



**T**HE world over, manifestations of the energy and versatility of a people's art have catalyzed the growth of showcases, as much as the phenomenon of modern art has inspired global art-focuses, festivals and biennales across New York, Venice, Sao Paulo, Paris, Florence, even Dakar and Johannesburg, celebrating prestigious art fashions and styles.

In Nigeria, the vibrant forms evolving off or with the celebrated Oshogbo arts, the Uli and Ife schools, classical or avant-garde contemporary modes are either overburdened by 'primitivist' considerations, a distortive 'modernizing' art elite reduced to the limits of Western aesthetics or the lack of a network integrating the numerous flowering taking place.

When instances of coordination present themselves, they occur more like jamborees of sound and reputable confusion neglecting the insights that braid historicity and contemporaneity, diversity of expression in

different media, with the intersection of identities that give character to art forms as cultural icons.

An art event, ART EXPO NIGERIA 2002 is a necessary intervention for the Nigerian visual art industry. For a country overladen with creative talents, very little is known about the proliferating artists adding novel colors and perspective to its artscape, those inhabiting the cutting edge of innovation, and speaking in new visual languages. This, therefore, is borne of the need to expose these various artistic styles, unique techniques and materials used.

Scheduled to run through the summer of 2002 and introduce a cast of artists from the Northern, Middle, Western, Southern and Eastern parts of the country, the EXPO will, utmostly, draw attention to the wealth of Nigerian 'classical' and contemporary



*Art is Africa , art is the air we breath, from the rising up to the going down, from the tangible impliments of domestic living to the inimitable flairs in movement and mannerisms, styles of speech and systems of oratory and music. The existential spaces enhanced by graphic depictions of legends and idioms, artistic nodes had always interspaced the every intent and purposes*

arts and the peculiarity of these artistic diversity. The scope of the expo mandates its conception as a composite of views from various segments of the visual art industry - the traditional schools, modern primitives, postmodern styles, while the presentation emphasizes organic curating pulling together essential turns in print, photography, installation art, sculpture etc into a unique encounter. Thus, the visitor will be afforded an experience of the finest of art interacting across media, their provenance and variety at a single occasion.

Significantly, like other important art centers or focuses, the city of Lagos will be on offer as gateway to a renaissance that has crept in and coalesced quietly, while forms capable of altering the direction of or

ways of relating to modern art are on exhibition.

At another purposive level, this recalls the time-long wonder: "does African art have the dynamism to transform and re-interpret the old or bring forth more interesting new reflections?" - a date with ART EXPO would clarify and extend this.

For artists, galleries, art collectors, patrons, and critics who believe the imagination can push so far, enquiries should be directed to Onyemaobinna Offoedu-Okeke, [artexpo@hotmail.com](mailto:artexpo@hotmail.com).



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# NIGERIA 2002

*Where do we go from here?*