequel to 2012 film Magic Mike, the film revolves around Mike who is the main character, having retired from strip dancing decide to join his old friends in the industry after three years. With his return the remaining king of Tampa decides to put on a final show at strippers convection at Myrtle Beach.

The film was restricted on the following grounds;

1. Sex nudity and obscenity –sexual scenes and obscenity in the film throughout in form of suggestive language and male strippers performing suggestive sexual acts on female characters. These scenes are in bad taste as most women in these scenes are either plus size, older or women of color insinuating that this kind of women can only get attention from men when they are paying for it.
2. Vulgar language- explicit sexual language and curse word is used throughout the film.
3. Alcohol and drug abuse-The main characters in this film are engaged in abusing alcohol and drugs without any repercussion.
4. Theme of the film -though the film was intended to be a comedy with entertainment value it goes overboard and the overriding theme in this film is to try and legitimize the trade of male stripping. The film attempts to show that male entertainers are legitimate career people and they do what they do in order to help women who are single and lonely, but reality it comes out as an attempt to prey on the vulnerability of these women because at the end of the day they have to pay to get male attention.

10. Rafiki

This is a Kenyan production it was restricted on April 2018 primarily for its **GAY THEME**. The film appears to normalize homosexuality through the casual way that the main characters get attracted to each other and the easy progression of their relationship into a fully blown love affair within a short span of time. It further portrays gay people as helpless victims of mindless violence by the society through the mob justice attack on Kena and Ziki as they have fun in their hideout. The ending of the film, where the two lesbian lovers are depicted to reunite after a long time seems to push the idea that even with distance, rejection by family and persecution from society two people in love will always beat the odds to be together even if their relationship is unacceptable to the society in which they are. Other classifiable elements in the film include:

- **Crime and Violence**; violence against women by mob attack, police brutality
- **Language**; gay people referred to as "Shoga", a derogatory Swahili term for homosexual individuals
- **Religion and Community**; exorcism of "gay demons"
- **Sex Obscenity and Nudity**; several kissing and caressing scenes by the same-sex lead actors