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Dance and museology: complexities and potential relevance in the Nigerian context

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Keywords Museum; dance; Igboamaka; museuming dance; Igbo Ukwu

Abstract “Museuming dance” refers to the collection and preservation of dance as heritage in the museum, safeguarding dance as a museum object. Inspired by the originally Western notion of curating dance in the museum, this paper looks at the possibilities of museuming dance in an African context. The preservation of traditional dances in the museum could imply the diminishing of the dances’ meanings to the local practitioners. To tackle this issue, it is possible to problematize the term “museum,” taking into cognizance its relevance, functions, advantages, and disadvantages. This paper also examines tangible and intangible heritage in relation to UNESCO’s 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Finally, certain steps are proposed in order to achieve a dance/museology relationship that could boost museum activities and increase museum visitor numbers in Nigeria.

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Introduction

Fascinated by the originally-Western notion of “museuming dance,” this paper looks at the possibility of achieving the museuming of dance in an African context. In this work, the term museuming dance refers to the collection and preservation of dance as heritage in the museum; that is, safeguarding dance as a museum object. Attempts will be made to highlight the difference between dance in the museum/museum dancing and museuming dance in the context of this work. The argument presented here contends that the preservation of dance in the museum is contrary to the Nigerian way of living and experience of dance as a tradition. Traditionally, dance is closely tied to the social context and community in which it is presented. Preserving traditional dances in the museum could imply the diminishing of their meanings to local practitioners who embody dance as a living art that is not static and that should not be frozen. In this essay, I will further explain why Nigerian culture might not accommodate museuming dance. Although museuming dance has proven to thrive successfully in Western countries, as seen in France and the United Kingdom, is Nigerian culture disposed to accept this idea? Certain adjustments must be made if dance is incorporated into museum programs. This paper therefore proposes such adjustments.

To tackle this issue, the term “museum” will be problematized, taking into cognizance its relevance, functions, advantages, and disadvantages. I will also examine the concept of tangible

and intangible heritage in relation to UNESCO's 2003 *Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage* (ICH). The lack of a clear-cut definition for intangible heritage is a problem. UNESCO'S definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage includes "artefacts, cultural spaces" and other tangible objects. (UNESCO 2003, p. 3) This paper will suggest that UNESCO's list of World Intangible Cultural Heritage can be seen as a "virtual museum" of world heritage, while exerting a level of control over participating countries and influencing decisions about which forms of intangible cultural heritage to protect and what can be counted as intangible cultural heritage based upon UNESCO rules. I refer to this as a "virtual museum" because UNESCO is concerned with collecting and preserving heritage through application entries (objects), and listing them online for global recognition.

The museum

The fluidity of a museum's function is evident through the contemporary notion of curating dance in the museum. Thus, the need arises to ask whether the museum is an institution and a construct concerned with safeguarding tangible heritage or intangible heritage. Since the 20th century, questions have been raised about rethinking the museum and its role in the heritage business. Several scholars have attempted to define the term museum. Defining a museum, like the term dance, is quite problematic, and has been an ongoing challenge. Duncan Cameron, a Canadian museologist, states: "attempts to define a museum have been made for almost as long as there have been museums, yet there is no definition to my knowledge that meets with everyone's satisfaction." (2004, p. 63) *The Collins Dictionary* defines a museum as "a place or building where objects of historical, artistic, or scientific interest are exhibited, preserved, or studied." (Collins Dictionary online, 2015) According to Alma Wittlin, a museum studies researcher, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) defines a museum as "an establishment in which objects are the main means of communication." (2004, p. 44) These definitions emphasize the importance of objects in the museum, as objects are the core of museum activities and it is through objects that knowledge is generated and shared. The *Collins Dictionary* definition highlights "objects of interest," and it becomes valid to ask whose interest is invoked? Is it the interest of the curators, or that of the visitors and tourists, or the interest of the community where the museum is situated? There is no single response to this question because the answer depends on the focus of the specific museum, the museum's context, and its defined target audience. Relating this to the notion of a virtual museum, the "interests" would be explicitly those of the practicing community and implicitly UNESCO, due to the level of control over the participating countries and the entries that UNESCO accepts.

The International Council of Museums consistently updates its definition of a museum in relation to societal developments and to the experienced realities across the worldwide museum community. Thus, at present, the 2007 ICOM Statutes adopted in Vienna defines a museum to be:

A non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (International Council of Museums online, 2015)

This definition references society and the public, thus, visitors and the community can fall within these categories, whose interests should be reflected in the museum. The Director General of the National Commission for Museums and Monument (NCMM), Abdallah Yusuf Usman, defines the

museum as “the central bank of cultural resources, a collection of memories about man’s way of life, his achievements and progress over time.” (*Daily Times*, 2015) This definition of a museum makes no reference to educational goals but focuses on storage, preservation, and memory. No wonder the author of the article *Nigerian Museums: Any Relevance to the Present Generation?* states that “the main purpose of the museum is neither to educate nor entertain, it is a memory bank to remind one of the past.” (*Daily Times*, 2015).

American museologist, Theodore Low, proposes to look into the nature of the museum in order to answer the question, what is a museum? This means taking into account the activities that the institution carries out. Museum administrator Rea Paul, as quoted by Low, defines museum activities as “...the acquisition and preservation of objects, the advancement of knowledge by the study of objects, and the diffusion of knowledge for the enrichment of the life of the people.” (Rea in Low 2004, p. 32) In introducing the anthology of articles *Rethinking the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives to the Paradigm Shift*, Anderson Grail recognizes a very important shift in museum priorities, which recently makes the needs of the “visitor, education and public service” central as compared with identifying collections as the center of museum activities. He advocates the use of museum collections to advance the educational activity of the museum. The value of the museum is, according to Anderson, no longer dependent on how many objects museums have, but how efficient they are in serving the public. (2004, p. 4)

A definition of the role of the museum that takes into account the notion of intangibility is expressed by the International Council of Museums, which states that “museums can contribute significantly to the protection of intangible cultural heritage by means of recordings and transcriptions.” (International Council of Museums online, 2015) This establishes a perspective of the museum as a place to protect intangible cultural heritage. Since dance is regarded as an intangible cultural heritage, can this perspective be a foundational principle for curating dance in the museum space? If Nigerian traditional dances are curated in museums, what happens to theatres staging similar dances in Nigeria? I will attempt answering these questions in this paper while discussing museums in Nigeria.

Museums in Nigeria

The first museum established in Nigeria was the Esie Museum, located in the ethnically Igbomina town of Esie, in the Irepodun Local Government Area in north-western Nigeria’s Kwara State. This museum was established in 1945, and since then the number of museums in Nigeria have risen to the current number of 47. The Nigerian National Commission for Museums and Monuments manage these museums, which are partly funded by the federal government. Some of these museums are situated within educational institutions like universities, while others are located in villages, cities, and towns. Early researchers opine that the establishment of museums in Nigeria was born out of a colonial motive.

The museum movement in West Africa is relatively young and admittedly based on an earlier European model. The first museums were colonial: set up for the purposes of ethnological research and put at the disposal of the colonial administrative and mercantile class. (Bohn and McKie 1983, p. 12)

The establishment of museums in West Africa, which started in the 20th century, resulted from neo-colonialism. Although museums were ostensibly established for the benefit of local

populations, the colonial masters enriched themselves through the “indiscriminate acquisition of valuable objects” of material culture of Africa. (Lopez 2002, p. 1) To prevent additional losses of valuable cultural objects, postcolonial African countries like Nigeria established rules against the exportation of cultural artifacts in 1953, and customs officials seized many such objects at the airport from the luggage of some expatriates. (Bohn and McKie, 1983) The government decided to take museums seriously as a storage houses to preserve their now-valued heritage, and “several Nigerian museums were founded shortly after this to house the new and burgeoning national collection.” (Bohn and McKie 1983, p. 12)

According to Awuah, “Museums and galleries are arguably the most significant facilities for housing tangible heritage materials and, in doing so, allowing people to make connections to the past.” (2016, 22) As established in Western tradition, the museum is a place to house significant elements of valuable heritage and history, but the African notion of time and the past is quite different from that of Westerners. While “the general western understanding of past, present, and future conceives of them as distinct entities, unfolding in linear fashion and following a definitively prescribed, therefore irreversible order,” (Gore and Grau 2014, p. 123) for Nigerians and Africans, the past is as present as the future. The present, past, and future are in a constant dialogue, always interacting, and Africans embody this interaction in our daily activities. For example, while entertaining guests, the kola nut (fruit of Africa’s Kola tree) is broken as words are spoken that recognize the presence of the ancestors and that connect with the world of the unborn. Thus, it can be seen as unnecessary to preserve the past in a house called “museum,” taking into consideration the African way of living and relationship with the past and future.

As a Nigerian youth, I rarely visited museums in Nigeria. This is because my understanding of a museum was that of a place for the “exotic,” thus, I was not fascinated by the structure or the superficial experience of connecting to history and the past through objects, when “visiting it.” This is not an uncommon mentality for Nigerians.

Interviews conducted by the *Daily Times* newspaper with Nigerians from diverse walks of life about the relevance of museums in Nigeria to the present generation agree. Oluwakemi Malomo, a businesswoman in Lagos, observes that museums in Nigeria have very low visitor numbers. In her opinion, this is due to Nigerian’s lack of curiosity about the past. She describes the museums in Nigeria as “desolate and underutilized.” In her words:

When you mention museum now, a lot of youths are likely going to look askance if not look at you as old school. The mention of Shoprite, Mama Cass, Domino and others will easily excite them more than museum. Most Nigerians are not interested in our museums anymore. It is unfortunate that the present generation is not tapping into the rich history the museum has to offer (*Daily Times*, 2015).

The inability of many Nigerian museums to create an adequate online presence has hindered gathering statistics about visitor numbers to any Nigerian museums. Museum culture has yet to be fully appropriated into the daily life of the Nigerian public.

According to Jeremy Coote, in his review of the journal *Museums & History in West Africa* by Claude Ardouin and Emmanuel Arinze, “Ardouin criticizes ‘most museums’ in West Africa for ‘reproducing

an ethnographic, a-historic, if not downright folkloric image of the societies that they present.” (Ardouin and Arinze 1997, p. 1) This leads to an impression that these museums have no existence outside ethnography and archaeology. This critique relates to the limited presentation of recent history in Nigerian museums, but also to the “all-too-common portrayal of pre-colonial societies as hermetically sealed and unchanging.” (Coote 2004, p. 307) In this light, the need to transform the Nigerian museum from “simply a place where works of excellence” and historical relevance “are exhibited and interpreted to the public, to include a place where the unknown and experimental should be given a chance to happen,” notwithstanding the outcome. (Duncan 2004, p. 62) The museum is not among the first places one will go to for leisure in Nigeria, thus, the Nigerian museum faces the challenge to remain relevant in contemporary society. Legal practitioner, Nwachukwu Ephraim points out the prime function of museums in developed places like Europe and America to be that of “offering enjoyable and rewarding stimulation for individual minds in their hours of freedom from their daily chores.” (*Daily Times*, 2015) He attributes this and also the sale of souvenirs as major reasons why these museums successfully generate revenue for and attract high visitor numbers. Olabisi Onabanjo University lecturer, Dr Yomi Akindele, calls for the meaningful development and proper financing of museums in Nigeria so that the nation can take advantage of the museum's ability to be a vital source of revenue. Regarding public patronage, he calls for rethinking both museums’ roles and cultural programming to involve more Nigerian youths:

At the moment, it appears that Nigerian museums must diversify in their cultural programmes in serving the public. This is because the traditional role of collection, housing and showcasing to the public is fast becoming un-motivating to the general public. It is pertinent that the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) as an umbrella body of public museums in Nigeria should look toward making policies that will rejuvenate museums. (*Daily Times*, 2015).

To transform Nigerian museums into popular locations for the general public, an “intense examination of values and assumptions, the scope and nature of services offered, the focus and approach to leadership and management, and the relationship between the museums and the people they wish to serve- the public” is required. (Anderson 2004, p. 1) The museum also needs to display the experienced reality of the community in which it is situated. Thus, the museum should serve as an agency for molding and reflecting public taste and opinion. (Adam, 1939) Although Thomas Adam made this statement in relation to American museums, it is valid for museums around the world to consider their local community. He emphasizes the importance of the “social content” of a museum as he sees the institution as meaningless to all but the curators, in the absence of a social content. (Adam, 1939)

Dance in the Nigerian museum

The very notion of installing dance in the museum, as dance scholar Alessandra Lopez y Royo posits, is an intrinsically disturbing idea because it seeks to objectify the dance and the dancers as well as present the dance as exotic. (Lopez y Royo 2002, p. 1) This would not be the case in Nigeria because the local community views dance in a different manner. Traditionally, Nigerians do not dance just for the sake of executing movement to sound, but dance partly because of the relationship between their social and cosmic world, alongside the representation of dance in their daily living. Research has proven that in Nigeria, and by extension Africa, dance is used to mark major milestones in the life of a person; from procreation, to child care and upbringing, puberty,

festivals, marriages, initiation into groups, and even daily activities like moonlight storytelling. Thus, if we seek to reduce dance to an object, it is countering the lived social reality of the people. "The very nature of an object changes when it becomes a museum object...it takes on a new quality. You and I will judge it differently." (Duncan 2004, p. 70) This is because museum objects are carefully selected with a level of "expert judgment," as well as the value ascribed to museum space presenting work that is "good" and "authentic." In a museum, expertise is typically removed from the hands of the heritage bearers, to the collectors and curators whose decisions and opinions may not be accepted as "expert" by the local community.

Postmodern choreographer Sara Wookey has created works for gallery and museum spaces. Her 2015 lecture at Roehampton University (London) made clear that her museum-based works are not necessarily tied to history or to the heritage of a specific culture, or to the specific contents of the museum, but are instead related to creating any kind of movement activity in a museum space that is empty or underused by the public. It is necessary to note that "museuming dance" and "museum dancing" differ. Museuming dance is concerned with heritage and preservation, while museum dancing focuses on animating the museum space. Museum dancing can also take the form of "choreographic installations" displayed in the empty gallery spaces as self-standing content, and are not intended to animate the space, but stand alone as independent works of art. There is a possibility of adopting the idea of movement activity in the Nigerian context, but with a clearly defined purpose, not as movement for movement sake, as the work Wookey creates.

By installing dance in the museum, today's museum is a "theater, a memory palace, a stage for the enactment of other times and places, a space of transport, fantasy, dreams." (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998, p. 139) Thus, apart from the role of educating the public on cultural values through objects, the museum can also entertain its visitors. Susan Bennett identifies this as the reason for the adoption of "performance strategies that evoke different kinds and qualities of experience" in order to exhibit heritage. (2013, p. 5) In her book *Destination Cultures*, Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1998) looks at how museums compete for relevance within the heritage business and also compete with other tourist sites, presenting museum as tourist attractions in order to be profitable. The time I spent working at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art availed me the opportunity to witness how educators brainstorm diverse educational programs to host in the museum in order to raise and maintain visitors, as well as to stay relevant in the heritage sector. Programs were categorized into films, workshops, performances, docent-led tours, and a workshop series. Museums do not rely solely on the ongoing rotating exhibitions, but constantly create educative and mind stimulating programs that engage all swaths of the museum audience across ages and interests.

Awuah Eric, a Ghanaian dance scholar, attempts to identify the usefulness of dance performances in the museum positing that such performances would help the audience to better relate with certain tangible heritage objects that are used in the course of the performance. He cites an example of a ritual mask whose significance cannot be deduced from its placement in the museum, thereby limiting exploration of its "physical, emotional, and expressive uses." However, dance can help with a deeper interpretation of the functionality of the object in a living situation, and thus "dance enables a more comprehensive view of the object." (Awuah, 2016, p. 23)

One of the implications of dance in Nigerian museums is the questionable multiplicity of roles with other institutions like the Council for Arts and Culture (CAC), which houses the state dance troupes of each Nigerian state, and is concerned with the preservation and performance of heritage

through various artistic expressions, including dance. Both museums and the Council for Arts and Culture function under each state's ministry of culture and tourism. It is not enough to belabor the idea of a museum in an African context, like Nigeria, as a Western imposition without making recommendations on possible ways to help this appropriated culture thrive.

Diverse strategies to assist Nigerian museums exist. Museums can dramatize historical stories behind certain objects, particularly those relevant to the present Nigerian society. It is possible to establish a collaborative platform between museums and the state's Council for Arts and Culture. This can be done by employing the services of the Council for Arts and Culture through the Performing Arts department. This dramaturgy can be projected on a screen that is placed beside the object, or in the room containing objects to which it relates. It is also important to make available texts with details about how objects were originally used, and how that information or the object can be relevant in contemporary Nigeria.

Interactive displays utilizing appropriate objects highlights the importance of touch, providing visitors with personalized sensorial experiences of objects that would otherwise be lost if the objects are only understood as static and untouchable. The Smithsonian's Museum of African Art in Washington D.C. has a dedicated room utilized by the Education team where objects are handled by audiences in controlled workshops and tours, particularly by primary and secondary school students. I hosted a traditional African dance workshop at the museum, and certain music or dance related objects were utilized from the Education collections by participants to help inform the workshop.

Similarly, dance exhibitions in Nigerian museums could address both the "representations of dance, the processes, modes of production, history, economies and conditions of circulations." (Spangberg, 2012) As performance theorist, curator, and dance practitioner Marten Spangberg (2012) states, an added advantage of hosting dance in museum spaces is that "it brings audience and that means ticket sales and that means statistics and that means potentially more subsidy to support more visual art." It should be noted that Spangberg sees this sarcastically as an advantage to the visual arts and to museums, but not necessarily to the field of dance. Dance in a museum in Nigeria could possibly alter people's perception of the museum. This answers the question posed by French choreographer Boris Charmatz: What do you think dance could do to the museum? What do you think museums will do to dance? (Charmatz, 2011).

Nigeria is a country where the mass media, as well as music and dance, have a significant impact on the general public. According to Onuoha Louisa, a staff at the National Museum of Nigeria, Onikan Lagos, "The media (print and electronic) should be readily available to partner with museums in disseminating information and programmes that would sensitise the people about the museum and its services. This could also encourage people to visit museums and heritage sites in Nigeria." (Onuoha, 2010) In the spirit of reviving Nigerian museums and making them more relevant to daily life, contemporary Nigerian artists whose works are rooted in the Nigerian cultural heritage could be invited to perform in the museum space. Artists including Flavour,ⁱ Phyno, and Liadi Adedayoⁱⁱ also known as Ijodee. In so doing, the museum is meeting the needs of contemporary society while taking into account the cultural heritage of the people. As Coote (2004) states, "The closer a museum project starts to the local community, the greater the chance of its success." (p. 308)

Every exhibition should be advertised across diverse media platforms. Beside using popular artists

in the Nigerian entertainment industry for political propaganda like endorsing candidates for electoral positions, and endorsing certain brands as the best in the commercial sector, the Nigerian government could leverage these artists' personalities and popularity to connect museums to the public. Let the Nigerian museum become a brand that Nigerians and foreigners would want to be associated with and enjoy.

Professor Abraham Adedokun, a Nigerian sociologist, calls for the “reinvention of our beautiful and glorious practices” through proper cultural management, including artistic expressions like dance and poetry, which went into decline because of “our romance with foreign religion.” (2011, p. 73) It becomes imperative that the museums in Nigeria creatively find their place in this space of cultural management and expression. Finally, as Wittlin posits, “the museum is not an all-purpose nostrum...it should be a fascinating goal to search for the specific, intrinsic contributions these institutions can make to the human wellbeing.” It is only then that we can answer the question: “would we invent museums if we did not have them?” (Wittlin 2004, p. 56).

Proposed project

Earlier in this essay, strategies were suggested to rethink and reinvent the museum experience in Nigeria. This section of the paper is dedicated to situating the achievability of these strategies in a Nigerian museum that opened in December 1989, the Igbo Ukwu Museum located in Ngor village, Aguata Local Government Area, Anambra state. I selected this museum because of its connection to my ethnicity as an Igbo speaking Nigerian. Igbo Ukwu could translate to “great Igbo.” In the history of the Igbo people and the history of civilization, Igbo Ukwu is speculated to be the cradle of civilization, and artworks dating from 9 AD were excavated from the graves of certain elites in the area. (TVC, 2013) The Nigerian Igbo people trace their origin to the people of Nri, who lived in the present geographic region called Igbo Ukwu. This museum is faced with certain challenges, like limited power supply, limited staff, poor maintenance and management both of the museum building and the museum objects.ⁱⁱⁱ

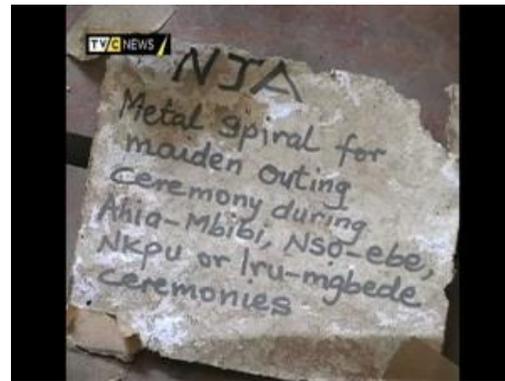
Below are images depicting the museum's current state:



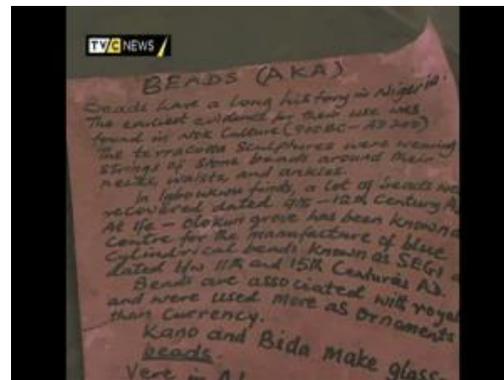
There is no power supply in the vicinity, and thus the objects are not properly cared for, open to dust and other substances that deteriorate their quality.



The museum building is old, rusty, and has broken ceilings. When it rains, water pours down into the museum, and objects are affected.



Numerous descriptions and text about museum objects are written by hand on paper. The text can get lost, get dusty, and is aesthetically unappealing.



The image of written text beside both pictures above are supposed descriptions of the objects. Seeing these, one cannot help but ask: What would motivate a guest to visit this museum? Even if someone visits once, will this sight encourage a visitor to return or even recommend the visit to others? (Igbonezim, 2015)

Stated below is an excerpt from a newspaper article written by culture expert, Preye, in an appraisal of the efforts and achievements of the Director General of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments in Nigeria:

To promote museums practice, sensitize stakeholders on its importance and capture the attention of policy makers, a series of exhibitions need to be carried out to expose

the cultural richness of Nigeria (*The Nation*, 2015).

Although the Nigerian government and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments have organized several exhibitions to this effect, some of which were held in some European countries and cities in the United States, there is the need to do more at home. It is on this premise that I am proposing the project, *Igboamaka: Performing the Igbo Heritage* in the Igbo Ukwu museum of Nigeria. The project's goals include:

1. To find a common ground between the past and present, and make the museum useful as a place to celebrate both the past and present, as well as their symbiotic relationship;
2. To encourage increased visitor numbers;
3. To improve the awareness of the relevance of museum to present day society;
4. To call the government's attention to certain needs of Nigerian museums;
5. To develop a platform for museum-audience interaction through the agency of objects, humans, and heritage sites (Igbonezim, 2015).

To find common ground between the past and present, it is imperative to see the relationship between the history of the Igbos, their past, with the cultural traits that are still evident today. Certain aspects of Igbo culture have been retained until present day, even though some contemporary elements have been included. Some of these include the ritual breaking of Kola nuts, pouring libation, traditional marriage ceremonies, the ritual of burial ceremonies especially for traditional rulers and leaders, the new yam festival, masquerading, wrestling and games, Igbo traditional music and dance, folklore, proverbial statements, and the Igbo language itself. All these are rooted in Igbo history and culture, and still find expression in the contemporary Igbo society. However, it is beyond the scope of this essay to go into the details of this past-present relationship of the Igbo culture.

Rethinking the Igbo Ukwu museum will require the renovation of the museum building such that it becomes attractive to visitors both as a tourist site and as a house of valued objects that protect and present our heritage. The Igbo Ukwu community is seen to host the celebration of new yam festival which attracts dignitaries of Igbo ethnicity, royal fathers, and commoners as well. The new yam festival is a culmination of most of the above-listed Igbo cultural traits, as it is filled with music, dance, masquerading, etc. The weeklong festival typically occurs between August and September. I propose utilizing three consecutive days during the festival to execute the Igboamaka project. The events would take place in different locations in the Igbo Ukwu community, culminating at the museum itself. The museum compound would also be used to stage performances, and certain props used for such performances can be borrowed from the museum if they are relevant to the story being told.^{iv}

Since the project is targeted at celebrating the Igbo culture, the involvement and collaboration of all Igbo speaking states through their state government and state troupes would contribute to the project's success. Traditional Igbo dances and drama presentations can be performed by different local and state troupes depicting cultural traits. It is a time to involve celebrities of Igbo descent, both at home and in the diaspora, asking them to openly identify with and celebrate their roots. Collaborations between renowned Igbo musicians and contemporary young artists who resonate with the Igbo culture, such as Phyno who raps in Igbo language, and Queen Theresa Onuoha aka Egedege of Africa, could attract many visitors. Taking into consideration the present-day political realities in Nigeria given the Igbo people feel highly marginalized and call for a Biafra nation, this

project is highly significant as it aims to foster Igbo unity and oneness through the celebration and projection of their cultural heritage. Only once achieved can one fully write about the realization of a dance and museology collaboration.

Conclusion

Dance and museology can work together in the rebranding of museums in Nigeria, and can awaken Nigerians to the relevance of museums. Including dance in Nigerian museums would involve significant commitment from stakeholders in the Nigerian heritage sector, the Nigerian government, and artists in the entertainment industry. Apart from exhibiting certain dance-associated objects in the museum, like dancer's costumes, props, make-up, and video clips of traditional dances and their contemporary evolution, there is the need for more increased interaction between the museum space and its local community. Finally, Nigerian museologists should consider more interdisciplinary collaborations, and start thinking outside the box of a museum building.

Notes

- i Some of his works include <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IUfM8yTtUc> which dramatizes the traditional marriage rites of contemporary eastern Nigeria, and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mXZTftMeQ> which reflects the politics of choosing a bride for a royal family in some communities in eastern Nigeria.
- ii He is a prominent Nigerian contemporary dance artist. Some of his works can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noj26FaNI7A&list=PLcrf55VYXkXWEUtPizdayV3rHIITZlgBM>
- iii I have created a portfolio for this project, which is available at www.igboamaka.wordpress.com/2015/04/17/challenges-of-the-igbo-ukwu-museum/
- iv A similar project was begun by the Igbo diaspora community in the United States, organized by the Council of Igbo States in the Americas (CISA), and hosted by the Frontier Museum of Culture in Staunton, Virginia where a replica of an Igbo village was erected in honor of Igbo slaves who were brought to America and lived in Staunton, Virginia.

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