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# Attaining an Ideal Symbiotic Relationship Between Creative Drama And Children's Learning A Dramatist Approach

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# THE SCHOLAR ARTIST AND HIS MÉTIER IN A GLOCAL CONTEXT

*Festschrift in Honour of*

**PROFESSOR MATTHEW  
MEVAYERHO UMUKORO**



@70

**Edited by:**

**Mabel I. E. Ekwierhoma  
Taofiq O. Nasir  
Sola K. Balogun**

**MM UMUKORO: THE SCHOLAR ARTIST  
AND HIS MÉTIER IN A GLOCAL CONTEXT**  
**A Festschrift in Honour of Professor**  
**Mathew Mevayerho Umukoro**

**Edited By**

**Mabel I. E. Ekwierhoma**  
**Taofiq O. Nasir**  
**Sola K. Balogun**

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Professor Matthew Mevayerho Umukoro, whose  
indefatigable presence within and beyond the four walls of the classroom paved the  
way for us his academic offspring and friends..

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is imperative to give all the glory to God for His grace that saw us complete this Festschrift despite many intimidating challenges that we faced before and during this book project. The title *MM Umukoro, The Scholar Artist and His Métier in a Glocal Context: A Festschrift in Honour of Professor Mathew Mevayerho Umukoro* adequately captures the identity and personality of the honouree. This publication was meant to coincide with the bowing out of our teacher, friend, mentor and father figure, Professor Matthew Mevayerho Umukoro from the services of University of Ibadan on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 2020. With the Covid-19 Lockdown, it was not possible to achieve this target hence the Festschrift would become visible in 2021, one year after. The patience of Professor Matthew Umukoro throughout the process of collecting the essays and their eventual publication is legendary. Not only was he calm, his supportive disposition was that of a father who knew that his children would ultimately deliver on a promise to themselves, which he was not unaware of.

A virtual celebration of Professor Matthew Umukoro was held on Google Meet on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, 2021, after the essays were assembled and his students were present. Termed "MMU, Papers on 'Plays, Essays and Poems'" (MMU-PEP), Professor Umukoro graciously honoured us with his presence and the salutation event or 'waving of handkerchief' was a success. The essay presented in the meeting room was a confirmation of his intellectual contribution to academia and society through his meticulous artistry and creativity as an essayist, critic, poet, dramatist and teacher.

It is important to salute the perseverance of all the contributors, who saw the need to honour Professor Matthew Umukoro and perpetually inscribe his name in a manner deserving of a shaper of theirs and other peoples' destinies. Professor Umukoro, the subject of the Festschrift was a firm cursor and indicator through the academic and life paths that many of his former students tread today.

The editors are appreciative of the support of those who despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent Lockdown following its outbreak, continued to gather, read the essays and tributes in this collection. It is for this reason that we thank Professors Barclays Ayakoroma, Effiong Johnson who wrote the Foreword to this Festschrift and the editorial assistants Mariam Olasunkanmi Kasim, Helen Doom Thomas, Emmanuel Adedeji and Kelechi Agocha who at various stages provided their services. We also thank our spouses for their support during this daunting task and wish all of them the best that life has to offer.

We mention Dr Taiwo Oladokun, a former student of Professor Umukoro, who was one of the planners of the MMU Festschrift Project Team, but did not see its fruition. Our consolation is that he is secure in the bosom of God.

This Festschrift is presented to academics, artistes, students, researchers and the public as a document for further insight into the creativity and activism of Professor Umukoro and how his academic offspring value his contribution to society and their lives.

**Mabel I. E. Ewlerhoma**

**Taofiq O. Nasir**

**Sola K. Balogun**

## FOREWORD

**...the rest of the timid generation, with their hearts in their mouths, echo the loud silence where a silent noise would have moved mountains... (From the poem "The Promise Land" in Matthew Umukoro's poetry collection *Dross of God*)**

Let me show great gratitude for my nomination for this task by the very able team of editors, led by the heroine herself, Mabel Ewrierhoma. How they arrived at my 'competence' for this still remains unresolved in my conjecturing.... I thank you, and more so, for dragging me into participating in this monumental feast of honour, to an outstanding man. This apparently lately-led participatory count is nonetheless highly priced by yours sincerely, as it has afforded him great opportunity to add his voice to the conflux of the silent noise made here to move mountains for Professor Matthew Umukoro (MMU). Talking of honour, especially in a clime where thieves, murderers, rapists, arsonists; who Hope Eghagha identifies as "tall corrupt men who play ping pong with people's lives" – and equally wishes the sky to collapse and land on their empty heads – questionable folks of apparent brazen effusions of character, have wantonly been "honoured" with national awards. One then is apt to ask, is Professor Matthew Umukoro deserving of honour? Without much ado, the answer is obvious. He does. Imagine over sixty very sane people in this collection, willingly struggling as it were, to lift a well-decorated crown upon his head as a mark of honour; and that, as absolutely deserving. The Bible says where two or three agree on a matter, such should be accepted as established (II Cor.13:1). Here then is a palace of agreement!

Professor Matthew Umukoro indeed deserves the honour bequeathed to him by the array of scholars making multi-thrust representations in this Festschrift. First, he is such a humble man. He displays unmistakable and unfeigned humility. He regards the person of everyone most respectfully. He comes across with a temperament that gives him the ease of fluidity with the least as well as the mighty symmetrically. His language of communication is always sandwiched within endearing euphemisms – not intending to 'bite' anyone with words. Even when provoked, he hardly allows it to tone him off his characteristic gentle nature and 'civilized' canon of language.

The honoree is an intellectual, who does his job as though God would scrutinize the record of performances to determine salary payment. He is one man you can be sure to find on his duty post. He is systematic, diligent and communicates the essence of whatever matters and edifies. Sure, he does have his fun-cracking moments, and rich humour, but that is done to bench the class attendees or his audience for relaxed empathy

– for easy commemorative assimilation. His drive is to give the best there is, on a subject, to his students; and he does it with patience and tremendous humanness. Carrying everybody along – for those of us whom he taught in Ibadan, was not a mere mouthy slogan, but a routinely, daily carriage of an "Umukoristic style." Among my M.A classmates then; Reuben Abati, Robert Obiano, Tayo Obisesan (now Tayo Oloruntoba-Oju), Emmanuel Oga (now Emascalu), Marcelinus Okhakhu, Amatu Braide (of blessed memory), Dr Matthew Umukoro as he then was, always appeared on the top list of Supervisory preference. Everyone desired (indeed prayed) for an Umukoro supervision, because, "you can be sure to find the man; and the man can be sure to facilitate your graduation on time." Even when MMU would be consulted for scholarly assistance on an assignment, project or dissertation, he was known to always grant people access, acceptability and comfort-conducive ambience with him, that often without him (yet) to answer you, you could perceive a welcome-to-solution psycho-settlement (peace of mind). One still recalls his inexplicably soothing, pro-solution reception, so inherently enveloping, that made meeting him douse tensions in the student or whoever sought his counsel on a matter.

In our time in Ibadan, at no time was Professor Matthew Umukoro unmindful of our different academic and other needs. He had a deterministic moral stand of uncompromising and an above board Godly disposition in moral dealings. Essentially, Professor Matthew Umukoro is the good and accommodating gentleman of the theatre family. If a student was known to him to have indulgences that could distract him/her from academic focus, Professor Umukoro was predictable on such a case, to advise the students, given the chance, against habits that were inimical to academic and moral decorum.

Professor Matthew Umukoro contributed to the repertory of successes of so many people – of which those opportune to say so in this text are but a negligible representation. There are some he quietly sponsored through school; others he paid for the cost of their projects, theses, and dissertations. Everyone had their fair share of the man's benevolence which came in variegated capsules. Besides impacting on lives, this man MMU also contributed immensely to theatre scholarship in particular, and the nation generally. His great titles, especially books and plays include (but not limited to) the following:

- *State of the Nation: A Collection of Essays*
- *Obi and Clara: A Stage Adaptation of Chinua Achebe's Novel, No Longer at Ease.*
- *Drama and Theatre in Nigerian Schools: A Blueprint of Educational Drama and Theatre.*
- *The Performing Artist in Academia.*
- *Nana Olomu – A Historical Play.*

- *The Performing Artist in Academia & Other Essays on Drama Theatre and the Media Arts*
- *Dross of Gold. A Collection of Poems*
- *Meteorites: A Collection of Poems*

Mabel Ekwierhoma in her introductory essay does a beautiful review-like presentation of all the above works of Umukoro; and the article is properly situated in the contents to give the reader an appetizing impression on the didactic, pedagogical, and critical universe of Matthew Umukoro. Similarly, most of the entries in the Festschrift are individually preferred analyses of his plays and the above listed works, by the impressive broad-spread contribution. There is so much to be gleaned from the honorific essays and so much to be intrigued by. Also, there is so much to be challenged with and at the same time so, so, much and many more. From deconstruction perspective though, none of everything written by everyone, escaped the “undecidability and nonclosure” dynamics. Essentially, every essay could have been re-written a thousand times, as any written topic yet opens itself to endless horizons of contemplations without the possibility of exhausted finalities.

Please, permit me to add this though a foreword is supposed to be “a short introduction at the beginning of a book.” Believe me, I have read a very long foreword of fourteen pages, written by a Professor of English; Hope Eghagha! Before my Ph.D defence at the University of Ibadan, in 1995, Professor Umukoro and a supporting staff-friendly team of other lecturers in the department, helped me to ensure I faced the panel of examiners after several postponements, almost ten in number! Thank God, I had the Ph.D.

I would have still have written the foreword to this volume in my readiness and resolve also to be “a tag-team” (with the rest) to celebrate my friend, teacher and inspirer, Professor Matthew Mevayerho Umukoro, at 70! He is truly a man of honour and deserving of it. Let's toast to a good life, an accomplished life, lived in the service of mankind and to the glory of God. Hip, hip, hip! Hurrah...!

**Effiong Johnson Ph.D, Fta**  
*Professor of Theatre, Film and Communication Studies*  
*Department of Theatre and Film Studies*  
*University of Uyo*

## PREFACE

A preface to a Festschrift of this nature requires an insight into the contribution to and facilitators of the entries, that made up the volume. The processes towards the facilitation of the copy in your hand though daunting, were worth the effort. The three-part honorary text commences with conscious efforts by the essayists to dwell on the works of Professor Matthew Mevayerho Umukoro, and these treatises are followed by general essays on the arts, theatre and society, while a review of one of the plays by the honouree-scholar follows with some tributes bringing all the contributions to a close.

The book begins with an introductory chapter by Prof. Mabel Ekwierhoma captioned “Professor Matthew Umukoro at 70: A Celebratory-Dedicatory Treatise” this chapter creates an overview of the scholarly efforts of Professor Matthew Mevayerho Umukoro, as an artist, scholar and moulder of destinies, academic, or otherwise. In it, an oeuvre of his essays, plays, poems and books are situated for the readers. The caption generates the need to celebrate teachers and mentors, who in the course of their mandate within the Higher Educational Institutions, this time Professor Umukoro, during his time at the University of Ibadan, where he forged a bond that necessitated the pledge of their honour and gratitude to the celebrant. Irene Agunloye in “Rethinking African Feminism: A Reflection on Umukoro's “Genderism”: An Alternative Feminism” provides an adequate report on Professor Umukoro's theory of ‘Genderism’ and how it provides a podium for the analysis of gender relations from the pre-colonial to contemporary times. The option of locating missing women and their activism within textual, historical and other contexts are deliberately stated. Following the grounds laid by Agunloye is the contribution “The Artist and Social Commitment: A Deconstructionist Analysis of Select Matthew Umukoro's Essays” by Chijindu Daniel Mgbemere, who examines Professor Umukoro as an essayist of national weight, in unearthing deep national topics for discussion. In exercising his right to pick the choicest of the essays, Nigeria and its descent into the pit of irregular social development, corruption in governance, mired party politics and the future of Nigeria as one (in)divisible political entity are shown to occupy Umukoro's mind in some of the essays. Mgbemere affirms that the redemptive role of the artist's exertion through his production of texts to deter citizens from corrupt tendencies and propel them towards patriotism is necessary, as this forms the crux of Umukoro's advocacy. Abayomi Seun Oguntinyinbo writes in “Influences of *The Performing Artists in Academia* on Societal and Economic Development: M. M. Umukoro in Perspective” where he espouses the performing artist in academia as drivers of development in the social and economic sectors. Where the symbiosis between the arts and society is imperative, Oguntinyinbo highlights the influence of Matthew Umukoro through his book *The Performing Artists in Academia* where character and behavioural development form the basis for learning, advocacy for

excellence, and professionalism in the arts, as well as entrepreneurship. He sums up his essay by affirming Umukoro's "effective guidance and purposeful direction to undergraduates and postgraduates". This statement implicates every contributor in this volume who is a direct or indirect beneficiary of the Umukoro approach to teaching and mentorship. It is scarce for a spouse to contribute an academic essay in a Festschrift to honour her consort, who also doubles as her teacher although both are professors of Theatre Arts. Julie Umukoro conducts a cross-textual approach in her essay "Intertextuality: Igbo Language-Culture and the African Proverb in Umukoro's *Obi and Clara* and Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*". The thrust of the essay is on the former text, a play, as an adaptation of the latter, a novel and how proverbs refer in texts. The intertextual and Igbo cultural perspectives provide an initiative for the linguistic undertone of texts from an indigenous perspective. The Igbo cultural perspectives on destiny, order, hegemony, hierarchy, belief systems, war, and identity are shown to be inherent in the play as influencers of the characters in the drama. To provide further insight into the play, the literary devices, images, Igbo names, concepts and ideas, as well as other Nigerian contemporary political realities at hand in and through the play are discussed. In further preoccupation with the creativity of Matthew Umukoro, Chioma Onugha writes on new trends in womanhood in "The Image of the Contemporary Woman: A Study of Matthew Umukoro's *The Maid and Other Plays*". The theoretical construct adopted by Onugha in the essay is 'New Historicism', to underscore the social assemblage in *The Maid and Other Plays*. In focus are the ideas on patriarchy, human trafficking, spousal challenges, deceptive relations and the objectification of women in society. On the further assessment of social indices, Onugha dwells on the stigmatisation of women in many societies as a result of childlessness and patriarchal practices revealing the concerns that must have shaped the dramatist's thematic focus in the play. The article "Re-Reading the Multimedia Ethos in Matthew Umukoro's *The Dream Diplomat*" by Tochukwu J. Okeke makes professional input into *The Dream Diplomat* and proposes the use of digital technology to create possible effects in the staging of the play using the multi-media technique. The methodology adopted helps to forecast the challenges that may erupt if the proposal is adopted. The findings affirm the creation of dream effects and surrealist modes in the staging of the play, to embrace and achieve the contemporary trends and realities of techniques in theatre design and aesthetics. Another practical approach to the plays of Matthew Umukoro is in "Choreographic Expressions Within and Without, in Umukoro's *Nana Olomu*" authored by Suru Cyrus Damisa. The realisation of proxemic, kinesic and chronological idioms in choreography is well promoted in the piece. Dance as creativity reflects the beauty in the play's narratives, dialogue and characterisation, and highlights the scenic splendour of the drama, in its showcase of the Niger Delta Region through movement. What promotes the detail above are the different ethnic dances of the Ijo, Itsekiri and Urhobo, across space and time in the play, which are executed with pulsating music to express the rich culture of the people, along with total theatre experiences. Another play by Umukoro is the focal point of the

composition "Tourism in Nigeria. Re-Narrativity of the Curious Tourists and their Strange Guide in Umukoro's *The Tourists*" by Sunday Enessi Ododo & Olabode Wale Ojoniyi. This collaborative essay and the first in the Festschrift, embody contemporary concerns and misconceptions about travels, be they for business or pleasure. The emphasis on tourism as a foreign exchange earner and contribution to national development places Umukoro's *The Tourists* in a context for textual analysis especially the experiences of Harry and Meg, two tourists to Nigeria as a tourist destination. How their experiences or 'travails' augur well for destination satisfaction generates questions about functional, sustainable tourism markets and the kind of stories tourists are fed before their visits. The Umukoro line of argument in the play is seen as crucial to tourism development and should be taken seriously. Another jointly written essay "Political Struggle and Social Stratification in Matthew Umukoro's *Nana Olomu*" contributed by AbdulRasheed Abiodun Adeoye & Olayinka Magbagbeola adopts the assessment mode to gauge the impact of political struggle and social structure in Matthew Umukoro's *Nana Olomu*. Damisa had engaged in the choreographic concerns in the play above, but the socio-political context of the historical play is in line with the contestations referred to in the essay. Both authors view the links between politics and literature and how *Nana Olomu* reflects the political conditions that typify positive or negative stratification at the domestic and communal levels. Like Onugha above, the theory utilised to justify their engagement in the essay is New Historicism, and *Nana Olomu* is dually depicted as a nationalist, despite being a monopolistic trader on the one hand, and a dialectical, ruthless and expansionist crusader as he opposed free trade. The play is highlighted as total theatre suffused with the politics of trade, ethnicity, self-determination, power tussle, succession and the hegemonic, imperialist control of the natural resources of the land by the colonialists. How conscious and unconscious political patterns are woven into the reality of the Nigerian state are manifest in Etuwe Ruth Epochi-Olise's "Dreams and the Reality of the Nigerian State: A Voyage into Matthew Umukoro's *The Dream Diplomat*". As inroads into the unconscious, dreams are employed to question human aspirations and ambitions in the play assessed by her. The exposition on dreams reflects a satirical play that interrogates the use of the unconscious dream pattern of Mr. Benson, a clerk, who dreams unrealistically of being the High Commissioner of his country to the United Kingdom. The essay is further strengthened by Freudian concepts. The input by Rasheedah Liman and Victor Ihidero is on the different sites of "Post-Coloniality and Ambivalence in Matthew Umukoro's *The Tourist*" where they depict post-coloniality as a link between the coloniser, the colonised the hegemonic relations between them. They also entrench their findings on the ambivalent characters, dialogue and relations in the play. Three perspectives govern their focus: culture, politics and urbanism, with a focus on Lagos and the notions of alterity that emerge in their analysis. Readers are wont to further the critical look at the text as the racial and supremacy issues about Prince Harry and his wife Megan continue to trend in the media. Solomon Ikibe and Victoria Ikibe

concentrate on the need for music education in academic theatre and its curriculum in their treatise "Umukoro's *The Performing Artist in Academia: Its Language and Capacity Building Refraction for Musicologists in Nigeria*". The challenges of musicologists in academia are projected as means of entrenching further appreciation of musicianship and the struggle by the early musicologists at the universities of Lagos and Ibadan to establish Music as a course of study. They argue that a subject in the Secondary School curriculum should also be fully taught in colleges of Education, polytechnics and universities where quacks are not employed to teach Music. Another spousal alliance in an article like that of the Ikibe's is "Reflections on Conflicts between Man and His Society: An Appraisal of Matthew Umukoro's *Obi and Clara*" by Solá Balogun and Elizabeth Balogun. Both writers affirm the adaptation of the Chinua Achebe novel by Umukoro, establish its performance features and interrogate three issues: tradition, culture and modernity. These three are evinced as drivers of social indices for education, entertainment, youth development and modernisation in an urban setting. In the manner in which Liman and Ihidero did, although on a slim basis, the Baloguns also address postcolonial issues in the play. The trajectory elicited in the primary text from which *Obi and Clara* was adapted is continued by Ngozi Udengwo in her assessment of symbolic concerns in her submission "When a Man Fails Alone: Tracking the Okonkwo Dynasty through Matthew Umukoro's *Obi and Clara*". The generational ties between Obi in the play and Okonkwo his grandfather in the novel show them as achievers and dark horses alike, displaying similar hubristic and tragic flaws. She avows that heredity, and not social circumstances led to the lone fall of each man. The psychological import of individual reminiscences and recall and how they result in subversive dialogue is the hinge on AbdulRasheed Abiodun Adeoye's "Nostalgic Memories and Counter-Discourse in Matthew Umukoro's *The Tourists*". The attention of Adeoye is on fear, the forces that generate memories and the resultant growth of the individual as well as how mind modelling and comedy can facilitate the erasure of negative memories. He furthers his expose on the play as a postcolonial text and proffers recommendations to conclude his essay. The next chapter also discusses *Obi and Clara* as a play on social justice and moral equity in traditional ways of life. In it, John Ochinya Onah and Adakole John Oklobia contribute "Of the Dearth of Social Justice and Moral Equity in Nigeria: The Dialectics of Tradition and Progression" to gauge the present reality inherent in the drama, using crime, corruption, clannishness and social deviance as examples. The query that emanates is whether these deviant manifestations can contribute to progressive circumstances in society. Preceding Joseph Oghenetega Umukoro, AbdulRasheed Adeoye had regarded comic disposition in *Obi and Clara*. In his essay, the former focuses his analytical lens on *The Maid*, a play on domesticity. In "An Appraisal of Comic Elements in Matthew Umukoro's *The Maid*", the core functions of the artist are highlighted as well as the exposure of the comic elements in the play to draw attention to the lively text. Olalekan Felix Olatunji's "Drawing from Benjamin, Brecht and Umukoro to Produce and Reproduce the Theatre Arts Culture in an

*Age of Radical Technology*" examines the role of theatre in its holistic form, without subjecting it to the influence of technology and New Media. The question now to answer is: "What can the Theatre Offer"? His answer lies subtly in the uniqueness of the theatre. Perhaps this response does not capture the question fully

Nonyelum Chibuzo Mba's composition "Love Squash and African Culture in Matthew M. Umukoro's *Obi and Clara*" addresses the twin issues of love and the Osu caste system. The amorous relationship between the eponymous Obi and Clara raises the prospects of validity of the choice of a life partner, tradition and modernity from religious perspectives, and the stability of nuptial unions threatened by culture, taboo and stigma. Theresa Iweabunegbe Oresanya in "Effect of Mass Media Campaign on the Abolition of Osu Caste System In Igboland" advances the focus on the Osu Caste system by affirming the need for media advocacy against the caste system in Igboland and also challenges the hypocrisy around it. Her recommendations are crucial and the call for Town Hall meetings, sensitisation programmes by Traditional rulers, and media programming amongst others to abolish the Osu caste system are worthwhile. One of the three essays on Umukoro's history drama in the Festschrift is "Oil Boom: A Sociological Trajectory of Matthew Umukoro's *Nana Olomu*" by Taofiq Olaide Nasir. The historical text revolves around oil politics in colonial Nigeria and the major players that were involved in it. The perennial challenges of equity, unfair trade, disunity, imperial exploitation, corruption and injustice currently the bane of national politics are shown to have eaten deep into the system since the colonial era. What emanates from the chapter is that the unjust colonial administration foisted the 'divide and rule' scheme of coordination to further the corrupt enrichment of themselves and a few local people. The reader is redirected to Umukoro's artistry as a poet in the following chapter, with the focus on his collection of poems. Ibironke Shalom conducts an examination of the poems as a means of opening up his worldview to readers. The caption "Unveiling Umukoro's Universe through a Critical Analysis of *Dross of Gold*" is a fulfilment of the Socratic maxim; 'Man- know thyself'. The thematic preoccupation of the poet as encapsulated by Ibironke is centred on self-awareness, life and its paradoxes, identity, destiny, motherhood, youth, conflict and war as well as other issues like the mind that relate to survival. "Drama as a Weapon for Reorientation and Social Change: A Study of Umukoro's *The Tourist* and *The Dream Diplomat*" is Victoria Enakeno Oju's essay, in which her sociological perspective on theatre as a weapon to be wielded by all to initiate social and positive change from circumstances of social ills is indicated. To wit, her goal is the reorientation of the populace using *The Tourist* and *The Dream Diplomat* as her call for the goal. The last piece of writing on the works of Umukoro in this section is "Humorous Rage: Sex, Culture and Idealism in Umukoro's *The Dream Diplomat*" by John Iwuh. The psychological and physiological basis for sexual pleasure in the play is underlined by Iwuh, who resides his textual analysis within domesticity, fantasy, the

denial of sex as triggers of activism and rage against bad governance by the lumpenproletariat and other oppressed people. He capably fuses the personal and political issues in the chapter.

The next section of the book draws out a critical focus on other works, artistic and performative terrains that highlight the essential place of artists, the arts and the creative outputs that connect man and society. As contributions from over two score intellectuals, friends and mentees of Professor Umukoro as scholar-artist, they point towards the different areas where Umukoro had a measurable impact in the classroom, as an author, social commentator, or critic

The joint article “Re-Inventing the Audio Drama (Theatre) For National Orientation: Radio Nigeria’s Play of the Week, *Dividends of Evil* as Case Study”, Barth Oshionebo and Kayode O. Idebi, assesses radio drama and in addition, provide a taxonomy of drama that exists in the broadcast media. They analyse the characteristics of radio drama and analyse the transcribed audio play of the Radio Nigeria Network programme, Play of the Week titled, *Dividends of Evil* written and produced by Kayode Idebi and aired on radio networks across Nigeria. In their opinion, the radio medium travels far across international space and breaks cultural hurdles within seconds. The chapter is a mini-guide on the production and use of radio drama as well as its relevance to governments across the world for moral lessons. The chapter on “Protest Ideology and Survivalism in Nigerian Dramaturgy: Meanings from ‘Diran Ademiju-Bepo’s *Rape of The Last Sultan* and Iyorwuese Hagher’s *We Protest* by Adediran Kayode Ademiju-Bepo and Bern Alfred Abugh employs performance studies and the protest ideological standpoint as a means of mental exertion to query the oppression of the oppressed lower class in society. The texts analysed relay protest ideology as a change-maker through intellectual and collective reasoning. The next contribution by Christianah Olubunmi Ajayi is the exposition on Mrs Kuti in the essay “Theatre for Development as Synergy to Encourage Self-Identity and Actualization: A Study of *Mrs Kuti* By Yinka Kareem”. This contribution entails a study across two platforms of performance: the formal stage and community-influenced playmaking process, culminating in theatre for development. The play’s themes are explained and linked to the crusade against discrimination against women and the advocacy for gender equity and equal opportunities for women. Another essay on protest drama in the collection is Samuel Ayodele Adegboyega’s chapter on “*Morountodun and Other Plays*: A Playwright’s Vision of Restructuring for a Greater Nation”. In it, the author pronounces Femi Osofisan as a prophet and clarifies some political registers like restructuring, and pollution and avows that as a dramatist, Osofisan is on the path to liberate Nigeria from the forces that threaten its corporate existence. The next chapter traces the origins and development of solo acting in Nigeria and generates some indicators of argument that practitioners of solo performance would want to engage them in. “Reflections on the Beginnings and Development of Solo

Performance in Nigeria: Implications for Information Consumption” by Alex Chinwuba Asigbo and Ngozi Marion Emmanuel affirms the hybrid nature of staged one-man acts that are frozen in the media for consumption by the audience. Their reflections are envisaged to open up the currently contracted spaces of the praxis of solo performance in the country through the theories implicated in the paper. Furthermore, the implications of the consumption of solo acts in the media stated by them shall open up more theories for use by other authors. S. Joseph Bankola Ola-Koyi stays his analysis of Ahmed Yerima’s *Agudua* on the stylistics and semiosis of performance. His contribution “A Nonlinear Analysis of a Nigerian Playtext: *Agudua* and its Political Contexts” relates the supernatural, dream and irregular contexts of the play to contemporary politics. To Ola-Koyi, the nonlinear style manipulates what the audience knows to conflict with what the characters know, thereby facilitating curiosity, suspense and heightened tension in the audience present in the theatre. What Omololu Taiwo Abe’s “The Actor-Audience Relationship and the Metaphor of ‘Theatreness’” contributes to the examination of the art of acting as a life-enhancer, the actor and the audience as established indices to the factor of *theatreness* of the event on stage through the conscious and established responsibilities in the theatre. His focus is on the Freudian theory of consciousness and Matthew Umukoro’s perspective on the actor as interpreter help to emphasise the psychological and semiotic implications of performance. The chapter following is authored by Saviour Nathan A. Agoro and Ebifaghe Owei Fawei titled “Portraits of Women by Women: A Survey of Three Female Playwrights’ Perspectives in Six African Plays”. The texts are Zulu Sofola’s *The Sweet Trap* and *Wedlock of the Gods*, Ama Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, and Anowa and Efua Sutherland’s *The Marriage of Anansewa* and *Edufa*. In all the six plays, Agoro and Fawei underscore the uniqueness of women as writers and characters and critically highlight the different factors that hemline the dominant women in the texts. To them, all the playwrights’ efforts to establish the positions of women, rebound and further their stunted characterisation. Modupe Elizabeth Olaniyan’s contribution to the politics of drama and the drama of politics is construed in “The Portrait of Dictatorship in African Drama: A Reading of Wole Soyinka’s *Kongi’s Harvest*”, where she brings to light four types of dictatorship, their prevalence in *Kongi’s Harvest* and implications in African governance. The steps towards a free society devoid of the trappings of feudal leaders and dictators are suggested, notwithstanding the brief focus on them. Oluseyi Abiodun Ogungbesan & Omotola Fasilat Dada present some modalities for theatre and performance management in “Strategies of Management in Nigerian Theatre Organisations: An Example of The MUSON Centre”. Ogungbesan and Dada highlight the management structure of the Music Society of Nigeria (MUSON) as well as the current challenges being faced by managers of the organisation. The strengths of their focus lie in the suggestion of the need for managerial innovations, scientific management using information, communication and technological devices that facilitate the speed of

management and audience involvement. These options have the potential to make the administration of MUSON wide and flexible, especially with the COVID-19 Pandemic and its aftermath. The possibilities of achieving perfection in the production of children's play arise from Nkemdirim Olubunmi Adedina, whose exposition on "Attaining an Ideal Symbiotic Relationship between Creative Drama and Children's Learning: A Dramatist's Approach" puts across drama as a creative learning strategy for children. The different means of achieving education throughout a life-long progression reflect the fundamental essence of her preoccupation, seen as a tool kit for creative dramatists. Jeleel O. Ojuade evolves through "Theatre, Media and Culture: The Interrelationships" his personal experiences as an artist-scholar-critic. The utility of memory serves his rendering well as the meta-descriptions of theatre, and media and the links between them open the avenue into Bata and Dundun drumming as the epitome of the connections. To him, the culture of any people, in a nutshell, depicts the total aspects of man as an operator within the theatre, media and universe. The paper by Akpos Adesi on "The Politics and Dynamics of the African and Black Diaspora Development: A Cultural Perspective" also delves into culture like the chapter before it. From the purview of a new global order, and arising from the centuries-old looting of Africa's resources, the matter of reparation, the role of Africans in the Diaspora and the continuous rape of the continent present ideological perspectives for critical discourse on postcolonial and neo-colonial issues especially the demeaning of Africa, despite the reliance of the West on its resources. The call for the reorientation of the African spirit, through cultural development, and away from corruption and maladministration by national leaders is fit and proper. Using the medium of film to dissect theological issues in film, Ameh Dennis Akoh in unison with Elizabeth Olayiwola contributes pertinent exegetical issues in the construction and analysis of the diegetic in Mount Zion films. The title "We Are God's Alternatives": Nollywood and Its Others" is connotative of the Christian spiritualism and Pentecostalism in Nigerian films. The duet establish the link between churches and film production in Nigeria, the founding of Mount Zion Film Ministry and Productions as an institution in 1985 by Mike Bamiloye to construct an alternative film culture in Nigeria through indigenous and transnational films, and thereby launch the medium of using films as sermons, for Proselytisation and affirming Christendom.

Some aspects of the theatre management structure as substantiated by Ogungbesan and Dada resonate in "Waiting in the Wings: The Implications of Ticket Pricing on Income and Audience Generation in the Theatre" by Olusola Fosudo. Fosudo creates the contradiction of which comes first, audience generation or income generation? However, the dilemma of pricing the products for a cultivated audience constitutes the nub of Fosudo's discourse as value for money remains a pivotal theatre audience concern. Another crux of the chapter is the proper completion of the theatre experience, with the audience's location in the cycle. The categorization of the audience into types

and the kinds of ticket sales further enrich his submission. The monetary and pricing matters raised by Fosudo in his entry are akin to the ones generated by Barclays Foubiri Ayakoroma, in his submission "From Film Marketing and Distribution to Social Media and Digital Marketing: Exploring Nollywood's Potentials" where market and marketing factors are projected to influence not stage performances and the audience theatre-going experience, but the medium of film as distributed on social media outlets. Ayakoroma utilizes the agenda-setting, cultivation and social marketing theories as well as the Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) Model to constitute the theoretical foundations for the paper. The attention to film festivals, film marketing platforms and websites and the prospects for the digital marketing of the film, further augment the chapter. Dankyes Ephraim in "The Aesthetic Value of Art" is a contemplation on the worth of art, its perception, the artistic experience, and aestheticism. Using the ideas of Immanuel Kant, Ephraim assesses painting and sculpture and their unique roles in producing veneration and its opposite, contempt. The specific attention on youths by Hameed Olutoba Lawal using a published drama encourages interest in Akanji Nasiru's drama. The essay "The Youth and the Nigerian Political System: Rallying Points in Akanji Nasiru's *The Rally*" hinges on conflict theory to engender youth participation in politics, deepening the democratic process, the norms and values that guarantee free and fair elections and the periodic transition of political power in Nigeria. Lawal summarises his views by his avowal that active participation of Nigerian youths in politics is indispensable as the 'Not too Young to Run' movement is evoked. The exposition on tradition, drama and marital syndication using African-centred values comes to the fore in "Promoting African Traditional Values through Drama and the African Marriage" by Maureen Ndu-Udeji. She takes a look at marriage in J.P Clark's *Song of a Goat*; Ama Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii's *I Will Marry When I Want* to affirm the position that the commission of the African playwright is to illustrate the deep meaning of marriage, devoid of the modern showy exaggeration, bereft of weighty respect for the families involved. Through this, playwrights would make plain to their fellow Africans the process, the necessity, and the rules inherent in traditional values and beliefs. The part of the book on "Soyinka and Cultural Nationalism in Nigerian Drama" contributed by Olorunsomo Adeniyi is a panoramic look at the concept of nationalism, its feature in different performances as seen in the ones by Hubert Ogunde and plays like *Ovonramwen N'ogbaisi*, *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Death and the King's Horseman*, *Childe Internationale* and *The Good Woman of Setzuan* among others to buttress his point on a citizen's devotion to his nation and its precepts with cultural perspectives as foundations for the nationalism.

Professor Umukoro also has inroads into broadcasting and this may have influenced another of his students, to author the essay on "Africa's Cultural Identity and Heritage in a Deregulated and Globalized Broadcast Environment: Challenges and Prospects".

Femi Okiremuete Shaka in this outing shares cognate ideas on culture and its manifestation in spheres that are global and deregulated along specific national lines established for globalised broadcasting and the multinational media institutions that operate across the world. The authorities cited to appraise deregulation though are mostly non-Africans, the imperatives for the African cultural identity, freedom and choice are foregrounded. Sunday E. Ododo (FNAL) in his second and joint essay with Joel Avaungwa Fanyam treats "The Mise-en-Scène and Theatre Technology in Nigeria", using stage productions that highlight the advent of technology and its teeming usage in Nigerian theatre. The illustrations provided are the underlining factors of the essay as they provide the core fusion of digital and analogue technology on the Nigerian stage where theatre technology has continued to influence indigenous traditional theatrical practices that formerly utilised natural and artificial sources as regards stage or performance space lighting. Through this, the scenic background of action is enhanced, to require the attention, reaction and participation of the audience. The digital freezing of the ways of life of a people is the spotlight of "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage through Imagery: A Digital Image Manipulation Approach" by Kome Godric Okerri. The merits and demerits of digital communication are brought to the fore where the onus is placed on the artist as manipulator and communicator of meaning. Okerri discusses aspects of the Isoko *Ehwa* marriage rites that are no longer extant. Using Adobe Photoshop image-editing software and the digital image manipulation technique, he created the digital image "Busy-Body". This lends credence to the assertion that almost any imagined picture can be created as far as the creative imagination of the artist permits, as long as he masters the tool of manipulation, creating possibilities for cultural preservation. What Joseph Nuhu achieves is a general expose on "Radical Drama in the Context of Contested Spaces", where he provides a general excursion to the specific areas of contexts in the theatre as a struggle for the assertion of identity. Kelechi Agoha's "Retributive Justice In Selected Nigerian Plays: A Study of Gloria Ernest-Samuel's *Chicken Chaser* And Irene Oronsaye-Salami's *Sweet Revenge* highlight the notions of nemesis and how it influences characterisation and moral behaviour by the audience or reader. He mentions social injustices that have dominated society and the need for retributive justice to ensure equity. "A Review of Matthew M. Umukoro's "The Dream Diplomat" by Peter Omoko brings up the rear of contributions of essays and it effects much excavation on the play-text, by opening up its universe of meanings to the reader or would-be play director. Lastly, come the tributes and in them some former students and friends of Professor Umukoro show how deserving he is of the honour that they have accorded him.

We have enjoyed reading these essays and the tributes that followed. We also appreciate the benefit of being 'immersed' in different theoretical, historical and sociological perspectives from which the authors emphasise their points of view. This publication is

a scholarly product that we hope would contribute adequately to knowledge and humanity. Professor Matthew Umukoro, as a teacher and mentor that many of us encountered at the University of Ibadan in our formative years of life and studentship deserves the honour that this publication glowingly reflects. We thank you for the access that you have to this Festschrift and believe that this was worth your while.

Mabel I. E. Ekwierhoma

Taofiq O. Nasir

Sola K. Balogun

## CONTENTS

|                                                                                                      |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Dedication                                                                                           | I     |
| Acknowledgments                                                                                      | ii    |
| Foreword                                                                                             | iv    |
| Preface                                                                                              | vii   |
| Introduction: Professor Matthew Umukoro at 70: A Celebratory-Dedicatory Treatise<br>Mabel EYWIERHOMA | xxiii |

### SECTION ONE: THE SCHOLAR ARTIST AND HIS MÉTIER

|                                                                                                                                                                             |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Chapter 1: Rethinking African Feminism: A Reflection On Umukoro's "Genderism": An Alternative Feminism<br>Irene SALAMI-AGUNLOYE                                             | 1  |
| Chapter 2: The Artist and Social Commitment: A Deconstructionist Analysis of Select Matthew Umukoro's Essays<br>Chijindu Daniel MGBEMERE                                    | 14 |
| Chapter 3: Influences of The Performing Artists in Academia on Societal and Economic Development: M. M. Umukoro in Perspective<br>Abayomi Seun OGUNTOYINBO                  | 26 |
| Chapter 4: Intertextuality: Igbo Language-Culture and the African Proverb in Umukoro's <i>Obi and Clara</i> and Achebe's <i>No Longer at Ease</i><br>Julie UMIKORO          | 33 |
| Chapter 5: The Image of the Contemporary Woman: A Study of Matthew Umukoro's <i>The Maid and Other Plays</i><br>Chioma ONUGHA                                               | 45 |
| Chapter 6: Re-Reading the Multimedia Ethos in Matthew Umukoro's <i>The Dream Diplomat</i><br>Tochukwu J. OKEKE                                                              | 52 |
| Chapter 7: Choreographic Expressions within and without in Umukoro's <i>Nana Olomu</i><br>Suru Cyrus DAMISA                                                                 | 58 |
| Chapter 8: Tourism in Nigeria: Re-Narrativity of the Curious Tourists and their Strange Guide in Umukoro's <i>The Tourists</i><br>Sunday Enessi ODODO & Olabode Wale OJONIY | 64 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                    |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter 9: Political Struggle and Social Stratification in Matthew Umukoro's <i>Nana Olomu</i><br>AbdulRasheed Abiodun ADEOYE & Olayinka MAGBAGBEOLA                               | 76  |
| Chapter 10: Dreams and the Reality of the Nigerian State: A Voyage into Matthew Umukoro's <i>The Dream Diplomat</i><br>Etuwe Ruth EPOCHI-OLISE                                     | 92  |
| Chapter 11: Post-Coloniality and Ambivalence in Matthew Umukoro's <i>The Tourist</i><br>Rasheedah LIMAN and Victor IHIDERO                                                         | 103 |
| Chapter 12: Umukoro's The Performing Artist in Academia: Its Language and Capacity Building Refraction for Musicologists in Nigeria<br>Solomon O. IKIBE, Ph. D & Victoria O. IKIBE | 117 |
| Chapter 13: Reflections on Conflicts between Man and His Society: An Appraisal of Matthew Umukoro's <i>Obi and Clara</i><br>Sola BALOGUN & Elizabeth BALOGUN                       | 128 |
| Chapter 14: When a Man Fails Alone: Tracking the Okonkwo Dynasty through Matthew Umukoro's <i>Obi and Clara</i><br>Ngozi UDENGWU                                                   | 135 |
| Chapter 15: Nostalgic Memories and Counter-Discourse in Matthew Umukoro's <i>The Tourists</i><br>AbdulRasheed Abiodun ADEOYE                                                       | 142 |
| Chapter 16: Of the Dearth of Social Justice and Moral Equity in Nigeria: The Dialectics of Tradition and Progression<br>John Ochinya ONAH & Adakole John OKLOBIA                   | 158 |
| Chapter 17: An Appraisal of Comic Elements in Matthew Umukoro's <i>The Maid</i><br>Joseph Oghenetega UMIKORO                                                                       | 169 |
| Chapter 18: Drawing from Benjamin, Brecht and Umukoro to Produce and Reproduce the Theatre Arts Culture in an Age of Radical Technology<br>Olalekan Felix OLATUNJI                 | 172 |
| Chapter 19: Love Squash and African Culture in Matthew M. Umukoro's <i>Obi and Clara</i><br>Nonyelum Chibuzo MBA                                                                   | 180 |
| Chapter 20: Effect of Mass Media Campaign on the Abolition of Osu Caste System In Igboland<br>Theresa Iweabunegbe ORESANYA                                                         | 190 |

|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |             |                                                                                                                                                                  |     |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter 21:                                   | Oil Boom: A Sociological Trajectory of Matthew Umukoro's <i>Nana Olomu</i><br><b>Taofiq Olaide NASIR</b>                                                                                                                            | 197 | Chapter 32: | Portraits of Women by Women: A Survey of Three Female Playwrights' Perspectives in Six African Plays<br><b>Saviour Nathan A. AGORO &amp; Ebifaghe Owei FAWEI</b> | 304 |
| Chapter 22:                                   | Unveiling Umukoro's Universe through a Critical Analysis of <i>Dross of Gold</i><br><b>Ibironke SHALOM</b>                                                                                                                          | 208 | Chapter 33: | The Portrait of Dictatorship in African Drama: A Reading of Wole Soyinka's <i>Kongi's Harvest</i><br><b>Modupe Elizabeth OLANIYAN</b>                            | 315 |
| Chapter 23:                                   | Drama as a Weapon for Reorientation and Social Change: A Study of Umukoro's <i>The Tourist and The Dream Diplomat</i><br><b>Victoria Enakeno OJU</b>                                                                                | 217 | Chapter 34: | Strategies of Management in Nigerian Theatre Organisations: An Example of The MUSON Centre<br><b>Oluseyi Abiodun OGUNGBESAN &amp; Omotola Fasilat DADA</b>       | 325 |
| Chapter 24:                                   | Humorous Rage: Sex, Culture and Idealism in Umukoro's <i>The Dream Diplomat</i><br><b>John IWUH</b>                                                                                                                                 | 225 | Chapter 35: | Attaining an Ideal Symbiotic Relationship between Creative Drama and Children's Learning: A Dramatist's Approach<br><b>Nkemdirim Olubunmi ADEDINA</b>            | 333 |
| <b>SECTION TWO: THEATRE, ARTS AND CULTURE</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |             |                                                                                                                                                                  |     |
| Chapter 25:                                   | Re-Inventing the Audio Drama (Theatre) For National Orientation: Radio Nigeria's Play of the Week, "Dividends of Evil" As Case Study<br><b>Barth OSHIONEBO &amp; Kayode O. IDEBI</b>                                                | 232 | Chapter 36: | Theatre, Media and Culture: The Interrelationships<br><b>Jeleel O. OJUADE</b>                                                                                    | 342 |
| Chapter 26:                                   | Protest Ideology and Survivalism in Nigerian Dramaturgy: Meanings from 'Diran Ademiju-Bepo's <i>Rape of the Last Sultan</i> And Iyorwuese Hagher's <i>We Protest</i><br><b>Adediran Kayode ADEMILJU-BEPO &amp; Bem Alfred ABUGH</b> | 248 | Chapter 37: | The Politics and Dynamics of the African and Black Diaspora Development: A Cultural Perspective<br><b>Akpos ADESI</b>                                            | 349 |
| Chapter 27:                                   | Theatre for Development as Synergy to Encourage Self-Identity and Actualization: A Study of <i>Mrs Kuti</i> By Yinka Kareem<br><b>Christianah Olubunmi AJAYI</b>                                                                    | 261 | Chapter 38: | "We Are God's Alternatives": Nollywood and its Others<br><b>Ameh Dennis AKOH &amp; Elizabeth OLAYIWOLA</b>                                                       | 358 |
| Chapter 28:                                   | <i>Morountodun and Other Plays</i> : A Playwright's Vision of Restructuring for A Greater Nation<br><b>Samuel Ayodele ADEGBOYEGA</b>                                                                                                | 271 | Chapter 39: | Waiting in the Wings: The Implications of Ticket Pricing on Income and Audience Generation in the Theatre<br><b>Olusola FOSUDO</b>                               | 372 |
| Chapter 29:                                   | Reflections on the Beginnings and Development of Solo Performance in Nigeria: Implications for Information Consumption<br><b>Alex Chinwuba ASIGBO &amp; Ngozi Marion EMMANUEL</b>                                                   | 279 | Chapter 40: | From Film Marketing and Distribution to Social Media and Digital Marketing: Exploring Nollywood's Potentials<br><b>Barclays Foubiri AYAKOROMA</b>                | 382 |
| Chapter 30:                                   | A Nonlinear Analysis of a Nigerian Playtext: <i>Agudua</i> and its Political Contexts<br><b>S. Joseph Bankola OLA-KOYI</b>                                                                                                          | 286 | Chapter 41: | The Aesthetic Value of Art<br><b>Dankyes EPHRAIM</b>                                                                                                             | 400 |
| Chapter 31:                                   | The Actor-Audience Relationship and the Metaphor of 'Theatreness'<br><b>Omololu Taiwo ABE</b>                                                                                                                                       | 297 | Chapter 42: | The Youth and the Nigerian Political System: Rallying Points in Akanji Nasiru's <i>The Rally</i><br><b>Hameed Olutoba LAWAL</b>                                  | 405 |
|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     | Chapter 43: | Promoting African Traditional Values through Drama and African Marriage<br><b>Maureen NDU-UDEJI</b>                                                              | 414 |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                               |     |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter 44:                 | Soyinka and Cultural Nationalism in Nigerian Drama<br><b>Olorunsomo ADENIYI</b>                                                                                                               | 423 |
| Chapter 45:                 | Africa's Cultural Identity and Heritage in a Deregulated and Globalized<br>Broadcast Environment: Challenges and Prospects<br><b>Femi Okíremuete SHAKA</b>                                    | 430 |
| Chapter 46:                 | The Mise-en-Scène and Theatre Technology in Nigeria<br><b>Sunday E. ODODO, FNAL &amp; Joel Avaungwa FANYAM</b>                                                                                | 444 |
| Chapter 47:                 | Preserving Our Cultural Heritage through Imagery: A Digital Image<br>Manipulation Approach<br><b>Kome Godric OKERRI</b>                                                                       | 453 |
| Chapter 48:                 | Radical Drama in the Context of Contested Spaces<br><b>Joseph NUHU</b>                                                                                                                        | 461 |
| Chapter 49:.                | Retributive Justice in Selected Nigerian Plays: A Study of Gloria<br>Ernest-Samuel's <i>Chicken Chaser</i> And Irene Oronsaye-Salami's <i>Sweet<br/>Revenge</i><br><b>Kelechi Uzoma AGOHA</b> | 470 |
| Chapter 50:                 | A Review of Matthew M. Umukoro's "The Dream Diplomat"<br><b>Peter OMOKO</b>                                                                                                                   | 485 |
| <b>Tributes</b>             |                                                                                                                                                                                               | 488 |
| <b>Note on Contributors</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                               | 493 |
| <b>Index</b>                |                                                                                                                                                                                               | 499 |

## CHAPTER 35

### ATTAINING AN IDEAL SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREATIVE DRAMA AND CHILDREN'S LEARNING: A DRAMATIST APPROACH

Nkemdirim Olubunmi ADEDINA

#### Introduction

There is an increasing awareness of the need to adopt learning strategies especially for young learners at the onset of their education. Consequently, learning at the elementary stage is targeted at an all-round human development to help learners acquire skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. This aids positive contributions to the social, economic, moral and political development of the society. The major concern is with the experiences of learners and on how creative drama may function as a means to explore a variety of intense personal, social and educational issues. Drama based-teaching and learning have a long history, so teachers must necessarily be familiar with the use of drama for the achievements of educational objectives and goals. This chapter, therefore, attempts a focus on creative drama to facilitate some new learning and help learners to understand the world around them. On the other hand, it will highlight the benefits of creative drama in complementing children's learning in the classroom using drama as an instrument, process or a means to an end and as an artistic tool for inspiring creativity through expression and exploration of ideas. By extension, it examines the undeniable role of dramatists and how their efforts would also be geared towards developing skills, attitudes and knowledge needed for young learners not only to meet challenges they will face both daily and in the future but also to enable them to become lifelong learners.

Education is the nucleus of individuals and society at large. The potential of an individual if properly harnessed will lead to personal rapid growth that will affect his society in terms of development. Education whether formal or informal involves learning in order to achieve behavioural change. "Education is an instrument for national development, the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the full integration of the individual into the community" (Falade, 2014:8). This simply implies that learning is an integral aspect of Education. Learning on the other hand starts at birth, from infancy to adulthood, even till the end of life. "Learning is the ability to acquire new knowledge or ideas through several means or methods (Olasupo, 2016:19). Researchers and scholars like Bolarin, (1995), Hendy and Toon, (2001), over time, have identified early learning in children from ages 0-11 as core and state its importance in determining the extent of child development. This is why it has become imperative to devise means, methods and methodologies for children learning. This probably informed the stand of Samlioglu and Karaku, relating drama to children learning. According to them:

Education in drama makes use of applied learning techniques rather than techniques based on memorization. Thus the aim is to provide learning establishing relationships with the previous and future subjects and personal experiences. In this way, drama in education offers a variety in terms of method as well as new perspectives. (2009:2)

Dramatic activity here is seen as a panacea for creative learning. Participating in activities like, improvisation, playmaking, games and scene reenactments help to develop the creative potential in learners as well as critical thinking skills. Drama-based learning aims at deepening self-understanding, fostering creativity, developing critical skills, and exploration of expression and communication. This rightly posits Drama and Art Education as a viable means of stimulating creativity in learners especially children. It provides learners with outlets to express innate feelings, emotions and thoughts in less cumbersome ways. Dramatic/Art Education challenges them to be sensitive to their world, enables them to develop a perception and allows them to create their own space in the scheme of events.

#### Relationship between Drama and Learning

Over time, drama has been adopted as a teaching technique or method that allows learners to participate, observe and demonstrate in a controlled but friendly learning environment. Drama aids young learners to come to grips with creativity and innate talents by developing self-confidence, building self-esteem, expressing ideals and developing communicative skills. Drama has the potential of making the learning experience fun for the student and even memorable because it is interactive and visual. This establishes a symbiotic relationship between drama and learning. When children engage in education based drama through the nuances of acting, it gives them a chance to bond for learning and have fun at the same time. Invariably, drama could be specifically designed for children's learning in a way to promote cognitive and psycho motive abilities of a child. However, this can only be achieved by an innovative and creative teacher who is vast in child psychology. These creative experiences especially designed for children's learning create room for tolerance, cooperation and healthy relationships. To reach children in the most effective and possible way, children educators need to employ and integrate drama and arts into their classroom. This has become necessary for authentic learning in order to leave a permanent and lasting impression on a child's cognitive, affective and psychomotor dexterity made possible using drama techniques. Drama gives educators the opportunity to teach learners in a way to create love for learning while providing valuable and lasting problem solving skills, creative abilities and improved personalities.

...the use of dramatic activities has proved the positive role that drama has on children's learning as being instrumental to expressing meaning and understanding. Dramatic activity is a simple way of replicating experience and its potentials to explore and examine experience in ways which would otherwise not be in real life. (Adedina, 2017:34)

The main idea backing the use of drama for learning is the desire to continue to develop the creative and imaginative potential of learners. In addition to the development of creativity and imagination, drama is the mirror for critical examination of society and human experiences; by providing opportunities for learners to deepen their understanding of humanity and cultures of past and present. Adedina further explains the relevance of drama to education:

The instrumental function and the artistic function of drama are very relevant in Education. Drama is instrumental as a process or a means to an end and artistic as a tool for inspiring creativity through expression and exploration of ideas. Drama based-teaching and learning have a long history... Drama-based learning aims at deepening self-understanding, fostering creativity, developing critical skills and exploration of expression and communication (2017:35).

Drama, therefore, makes education enjoyable by making children retain things learnt and develop a positive attitude towards learning. When children are engaged in the art of drama for learning, it simplifies their efforts and affords them opportunities for an easier time relating with materials.

#### **A look at Creative Drama**

Two major words make up the term 'Creative Drama. They are 'creative and 'drama'. On one hand, drama is a creative venture, while on the other hand, creativity is a necessity for drama. Therefore, these two words can be likened to an inspirable Siamese twins connected at the heart. In this context, both words share the same features and characteristics in terms of objectives, outlook and outcome for children learning. Creative drama is not primarily designed for teaching theatre skills, although this may occur along the way. This is a far cry different from the process of passing out scripts, assigning roles and working toward an end product, which in most instances result in a formalized theatre (Nicholson:2014). Creative drama for children is often a classic problem solving exercise in language building and enhanced communication skills better than just about any other activity in school (Novelly, 1985). So, creative drama promotes empathy by allowing learners to step into other's shoes and can also be deplored as a tool to teach any other subject. In a follow-up opinion, Olasupo (2016:3) cites Behn's meaning of creative drama as an, "improvisational, non-exhibition process-centered form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences". This definition specifies the role of a child educator not as a director or dictator but as a leader to guide learning through participation in creative drama. They are to use natural dramatic impulse to facilitate learning in an unlimited number of fields, subjects and areas in a way that learners can relate to. These thoughts, position creative drama as the most appropriate way children learn about their world.

Creative drama adopts children's natural world and develops it further, using drama techniques to create learning experiences in them. In this light, it can be regarded as a flexible, versatile and applicable tool to all areas of life. It therefore becomes an effective method for child development and improved learning to encourage the active participation of learners, physically, intellectually and emotionally. Drama based-teaching and learning have a long history. "For centuries, teachers have used drama-based pedagogy to connect with children inclination toward bodily kinesthetic imitation as they try on identities and understandings of their world" (Water, McAvoy and Hunt,

2015:7). Drama-based learning aims at deepening self-understanding, fostering creativity, developing critical skills and exploration of expression and communication. Participation in drama activities provides teachers with better approaches to assess learners. This opportunity manifests when learners through dramatic plays, organise ideas, solve problems, engage in teamwork, address conflicts and task their imagination. Through observation educators would be provided with valuable insights into learners' perception, interpretation, understanding and analysis of the lesson taught. The child educator, therefore, needs to be sensitively engaged in creative drama to decipher developmental traits in learners. The process of assessing learners through creative drama are engaging and demanding than the normal "chalk talk' traditional method. If the process is not properly followed, the teacher may end up with misplaced priority and an inability to achieve educational objectives.

#### **Appraising Creative Drama and Children's Learning**

The use of creative drama in the classroom for learning is learner oriented, it involves a process where experimental learning can be fostered and developed irrespective of any given curriculum. It can aid the development of divergent thinking skills, inventive creativity and cognitive thinking skills as well as stimulate the development of oral and written communication skills in learners. The art form of creative drama has often positioned it like creative teaching rather than an artistic medium with full potentials to enhance and change thoughts, actions and relationship with others. Without mincing words, creative drama is an encompassing learning medium emerging from the spontaneous play of children to build and enhance participants' artistic sensitivity, self-awareness and development of dramatic imagination. The creative drama process integrates mental and physical activities by engaging the child's entire being in improvisational and process oriented experiences. These dramatic learning activities nurture and develop individual and group cohesion with improved abilities to communicate ideas, images and feelings through dramatic actions. Olasupo reaffirms that:

Creative drama helps students to relegate the inner strength of knowing into concrete action. Creative drama is a holistic approach to academic learning.... creative drama activities are often not differentiated from the spontaneous, imaginative play of childhood ... the perception of creative drama are influenced by the educational back drop of the time (2016:9).

In clear terms, there is a divide between plays acted for an audience for the sole aim of entertainment and creative drama in education for teaching and learning. Creative drama is a hybrid between theatre and education. This makes it a distinct discipline, art form, teaching tool and educational process for teaching and learning. Apart from this, the eclectic nature of creative drama posits it at an advantage in children's education; it is not restricted by time, space, content or context. Creative drama provides opportunities for learners to understand other disciplines such as history, social studies, citizenship education, language studies, literature, etc., from different perspectives and multiple angles.

Subsequently, Creative drama finds expression in other fields and subjects as methodology not only in arts for entertainment. This fact is well situated in Adedina's justification of total embrace of creative drama as methodology. According to Adedina:

The global proliferations on drama during the twentieth century have not been free of struggle and controversy. As drama grew in popularity as a teaching tool, opinions and views emerged and generated skepticism and suspicion to its viability. This also came in various forms like criticism and theories which practitioners rose gallantly to defend their positions. Consequently, drama was marginalized in general education while only a few dedicated and committed artist educators maximized its potentials and advantages. By the mid of 1990's researchers from other disciplines especially psychology, sociology and neurosciences started collaborating claims that drama practitioners have been making for ages. (2017:39)

Engaging students in instructional and creative drama have positive contributions to the general education process. Apart from enabling the teacher to create a supportive classroom environment, it brings written materials to life. Students are encouraged and motivated effectively and are also given opportunities to be directly involved in the learning experience as active participants. There is however a note of caution for children educators who might want to adopt creative drama as a method of teaching. Marinho therefore suggests that:

more work needs to be done to let go of outdated modes of knowledge accumulation such as rote learning, and adopt methods that engage the students in high level cognitive activities, which stimulate thought, analysis and reflection. For this to take place, existing teachers need to be retrained to accept changes, while novice teachers need training in innovative pedagogical methods that ensure deep understanding and skill acquisition in students (2009:8).

Tacitly, children educators should take courses in drama as a tool for teaching and learning while in training to prepare them for experimental teaching using drama in the classroom. This will help to reduce confusion and apathy to creative drama dynamics, which is expected to serve as a means to an end. For some other teachers, when caught in this web, it is a case of groping in the dark and kicking in all directions due to their non-exposure, thereby making all their efforts futile. Some others, in the bid to hide their inefficiency, shy away totally from adopting this method in their teaching. It therefore becomes difficult to achieve desired goals at the end of the lesson or dramatic activity. For educators to provide fun and meaningful learning environment, they must be able to learn and explore the world of children through prior exposure to drama. Teachers will seamlessly harness the many opportunities inherent in creative dramatics because it allows for learners to have multitudes of creative opportunities through sequential learning activities that build on one another to deepen their understanding. Children -

teachers prior exposure to creative drama will avail them the opportunity of adequate planning. This prepares them for the challenges that could arise in the classroom and equips them with possible solutions to well stated objectives before the commencement of teaching and learning. This is in a bid to promote effective class management, avoid noise, rowdiness and unnecessary waste of time. Teachers are referred to as guides and instructors in creative drama classes. They are expected to assist learners to acquire adequate knowledge suitable for their age within a given set of rules and regulations. It would also be of advantage if the teacher is conversant and exposed to many teaching methods where creative drama finds significance, such as role play, mime, games, and so on. It is vital that teachers must always place the child at the centre of learning in adopting a creative drama approach. He/she must identify with learners' strengths and weaknesses. Through the power of imaginative transformation and reflection on experiences, teachers should help learners by guiding them through the process. Creative drama is engaging, involving and demanding to both learner and teacher, it is an experience that both share through exploration of ideas aimed at developing a well-rounded personality in the interest of society.

Unfortunately, there are impressions that the creative dramatic method of teaching is extravagant and expensive. More so, learners often seize the opportunity to digress from the objectives of the lesson to noise making due to improper coordination and guidance. Contrary to this view, creative drama is learner oriented and should engulf learners' attention and concentration. The teacher only needs to be focused while overseeing activities and effect corrections in line with stated objectives. It is very important that teachers must devise means of class control to bring out the best in learners during creative drama. Another way of overcoming these challenges is by centering inquiry on students' queries and real world issues. This could be very motivating and can engage learners in high level critical creative thinking to connect the classroom to the world (past, present and future).

#### **The Dramatist, Creative Drama and Children's Learning**

Dramatists are the mirror that reflects society. The relevance of the dramatist lies in the useful role he plays in portraying the social realities of his time. A committed dramatist is the conscience of his immediate society and it rests on him to create awareness and conscientisation of agitating issues on social, economic, religious and political climates and provide possible solutions to them. They bring to fore, prevalent societal norms, promote virtues and values which are the bedrock of human society through creative works and performances in drama, prose and poetry. These, are the major roles of a practicing dramatist in society. "For dramatists, the key components of added value are to do with the wellbeing of human beings in their society totality. There is no poetic creativity without investment into human potential, knowledge and originality" (Olasupo, 2016: 11). Dramatists are mostly concerned with providing solutions to social menace and injustice through thought provoking mind changing writings. Renowned dramatists like Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Ola Rotimi, Ahmed Yerima and many others have been at the forefront of societal revolution and progress through their literary works and productions. They use drama and theatre as a medium of expressing

artistic forms to address predominant societal issues. Given the important role of the dramatist in society, it would not be out of place for them to begin to lay preeminence on children learning. The desired outcome of their creative endeavours will certainly come to the forefront if a conscious artistic effort is targeted at the early learners. Children at this stage are in their formative years and are open minded, readily receptive to ideas and amenable. There is therefore no better time for dramatists to make impactful contributions to teaching through creative drama than this now.

For creative drama to be effective in the school environment, dramatists need to become children educators by coming up with works that are relevant and address children learning demands. Apart from writing plays, stories and poetry for children's entertainment, it is vital to begin integration of this art into the school curriculum. The incorporation of all features of creative drama into lesson plans for the sole aim of learning to enhance academic achievement is an area that is worth exploring. This requires a conscious effort targeted at developing learning materials for semi- drama literate teachers, fashioned to accommodate creative drama as a methodology to cut across all subjects especially at the primary level of education. This would be prominent in the objectives of the lesson, preparation, procedure, activities and evaluation of the lesson. Some tips would be suggested to dramatists as approaches to creative drama for learning especially in the classroom.

#### **Drama Warm-Ups**

This can be achieved by designing warm ups to help students relax and focus on the lesson ahead to set the atmosphere to a learner friendly one. Warm ups can be a stimulating way of gradually easing children into learning without hitches. It is also a useful tactic in enhancing creative thinking skills in a beneficial way to the curriculum.

#### **Role Play**

Role play encourages teamwork and cooperation among young learners. Roles from lessons could be assigned to them to re-enact thereby giving them a sense of purpose especially with the absence of an audience. For instance, in History class, they could re-enact, a famous battle, personality, a trial, an event and so on.

#### **Monologues**

Learners should be encouraged to write monologues using the first person, where they step into a role or an entity they are studying. This gives them new perspective of the subject matter and provides a new insight and fresh understanding of the topic. Moreover, in staging their monologues, their peers will also help develop their presentation skills and confidence. This will also enhance learner vocabulary proficiency which is a major feature of language development.

#### **Games and exercises**

This is particularly useful and significant for speech physiological development in children. Careful incorporation of games and exercises will help to convey knowledge, arouse interest, solve problems and change attitudes. Children love to earn points, win

games, and set high scores during games. It also encourages a healthy competitive spirit among them which is essential for more advanced challenges in the future.

#### **Story Telling**

This is one out of the many approaches that will always attract the full attention of learners at any given time. Dramatists can tell stories using topics of lessons from subjects taught in the classroom. These stories would then be creatively re-told in the process of teaching and learning by teachers. Little bits of creative movements will come handy and useful in this instance.

#### **Visuals**

There is a need to encourage more visual representations of subjects for learners. Graphical illustrations in cartoon forms, colourful paintings and aesthetically designed drawings are all vital for visual learning. Learners are quick to identify with the content and also task their imagination, critical thinking and creative skills.

#### **Conclusion**

Creative drama enhances the creative development of learners in building cognitive domain and increasing their learning abilities. Consequently, creative drama is a viable tool employed by many fields of study to help learners get involved in the teaching and learning process. Apart from the functions of entertainment which drama is known for, creative drama in this context is for the education of young learners to generate their interest in the learning process and improve their learning abilities through drama and dramatic activities. For the purpose of education, creative drama is a methodology employed by children educators for effective teaching and learning, and to encourage active participation of learners in the teaching process. Dramatists are the link for educators to reach young learners through the most creative means available. Their role in advancing creative drama as a methodology will aid authentic learning to leave a permanent and lasting impression on a child's cognitive, affective and psychomotor dexterity, especially when gained by using drama techniques. A fusion of creative drama and children's learning is therefore an achievable feat if dramatists come to the rescue to properly integrate these two entities for the overall benefit of young learners.

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