

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART IN WORLD OF COLOURS

By
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Minister of Tourism, Culture & National Orientation, Chief Edem Duke (M) flanked by DG, NGA, Abdullahi Muku (R) and Chairman, Governing Board, NGA, Barr. Hipo Onwuegbuke

The Minister of Tourism, Culture & National Orientation, Chief Edem Duke was in his elements reminiscent of his days as a broadcaster. "The National Gallery of Art, (NGA) has set the ball rolling by charting a course to embrace the global art market," he began, voice sonorous. There was pin drop silence that Wednesday evening at the Shehu Nusa Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja. On stage with him were the Director General, NGA, Abdullahi Muku and the Chairman, Governing Board, NGA, Barrister Hipo Onwuegbuke who simply smiled in acknowledgement of the compliment.

Duke continued: "The unveiling of the Abuja Biennial is just a route; a modest ceremony laden with expectations of the eventual creative enterprise. Beyond the unveiling lies the actual Abuja Biennial, a global event that will assemble the best creative minds from all over the world on the soil of Abuja. The Biennial opens the double window of opportunities to international artists, tourists and patrons whose presence and patronage are capable of energizing our economy."

Then with the smoke machine emitting a cloud of smoke enveloping the stage and pyrotechnics, the Minister unveiled the Abuja Biennial Logo to a thunderous applause from the audience. "I implore you to regard this official logo unveiling as the beginning of a bigger global event that has the capacity to contribute immensely to the larger pool of economic diversification," the Minister added.

In concept, the Abuja Biennial logo captures the free spirit, the unrestrained energy and the eloquent vibrancy of the art event. The array of colours shown in the arc and semi arcs

explores and captures the different colours of international flags of different countries and people of the world. These colours are classified “World Colours” to create a general sense of belonging in all participants even though in different sizes to reflect the truth that artistically the International Community is in constant motion of creative progress in a relentless quest for excellence. The free hand text of the logo means beauty of a free mind while the red vivid brush stroke symbolises the burning desire for change-a positive change within us-that will impact meaningfully and positively on our various cultures and peoples as a whole.

According to Onwuegbuke, Board Chairman, NGA, the logo is not just a design but a symbolic representation of a global convergence of artists, art scholars, enthusiasts and more on the city of Abuja. “Abuja Biennial is designed by NGA as a bi-annual artistic fiesta to draw participation of artists from Nigeria, Africa and other parts of the world in response to yearnings of the Nigerian Visual art Community,” he explained, adding: “one of the objectives of the Biennial is to create awareness and a platform to reposition Nigerian art among the comity of nations and galvanize our overall national development. The Abuja Biennial was mooted by the NGA as convocation of productive and prodigious creative minds from all over the world so that artists of the finest stock will converge in Abuja with the sole aim of cross-fertilizing diverse creative emotions for the benefit of our Tourism and Creative industry.”

The Abuja Biennial is billed to hold in the last quarter of 2015. Present at the logo unveiling were: the Directors General of Centre for Black & African Arts and Civilization, (CBAAC), Sir Ferdinand Anikwe and National Institute of Hospitality & Tourism (NIHOTOUR), Mrs Chika Balogun; the Executive Secretary/CEO, National Institute for Cultural Orientation, Dr. Barclays Ayakoroma; former DG, NGA, Dr. Paul Dike, and the Cultural Attaché, German embassy, Dr. Burkard Weth among other dignitaries.