

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The word composition has been defined etymologically as ‘putting together’ or combining parts or ingredients. Harper Collins Dictionary of Music n defined etymologically as “putting together” or combining parts or ingredients. Harper Cothins dictionary of Music (1972:86) defines it as the process of creating a musical work. Now! Man creates or composes music so as to express his feelings, ideas, beliefs and impression of events, incidents and the world around him. Composition is therefore, an art that is highly structured, highly planned, very intellectual, mathematical, even cold-blooded. Udoh(2006b), quoting Brindle submits that composition expertise, talent, and observance of implicit rules to ensure that music serves the function of its genre. Uzoigwe(1992) highlights that, Many composers all over the world have made conscious and unconscious efforts to draw on the folk materials of their people.(p.9), and divers forms of artistic approaches have preoccupied the mind of the contemporary composer. Nketia (1974) observes that whether it is Africa or Asia, Latin America or Europe, there seem to be wide spread consciousness among musicians that music reflect the intellectual environment of those who make it. In drawing attention to this trend, Nketia further observes that for historical and sociological reasons, the search for new idioms has been much more intensive in the western hemisphere and in those countries musically within its orbit. According to Nketia, highly technical approaches involving science, mathematics have been developed and resulted in equally complex music such as chance music, electronic music and so forth.

Pursuant to the above, Nigerian composers have the duty to establish a musical identity for Nigeria’s art music. Characteristic traits of Nigeria’s music which may be found in our melodies, complex rhythm, harmony, roles of instruments in an ensemble, form meter, embellishment, harmony etc are materials that need to be utilized to give

our new music a national character, or at least an African character. This, therefore, means that a composer wishing to draw creative materials from the socio-cultural music of his people should in the first stead, be receptive to folk music and more importantly, embark on an analytical study of such music.

In this century and in Africa, for instance, new musical genres have emerged. Notably, we have had new forms of music. This include: those using western instrumental resources while employing African music idioms as much as possible, and those that are an encompassment of both African and western resources as well as their idiomatic context. In the Nigerian case, it is note worthy that, the evolution of these new compositional styles stem from African's encounter with music of other cultures of other races. Meanwhile, the adoption of western-styled education and religion have had a detectable effect on the music practices in Africa. Akpabot (1986) in his view relates that;

Many problems concerning African music have been exaggerated to such proportions as to make them appear insoluble. Africans with training comparable to Western researchers are now re-discovering and writing about this music free from many of the problems that confronted early Western scholars.(p.51) Nketia(1995) submits that: As the contemporary challenge lies in the conscious search for new direction and new resources as well the expansion and reinterpretation of old ones, composers cannot but make their own personal choices while allowing themselves to be guided by tradition or the experience of others as they search for an appropriate compositional framework(p.223).

It is indeed expedient for the researcher to carry out this research in Ibibio traditional folk music and form a new music based on Ibibio traditional musical elements for contemplation. It is restricted to the Ibibio community of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Ibibio ethnic group comprises of 5 million in population sharing boundaries with the Ibos of the East central state and the Kalabari people of the Rivers state on its Western side.

In this composition, the writer elicits melodic as well as harmonic configurations from Ibibio folk songs in order to create a new piece of music for piano. This work tries as much as possible to reflect an identity even though western musical instrument (piano) is used. On this note, he agrees with Uzoigwe (2001) thus:

Composers of African art music even though their works reflect the duality of Afro-European culture, must in their African identity return to what might be described as folk or African musical tradition of what tonal concept and organization constitutes but a part.(p.164)

Taking note of Uzoigwe's excerpt, it is necessary that modern Nigeria/Akwa Ibom composers create a musical identity for Nigerian Art music. Therefore, this work tries as much as possible to reflect an African identity, even though western musical instrument is used.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Some western trained African musicologists composed music which later referred to as "Art music" using western style of staff notation. Even these western trained African musicologists have composed many instrumental music in their own traditional idioms, most of these composers have not done much work on Ibibio traditional music. To be very clear and precise, this is a problem.

This is a study of Ibibio music as seen through the eyes of an Ibibio. It is not the music of Nigeria, but the research is convincing that there are many aspects of Ibibio music which could be applied to Nigerian music in particular and African in general. Akpabot (1975:2) quotes Major Leonard, a British administrative officer in Eastern Nigeria for many years described the Ibibios as "a wild and truculent people about whom nothing is known and from whom it was impossible to collect any information" But the researcher's point of concern is this quote from Merriam(1959) who suggested that; It is only in dealing with music as an aspect of culture that truly penetrating studies can be made; although the collector of music serves a useful purpose, the full rewards in the study of music lie in the depth analysis of musical pattern of culture".(p.85)

In other words, Ibibio traditional music has not gained much attention in the contemporary African art music for people to enjoy and appropriate. This is a problem that the researcher wants to address in the course of the study.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this research contains the benefits or value of this research work. This study will create avenue for entertainment. Traditional music of this type will energize the people to dance according to the rhythm of the music. It will entertain and bring joy and the culture owners especially the people of Ibibio.

Through the documentation of this music(Ibibio traditional music),other ethnic groups will have more ideas on Ibibio melodies, rhythmic and harmonic style in musical theories; because different Nigerian music types have disappeared without any trace of their histories.

This study would provide necessary information to the students, scholars, musicians, government authorities e.t.c, on ways to improve Ibobio music and also properly orientate the Ibibio about their culture.

1.4 Purpose Of The Study

It is pertinent to understand the purpose of carrying out studies on a particular area. These are the purposes of this study.

The use of piano instrument (which is a western instrument) instead of traditional musical instrument to compose Nigerian Art music based on Ibibio traditional folk music in which the rhythm, melody, harmony and texture of the music depict the cultural identity of Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State.

The Researcher wants to utilize the African identity and musical elements inherent in Ibibio traditional music to create a new music, in which the western element are not neglected but fused together with the African elements to form new composition. The researcher also wants to create the African art music that will be internationally accepted in composition and performances.

The researcher wants to explore the versatility of the piano as melo-rhythmic

percussion instrument will evoke the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic textures of Ibibio traditional music.

The researcher wants to create a new music in Ibibio culture through the use of piano to evoke inspiration and African spirit among the people of Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State and beyond.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study includes, recording, notation and analysis of the chosen folk songs, and a review of related literature. This include the collection of relevant printed materials such as textbooks, journals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, published and unpublished articles. This method is considered necessary in order to assess the extent to which scholars have contributed on the study of Ibibio traditional music. The researcher, more so, is an indigene of Ibibio tribe grew up and participated in musical activities with this culture as a child and a youth. These have afforded him an understanding of musical culture of his people- “The Ibibios”.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF STUDY

The study focuses on Ibibio traditional music; also the researcher is basically restricted to the culture of Ibibio tribe of Akwa Ibom State. This creative work is an original composition for the piano. So this composition is limited to piano.

1.7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

It is observed that the prevailing urge to listen to popular music in our society, especially, among the youths evade the growth of Art music composition. It is a fact that, in our contemporary music society, more popular artistes abound than art music composers and this trend is on the increase. The researcher then decided to embark on this work; first to gain popularity, catching the minds of the youths to something Academic and its importance.

Secondly, since most of our traditional songs are transferred by rote, and Ibibio music not exclusive, it gives the researcher the joy to be able to assist in preserving these

folk tunes not just in written form, but also, in a notated form.

Thirdly, I consider this work an avenue to popularize Ibibio music, bring recognition to it and increase the repertory of folk music with this sentiment.

A CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITIONAL APPROACH BASED ON SELECTED IBIBIO FOLK SONGS

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Regards!!!