
Quality Assurance in the Creative Enterprise: An Appraisal of Select Plays of Emeka Nwabueze

Canice Chukwuma Nwosu & Emeka Nwosu
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Abstract

Live performances on live stage, the mother medium are no longer common sights in Nigeria. Thus, the waning influence of the live stage in the nation's contemporary theatre practice is becoming a newly found but embarrassing tradition among young and even some old theatre practitioners. Hence, the problem of this study is the lull in different stages and sectors of the creative industry that led to the decline in live performance. Poor creativity is one of the cancerous worms that is eating deep into the fabrics of the vibrancy of contemporary African theatre practice. Commercial interest, sexploitation and peripheral creativity are now the order of the day. Thus, the aim of this study is how to assure quality in the creative process through adherence to theoretical provisions, professionalism and finesse in the creative process; reinforced with indebt knowledge of the practitioner's worldview. Objectives include drawing the practitioners' attention to existing theories and aspiration towards a robust, vibrant and entertaining live theatre. To achieve this creative process based on a marriage of theory and practice; two of Emeka Nwabueze's plays, Guardian of the Cosmos and A Parliament of Vultures are examined in this article using case study and content analysis research approaches of the qualitative research method. The researchers concluded that adherence to theory can build and sustain quality assurance mechanism and vibrancy into the postmodern African theatre practice.

Introduction

The creative enterprise is a conglomeration of activities encapsulating dramatic, musical sculpture and plastic arts. However, drama in its atavistic and conglomeratic nature stands out as the king of creativity. Its atavistic nature stems from the fact that it is among the earliest natural activities that is as old as man and his environment; hence, both primitive and modern men portray similar instinctive dramatic responses to their environments and its characteristic social and cultural dynamics. Intricacies and aspects of the other arts: music, plastic, carving, sculpturing and so manifest in drama, hence, its conglomeratic nature. Thus, despite the wide disparity and divergences in purpose and convention; drama as a creative enterprise is almost as natural to human beings as breathing, eating and drinking. Drama as a natural attribute of man stems from the truism that man is the most imitative creature on earth. Hence, his learning and delight in imitative art enabled him perfect his primitive attempts to interpret and control nature. Among other mammals man is a colossus, a status he enjoys partly because of his imitative attribute. Aristotle affirms in his *Poetics* that,

Imitation ... is one instinct of our nature. Next, there is the instinct for “harmony” and rhythm, meters being manifestly sections of rhythm. Person, therefore, starting with this natural gift developed by degrees their special aptitudes, till their rude improvisations gave birth to poetry (34).

Developmental trends in the historical origin of both Western and African theatres portray the importance of this imitative attribute to the creative enterprise. Following it is the ritualistic tendency as starting points of primordial but theatricalized efforts of the primitive man to achieve mastery over nature. Thus, the initial Siamese relationship between drama and

theatre makes them synonymous in the creative enterprise. Oscar Brockett maintains that, “the history of theatre is usually constructed around drama...” (6) The third variable in the creative enterprise is theory. Drama and theory share such relationship, in as much as drama evolved before theories, there is no gainsaying that theories are tested in architectural structuring of plays and theatrical productions following evolution of such theories. Therefore, the theatrical art is hinged on an embracive creative enterprise conditioned by a people’s worldview that encapsulates drama and theory in their etymological interpretation.

Though drama and theatre as conceived by man are natural and universal activities, this is without prejudice to the fact that the Greeks formalized and popularized drama and theatre. The first step that formalized theatrical creative process in Greece was according to John Gassner, “When Thespis, a director of choruses, his face smeared with white lead perhaps in simulation of the dead god, stood on a table and addressed the leader of the chorus [by which] dialogue was born in Greece” (13). This version of the origin of the Western drama has almost achieved universal acceptance among European and African critics. For example, Emeka Nwabueze, a renowned theorist of African descent, shares this same version of the origin of theatre with Gassner. Nwabueze says:

This sole actor impersonated the hero instead of singing about him, thereby turning a purely storytelling and praise-chant situation into a dramatic form before the ecstatic spectators. The man who performed this historic act was Thespis... (Nwabueze, *In the Spirit of Thespis: The Theatre Arts and National Integration...*8).

Theatre historians did not tell us of any play or dramatic theory written by Thespis but that singular dramatic movement that

placed him in conflict with the Chorus transformed what used to be a festival into drama and theatre. Soon after, “the Greek ruler, Pisistratus, set up dramatic contest as part of the festival of Dionysus. Drama, thus, became a state affair” (Nwabueze 8). Subsequently this contest raised the standard of Classical creative enterprise, produced a body of playwrights, plays and eventually erudite literary theorists who through analysis of the existing plays, evolved dramatic theories that helped to introduce quality assurance mechanism into theatre practice.

This historic beginning of the classical Greek theatre produced great theatre practitioners like Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles who wrote plays with which they contested for positions as Playwright-Directors in the Greek Dionysian Festivals. Though there were no critics in the contemporary sense of it, Dionysian priests, the Athenian political class and other members of the audience acted as judges and determined the winner of first, second or third positions at the end of each Dionysian dramatic contest. Since some plays were accepted as best, others second best, etcetera, and prizes awarded accordingly, it implies that certain criteria were used to determine the quality of plays presented at the City Dionysia.

Thus, the Greek playwright even in the absence of written dramatic theories followed a particular style and trend of play writing that suited his society and passed the available quality test. Hence, he tailored his production methods to satisfy the artistic and dramatic demands of the Dionysian Festival and functional expectations of the Greek city state. Thus, the Greek Dionysian festival was a forum for standard test; it injected into practice quality and failure tests requisite for quality assurance in the prevalent creative culture of the classical period. Athenian approach to creativity that depended on communal sense of

aesthetics engendered in the Playwright-Director the spirit of competition and healthy rivalry that contributed immensely to the flourishing of quality Greek Drama in the 5th Century B.C.

Consequently, developmental trend in theatrical creativity shows obvious symbiotic relationship among society, drama and theory. The society as the primary conditioner of arts influences both playwrights and theorists because the collective memories of the community serve them as a creative repertoire from which they draw. The duo in turn uses their products to influence the society through their impacts on the citizenry. There are strong bilateral indicators in the creative enterprise that enable the playwright and the theorist to influence each other. Though most critics posit that Plato's the Ideal Republic is anti art, Canice Chukwuma Nwosu insists that;

Plato tries to use his theorization to infuse vibrancy and acceptance into theatre practice by theorizing on what is to be written by the playwright and its acceptability to the people. His approach shows the importance of theory to practice and why there should be coeternity between the two. (69)

The impact of a people's worldview is another influence on the playwright across world theatre regions and various eras in theatre history. Classical Greek playwrights such as Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, to a large extent reflected in their plays, characteristic features of the Greek worldview of their time in their creative enterprises. Same practice applies to medieval playwrights who projected the medieval religiosity in their morality and mystery plays. The Renaissance writers even up to the modern and postmodern playwrights also reflect social realities of their time in the creative enterprise. There is no gainsaying therefore that social reality crucially influences the playwright more than the theory.

The importance of theory in the creative enterprise however, is that it helps to harmonize the playwright's presentation of social realities in his plays; thereby functioning as quality assurance mechanism.

Adolfo Vazquez's synthesis of Franz Mehring's aesthetic discourse on Marxism throws more light on this symbiotic relationship among society, drama and theory in theatrical creative enterprise. According to Vazquez;

Mehring ... conceived of art as a social phenomenon and a part of the superstructure; in that sense he saw that it is conditioned by class interests and incapable of reaching a total universal plane. On the other hand, he attempted to free art from that conditioning with the help of Kantian formalist aesthetics. His study of a work of art thus placed him at the fork of two roads, an analysis of content and an analysis of form, causing him to waver between a sociological schematism and Kantian formalism (12-13).

Part of the preoccupation of the dramatic theorist in the creative process is to provide the guidelines that govern creativity not by imposing theory on the dramatist the way a tyrant imposes laws on the citizenry; but by making the playwright aware and conscious of the existence of theory because their plays do influence the theorist as well. Hence, society, theory and drama are both variables and products of creativity. Therefore, creativity according to *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*;

refers to the phenomenon whereby something new is created which has some kind of subjective value (such as a joke, a literary work, a painting or musical composition, a solution, an invention etc.). It is also the qualitative impetus behind any given act of creation, and it is generally

perceived to be associated with intelligence and cognition.
(1)

The acceptability of the product by the targeted consumer (audience) as well as its utility brings in quality assurance into the creative process in the theatre. *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* posits that:

Quality assurance (QA) refers to the engineering activities implemented in a quality system so that requirements for a product or service will be fulfilled. It is the systematic measurement, comparison with a standard, monitoring of processes and an associated feedback loop that confers error prevention. This can be contrasted with quality control, which is focused on process outputs. (1)

Theory and practice should intertwine in the theatrical creative enterprise for quality to be assured. Modern African theatre at its inception around 1960s showed this intermingling of theory and practice and the outcome was a robust and vibrant theatre that produced African classics. African theatre is among the known theatres of the world like the Western and Oriental theatres. However, historical and politico-economic factors affect the nature of African theatre. Africa's pre-colonial history, the subsequent colonial experience and the complexities of her post-colonial realities exert enormous influence on her theatre. Critical analysis of African theatre reveals a triangular conception hinged on the tripod stand of traditional African theatre, popular theatre and literary theatre. Traditional African theatre is the pre-colonial theatre –“nature theatre” which has its roots in African religious rituals and modeled after the Agrarian, egalitarian and communal African society. Traditional African theatre evolved out of the struggle by the African to gain mastery over nature and understand the phenomenon of the nebulous cosmos. According to A. B. C. Duruaku:

Traditional African drama refers to indigenous African performing art forms that have not been corrupted by modernization over the years. They include those found in festivals which combine dance, songs, music, chants, speech/dialogue, spectacle etc (16).

Wole Soyinka who did pioneer work on modern African theatre criticism says that African theatre thrives on “a cohesive understanding of irreducible truths.”(38) Critical theories in the Western, Oriental or African creative enterprise are geared towards evaluation and judgment with adjudicatory icons patterned by religious, cultural, geo-political and socio-economic forces from their worldview. Thus, since the emergence of dramatic theory and criticism, quality assurance encounters dichotomy of the basis for assessment, judgment and acceptance. No wonder then dramatic theory and criticism remain highly persuasive, individualistic and dynamic. Effectiveness and general acceptance of theories in the creative enterprise are to a large extent dependant on their “service” to the practice of drama and theatre in different geographical enclaves of the world. Modern African theatre failed to sustain the service of theory to practice, quality declined, boredom and drudgery set in and quality of the creative enterprise dwindled.

Emeka Nwabueze is exceptionally one of the contemporary African theatre practitioners who have imbued a system of quality assurance in his creative enterprise. Hence products of Nwabueze’s theatre over the years withstand vibrations from several failure tests and scale through periodic standard evaluation from the targeted consumers (the audience) and custodians of the theatre. Therefore, the preoccupation of the researchers in this paper is to appraise Nwabueze’s creative approach, lay bare his creative erudition and see how it can

influence contemporary African theatre practitioners in their quest for quality assurance.

Quality Assurance in the Creative Enterprise: A Critical Appraisal

Creativity is an interdisciplinary enterprise that cuts across various areas of study, “It is widely assumed that creative thought involves selecting from amongst a set of well-formed, predefined candidate ideas.” (Liane Gabora, 1) The creative enterprise in the theatre compels creative individuals to wrestle with materials and ideas which they may deem as ill-defined, or in a state of potentiality, through assemblage of materials and their creative impute such materials or ideas become well-defined or refined. Outcomes of the creative enterprise are products; however, consideration of these products from different perspectives or contexts brings in quality assurance. Gabora in her Hones theory of creativity opines that; “Creative outputs are the external manifestation of the process by which an individual’s internal model of the world, or worldview, self-organizes into a more stable structure.”(2) There are many theories of creativity; however Hones theory appears to have provided the theoretical bedrock upon which theatrical creative enterprise is based. For instance, Hones theory depends so much on the self-organizing ability of a worldview which invariably gives birth to a theatre product. Furthermore, Hones theory inbreeds a quality assurance mechanism requisite for creativity in the theatre. According to Gabora:

Honing theory posits that creativity arises due to the self-organizing, self-mending nature of a worldview, and that it is by way of the creative process the individual hones (and re-hones) an integrated worldview. Honing theory places equal emphasis on the externally visible creative outcome

and the internal cognitive restructuring brought about by the creative process. Indeed one factor that distinguishes it from other theories of creativity is that it focuses on not just restructuring as it pertains to the conception of the task, but as it pertains to the worldview as a whole. (2)

Hones theory reinforces the symbiotic relationship among: society, drama and theory which Nwabueze relies on in his creative enterprise. The worldview is also a creative pool from which Nwabueze draws, while theory harnesses and organizes what is to be drawn from the worldview. Hones theory opines that;

When faced with a creatively demanding task, there is an interaction between the conception of the task and the worldview. The conception of the task changes, through interaction with the worldview, and the worldview changes through interaction with the task. This interaction is reiterated until the task is complete, at which point not only is the task conceived of differently, but the worldview is subtly or drastically transformed. (2)

Nwabueze's creative enterprise manifests Gabora's postulation above as evident in his two plays selected for study: *Guardian of the Cosmos* and *A Parliament of Vultures*. Emeka Nwabueze uses theories rooted in the African worldview to ensure that the quality of his plays are high especially in the two plays selected for study where he achieved artistic concretization of M.J.C. Echeruo and Bakary Traores' theories "Dramatic Limits of Igbo Ritual" and *Black African Theatre and its Social Functions* respectively.

Emeka Nwabueze and Quality Assurance in the Creative Enterprise: The Example of *Guardian of the Cosmos* and *A Parliament of Vultures*

Emeka Nwabueze stands out among playwrights of his generation when it comes to quality creativity. Even though he uses his art to mirror the society like other African dramatists; he goes beyond entertainment and social function, to imbue his creative enterprise with quality test mechanism from his worldview. Therefore, while Nwabueze still speaks and fights for the emancipation of the masses with his theatre of commitment, he ensures that his theatre does not thrive on peripheral creativity and unnecessary commodification.

He is an Anambrarian from Awka South Local Government Area and a professor of theatre Arts at the University of Nigeria Nsukka. The two plays selected for study *Guardian of the Cosmos* and *A Parliament of Vultures* distinguish him as a satirist and political commentator whose contemporary themes have made relevant contributions to the creative enterprise in Africa. Hence, Nwabueze's thematic fixations ascribe dialectic timelessness to his Plays and dramatic theories. His other plays include: *Spokesman for the Oracle*, *The Dragon's Funeral*, *A Dance of the Dead*, and *When the Arrow Rebounds*.

Emeka Nwabueze's plays provide a suitable plat form for appraising quality assurance in the creative enterprise in Nigeria because his stylistic creative approach which is hinged on the marriage of theory and practice is a self appraisal mechanism that guarantees production of quality plays. The thematic thrust of the *Guardian of the Cosmos* is based on ancient Anoka Chieftaincy selection myth and ritual which Nwabueze elongates to capture the political wrangling of his time. Nwabueze shows in the thematic thrust of his plays that as the Nigerian nation matures, her political

problems becomes hydra-headed and harden into archetypes with frightening and threatening tentacles. Nwabueze captures this trend in the union of the plots of *Guardian of the Cosmos* and *A Parliament of Vultures* which present in a life-like manner contemporary political issues and corrupt practices of Nigerian politicians at the local and community levels.

Nwabueze's inclination to theory also enables him to create within the critical attitude of each era in Nigeria's theatre history because the theory is conditioned by the prevalent worldview hence; high quality of his plays is reflected in thunderous audience receptions which his theatre receives. Three important theories of African theatre provide Nwabueze's footplate in his syncretic drama experiment: "The Dramatic Limits of Igbo Ritual" by M.J.C. Echeruo "The fourth stage" by Wole Soyinka and *The Black African theater and its social functions* by Bakery Traore According to Echeruo, "...there are considerable limitations to be encountered in any attempts to classify Igbo festival as drama" (7) Echeruo argues that:

Until the ritual content of Igbo festival (for example Mbom Ama and Odo festivals) is forced "to yield its story; the dramatic content of those festivals will still remain subsumed in their ritual purity." (7)

Echeruo's analysis shows the multifunctional nature of African festivals and the centrality of ritual in the existential essence of the African. Furthermore, Echeruo points out the importance of action and narration as essentials of drama. Based on his perception of drama, he proposed what the African dramatist should do and says;

What is needed then it seems to me is to force the ritual to yield its story; to cut through the overlay of ceremony to the primary events of the mythos, Ritual is and has always been a dead end it cannot grow it only shrinks steadily into

inevitable inaccessible symbolism. The Igbo should do what the Greeks did; expand ritual into life and give that life a secular base. That way, we may be able to interpret that serious view of life which is now only so dimly manifested in our festivals (147.)

Echeruo's proposition influenced Emeka Nwabueze's creative vision in *Guardian of the Cosmos* especially the thematic fixation of the play which derives from primary ceremonial event of myth and ritual. What Nwabueze used as creative materials in the two plays are the myth and ritual behind the selection of Anoka Chief which he expanded into life. To give this serious view of life a secular base, Nwabueze broadens, universalizes and secularizes the mythic and ritualistic world of the original story. He involves the government of the day and the metaphysical to achieve a re-interpretation of life.

Idigo in a summative manner presents the original story:

Elders of Anoka, we know why we're here Since the death of our last chief, there hasn't been peace in the land of Anoka. People were divided on how and when the next chief should be chosen (15)

Consequently, "how and when" the next chief should be chosen become in Nwabueze's creative hands essential ingredients for propelling the plot of the play. Nwabueze problematizes the original chieftaincy selection process adding; social, political and metaphysical dimensions to expand the story and give it a secular base. Relying on theoretical provisions made by Echeruo, Nwabueze allows the three forces to clash at the communal arena and trigger off a hydra-headed conflict that pitched Ezeudo against Akukalia and his allies - the government. There are betrayals, sellouts, by the very custodians of the peoples' sacred tradition and

eventually Ezeudo becomes the scapegoat. Idigo points out this treacherous betrayal of the people below:

The people who were called in to soothe the wound inflamed it, we were all afraid of speaking out and incurring the wrath of ferocious tigers, only one Ogbuefi Ezeudo uttered the unspeakable words. He suffered for it. An elder of Anoka was determined for speaking the truth (16)

Though Ezeudo incurs the wrath of the government for speaking out he becomes the people's hero, the custodian of the peoples' threatened tradition and the "guardian of the cosmos." However, Nwabueze uses Sophoclean like tragic heroism to further complicate the plot; hence, the social dimension issue, questions the origin and identity of Ezeudo the peoples' hero. Akukalia taunts Ezeudo with his unfortunate but punctured background and says:

Akukalia: Ozo Akunne need I remind you that a person whose great grandfather is an immigrant should not be regarded as an aborigine of this land (19)

The above information opens the dark side of Ezeudo's life, he is rattled but he makes frantic effort to defend himself. The battle line is drawn, Akukalia cannot bulge as events take a dramatic turn and the metaphysical is dragged into the communal event of chieftaincy selection. Akukalia, the antagonist vehemently reminds Idigo:

The matter does not rest in your hands now, elders of Anoka. The matter rests in the hands of our ancestors (22).

Akukalia's assertion affirms that Nwabueze's architectural structuring of the play; characterization and style are guided by theoretical provisions made by modern African theorists for quality assurance. For instance the resolve to involve the metaphysical,

quickly converts the chieftaincy selection process to a universal action making it conform with Soyinka's theoretical provisions in "The Fourth Stage;" Okoye another Anoka elder reveals the implications of the metaphysical presence, he says:

Okoye: Our ancestors! I embrace that, the ancestors of Anoka have the last say in matters of this nature. The priest of Agbala should be asked to guide our action. Let's ask the deity. The worlds of the dead should guide the living (22)

Apart from using Soyinka's tragic theory for universalizing, mystifying and ritualizing the communal event, Nwabueze in his syncretic stylistic manner uses Okoye's assertion to introduce requisite set traps that propel the plot and heighten the tragic essence to a catastrophic resolution that consumes the peoples' messiah. Even though this plot complexity is a quality assurance mechanism, for how long will the people continue to suffer in the hands of traitors like Akukalia. Hence, is Nwabueze's resolution a justification of evil over good or does Nwabueze in his resolution question the concept of African heroism, leadership and messiahship. If people like Ezeudo are not qualified to redeem the people, who as a matter of time and space should be bestowed with the responsibility of carrying the burden of the people's redemption.

The second play *A Parliament of Vultures*, takes the conflict to the national level where Nwabueze attempts resolution of these issues using the social function theory of Bakary Traore who posits that;

It has become clear that the Negro-African theatre has an undisputable social function. It is as we have already begun to realize a mirror of life. Every event is recorded there in the essential actions of life are expressed there. Life in all its forms serves as inspiration for the Negro-African theatre (64)

A Parliament of Vultures is one of the contemporary political satire plays that capture in a life like manner, political jiggery-pokery and maneuverings that characterize parliamentary deliberations in Nigeria and Africa at large. Through characterization and character milieu /relationship, Nwabueze made the play overtly political. Using the polarization dramatic technique; Nwabueze pitches Madam Omeaku against the moral voices of the House of Parliament, laying bare bickering, greed, selfishness, gang-up, bitterness and materialistic tendencies of the average Nigerian politician. Madam Omeaku, using every advantage at her disposal succeeds in impeaching Mr. Ootobo, the parliamentary secretary and takes over as parliamentary Secretary. Unfortunately, she uses her office to corrupt other members of the house and they enrich themselves with ill gotten wealth. Events take a dramatic turn and irate youths in a protest besiege the parliament.

The influence of political theatre theory is also evident on the developmental trend of Nwabuezes's Political Theatre especially in the way and manner he utilizes theory and periodization. Erwin Piscator was the first to use the notion of political theatre in 1929. Like Piscator, Nwabueze shows that theatricians are not politicians and that theatre is not politics. Thus, he reveals in *A Parliament...*, that, political theatres; “ reflect the society, make the members of the society think about certain issues, to discuss them and through that change something in their thinking and mentality.” (Pesti Madli,1)

Nwabueze uses character exposition to assign this role to Dr. Parkers, Mr. Ootobo and to some extent Mr. Omeaku; continuously they remind Habamero the speaker of the house and his group (Madam Omeaku, Bob Brown and Rev. Jossy) of the atrocities they are committing against the nation. Chief Omeaku stumbles into one of their "parliamentary meetings" before

parliamentary sessions, over heard how they despoil the people and laments.

Mr. Omeaku: so this is what you people are doing?....This is my nation's parliament at work... do you know what you people are? You vultures! This is a parliament of vultures. Eating my nation to death, leaving nothing for the masses to quench their thirst (31)

Emeka Nwabueze uses the social function theory to expose the level of greed, corruption and looting of the national treasurer by Nigerian politicians. He not only exposes these ugly trends among our leaders, but unequivocally condemns in a very stern language this unnecessary crave for material wealth. The political system suffers because there is high level of collaboration among political office holders to recycle and keep one another perpetually in power. The party chairman liaises with the Speaker of the house to appoint an ex-convict chairman of Radio and Television Board. Mr. Otoro did not mince words in condemning this shameless act and betrayal of the people, in a strong objection he says:

Otoro: Mr Chairman. This man, Anu Mpama was detained and tried by the previous administration for embezzlement of public funds. (78)

The impunity with which crimes are committed by the political class calls to question the integrity of our leaders. Rather than listen to the voice of reason, Habamero, the Speaker of the house emphatically informs Otoro:

Habamero ...the party chairman has nominated, and approved the appointment of chief Anu Mpama to head this organization (78).

Mr. Parkers reinforces Otoro's objection, suggesting caution and emphasizing integrity in the selection process of chairmen of boards:

Parkers: I suggest that care be excised in choosing these individuals. We owe this nation a duty to ensure that there is enough money to justify their existence. And this can only be ensured by the appointment of men of honesty and integrity if we want to improve the economy of this impoverished and economically raped nation (73).

Despite an emotion laden speech and persuasive diction by Dr. Parkers meant to appeal to the arrogant and insensitive parliamentarians' consciences; corruption, immorality, looting and frivolous spending of public fund continued. The personality of this character (Dr. Parkers) makes it obvious that the onus task of transformation and positive reformation of the decadent political dispensation in Nigeria lies on the elite. Unfortunately, Nwabueze shows that the elites are relegated to the background, disregarded and used as war horses and dropped at the end of the war to graze in common with other horses. However, it took an irate and violent group of youths rather than the moral voice of the elite to sack a senseless and insensitive parliament.

What does Nwabueze's conclusion of the play suggest as the locomotive engine of change in Africa; Satire without bite or Satire with bite?

Conclusion

The paper established among other things, the importance of theory to theatre practice and states unequivocally that utilization of theory is a pre-requisite of quality assurance. There is need therefore to check the decline, low activity and unprofitability in the live theatre industry brought about by negation of creative principles proposed by the theorists. There is need to lift African theatre above the winding modernism to enable it compete

favorably with the other theatres within the contemporary global theatre culture through concretization of theory in the creative enterprise.

Apart from a sustained effort to concretize theory, this paper established that Nwabueze uses the marriage of theory and practice to ensure quality assurance in his creative enterprise. Hence, the influence of theory on Nwabueze's plays, affirms that theory is Nwabueze's footplate for quality theatre practice. The maturity of Nwabueze's Political Theatre and its service to the overall development of Africa is not divorced from Nwabueze's understanding, utilization and adoption of both the principles of African and Western theories in his syncretic dramaturgy.

The study also shows that apart from theory, Nwabueze is also influenced by his world view, which he expresses in one of the plays as a tripartite cosmos that manifests co-existence of the physical and metaphysical. Therefore, the researcher recommends the utilization of theory in the creative enterprise and portrayal of African worldview as ingredients of quality assurance mechanism.

Canice Chukwuma Nwosu

Department of Theatre and
Film Studies

Nnamdi Azikiwe University,
Awka

nwosucoc@gmail.com

&

Emeka Nwosu

Department of Theatre Arts

Imo State University, Owerri

nwosuemekah@yahoo.com

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