

Emeka Ihenacho, ex-Minister's son, shines at Mr. World pageant

Stories by BRAIDE DAMIETTE



•Ihenacho

Rhodri Emeka Ihenacho, the second son of Capt. Emmanuel Ihenacho, foremost Master Mariner, ship owner and immediate past Minister of Interior, emerged as one of the favourites at this year's Mr. World competition held at the prestigious Kent Event Centre in the United Kingdom.

This year's Mr. World, which began on November 9 and held for two weeks, had its grand finale on November 24. Rhodri represented Wales at the competition having emerged the winner of the prestigious Mr. Wales competition held late last year at St David's Hall, Cardiff, Wales, and United Kingdom.

19-year-old Emeka, until his sudden rise to fame, was a finishing 'A' levels student, graduating last summer from the prestigious Monmouth Public School, preparatory to entering the university. In emerging as Mr. Wales in 2011, Emeka who at 18 was

the youngest contender in the field of 19 finalists, faced very stiff challenge from the 18 equally talented and gifted competitors but, however, emerged the youngest ever winner of the Mr. Wales pageant.

With his emergence as Mr. Wales 2011, in addition to the attractive pack-

age of prizes, which came with the position, Emeka acquired additional opportunity of acting as a Charity and Goodwill Ambassador for the Joshua Foundation, fronting events on behalf of the foundation and promoting its goodwill causes for the 12 months.



•Ihenacho (2nd right) with other contestants

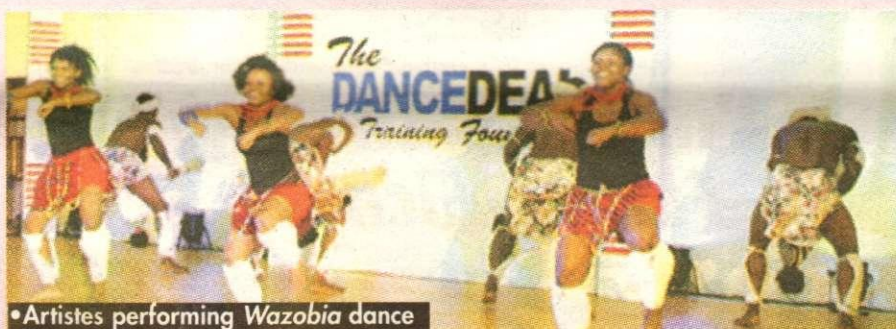
DanceDeal Foundation berths in Lagos

It was excitement galore when the first set of professional dancers from DanceDeal Foundation an initiative of Corporate Dance World showcased their talents in various dance styles at Terra Kulture in Lagos.

The dance styles are: choreography, Latin & Ballroom, contemporary African dance, Broadway, Hip-hop, indigenous Nigerian dance, among others.

DanceDeal Foundation is designed to create a haven for dance in the country and help talented individuals gifted with dancing to maximize their potentials and carve a niche for themselves.

Some of the guests that graced the occasion include Vice Chancellor, Lagos State University, Prof. Dapo Obafuwa, Provost, Lagos University Teaching Hospital



•Artistes performing Wazobia dance

(LUTH) Prof. Folashade Ogunsola, Mr. Fela Durotoye, Mrs. Lai Koiki of Greensprings Schools.

Mr. Bimbo Obafuwa, Dance Director, Corporate Dance World, said, "the foundation is geared towards providing free and professional dance training for talented

dancers across Nigeria. It will bridge the gap between professionalism and half-baked dancers in the arts and entertainment industry.

Segun Lawal, a partner and Fellow of The Kennedy Centre for Performing Arts, said: "Even if the necessary facilities for dance

are available in the country, professional management of arts still poses a threat and remains the greatest challenge in this part of the world. The concept needs to be driven to maximize young talents."

The Evening of Dance initiative rekindled the spirit of creativity in several individuals as talented dancers' showcased exact realities and experience, using drama story-lines of activities in the Nigerian environment.

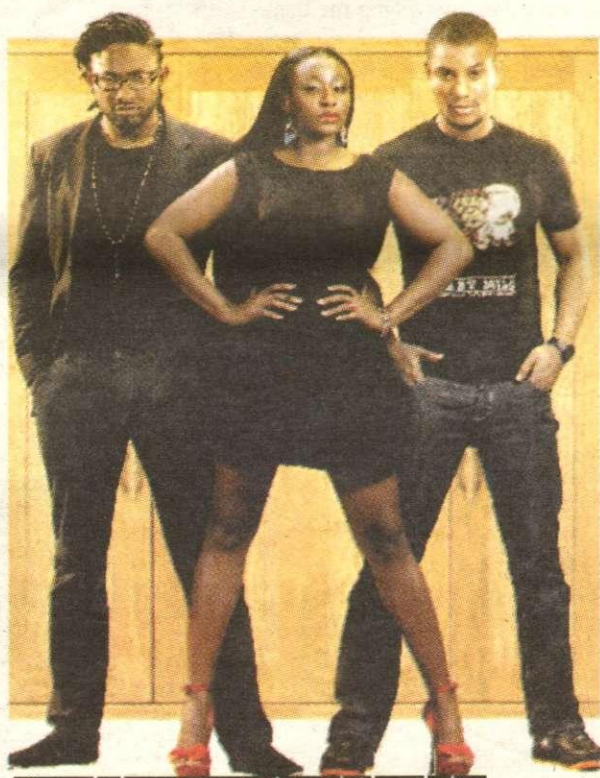
The group of dance graduates performed a dance drama to relay the historical revelation behind the concept of noise, vis-à-vis the art of silence. The Foundation intends to offer trainings and workshops nationally and internationally through partnership packages, where individuals can learn other specialized genre of dance like gumboot, Bollywood, Masai, Kwaito, American Rhythm and Smooth Standard, Show Dance and Afro-jazz to mention a few.

In The Cupboard with Desmond, Caroline

Nollywood is an industry that depicts different things to many people. To some, it is a hotbed of substandard productions and untalented artistes which should be encouraged as a self-sufficient sector that creates hundreds of thousands of jobs for an ever burgeoning socio-economic class.

Nollywood seems to have reached a saturation stage, where every movie is like the other – no difference, no freshness, same old stories, same old actors and definitely, the same old reaction from its steadily disenchanted audience. But there comes a time when a few bright sparks, blaze the trail and leave their other contemporaries choking in a cloud of dust.

Delivering big-budget movies though, is not enough. Does the audience connect with the movie? Do they understand what goes on? Are they able to relate to certain themes that the movie speaks about? Does the movie have unforgettable characters, those that transcend individual and cultural boundaries? This is perhaps how a successful movie is judged. Do people in Sierra Leone, for example, love a movie that was produced by a Nigerian? And vice versa. Herein lays the question.



•Nwachukwu Uti, Ini Edo and Alex Ekubo

Desmond Elliot's *In the Cupboard* and co-executive producer, Caroline Danjuma is a great example of how a movie transcends national boundaries; but yet resonates with its indigenous audience.

In the Cupboard, is a story that revolves around the lives of six siblings born into the rich, aristocratic De Souza family; a name synonymous with wealth and power. Everything seems perfect in their lives until their father dies unexpectedly and all of them comes together from different parts of the world to stay with their mother, the elegant matriarch Veronica "Ronnie."

Desouza played by legendary actress, Biola Williams. What ensues is a series of events that threaten to shake the family to its very foundation.

Why does the movie stand out from others? Besides stellar acting by most of the cast – Ini Edo, Uti

Nwachukwu, winner BBA, Ghanaian actress, Lydia Forson, Biola Williams, Alex Ekubo, and others, the movie tackles subjects that are hitherto seen as taboo in the Nigerian context.

Issues like drug use and adoption receive the full beam of the producers and somehow make those subjects more believable and relatable. The inclusion of actors from Ghana and Senegal adds a true African authenticity that is becoming more prevalent as time goes on; and this definitely signals a positive development and perception for movies that come out of Africa.

Perhaps as a nod to the exceptional nature of *In the Cupboard*, the movie has received five awards since its release in August. They include Best drama, Best Original Story, Best New Actor and Best Supporting Actress at the 2012 GIAMA Awards in the USA.

It has also won the Most Promising Actor at the 2012 Best of Nollywood Awards. Resting on its oars, the Elliot and Danjuma released the movie on DVD last Monday, November 26.

The movie is marketed by Denziot Productions brand.