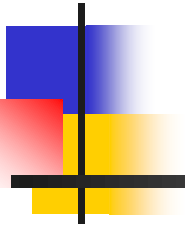


Reflections of an Unapologetic Commercial Nollywood Filmmaker



AT THE
1ST NIGERIAN ENTERTAINMENT
CONFERENCE
2013

Film industries are characterised by their unique *political economies*. *Ukpong 2008*

POLITICAL ECONOMY ... “social relations, particularly the power relations, that mutually constitute the production, distribution and consumption of resources.” (Mosco, 1996)






Nollywood's

Shoestring Successes: *Of enterprise and glocality*

“NOLLYWOOD ... is the story of hope, resilience and glamour ... of the explosive success of Nigerian filmmakers' reliance on [digital] video instead of film, reducing production to a fraction of the cost while reaching its local and global audience.” (Franco Saachi, 2007)





NOLLYWOOD IS THE NAME BY WHICH
THE NIGERIAN MOTION PICTURE
INDUSTRY HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO
THE WORLD IN THE PAST 15 YEARS

IT IS A PHRASE COINED BY A
JOURNALIST OF THE WASHINGTON
POST WHILE TRYING TO PROPERLY
DESCRIBE THE UNFOLDING
PHENOMENON IN NIGERIA



The Nollywood Edge

- Industry thrives in its originality and non-conformist approach to filmmaking.
- Industry and its practitioners are consistently adapting to a wide range of economic challenges within the operating environment.
- Seeks to be inventive and innovative in its entire filmmaking practices.
- Nollywood seeks to entertain a mass audience in search of more socio-culturally relevant stories.
- Industry defines technology's impact on the its operations.
- It appears to thrive best in rough economic times.



THE ODYSSEY

- FOLLOWING THE DECLINE OF CINEMA IN NIGERIA.
 - GOVERNMENT COLONIAL MENTALITY
 - IMPROPER DEFINITION OF WHAT WAS NIGERIAN /AFRICAN CINEMA – FRENCH, INDIAN, CHINESE, AMERICAN, BRITISH
 - ART FORM, FUNDING, AUDIENCE, CONTENT-MESSAGE
 - LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE NIGERIAN AUDIENCE
 - AMPECA, INDIAN/ LEBANESE DISTRIBUTORS
 - FAILURE OF THE NIGERIAN INDUSTRY TO FILL THE GAP
 - THE THRIVING OF TV DRAMA



NIGERIAN TELEVISION

- TELEVISION ENJOYED FUNDING
 - GOVERNMENT, CORPORATE, DONOR AGENCIES
- A LARGE CONTINGENT OF HIGHLY TRAINED AND MOTIVATED PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE
- PRODUCTION WAS DISTINCT AND UNIQUE
- DISTRIBUTION WAS EASY AND CONTROLLED
- NIGERIAN TV PRODUCTIONS CULTIVATED A LARGE TV AUDIENCE WITH LOVE FOR INDIGENOUS DRAMA ART FORMS
 - COCKCROW AT DAWN, TELLY MOVIES, FOR BETTER FOR WORSE, MASQUERADE, SAMANJAH, VILLAGE HEAD MASTER. THERE WERE PRODUCTION FESTIVALS – NIFETEP, NIFEST ETC
 - VIDEO WAS BORN



THE INDEPENDENTS

- THE SUCCESS OF TV SPAWN A GREAT COMMERCIAL MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITIES
 - ADVERT AGENCIES, INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION COMPANIES,
 - INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS MAKING SOAP OPERAS AND TV SOAPS
 - MIRROR IN THE SUN; RIPPLES; CHECKMATE
 - TALENTS WHERE EMERGING FROM EVERYWHERE AND EVERYONE WANTED TO MAKE A SOAP. – AIRTIME WAS CONTROLLED; SPONSORSHIP BECAME COMPETITIVE.



THE VHS/VCD REVOLUTION

- THE HOME ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY WAS AT THIS TIME RAVAGING CINEMA/TV WORLDWIDE.
- EVEN HOLLYWOOD WAS AFFECTED.
- NIGERIANS LOVE ELECTRONICS AND THE IMPORTATION OF VHS MACHINES WAS PHENOMENAL. VHS WAS SUPERSEDED BY VCD. THE ASIANS FOUND NIGERIA A DUMPING GROUND FOR VHS TAPES. ELECTRONIC DEALERS HAD CHEAP TAPES TO SELL. THEY DID NOT EVEN HAVE TO PAY FOR IT. THEY HAD MARKETING MONEY TO PROMOTE IT.
- THE PROBLEM WAS HOW TO SELL IT FAST ENOUGH



NTA'S BLUNDER

- THE MONOPOLY OF THE NIGERIAN TELEVISION AUTHORITY BECAME ITS OWN ALBATROSS. THEY HAD TOO MUCH MONEY, THEY FELT THREATENED BY INDEPENDENTS; THEY FRUSTRATED AND FINALLY BANNED THEIR STAFF FROM ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PRODUCTION
- THEY IMPORTED ANCIENT MEXICAN SOAPS
- THE STAGE WAS SET



NOLLYWOOD IS BORN

- WITH A POPULATION THAT LOVED ITS OWN PRODUCTION DISENFRANCHISED BY NTA
- A DEJECTED ILL NTA MOTIVATED WORKFORCE
- A TEAMING POPULATION OF PEOPLE WHO WANTED EXPRESSION ON TELEVISION
- TRADERS LOOKING FOR HOW TO SELL THEIR TAPES
- KENNETH NNEBUE, AN ELECTRONIC DEALER PUT THE CHAINS TOGETHER AND LIVING IN BONDAGE IS BORN – LARGER BUDGET THAN TV PROGRAMME



THE ODYSSEY

- PEOPLE CONSUME LIVING IN BONDAGE
- KEN MAKES MILLIONS
- EVERYONE WANTS A PIECE OF THE ACTION AND GETS IT
- PROFESSIONALS STAY AWAY IN CONTEMPT
- ELECTRONIC TRADERS NOW FOUND WHAT TO PUT ON THE BLANK TAPES. – LOCAL AND FOREIGN FILMS
- All of us became film makers.
- “To God be the Glory”



REACTIONS

- THE PEOPLE EMBRACED IT
- "FILM MAKERS" HATED IT – JEALOUSY
- GOVT. INDIFFERENT
- TV IGNORED IT
 - THEY ONLY JUST REALISE THAT THEY ARE BATTLING FOR AUDIENCES
- THE YORUBA FILM INDUSTRY REMAINED CONSISTENT
- SOME PROFESSIONALS SAW IT AS THE FUTURE AND JOINED
- FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DID NOT FEEL IT
- ACADEMICS HAD DISDAIN
- PEOPLE INVADED IT - "OVER NIGHT FILM MAKER"
 - I HAS A SCRIPT
 - MY LINE IS NO MORE WORKING



MY ODYSSEY

- I JOINED
- I ALREADY HAD A PRODUCTION COMPANY WHICH WAS MAKING PROFIT WORKING ON TV. MY COMPANY MADE MORE MONEY WORKING ON TV.
- WE UNDERSTOOD THE MASS MARKET
- WE STARTED LEARNING FILM
 - ITS AESTHETICS
 - ITS BUSINESS
 - ITS TECHNOLOGY
 - THE FUTURE



BUSINESS PLAN

- WE INVESTED IN TRAINING
- WE CHASED TECHNOLOGY
- WE DEVELOPED OUR BUSINESS MODEL
 - HOLLYWOOD, BOLLYWOOD
 - DO NOT REINVENT THE WHEEL
 - GOVT. INVOLVEMENT – POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE
 - BETTER DISTRIBUTION – REDUCED PIRACY
 - INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT –
 - TRAINING
 - NATIONAL GUILD SYSTEMS
 - INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE
 - BUILDING STRUCTURES FOR THE FUTURE
 - TOTAL FAILURE



THE BOOM

- TV PRODUCERS MADE MONEY OUTSIDE SPONSORSHIP/NTA CONTROL
 - COULD AFFORD THE BETTER THINGS OF LIFE
- BECAME EXTREMELY POPULAR & CELEBRATED
 - CURTSEY OF THE PRESS/ADORING AUDIENCE
- AWARDS/TRIPS ABROAD
- DID NOT DEVELOP THEIR ART
- TOOK THE MARKET FOR GRANTED
- ASTRONOMICAL GROWTH IN PROFIT FOR THE ELECTRONIC DEALERS PROFIT
 - SETTLED HIS BOYS AND LET THEM LOOSE
 - WANTED A LARGER SHARE OF THE PROFIT
 - DECIDED TO PROTECT HIS INTEREST
 - ALL THE GLORY WAS GOING TO THE PRODUCERS
 - BECAME A FILM MAKER – TO GOD BE THE GLORY



RIPPLE EFFECT

- 24 Disc Replication plants
- 150 cinema screens
- 119 TV stations
- 3 DTH pay TV platforms
- 8 exclusive Nollywood channels
- Over 1m retail points (general merchandise)
- Advertising revenue for radio, TV stations
- Contributions to Gross Domestic Product of the nation; taxes,
- Staple Viewing all over Africa and the Diaspora

CULTURAL IMPACT



- Massive local Music industry
- Renewed interest in the local culture – costume, food and locations.
- Creative expression of the self/filmmakers
- Socio-cultural expression of our diverse cultural heritage
- Socio-cultural identification with Nollywood movies by Nigerians, Africans & the Diaspora
- Local Film festivals, Awards, Markets and Expo's
- Emergence of Local Actors as Heroes and Heroines, Continental brands and Ambassadors.
- Socially relevant programmes for TV stations



ECONOMY

N3.15bn in direct production expenses per annum

N5.25bn in direct release expenses per annum

N522bn contribution to national GDP per annum

Estimated \$200m+ in foreign exchange per annum.

Over 300,000 new jobs in new skills areas - creating massive employment opportunities.

Successfully capturing a growing international mass audience through effective storytelling.

INDUSTRY PLAYERS

- 
-
- WRITERS
 - PRODUCERS
 - DIRECTORS
 - ACTORS
 - EDITORS
 - CINEMATOGRAPHERS
 - GRAPHIC/ANIMATION ARTISTS
 - PRODUCTION DESIGN
 - ELECTRICIANS
 - SOUNDMEN
 - MAKEUP ARTISTS
 - COSTUMIERS
 - PRODUCTION MANAGERS
 - LAWYERS
 - ACCOUNTANTS
 - DRIVERS
 - CARPENTERS
 - HAIR STYLISTS
 - PR CONSULTANTS
 - PUBLICISTS
 - IT TECHNICIANS
 - SOFTWARE EXPERTS
 - SPECIAL EFFECTS
 - ARTISTS
 - WELDERS
 - JOURNALISTS
 - REAL ESTATE
 - VIDEO RETAILERS
 - VIDEO RENTALS
 - CINEMA OPERATORS
 - INVESTORS
 - EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
 - DISTRIBUTORS



THE REVERSAL

- GOVERNMENT CAME. – INVITATION TO ABUJA AND ITS BENEFITS
- THE PRESS HYPE CURTSEY OF THE FILMMAKERS
- THE FILMMAKERS BELIEVED THEIR OWN HYPE
- THE FAITHFUL AUDIENCE IS TAKEN FOR GRANTED
 - TRIES TO MAXIMIZE PROFIT; FILM AS CONTAINER; PART 1, 2 TO PART 8
- TECHNOLOGY CHANGE - VCD COMES IN
- FOREIGN INTEREST COME
- TV RESURGED WITH DEREGULATION
- THE TYRANNY OF THE ASSOCIATIONS
- ARM CHAIR BUSINESS ANALYSTS
- THE BANKS CAME
- QUANTITY VS QUALITY DEBATE
 - WHAT DOES IT MATTER
 - TRAINING IMPLICATIONS
 - DISTRIBUTION IMPLICATIONS



STATE OF THE NATION

- PRODUCTION IN DECLINE
- MOST “PROFESSIONALS” HAVE GONE ON TO OTHER BUSINESSES – FILM FESTIVALS & MARKET, FILM POLITICS, POLITICS OTHER LINES TV, GOLD, SCHOOL, ETC
- GUILDS AND ASSOCIATIONS ARE SNORING
- THE GOVERNMENT IS “INTERVENING”
- RESEARCH WORK IS ON GOING
- AFRICAN MAGIC & PIRATES FROM ASIA
- DISTRIBUTION IS INADEQUATE
- TELEVISION IS BOOMING ONCE AGAIN

THE FUTURE

**THE MODEL IS ON THE MOVE
AND TRAVELLING FAST**

**THE MOVIE INDUSTRY IN
NIGERIA IS READY FOR LINEAR
GROWTH**

**THIS GROWTH SHALL BE
DRIVEN BY INFRASTRUCTURE
REQUIRED TO SERVICE THE
EXISTING MARKETS AND THE
NEW MARKETS WHICH ARE
DEVELOPING**

RESTRUCTURING THE GUILDS



THE FUTURE



NOLLYWOOD SHOULD BE READY TO MAKE A QUANTUM LEAP IN FILM MAKING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

NOLLYWOOD SHOULD TAKE ON THE RELATED RESPONSIBILITY OF MAKING FILMS FOR MODERN AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION, EDUCATION, CULTURE PRESERVATION AND DISSEMINATION OF NIGERIA.

WITH NEW MEDIA DELIVERY SYSTEMS SUCH AS BROADBAND INTERNET NOLLYWOOD WILL LEVERAGE THE PENETRATION, IMPACT AND RELEVANCE OF THE “MODERN DAY MIRACLE” THAT IS NOLLYWOOD



OUT OF THE ASHES

- I BELIEVE...
- TRAINING IS GAINING GROUNDS – THE NEW BREEDS ARE COMING
- BANKS ARE FUNDING - Yellow Sun
- DISTRIBUTION IS ON THE FRONT BURNER
- GOVERNMENT IS LISTENING
- TECHNOLOGY FAVOURS THE NIGERIAN FILM MAKER
- GOOD FILMS STILL SELL
- ... THE FUTURE IS NOLLYWOOD