African performance epistemology: fundamental indigenous creative theories and philosophies for application in contemporary music education

African Performance Epistemology: Fundamental Indigenous Creative Theories and Philosophies for Application in Contemporary Music Education

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Abstract

Music curricula in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa have been for a long time shaped by Western paradigms and exogenous pedagogic theories. A major result of the above reality is the undermining of the philosophy that guides creativity in indigenous musical arts practice of most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which is informed by an indigenous knowledge system birthed in the crucible of the people's distinctive history, philosophy, creative theory, geographical location and cross-cultural influences. Another cost of this purely Western paradigm in the music education of African musical artists is the loss of the opportunity to inculcate the humanistic and communal values that are the bedrock of indigenous musical arts education. There is, therefore, the need to re-evaluate the content of African musical arts discipline as it is currently taught in schools and nudge it towards being in decent communion with African performance epistemology. Drawing from my over twenty-five-year experience in the teaching and learning of indigenous African music and my personal practice as an African classical drummer, I investigate in this research the possibilities for identifying creative formulations that could be harnessed for classroom education and performance across the African continent, and the humanity-based philosophies and values embedded in indigenous cultural arts practices that can be harnessed for molding learners towards exemplary citizenry. Since it is an arts-practice research, the primary research method is qualitative, drawing insights and data from interviews, articles, feedbacks from student journals and interactions with students and so on. Experimenting with the teaching and performance of two pieces, with the first subjects being Western-trained non-African students of music and the second comprised of local African performers with no Western music education, I compare and contrast the differences between the two performances in terms of the pedagogic process, content and genre, and the impact of the methodological approach. The two performances adopted an indigenous knowledge approach to the teaching and learning of indigenous African music. The preparation of the two performances demonstrated that the application of this pedagogic approach in contrasting contexts is possible and that a deep and introspective engagement with the epistemology of African indigenous performance practices provides a viable model for musical arts education pedagogy. The research finds also that what remains is to formalize this approach like the existing non-African theories of music education.

Key words: indigenous creative theories, performance epistemology, music education

Declaration

I herewith declare that I have produced this paper without the prohibited assistance of third parties and without making use of aids other than those specified; notions taken over directly or indirectly from other sources have been identified as such. This paper has not previously been presented in identical or similar form to any other Irish or foreign examination board. The thesis work was conducted from year to year under the supervision of Dr. Colin Quigley at University of Limerick.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to all functional mother musicians and culture bearers in Africa, whose arts are currently facing the risk of extinction. You are an endangered species and as we embark on this journey of reorientation and the restoration of Africa's viable musical arts heritage in our institutions of learning, we will strive to preserve and promote the authentic indigenous knowledge systems that your works embody.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The philosophy that guides creativity in indigenous musical arts practice of most countries in sub-Saharan Africa is informed by its peoples' worldview as well as their socio-political circumstances. The indigenous knowledge system that informs the content of these performance practices derives from the distinctive history, philosophy, creative theory, geographical location, cross-cultural influences peculiar to particular African communities. One may draw broad contrasts between sub-Saharan African music cultures and that of the cultural formation one might call 'the West' and it is this contrast that provokes my research interest. In order to investigate the problem in detail, however, it will be necessary to focus my inquiry on specific musical cultures, and perhaps even musical idioms. My choices in this regard will be informed by my own experience, life-story, opportunities and access. I will return to these specifics.

I have been involved in research on the use of indigenous musical arts resources for classroom education and have worked with indigenous music practitioners towards achieving this in the Southern African Development Communities (SADC) region for over 10 years. I have been instrumental to the development of an Africa-sensed curriculum, which was presented to the Department of Education in South Africa during their curriculum review in 2010, and which was adopted for an Indigenous African Music stream in their newly developed Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document in 2011. I have also been part of the development of a notational system for the scoring of some indigenous African instruments and the subsequent development of the Modern African classical drumming (MACD) style, which has given rise to the composition of African classical drum music pieces (solos, intercultural duos for the African single membrane drum and the saxophone or voice, and African classical ensemble pieces) for classroom practice. I also played a significant role in the development of The Certificate in African Indigenous Cultural Arts Education (CAICAE) course. This certificate program was accredited and awarded by the University of Pretoria South Africa. It is a two-week intensive training program for in-service and pre-service teachers which takes on an integrated approach to teaching and assessing arts and culture education and includes the use and selection of resources as well as provides examples for classroom-based applications. It packages "fundamental" content and skills

for teaching together. There is particular emphasis on indigenous African musical arts practices and materials as a resource for classroom education. The certificate program is a move to consolidate and formalize the teaching of African musical arts as a specialized (cognition-based) education subject area in the African school system

This chapter will look at what has inspired and motivated this research work with the prospect of identifying elements and aspects of African indigenous performance epistemology and how it applies to modern classroom music education. The vehicle for doing this would be Arts practice research, and I would be drawing from over 25 years of personal experience teaching African music performance theory and practice. The work will sample and analyze two distinct performances, the first of which involves working with Irish music students who have not had any prior African music training, to develop and produce an array of African instrumental and dance performances, deriving from the researchers' own compositions. The second performance to be produced and analyzed involves the researcher working with African professional musicians with no western music training but will be expected to read music from score as developed by the researcher. There will then be a comparative analysis of both performances to determine how the researchers approach to teaching and learning music impacts both distinct class of musicians, with diverse musical and cultural backgrounds

1.1 Research problem

The current practice in schools in Africa with regard to the study of the musical arts (comprising music, dance, theatre and the visual arts) generally derives from exogenous theories and practices of Western art music pedagogy. This has hugely affected teaching of cultural arts education in African schools, even with cultural arts education having been described as "a fundamental human rights of every child" by the UNESCO:

> State parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.
>
> (United Nations 1989, p.9)

There is much in the typical Western pedagogical approach that alienates the core principles, indigenous creative theories and philosophical peculiarities of indigenous African musical arts practices. There is thus a strong need to re-evaluate the content and context of musical arts curricula in Africa. It is my belief that a curriculum needs to derive its content from the philosophy and theory, which inform the creative ideologies and principles of most indigenous musical arts practices in Africa, if it is to harness the full creative potential of the learners. This is due to the fact that children usually have an inherent inclination towards the musical arts practices deriving from their direct cultural environment, and thus would be in a stronger position to understand theoretical concepts and practices of music pedagogy if descriptive examples and models are drawn from practices familiar to them.

A more African oriented pedagogy therefore, is more likely to generate value laden (i.e. emphasizing the African indigenous philosophical, theoretical and performance logic distinguished by the implicit humanity and societal purposes indigenous music was conceived to accomplish) teaching and learning in music, integrating the creative siblings of dance, drama and costume that constitute the soft science of musical arts.

1.2 Hypothesis

Recent cognitive studies have established that indigenous cultures in Africa south of the Sahara share common philosophical and theoretical foundations for musical arts productions (Nzewi 1999, p.33). Some of these creative peculiarities that have been identified to establish this finding include the following:

- the concepts of the ensemble thematic cycle[1]
- principles of sharing
- concepts of individuality in community
- spontaneity in creativity
- pro-active and purposive creative and performance principles etc

[1] Meki Nzewi, African Music: Theoretical Content and Creative Continuum—The Culture-Exponent's Definitions (Olderhaus: Institut für Didaktik populärer Musik, 1997), 33.

These basic creative foundations cut across indigenous musical arts cultures in Africa. A focused curricular content on these basic creative theories and philosophies holds out the possibility for a more uniform teaching structure across the continent, thus making it possible for cultural arts education to be taught and learned by any teacher or learner anywhere in Africa, irrespective of cultural/ethnic background. The specifics of such pedagogy would need to be tailored to specifics in its implementation but establishing some commonality in approach would contribute to broadened access to a culture sensitive and appropriate music education across the continent. Such an approach would mean less distortion in learners' perception of traditional music contributing to a 'de-colonization of the mind' and a more positive self-understanding.

1.3 Research questions

The main research question in this research is: Are there aspects of the fundamental creative theory and philosophy that mark African indigenous musical arts practices which can be resourced for classroom education? The implications of results from this research could have applications that might be investigated themselves in turn.

- Are there possibilities for identifying creative formulations in this research that could be harnessed for classroom education and performance across the continent?
- Are there any humanity-based philosophies and values embedded in indigenous cultural arts practices that can be harnessed for molding learners towards exemplary citizenry?
- Can creativity and performance in early childhood education enhance critical thinking and originality towards addressing the challenges of current day to day existence?

1.4 Rationale and objectives for the study

My passion for this topic emanates from the need to produce African music students with sound cultural intellect, future leaders grounded in creative ideologies marked by their African cultural identity. The general objective of this study is to investigate how to best position the unique intellectual and performance merits of African indigenous musical arts practices as a driving force towards achieving effective cultural arts education in schools to enhance original creativity amongst learners through performance. The specific objectives of the research are:

- To produce critical thinkers who will take up challenges and find solutions to problems through a well-articulated thought process primed by originality in creativity that marks indigenous musical arts practices
- To harness the humanistic values which are embedded in African indigenous creative philosophies, and apply these to daily living in the immediate communities and environments of learners and teachers
- To produce exemplary citizens who are driven by the spirit of community and communality, as is found and practiced in the old indigenous musical arts of African cultures, which emphasize inclusion, equality, mutual respect and inter-dependence.

1.5 Significance of the study

There is a need to re-evaluate the content of African musical arts discipline as it is currently taught in schools. There is a pertinent need to inculcate positive values and humane attitudes in learners of today. Furthermore, there is the need to drive the learners towards positive original thinking through active involvement in creative activities. A creative thinking learner is better positioned to solve problems that s/he encounters in life. This study investigates ways of harnessing African indigenous performance practices applied to stimulating creativity and instilling societal/cultural norms, values and attitudes which mark indigenous creative arts intentions.

1.6 Arts practice research

This research work investigates certain models with which to approach the teaching and learning of African music, based on African creative philosophies and ideologies. It also sheds some light on an African-sensed curriculum which could be adopted for indigenous African classroom music education and practice in schools. The study samples two different classes of music scholars, the first being non-African music students, specialized in Irish traditional music and current music students of a Western tertiary institution, while the second will be a group of African traditional musicians who do not have a formal Western music education background but are accomplished indigenous Nigerian musicians. The pedagogic approach is similar, deriving from African indigenous knowledge systems for music education, which focuses on the holistic development of

the student both as an accomplished musician and a model member of society. The content differs even though the approach will be similar, because the two different research groups have their different strengths and weaknesses with regard to the task before them. Music education in indigenous African societies aims at developing the child to be a virtuous musician, as well as a model citizen within the community. The performances that emanate from this project are original pieces that reflect the professional musical experience and expertise of my professional musical works.

In Arts-Practice research, it is important to situate self in the practice, since the creative process in one's creative work is the focus of the research. In the opening chapter of their publication "A Practical Guide to Arts-related Research", Savin-Baden and Wimpenny describe Arts-related research and its relationship to the creative process of the Artiste thus:

> Arts-related research is defined here as research that uses the arts, in the broadest sense, to explore, understand and represent human action and experience. It has emerged as a concept and practice from the interaction between art and social science. Early studies began with artist-researchers using and following their creative process as their research method. The result was that arts-related research developed through the relationships early artists/researchers had with their own creative processes, and their beliefs that letting research and creativity unfold together would cause both art and research to emerge as outcomes.
>
> (Savin-Baden and Wimpenny 2014, p.1)

It therefore becomes imperative that situating one's work and the underlying creative process in "practice" is of uttermost importance in establishing the research focus of a work such as this. Therefore, I begin by situating myself and my practice through autobiography.

1.7 **Situating self/ practice**

My academic background is in music, with special focus on indigenous African music theory and practice. I have also been trained in the oral music tradition as found in most indigenous cultures in Africa, having studied four different instrumental music types under indigenous Igbo mother musicians[2] from south eastern Nigeria. I have developed my practice in the playing of the following instruments: the single membrane drum, the *ufie* slit drum music, the *ogene anuka* bell

[2] In African music ideation, music is conceived as a woman, just like the Earth. Therefore, a mother musician is an expert on any indigenous African music instrument, which is used to direct the proceedings in any musical event or of an event music. This term was erroneously referred to as "master musician" by earlier researchers on African music.

orchestra, and the *ese* tuned drum row. I am also an accomplished oral drummer as well as an expert in the modern African classical drumming style. I have long had a great interest in indigenous knowledge systems of Africa, and the effective teaching and learning of indigenous musical arts practices in a contemporary classroom environment. This passion for the transmission of indigenous African creative epistemology has led to my undertaking this practice-based PhD program.

I come from a family where music making was a part of my earliest childhood memories. My father Prof. Meki Nzewi ('Meki' as he is fondly called) is an ethnomusicologist and an indigenous music practitioner[3]. Before he veered into indigenous African music later in his career, he was a classical clarinetist, pianist and western art music composer. As a result of his strong classical music background, we were exposed to western art music right from our early childhood developmental years. My first instrument was the piano. From the young age of seven years, my siblings and I, through the special tutelage of my father, prepared a repertoire of piano recitals, songs and drama skits for children's television programs. We eventually had our own music show on the State-owned television station that was titled "Classics here and there" with my sister as the host, and the rest of us kids performing alongside some adult guest artists on the show. After this introduction and very early encounters with music, I went on to engage with creative explorations going forward in life.

The early years of my life set up the backdrop for my eventual career in music. Even though none of us (my siblings and me) had planned to take up a career in music, the onus eventually fell on me to carry on with the music heritage of the family, albeit against my wish. My father made it clear that I had to study music in order to take over and inherit his musical legacy. I eventually gave in. An early involvement in creative musical arts activities helps to harness and develop the creative traits that are inherent in every individual. In my case, and given an enabling environment provided by my father, I availed myself of the opportunities, and exploited the creative talent inside me at an early stage in my life. I became involved in youth performance groups, producing our own variety shows, theatre and dance productions. In fact, it is on record that some of the comedy

[3] Meki Nzewi is a Professor of Ethnomusicology and a cultural scientist. He is a composer and playwright. Some of his works include "The lost Finger", and "Musical sense and musical meaning: an indigenous African perception."

skits we developed during that period became standard skits that were re-performed by different other groups over a period of years later.

When it became obvious that I would have to study music at the University, my father thought it necessary that I immediately start being exposed to indigenous musical arts practices, to give me a strong cultural background before I began my studies. My father has been my mentor and inspiration in my journey through life as a musician, and it was as a result of this that I accepted to go into musical apprenticeship with a mother musician, the leader of an *Ese* music ensemble when the opportunity came. The *Ese* is a six-man ensemble, an event music type that is played for the canonization of a meritorious man in the Ngwa community of Abia State in Nigeria. The mother instrument is a set of four tuned-drums and a bass drum. Other instrument types are played by the other members of the ensemble as a textural foundation over which the *Ese* drummer marshals the event and interacts with members of the community. My first encounter with the mother musician lasted for two weeks. During that period, I lived with him, slept in his house, ate with his family, worked and played music with him. This was my first exposure to the life and practice of an indigenous music expert within an indigenous African culture, and it was my launching pad to a career in music that is focused on indigenous musical performance practices.

My years at the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria were filled with milestone moments in my life and career; I was the first and at that point the only student to take up an indigenous African instrument as a major instrument in the history of the Department of Music. My audition into the Department was rather historic. While other participants at the entry audition examinations had come prepared with songs, piano pieces, trumpet and guitar pieces, and so on, I had prepared two indigenous pieces, one on the [4]*oja* and the other on the *igba* single membrane drum, both of Igbo provenance. This came as a surprise (or rather a shock) to both the lecturers involved in the audition for entrance into the Music Department at the University and my fellow participants at the audition. My performance generated quite a bit of controversy. Some people thought I was quite courageous to risk playing the instruments I played, some others thought I was crazy to have even conceived the idea, while a third group of people around the venue thought it a very creative and ingenious

[4] The *oja* is a notched flute found among the Igbo's who are from the south eastern parts of Nigeria. It is a small flute carved out of a piece of wood from 12cm to 25cm in length with four openings, The opening on the top is for blowing and the other three openings are on both sides and one under the flute are for producing pitches.

approach. That audition experience raised two concerns for me, the more positive of the two being that there must be value in my chosen area of focus, at that point in time, indigenous African music. This was as a result of the controversy created by my audition. My father had taught me that any venture that one gets into which does not throw up challenges was most likely not going to make great impact; whereas if there are serious challenges and one is able to overcome them, then the person was on his/her way to achieving great success and adding value to humankind. The second concern was that it would not be easy navigating my way through the Department, considering my emerging focus area in music studies, indigenous music. It did not take long for the manifestations of my second concern to catch up with me in my sojourn at the Department.

Meki Nzewi developed a notation system for the *ese* tuned drum row of which he writes thus:

> An example of symbolic notation system has been developed for a type of tuned drum row instrument, the Ese of the Igbo of Nigeria. The indigenous Ese instrument comprises four mortar-shelled membrane drums of different sizes, and correspondingly graded pitch tones. There is a fifth, open-ended membrane drum that plays a deep-toned note of indefinite pitch.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2007, p.200)

He added two extra tuned drums to the initial five drums to give a total of seven drums. I played the *ese* as my major instrument all through my years at the university, my repertoire being made up of solo compositions for the *ese* by Meki. I played these scored pieces for my assessment. The time spent in Ngwa became a plus for me, as I had already mastered the techniques of playing the instrument from the aural/oral lessons taken with my music mentor on the playing of the *ese*. It was then just a matter of translating the scored composition on paper to the drums after I had studied the notation system. During my first presentation on the *ese* drums for assessment examinations in my first year, the then Head of department, after I had finished playing my piece, accused me of trying to deceive the examiners by pretending to play my piece from the sheet music. This was due to the fact that they could not understand the notation, (which incidentally is read from right to left, against the conventional reading of scores from left to right), and he never bothered to understand it. He picked up the drumsticks, sat in front of the drums and mimicked my playing of the drums in front of the lecturer's present. This was done obviously to embarrass me and make nonsense of the hard work Meki had put into developing the notational system and composing the pieces. I immediately challenged him by telling him that he did not need to ridicule me because of something he clearly did not understand, that the right thing to do was to ask me for clarification on the notation and its interpretation and then follow the rhythm as played even if

he did not have a full understanding of the notation system. This was why the score of the music was provided for each of the examiners. Despite this reaction, I insisted and the *ese* was duly accepted as my major instrument of choice and I played it throughout my years of study at the University. However, it was a long, torturous and silent war between the lecturer and me throughout my years at the University.

By the end of my first year, after having fought a good fight that helped to establish an indigenous music instrument as a possible choice for a major instrument in the department, two other students of the Department took up the *ese* as their major instrument. I therefore had to take them as my first students and taught them using both the oral/aural and literate approaches.

My first major concert on the *ese* came towards the end of my second year at the University. The occasion was the re-opening of the All Saints Cathedral Anglican Church Onitsha, South Eastern Nigeria in 1992. I played a series of solo concert pieces and duos with Joyce Adewumi[5], a renowned classical singer in Nigeria. The process involved in preparing for the concert was my first taste of the preparation requirements to be a professional musician. My father who was to have played the concerts with the singer had to make a trip overseas and had mandated me to prepare for and play the concert on his behalf with the singer. I had daily rehearsals, putting in about two hours of personal rehearsals each day except for the weekends, and subsequent rehearsals with the singer when she joined me about a month before the concert. It was my first real test and baptism into professional musicianship. This, unknown to me, was the beginning of a performance-based career in music.

By 1993, my father in collaboration with a German painter, Doris Weller, established the "The Ama Dialog Foundation", a center for research and education in culture. There, we had international visitors come every year from Europe to spend two weeks in our study visit program, where they engaged in learning the indigenous arts of painting, sculpting, music, dance, and generally experiencing life in a rural Nigerian setting. I was actively involved in the running of drumming workshops for the participants. This was my earliest foray into international workshops and concerts. Through the contacts, I started my yearly visits to Europe, running drumming workshops and small-scale concerts. All this while, I was still studying for my Bachelor's degree.

[5] Founder and Executive Producer at New York African Chorus Ensemble and NYC Multicultural Festival

It also was during this period in time that we started the development of the modern African classical drumming compositions that have changed my focus in music and provided the path to where I find myself today.

In 1995, the "Igba Joli Four", an African pop music ensemble group came into existence. "Igba Joli Four" is a four man Pop ensemble group made up of myself and three others, my father, younger brother and a music lecturer from the Department of music at the University of Nigeria (YouTube link https://youtu.be/lw7nqi4FX3s). The group specifically employed the use of indigenous music instruments peculiar to the south eastern Igbo culture area of Nigeria for performances. The group played vocal and instrumental pieces with texts and lyrics derived from topical issues and experiences that affect humanity. The languages are Igbo and English, and the entire instrumental parts scored. We spent many months on rehearsals, even before we got our first gig. We wanted to have a well-rehearsed repertoire of music before we launched the group. After over seven months of rehearsals, we went on our first performance tour of the Netherlands and Belgium in April of 1996, had a studio recording of our album in 1998, and much later South Africa in 1999 before the group broke up.

The activities of the Igba Joli Four group in 1996 led to my development as an African classical drummer. The compositions for the Igba Joli Four pieces further led to the composing of single membrane drum solo pieces, drum and voice as well as drum and saxophone intercultural duo pieces. The first of the drum solo piece was entitled "Hop Along", while the first drum voice intercultural duo was entitled "In-between". "Valentine on three notes" and "Valentine on four notes" were the first intercultural drum and saxophone pieces. Subsequently I had eight solo pieces, six drum and voice duos and seven drum and saxophone pieces. My debut concert in this emerging genre of African music was at a Conservatorium in Zwolle Netherlands in 1996 during our Igba Joli tour, where I played the "Valentine" on three and four notes with two students of the institution during that visit. Subsequently, I recorded for a local cable network television station Minaj in 1997. A portion of the recording along with interviews was later used for a CNN montage for one "Emerging trends in African" music that year. I later rehearsed and played with a lady singer and a lady saxophonist after my return from the tour, and had my first public concert with them at an African music conference in Ghana in 1999. Other concerts were to follow in the subsequent years in Nigeria, South Africa, USA, the Netherlands and Germany.

My performances and workshops over the past 20 years have taken me to different parts of the world including Germany, Belgium, China, Australia, Netherlands, USA, India, Wales and South Africa. More recently, I have been running interactive African music workshops with students, children, teachers, corporate organizations and institutions of higher learning. My approach to these workshops was drawn from my performance practice and apprenticeship experiences with indigenous mother musicians in Nigeria.

As mentioned earlier, I took up apprenticeship for two other music genres peculiar to the Igbo cultures of the South eastern Nigeria. They were the "Ogene Anuka Bell Orchestra" and "Ufie" music. The Ogene Anuka bell orchestra is a two-man orchestra consisting of a pair of quadruple and twin bells [https://youtu.be/rxOz_lQ_LVM]. The themes played by each of the bells merge to create an identifiable melodic piece. I had to learn both parts during my apprenticeship, which the musicians found rather strange, due to the fact that they would normally have at least two people come to learn the instrument, each person concentrating on one or the other of the bells.

The *ufie* on the other hand is a twin wooden slit-drum set that is played, accompanied by a seed shaker [https://youtu.be/8LtXK8Q9SDE?t=163]. The theme played by the seed shaker is constant throughout each piece, whereas the *ufie* played melodic phrases and occasional rhythmic statements that represent encoded text, understood by members of the culture who appreciate the communicative language of the drums.

I got involved with the Centre for Indigenous Instrumental Music and Dance Practices for Africa (CIIMDA) www.ciimda.org when I came to South Africa in 2004; this is a Norwegian funded music project with the aim of facilitating African indigenous performance practices in schools in 9 countries in the southern African region. By 2008 I was running the organization, which included organizing children's musical arts festivals, running music workshops with school teachers and their learners on the use of African indigenous musical arts resources for classroom education, and eventually offering a certificate course in cultural arts education. I worked extensively with ministries of education in the different countries and started taking a keen interest in the way music education was implemented in schools. I started to observe the challenges faced by the music teachers and how inadequate music training and a lack of resources was impacting on the teaching and learning of music in schools. When the key focus of the CIIMDA organization shifted to

offering a certificate course in cultural arts education, my interests in music also started to change. This shift in focus thus started my foray into school music curriculum development impacted by indigenous African creative philosophies and music practices. It was during this period that the possibilities of having a standardized teaching curriculum for schools in Africa started to form in the CIIMDA organization.

In a testimonial written on my behalf by my father, mentor and longtime teacher, for the purpose of this PhD work, Meki gave an evaluation of his perception of me as a musician whom he has watched grow and develop over the years. Below are excerpts from the testimonial.

> ***In indigenous African knowledge philosophy, legacy as well terminology of discourse in the musical arts, the exceptional expert in creativity and performance is referenced as a mother not master***
>
> Odyke Nzewi is the foremost literate African classical drummer and composer who is as well an accomplished oral mother drummer. He is specialized on the single membrane drum represented by the *djembe* for his professional and academic activities. His first formal study in African drum music started with the Ese tuned drum row, when in 1990 he studied under Tom Ohiaraumunna a renowned Igbo traditional *ese* mother drummer... He next started specializing in the single membrane drum (the *djembe*), and co-designed with me the symbolic (staff) notation for Modern African Classical Drumming (MACD). He thus also became a mother membrane drummer, literacy (sic) and oral, and has composed modern classical literacy (sic) drumming pieces. Odyke was a member of the Igba Joli 4, a foursome popular music group that performed with only indigenous instruments, and toured Europe in 1995. Since 1995 Odyke has been giving concerts of solo modern classical drumming and inter-cultural drum & saxophone/trumpet duos...
>
> (Nzewi 2013)

My involvement in music as a practitioner and my collective experience of learning that has marked me as an oral mother drummer and an African classical literacy drummer, the unique opportunity of experiencing both the oral approach and the literacy approach to music learning and performance, as well as my many years of teaching the philosophy and theory of indigenous African musical arts practices, have equipped me with the relevant tools to play an active role in the development of an Africa-sensed curriculum for schools. This PhD program is giving me the opportunity to test the teaching of this curriculum through theory and practice. I will therefore attempt to answer my research question as stated earlier in this chapter using my performance practice, and to develop an implementation strategy that would capture and retain the knowledge base as is found in indigenous musical arts practices of Africa, and as was experienced by me during my years of training and my performance practices.

1.8 **Relationship between my practice and research question**

In African indigenous musical arts milieu, performance, pedagogy and research are inseparable components of the practice. Research is essential to the performance, which informs the pedagogy.

It is important then to explain this notion of research and its relevance of investigating fundamental African indigenous creative theories and philosophies for application in contemporary music education. The creative theories embedded in indigenous African musical arts practices have informed my performance practice over the years.

> African musical arts is a science of psychical and physiological health. It does not promote flippant entertainment aspiration... Performance is more a matter of engendering benevolent spirituality, and thereby humanizing connections than pursuing the fantasy of technique. Every part of the human body is by instinct, musically intelligent, and could be automatically expressive in musical arts production. Hence Israel Anyahuru (1976) explicates that the hands gain the creative 'intellect' to compose by sheer reflex once a person becomes adept on an instrument: "Not every compositional sequence played by the hands is mentally calculated"6. The brain, however, remains the intellectual hub that brews, formats, sensitizes and conforms creativity and execution.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p.1)

The above statement (taken from a book on African classical drum music) highlights the creative intentions of the musical arts practice in Africa. Hence the creative thoughts in most of my compositions and pieces that I have played in my professional practice derive from this humanizing intention, which the indigenous musical practices are structured to achieve. The compositional structure of ensemble music stimulates interactive musical arts activities as well as kindling spontaneous creative disposition aimed at inculcating inter-personal consciousness – self-expressivity in the context of the original contributions of others (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009). The humanizing intentions of the indigenous African musical arts practices are evident in every sphere of musical construction, invention, and innovation.

An example of this may be seen in the construction of the single membrane drums of African origin. The drum shells have a smooth outer surface and a very rough inner surface. The roughness of the inner surface is intentional, as it is essential for achieving the raw harmonics activated when a single membrane drum is struck. These raw harmonics in the sound of a vibrating membrane

6 Israel Anyahuru was the foremost, articulate Igbo traditional mother musician who mentored Meki Nzewi on the philosophy, theory and human meaning of the African indigenous musical arts. The quote is from transcribed recordings of his insightful testimonies on African indigenous musical arts in Meki Nzewi's archives.

massage and soothe the nerves and tissues of both the player and listener. This is why the playing of the membrane drum, as much as it produces musical sound, is also a therapeutic experience for the persons playing and those listening.

The overall aim in the ensemble music practice therefore is to highlight and inculcate the humanizing underpinnings of ensemble music engagement which stresses fellow-human consciousness in the community. The methodological approach to teaching music, as I have observed with my indigenous music teachers during the course of my apprenticeship, is informed by an African philosophical conceptualization that emphasizes the humanistic imperatives of the various musical arts practices. Music is perceived as a communal experience that humanizes and socializes, bringing people together to share in a somatic healing experience, recreation, communion, bonding, social cohesion, encompassing societal checks and balances, rewards and reprimands/sanctions, togetherness and overall understanding amongst people. Most indigenous music teachers in tradition would devote a good measure of their teaching time to discussing their life experiences with their students, in addition to technically and concretely teaching or playing the music. It is in such music making situations that lessons on life, living and integrity take place. Music is applied to every sphere of life in African indigenous contexts, it is employed for recreational, socio-political, religious, medical, psychological and even economic purposes. The experts approach music as a social experience that is value laden and reflects the spirituality and consciousness of society. Therefore, participation in musical arts practices is not just observed as a creative process, but as a way of life, and as such the learning experience would deal more with how the music making would impact on the student and society in general.

Music represents the core ethos of society and helps to maintain law and order in the community. As a result of the crucial role music plays in indigenous African societies, musicians are regarded as spirit beings who carry the conscience of society and are expected to be upright and honest in their judgment and are not expected to tell lies in musical contexts. They are mandated to speak the truth about whatever they observe in society without fear of reprisals from those who may be affected by the topic of their songs. All these are taken into consideration in formal musical arts training in indigenous Africa, whether as a music apprentice or a young prospective initiate undergoing training in an initiation school where they are prepared for their rites of passage in the indigenous cultures. It is sometimes during the initiation process that mother musicians in the

communities are identified and nurtured. The final product of this entire process is expected to be a morally sound, musically competent, socially accepted individual with a good understanding of the socio-political, cultural and spiritual norms and dynamics of society.

This observation of the role music and musicians play in indigenous African societies also leads to the question, "why do we study music?" There seems to be some degree of significant difference between what informs the need for musical arts pedagogy in indigenous African and Western educational cultures. The answer to that question would go a long way in justifying the need for a re-evaluation of existing music curricula in Africa if these are to reflect the intended objectives and goals of music pedagogy as experienced in old African cultures. As much of the reasoning that informs music education in our schools derive from Western pedagogical principles, I believe that in order for an African based music curriculum to make cultural sense, it should adopt some of the intentional underpinnings that are embedded in the indigenous knowledge systems of Africa.

I have reviewed the work of a widely influential American-born African drummer, David Locke, to have a clear understanding of his approach to the learning and playing of African drums, and why it is important for him to adopt the ethnographic approach to the study of indigenous African drumming music cultures. I believe that the need that informs his approach is totally different from the needs that have informed my research.

David Locke had studied the music of a particular African culture (the Ewe of Ghana), to understand and learn the playing technique of that particular music type. His interest in adopting an ethnomusicological approach to the study of Ewe music of Ghana was in learning about African music the way it is performed and contextualized in tradition for the benefit of the Western academic institutions (Locke, 1987). Whereas my approach has been for teaching music in African schools where the students may most likely already have some contact with indigenous music performance, but their bodily perception of dance structures and rhythmic movements exhibits the second level of consciousness as discussed by Shusternman (2008, p.157) as a "conscious perception without explicit awareness". The intended approach therefore is to get the students to raise their level of consciousness to the fourth level of "Self-consciousness or reflective somatic perception with explicit awareness" in engaging in these performance practices, and to articulate literately what happens in those practices based on a theoretical and philosophical understanding

of the indigenous African creative milieu. Most ethnomusicological research in Africa is funded by academic institutions and organizations in Europe and America, and carried out for Western interests, for use in Western institutions. The findings are applied to western musicological studies with intentions to document and adopt the findings to promote multiculturalism in musicianship within the institutions. The African scholarship does not seem to see these same needs in institutions in Africa.

My research in this project, above all things, is geared towards making the study and knowledge of music a humanizing experience.

> In the indigenous African culture, every creation, invention, prescription or construction was rationalized as not being harmful to psychical and physical health, and as having a justifiable added value to communal human well-being, before being presented to the general public. This was because the indigenous African cultures operated in social, economic, political, and religious systems that were underpinned by humanity concerns, where the well-being of the human person was given priority consideration.
>
> (Nzewi, 2009)

As the above indicates, it was imperative that a social activity such as musical performance practice, which maintained the psychological and physical balance of every individual in a community, had to conform to the above-mentioned principles of rationalized humanistic considerations for it to be viable. These considerations which are embedded in the teaching and learning of music in indigenous African cultures encapsulate the epistemology of indigenous African performance practices.

The approach adopted for this research has been pragmatic, carried out in situations where practice directly informs theory. In most indigenous cultures, people would exhibit a level of explicit conscious somatic perception towards their cultural performance practices, and would engage in and express themselves naturally, without reflecting on what they do. It has, however become necessary, for them to be consciously aware of their performative actions, reflecting on what they do during the process, and to be in a position to analyze and articulate what they do discursively. This has necessitated my adopting certain western art music terminologies and ideologies in the establishment of a creative continuum for these African musicological practices and for its global adaptation and appeal.

I use my practice as the focus of this study in developing a pedagogic approach that will aim at adopting the performance nuances, theories and philosophies of diverse African cultural practices for classroom education. My music practice incorporates certain key concepts and philosophies that have strong humanistic rationalizations. These concepts and philosophies also inform my compositions and performance presentations. These include individuality in conformity, concepts of sharing, spontaneity in creativity, profundity in minimality, concepts of making musical sense vis-a-vis making musical meaning, and the overall concept of music as a communion with humanistic imperatives. The teaching and learning of the performance pieces reflect these concepts and philosophies and an attempt is made to get the students to approach the learning of the performance practices through consciously embodying these identified concepts. The theoretical approach I have taken to both final performance outcomes will show the application of these concepts, while the teaching and learning process itself showcases a pedagogic model derived from African indigenous knowledge systems as it relates to formal music education and performance practices in traditional African communities. The forms of transmission of knowledge in this study aim to retain the essential African pedagogic philosophies which incorporate theory and practice as essential to teaching and learning. African indigenous knowledge systems adopt practice-based educational philosophy.

1.9 Situating my practice as research

Practice-based research is a new research paradigm that is based on a post-structuralist qualitative research approach that has been around over the past two decades. Practice-based research implies the use of performance practice as a means to answering research question.

> In order to be defined as research, practice-based investigation has no real option but to locate and address in advance a question or questions (problem or problems) before identifying appropriate practice-based means of addressing them.
>
> (Freedman 2009, p. 66)

This new research paradigm has been a source of anxiety amongst academics since its emergence, the same anxiety that was witnessed during the emergence of the feminist era in research (Candlin, 2000; Quaye, 2007). There have been numerous publications since the 1990's that have argued for the validity of practice-based research. In one of such books, *Methods Meets Arts,* Patricia Leavy

takes a critical look at this emerging paradigm in qualitative research that adopts the arts-based approach to data collection and analysis (Leavy 2009). Practice based research gives the researcher an opportunity to approach research and answer research questions through own performance practice. According to Freeman (2010), Practice as Research, "is seen as a non-prescriptive research method, that is primarily based on the 'strength of practical knowledge, understanding and accumulated experience' as a motivating factor that often leads those who engage in it into new fields of inquiry" (p.57).This statement situates the performer and his/her experience as the core source of knowledge. An investigation into and through one's performance practice opens up new avenues of inquiry. In his article "Practice as research through performance", Kershaw notes how the paradoxical nature of performance-based research has the ability to create new directions for discourse and discovery. According to him, "paradoxes are very suggestive of further starting points that might be especially appropriate to this new style of research" (Kershaw 2009, p.113). The new approach to research through practice thus creates opportunities for new questions deriving from the specific performance practice. Unlike the quantitative, objective, positivist approach to data collection and analysis in research, practice-based research deals more with qualitative, subjective, process-driven research methods, adopting the use of different art-based research approaches for data collection and analysis such as auto-ethnographic writing and narrative inquiry.

The anxiety that has been raised by this arts-based research approach has included issues around supervision, assessment and grading of works. Questions have been asked as to whether an artistic piece/performance alone could stand as a PhD thesis? An affirmative answer to this question would not entirely be out of order, since most artists would "let their works speak for itself". But in the academic environment where process is as important as the end product, this might be quite limiting. This leads to questions around the need to have a written component alongside the artistic piece or performance produced. The first of these is the question of whether images and productions can function as research. And the second, the question of whether the emphasis should be on the thesis and should the thesis go on to further explain the works? The United Kingdom Council for Graduate Education (UKCEG) report on *Practice-Based Doctorates in the Creative and Performing Arts and Design* raises a third question. How do you judge intellectual and scholarly works of art? They further stress the point that a PhD artwork is inaccessible to judgment

unless accompanied by written contextual material. This therefore implies that despite the originality presented by the works, the written research provides a basis for judgment.

In taking a stance on this subject matter, the first question would be: What qualifies a piece of work for the award of a PhD degree? One of the dominant requirements is that the PhD work should add to an existing body of knowledge. Therefore, there needs to be some documentation of the process that leads up to the final artistic piece/performance, which may be peer-reviewed to qualify the work for the award of a PhD. There is then a need, in my understanding, to have standardized criteria or a body (with knowledgeable practitioners and academicians) to assess and validate an art work as a competent work of creativity. Therefore, some of these identified anxieties can be seen as not just being about personal competency, but equally an institutional challenge. Katy Macleod, in her research on PhD methodologies, notes that "there is an acute anxiety about retaining the identity as artists, this is because in practice-based programs, the emphasis is on the written component. The arts practitioners are also faced with anxiety about the implication for professional identity" (Macleod 1998, p.35). The issue of retaining identity as artists, for me, should not create as much anxiety as is being insinuated in the above observation. This is due to the fact that for years the perspectives and discourse on artistic works produced have been left to critics, curators, journalists, academics etc., who have had the (doubtful) responsibility to interpret and analyze the artistic works produced.

It is imperative at this point that the voice of the performer be heard in and about his/her performance and this has been made possible through practice-based research. The need to pay close attention to process as well as end product cannot be over emphasized, and it is the arts/performance practitioner who understands the motivation and methodology adopted in the creative process of a work of art. As much as the moment of an artistic work's completion is in one identifiable sense the moment of its exhibition, Freedman believes that research should not rest entirely on outcomes. Therefore, there is a need for practitioners to ask questions that interrogate assumptions lest they become mere entertainers (Freedman 2009). These questions and assumptions, as articulated by Freedman, are the distinguishing factors between the artist and the artist researcher. Process therefore becomes a valid motive for documentation in practice-based research.

There are three basic points of departure in the discourse around performance/practice and research; and they are performance-as-research, performance-based research and research through performance. These three are closely related in meaning, but only one of them actually speaks to and articulates my research approach. According to Freedman, "when practical performance, in its most inclusive sense, forms the core of the contribution to knowledge then that research can most logically be described as 'practice based'". On the other hand, "when the research undertaken is likely to lead primarily to new and/or advanced understanding about practice, we can say that this is 'practice-led'". The third strand which approaches research in or through performance is seen, according to Freedman, as the most problematic of the three suggested approaches. He indicates that this model of research driven practice explores performance problems that are likely to be acknowledged and shared by the wider artistic and academic community. "Because this work is undertaken in order to advance understanding, insight or knowledge in the area of performance that it elects to address, the making process turns rehearsal studios into something akin to laboratories" (Freedman 2010, p.63). This is the interpretation that best suits the practice-based research methodology that I am employing in my work.

Freedman further asks three pertinent questions in and around what the correlations between performance and research are, namely:

- a) what is meant by research in terms of performance
- b) when does performance/practice assume the status of research
- c) how do we differentiate between the different modes of performance/research?

In answering these questions, he starts with the notion that research into or on performance is investigation that takes performance as the object of study. He identifies this as the type of research found in the traditional humanities division. A second observation is that research for performance is concerned with application; with the ways in which what is researched can be used to develop performance. In this strand, the practice informs the thesis without ever satisfactorily standing as the thesis (Freedman 2010, p.64). The question on what could have informed this new methodology in research can be attributed to different reasons. Freedman has identified practice as a way towards creating an acceptable alternative to the traditional thesis. According to him,

Practice as Research has “allowed for a proliferation of conference papers, think tanks and publications all looking for ways to create acceptable alternatives to traditional thesis” (Freedman 2010, p.60). Practice as research is currently undergoing a process of standardization.

A survey of the Higher Education Qualification Council (HEQC) in eleven (11) Universities in the United Kingdom (UK) identified the need to “clarify the use of new doctoral titles, to protect their significance”. This statement is significantly targeted at Practice-based PhD's, implying that PhD's would be devalued or undermined if the term “PhD” is used in practice-based research. There are a couple of possible reasons for this position on the issue of practice-based PhD's. One is the question of whether images and productions can function as research. Another is the question of whether the emphasis should be on the thesis and should the thesis go on to further explain the works? According to Candlin, “Arts Practice and Academia have been institutionally separate. Compulsory academic element was introduced in 1960, but they remain separate. This is underpinned by a conceptual framework that similarly split theory from practice. This split has been exemplified by the work of Clement Greenburg, who argues for arts autonomy from academic, social, economic and political experience. His insistence on different spheres of arts highlights what is at stake in maintaining and/or working across theoretical and practical areas, which is basically competence on one hand and institutional authority on the other” (Candlin, 2000).

I would argue against the justification of the split between Arts Practice and academia and thus against Greenburg's argument, which is in favor of an autonomy of the arts from the other contexts mentioned above. Validating institutional authority against competence I think still leaves much to be desired in the transmission of knowledge and skills in music making. My background and approach to music, coming from an indigenous African perspective, does not allow for the separation of theory and practice. It is actually in the practice that the theory is discussed and understood. Besides, can a music teacher well versed in theory who is incapable of playing any music instrument be validated as musically competent? My experience in teaching indigenous African music is that it is has proven to be more effective to teach from the known to the unknown, therefore a musical motif that is played or danced by a cultural group would be an excellent music example in the discussion and teaching of syncopation for instance. This same approach can be adopted for the body of work in the practical aspect of answering my research question.

In trying to identify what necessitates this shift in research methodology, a few pointers may be looked at and assessed.

Practice/Performance

Freeman identifies two areas of particular focus in the discussion of practice as research, the first being "to look at what might usefully define research practice", and the other to "explore the area of practical performance and in so doing provide a contextualizing frame for the discussion of works that have already begun to emerge through the case studies in his publication" (Freedman 2010, p. 59).

Performance happens in everyday life. Richard Schechner (2007), advocates that the concept of performance [rightly] incorporate ritual, performing arts, healing, sports, popular entertainment and performance in everyday life. He further advocates for a branch of performance studies that would deal with performance outside the Western definition of drama and theater. African cultures used music to humanize people and societal systems, to mediate between the social systems and key operators, and also to imbue as well as negotiate spirituality and its supernatural connotations (Nzewi 1997, p.5). The response to Schechner's "Broad Spectrum Approach" by the Editors of the PAJ Journal states, "Performance in its broadest definition, takes place in almost every aspect of our lives and livelihood, and theatre should as its main purpose, be founded on the staging of texts, just as the main purpose of the music world is to acknowledge the playing and singing of musical texts" (Marranca and Gautam 1988). I find this statement representative of the hegemony of Western musical notins, that I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction. It is inconsiderate of the meanings and interpretations non-western cultures might bestow upon music and theatre. As Schechner rightly pointed out in his response to the PAJ editorial publication,

"Such blatant ethnocentric nonsense hardly deserves comment. It is only from the Euro-American perspective that one can possibly say that the purpose of theatre and music is the staging or 'acknowledging' of texts" (Schechner 1988).

He *goes* on to further strengthen his argument by asking ' What do the PAJ editors mean by "text" anyway? If they mean dramatic text, that is plays, then the comparable music text would be written scores. But anyone who knows anything about music knows that most of the world's musicians, including many great ones, do not read music or play from a written score. If they mean

performance text (as defined by Pavis 1982 or Schechner 1973, 1988) then written dramas are not necessarily the foundation of theatre' (Schchner 1988).

Meki Nzewi describes the typical indigenous African drama as 'an illustrative object lesson transacting mystical, mythical or realistic themes aided by costume technology' (Nzewi 2009, p.83). He further describes its conception as "a musically facilitated supernormal theatre that intangibly manages a human society's corporate polity ethos" (Nzewi 2009, p.83). About music Nzewi further posits that "in most African cultures, there is no specific terminology for music as disembodied sonic phenomenon. Rather, a unifying term qualified and discussed a composite creative ramification, the components of which could be distinctively perceived as sonic, choreographic, dramatic, poetic or material" (Nzewi 2007, p.308). This absence of a specific term to describe "music" in most African music cultures, then testifies to the fact that Western terminologies and descriptions should not be arbitrarily imposed on cultural/musical arts practices of music of other world cultures.

Performance can be said to happen within different situations in our lives. I would like to view performance in a broad sense as a conscious or subconscious expression/exploration of our inherent creativity. Performance can happen on a stage or outside of a stage (Bell, 2007; Goffman, 2007; Gray, 2003; Harding, 2007). The performance that happens on stage (stage here meaning any organized platform for showcasing any type of practice), could be in political rallies, operating theatres, board rooms, classrooms, concert halls, sports arenas, theatres, etc. or performance that happens off stage for example could be while driving on the road, jogging, praying, cooking, working, etc. Basically, our lives are lived engaging in one type of performance or the other. When a performance is deliberately executed to evoke aesthetic appreciation, criticism, entertainment, empathy, emotive response from a target audience and/or show imagination and skill, such performance could be said to be artistic. Other forms of performances that are borne out of the need to satisfy a life function outside of aesthetic appreciation and entertainment, could be said to be performance in everyday life.

In the context of performance as research, McCall (2000) sees two camps engaged with dramatic performance as research, namely the camp "coming from" ethnography and the camp "coming from" theatre or performance studies. Gray (2003) classifies the two fields as: a) social scientists

concerned with performance as research who are mostly interested in accurate representation of research findings (Becker, McCall, & Morris, 1989; Jackson, 1993; Paget, 1993; Stucky, 1993), and b) others more focused on evoking meaning through the creation of "messy" performance texts (Denzin, 1997; Pelias, 1999; Trinh, 1991; Walstorm, 1996). The second group will more effectively resonate with my research approach through performance, and as Denzin (1997) rightly terms it "evocative" epistemology. My intention is to answer my research question, accessing performance epistemology, as it is found in indigenous African performance, for modern classroom education through investigating my very own practice as an African classical and oral concert drummer.

Musical arts practice in indigenous African cultures is an embodied experience. Nzewi notes, "in most African cultures, there is no specific terminology for music as *disembodied* sonic phenomenon. Rather, a unifying term qualified and discussed as a composite creative ramification, the components of which could be distinctively perceived as sonic, choreographic, dramatic, poetic or material" (Nzewi 2007, p.308). The intangible (spirit force) sonic element is embodied in, and underscores, the artistic-performative distinctions of the other tangible components of the unified concept of musical arts. It is the intangible nature of the sonic effects of music that gives it its spirituality.

1.10 Methodology

My primary method of research in this study is qualitative, which involves interviews, and data collection through interactions with students and teachers alike. The subject of the research derives from my experience as an indigenous African musical arts practitioner and performer. My research intention is to investigate fundamental African indigenous creative theories and philosophies for application in contemporary music education. My musical training happened at two different levels. On one hand there is the western art music education, and on the other hand the African indigenous music tradition. The two traditions have been combined to produce a hybrid musician that applies western theoretical ideologies to an indigenous African music practice.

My key area of performance competence is in African classical drumming, which simply implies the playing of specifically composed pieces for the single membrane drum as a solo instrument, or as a duo in combination with the human voice or the saxophone/trumpet, and in an ensemble situation. The single membrane drum which can be represented by the popularly known *djembe drums* or the less known *igba* (the generic name for the drums in [7]Igbo land) of Igbo extraction thus becomes my main instrument of choice for my performances. The pieces that make up my performance repertoire are composed to capture as much as possible the performance nuances of an African traditional musical performance, factoring in elements of dance, singing and drumming. As elaborated earlier, I have also learnt to play a range of other melo-rhythmic and percussive instruments all of Igbo extraction and these include the *ufie* twin slit drums ensemble and Ogene Anuka Quad-bell orchestra. Others are the *ese* tuned drum row, *igba enyi* dance orchestra, etc. Apart from my experience as a performer, I also teach indigenous African music with focus on its theory and practice. This means that through my years of fieldwork and apprenticeship with indigenous musical arts practitioners I have been exposed to and schooled in the indigenous knowledge systems that inform the creative process involved in the musical arts practice of the indigenous cultures where I have worked and lived, as well as the pedagogic model and approach in the teaching and learning of their musical arts practices.

My experience in these performance practices plays a key role in this research. The learning process and apprenticeship experiences have positioned me to understand and apply the teaching models adopted by indigenous musical arts practitioners/experts, who also double as music teachers in indigenous African cultures. The participation in, and experiences garnered from a music apprenticeship system, thus provide me with the necessary information, tools and working model to develop a hypothesis to explain my intentions in this research work. The pedagogic process that I have been a part of in the indigenous context also help me in developing a practicable approach to teaching my music in a way that it exposes the current students I will be working with to understanding the context and values as well as developing the playing skills that African indigenous music education imparts on young Africans in a traditional environment.

[7] The Igbo are a tribe found in the South Eastern part of Nigeria

Techniques used for documenting my research include, but are not limited to, journal writing, audio-visual recordings, and interviews. The reasons for these choices are highlighted below.

Journal Writing: Experiences and perceptions of both the teacher and the students were documented on a regular basis to enable me to assess individual progress and the impact of my teaching methodology vis-à-vis the rate of learning among my students. It also helps me to evaluate myself and identify where there are gaps in my approach. At the end of the process, the student's journals will help me to do an overall assessment of my approach, and to determine if the intentions have been met against the set goals which will manifest in a successful production with the students.

Audio-visual recordings: I made a recording of the first performance, which was a live presentation made to the general public at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance. The second recording was not open to the public and the recorded performance took place at the Villa Jazzmataz theatre in Lagos Nigeria.

Interviews: Interviews have been an important aspect of this research work. There were interviews conducted with teaching staff of the academy, students, traditional professional musicians, curriculum developers, and heads of institutions. These interviews provided content for the completion of this work

1.11 Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, I want to say that the different events and activities that have happened over the course of my life from my early childhood engagement with music through my youthful teenage years up to adulthood have prepared me for who I have emerged to be today. These events and activities have also given me a life story of experiences that form the bedrock of my musical personality. These experiences also dictate the source of information that is needed for this research work. I have studied and experienced music from a western art music education viewpoint and have also interacted and studied music from an indigenous African music perspective. These two extremes have developed in me a somewhat "hybrid" musician/scholar who can easily move

seamlessly between these two musical standpoints. My focus on the epistemology of African indigenous performance practices is informed by my learning experiences with the indigenous mother drummers under whom I have studied over the years, and how their teaching methodology and approach impacted on my life. This has ignited the desire to investigate further into the indigenous knowledge systems that inform the creative output of these culture bearers, and to find how these can be adapted for application in modern classroom music studies in the teaching of African music and instrumentation. It is hoped that my wealth of experience, my interaction with the students I have worked with in the course of this research work, and the outcome of the works that we produced would provide an approach to modern classroom music education that is informed by the methodological approach found in indigenous knowledge systems of African communities in music teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONTEXTUAL STUDIES

2.1 Introduction

The African rationalizations for engaging in musical arts practices and its consequent pedagogies may be different from the overall intentions of engaging in Western art music performance practice in education. In old African cultures, participation in, and the learning of the music within the culture of society was a prerequisite for becoming a responsible functional member of society. Therefore, the societal values, attitudes, norms, character building, morals, ethics, and community ethos are taught, imbibed, and upheld within the musical arts practices of society, while at the same time developing the creative personality within each participant in the practice. This contrasts with the intentions of Western art music education and performance practice, which aims at virtuosity on one's instrument and excellence in musicology. If that is the case, the contrast of intention and expected outcome of western art-musical practice vis-à-vis African indigenous music ought to change the whole dynamics of the approach and methodology in education for institutions of learning that want to adopt an African indigenous knowledge system for musical arts education on the continent. Whereas one is geared towards achieving the technical proficiency (even to the level of virtuosity) for competent and highly skilled performance of particular repertoire in several contexts, the other is aimed at producing credible members of society who understand the essence of community as it is made manifest through musical arts practices. Inasmuch as virtuosity is appreciated and encouraged in the indigenous African approach to music education, the understanding and embodiment of the concept of individuality in community tends to downplay overemphasis of one's individual ability. When music education is approached with this African viewpoint, just like its western counterpart, it enhances the collaboration between members of an ensemble as the aim of the engagement process is achieving a common communal goal.

This chapter focuses on the current trends in teaching world music in institutions of higher learning. It looks at the challenges of having indigenous African music as part of the school curricular and samples existing world music pedagogic practices, while also taking a look at the researchers own attempt at proffering a solution to the problem of having a standard curriculum for teaching indigenous African music in Africa. It analyzes these existing practices and tries to weight these methods against the proposed model being proffered. The chapter explores an Irish

Traditional music curriculum, the South African Music curriculum and the music curriculum co-developed by the researcher, analyzing the content of each of these curricula.

The focus of the teaching methodology adopted in this study is not on the use of specific African music examples for classroom music education. The focus, rather, is on the creative theories and philosophies of African music performance practices as structured into generic models or frameworks that may be applied to any music type in Sub-Saharan Africa. The musical arts practice of the different cultures in Africa is as diverse as its cultures, spread as they are over vast distances and equally distinguished one from another more locally. The choice and type of instruments employed, the geographical location of the culture groups, their religious, socio-political dispositions, vocation (the predominant vocation of a culture group impacts the dance movements and choreographic formations within the community), as well as other external influences all affect musical arts practices all over the African continent. But amidst all the diversity, there seem to be critical elements that transcend the differences among culture groups in the continent. These would include the practice of community in musical arts performances, the humanizing intentions of the musical practices, the guiding principles of creativity, functionality of music, creative theories and philosophies, creative intentions, the interconnectedness of the different siblings of the musical arts namely music, dance, theatre and the visual arts, as well as aspects of more technical features such as form, cadence, phrasing, repetition, ensemble practice. These factors are therefore responsible for the need for the focus of this work to be on those commonalities found in different music cultures across Africa, rather than on the more subtle differences in aesthetics (expression) and language between them. The focus on creative intentions, concepts and ideas, philosophies and theories as the basis for discussing "African musical arts practices" makes it possible for engaging in the classroom pedagogy of African music with a framework that will accommodate any of the music cultures found in Africa, using specific musical contents within a particular culture for the teaching and learning of African music in this sense. In a third-level education scenario, it then becomes imperative that the students understand and embody these generic creative theories and philosophies and adopt them for their own specific creative journey.

The objective of this second chapter of my dissertation is to discuss the current trends (through library research) in the teaching of traditional music globally, with focus on curricula that have integrated traditional/indigenous music in their mainstream syllabi, in order to provide a strong

basis for the research questions and hypotheses on which this work is based. The chapter will then explore certain pedagogic concepts in music education to assess their impact and relevance. These concepts include multi-cultural approaches to music education, "informal" music education, and what is termed "African music" in the music education milieu globally. It will also examine a specific music curriculum in third level music education, the Irish World Academy BA in traditional Irish music, and carry out a comparative study between this and an African sensed curriculum previously developed at CIIMDA, towards arriving at a model curriculum that can be applied to the teaching of African music in Africa and other parts of the world.

Modern music education in Africa has for decades been built on Western content, models and examples. This is not withstanding the fact that Africans have always maintained a formal music education system that was in place before contact with early explorers. A formal education process was evident in initiation schools, age grade associations, and home tutoring situations. Indigenous knowledge systems in Africa are very rich in theoretical content and creative philosophies of their own. Africa therefore is at a point where a curriculum for musical arts education can be developed, deriving from its rich indigenous knowledge systems and musical arts practices found all over the continent.

I will also argue that making the study of African indigenous musical arts literacy and practice a compulsory key element in the school curricula around Africa will expose the young learners to the values embedded in Africa's cultural heritage. It will accord them the opportunity to fully understand that there is theoretical content in African indigenous musical arts practices while maintaining an oral approach to its teaching and learning, and possibly create a desire to "own" what is authentically African among the youth in Africa. Engaging in African indigenous musical arts practices engenders creativity and fosters community. It creates an enabling environment for self-discovery, self-confidence, originality, and an overall wellness of the body and mind. The understanding and practice of communality, which is paramount in the philosophy of musical arts practices in indigenous Africa, is imperative for the social and moral stability of African communities. A community that understands the need for social tolerance and mutual respect, and practices same, will produce citizenry that are morally sound.

The role African indigenous musical arts practices can play in schools in Africa is being over

emphasized. Getting involved in and being a part of the creative process involved in traditional musical arts activities could prove critical in the growth and development of any individual learner. In many countries in Europe and America, children start getting involved with music and musical activities at an early age. There is a consciousness in these countries that it is necessary for a child to start developing musically from the earliest age possible. In ancient African societies, the same was the case. Children were started off in formal education through music, which could be in the nature of belonging to an age group team of all children born within a certain period, in which they would be expected at different periods in their life to go through stages in their traditional rites of passage. It is in these "life schools" that they are taught about being responsible members of society, discovering and nurturing their talents and skills, developing their musicality, recognizing unacceptable behaviors and adhering to the norms, values and codes of conduct of society; furthermore, they learn about their sexuality and are tutored on the leadership qualities they must possess to get through life. They would also be trained on the use and playing of different musical instruments, as most of the activities in the rites of passage ceremonies are conducted through music. Being exposed to creativity at a very young age prepares children for the future as they already start to believe in their ability to be original creative personalities quite early in life. This understanding and belief in their innate creative capabilities plays an important role in their future life vocation and professional pursuits, as a result of their applied critical thinking that is nourished by originality and creativity.

2.2 Contextualizing traditional music studies in an institution of higher learning

Considering the dynamics and challenges of mainstreaming indigenous African musical arts practices in classrooms all over Africa, I am faced with the need to examine institutional models where indigenous music theory and practice has successfully been integrated into an educational institution's curriculum. The Irish World Academy for Music and Dance has achieved this feat in the third and fourth levels of education, hence my choice of their curriculum in BA Irish traditional music and dance as my case study. My focus, therefore, will be on the contextual implications of having such traditional music studies in a modern academic environment in Africa.

Every culture group, whether in Africa, Europe, the Americas or Asia, and other parts of the world has its own well-developed music practice and education systems. The models set up in most

academic institutions around the world today derive from the well-established western art music programs, with a primary focus on Classical music and more recently Jazz music as the desired choice in performance practice. This hegemony of Western art music over the indigenous musical cultures of the world has been around since as long as the great European nations started their colonization of other regions. Keene (2010, p. x) talks about the folk culture in America as having "always been a source of embarrassment to those who look towards Europe as their artistic Mecca" and much the same can be said of the place of indigenous music in many cultures in Africa. Since the beginning of Western exploration of Africa, indigenous cultural practices have been looked down upon as primitive and inferior compared to the imported Western practices.

One could also draw parallels in this regard with the traditional Irish music practice before their independence in 1922. Speaking on the current status of Irish traditional music at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, Sandra Joyce (in an interview conducted by the researcher on 21/11/13) mentions that *"*a lot of the aspects of the Irish culture suffered from this kind of sense of inferiority…Irish dancing to a large extent, singing, and the language in particular was associated with ignorance and poverty*"*. The impact of Colonialism therefore has been responsible for the extinction of cultural practices in different parts of the world, most especially in Africa. Kanu highlights the need for reforms in educational systems in Africa:

> As education is generally regarded as the key to national development, proposals for nation building have included the reform of inherited educational systems which were erected to maintain the colonial social order and which continue to function to foster neo-colonial dependency, promote elitism, and inadequately prepare individuals for living successfully in their communities and in a rapidly changing world. Paramount among these reform proposals has been the call to re-appropriate African indigenous educational traditions that were marginalized or dismantled during colonial rule in Africa. (Kanu 2007, p.3)

Kanu goes further to ask a pertinent question:

> Precisely how can African traditions be **re-appropriated** for education that is grounded in the continent's past while at the same time meeting the demands of living successfully in postcolonial and global contexts today?" (Kanu 2007, p.3)

To "appropriate" according to *Oxford Living Dictionary* is "to employ or adapt (something) for a use different from its original purpose*"*; re-appropriation suggests the reclamation of something previously taken away and lost.

The focus of my PhD research therefore could then be said to be on "re-appropriating" indigenous African performance epistemology for classroom music education, and this includes adopting indigenous teaching and learning methodologies appropriate for the cultural environment in most of the schools in contemporary Africa, in order to overturn the seemingly deliberate attempt to suppress indigenous cultural music practices, while promoting the exogenous music culture of western art music. This situation, nonetheless, has changed over the years, and the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance is an exemplary institution of higher learning, where traditional music and dance are the core focus of the teaching and learning of music at the third and fourth levels of education.

The Irish World Academy for Music and Dance was established in January 1994 at the University of Limerick, by Professor Micheal O Suilleabhain, who was the first holder of a new Chair of Music. From its inception, the academy was concerned with research and innovation in Irish and Irish related music world-wide and this interest has now expanded to form a central ring of nine MA programs with associated doctoral research. Although the academy started with the award of an MA degree, it has now expanded to encompass a BA Voice and Dance Program and a BA Irish Traditional Music and Dance. The BA Irish Music and Dance is a four-year degree program, with key focus in traditional Irish music and dance performance.

2.3 Tradition

Oxford Living Dictionary describes "tradition" as the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way.[8] In some other online website (Wikipedia), tradition is referred to as *a belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past*. It goes further to discuss the origin of the word; "The English word 'tradition' comes from the Latin *traditio*, the noun from the verb *traderere* or *tradere* (to transmit, to hand over, to give for safekeeping); it was originally used in Roman law to refer to the concept of legal transfers and inheritance". *Dictionary.com* gives a broader definition, which encompasses the intended use of the word 'tradition' in this paper. It

[8] I am aware that the concept of tradition is central in folklore studies and has been much written about in that context. This disciplinary academic context, however, is not so important here as the sense in which it is commomly used in Irish 'trad music' discourse.

defines tradition as, "the handing down of statements, beliefs, legends, customs, information, etc from generation to generation, especially by word of mouth or by practice"

The term "traditional music" in this sense therefore refers to music that has been handed down from generation to generation in Ireland, although from interviews conducted by the researcher, it would seem that most of what is known as "traditional Irish instrumental dance music" dates back only about just over a hundred years. According to Paul Keating, "the Gaelic Revival started at the turn of the 20th century, and the nationalistic fervor that accompanied it sparked a greater interest in the native music and dance of Ireland" (@irishCentral October 29th 2014). The most significant thing about tradition is its constantly evolving nature, and this comes about through acculturation and other external social, political, and religious influences. Gross (1992, p.14) describes the evolving nature of tradition thus:

> As social and cultural changes occur, so do ways of confronting and organizing experience. And as experiences change, so do modes of perception, including perceptions of what a tradition is and means. When needs and perceptions shift, no matter how slightly the inherited traditions cannot help but be apprehended and assimilated differently. Hence, no tradition is ever taken over precisely as it was given or passed on precisely as it was received. Rather it is always adapted to a situation.

The perception of what is "traditional" can then be described as tacit knowledge handed down orally or through practice from generation to generation, which is subject to change and modification as it is influenced by acculturation as well as social, political and religious factors in an ever-changing cultural milieu.

2.4 International conventional methods for music education

There are a number of internationally recognized conventional methods for teaching and learning music, some of which have been well developed and are in use in many institutions around the world. A brief description of some of these methods for comparative purposes will be helpful in further characterizing indigenous African pedagogical practices.

The Dalcroze method: As sourced from *The Oxford Companion to Music,* this is a teaching method developed by the Swiss educationist and composer Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1950). He worked at the Geneva Conservatory, where he found the teaching failed to give students a living experience of music. Inspired by the rhythms of oriental music and the meters of classical

poetry, Dalcroze developed a system of coordinating music with bodily movements. This method, which may be used with adults and children, aims to promote alertness, expressiveness, and a sense of phrasing and musical structure. The method is divided into three fundamental concepts - the use of solfège, improvisation, and eurhythmics. Sometimes referred to as "rhythmic gymnastics", eurhythmics teaches concepts of rhythm, structure, and musical expression using movement, and is the concept for which Dalcroze is best known. It focuses on allowing the student to gain physical awareness and experience of music through training that takes place through all of the senses, particularly kinesthetic. According to the Dalcroze method, music is the fundamental language of the human brain and therefore deeply connected to what human beings are.

Carl Orff was a prominent German composer. Born in Munich, Orff studied composition at the Music Academy before working as a professional musician (1915–19). Gradually he evolved a system of musical education for children, beginners, and amateurs based on Dalcroze eurhythmics, enabling anyone to participate creatively in music-making. He set out his theory and method in *Schulwerk* (1930–33; ‘Schoolwork’), stressing the value of simplicity and controlled improvisation in music. He conducted early experiments in this system at the Günther School for gymnastics, dance, and music, which he co-founded in Munich (1924). The Orff Schulwerk is considered an "approach" to music education. It begins with a student's innate abilities to engage in rudimentary forms of music, using basic rhythms and melodies. Orff considers the whole body a percussive instrument and students are led to develop their music abilities in a way that parallels the development of western music. The approach encourages improvisation and discourages adult pressures and mechanical drill, fostering student self-discovery. Carl Orff developed a special group of instruments, including modifications of the glockenspiel, xylophone, metallophone, drum, and other percussion instruments to accommodate the requirements of the Schulwerk courses. Experts in the shaping of an American-style Orff approach include Jane Frazee, Arvida Steen, Judith Thomas, and many more.

The Suzuki method: This is a method of teaching instrumental playing that embodies a radical and innovatory philosophy about how children learn music. It is named after its originator, Shin'ichi Suzuki (1898–1998), a Japanese educationist and violin teacher. Suzuki believed that children could learn musical skills at an early age, initially through listening, and he observed the

way young children acquire language through hearing others speak. He advocated starting violin training by the age of two or three, initially by exposing children to recorded music, a process that continued throughout their musical training. The aim was to develop an internal model of the music to be studied, memorizing both the notes and the way those notes were performed.

Just as children learn to speak before learning to read, Suzuki advocated a delay in teaching notation until there was an adequate grounding in playing skills and the development of musical memory. The Suzuki method also aims to promote social skills. Children are taught in groups rather than individually, encouraging a spirit of cooperation and teamwork. Parents are involved in partnership with teachers; they attend lessons, enabling them to support their children's practicing.

World music pedagogy

The growth of cultural diversity within school-age populations, especially in the US, prompted music educators from the 1960s onward to diversify the content of the music curriculum, and to work with ethnomusicologists and some of the world's artist-musicians in establishing instructional practices relevant to the musical traditions. The term 'World music pedagogy' was coined by Patricia Shehan Campbell to describe world music content and practice in elementary and secondary school music programs. Campbell gives accent to the diverse musical practices that are performed in communities. She acknowledges World Music Pedagogy as "a multifaceted avenue for knowing diverse musical expressions and that the concept of teaching and learning a diversity of musical expression is relevant and usable in contexts within schools and communities" (Campbell 2019, p.2). Pioneers of the movement, especially Barbara Reeder Lundquist, William M. Anderson, and Will Schmid, influenced a second generation of music educators (including J. Bryan Burton, Mary Goetze, Ellen McCullough-Brabson, and Mary Shamrock) to design and deliver curricular models to teachers of music of various levels and specializations. Campbell's pedagogy advocates the use of human resources, i.e., "culture-bearers", as well as deep and continued listening to archived resources such as those of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings in order to encourage informed music-making experiences.

These methods have some close affinity to methods of knowledge transmission in indigenous cultures in Africa. There are elements found in each of the above methods, which if combined

appropriately, can approximate the defining characteristics of "an African indigenous approach". These include but are not limited to the following:

- Advocating for the use of human resources (culture bearers) as is seen in World Music Pedagogy, is very much practiced in African indigenous music practices. Blacking (1965) made reference to this approach in his description of the *matsige* of the Venda in South Africa. According to him, "the matsige are recognized and his presence in a district inspires young admirers to practice to attain his level of expertise". This statement goes to show the influence of culture bearers as mentors both in cases.

- The ideal environment discussed in the Suzuki method, which includes love, high-quality examples, praise, promoting social skills, rote training and repetition. These would be found in most music learning and apprenticeship situations in many cultures in sub-Saharan Africa

- Encouraging improvisation and discouraging adult pressure and mechanical drill, fostering student self-discovery as is found in Carl Orff's method. Children in most African cultures are encouraged to form their own versions of adult music groups from a very young age and would, in most cases, belong to children's music groups without adult supervision. As Nzewi (2007) documents, "Egbe, (a mother musician)[9] also learned to play music in the children's xylophone teams, which according to him, had disappeared due to the influence of schools…"

- And finally, the use of eurhythmics (as also found in the Dalcroze method) has been an ongoing practice to embody rhythm and melody as in some indigenous music cultures in Africa (Nzewi 2013, p.202).

2.5 An Irish traditional music curriculum

A lot of parallels can be drawn between traditional Irish music and Indigenous African music. In the introduction of her book *Passing it On*, Marie McCarthy observes about the transmission process in Irish music that,

[9] A mother musician is an expert on any indigenous African music instrument, which is used to direct the proceedings in any musical event or event music. This term was erroneously referred to as "master musician" by earlier researchers. Music is conceived as a woman in Africa.

> Examining these questions necessarily addresses issues of Irish identity, since not only is music itself (rhythms and tones, for example) transmitted but also a set of values and beliefs that are inextricably linked to political, social, cultural or economic power structures and ideologies in the culture at large' (McCarthy 1999, p.3).

This can equally be said of the role African music plays in traditional music cultures found in Africa. Meki Nzewi notes in the publication, *African Indigenous Knowledge-Sensed Musical Arts Education Policy Considerations* that:

> African cultures used music to humanize people and societal systems, to mediate between the societal systems and the key operators, and also to imbue as well as negotiate spirituality and its supernatural connotations.
>
> (Nzewi 2009, p.78)

These two statements illustrate that music and the learning of music in both cultures go beyond the sonic implications of making music and extend to socio-political and economic issues being addressed through music. Music thus becomes, amongst other things, an agent of social coherence, political awareness, consciousness of morals, values and belief systems, and is of economic viability within the cultures. Therefore, one would expect that music should not just be studied and/or experienced as the production of musical sound, but more as a functional part of social life within communities.

In the Irish "Leaving Certificate" draft guidelines for teachers in Music, the main aim is stated as follows

> The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetics, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, expressive, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development, for the personal and home life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure

The above statement captures the objectives of music and musical arts practices, as observed in the music cultures of Africa and Ireland.

The leaving certificate curriculum guidelines are quite comprehensive. Among their unique qualities are the provision of an enabling environment for students with particular talents to specialize during the course of their senior years in High school. The areas of specialization include

performing, listening and composition. This component of the curriculum indicates the understanding of the essential nature of music to the life of every child. Furthermore, in the guidelines, music is a graded/ promotional subject and has been allocated 45 (forty-five) minutes per week in the curriculum, this is excluding the times for other group rehearsals for school choirs and orchestras. This curriculum caters for music of all genres including traditional Irish music.

2.6 Existing curriculum in music in Africa (South Africa)

A brief look will now be taken at an existing curriculum in music from South Africa, capturing the content, periods per week, outcomes and assessment criteria for music in South Africa.

Music in the South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) has been described as "having the power to unite groups and to mobilize community involvement for the improvement of quality of life, social healing and affirmation of human dignity". It is important to draw attention to the fact that in Apartheid South Africa, the school curriculum was designed to disenfranchise the black South African, and thus created an imbalance in the content of the then South African school's curriculum. After the abolition of Apartheid in 1994, a new curriculum was developed to redress the imbalance in the past curriculum, which did not provide adequate and balanced learning opportunities for the predominantly black populace of the country. Therefore, there was a dire need to revise the school curriculum to, among other things, value the indigenous knowledge systems of the different cultures that make up the country, and entrench human rights and inclusivity by infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of South Africa.

Part of the aims include development of creativity through improvisation and working with one's own music ideas and the awareness of various music traditions (FET Music Grade 10 to 12, CAPS, South Africa). Music at the FET Grade 10 to 12 is allocated four (4) teaching hours per five-day week. The CAPS has seen the introduction of the Indigenous African Music (IAM) stream in the curriculum, to cater for indigenous music types that cut across the 11 culture groups in South Africa. Out of the four (4) hours allocated to Music, Musical performance and improvisation is weighted at two (2) hours a week, while music literacy and general music knowledge and analysis are weighted one (1) hour a week each. The IAM stream is an optional stream for learners, to be decided upon by the student, teacher or the School. During the first and second terms, the IAM features only under the musical performance and improvisation section of the curriculum, but in

the third term, it features under both the musical performance and improvisation and general music knowledge and analysis.

2.6 An African sensed curriculum in music for Africa

There has been previous work done in the area of developing an Africa-sensed curriculum for Africa as has been researched and developed by the Centre for Indigenous Instrumental Music and Dance Practices for Africa (CIIMDA) in South Africa. This section of this study will briefly take a look at the course content, suggested periods per week, outcomes, teaching plan and assessment criteria for music as proposed.

The Centre for Indigenous Instrumental Music and Dance Practices for Africa (CIIMDA) in 2009 introduced a Certificate in African Indigenous Cultural arts Education (CAICAE) which is accredited by the University of Pretoria in South Africa. The certificate program was a move to consolidate and formalize the teaching of African musical arts as a specialized (cognition-based) education subject area in the African school system. The certificate program trains teachers in the philosophy and theory of African indigenous cultural arts practices for classroom education. The Certificate has a strong curriculum adaptation and implementation module to help teachers develop lesson plans and learning programs and adapt the curriculum to suit their direct teaching environment. This module shows the teachers how to adapt and implement the curriculum across board to all learners, both those with different challenges and learning difficulties and those without, giving them the resources to teach and access each learner irrespective of these learning difficulties and challenges.

CIIMDA went on to further develop an African sensed curriculum for grades R to 12, deriving its content from the philosophy and theory inherent in the creative ideologies and principles of most indigenous musical arts practices in Africa. From African indigenous perspective, creativity and performance in music integrate the creative siblings of dance, drama and costume, constituting the soft science of musical arts. The classroom education plan presented in the curriculum emphasizes the African indigenous philosophical, theoretical and performance logic distinguished by the implicit humanity and societal purposes indigenous music was conceived to accomplish. The sample curriculum represented in this essay will be for the FET (Further Education and Training or grades 10 to 12 in the South African Education System).

2.7 Integrated approach

Bearing in mind the integrated nature of music arts, this curriculum therefore will adopt a holistic approach to musical arts ideology in the packaging and delivery of the contents in the curriculum. Below are some of the specific aims the curriculum is intended to achieve in the lives if the students

- Understanding the philosophical objectives, determining creative logic, grammar and purpose of indigenous African music
- Gain general knowledge of conventional music literacy and theory
- Develop capability to listen, notate, transcribe and compose music
- Create, rehearse and present integrated concert pieces for live concerts, and engage in critical analysis of the product in a group
- Develop skill in solo and ensemble instrumental performances from literacy (concert) and oral (spontaneous creativity) perspectives
- Develop awareness of what marks music traditions, styles, and types from historical and multicultural perspectives
- Gain knowledge of what distinguishes contemporary music styles, local and global

Where school leadership is cooperative, the last activity in a school week every Friday should be for all teachers, workers and learners to congregate and participate in 20 to 30 minutes of free-medley mass dancing to music played live by capable learners. This will be mass therapy as in African cultures and would relax the minds and bodies of all and build a communal (*ubuntu*) spirit within the school. Parents who come to fetch learners could join in the experience. One can only but imagine the extent to which such a practice would go in creating an atmosphere of understanding and friendship between the students, school staff and parents.

Topic areas per term

The curriculum for FET African musical arts education would cover the following Topic areas:

Interactive rhythm exercises that stimulate and instill basic, virtuous social-humanity consciousness principles

Theoretical concepts - indigenous and conventional classical

General musical arts knowledge

Literacy activities - creative, performative and analytical

Oral-aural activities - creative and analytical implicating oral-phonic principles

Group projects - musical arts theatre production projects

[As much as possible, introduce the necessary indigenous, literacy and professional practice terminologies for concepts and music/dance/drama/costume idioms, elements and colours after they have been experienced by learners in activities or observed or described.]

Topics – Content/Concepts/Skills

The following content breakdown of Topic Areas will progressively guide knowledge transmission through FET accreting with respect to knowledge content, concepts and skills through the terms and years. [The knowledge transmission philosophy and ideology that marks African-sensed musical arts education is democratic. In learning discourses and activities the effective teacher practices as a knowledge motivator and senior co-learner; not as a supremely authoritative embodiment of knowledge. Learners must be engineered to contribute, and there is virtue in exploring and transforming what appears to be a "mistake" into a positive new dimension/direction in spontaneous creativity and performance.]

Interactive rhythm exercises that stimulate and instill basic, virtuous social-humanity consciousness principles

Use of the feet stepping (foundational pulse principle), hand clapping and other body-music (chest, laps, buttocks, cheeks, finger snapping etc) to perform interactive rhythmic exercises (in unison, two or more parts) that inculcate the principles of steady life-pace, space consciousness, chorus-solo, complementarities, leadership and inter-relationship structures, physically and oral-phonically. There could be two or more parts structural relationships in this exercise, which entails establishing two part or multiple part themes, simultaneously sounding together to create a recognizable thematic structure. The exercise must introduce every class period, and last about 15 minutes for warming up mind and body. After the teacher has demonstrated an example, learners should be rotated to lead the exercises, accommodating two or three per class session. Leaders should create spontaneous rhythm patterns and interactions with peers.

Theoretical concepts - indigenous and conventional classical

Dramatically embody (edu-play mode), chant and write the concept of note values progressively, starting from the semibreve to semiquavers, and illustrating the interface of 4/4 and 12/8 time signatures. (Note that the learners already intuitively perform and create music using the note values and time signatures. The classroom exercise translates the instinctive knowledge into visual-aural literacy consciousness). Whatever is capably done naturally could be reflected upon and written in narrative for the enhanced intellectual and literacy awareness of its nature and principles.

Discuss and imitate environmental sounds, then dramatically embody, vocalize, illustrate with available instruments/objects and write/draw the concepts of timbre, pitch/tone level and intervals (edu-play mode). (Note that the learners already intuitively create and perform music and oral-phonic vocalizations of various timbres, pitch/interval ranges and scales.) Introduce more keys in the staff notation system and do easy exercises in common or quadruple time signatures to enable learners read or write music in the various keys.

Discuss and illustrate the concept of harmony in environmental sounds, human relationships, musical sounds, movement and dance, visual art.

Discuss concepts of levels, space, impulses and silences in dance and music

General musical arts knowledge

List and discuss what characterize different styles/types of musical arts as a unity, as well as its components of music, dance, drama, costumes, mask, instruments, and audience, in indigenous and contemporary practices. How is each style/type originated, created, produced, presented, experienced (public/private), also critiqued, owned, transmitted?

Investigate sources of musical sound, the societal need and utilization of musical arts in traditional as well as contemporary societies in all possible cultures

Discuss aspects of history (of styles, types, icons) in indigenous, popular, European/Contemporary African classical musical arts types, also issues of movement of styles/types, borrowing and archiving.

Discuss careers in the musical arts in the contemporary society, and stress what is required to equip a person to participate as a professional in the various careers. Illustrate with examples of commonly known luminaries in each career category.

Discuss the role and structural features of musical arts in festivals and social or political or ritual ceremonies, indigenous or modern. Can the event make public sense in the absence of the musical arts?

Literacy activities – creative, performative and analytical

Write short stories of learners' weekly life experiences (reflexive journaling): personal, social, political, economic etc. as narratives or play lets. Discuss the lessons of such personal or public life experiences.

Sing/play and as much as possible write simple original tunes/songs with topical texts, and then discuss each item with respect to metric organization, rhythmic structures, range of tones and intervals. Then improvise a dance sketch prompted by the character of the tune/song text meaning. Repeat each material for various individual dance/dramatic improvisations by learners. Discuss the structural or interpretative relationship between the performed music and the dance/dramatic act as a class or make individual notes for comparison of perceptual views.

Write and/or play simple tunes/patterns and ensemble pieces written for indigenous music instruments, based on the knowledge of rhythm and pitches/tones demonstrated in Topics 1 and 2. Where possible perform available published simple ensemble compositions, improvising on available music instruments. Learners who have the interest could start having lessons on playing music written for available/own African music instruments such as the drum, and/or Western classical instruments as individual or groups activities depending on the availability of instructors.

Oral-aural activities – creative and analytical ora-phonic principles

Identify instrumentally accompanied traditional dance types/styles of South Africa, which constitute a science of mental and physical health. Perform to experience the nature of the styles and types. Learners who already know the dances and music will teach others in groups or as a class activity possibly during Group Project Topic activities

Learners take turns, using mime and dance (and no words) to perform anecdotes/actions, with interpretative music when possible, to depict the characteristic behavior/nature of animals, life occupations (such as pottery, weaving, farming, teaching, politicians, police persons, taxi drivers, soccer players, musicians etc); also perceivable human natures (such as kindness, bully, child caring, confusion, stealing). Identify and discuss the meaning or subject of each mimed anecdote/characteristics, and how successfully done. Discuss the possible appropriate costumes

(material, colour, design) to match the various characters/ideas/subjects that have been depicted in the above activities.

Spontaneously interpret short music patterns/statements as dance; and articulate danced patterns as music (demonstrations of the concept of music as sonic dance, and dance as visual/embodied music).

Group musical arts theatre production projects

Form the class into a theatre arts production team. The learners will volunteer or be selected for the various production duties: Producer Storyteller/Script writer, Director, Costumier, Choreographer, Stage Manager, Properties person, Composer, Instrumentalists, Actors/Actresses/Singers/Chorus/Dancers, Set builders etc.

Discuss the nature of the various production duties. Relate a folktale/folk myth/folk legend, or originate a story with or without music about events in real life or historical event. Original stories should be created singly or in a group by a learner/s. Engage in the stage business of acting out the story in dialogue, dramatic confrontations/interactions, music, dance, mime, props, and costume including masks - especially for mythical or non-human characters. Finally integrate all aspects into a composite acting-music-dance-drama-costume theatre with a beginning, development of characters and story narrative, a climax and a resolution for a wholesome (cathartic) ending. A learner could act/perform more than one role in the production, and the teacher could participate along with the learners.

Assessment

As a humanity-conscience principle, assessment in the learning activities must recognize that the aim of human education in African indigenous models is not to produce failures. Every genuine effort no matter the quality or magnitude deserves to be recognized, encouraged and accorded positive assessment. Emphasis in assessment must be partial to originality and practical activities that inculcate knowledge intellectually as well as bodily. Group activities must receive group grade for all participants no matter the extent of input into the final outcome, and should constitute 70% of final assessment mark because of the humanistic values/virtues entailed; 30% will go for individual scores that should take care of extra grades for individual merits or extraordinary

demonstration of knowledge or capability especially for solo instrument performers and the written tests/texts.

Teaching Plan

Grade 10	**FET Phase African Music**	**Term 1**
Topic 1 Performance of philosophy and theory	Suggested minimum contact time 1 hour	Resources Preferably school-based qualified teachers Itinerant/community teachers shared by schools/Grade levels Private tutor Ensemble/Rehearsal room/any available open or enclosed space Indigenous instruments; Body as instrument. Textbooks. Basic learners' research in communities

Content/Concepts/Skills (Note that level of illustrative materials will be progressively higher as per term and grade as well as capability of all learners)

1. Pulse sense as central to music and dance creativity, performance and transcription as well as life and cosmos generally
2. Steady pulse-stepping (in common and compound quadruple time) with interactive clapping and body rhythm structures/textures to sensitize and inculcate the soft humanity science and structural principles of Space, complementing, sharing, bonding, creative spontaneity etc - all stepping the pulse together. (Discuss as experienced)
3. Mnemonic singing as well as playing of patterns on available instruments and body – Oral procedure
4. Experiencing the concepts and interface of pitch and tone levels/melody and melorhythm, in ensembles and textures
5. Experiencing harmony of phrase-matching (humanity principle of inter-dependence/complementarity) as opposed to vertical harmonization

(subordination/supplementation) in social-musical organization – Every individual counts in a group or society

6. Cadential cues
7. Concepts of family, community and duality in musical structures and textures

Ensemble/Group Work

- Every member of the class must participate and be encouraged to originate/contribute illustrative material as need be
- Every learner must have a chance for solo (leadership/self-emergence) role in the above practical-oral learning exercises

Processes

1. All concepts above must be practically experienced and embodied with original themes/materials or known examples (indigenous or contemporary) contributed by learners and teacher

2. It is important to explain to learners the humanity implications underpinning the philosophies and theories that the activities entail

3. Learners should take turns to lead the practical activities above, while the teacher leads in discussing the experiences as they transpire

Table 1: Teaching plan

2.8 Contextual issues surrounding teaching African music

Researchers have been carrying out ethnomusicological research into African musical arts practices for decades. Some of these researchers have lived with, interacted with, observed and also participated in the practices of the cultures they research. These research projects are usually funded by the institutions where the researchers are affiliated to, or other bodies with interest in the research of African music. The outcome of these researches would in most cases lead to the publication of a dissertation or thesis, articles in accredited journals, advancement of a knowledge domain, publication of books. In some other instances, the researchers could apply and utilize the knowledge they have obtained from these researches, in their own music making later on.

Most ethnomusicological research studies carried out in music cultures of Africa are funded by academic institutions in the western hemisphere and their affiliates. Some of them apply the outcome of the research studies to the teaching of music in their home institutions.

There are institutions of higher learning in many countries of the world where academic disciplines that deal with Africa and African related studies exist. These institutions have found it necessary to establish units that deal comprehensively with research into the music practice of specific African ethnicities within a cultural context. In the United States for instance, where there is a large population of African-Americans living in the country, as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, African studies has therefore become an important part of the school curriculum of most institutions of higher learning, especially in the subject areas of sociology, anthropology, humanities and the arts. Africa seems to be the only continent that is not taking research into the music practices of the cultures in the continent seriously enough. Even some of the research findings that have been carried out in the music cultures by Africans themselves have not in most cases been applied to the teaching of music in the continent.

There is need at this point to discuss my rationalization for focusing on the creative philosophies of indigenous African music, rather than dwelling on specific music types for ensemble practice as in classroom music education. The emphasis here is on getting the students to be creative rather than learning particular repertoire. The nature of the focus of the ensemble practice is such that there might not be any need to teach the students how to replicate a particular repertoire. The focus chiefly should be on how these music types and performance styles are developed and presented. It is then necessary for the students to develop their own ensemble groups using all the creative philosophies and principles that they have been exposed to. This is not to say that particular existing ensemble music types cannot be used as music examples. But it is more effective, and the students take away more, when they are a part of the creation process of a new ensemble sound. When already existing indigenous African ensemble music is used, the nature of the thematic development and improvisations encountered in the original piece is not static, this is due to the constantly changing nature of the micro-themes of the ensemble (i.e. the individual themes of the various instruments), which does not necessarily affect the macro-theme (ensemble sound) or the known presentation format. If the student tries to replicate directly the thematic development which is usually transmitted orally, the piece would lack originality and flow, because the

development of a micro-theme is intuitive. It therefore will not make sense trying to replicate another's creativity directly. This is why when music is taught between communities in Africa, the learning community strives to own the new music they have learnt, and even though anyone listening might be able to notice the similarity between both renditions in terms of ensemble sound, one is also able to differentiate between the two. This is also evident in the fact that no two renditions of an indigenous ensemble piece are ever exactly the same.

2.9 TEACHING TRADITIONAL AFRICAN MUSIC

According to Willie Anku (1998), he intended to examine African drumming from Ghana's Ewe and Akan traditions, to Identify its distinguishing features, from a performer's perspective, in order to devise a theoretical framework for its analysis. He intended to identify procedures and processes that guide "the interplay of composite rhythmic elements" in these drumming traditions to be used in his teaching his students.". Anku is very much aware of the importance of the structural elements of the traditional music he teaches, as well as the cultural "rules of procedure" that guides music making in his culture, which by virtue of the fact that he is a part of that Ghanaian music culture, makes it a part of his musical acculturation background. As much as he realized that even though the socio-cultural context of the music making was not present for his "American students", music-making informed by these traditions "would help them to better understand and be able to utilize the expressive features of this repertory. It therefore becomes imperative that the students in a multicultural classroom, understand the socio-cultural context in which a music is performed, for them to cognitively embody the essence of the creative ideology that informs the practice.

In discussing the place of "African Music" in Kenya, Jean Kidula (2006), touched on a problem that still exists in institutions of higher learning in Africa. There is an African music component in most of these institutions, but the fact remains that European "art" music remains the core content of the curriculum. Kidula (2006. p.104) notes that:

> "The bulk of the University curriculum was European "art" music, present also in any school in Europe or the Americas. The daily musical life of the student and the studied music were separated in profound ways. Methods of acquiring European musical knowledge had to be learned by many students. The process distanced the notion of lived

> music, studied music and music appreciation. African music was therefore studied as an artifact and understood as a cultural phenomenon, rather than a lived, historical musical process. The result was a mixed relationship with African music- studied as an artifact but performed as life. It was and still is, difficult for students to accept African musicianship as valuable and "elite" since it has been presented in anthropological, rather than musical terms and locations"

There is need for music curricula in African to be reflective of the rich musical heritage of the African continent. Except this happens, Africans will still treat African music as inferior to its European counterpart. Except the curriculum is redesigned to place African music as the core of its musicological content like has been developed. If an African sensed curriculum is introduced in schools from early childhood education, and European "art" music equally studied alongside its African counterpart, perhaps the next generation of African musicologists will emerge with a strong focus on African musicianship.

2.10 Informal/non-formal music learning in institutions of higher learning

I am not using the term informal learning to describe the study of indigenous African music practice in tradition, simply because it does not take place in a conservatory, with a written down curriculum. As far as music learning is concerned, the music education that happens in indigenous African cultures is a formal educational process, and it is described and intended as such in the cultures that engage in it. According to Green's description of "informal learning he says:

> By 'informal music learning' I mean a variety of approaches to acquiring musical skills and knowledge outside formal educational settings. I will in general terms refer to informal music learning as a set of 'practices', rather than 'methods'. Informal music practices may be both conscious and unconscious. They include encountering unsought learning experiences through enculturation in the musical environment; learning through interaction with others such as peers, family, or other musicians who are not acting as teachers in formal capacities; and developing independent learning methods through self-teaching techniques.
>
> (Green 2002, p. 16)

It becomes clear in this case that his allusion to informal learning here is to music that happens outside of an organized teaching environment and does not necessarily involve the teaching happening from a "qualified teacher" to student basis. As much as the learning model that happens in the indigenous African context could be an intentional as well as non-intentional process, the

end results are implicit; knowledge is transferred. On the other hand, non-formal music learning which also happens outside the conservatories, according to Peter Mak (2009), is where the focus is on learning by doing. In this case, teachers, fellow students and other people within the learning environment who are able to add value to the students' experience are all part of those involved in the teaching process.

In the indigenous African learning scenario, both the formal, non-formal and informal learning approaches are collapsed into one practice. This is due to the fact that in the learning environment of our indigenous cultures, one is also learning about life and how to make a good livelihood. These life schools include the training camps for rites of passage, age grade associations, and direct tutelage from mother musicians within the communities. Learning from a mother musician in tradition exposes the student to what Nzewi (2009) terms non-formal and formal learning. Inasmuch as there is no written curriculum, the mother musician teacher has an array of objectives that he/she intends to reach during the course of the learning and teaching period. There are identifiable outcomes to the teaching and learning process that are assessable. Although the nature of the assessment might not be through written and performance, the teacher is able to actually determine at each point the progress of his student. The teaching is not only focused at performance virtuosity on the given instrument, but also encompasses life skills, values and attitudes. This seems to have become a prerequisite in the present-day requirements of being a musician. It would seem that just having musical performance skills is not enough for getting a job as a musician. This is highlighted in Mak's assertion that:

> Having excellent musical performance skills only is no longer a guarantee in finding a job or holding it. Generic skills are equally important because these skills enable musical professionals to be adaptive, enterprising and performative, to meet the demands of today's music business.
>
> (Mak 2009, p.1)

Mak goes on to outline the generic skills needed and they include people related skills, conceptual/thinking skills, personal skills/attributes, skills related to the community etc. He elaborates further that:

> These skills cannot be acquired between the walls of the conservatoire only (in a formal learning context). Incorporation of learning contexts that resemble real professional situations is a necessity in achieving this goal. These non-formal and informal learning contexts are highly connected to experiential learning. Reflection is a powerful means to learn from experiences, to make explicit what is implicit acquired.
>
> (Mak 2009, p.1)

Mak's argument for a broader conception of what is needed in music education echoes the approach used by indigenous mother musicians in Africa where they contextualize the learning process for the students. The whole essence of this approach is to produce musicians who are professionals and experts in their music, and also musicians who will be role models and mentors to other members of society. In the Igbo world view that I know well for example, a musician is seen as a spirit that carries the conscience of the community, therefore it is expected that they should be upright members of the community. In the same vein, their lifestyle should be exemplary and they are not expected to indulge in falsehood, as every word that comes out of them through their songs is taken to be a true representation of affairs within the community.

2.11 Focus on Diversity/Commonalities in African music

There are musical diversities found in the musics of Africa. These diversities are evident in the peculiar aesthetics of the art, presentational nuances, cultural beliefs, tradition, and the choice of instruments by classification, which sometimes is informed by the geographic location and overall vocation of the people in question as well as intercultural exchanges between communities. Nicola Mason (2005) in her article acknowledges the commonalities in African music as a basis for teaching African music in Africa. According to her, "however, many lesson plans, books, and articles about African musics often focus purely on the commonalities among musical traditions, dismissing the variety of unique musical and cultural qualities offered by each country on the African continent" (Mason 2005, p.1) She advocates for greater focus on diversity, to give the students a richer experience. She believes that "exploring the diversity of individual African musical traditions provides a pathway to the multiplicity of sounds, cultures, beliefs, and uses inherent within African and all multicultural musics". As much as the above sentiment is true, argue that the focus on these attributes of diversity should take a back seat when one is exploring the musicological rationalizations for a music curriculum for African music. It is my observation that there are significant commonalities in the theoretical framework, compositional elements, creative theories and developmental structure of music performance found in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite her advocacy for emphasizing sub-Saharan musical diversity, however, Mason also identifies some of the commonalities among many African musics as including the use of polyrhythms, call-and-response, improvisation, offbeat phrasing of melodies, and the purposive unity of movement with song. Agordoh (2005) throws some light on the perception of African

rhythm by early researchers. According to him, several theories about African rhythm have been put forward: and "Merriam's summary (African Music, 1957. p. 65) provides an excellent short cut to comparing them", going on to write:

> Ward notes one drum playing a basically unvarying beat; Hornbostel sees the organization in terms of motor behavior, which is the opposite of the Western concept. Waterman postulates the concept of the metronome sense; and Jones makes the point of lack of coincidence of the main beats. While these specific details remain to be worked out, the consensus about the use of multiplier meter is so strong as to remain unquestioned as the basis of African rhythm.

If a critical component of African music such as "rhythm" can be generally described with the same basic characteristics by different researchers at different times and in different communities in Africa, it then follows that for the purpose of developing a standardized music curriculum for Africa, there needs to a focus on the commonalities for musicological purposes, while the diversity may be best explored by showing music examples to students. Christopher James (1999. Pp.7-20), in recognizing the "great diversity of African musical styles and idioms", acknowledges that there are a number of common features and characteristics, melodic and rhythmic. A good example would be the concept of individuality in conformity/community. This concept is not peculiar to the people of Eastern Nigeria alone. The concept simply acknowledges that in a music making creative process and especially at the point where the music is presented for the general audience to appreciate, every musician is given the freedom to express himself on his instrument while still working within the ambits of the external super-structure of the musical piece. He is therefore allowed certain liberties in the internal developments of his theme, while conforming to the external developmental structure that identifies the group's music (ensemble thematic cycle). Having said this, it then becomes imperative that for a curriculum of African music to be acceptable in Africa, there is a need to focus on the commonalities in structure, characteristics, musical concepts, and form as the basis for teaching musicology, while the diversity in the music cultures can then be introduced as music examples to further explain and illustrate these concepts.

CHAPTER 3: "LIBATION": FIRST PhD PERFORMANCE

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter is an analysis of the creative process involved in the production of the first of my two PhD performances which is entitled "Libation" with the BA Irish world academy students. It follows the compositions and development of the pieces and an account of the execution of the project. It talks to the challenges faced by both the students and the researcher, and how these challenges were overcome. Finally, it takes the reader through the content of the performance pieces, analyzing the pieces and the compositional elements found in each piece.

As part of the requirements of the Practice based PhD, I am expected to document the creative process of my artistic work. For the two performances, I have worked with two different sets of students. The first (being discussed here) is a Western group of very enthusiastic students with no background in African music; and the second is an African group with a strong background in African music and dance performance. I have had to negotiate my engagement with the two groups differently, in contemporaneously transmitting the fundamental values of the African cultural practice that I am offering. My practical research premise is to stimulate a dialogue of cultural orientations in the context of updating historic African knowledge tenets, with two different student groups. The approach requires more of collaborative creativity and interactive learning rather than the conventional western formal "teacher student" relationship, where the role of the teacher is primarily prescriptive (normally the Western formal approach can be viewed as prescriptive, and leaves little room for incorporating and interacting students' compatible knowledge backgrounds as well as capabilities). My approach involves eliciting the cultural and knowledge background of the group of students, thus establishing a pedestal for collaborative learning interaction. Then I try to explain the humanistic values and musical principles underpinning my practical transmission of African culture knowing design that performatively bonds with compatible other-cultural inputs. I will therefore in this chapter, discuss in detail the creative process, approaches, challenges and outcomes of this project as was witnessed over a twelve-week period.

This first performance was a showcase of the different styles and genres that define my creative practice, and was made up of new original compositions and some older works from my performance repertoire. The performance was divided into three basic sections in terms of genre. The first section was a musical theatre, which consisted of spoken text, theatrical movement, singing, dance and instrumentation. There was an African classical drum music section of drum solos and intercultural duos of the membrane drum and the saxophone/voice, and finally mixed ensemble (African and Western instruments) pieces of a pop music nature. My PhD work is situated in a wider context of ongoing discussion around music educational approaches which include multiculturalism in education, oral-formal music education (which in the indigenous African music milieu is rationalized as a [10]systematic play-mode music education), and classroom-formal music education. It is intended to contribute to the overall conversation around these approaches, the values, effectiveness and overall impact on the transmission of musical knowledge and practice. The discussions in the preceding chapter acknowledge the move towards the multicultural approach to music education, and also the intrinsic values in the (play-mode) approach to music education. (African pedagogy is authoritatively formal in play-mode ideology, which is stress-less learning environment, an aspect of which I have earlier captured.) My case therefore is to establish the possibility of marrying these two unique approaches to the demands of the western formal music education context, in order to produce a holistic model that encapsulates the ideologies of both the African and Western music educational approaches as has been sampled in the creative process involved in the preparation and presentation of this PhD performance. In preparation for the performance, certain elements found in these approaches were considered and the most effective were eventually adopted for the training of the students towards the performance. The approach adopted could then be said to be a combination of the different existing approaches as discussed in the preceding chapter while certain situations necessitated the experimentation of new approaches to deal with particular challenges that came up in the process.

This performance project entailed introducing the students to a music type most of them were experiencing for the first time, and this therefore required a proper grounding in the philosophy, contextual implications and creative ideologies of indigenous African performance practices. At

[10]Music education in indigenous Africa is uniquely formal as a systematic knowledge transmission in play-mode, to avoid stress or strain in learning.

the point it became clear that I would not have the luxury of time to adequately prepare the students for the task ahead. I then decided that the best approach would be to use their acquired strengths to mediate the perceived weaknesses. I, therefore, used their musical proficiencies and expertise to mediate the weakness of their lack of African music cultural background. With respect to issues of multiculturalism, I am taking the values of a cultural system and bringing them into dialogue with other cultural practices.

The value-based epistemology I adopted for initiating the community at the Irish world academy is a contemporaneous advancement of the musical knowledge lore of cultural community that informs my practice, designed to interactively animate the group I worked with. The dynamic and flexible nature of this humanistic values-grounded approach made it possible for me to cope with the challenges of time constraints and the different cultural/musical background of the participating students. I would normally modify my approach to suit any different set of challenges in order to achieve specifically desired objectives. One element that has made the goal of synergy of cultures (multiculturalism) possible is my professional experiential practice that bestrides both the western formal classroom, and the indigenous interactive routine learning models. I have a strong commitment to African indigenous musical arts epistemology and knowledge acquisition model, which is a systematic interactive play-mode methodology. As such, I could have decided to locate myself within an indigenous African community and foster its peculiar practice. Instead, I have broadened my African musical arts knowledge base by researching and advancing the fundamental logic and principles for contemporaneous, international knowledge intercourse relying on my expertise in both the oral indigenous practice of Africa and the literacy art music positions me as a mediating practitioner, capable in the expressive vocabulary of the two worlds.

3.2 The preparation

I set off on this musical journey in an attempt to apply a teaching methodology that is informed by a number of influences which include a) my meta-practice, b) my musical teaching and learning experiences, c) influences of nonconventional pedagogic approaches that are currently being used in music institutions around the world and d) methodologies that I have been a key part of developing towards effective teaching and learning of indigenous African musical arts practices. The task ahead of me was to embark on a performance journey with human and material resources

that would be at my disposal, towards creating a credible original production project for my PhD work, which would represent/showcase the value laden indigenous performance ideologies as found in my African music practice. Given the nature of my intended pedagogic approach to the project, it was necessary to cultivate within the students, the right mindset and attitude that would ensure a successful project. It was imperative that the students I would be working with are open minded to understand and embody the African indigenous creative concepts and performance philosophies that would establish the bedrock of our interactions during the course of the project.

The first performance presentation for my PhD Arts-Practice program was fixed for the 8th of May 2014. I actually chose that date towards the end of the previous semester, despite the fact that it would barely accord me five months to compose the pieces, rehearse and present the performance before the students vacated for the summer break. At that point of fixing the date, I had not determined the exact content of the performances. I did not know the number of students that would be at my disposal for the performance. I equally did know how much time the students could spare per week. The first step was to come up with a conceptual theme for my performance, which would be developed into a storyline to suit the creative intention of the project. After a couple of brainstorming hours, I decided on the conceptual theme of "Libation". Libation according to Dictionary.com is "a pouring out of wine or other liquid in honor of a deity". In some African cultures, the ritual of pouring libation is a significant ceremonial prerequisite, a way to reverence the Creator and acknowledge the ancestors. The practice in my culture involves the pouring of wine as offering to Ala (the Earth deity) while prayers are said. These prayers are for the wellness of the community, to wish away the influence of unfavorable forces and to welcome that of the favorable, then praying for the wellbeing of all gathered and the successful outcome of the event. I envisioned my performance as a reverence to "Chukwuokike Abiama" (God the Creator), and an acknowledgement of my ancestral heritage, for their enabling my understanding of the epistemological integrity of my indigenous music heritage and its humanizing attributes, which underpin my performance practice. I felt a great need to acknowledge the source of my artistic inspirations and aspirations, the intangible forces that have both guided and challenged my practice. I needed to reverence the Ultimate Creator for the opportunity to share my cultural heritage with people in my immediate environment. With the conceptual theme in place, I got an idea of the opening piece and thus started the creation and development of the full performance.

At the start of the semester, I wanted to immediately get into the preparations for my performance which was only a few months away. At this point, I was only sure of a couple of MA ethnomusicology students, who through my supervisor, had agreed to participate in my performance project as part of the world music component of their MA program. There were five of these MA students in my ensemble. Subsequently I was to have four BA Traditional music students whose major instrument was the bodhràn (the traditional Irish frame drum). I therefore had 9 students for the project, none of whom had played any type of African music/instrument prior to this engagement. We were only allowed 1 hour of practice every week, on Thursdays from 5 to 6pm. I felt an immediate challenge with the one hour a week meeting period for the group work, and tried to get more hours or at least two meetings a week, but that was proved not to be possible especially with the BA Traditional music students, who already had very tight and full schedules for the semester. The time constraint on the rehearsal schedule was also acknowledged by one of the MA students Stacey Key in her journal. She wrote, "I could wish that the ensemble had had more time to meet, as we started late in the semester and had only an hour-long rehearsal". One of the BA students Nicole Figueroa further captured the challenges of rehearsal time and the tight academic schedule of the students in her journal, when she wrote "The challenges and difficulties of this process, in my opinion, were: our personal schedules, especially during exam period. Nevertheless, O'dyke worked hard to get everyone on the same page, which is very hard with such a large group doing different programs in the academy". The MA students were willing to make more sacrifice and put in more hours, probably because they were more mature in age and recognized the benefits of multicultural music education, or simply because they had more time at their disposal, but despite all that, we were unable to find more time per week. In the early period of the rehearsals, it seemed to me that some of the BA students felt they were doing me a great favor by participating in my project. I had to handle them with as much tact as possible to keep them interested in the project. At the same time, the fact that they had been told that participation in the project would count as part of their assessment for the semester affected their attitude. This seemed to keep them focused at those early stages of the project. I had, in addition to these students, 3 other professional artistes from within the academy who were experts in their respective fields. These included a contemporary dancer, a saxophonist and a vocalist. A full assessment of artists at my disposal for the performance project therefore showed 9 students who had never played any African instruments or music, with whom I had barely 12 hours of contact period, and three

professional musicians with whom I had to fix extra rehearsal times, to prepare and deliver my first PhD performance presentation. So that was it: 12 hours a week and 12 weeks to prepare and present the performance. The Academy had assisted me with the funding of the costs of bringing over some indigenous African instruments that I needed for my performance. This was a major material necessity for my first performance since it was African indigenous instrument intensive project, and there were very limited possibilities at the Academy to access the necessary indigenous African instruments. It therefore became imperative that I make my case with my supervisor and course director. They, in turn made my case at the Faculty level, and secured funds for the freighting of the instruments from South Africa to the Academy in Ireland. I knew that I had to get this performance to happen no matter what the challenges were. I considered the possibility of bringing in professional African musicians at some point, to help out with the performance. That eventually didn't happen, because I could not find capable performers in the Limerick community where I was based. The foregoing is the story of this journey into the unknown, where I depended primarily on my enduring commitment to finishing whatever I have started.

The thoughts that went into the composition of the pieces came from my experience as a scholar, performer and composer. My cumulative research and musical experiences informed the content of the performance. As the initial ideas came to me, I immediately put them down as "thoughts for my final performance". My production notes below, evolved into what my performance turned out to be. The following notes were made when I decided on my first performance.

> **LIBATION…**
> In African cultures, the ritual of pouring libation is an essential ceremonial tradition, a way of reverencing the Creator and acknowledging the Earth Deity, minor deities, and the ancestors. The practice involves the pouring of wine in respect and supplication to Ala (the Earth deity) while prayers are made. These prayers are for "odimma onye obuna" the wellness of the community… to wave away unfavorable forces and to welcome the favorable…. (shake oji)
>
> The performance therefore is in reverence to "Chukwuokike Abiama" God the Creator, and an acknowledgement of my ancestral heritage, without whose influence, the epistemology of the music culture, which has translated into my practice and its humanizing attributes would not have been revealed to me or further still shared with others…

The pieces performed symbolize the wine that is poured out as the prayers are said, for a bountiful harvest of spiritual rejuvenation, psychosomatic revitalization and emotional bliss… (This part will be said upstage center)

This part will end with a roll on the drum. Immediately play the theme

Thoughts for my Final performance
Start performance with the chant Ojuodeda while the script is being recited.

- Three Solo instruments, *oja, ufie* and bells (real bell or oji for opening)
- Three dance numbers
- Six instrumentalists from Africa and inclusion of the two guys from Ireland
- One intercultural drum/sax duo and one drum solo
- The pieces have to have a lot of vibe about them, establish themes and everyone plays them; different drums changing their themes and others joining in. There will be singing and chanting
- The dances have to be well choreographed, with a distinctive rhythm of dance line, vigorous dance movements with coda sections, three persons will dance. Lots of quick feet dances

I need to bring in about 10 *djembe* drums, one udu, one oja, Ufie and its stand, set of traditional bongos with stand

The whole performance has to be one continuous story, I don't know how you are gonna do that…
The performance will have about 10 musicians … will have to start working with whoever I have available in January. Find out the duration of the performance.
The stage will be set with all instruments on the set; the stage has to be decorated like the Igba Joli stage. Start the show with some sort of chant played from back stage; I come on stage to do some incantations with neon lights and semi darkness. Everything will happen with choreographed movements on the stage in the semi darkness, depicting a ritual scene in Africa? The chant happens, and when it stops, a very vibrant rhythm section starts like *egwu agha*, and in the darkness two dancers will do capoeira? dance type
After that preliminary section, the lights come on and the show is introduced officially.

Content
Part 1: 20 minutes
Off stage, one drum gives a 2 bars call, and it is answered by 4 other drums in unison, this happens 3 times, then the mother drum plays her theme, and the other 4 drums come in with their themes. Intermittent solos will take place, like a conversation; there will be a bell and a shaker. The drummers come on stage and take their positions while still playing. This opening piece will be 6 minutes long. It will have a high tempo and a fast section. As the music ends, the bell takes over and the music slows down for a story telling section (with a refrain) of 5mins. Next will be an ensemble piece where the *ufie* will play the mother instrument role, coordinating and marshalling the performance, the piece has to be danceable and of a good vibe. The next piece will be on *ogene anuka*, if I can find a player,

if not, it will be *egwu ufie*. The last piece will be an instrumental piece with the *oja* as the mother instrument. The *oja* and vocalic lilting will be used for this piece, soft instrumentation for a lullaby.

Part 2; 20 minutes
The second piece will be two drum and saxophone pieces lasting about 8 to 10 minutes and two drum solos. This section will end with a piece involving the harp, drums, *udu*, and *oja*, slow piece. Do a composition for a small orchestra, comprising violin, harp, and any other instrument the students play.

Part 3; 30 minutes
This part will be of Western and African instruments. The first piece (lift, clutch, change gear) will involve a double bass and an acoustic guitar, with the bell/knocker, shakers, drums and *udu*. The mother drum will have a solo section and an interactive session with the guitar, where it plays with the guitar player. It will be a large ensemble sound with all players on stage. The compositions will be for dance music in English and Igbo, drum singing, with Fela style coda and cadences, 4 numbers. (I could play a range of instruments, including the xylophone)

As I put down these thoughts, I visualized what I wanted the performance to be. As these imaginings played out in my head, I began to have a clearer vision of the nature and form the performance would take. In this way the opening piece of the performance and the script for the Chant came about. The chant Ojuodeda, is a chant I had learnt about 23 years earlier during my undergraduate years in Nigeria. It was a chant in a theatrical performance we had put on stage back then. These initial thoughts slowly started taking shape as my rehearsals commenced. I still had to rework these program notes over and over again, to suit the circumstances that I came across and to adapt to the challenges that faced the production at the different stages.

3.3 The pieces

The performance eventually had three sections: the first was the opening ritual theatre, then the intercultural/classical drumming, and finally the Ensemble pieces. The intercultural/classical pieces were made up of a classical membrane drum solo "Ngedegwum", two voice and drum duos, "Grace of Pentecost" and "In-between", and a drum and saxophone duo "Kpom kpom Dum dum". The ensemble pieces were an African drum ensemble piece entitled "Part One", Mama Africa, and Limerick Groove mixed African and European ensemble and *Ogene Anuka* bell music.

OJUODEDA RITUAL THEATRE

The opening piece Ojuodeda is a musical arts theatre fashioned from the presentation model as found in my indigenous culture. It contains all the performative siblings of the musical arts namely music, dance, theatre and visual arts. Creativity in the indigenous musical arts practice is approached holistically. Every creative personality is conjointly a musician, dancer/choreographer, actor and visual artiste. This has been discussed by Nzewi, where he talked about the holistic approach to musical arts education as is observed in indigenous cultures of the Ngwa communities of the South eastern Nigeria. (Nzewi, 2007). I wrote the text of the opening piece during the months that led up to the start of the rehearsals. I envisaged a theatrical piece where I would narrate the essence of my performance title, the narration talked about reverencing the Creator and my ancestral heritage for the inspiration I have gotten from them in pursuit of my professional practice. The narration of the text was in three different stanzas.

The narration piece started with the chant in a dark stage (each rendition of the chant was followed by the humming of the entire melody by the ensemble musicians). The musicians were standing in a semicircle in front of their instruments, while I was positioned down stage and used the apron of the stage for my movements, which were to the right of the stage for my first stanza, the left of the stage for my second, and down stage center for the third.

Figure 1: ***Opening piece Ojuodeda with the musicians standing in front of their instruments***

At the end of the first chant, the stage lights came on, and the lights picked me up down stage right, and I started to render the text of the piece. Each stanza was followed by the chanting of Ojuodeda by the musicians in the ensemble and then again, the humming of the melody. At the end of my last stanza, the musicians slowly turned and walked to take their positions behind their instruments as they hummed the chant for the last time. I also moved back to my instrument. As the humming died down, we slowly started introducing the theme for the dance component of the opening presentation. I had a weekly meeting with Ras Mikey Courtney who is a contemporary dancer and PhD Arts practice student at the academy. I explained to him the kind of dance movements I wanted to go with the music. I relied totally on his choreographic expertise. Having worked with him on different music and dance projects, I knew his capabilities and therefore let him interpret my intentions through his own creative abilities. He was coming from a contemporary dance background, and had no prior training in African dance (except for a recent foray in Ethiopian traditional dance), but despite that and as a result of his high level of professionalism, we were able to develop a dance that well suited my intention for the opening scene.

Figure 2: **Ojuodeda dance with Ras Mikey**

My initial ideas for that opening eventually gave way to what we arrived at in the finished work. In his reflexive journal, Ras had this to say about our professional engagement at the start of this project: "We mapped out the flow of the production and he explained to me the movement and vocal ideas he has and how he wants me to implement them. Our past experiences together have helped us both build mutual respect for each other. This allows for free flow of ideas although we both know that this is his work and I am just playing my part in bringing his vision to life*"*. We met once every week, and this also counted as his elective for his PhD course work.

I composed the instrumental section of the opening piece using a particular drum notation system that had been developed by my father and I at the Ama Dialogue Foundation where I worked with him in the early 1990's. The notation makes use of conventional note value system and is written on a one-line stave. The deep and high tones on the single membrane drum are represented by the note heads, in this case a black note head for the deep tone and an "x" for the high tone. The tail of the note determines the rhythm value of the note to be played. Other musical and extra musical effects for the pieces are represented with different symbols on the note head, while the tail determines the durational value of the symbols. Due to the fast decay time of a note struck on the membrane drum, the longest note duration was the duration of a crotchet beat. The one-line stave meant that all notes written for the deep tone on the membrane drum were written below the line,

while those for other tones, musical and extra musical, were written above the line. This notation was used for percussive and melo-rhythmic instruments.

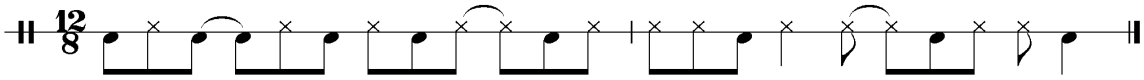

Figure 3: **Example of the notation style, the "x" represents the high tone, while the "black head" represents the deep tone on the melo-rhythmic instrument**

The first instrument to be composed for is the Phrasing Reference[11] line (this has been my normal procedure over the years), which helps to guide the length and phrasing of the respective themes of other instruments of the ensemble. It acts as a guiding thematic length beacon for the other instruments in the ensemble. Next to be composed is the Pulse line, which further establishes metric framework for the entire piece. With the pulse and phrasing reference lines established, it is then easier to feed in the other instrumental parts according to their roles in the ensemble. Citing Nzewi & Nzewi (2009, p.16) "the pulse and phrasing reference roles, independently or in combination, provide the common, foundational sub structure frame of reference for ensemble music texture in virtually all African cultures". It was necessary at this point that I had a conscious awareness of the nature of the instruments at my disposal, to understand the timbre and tone color of the instruments in order to determine what instrument would play what role in the ensemble.

There are certain timbre characteristics an instrument has to possess to be suited for the different ensemble roles. The phrasing reference role for instance is played by the instrument with the highest pitch in a typical African indigenous ensemble, and in this case the choice was between either a cowbell or wood block. The pulse instrument on the other hand, is played by the instrument with the deepest tone in the ensemble. Other instrumental roles, and instruments that played them in my project ensemble include the action motivation instrument, whose theme was shared between two melo-rhythmic instruments and in this case, two groups of drummers. Nzewi & Nzewi (2009) describes its role thus: "the combined sonic character of any preferred structural combination and arrangement of thematic layers constituting Action Motivation role generates the energy impulses that galvanize motive responses to a music piece" (p.17). The obbligato

[11] See phrasing reference instruments in chapter 2

instrument, which is a supernumerary instrument in an ensemble, is usually played by either a melody or a melo-rhythm instrument and adds further enriched texture to the entire ensemble sound, even though the piece would sound structurally complete without it. In this case, it was played by a slit-drum (a dug-out log of wood with two lips that usually gives an interval of a major third). The mother instrument played the rhythm of dance role, and this is due to the fact that this composition is a dance music piece. The mother drummer marshalled the entire presentation and sonically underlined as well as prompted the dance movements of the dancer, while at the same time acting as a conductor for the other members of the ensemble. It articulated breaks in the music narrative, and prompted cadential figures. It improvised within a thematic statement that is established at the start of the piece. The mother instrument role could be played by an eloquent melody or a melo-rhythmic instrument, and in this case was played by a single membrane drum, the *djembe*. Deriving from my knowledge of these instrumental roles and their characteristics in African ensemble music theory, I proceeded to assign the roles according to the instruments at my disposal.

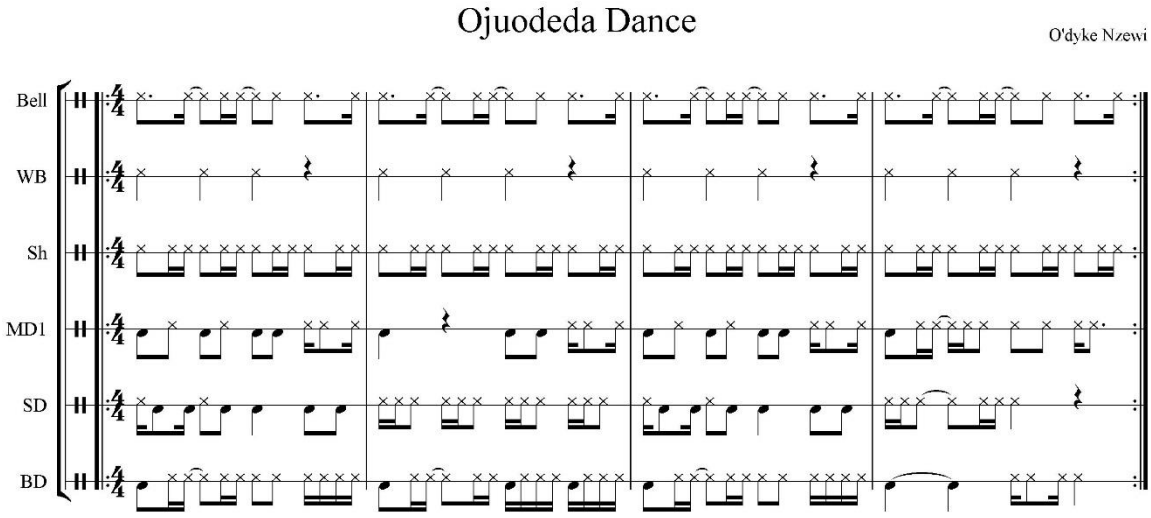

Figure 4: **Opening ensemble theme for Ojuodeda: WB=woodblock, SH=shaker, MD=membrane drum, SD=slit drum, BD=Bass drum**

It is also noteworthy to mention that for the benefit of the students and sensitizing their embodiment of their roles in the ensemble, I explained the way in which each role is modeled after the expected roles of family members in a typical African nuclear family. According to Nzewi &

Nzewi (2009) "the rationalization of roles in indigenous African ensemble music is modeled on the role distinctions that mark a coherent nuclear human family" (p.14). The pulse instrument is usually perceived to be the father in the ensemble because of its steady deep-toned pulse that acts as the heartbeat of the ensemble. It thus pounds the metric pulsation and pace of the music being played, and thus acts as a temporal symbol for the ensemble family. The phrasing reference instrument is described as the infant, because of its poignantly pitched consistent theme played all through the piece without any variation. The obbligato is regarded as an extended family member, whose presence enriches the aesthetics of the family communion. The presence of this family member is not structural to the existence of the family which can function well without his/her enriching inputs. The action motivation instrument is rationalized as the older siblings of the phrasing reference whose interactions create a singular theme that allows for internal variations to their individual sub-themes during the course of the performance. The mother instrument plays the typical cultural role of the mother in an indigenous African nuclear family, marshalling and coordinating the activities of the family members, giving out sonic directives on what needs to be done and overseeing the overall functionality of the household/ensemble. The explication of this epistemological family analogy helped the students better embody the concepts and parts they played in the ensemble.

I composed for the instruments in the ensemble based on the above structural model. I conceive the theme for one instrument in my mind, write that down on my score sheet, then while playing that back in my head, I add the next thematic layer of sound, and subsequently while playing back the already established themes in my head other layers emerge. This process is followed until I have an established ensemble theme, the Ensemble Thematic Cycle, formed by all the instrumental themes that may contribute individually coherent but complementary thematic identities and lengths. Nzewi & Nzewi describes this thus "an indigenous ensemble music style or type is made up of peculiar layers of themes that contribute to its characteristic ensemble identity" (p.14).

INTERCULTURAL CLASSICAL DRUM PIECES

The intercultural classical drumming pieces are a collection of African drum solos and duos developed in the mid 1990's by my father and myself. The term Modern African Classical Drumming (MACD) is used to denote the fact that the drum pieces are composed and scored using the notation system described previously and played from the score. The pieces selected for this

performance were all composed prior to this engagement and are a part of my classical drum music repertoire. The pieces cut across the different genres found in the repertoire, and include one classical drum solo composed by myself, one drum and saxophone intercultural duo, and two drum and voice pieces composed by Meki Nzewi. The lyrics for the drum and voice pieces are in English, and they also include elements of vocalic lilting as a signature component in the pieces.

Figure 5: **Odyke and Femke performing the voice and drum intercultural duo**

The drum part incorporates extra musical sonic effects such as the snapping of fingers, foot rattles worn around the ankles, a wooden body tone achieved by striking a brass finger ring worn around the finger against the wooden frame of the drum, hand clapping, finger snapping, and drum singing. A combination of these different sonic effects, the playing of the drum and a simulation of dance movements while playing, results in indigenous African performance epistemology that does not only have an auditory appeal, but also a visual one, and this resonates with our holistic conceptualization of performative creativity (musical arts) as per indigenous African performance design and practice.

The saxophone was played by another PhD student Shannon Burns. She already plays classical saxophone, and therefore was quite comfortable with the written score. The vocal piece was

performed by Femke van der Kooij, who at that time was an MA Ritual Chant major at the Irish world academy. An accomplished singer, Femke brought her professional musicianship into the project.

Figure 6: **O'dyke and Shannon performing the drum and sax intercultural duo**

As with the saxophone piece, the style in which the pieces were composed employed a lot of indigenous African rhythmic idioms such as, shock rhythm, syncopation, vocalic lilting and inter rhythm. Due to the professionalism of the two musicians I used for the intercultural duos, it was easy to scale the hurdles of interpretation of their parts. The moment I explained whatever challenges that we came across in the course of the rehearsals, they immediately picked it up and it became a part of them. In reflecting on the learning of the pieces, Femke in her journal wrote

> learning the repertoire was pretty difficult to begin with because I began with learning it visually sight reading this repertoire does not give one the sense of how it should be, and suggests more of a mechanical erratic intervallic leaping, which is not the case, as the music has a clear logic and thematic continuation throughout which can be heard when either familiar enough to sing it fluidly, or listening to it being performed by someone.
>
> Femke (2012)

The mastery of their instruments and artistic acuity made an otherwise difficult process easier to accomplish, and we were able to overcome the challenges that came with the new work and went ahead to deliver a great performance.

ENSEMBLE MUSIC PIECES

The African drum ensemble piece is composed in a conversational format, with a leading mother drummer role. The piece has three thematic layers or complementing voices, and each of the layers is assigned to a minimum of two players. The dialogue conversation that happens in the piece moves from call and response to a three-way conversation between the voices. The cadences and breaks are clearly articulated in the piece, and a distinct cadential cue is adopted for the final cadence in all the ensemble pieces. The mixed ensemble pieces are of two genres, one African pop instrumental and a contemporary instrumental piece. A selection of membrane drums, slit drums, bells, shakers, and woodblock are employed on the African instrumental side, while the Cello and Saxophone were added to the ensemble to give it the envisaged multicultural appeal. The choice of the Cello was as a result of the unavailability of a bass guitarist during the rehearsal process.

Figure 7: **Mama Africa**

The African Pop number entitled “Mama Africa” comes from a pop music album in which I was a child vocalist in 1982. My father had started a pop music group in which myself, my older sister and my younger brother took part. My sister was the lead vocalist while we provided the backup voices. Mama Africa was one of the songs in the album, but I adopted only its chorus for this piece. I arranged the song to suit my objective working with indigenous instruments and added Cello and Saxophone lines to give it its intercultural appeal. For this piece, I first of all established a phrasing reference line and the pulse line deriving from the already existing chorus line, then built in the other parts with the melody of the chorus in mind. I engaged the assistance of Ras Mikey to compose a rap component to fit into the music. The main chorus section was a sixteen-bar statement, while the saxophone provides an eight bars interlude: At the end of the chorus section, the instrumentation changes entirely for the saxophone interlude, and then returns to the chorus theme. A distinct coda at the end of the interlude calls back the main chorus theme. The rap layer was then rendered during the eight bars interlude of the saxophone, during the second run of the interlude. The Cello which played the bass line also had two thematic statements for the two sections of the composition.

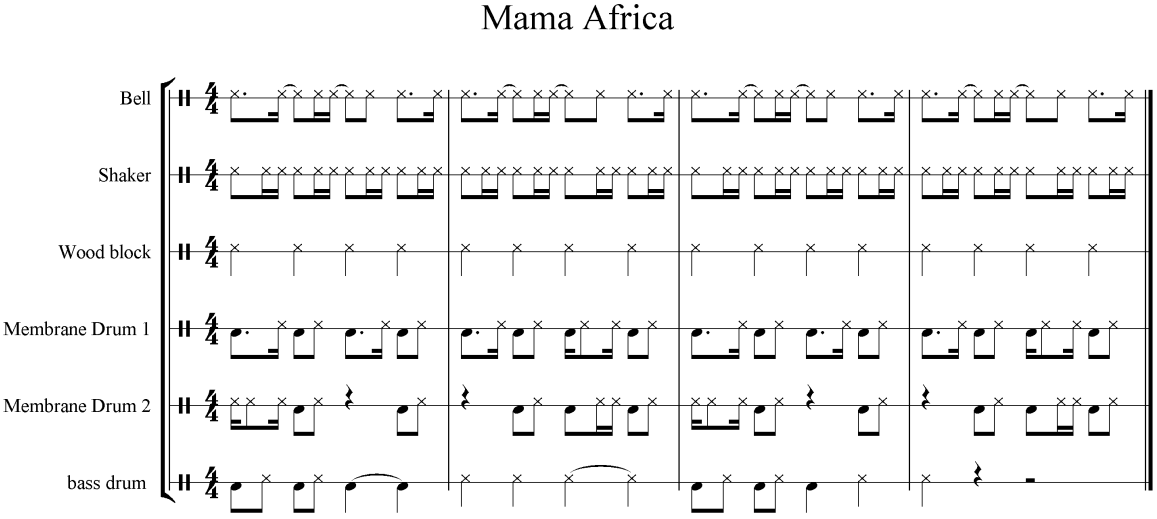

Figure 8: **Mama Africa instrumental theme for the chorus section**

The second piece “Limerick Groove” was developed from a phrasing reference theme that I liked very much, because of its psychedelic feel. As in all other compositions, once the phrasing

reference was established and a complimenting pulse part added, I started experimenting with different motifs and grooves. The piece was a slow one, and by the time it was concluded, it had a salsa feel to it. I deliberately added a coda section because I have always wanted to engage all the instruments in playing the same rhythm for special emphatic effect.

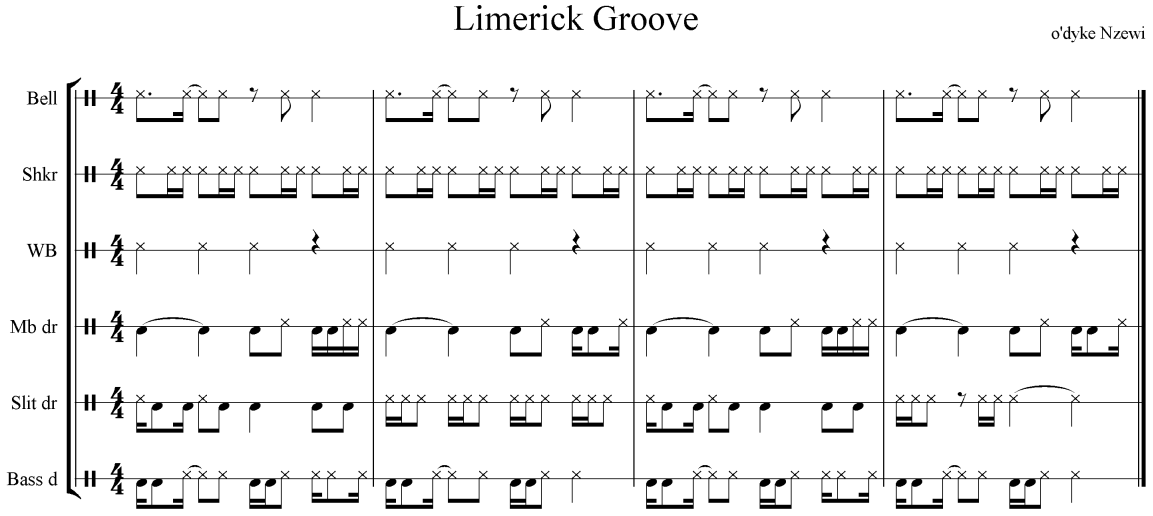

Figure 9: **Opening theme of Limerick Groove**

When the composition of the piece was done, I then decided that I would want to get a couple to do a salsa dance to the piece. I find it of interest, that a piece that was influenced by my indigenous musical practice, eventually became expressed choreographically in a Latin American dance style. The gap between these two genres, however, might be less that it appears bearing in mind that African musical arts instincts transported to Latin America by slaves influenced the derivation of some Latin American music and dance styles. After I had composed both pieces, I arranged them on the Apple "garage band" music app and was able to distribute this to all the collaborating musicians involved, along with a score of the different parts. So, they had access to the music in both an audio and written format.

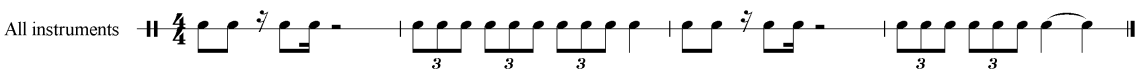

Figure 10: **Coda theme**

The last piece is the Ogene Anuka Quad bell orchestra, which accompanied some traditional songs in the Igbo language[12]. I had learnt the playing of the instrument from the indigenous practitioners almost two decades ago. I needed a second person to play the receiver bell for the orchestra, for Ogene Anuka is a two-man bell orchestra in which the main soloist plays a quadruple bell, and the receiver soloist plays a double bell. The themes of both players combine to crystalize the singular thematic melodies of the pieces. One of the MA students I worked with, Ozan Cagil Deniz, happens to be a brilliant musician from Turkey. He had a very acute and stable rhythmic sensibility, and eventually stood out as the foreman of the ensemble group I was working with.

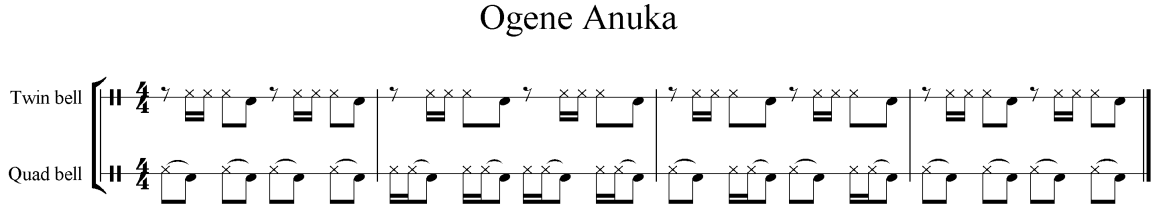

Figure 11: **Opening theme of Ogene Anuka piece**

I introduced him to the receiver soloist part of the bell orchestra, and after a few rehearsals, he competently captured the essence of the instrumental music genre. I vocalized his theme for him, as the pieces were not written down, and showed him what to play and how to play it on the double bell.

[12] The Igbo are an ethnic group found in the south Eastern parts of Nigeria. They are one of the more dominant three ethnic groups amongst the over two hundred and fifty ethnic groups found in the country

Figure 12: **Ogene Anuka bell orchestra with Ozan**

The moment he had a grip on what was expected, I urged him to express his creative individuality by being at liberty to embellish his theme with his own internal variations to his part as in the traditional African performance-composition norm. When both parts were established, I decided to introduce vocals to the piece, and drawing from my knowledge of indigenous tunes from my culture area, I was able to arrange and sequence three tunes for the bell music rendition, namely "Obaladike n'abia" a praise song for a local warrior, "Jemu jee" a motivational song for a vibrant youthful group and "Mgbenka" the chorus from a folk tale about a young man who was on a mission to accomplish a feat that would save his community, but was being hindered by his mother's close associate through diabolical means. The songs would be contextually appropriate for the bell music genre, which is usually a mobile orchestra used to portray and show off youthful strength and prowess in indigenous Igbo communities.

The foremost thing on my mind during the entire composition process was to compose pieces that would help to clearly portray some of the African indigenous creative principles and philosophies that I discuss with my students. The values that are found in my cultural practice were thus reflected in the music. The indigenous life and creative philosophies equally had to be exposed and imbibed through the different pieces. I would say that I believe I was able to achieve these

objectives by the time the performance went on stage, and this was evident in the feedback I received from some of the students at the end of the performance.

3.4 Teaching methodology

I adopted a collaborative multicultural knowledge acquisition methodology for this performance project. I also adopted elements of formal and interactive play-mode educational approaches while engaging with the students. It became imperative for me to adopt as well a flexible approach to enable me cater for the challenges the students might encounter in this project, given the constraints of time and the fact that the repertoire presented a totally new music rationalization for the students. None of them had played or been involved in an African music ensemble, it was for them a novel experience. I would at this point want to explain the process involved in learning to embody African ensemble music through oral transmission. In indigenous African cultures, knowledge transmission is oral, and in instrumental music, teaching and learning usually happens by rote, through observation and practice. Therefore, it becomes imperative that the teacher is aware of and able to apply the different tools needed to pull out bits of awareness from the student. The playing of the single membrane African drum is a seemingly simple process that requires first of all, the ability for one to be able to go through the motion of striking the drum membrane, constantly alternating the hands as musical sound is generated on the instrument.

Achieving a heightened level of awareness and consciousness on the drum, however, requires an extended process. In this case the route through which I led the students began from the sitting posture and straddling of the drum. There is a proprioceptive awareness of the limbs and their proximity to the straddled drum. The drum is straddled with the open end facing the posterior of the seated player. This posture balances the drum and allows the limbs of the drummer to rest comfortably on the drum surface. The action of striking the drum with alternate hands would be akin to the movement of the limbs when one is running, therefore meaning that it is an action that is not alien to most people who have use of their limbs. There needs to be a conscious awareness (soma esthetic perception) of the position of hands in relation to the sitting position and position of the drum, which is necessary for the action of playing the instrument. The student becomes consciously aware of the need for the limbs to move in alternation (as much as possible) as the drum is played. The approach of teaching by rote enables the student to observe the teacher and

try to replicate the physical movement of the teacher as well as reproducing correctly the sonic output on the membrane drum. The students could be said to exhibit external conscious somatic perception when they try to replicate the movement of the teacher's hands to produce the expected sound.

Further personal development of expertise as a player on the drum would require a conscious spontaneous manual transfer of a musical ideation or intention in the nature of a rhythmic figure conceived in the mind/brain of the student (while being consciously aware and physically maintaining a pulse sense). This is achieved by transmission through the body sensory organs of perception, to the hands, where the tacit knowledge of the tonality of the drum, the proprioceptive awareness of the position of the hands and the kinesthetic perception of the transmitted impulse all translate to musical sound. The sound produced on the drum is immediately recaptured through the senses of auditory perception and transmitted back through the body to the brain for analysis and interpretation to ascertain that the sonic output was indeed a product of the original creative intention.

As the student progresses, he then needs to start working on developing his spontaneity. Spontaneity in creativity, which is a key component of performance composition, is an attribute of a proficient mother musician. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962), recognition and recovery of spontaneity is characteristic of primordial perception and expression. Therefore, spontaneity which is a key characteristic at the primordial stage should be harnessed for the student's personal proficiency and expertise in musical arts creativity. There are certain warm-up exercises that the student will be required to practice consistently to be able to develop the required flexibility, speed and dexterity on the drum; it is a combination of fast alternate hand movements to a particular pulse and rhythm. The rhythm structure varies to attain different proficiencies of drum playing techniques.

However, my teaching approach is not just about acquiring musical skills, it is about stimulating an orientation to musical practice that can add something quite humanly different in the life of the student. A major question that my approach in this particular project has tried to answer is "what are the issues encountered when trying to implement the multicultural approach?" We all can be

multicultural, but there is a need to work out a strategy that fosters smooth interaction and performative accommodation of others' worldviews through experiencing the peculiar manifestations of common human/musical expressions appertaining. Therefore, when I argue that I can offer something peculiarly holistic and organic, that does not imply trying to transplant a whole musical practice, rather expanding the innate musical capabilities (creative and performative) and valuation of others.

At the first meeting, I explained what the project was about, what our goals were, and my expectations of them. The first meeting had just eight MA students. I had a five minutes drumming warm up with them, which eventually became a norm in the subsequent meetings. I introduced the single membrane open-ended drum to the students present, explained the primary tonal possibilities (deep and high tones) on the drum and how they are produced. I immediately discussed the ideology of instrumental roles in an African indigenous ensemble worldview, and the tonal characteristics of the different instruments that play specific roles (instead of parts). I explained how the collaborative ensemble theme (Ensemble Thematic Cycle) is rationalized, and the importance of individuality for every instrumental component of an ensemble.

I also explained some guiding creative concepts that I felt would be important for the project we were moving into. Some of these concepts and philosophies included individuality in conformity, minimality in profundity, and spontaneity in creativity. I explained the values of space, sharing and mutual respect and the overall principles of communal interaction that mark ensemble performance in African traditions. Sharing in the African indigenous knowledge concept is a communal principle which combines notions of communion and interdependence. Collaboration can be viewed as the usual model for 'western' cooperative creation. A framework that STARTS from a position emphasizing the individuality of each participant. The African indigenous framework for making work together, which I have characterized as 'individuality in community', begins rather with the nature of the communal collective, which sets the parameters for performance, within which individuals can find their place, so long as the whole is not destabilized. In my African music pedagogy, I try to begin by creating a community among the participants as the social 'given' from which to work; collaboration typically begins with disparate individuals finding ways to work together. This contrast in cultural perspective is perhaps overdrawn here for

the purposes of argument, but in my experience of having worked in African and 'western' contexts it does capture a noticeable difference.

These concepts, philosophies and values formed the bedrock of our engagement over the next 12 weeks. After these initial discussions, we did a bit of rhythmic clapping interaction while they moved to a steady pulse. I used the last 20 minutes to introduce the students to the opening piece for the performance. I got two people each to play the phrasing reference on a bell, and an action motivation theme played on the maracas. It was not a very smooth attempt, still the students looked happy and confident, and seemed eager to continue. The first hour went by pretty quickly, but I was happy that I had done pre-requisite introductory explaining and hoped that as we went along, they would start to imbibe some of the concepts through practice. I made it a point of duty to always explain in theoretical terms any new practical concept we encountered all through the rehearsals. By the second rehearsal, I had more students from the BA Irish music and dance program. I spent a very short time with the warm-up and immediately went into working on the drum ensemble piece. My strategy this time was to get everybody to play each of the themes, before splitting them into three groups for the three different voices of the piece. I discussed the use of notation along the line, and we agreed that I planned to introduce my notation style to them in the next class, so that they could use it to score their individual parts and also enable me to give the music to them in sheet form. We were able to revisit the opening piece before our time was up.

Our work during the first four weeks was productive, after the initial challenges of the first two meetings. We had some improvement in attendance and participation. My attempt to introduce the special drum notation went well as they all appeared to understand it. By this time, we had worked on three pieces altogether. I made a concerted effort to add a new piece at every meeting, then go through the ones we had done the previous week. The students showed measurable improvement in their pick-up rate although the one-hour meeting time a week was still a huge challenge. The teaching and learning methods involve a combination of learning by rote and the use of notation. As we proceeded, I would introduce a new theme by playing it for them to repeat after me. We would then repeat the parts over and over again, until it became a part of them, and what was most impressive was their ability to retain what we had done the previous week and present it the next week. This system although effective, meant that progress was slow. Nicole Figuero made mention of the effectiveness of this approach in her journal when she wrote that

> His instructions were clear and simple. If we did not understand (or had forgotten) a rhythm, he was patient and repeated it as many times as needed. I like the fact that he always played with us.

Despite the perceived effectiveness of the method, I realized that I needed to use a new approach that would enable us move a little faster, since we were really pressed for time as the performance approached. So, after discussion with the students, I decided to send them audio files of the different parts of the pieces. By the fifth meeting, we had consolidated the first two pieces, and continued work on the third piece. The first two pieces were played from start to finish, even though there were errors with the form and some of the parts. I discussed the possibility of having an extra hour a week, and we agreed that I talk to the relevant course directors to see the possibility of that. Unfortunately, that was not to be.

At this stage I was feeling a bit frustrated because I was not getting 100% commitment from the students, especially the BA Irish traditional music students. The reason for that, I believed, was that the project was not initially part of their course requirement and was only announced to them when they returned from winter break for the spring semester. The only available time at that point was by 5 – 6 pm every Thursday. Part of the challenge faced as a result was that by that time of day, they were usually quite exhausted from the day's work and were thinking of going home. This concerned me very much because of the limited time I had to present the performance. I discussed this with my course director in a meeting in the middle of March, and that meeting gave me the boost I required to face the challenges and overcome them. In the meeting, my course director explained that the challenges I was currently experiencing should form part of the creative experience and findings. She was of the opinion that my work currently was important in that my findings may well assist other practitioners in future.

After the meeting, I regarded the challenges as a part of my investigation and faced them with new vigor and strategies. During one of the rehearsals, I was faced with my own personal challenge of having to remember the thematic phrases for one of the pieces, as the many years of having to score my musical ideas on music sheets started to catch up with me. I discovered that I always had to look at the sheets to remember what each group had to play because as we developed the pieces, we constantly made changes on what each group played to suit our intended output and I always had to write down these changes on my score sheet to remember them. On this particular day, we

had quite a number of stops because I was constantly reminded by the students that certain parts had been changed during the previous rehearsal. During the course of this rehearsal, I asked if there were any questions from the students, and one of the BA students told me to "quit bullshitting and get my act together". I realized at that point that I had to prepare myself better for subsequent rehearsals to cut down on the time spent on unnecessary repetitions, and I did get my act together from that day going forward. My once-a-week rehearsals with the ensemble continued, I changed strategy and started to explore other music genres knowing that I needed to focus more on solo works and duos in the performance, rather than making ensemble work the bulk of the presentation. I decided at that point, that it would be ideal for me if I could find professionals within the academy, and fashion out performances that would take advantage of their personal expertise to mediate their lack of experience in African music. I had to search for music that would meet them where they were coming from and at the same time retain the essence of my performance.

I engaged Shannon Burns a saxophonist and a PhD colleague at the academy. I had four rehearsals with her for the drum and saxophone intercultural duo that has already been described above. I also engaged Ozan, a member of the present ensemble, to accompany me on the Ufie[13]. But after the second day of rehearsals, I decided it would be futile to continue with the music. The reason was that the pair of seed rattles that accompany the Ufie music are played with both hands in a 12/8 compound time pattern, that required a specific hand movement to achieve the intended rhythm, and, it is usually played at a very fast pace. It required a long period of practice to become conversant with the rhythm and sustain it for an extended period of time. I therefore decided to attempt the Ogene Anuka bell music with Ozan. I explained the musicology of the ensemble, the nature of the interaction between the two instrumentalists; I showed him the part of the receiver soloist which he was to play and also showed him how to respond to the calls on the mother quad bell. I then explained the nature of the thematic development and what he was allowed to do with his thematic statement.

[13] Ufie is a two-man orchestra played by the Igbo of south eastern Nigeria. It comprises of a pair of slit drums played by the mother musician and pair of seed rattles played by an accompanist. It is music that is used to celebrate royalty in the Igbo custom.

The Ogene Anuka bell orchestra is a large component bell orchestra. The mother musician plays on a quad bell (a large twin bell, with a smaller twin bell attached to it with the aid of strips of rubber and cloth), and another large twin bell is played by the receiver soloist. The interaction between the two players is such that they combine individual motifs to create a melodic theme. There are variations in calls from the principal quad bell, which elicits a particular response from the receiver soloist. Both players are allowed to develop their themes internally without tampering with the external structure of the piece. Ozan who is a brilliant musician picked up the motifs and after a few rehearsals, had embodied the role he had to play in the orchestra and started adding his own variations. At this point, I felt it would be ideal to find appropriate songs in Igbo, to go with the pieces.

My experience working with Femke van der Kooij was an interesting one. After she accepted to work with me, and I gave the music scores of the drum and voice duos, we fixed weekly rehearsal meetings. During these meetings, a huge part of the time was spent on discussing the context of African performance arts practices. These discussions were usually not preempted, but usually came about from questions that arose from the rehearsals. Femke acknowledged that these discussions played an important role in her enjoyment of the working relationship and the piece. She wrote in her journal that about the discussions:

> The rehearsals were full of contextual chatter about tradition, getting to know each other's method of working, and being generally social in a way that I feel music making is and always should be. This of course also added to the level of enjoyment I felt in experiencing this repertoire, culture and personality.

This for me was quite significant as I had learnt the effectiveness of contextualizing the learning of a music practice through lengthy stories told by the indigenous practitioners during each learning period. I had therefore imbibed the practice of teaching through telling stories, and this helps the student to fully understand the contextual and social parameters within which the music happens. She went through the entire pieces over a period of time before we actually met for the first rehearsals. Her professional skills as a singer mediated the challenge of the song type being something she had never done in her life before. The piece had large intervallic leaps and vocalic lilting; these were not the kind of things she would have come across ordinarily in her music training. She noted this in her journal about these: "technique wise, the challenges had to do

with maintaining flexibility in the vocalic lilting sections which moved fast and demanded much precision of articulation and rhythmic enfaces*"*. And elsewhere she adds: "it was new, and to be honest quite athletic in terms of intervallic leaps and range". But her experience coupled with my holistic understanding of the pieces, made the learning process less challenging. We eventually settled for two of the pieces and continued to meet for two hours every Friday until the performance.

I had five meetings with Ras Mikey over the time leading up to the performance. During the meetings, I explained the concept I had in mind for the performance, in order to situate both him and his dance within the right framework for my performance project design. During the meetings, we discussed ritual and dance in the Nigerian context, leading up to the kind of body movements I wanted for the opening dance, the nature of the music and choreography. We also discussed the stage sets and stage blockings. I took the opportunity to discuss what type of text I wanted for the rap section of the Traditional pop number "Mama Africa".

Closer to the performance time, Ras Mikey came in to rehearse his dance with the group while we rehearsed that particular piece. In this way we were still able to follow our normal rehearsal routine and manage our time adequately. The last two technical rehearsals came two days before the main performance. Unfortunately, on the first of the two days, Ozan was absent and that greatly affected that rehearsal because he carried the bulk of the responsibility of the group, always reminding and cuing other members on their various parts. Therefore, his absence was strongly felt. It was a good lesson though, as we understood that this could happen on the performance day proper if any member happened not to be there. That became a happenstance that we needed to be ready for. We had the cello player there for the rehearsals and were able to do a proper run through even without one of the musicians. The second "wet tech" rehearsals went well; every member of the group did their respective bits, there were a few retakes, but all in all, we were sounding good together. We discussed costumes, lighting, entrances and exits and the stage setting.

My role in the entire process was that of the organizer and producer, and my position as the teacher, mentor and friend to the enthusiastic members of the ensemble ensured the success of the performance.

Figure 13: ***A cross-section of the ensemble***

3.5 Feedback

One of the most crucial aspects of this entire performance as research process is the feedback from the participating students on their engagement with me my teaching approaches to indigenous African musical arts practice. I encouraged the students in the ensemble to keep a reflexive journal in which they record their thoughts, observations and feelings towards the entire process of preparing for the performance. This was not just as a possible feedback material for me at the end of the presentation, but also to help them assess their participation and reflect on their different roles and responsibilities both as instrumentalists in the ensemble and members of this small human community during the course of the training. It was essential for me that they imbibe and understand the essence of the community in practice and to appreciate the values of collaboration and interdependence within this music community. The key concepts which have been mentioned previously in this chapter and which are essential for their engagement in the teaching and learning process as well as their interpersonal interactions include individuality in community, minimality in profundity, spontaneity in creativity, space sharing, and the overall value of mutual respect and tolerance. These concepts emerged constantly during the course of the entire project, and they were not just discussed but also experienced both in the music and inter-personal engagements.

I will discuss feedback from four participants in the project; these four participants were randomly chosen to represent the different groups of students involved in the performance. These include a BA music and dance student (Nicole), an MA Ethnomusicology student (Stacy), the PhD dance student (Ras) and the MA Ritual chant student (Femke).

Part of Nicole Figueroa's opening paragraph in her feedback, established the sense of community that I made the bedrock of the engagement. She writes: "First of all I would like to comment that O'dyke made it clear at the beginning of rehearsals that we are all a community for the simple fact of being together in the room, regardless of our background or experience. We were all made [to] feel included and respected". This was necessary also for them to understand that everybody had a unique input to make in the performance. She went on to describe in her own words the teaching approach I had used and how effective she found it. She continues

> O'dyke's approach was very relaxed. As we began to play on the drums, O'dyke made sure to start slowly and used verbal sounds, for example: du, ke, du. O'dyke's teaching aids would have been: a range of drums, vocal and visual repetition, notated rhythms, and a constant pulse. O'dyke's tone-of-voice was always calm and cheerful. His instructions were clear and simple. If we did not understand (or had forgotten) a rhythm, he was patient and repeated it as many times as needed. I like the fact that he always played with us. In other words, he never left us in the "deep end". We were "safe" in case we made a mistake.

The importance of the pulse was always stressed in the warm-up exercises and in the learning of the pieces, this was intended to get the students to understand how the various rhythms are constructed and inter-related in the internal structures of a piece, to help them understand and embody the movement of the rhythm in time. Nicole emphasized this when she said "O'dyke had mentioned before that the pulse of the music is like our heartbeat and it "should never" stop. Hence this, in my opinion, became the core of the rehearsals and performance*"*. It was necessary to get them to understand that even though we had different rhythms happening simultaneously, it was important that they understood how the rhythms complemented each other in the ensemble work. I felt that this was necessary because they did not have the understanding and practice of polyrhythm as it is found in much of Sub-Saharan African instrumental music. Nicole expressed this in her reflection, stating that although there were different rhythmic patterns being played at the same time during the rehearsals, "we never got in each other's way. On the contrary, O'dyke

arranged the rhythms to complement and fill each other's gaps*".* Some of these were explained within the context of the "space sharing" concept. She acknowledged that one of the greatest challenges of the entire process was presented by the personal schedules of the students, especially during the exam period, and considering the fact that the students that made up the group came from different programs at the Academy. But she believes I was able to mediate that through *"his patience and general commitment".* Nicole also felt a strong challenge in having to memorize the entire repertoire for the performance, but according to her, "nonetheless, I quickly realized that O'dyke's teaching approach of repetition was very effective and I found myself not having to think about the rhythms because they came naturally*".* Despite the shortage of time, I believed it was necessary they repeat the different rhythmic patterns over a period of time in order to make it a part of them – the philosophy of repetition in music and life. The breaking down of each rhythmic pattern and understanding the relationship between the pulse and each rhythm, made the repetition an effective method, towards embodying, thereby internalizing the rhythmic patterns.

Stacy was a member of the ensemble; she worked with the group, although she could not participate in the final performance, due to the fact that she had travelled out of the country. She stressed the importance of situating the teaching and learning of indigenous African ensemble music within the appropriate context. "Rehearsals were a time for learning about the instrument and the cultural context of the music, both of which were necessary if we were to understand and appreciate African drumming and the ensemble*".* She also talked about the challenges she faced, this being her first time ever playing in an African music ensemble, some of those challenges had to do with learning the rhythm and reproducing it. In her words, "I must admit that at times it was difficult to understand the rhythms or overall structure of a piece that O'dyke was teaching, but for me, the confusion was usually straightened out in playing it and getting the sounds into my head and hands". The above statement seems to confirm that the effort at getting the students to embody the rhythmic patterns in the repertoire through oral transmission and learning by rote is an effective tool for the teaching and learning of African ensemble music.

Stacy went on to highlight the effectiveness of breaking down each piece into its melo-rhythmic components and teaching each section of drummers its pattern. This was followed by thematic layers being added gradually so that in time all drummers were playing and could grasp the structure of the piece. She responded to this approach thus: "I found this strategy quite effective

as it gave me an opportunity to hear all the parts individually and in relation to my own rhythms". It is a very healthy and crucial practice in indigenous African ensemble music to listen to other parts in the ensemble and their relationship to one's own inputs, as this helps to grasp the overall ensemble sound. It is also helpful in understanding the organization of the pieces, so that one is able to continue with playing a piece, even if any member of the group fails to play their part during performance. She pointed out particular difficulties she faced during the course of the project; some of these were generic to the entire group while some were personal to her:

> Difficulties I encountered in learning the music included my own unfamiliarity with drumming and poly-rhythms in performance, as well as carpal tunnel syndrome, which at times affected my ability to play; however once I became familiar with the rhythms given to my group, I was able to hear my part in relation to the other pieces, which was at times more helpful than words in explaining the pieces. Other difficulties included the time constraint on rehearsals and inconsistent attendance by some ensemble members.

Femke is one of the artists that I worked with who came from a highly skilled professional background. She is an accomplished professional singer who was completing an MA in Ritual Chant and Song at the academy. I approached her because of her professional profile, and knew that it would be easier to meet her where she was coming from as a musician. I report here her exact words in describing what the experience has been for her:

> The most significant performances of this semester for me, are ones that I have done to help others such as this PhD performance which had more challenging repertoire than any other that I have done this year, purely because at the beginning it was new, and to be honest quite athletic in terms of intervallic leaps and range. Technique wise, the challenges had to do with maintaining flexibility in the vocalic lilting sections which moved fast and demanded much precision of articulation and rhythmic enfaces. Balancing the vocal volume with that of the drum was less of an issue than I originally thought, as the performance space allowed for good projection, and because of its positioning of the seats, the acoustic was pleasant enough for me not to require any amplification, matching the muted volume of the drum without straining.

Due to her level of experience and expertise, I only had to assist her with breaking down a few of the fairly complex rhythms of the melody. She quickly grasped the melody of the pieces by the third rehearsal and we then concentrated on the interpretation of the pieces. According to Femke on interpretation: *"*Odyke gave me much artistic freedom in terms of interpreting the mood of the piece with vocal timbre, I thought it best to prioritize the clear articulation of the text so that the all-important poetry could be understood and reflected upon during the moment of performance". Contextualization was crucial in this piece, because Femke comes from a different cultural background. There was a need for us to understand each other as we worked on the piece. I tried

to understand her work ethic and style in order to avoid any barriers (cultural or otherwise) that might prove a challenge in the learning and performing of the pieces, and fashioned my style of engagement to meet hers. There was ample freedom in our interactions and engagements. I felt that approach must have proved successful from her observations on our rehearsal engagements. She writes:

> The rehearsals were full of contextual chatter about tradition, getting to know each other's method of working, and being generally social in a way that I feel Music making is and always should be. This of course also added to the level of enjoyment I felt in experiencing this repertoire, culture and personality.

The last feedback came from Ras, a fellow PhD Arts Practice student, whom I had worked with on a number of occasions before this performance. Because we had worked on other projects together and understood each other's work ethic, it was easier for us to engage successfully in this project. He took the preparation for the piece as an elective for his PhD work. We developed the dance component of the opening performance together, meeting once every two weeks, I explained what I wanted in terms of dance movement, and Ras interpreted it from his wealth of knowledge as a trained contemporary modern dancer. He listened in on the rehearsals on one or two occasions, and by the last three rehearsals, we had him rehearse the performance of his dance interpretation of the music as I had explained it to him. I gave him the liberty to use his experience to interpret my creative intentions. In other words, he was the conduit for bringing to life my intangible ideas about the expected dance. I will summarize his reflections on the engagement by pulling out the conclusion of his journal on our work together:

> In conclusion I think that this elective has been enlightening, in that my prior understandings of the important roles that everyone in a community plays in a performance, especially within the African Tradition. I felt as though O'dyke was successful with illustrating aspects of the African tradition and presenting them in a contemporary theatrical context. This has been a motivational experience for me as I have seen the potential of an African inspired performance ensemble at the Irish World Academy, and I look forward to developing my own African influences performance project next year. I will in no way attempt to recreate what O'dyke has done, as we approach our work from different cultural upbringings, but his influence on my perspective of what is African and African Diaspora art I will carry with me in my own creative processes.

In conclusion, my assessment of the outcome of this project in regard to reaching my objectives as set by my research plan from the onset has met those goals. The final performance itself went on as planned, with everyone involved accomplishing their respective roles to the best of their ability. The value base (as discussed in the preceding chapter of this work) which is a key focus of

this work has the following attributes: it is community oriented, collaborative, and deals with effective dialogue and transmitting of knowledge within a group. These values came to the fore in dealing with certain challenges encountered in this project, one of which was guiding students who have no background in African musical practice and its cultural context. This challenge had to be dealt with through dialoguing with them and exploiting their professionalism with respect to their musical background, strengths and skills. I therefore used the creative-performative norms that mark my African practice not to replicate a specific indigenous practice, but to create something that was meaningful for the community I was working with and in this case, students of the Irish World Academy in Ireland.

Figure 14: ***O'dyke in the opening piece Ojuodeda***

Let me recapitulate the specific goals set and assess how far we had gone to achieving them

- Experiencing the African sense of Community through music making
- Instilling humanistic Values
- Routine play-mode and Multicultural approach to learning
- Virtuosity

- Contextualizing an African ensemble experience
- Embodiment

From the feedback from the different participants in the project, I would say that the specific goals set seem to have all been met. The students showed that they understood the concept of experiencing community through music. Nicole Figueroa confirms this in part of her report where she stated the following: "Moreover, I believe I learned more about cultural context of the music: the groove, repertoire, sound, and concepts such as the importance of community and listening to the music as a whole". They understood and expressed the right attitude throughout the entire project. There was mutual respect and understanding and an appreciation of everyone's input. Interdependence was practiced and experienced during the course of the rehearsals. Participants were immediately ready to take up the part of any member who was absent during the course of the rehearsals. Values were also discussed shared and experienced, and the students exhibited these in their conduct during rehearsals and participation in the development of the performance pieces. There was an incident in which one of the students, who was quite an experienced bodhràn player, was given the phrasing reference role for all the ensemble pieces, save the drum ensemble. He complained during one of the rehearsals that he was not happy with the instrument (the bell) that he was playing. He said that his thinking was that he would have the opportunity to do a lot of African drumming in the project. I then explained to him the pivotal role of the phrasing reference instrument (the bell) in an ensemble, and that the reason I had given the role to him was because he exhibited a very strong rhythm sense and that I needed someone in that role who would be able to carry the group along. I had explained all these to them at the beginning of the project, but my reiterating this explanation gave him a stronger sense of purpose and from then on he played the instrument with much zeal, always remembering his cues throughout the exercise. At the end of the performance, he approached me to thank me for the kind of exposure and experience he had enjoyed during the course of the entire work.

The students also exhibited an understanding of the somatic experience of embodiment; this was reinforced and practiced through the warm-up sessions and the learning of the repertoire. It was actually after I watched the video of the performance that I saw how much the students embodied their respective roles in the ensemble. Nicole, who provided written feedback talked about how she enjoyed playing the gourd shaker (maracas) according to her report "I also had the opportunity

of working with a ‘shaker’ which I always wanted to do. I really enjoyed the sound it would emit. I was very happy that O’dyke gave me the opportunity of experiencing new instruments and rhythms”. Watching the playback of the performance, it was such a joy to see how she swung her feet and moved her body to the combination of her particular rhythmic pattern and the entire ensemble sound. Finally, the students showed a great commitment to the project, and despite the different challenges that we encountered, we were happy it did not break us, but rather made us stronger for the performance.

The performance to me was a great success as far as group dynamics and collaboration is concerned. The students exhibited a good understanding of and virtuosity on the instruments, and performed very well according to the script, which was evident in the way they were acknowledged and applauded by the audience.

In the 2nd performance to be considered in the next chapter, I faced a new set of challenges in bringing the project to fruition. The teaching and performance contexts present a radical contrast to those examined in the first performance project. It is now left to see how African students in Africa, who are also pursuing degrees in Western art music, will respond to my methodology and approach in the forthcoming performance.

CHAPTER 4: MODERN AFRICAN CLASSICAL DRUMMIMG: SECOND PhD PERFORMANCE

4.1 Introduction

"Theory-in-practice and humanity building structures mark indigenous pedagogy"

The pursuit of continuous development in skill and knowledge acquisition in music practice seems to be the core aim of music education the world over. This is encompassed in the theory and practice of music types both indigenous and classical. There are certain expectations and outcomes that are essential parts of the music education process, which when achieved, qualify the student as an accomplished musician. Western art music education is built around the theory and practice of art music with focus on reading and writing of music as well as its performance practice. Indigenous African music education is equally centered on the theory and practice of music, but by focusing on general musicianship (i.e. the ability to apply the fundamentals of a music practice bordering on knowledge, skill and the artistry of music making to a performance practice) and the specific knowledge of the performance practice involved in the particular music type in question, as well as the social responsibilities of the learners within the community. The mere mention of indigenous African music practice generally solicits the idea of a practical engagement with music making (singing, dancing, theatre and playing of instruments), and a teaching and learning process that is carried out by imitation. Music practices in indigenous African cultures are conceived as a holistic process that includes all aspects of the arts practice, hence my preference for the use of the term "musical arts", which encompasses music, dance, theatre, and materials of performance. In many music cultures in Africa, a generic term describes musical arts practice. This word would most times stand for the term "play" and will then require a verb to qualify the idea depending on what aspect of the musical arts practice that is being referred to. For instance, the generic term for "musical arts" in the Igbo language of South Eastern Nigeria is "egwu" (serious play). All components of the musical arts are then distinguished by a specific qualifying adjectival term typifying the nature of the noun "egwu", eg. "Igba egwu" meaning (to dance or dancing), "iti egwu (beat or play sonic music), "igu egwu" (sing), "egwuri egwu" (dramatic play or theatre). This suggests that a music teacher in tradition would be a practitioner of all the facets of the musical arts and, therefore, would approach the teaching holistically too.

In the contemporary teaching of African music theory and practice in third level education in the West as broadly conceived, some of the elements that are obtainable in the indigenous musical arts learning environment are lacking. In certain cases, the creative intentions, theoretical precepts, developmental parameters for the themes and subthemes, and presentation peculiarities which inform the musical practice are overlooked. More often than not therefore, African music is learnt and played abroad as well as many times in Africa for the euphoric experience that comes with listening to the music, and the sense of exoticism (whereby people take the art of playing the African drums for instance as an exotic pastime for the middle and upper class Euro-Americans, and now Africans too) that comes with the practice.

In this project I have approached the teaching of indigenous African music using a literate music approach, for the reasons previously argued (see Sub-Heading Chapter 2). True to the indigenous knowledge systems of the music practice as observed by the owners of the music in Africa, there are strong theoretical and philosophical underpinnings to the music practice, hence theory-in-practice and humanity building structures mark indigenous pedagogy. This is not usually shared by many of the would-be African music learners whether they be African or Western, who are more interested in the experience of the euphoric outcomes of the practice, than in its deep creative parameters and contextual imperatives. Musical theory and philosophy should be passed on to young musicians by example from real life experience by cognizant trained teachers. This in-depth method has now been adopted for the teaching of indigenous musical arts practices in a modern learning environment. At the same time in modern education practice the use of notations alongside the traditional learning by rote, which for the sake of this work I have termed 'literacy perspective' is also an imperative.

My approach to teaching drummers in this research work (the non-African music students and the accomplished African drummers) has been focused primarily on music literacy. This encompasses the learning of basic rudiments of music to enable the students to identify and understand aspects of conventional art music literacy necessary for reading basic music notation as well as applying the knowledge to the interpretation of the developed notation system for writing for indigenous African instruments. In today's interconnected world, many barriers to communication remain and musical notation systems are often key to widespread knowledge of specific music. Nevertheless,

we still must not negate the need for oral learning if we wish to reap the benefits of orality, such as spontaneous creativity (performance composition which energizes creative aptitude and self-presence), interactive learning, and creativity. Juniper Hill (2018) identifies oral transmission and informal learning as being helpful in developing skills in creativity. There is therefore a need to maintain a balance in the approach to African music literacy, ensuring that no relevant aspect of the indigenous music culture is lost through this acculturation process.

The focus of my arts practice research in music pedagogy, based in the epistemology of indigenous performance in Africa and its relevance in modern musical arts education and performance, will therefore go beyond the euphoric experiencing of African musical arts practice. It explicitly focuses on an understanding of the creative intentions, moral values attached, ethics, codes of conduct exemplars, and the overall expectations of the originators of this particular indigenous knowledge system experienced in indigenous African music pedagogy. The aim, therefore, is to harness these intangible elements and incorporate them in the skill and knowledge acquisition process, and this geared towards producing a contemporary musical exponent who approaches indigenous African music practice not just to attain exceptional entertainment skill levels in the playing of his/her instrument of choice, but to also attain a conscious awareness of the contextual (implications) dimensions of the practice, which implicates a holistic conceptualization of the musical arts practice. There are therefore certain basic humanistic virtues and social functions of African indigenous musical arts practice which determine theoretical constructs in indigenous African music pedagogy. These determinants form the basis of some of the underlying concepts and philosophies that inform the theory and practice of indigenous African music, such as sharing thematic gestalts for other person-consciousness/accommodation, (otherwise known also as the concept of individuality in community, where the macro theme is shared among players as micro themes which are played, each individual being conscious of the others' unique inputs towards achieving the whole). According to Nzewi & Nzewi (2007), African music generates compelling motive and psychical effects. The bipolar (tension-relax) juxtaposition of psychokinetic energy generated agitates as well as produces therapeutic effects, particularly in the active participants (p 236).

My second performance was designed to present a contrast to the first, challenging my proposed pedagogy in different ways. For the second performance I planned to work with a comparable set of African students in 3rd level education. This was not to be, due to the fact that I was not able to find an institution that accepted my proposal to work with their students, in my place of domicile during this research work. My attempt to work with three higher education institutions in Lagos did not materialize, either because of timing, as all academic activities for the school year had been planned and there were no more available slots in the timetable to accommodate my project or just the mere fact that the institutions were not interested in a proposal that required their students working on an African instrumental music studies, which they felt was irrelevant to the development of their students at that time. Due to these and many other logistical difficulties that I encountered trying to work in this environment, I was eventually able to settle for a dance drama presentation, working in collaboration with a traditional dance/instrumental ensemble group "White sands Ambassadors" based in Lagos. My decision therefore to work with an established African Dance Instrumental Ensemble made up of professional drummers and dancers resulted in the final work produced for this research work.

The musicians I worked with in my second performance are all accomplished African drummers and dancers. Most of them like many indigenous African instrumentalists, started playing their instruments from a very young age, playing in churches and community engagements, they learnt by observing older members of the society play and thus developed their innate musical capabilities. They would usually play on the adult instruments after musical engagements and rehearsals, getting periodic instructions and corrections from the older musicians. They thus acquired their basic playing skills on different types of drums without actually going through a formal learning process. This approach is very common in indigenous African communities (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p.3), where "a child performs side by side with the parent who is an acknowledged specialist in a knowledge field such as healing, pottery, instrumental music, farming, visual arts etc". They learn to play by observation and are given a free hand to practice on the adult instruments when they are not in use.

Armed with these general skills in specific drum types and a proficiency in creativity and mental thematic development skills, these musicians I worked with were now able to adapt these skills in learning and playing a wide range of drums as is found in the musical cultures of their direct environment. The leader of the troupe who is also the composer and instructor, himself teaches

members of his group the music types he wants them to learn. He also brings in other experts on other musical genres to run workshop with his troupe to teach them how to play particular music types. The playing techniques therefore exhibited by the musicians are of the highest quality and they have used these skills to provide a livelihood for themselves. They would usually belong to indigenous church choirs and play for commercial music groups. Most of them have other professions, mostly artisan work and would come together to rehearse and perform when they have concert engagements. Since they would get paid for these concert engagements, they are able to commit time to rehearsals and performances

This scenario above may have played out working with African 3rd level music education students, the reason being that most of the intakes into the institutions are already practicing musicians who are either session's men or singers, who have not had the opportunity to study formal music. Unlike the artistes I worked with though, majority of these students in the 3rd level of education may not really proficient in indigenous African music instrumentation. They would mostly have their expertise in western concert and popular music instruments like horns and string instruments. Their focus on getting into the 3rd level institution is basically to obtain western music education training and learn how to read sheet music and apply the knowledge to their music practice.

My advocacy for introducing indigenous musical arts practices in 3rd level institutions of learning is to offer a way to reclaim our rightful cultural heritage which has almost completely gone extinct. Making indigenous musical arts practices in Africa an integral part of the curriculum, will provide an avenue for indigenous music practitioners to share their knowledge and art with upcoming music students and serve as a preservative measure for some of these practices. The relevance of these practices can them be highlighted as it gains acceptance in institutions of higher learning.

My focus on a literacy approach to the learning of indigenous music instruments is informed by the need to find a sustainable model to teach, learn and preserve our musical culture. Documentation and transmission of our musical culture has been by rote and passed down from generation to generation through the practice, but with more and more people adopting a more urban lifestyle and coupled with the effects of Christianity and western education, there are less people interested in continuing with these practices. Therefore, as a result of this, the culture bearer and custodians are fast dying away without passing this culture to anyone in the communities.

Some of these practices are becoming obsolete and therefore it is only getting them into mainstream academic environment can we have a chance at sustainability. The devising of a notational system for these indigenous instruments is to enhance documentation and provide tool for teaching both in Africa and the globe.

The fact that these musicians I worked with in my second performance are not western music-trained, the key question addressed in the contrast between the first performance with western students unfamiliar with African music and this groups' lack of western music training remained. The pedagogical process in this second context I argue, in addition to the issues mentioned in the preceding paragraph, also demands an introduction to written drum notation and how to realize the performance of a score.

The initial focus on the theorization of African music implicitly in the notation made the first few sessions with them more academic in mode and less experiential than I had expected. Explaining basic rudiments of music, as constructed within the use of notation and its western referents, was necessary for the project at hand. My pedagogical approach focused on teaching the elementary rudiments of western art music (notes, rests, tone, time signature etc.) to enable them to recognize and understand written music and then relate it to what they knew and already worked with every day in their contemporary practice.

The students who took part in this second performance, as noted, were already accomplished indigenous African instrumentalists, which created useful parallels with the first performance. Whereas in the first performance, I was working with traditional and western-trained musicians of European decent, in this case I worked with equally accomplished traditional musicians of African origin. The significant contrast was not in their level of "native" musicianship but rather in the level of exposure to western informed music education. Both groups were introduced to the notation system I developed for scoring indigenous African melo-rhythm instruments and therefore the same pedagogical approach, while remaining sensitive to the contingencies of each specific situation. As described previously the approach employs the use of stories of experiential life exemplars to teach concepts which model the socio-musical process which enacts these.

I developed the story line for the piece, with a theme: "Save the Earth". One of the members of the group created a screenplay of the story line and supervised the theatrical direction and production of the piece. The choreography of the dance was done by the leader of the group. Nevertheless, I had a significant input into both of these domains. It is necessary to mention here that in indigenous African music milieu, total theatre sees no clear demarcation or separation of music, dance or theatre. According to Nzewi (2007, p.33),

> The quintessence of the African's indigenous concept of drama as total theatre is encountered in the performance of spirit manifest theatre that integrates music, dance and dramatic text (encoded in costume, mime, songs, recitatives, poetry, gesture, often through magical displays) and stagecraft.

We had our rehearsals twice a week for a period 9 weeks leading up to the recording of the performance. The main part of their musical learning process occurred with the teaching of the rudiments of music which are western in conception and flow from the demands of notation; it was not necessary to teach them drumming technique as they were already accomplished drummers. With this skill set, all that was required to create a piece, was for me to give them the theme for each instrument and they individually developed these themes into full music statements.

4.2 Classical African ensemble music

In teaching any African classical ensemble music piece I have decided to score the parts to help the students to see and remember their parts/roles as well as continually improve on their notation reading skills. The teaching approach and learning methodology also takes account of the ensemble education model found in music practices of some indigenous communities of Africa, which combine virtuosic skill acquisition, with training in moral values, towards producing responsible and respectable members of a community. Values rooted in concepts of interdependence and sharing, as well as concepts such as individuality in conformity, and profundity in minimality[14], which are found and practiced in indigenous African community practice are taught and experienced in my modern ensemble teaching and learning process.

[14] Making the small or compact creative element powerful and profound in composition is the forte of African music management of resources and energy. The development theory in African music prescribes creating prodigious effects with minimal creative resources. (Nzewi & Nzewi, 2007)

The institution and students

The White Sands Ambassadors group is an indigenous musical group based in Lagos Nigeria. It is made up of 6 drummers and 8 dancers.

4.3 Schedules and timetables

The timetable for the rehearsals was fixed for two classes a week from 9am to 11am on Wednesdays and Thursday's. This was broken down into ten minutes of a recapitulation of the last class activities and introduction of the new topic for the day. The timing was agreed upon to allow the participants to take care of other engagements, which included teaching engagements in some schools, as well as to allow them time for their group rehearsals for their professional dance company. The class activities for the first couple of weeks focused, as I have said above, on teaching the students basic rudiments of music (which encompassed western music note value systems, time signature, rests etc) and understanding the notation for Modern African Classical Drumming (i.e., the symbols used and their interpretations). The reason for this component in the pedagogic process is to offer the students more options in their professional musical career and in their regular group work and interactions. The world today is a global village and as such there is a need to be equipped for many more opportunities in intercultural exchanges across cultures and continents. It has then become necessary to prepare the students for possible interaction with music and musicians from other world cultures. In order for the students to be able to play with other music ensembles in collaborative ventures requires that they have a basic understanding of notation and its interpretation. It is also necessary for them in arranging works for performance in school sites where most of them offer workshops to learners. These reasons cited above have made the knowledge of basic rudiments of music essential to musicians on indigenous African instruments living and plying their trade in urban areas. In order to leverage this competitive advantage over their peers, musicians with this added knowledge skill will be quick to make this specialized skill known to directors of bands and orchestras, recruiters for music projects and producers.

In the old African cultures, musicians had other means of livelihood, and as such did not normally depend on their music making to survive. Music playing therefore was an added source of income for them especially when they had to fulfill engagements that took them away from their subsistence trades to conduct their clients' event-music contexts as per cultural requirements. They

were remunerated, in compensation for time off from their normal subsistence occupations. They therefore were not under the pressure today's musicians experience to find ways of financially surviving through their music. In traditional Africa, music making was not reckoned as full-time subsistence trade for specialist musicians in [15]event-music categories, they thereby did not depend on appreciatory public tips for a living. There were however a few itinerant musicians who specialized in music events such as minstrelsy in African societies, and would travel from place to place, making their music for a living. This is not entirely the case today. Most specialist indigenous music practitioners, especially those that dwell in the urban centers, survive in most cases through their music. They are therefore under obligation to make sure that they are continuously improving on their skills on their instruments and must maintain a high professional competitive standard in order to remain relevant in the market. This is one way to ensure sustainability in the industry, as there is no place for mediocre indigenous instrumentalists in this highly specialized industry. This then proves to be different from the aspirations and expectations of indigenous instrumentalists practicing in their rural environment vis-à-vis their urban center-based counterparts. This added contemporary skill set requirement has necessitated the need for some urban musicians to acquire notation reading skills that will enhance their sustainable development.

4.4 Teaching methodology

TEACHING PLAN

A course outline was specifically developed for this project and tailored to suit the circumstances surrounding Performance 2 and its accomplishment. The outline was designed to achieve certain outputs that will be discussed later. The outline includes the following sub headings:

1) Elements of music (implications of pulse, space, sharing, linearity, communality and individuality in artistic expressions)

2) Notation reading (reading and writing of notation for indigenous music instruments)

[15] The event-music idea is concerned with musical arts that ordered the issues of life, and specifies music types and usage

3) Meter (time signature, common and compound time)

4) Thematic structuring in indigenous African music (ensemble thematic cycle (identity), thematic development; internal variations, external variations, extemporization, improvisations, performance composition)

5) Ensemble instruments and their roles

6) Basic rudiments of music (bars, rests, dotted notes, time signature, tempo, ties etc)

7) Rhythmic structures and harmony from the perspective of Indigenous knowledge systems in musical arts performances in Africa

This list of focus areas in the training course outline has some parallels with the course outline for the first performance. The students from the Irish world academy although not having the same western art music challenges the African musicians have, still were not exposed to some of the concepts listed above. As much as they understood the basic rudiment, they still needed a conceptual understanding of other factors such as thematic structuring in African music, ensemble instruments and their roles etc. It was also necessary for both groups of students to understand topics such as African ensemble instruments and their roles, since both groups are not exposed to the theory of African musical arts performance practices, from a scholarly perspective.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

The selected artists I worked with are accomplished musicians (drummers and dancers) who did not have any Western music training. They have played the drums and danced for many years. Venturing into reading and writing of African music is a completely new concept for most of them. Having understood that their working experience was an added advantage, I capitalized on that knowledge and focused on guiding them in the interpretation of written scores over the playing techniques of the instruments. My main task then was to explain the note values, its representative symbols, how rhythm happens and how the progress of music through time is represented on a music score. Aspects of the theory of indigenous African music, such as the instruments and their roles in an ensemble, thematic development and structure, and form were also part of the theory they had to learn.

The approach I chose to teaching the students how to generate rhythm was to first get them to take into consideration the components of sound that make up make up the rhythm; the individual strokes that result in beats, and how they both work together in combination to create the rhythm. Successions of strokes and beats are arranged in a certain order to create the desired rhythm. These beats produced by striking the instrument travel through musical time in an upward and downward motion (pitch/tone) in space to create sound that is culturally acceptable; in other words, creating a melo-rhythmic passage. The phenomenon of "beat", which is found in every music culture around the globe, is a sonic stimulus that is achieved by striking a music instrument on a stretched membranous surface or on its body, blowing into an instrument or pulling or plucking a string, etc. These beats are then organized in a certain way using accent patterns to create rhythmic sequences of sounds that are recognizable and acceptable to a particular musical culture. Every indigenous knowledge system that is based on oral transmission of knowledge, would have a theory of creativity that enables the recognition of certain frameworks that identify what is culturally acceptable as music. These frameworks, when put together and executed, will cause the output to make musical meaning to every member of that society.

There are three interacting factors that are basic to musical meaning, according to Nzewi et. al. (2009). These three factors are stimulus (musical sense), receptivity (psychical tolerance) and response (musical intention). Stimulus – within a culture group, the organization of any musical creation should make musical sense to that culture. The ordering of the notes of a melodic instrument and the organization of the beats that produce rhythm in that culture must have recognizable attributes that makes that sound acceptable as music to the culture. Therefore, even though particular instruments can be used to create musical compositions across cultures, there is an understanding of musical parameters and organization of the sound that constitutes an acceptable musical sense in that culture. Likewise, psychical tolerance connotes the threshold of receptivity of sound produced by musical instruments in any given culture. The cognitive mental acceptance of a sound as musical sound. The musical intention goes to underscore the functionality of the musical creation and its ability accomplish its set goals and objective, which is achieved when the audience's reaction is in accordance to the expectations of the composer. He goes on to say that musical meaning:

> Is a philosophy of musical communication, which, whether or not articulated discursively in a musical arts tradition, is nevertheless inherent and perceived in how the musical arts is used and appreciated by the culture owners.
>
> (pp.5-6)

The organization of beats into rhythmic musical sound is subject to the creative genius of the persons within the culture. This culturally specific approach to musical creativity is informed by the environmental, natural, and cosmic influences within the cultural space. A musical beat in isolation therefore is not unique or peculiar to any group or culture, it is the way the generated beats are arranged in time and space that gives it identity. In the phenomenon of the creation of a rhythm, on the first level is the pulse, which is the consistent equally spaced impulse at which the music travels. The "beat" on the second level then becomes an articulation of the pulse in musical time. The rhythm produced on the third level can be described as patterns of accented beats, which of course can be organized at a higher level of cognition according to a variety of culturally specific ways of thinking about musical time and its markings.

The arrangement of the beats to create a melo-rhythm happens in time and space (the space being the height and depth of the tones generated as a result of tonality of the instrument played). Rhythm is created within an established timeframe that is subject to the manipulation of sound and silence in a deliberate manner that makes the rhythm manifest. These beats and silences are what constitute notes which are graphically represented, showing the flow of sound events visually, in the form of the written notations.

Embodied knowledge, according to Tanaka (2011) "is a type of knowledge where the body knows how to act (e.g., how to touch type, how to ride a bicycle, etc.). One of the important features of this knowledge is that the body, not the mind, is the knowing subject". This teaching and learning approach is well suited for and therefore adopted for this project. The students were taken through a process where their bodies were taught how to act in response to the impulse of the beats played over an underlay of a steady pulse. Their classes in the first few weeks then on understanding written music symbols, rhythm values and rest signs, and how they are written. We used simple rhythmic structures as musical examples which they had to interpret through keeping of the pulse with their feet while clapping the examples. We also sang rhythm structures observing the deep and high tones on a single membrane drum with mnemonics of "du" and "ke".

Note values

In order for the students to understand the visual symbols used in the notation, it was necessary to start explaining how duration is represented in musical notes to them from the value of the full note, down to the sixteenth note, which was the smallest value they would encounter in the compositions. Our focus was then on the quarter note as the basic unit of measurement of the pulse, an in-depth focus on the reason it is called the quarter note, how it is written and represented in the time signature. The approach used in teaching note time-value is described below.

I began teaching the students by explaining the phenomenon of pulse in music by analogy, as the heartbeat of the music, and established that for anyone to be alive, the heart must beat at regular intervals to pump blood to all parts of the body. I also explained that when one exercises, the heart beats faster, but still at a regular pace, which is still healthy. An uneven heartbeat reveals that something is wrong and needs to be fixed, while an excessively fast or slow heartbeat can also show that something is not entirely right. We need an even regular heartbeat to remain healthy, and when the heartbeat stops, the person ceases to live.

This analogy was applied to the phenomenon of pulse in music, leading each student to understand the need to have a regular pulse when music is being made. In order to physicalize and so ingrain this understanding for all musical examples and exercises, students marked the pulse and maintained it by lifting and dropping of each foot at regular intervals alternately. I went on to use another analogy to explain that a full note was like a fruit and one can visualize the half of the fruit and the quarter of the fruit. In the music we were learning to play, the quarter of the fruit then represents the "beat" as is found in the pulse. Because of the fast decay of instrumental sound from melo-rhythmic and percussive instruments, the notational appropriate basic unit of measurement for the beat becomes the quarter note. The quarter note, representing the main value of the pulse beat, thus becomes the basic unit for time measurement. With that established, I then went into the subdivisions of the quarter note, being the eighth and sixteenth note values, the quaver and the semi-quaver.

The pedagogical focus then shifted to the movement of music in time and how it is represented through graphic notation as musical bars. I explained that for easy comprehension and

interpretation of rhythm in a composition, there was a need for them to use the slowest note value therein as their unit of measurement. By doing this, they would be able to account for every note in the bar. In an example where there is a quaver represented in a 4/4 metered music, they were expected, for easy understanding, to count in quaver beats while at the same time maintaining the pulse rhythm with their feet. Therefore, for each crotchet beat they counted two quavers, which yields eight counts in a bar, while retaining the four crotchets beat pulse. This way they are able to account for the quaver notes in the bar. So, in the following one bar music example (fig 15), where the smallest note played is a semi-quaver, the students count in semi-quavers, four semi-quaver beats to a crotchet pulse. I represented the rhythm as it would be written out, and then used numbering from one to four, written under each crotchet pulse beat, to identify where the rhythm falls in relation to the rhythm. So, a dotted quaver followed by a semi-quaver will have the number "1" written under the dotted quaver and a "4" written under the semi-quaver.

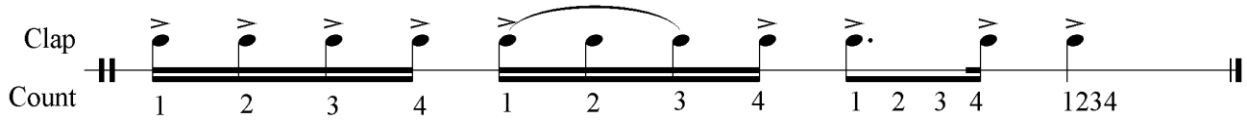

Figure 15***: Clap Count***

This process is done prompting the class to identify where the numbers will be written. This done, the students then have to keep the pulse with their foot while counting from "1 to 4" and then clapping at the count of "1" and at the count of "4". The students also use their body movement to fill in for the places where there is no rhythm going on so that all four semi-quaver beats are fully accounted for. This simple analogy helps the students to identify where the beats are articulated while maintaining the pulse of the music. This approach is taken to help them to understand the scored rhythms and to relate the graphic representation of the written melo-rhythm to the sound. The idea is to get the students to embody the interpreted written melo-rhythmic structures and to recognize the embodied phrase and interpret it if they come across it somewhere else. This approach works for the students who are mostly seasoned professional drummers, who are used to playing complex rhythm structures. When they have a full understanding of how these structures are written using the graphic elements adapted from standard western notation, they can easily identify these in their everyday music playing.

4.5 Rehearsals

The rehearsals consisted of four hours a week, broken down to two rehearsals a week of two hours each. The rehearsals began with a few minutes of movement and rhythm session, during which students repeated simple rhythmic patterns clapped for them to replicate while keeping time with their feet as described. This exercise was necessary as some of the participants were not in the habit of consciously keeping time while they played music. For most of them, the metronome sense is internalized in them when they play in an ensemble (Kubik 2010, p.32). But it is necessary for them to be conscious of their time keeping in order to play the written music. Thereafter we would have a recap of the previous day's class before going into the activities for the day. They then would start reading and playing their individual parts from the score, being mindful of entry points, breaks, repetitions, tempo and cadences. We made an effort to add a few more bars at every meeting while striving to perfect that which had already been learnt with as few mistakes as possible.

Notation

The following are the symbols for writing the above sounds used in modern classical drum music. Some of the symbols are also suitable for writing the sounds of some other African instruments that produce levels of tone instead of clear melodic pitches:

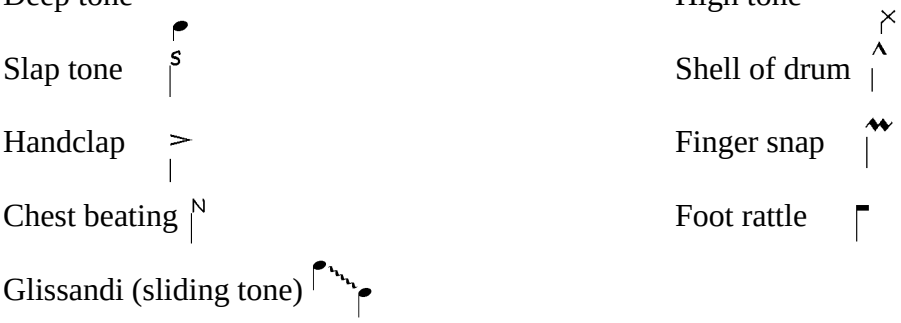

Figure 16: ***Symbols used in the notation of the drums***

> The Consistency of metric organizations, as well as the factors of rhythm and melody, make the conventional staff notation system adequate for writing African music performed on both the melody and the conceptually rhythm instruments. However, the indigenous African music milieu features a preponderance of melo-rhythm instruments.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p.20)

The notation for melo-rhythm instruments captures the levels of tone that have pitch essence played by the different types of drums. The staff notation has been adapted to capture the "unique concepts and sonic ambience of tone levels, the sonic characteristics of which differ from that of pure pitch" (ibid). The melo-rhythmic tone levels derive from cluster harmonics of the fundamental pitch generated by a struck melo-rhythmic instrument.

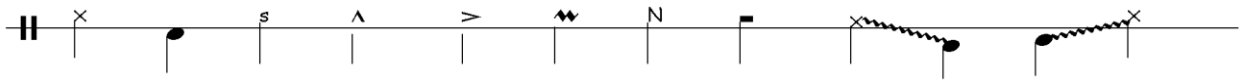

Figure 17***: The drum music symbols written on a one line stave***

Special notation symbols have been devised for representing the tonal levels of indigenous melo-rhythmic instruments as already stated. The notation makes use of the duration of conventional note values while adopting different symbols to represent the tones on the drum and other sonic expressions that form part of the classical drumming notation. According to Nzewi and Nzewi (2009)

> The tone level that a symbol denotes is relative. This derives from the relativity philosophy and principles that mark the African regulation of tuning, pitching, scale, key and tone row systems in indigenous music. The key or starting pitch that is convenient for a performer or all performers concerned is satisfactory as long as a particular cultural scale or tone row is not altered. The philosophy of relativity mandates the tuning of instruments before every performance.
>
> (p.20)

Graphically, the note head carries the respective symbols, while the stem indicates the duration of the sound played. The notation for rhythmic and melo-rhythmic instruments is written in a straight line. "The notation and rhythm score for a purely rhythm instrument - which is basically monotonic irrespective of dynamic shades and which is normally referred to as percussion - is written as a straight-line score with the symbol (x) or (·) on top of the appropriate rhythm sign". (Nzewi & Nzewi 2009, p. 21). This notation system was developed in the early 90's by Meki Nzewi and Odyke Nzewi. The development of this style came as a result of the Ama Dialog Foundation research projects, which started in 1993. The purpose of the Foundation was to conduct research that would lead to advancing the indigenous African performing arts so that they could be preserved (in the case of drumming), by notating the drum music and capturing the indigenous idioms that informed it to fit into contemporary strategies of music learning and performance.

A melo-rhythmic instrument produces two distinct tonal levels, or what could also be described as "two distinct pitch fundamentals". These two tones are usually a high-pitched tone that is generated by an open stroke on the outer rim of the drum membrane with the fingers, and a deep tone generated by striking the central area of the drum's membrane with slightly cupped palms. For such melo-rhythmic instruments, the stave is a one-line stave with an (x) written above the line to indicate the high tone and a (•) written below the line to indicate the deep tone. A closed stroke slap generated by striking the outer rim of the membrane of the drum with tightly held fingers, eliminates skin reverberation to produce a tone level sharper than the high tone is represented by an (s) written on the stem above the stave line also.

Modern African classical drumming has been conceptualized as a theatrical activity, and thus simulates dance and dramatic gestures in performance, thereby making the performance a strongly visual theatre. These other media have been integrated into the range of tones available for modern African classical solo drumming for concert performances. The dance component of performance and its dramatic gestures are part and parcel of the nuances of modern African classical drumming presentation. The integration of dance movement with sound production can be seen in the foot rattles that are tied around the ankles of the drummer and are stamped during performance to the rhythmic notation symbol for that part of the body. The up and down movement of the legs in performance, therefore, simulates the up and down movement of the feet in an actual dance. There is also the clapping of the hands and stylistic snapping of the fingers, which increase the tonal range of Modern African Classical Drumming (MACD) while adding to the visual appeal of the performance.

4.6 The pieces

The ensemble pieces are made up of a mother instrument solo section and an accompaniment ensemble section also described as the Ensemble Thematic Cycle (ETC). An ensemble texture is made up of varied interdependent thematic layers, which are unique in sonic character, as well as in duration and structure. These different, individuated thematic layers sound simultaneously, to produce a unique block of sound. According to Nzewi and Nzewi (2009), "this basic textural block of sonic logic is the microform, the normative African indigenous formal syntax that is recycled

to compose the macro-form of a piece during a performance session" (p.27). The ETC is thus perceived as the significant ensemble theme, which is *recycled* through the internal variation technique, which must not obscure the significant sounds. Recycling here is not perceived as repetition, again Nzewi and Nzewi (2009) explain recycling as having "philosophical and psychological intentions". And they go further to state that "normally a familiar human routine is not repeated exactly on every occasion it is performed, there would invariably be minor variations of the familiar frame of reference" (p.27). In a performance situation, all instruments of the ensemble may not start playing at the same time. Irrespective of when each instrument starts playing, there is a point where all the instruments in the ensemble have made their significant entry into the body of sound. By the time all the instruments of the ensemble have registered their sonic theme presence, the ETC is established, and a common ensemble starting point (ESP) will 'crystallize' for all the instruments. Nzewi and Nzewi (2009) note here that "the ESP is the point at which the respective starting points of all ensemble themes coincide, irrespective of the differentiated lengths and structures of themes, and also irrespective of the point in the ensemble performance time at which the various instruments join the collective musical action" (p.28). With the ESP established, the number of bars each instrument plays its theme before arriving at the subsequent ESP could vary within the ensemble thematic cycle.

> The ETC is thus a block of composite ensemble sound with beginning and end points. Its significant musicological content recurs successively for the duration of a performance or section thereof. The ETC is the basic ensemble form with which the contextual/event form is constructed.
>
> (ibid, p. 28)

The ensemble is made up of the following instrumental layers namely the mother instrument, the pulse layer, the phrasing reference layer, and the action motivation layer.

The pulse layer

> The pulse theme marks the regular metric feeling in the ensemble. It could occur in either common The pulse instrument repeats a theme that serves as the heartbeat of an ensemble. This gives an earthy or grounded feeling to the musical mood. The regular beat of the pulse theme focuses the structural identities of the themes played in the other ensemble layers.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p.7)

or compound time of two, three or four quarter notes per meter. Where the pulse beat moves in regular four counts, it could either be four beats in common time or in compound time. In this case, it will feel similar but will be written differently (fig 18).

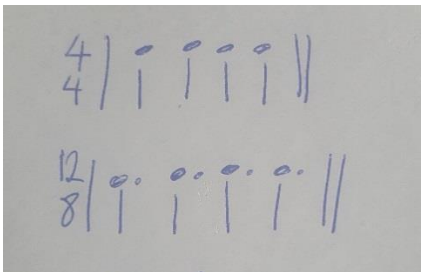

Figure 18: ***The Pulse theme in four beats in common or compound time***

Despite the role of the pulse instrument being to mark the ground or heartbeat of ensemble theme, which binds other instruments of the ensemble, internal variations could be introduced to aesthetically embellish the theme without distracting from its critical ensemble role. Still according to Nzewi and Nzewi (2009), "When the internal embellishment (structural fissions and fusions) of the essential pulse sense becomes busy, it marks the timing essence of a piece at the same time as it additionally incorporates the thematic role normally assigned to other ensemble layers" (p.19). The instrument of choice for the pulse layer would be a deep-toned instrument, and sometimes the deepest toned instrument in the ensemble. Its theme should not be structurally busy so as not to distract from its essential role as the "grounding pillar supporting other ensemble structures". The deep tone of the pulse instrument could be embellished with a contrasting sharp or lighter tone on the instrument. This could be achieved by striking the wooden shell of the drum (in the case of a stick played membrane drum) or achieved with an open tone (in the case of the large water pot drum or a hand played membrane drum). " Playing the supplementing fractions of the essential pulse beats on the same deep tone level of the main beat is not recommended unless the nature of the instrument or the playing technique discourages manipulating two levels of tone" (ibid). In certain cases, when the pulse theme has been established, it is at the discretion of the instrumentalist to add their own embellishment on the essential sound to help create a balance or to act as a fill-up if there are long rests between the notes of the theme, but this should not in any way affect the essential sound of the theme or distract from its desired objective. This applies to even pre-composed themes in a concert piece.

The phrasing reference layer

> The phrasing reference instrument plays a topos that acts as a guide beacon for the other ensemble members to determine the length and phrasing of their respective themes. The phrasing reference theme is sounded on a high, usually the sharpest, musical object in an ensemble.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p.7)

The phrasing reference theme is usually one bar in length. This is usually in a four beats a bar duration in either common or compound time (i.e. 4\4 or 12\8 time). The phrasing reference theme does not change thorough out the entire duration of the piece, and there is no provision for any form of embellishment of the theme. In relation to the pulse layer, "the phrasing reference role is a bipolar structural complement of the pulse role. Both roles have been discussed as synergizing to constitute the layers that give stability to an ensemble texture - the leg to root action that serves as the structures framing an ensemble composition" (ibid, p. 7). When the phrasing reference layer has been established along with the pulse layer, it creates a framework upon which other instrumental layers of the ensemble can then be built upon.

The action motivation layer

> The action motivation role can be assigned to one or more instruments in an ensemble. The combination of instruments can be of the same or different instrument types and species...The combined sonic character of any preferred structural combinations and arrangements of thematic layers constituting the action motivation role, generates the energy impulses that galvanize motive responses to a music piece.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p.8)

The action motivation layer constitutes the action level or frame of an African ensemble. This role could be played by either a melo-rhythmic, melody or a purely rhythmic (percussive) instrument or a combination of two or more instruments. The theme of the action motivation layer could be distinctively different themes of same or varying lengths played by two or more instruments, or could be one distinct theme shared/played by two or more instruments. "The length of themes played singly or shared could be of different lengths, which can be in the ratio of 2:1, 3:1 and/or 4:1 with the standard measure of the phrasing reference theme" (Nzewi and Nzewi 2009, p. 20). Where the nature of the relationship of the theme between two action motivation instruments is in a relay form, each instrument plays its own pattern and hands over to the other instrument. While one instrument has played its own pattern and handed over to the other instrument, it is often the case that the sharing instrument can play improvised fill-up patterns to enrich the overall sound of

the ensemble texture, but the fill-up pattern is not necessarily "taken into primary analytical reckoning in discussing the composition" (ibid, p. 20). To shed further light on the impact of the action motivation layer in the ensemble structure, "the action motivation sector combines with the ground sector to establish the overall textural, stylistic or typological carpet on which a solo composition can ride" (ibid, p. 20).

In summing up the role of these layers when properly integrated into an indigenous African classical ensemble music composition, Nzewi and Nzewi (2009) note that "the pulse and phrasing reference layers that prop up an ensemble texture, along with the role of the composite action motivation themes, generate the particular psychic energy (affect) that marks the music intention" (p.20).

4.7 Ensemble instruments

The choice of instruments for this project was based on the instruments available. Luckily the group I was working with has a good collection of percussive and melo-rhythmic instruments. That notwithstanding, there are certain characteristics that qualify an instrument to be deployed to play a particular role in the ensemble. This section will look at the instrumental roles and the class/types of instruments that would play them. Nzewi and Nzewi (2009) have given an overview of the instruments and I will adopt their descriptions for the purpose of this work.

Pulse instrument, otherwise known as the heartbeat of the ensemble, plays the father role in the ensemble. It guides and keeps other members of the ensemble in line as it provides the tempo and the base for the activities of the other instruments. Nzewi and Nzewi (2009, p.10) describe it thus:

> The pulse instrument is any deep sounding instrument, commonly the deepest sounding, in an ensemble. The ideal is generally a melo-rhythmic instrument such as a deep voiced membrane drum (single or double), a giant-sized bell, the bass wooden slab/s of a xylophone, or a large water pot. The skin membrane of a pulse-pounding drum is played with the hand or padded drum mallet. The wooden shell of a membrane drum played with a hard stick or ring provides a melo-rhythmic tone. The giant bell is played with a soft stick, and a felt is used to play the water pot.

Phrasing reference instrument is otherwise known as the timeline instrument and the baby of the ensemble. It has a regular theme that remains constant throughout the duration of the performance.

Its combination with the pulse instrument establishes the core of the ensemble sound, or the recognizable ensemble sound of the performance. Nzewi and Nzewi (2009, p.10) describe it as:

> Any portable sharp or ringing object that plays monotone can serve as a phrasing reference instrument. We recommend that the player should stand, and perform restrained dance motions, at least step lightly to the ensemble pulse. The music instrument and objects that are suitable include the clapperless iron bell or a bamboo stem struck with a stick, also a pair of sticks or stones or metal objects struck together. Shakers and rattles could also serve although they are more suited for the action motivation roles.

Action motivation instruments are sometimes described as siblings in the ensemble. They are constantly interacting between themselves sharing a theme or complementing each other's theme. They usually work hard in hand. Nzewi and Nzewi (2009, p.10) explain further

> These are a combination of different melo-rhythmic and melody instrument types and species available. Inclusive are all types of membrane drums capable of producing two or more levels of tone. Other instruments are the wooden slit drums, twin bells, flutes, horns, shakers, rattles, xylophones, musical pots, etc. In selecting instruments from the range available in a cultural location, care must be taken to blend the dynamic levels of the available instruments such that none is drowned out by the others. Any of the instruments identified above as suitable for fulfilling the action motivation intention can also be deployed as a mother Instrument depending on the nature and purpose of the ensemble.

Mother instrument otherwise referred to in other instances as the "master instrument" is actually observed and discussed as a "mother instrument" in most indigenous African cultures. Music is perceived to be feminine as it has the ability to fecund in the indigenous knowledge systems of many African cultures. Its ability to give birth to new creativity makes the instrument adopt that mother (feminine) role. It is the instrument that guides, directs, controls and marshals the activities of all the other instruments and actors in a performance situation, and thus takes on the responsibility of a mother in a household to nurture the creation. According to Nzewi and Nzewi (2009, p.11),

> The mother instrument is the most outstanding solo instrument in any indigenous ensemble sound, and could be either a melo-rhythm or melody instrument, including any keyboard instrument such as the xylophone, pot chimes, tuned drum rows and finger piano. The voice is, of course included. Apart from delineating choreographed dances or marshaling drama (particularly spirit-manifest drama), the contemporary mother role is not expected to conduct a utilitarian societal objective. However, the mother drummer can conduct emotions and audience participation that humanize and

heal spiritual or attitudinal indispositions during contemporary concert hall performances that derive from the intellectual authority of African musical arts.

4.8 REFLECTIONS ON THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF 2ND PERFORMANCE

The planning and execution of the 2nd performance was met with a lot of challenges, such that it was necessary to entirely change the trajectory of the performance. The initial plan to work with 3rd level students of music in an institution of higher learning in Africa would have given me a chance to apply my pedagogic approach to another set of comparable students in a comparable setting. I would have approached the students with the same repertoire of work that I had done with the Irish students and deployed the same pedagogic approach as was used with the Irish students. This would have given me an opportunity to better critique my pedagogic approach with a group that had similar music background but a totally contrasting cultural background/experience. At the onset of my PhD program, I had assessed the requirements were for the successful completion of the program and the award of a degree. I knew that I needed to have 4 years of in-person course work, the presentation of 2 performances and the submission of a dissertation. Bearing that in mind, I had made the necessary arrangements for my first and second performances. The intention was to have the first performance in Ireland, using students of the Irish World Academy, and the second in South African, using music students at a University of Technology in Pretoria South Africa. I had made arrangements with the head of music in the institution and we both agreed that it would be a good opportunity for the students to be part of this project and benefit from my knowledge and experience. We kept in communication until towards the time for the project to commence in South Africa.

I lost communication with my contact when I needed an official letter from them, which I would present to the Irish World Academy, to facilitate my taking my second performance to South Africa. With that lack of response from the school, I then decided to take my chances and take the project to Nigeria, to seek out an institution to work with. I wrote to different Universities in Lagos, Nigeria, and visited a few of them, with the view of achieving the objective of my project but was not successful. One of the Universities approached, Lagos State University, showed some interest in the project, but were constrained by the timing of the project, since the students were almost at the point of taking their semester exams as the school year was coming to an end. This caused a huge setback to my plans and put me again under pressure to find the students to work with.

In searching for an alternative, I came across the dance troupe with which I eventually ended up working. The dynamics of my second performance changed entirely when it became obvious that I would not be working with a formal music institution. I had to determine how to make my teaching approach effective given that I was now working with a totally different class of musicians. The first challenge was the fact that these people did not have any formal western music education, even though they were accomplished traditional musicians. This meant that I had to first of all start off teaching them rudiments of music and the modern African classical drumming notations. At this point, my whole plan for the second performance had changed from the expected goals of the second performance, to a different set of goals. I had to pursue a totally different objective from the original objective which was to assess the impact of my pedagogic approach working with western music literate African students.

In my desperation, I channeled my energy towards trying to present an African classical drum music concert, using the students at my disposal, even though they were not musically literate. That on its own was a tall task, as I had underestimated the challenges, they would face with reading music, hoping that since they knew and understood some of the rhythmic motifs found in African drumming (even though they could not represent these in written form), that they would not have problems interpreting these structures. I was wrong. We spent so much time learning note values and symbols, and also interpreting written music, that at the end of 6 weeks, we had not gone beyond interpreting simple rhythmic exercises on the drum. The project was costing me money, because I had to pay the students their transportation and also provide lunch to keep them committed. They would have otherwise been pursuing their livelihood during the times I needed them for rehearsals.

It was in this frustrated and confused state, that I decided to make a drastic change to the entire program and produced a storyline for the production of a danced drama presentation. My inputs in this were minimal, apart from offering some stage directions and the storyline, I let the group decide on the dances to be used, as well as the songs. Because of their expertise on their varied music instruments, I only had to tell them what kind of music and dance I wanted in the different dance scenes, and they produced that on their own.

Could this have been done differently to achieve better results? The answer is YES.

What Could have been done differently

First of all, I made the mistake of depending on only one avenue to actualize my second performance, ideally, I needed to have a second option or even a third, in case the first didn't work. This lesson in life has taught me to prepare myself for disappointments in whatever venture I am going into. If I had made alternative arrangements should my original plan not work, I would have had a second and even third option for my project engagement. I was domiciled in Ireland and was in constant communication with the Irish world academy, and as such knew that I had the buy-in of the college for the project. I had an assurance of participation from an African institution from the start of my PhD program and followed up with that arrangement, but at the point when I needed the consent of the institution to get approval for the project, I was disappointed. If I had lined up a second and third institution. That would have given me options to work with after my initial disappointment.

In a situation where all else has failed, I should perhaps have been able to deal with the outcome differently. I had taken the timing of this project for granted and could have planned better. When I left Ireland to go back to Africa for my second performance, I did not consider the time in the school year or the school calendar. That should have been the first thoughts, when it was evident that I could not complete the project in south Africa. My planning was not well thought out and that affected the entire outcome and hence the huge challenges that caused my project not to go as planned. Planning should be a key component of a project such as the one I undertook for the degree work; nothing should be taken for granted.

Finally with the caliber and class of musicians I eventually had to work with, I should have been more conscious of the fact that what I wanted to do was a research project, and the outcome even if not to my expectations, was still an outcome. I had erroneously tried to work towards achieving the same outcome as expected even given a completely differently scenario. The results of the performance project would have still given me an outcome that would have been analyzed and a conclusion drawn from it.

I had these accomplished musicians at my disposal to work with, I should have still gone ahead with the project like was planned and tried to see how my pedagogic approach would have worked with the group of students I had and documented the challenges with their understanding of western music. I would have still produced a performance, with new insights into how such a feat becomes possible or impossible. Applying the methodology of teaching by rote and memorization

of parts, which actually is the way these musicians learn, would have been a useful component of this research work.

In conclusion, I hope that the unfortunate mistakes I have made and the resultant effect of same will shed some light to future researchers on what not to do and how not to approach a project such as these, where some factors are not certain. Contingency planning becomes imperative especially working with institutions in developing nations and third world economies.

4.9 Conclusion

The preparation and presentation of Performance 2 provides insights to the challenges that have to do with the teaching of modern African classical drumming to musicians not trained in Western practice, theory, and notation. I faced a parallel predicament in both performance projects. In the first performance, the notation system and its concomitant musical theorization served to make the African music more accessible to students without previous African indigenous musical exposure and experience. In the second performance, it served to assist students with African indigenous music experience to transition from that context to a literacy-based setting featuring new compositions. How this system is introduced, taught, and used has been revealed as a key pivot point between two musical world views – as seen from opposite sides in the two performances

I will try to highlight some of the perceived benefits of scoring indigenous African music as well as some of the challenges in this section of the paper. The initial aim of embarking on the work of performance 2, was to explore adopting a literacy-based approach to teaching African drum music, and I had selected an indigenous music and dance ensemble that had no western music training for this purpose. The findings therefore have shown that there is merit in exposing young African indigenous musicians to Western music literacy tailored to suit their music and environment, towards preparing them for a globally interconnected world. The feedback I got from the students who participated in this second performance project was quite compelling. Though they had been encouraged to keep journals, they did not, due to time constraints and the need for them to get on with their daily routine in their chosen professions. The feedback was verbal, and I made it a point to make notes whenever I had discussions with members of the group. The musicians pointed to the fact that they felt the need to be more enlightened about Western music literacy and its

application to their music. They cited examples of occasions when they had been invited to audition for international music ensembles and had been given scores of their music parts and were asked to go prepare it and come back the next day, the music director then played back a recording of each instrumental part for them to hear. Some of them were dropped due to their inability to interpret the written score, but the more intelligent ones had memorized their parts when a recorded version was played to them and retained. Although they were looking at the sheet music, they had no idea what it was all about. This project has accorded them the opportunity to understand how western music notation works and prepared them for a launch into the interpretation of scored music. They also noted that due to the fact that in this notation system they had to deal mostly with representation of rhythm, which sometimes happened over two or three tonal levels (from playing melo-rhythmic instruments). It was easier for them to grasp and assimilate this notation than standard western staff notation in which music moves both vertically and horizontally. The overall feedback on the importance of the rudimentary western music component vis-à-vis its adapted model for the African drums was a welcome development for the students and they seemed quite enthusiastic about having an opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills in their music profession.

Though I had to settle for a dance drama production as my final performance, (this was because there was not enough time to go into preparing the ensemble pieces in the Classical African Drumming text book used), we were still able to explore their music reading skills as we prepared a separate scored music piece which was a special "Birthday song" composed by Meki Nzewi and arranged by myself, for performance by White Stones Ambassadors, for a state presentation. The parts were scored, and the score distributed to the musicians, who each had to learn and memorize their different parts. For the performance, they were at liberty to apply different forms of thematic development to their given parts, using external variation techniques such as improvisations, which involved the use of established thematic elements given context-inspired external thematic extension, but being careful to constantly restate the original theme. This reflects this indigenous musical principle of *Performance composition* in which the mother musician has to recompose a known format to capture the exigencies of a performance situation. *Internal variation technique* allowed the musicians to develop within their established themes, altering the structure internally without affecting the length of the theme.

There are other notational systems that have been developed for the African membrane drums. Some have been based on the conventional note value system, while others are quite different. For example, MACD notation, mentioned previously, was developed at the Ama Dialog Foundation for the classical drumming genre was created out of an effort to try to capture the performance nuances of an African performance situation so that the notation could be used as a score in performance. Previous notation systems, such as the TUBS notation that was fully developed by Koetting (1970) were designed to be used for transcription purposes in a field situation; the notation we developed is conceived principally for compositional purposes. In ethnomusicological discourse, this contrast is known as descriptive vs prescriptive notation.

> Negotiating advancement in scholarship and performance on the drum and related instrumental music mandates a written repertory and therefore, the rationalization of devices for notation…we have rationalized notation symbols for modern classical drumming, within the ambit of representing rhythmic constructions in conventional music writing.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2007, p.6)

This notation system has made it possible to graphically represent thematic ideas on paper in form of scores for a wide range of indigenous African instruments; it is also very convenient in transcribing field recordings and teaching drum music.

Simha Arom asks a pertinent question concerning the notation of African music using conventional western music notational system: "It may be reasonably asked whether it is not improper to notate music so different from our own with the same signs?" (1991, p.172) His following answer addresses that concern, and also provides a rationale for adapting this notational style to suit our purpose as is demonstrated in the MACD notation: "…Experience quickly shows however, that the parameters we have mentioned as relevant (pitch, duration, period) can be easily expressed by conventional notation".

We asked ourselves the same question as we created a notation for the classical drumming and argued that there was no gain to be had in trying to re-invent the wheel. We could rely on already existing widely applied notation systems and their graphic conventions, adapting these to suit our purpose while at the same time giving a real representation of our intentions. It became obvious

that if one could interpret written rhythm, then all that was needed would be symbols to represent the different tonal and extra musical possibilities on the drum. All that would be left, then, was to provide a key to the symbols in use. Arom properly articulates the difference between descriptive and prescriptive notations in relation to African music specifically.

> A score in this case, is a reduction to writing of an acoustic event which has already occurred. While the score of a work of cultured music is the link between the abstract thought of the composer and its materialization. The score of music from an oral tradition is the link between living musical reality and an abstraction.
>
> (Arom 1997, p.173)

It can then be said that traditional Africa's reliance on oral tradition worked well for the preservation and transmission of knowledge over the years and is still working in many? parts of Africa. However, there is also a need to be able to put musical ideas and inspirations down on paper, whether it be as a new composition for indigenous African instruments or as a recording or transcription of existing music pieces. But as much as possible, in written compositions for African indigenous instruments, provision should be made for performance-composition as is practiced in tradition. This may be accommodated in form of sections in the composition in which the performers are given the liberty to improvise, extemporize or re-compose sections of the pieces as determined by the performance context.

There seems to be a strong desire among the participants in performance 2, Africans themselves, to be Western music literate, but most of them had not had the time, opportunity, or resources to enroll in proper music programs, but rather depended on opportunities such as this for such study. The model I introduced to them offers a workable option that allows them to quickly adopt and apply the western musical knowledge being taught them to their existing musical knowledge and practice. Some effort was made at teaching them some rudimentary terminology that would help them in remembering and embodying these western ideas and concepts. There were still challenges for some of them in fully grasping the concept of note values, although if there was an opportunity to continue the training over an extended period of time, they would most likely have a full understanding of all note values in music practices. They were nevertheless encouraged to keep practicing on their own.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I need to assess if the intent of my research focus on *investigating fundamental African indigenous creative theories and philosophies, for application in contemporary music education* has been properly justified. I also need to ensure that the key expected outcome of retaining the essential African pedagogic philosophies (which incorporates theory-in-practice as an essential component in teaching and learning of music) has been achieved by adopting a practice-based educational philosophy, deriving from African Indigenous Knowledge systems.

A comparative analysis of the first and second performances will be carried out in this chapter, to determine the difference between the two performances in terms of the pedagogic process, content and genre, and the impact of the methodological approach in dealing with western student (Irish traditional music students) and African traditionally trained musicians who are not western-music trained or enrolled in any tertiary institution. Whereas teaching Western trained non-African students using the African Indigenous Knowledge System's (IKS) informed methodology achieved its purpose from my research point of view, the second performance which was supposed to involve teaching Western trained African students in a tertiary institution using the same pedagogic approach could not be achieved. The main objective in the first performance was to work with students who have had no prior training in African indigenous music performance practice, towards producing a performance of indigenous African music compositions as well as intercultural compositions, adopting an indigenous pedagogic approach for knowledge transfer. This objective was met, and has been discussed in the chapter three of this work. The initial objective of the second performance study on the other hand, which was to work with a parallel caliber of students, this time Western trained African students of music in a third level institution in Africa was not achievable. The inability to work with a third level institution music students for the second project slightly changed the dynamics, but did not really affect the objective of the pedagogic approach. The main difference was that the students used were already proficient indigenous African instrumentalists, but still had to be taught using the notation developed for teaching African music as well as a particular teaching approach.

The performers I eventually used were already accomplished traditional musicians with no Western music training. They were taught a western derived music notation for interpreting indigenous African melo-rhythmic and percussion instruments. Therefore, I do have case studies that could be used to make necessary comparisons and conclusions necessary for this study.

The first performance was designed and developed to explore the possibility of approaching the teaching and learning of music using an indigenous African pedagogic approach. This approach took cognizance of the fact the students may not have had any direct experience with playing African music and therefore necessitated the teaching of playing techniques and methods of sound production on the instruments used in the project. It was necessary to contextualize the learning experience in order for the students to have an embodied experience of the music type they were playing. There was a lot of contextual information passed on to the students during the course of the lessons, to help them fully conceptualize the performance scenario and to have the desired mind and body disposition. As much as using proper playing techniques, expertise and remembering of their parts was part of the overall objective, the pedagogic process also focused on the underlying cultural education perspective, which implies the connection between the individual behaviors and the structures of the society in which they live. The methods used taught values and codes of conduct which are embedded in the structures of the philosophy guiding the music practice. These were also employed to illustrate and convey to the students the societal expectations of individuals in relation to the community and how the community in turn is meant to interact with individuals in the African world view. The pedagogy is meant to provide an experiential learning process that explains life philosophies through the music's form and structure. The same philosophies that guide the life of the people in the community are those that guide creative process and execution in the musical arts practice of the indigenous African societies already discussed, including the philosophy of individuality in community and profundity in minimality. Individuality in community refers to the knowledge practice that accepts the individual attributes and peculiarities of each member of a community and how these contribute to the overall output of that community. Every member of that society is expected to express self without unbalancing the fundamental base of that community. The notion of profundity in minimality, on the other hand, implies achieving great depth or expression of insight or knowledge with minimal use of creative elements at the disposal of the musician, and employing such minimal thematic

idioms to create captivating thematic development in the presentation. There needs to be a full grasping of the context of the music, understanding of the expectations of the audience, and a thorough knowledge of the music event or event music that is being marshalled for the mother musician to achieve profundity in minimality.

It is necessary to mention that in old African cultures, such as the music cultures of the Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria, the music learning process was also an avenue for mentoring, molding and developing the character of the students into good and exemplary citizens in the society. According to Nzewi,

> In indigenous Africa, the musical arts become a subtle but prodigious supernormal force that transacts the issues of life, health and death. At the indigenous musical arts sites, human and societal systems are queried, negotiated and sometimes effectuated musically. The musical arts generate a conducive, spiritual disposition for engaging with sensitive issues of life. It is practicable to rationalize the same aspiration into the philosophy and methodology of contemporary musical arts study, performance and discourse.
>
> (Nzewi and Nzewi 2007, p.v)

Part of the reason for this being that musicians in the old Igbo culture were perceived as spiritual beings who bore the burden of the conscience of the community and were believed to speak only the truth about the happenings in the community, which they expressed through their music practice. Therefore, it was expected that musicians had to speak the truth at all times, as misrepresenting facts in their music could be catastrophic in the society. They were social commentators who reserved the right to speak up and speak out against wrong doings in the community irrespective of who was involved. It was believed that whatever they said through their music was accepted as the 'true' account of events as they have been mandated by the Supreme Being to protect the vulnerable in the society, and to represent the conscience of the society.

Differences in approach in 1st and 2nd performances

> African musical arts **is** a science of psychical and physiological health. It does not promote flippant entertainment aspiration . . . Performance is more a matter of engendering benevolent spirituality, and thereby humanizing connections than pursuing the fantasy of technique. Every part of the human body is by instinct, musically intelligent, and could be automatically expressive in musical arts production. Hence Israel Anyahuru (1976) explicates that the hands gain the creative 'intellect' to compose by sheer reflex once a person becomes adept on an instrument: "Not every

> compositional sequence played by the hands is mentally calculated"16. The brain, however, remains the intellectual hub that brews, formats, sensitizes and conforms creativity and execution. (Nzewi & Nzewi 2009, p.1)

This research work was inspired by the research aim stated previously, to develop ways to apply indigenous African creative theories and philosophies (as previously investigated and articulated by my father and I in a number of publications) in contemporary music education. These creative theories have been applied in the preparation of the two performances and the outcome of this approach is discussed in this chapter.

The two different sets of students used in the preparation and production of the two performances come from different backgrounds, but they have one thing in common, and that is the fact that they are accomplished musicians in their own right.

My practical research premise was to stimulate a dialogue of cultural orientations in the context of updating historic African knowledge tenets among two culturally different student groups. The approach was one directed towards collaborative creativity and interactive learning rather than a more conventional western formal "teacher student" relationship, in which the role of the teacher is primarily prescriptive. Normally the Western pedagogical approach can be understood as prescriptive (control driven), leaving little room for incorporating and interacting with students' compatible knowledge backgrounds as well as capabilities. This remains the case despite the arguments made by Western music educators for amelioration of this alienation of teacher and student. It is the fact that these remain arguments rather than implicit models that demonstrated the continued dominance of what I refer to here as Western music pedagogies. My approach aims to counter this educational model, still widely ensconced in African institutions of higher education. It employs techniques such as expanding the innate musical capabilities of every student explained in detail in the chapters reporting on Performances 1 and 2. My approach involves first, eliciting the cultural and knowledge background of the group of students, thus establishing a foundation for collaborative learning interaction. Then I explain the humanistic values and musical principles underpinning my practical transmission of African culture applying a design that performatively bonds with compatible other-cultural inputs. The pedagogic approach, which

16 Israel Anyahuru was the foremost, articulate Igbo traditional mother musician who mentored Meki Nzewi on the philosophy, theory and human meaning of the African indigenous musical arts. The quote is from transcribed recordings of his insightful testimonies on African indigenous musical arts.

included collaborative creativity and interactive learning, accorded me an opportunity to contextualize the musical experiences of the students to represent an African music setting within the classroom. A typically African setting would be characterized first by the students sitting in a circle or a semi-circle. This was deliberate and necessary in order to have the collective energies of the group pooled together in the center. We employed warm up sessions with rhythm, movement and clapping, before we dug into the day's learning. Rhythm structures and thematic statements are notated using the [17] MACD notation system for interpretation by the students. This proved helpful for writing down the different themes to be worked on, and to be used as prescriptive notation, as my approach required the students to apply selected thematic development techniques to their given themes. These selected techniques include internal variations on a set theme, external developmental techniques, improvisations, and the use of repetitions.

The rehearsals usually began with movement and clapping exercises before we would go into the portions of the pieces that posed challenges, singing through the parts with the vocalist, before playing the complementing drum part to the singing. Our conceptualization of the pieces was not that of a typical voice and accompaniment, but rather was composed as two independent lines of music complementing each other. The tonality of the drum, makes it possible to compose melo-rhythmic lines to complement the melodic vocal line that also incorporates strong rhythmic idioms as well as vocalic lilting. The rehearsal sessions were also characterized by lots of discussions and stories about music making and performances in Africa, the presentation contexts and performance concepts. This helped the student to better embody the music and to give it the best interpretation to the best of her ability.

Although there were instances where the themes and lines were notated, most of the teaching happened by rote and imitation, and the rehearsals in all cases were characterized by discussions, stories, examples, life lessons and experiences of the teacher. The students therefore were thus able to contextualize and conceptualize an African performance environment, and apply this to themselves.

[17] Modern African Classical Drumming (MACD) notation is a notation system developed by Meki and Odyke Nzewi for notating and composing for African melo-rhythmic instruments. It employs symbols and western music note value systems written on either a one line or multiple line stave, depending on the tonality of the instrument

There were similarities in the execution of the second performance and the first. The students I worked with in the second performance were accomplished traditional musicians in their own rights and were mostly operating as professionals. However, unlike the first group, they were not in a formal academic institution. They were equally engaged in a learning process, the learning of new songs, instruments, dances and theatre. They also had no foreknowledge of western music education and thus did not read or write music. All their previous teaching and learning has been by rote and imitation. In order to give the students, the skills needed to read the drum notation used for this project, I started with teaching them basic rudiments of music that would be necessary for the reading and understanding of scored African instrumental music. At the same time, there was a great effort made in teaching the theory of the fundamental elements and concepts of African musical arts practice to the students. These include the practice of community in musical arts performances, the humanizing intentions of the musical practices, the guiding principles of creativity, functionality of music, creative theories and philosophies, creative intentions, the interconnectedness of the different siblings of the musical arts namely music, dance, theatre, and the visual arts, and the more technical issues like form, cadence, phrasing, repetition, ensemble practice, etc. These formed the bedrock of the engagement in the first few weeks alongside the learning of the notation system. The first few weeks also focused on identifying and interpreting the MACD scores.

It is imperative that the discourse on African music scholarship be approached from the perspective of the owners of the culture to reflect the intentions, motivations and rationalizations of their music practice. Two pertinent questions are asked by Nzewi (2007, p.69) and answered to rationalize the need for the discourse on African music to be approached from the perspective of the music owners who have a well thought out philosophical-theoretical basis governing their musical arts practice and creative ideologies.

> Are there indigenous philosophical-theoretical premises that inform musical thought, composition and performance in African cultures, and which remain viable for modern classroom education and creativity? The answer is **YES**! Otherwise the systematic formulae that identify a musical sound as African, at the sub-structural level, and from there distinguish music cultures, styles and types in Africa would not have been possible. Is there human or ideological justification for negating the existence of indigenous theoretical formulae or discourse, while using Western conceptual and theoretical perspectives to study and analyze uniquely African music formulations? The answer is

> NO! And the result is a mis-perceptual load of misinterpretations and misrepresentations of African musical philosophy, thoughts and creative procedure. African music theory is inculcated primarily as a practical experience-driven enculturation. There are verbal discourse and terminology as well. (Nzewi 2007, p.69)

Nzewi argues that African music can and should be studied using theories and models deriving from existing African indigenous knowledge systems for the musical arts practice. Terminologies, ideologies, philosophies, examples, formulae, language and creative indices etc, should all be African IKS derived to ensure that little is lost in terms of content and context. This brings to the fore, the needs to contextualize African indigenous music studies in music education, to allow for a proper understanding and embodiment of the music practice in question, since it has been established that African music theory is "*inculcated primarily as a practical experience-driven enculturation*" (ibid).

The focus of my PhD research as alluded to in Chapter Two, has been on "re-appropriating" indigenous African performance epistemology for classroom music education, and this includes adopting indigenous teaching and learning methodologies appropriate for the cultural environment in most of the schools in Africa, in order to overturn the deliberate colonial era suppression of indigenous music cultural practices, while promoting the exogenous music culture of Western art music. The approach I used in the preparation and execution of both the first and second performances of this PhD work is informed by African Indigenous Knowledge Systems for music education. It derives from my personal learning experiences working with indigenous teachers in the Igbo cultural environment. As observed during one of such training in Ngwa community of South Eastern Nigeria, my teacher spent long periods of time telling stories of happenings in the community, both recent and past. He told topical stories of previous performances and what occurred in these performances. It was important that I understood the context in which these performances happened, what informs the thematic development, and what prompts the creative principles of the music type. This enabled embodiment of the creation process and subsequently the performance concept. An embodiment of each theme helped me to remain cognizant of the other themes, and the developmental processes that went with each piece.

The use of indigenous music practitioners is necessary in institutions of higher learning, for the proper understanding and contextualization of the music practice for the students. Blacking (1965),

on the use of human resources (culture bearers) as found in World Music Pedagogy, makes a case about the matsige of the Venda in South Africa. According to him, "the matsige are recognized and his presence in a district inspires young admirers to practice to attain his level of expertise". This then gives credence to the need to employ the original culture bearers as teachers in institutions of learning. Their approach and methodology are as credible as those of Western music educators. Their approach, though different, delivers more than the conventional pedagogic approach does in terms of the values and codes of conducts embedded in the learning process in African IKS.

This thesis focused on investigating the epistemology of African indigenous performance practice and its relevance in modern classroom music education. I embarked on two performance projects aimed at using my performance practice as my case study. The two performances were focused on adopting an indigenous knowledge approach to the teaching and learning of indigenous African music. The preparation of the two performances has demonstrated that the application of this pedagogic approach in contrasting contexts is possible. A deep and introspective engagement with the epistemology of African indigenous performance practices provides a viable model for musical arts education pedagogy, a model that is informed by indigenous knowledge systems of African performance practices. What remains is to formalize this approach alongside those reviewed in Chapter 2 /3 such as Orff, Suzuki, and the others mentioned, a step that would facilitate its wider adoption, something that is specifically to be desired in the modern African context.

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