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**pp 7-8**

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**Editorial**

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The editorial team of *African Performance Review* have in Vol. 3 No 1 put together an exciting mix of essays that touch on a wide range of issues that are currently exercising the minds of African performance scholars and practitioners. But one key idea which connects and is a thread that loops through and around the essays in this volume is the centrality and functionality of drama, theatre and performance in the life and social processes of respective African contexts and communities. The six essays presented here are: Professor Ossie Enekwe's "Beyond Entertainment: Reflections on Drama and Theatre" which indeed is an authoritative reflection on the many functions of drama and theatre, in general within an African but also specifically the University of Nigeria, Nsukka setting; this is followed by Dr Sam Kasule's "More than just Musical Plays: ...", which is a very engaging look at the intersections of politics, culture and folklore in the theatre of Byron Kawadwa, the outspoken critic of the repressive Ugandan government of Idi Amin - Kawadwa was later assassinated by the agents of the Amin regime; Lanre Bamidele in "Grotesque and Mirthless Humour in *Midnight Hotel* and *Morning Yet on Judgement Day*" explores the theory of humour and then uses this to argue that while Femi Osofisan's satiric pieces in *Midnight Hotel* elicit grotesque humour because of the dramatist's leaning towards the comic, Hyginus Ekwuazi's *Morning Yet on Judgement Day* provokes mirthless humour because of the playwright's tragic take on the socio-political issues which both plays are concerned with; in "Music as Therapy: The Example of Perry-Como Okoye" Dr Alex Asigbo looks at the music of Perry-Como Okoye which he classes as 'music for inner orientation and spiritual alignment' – that is to say that it is individual music – yet, as the author points out, it is music for all because Perry-Como Okoye manages through style, form and content to use his songs to

inspire, incite and soothe his listeners by connecting them to the Igbo 'essence and world; Dr Uche-Chinemere Nwaozuzu warns in "Theatre and Globalization: Emerging Trends in the Dialectics of Performance in Sub-Saharan Africa" of the grave danger to the 'soul' and very survival of African indigenous dramatic forms because of the potential for 'cultural genocide' attending the rapid globalization happening now in which African countries play second fiddle to the dominant West represented by America and Europe. Dr Nwaozuzu singles out the new fundamentalist/revivalist religions which have come with globalization as posing the greatest threat as they have the power to sever African peoples from their indigenous performance traditions; the final essay, "Progress and Utopia in Bode Sowande's Babylon Trilogy", by Osita Okagbue again follows the functional argument in an exploration of Bode Sowande's sustained engagement with the Nigerian political scene, especially the continued presence of dictatorial and repressive governments in Nigeria since independence in 1960. Dr Okagbue argues that Sowande deploys the Babylon-Utopia dialectic in *The Night Before*, *Farewell to Babylon* and *Flamingo* in order to offer a progressive vision of human and social progress. Okagbue points out that while Utopia may not be realisable, that Sowande's uses it in the trilogy as a way of suggesting that the search for a more egalitarian social order should remain an un-going concern; and thus there is not yet Utopia at the end of *Flamingo*, the third and final play in the trilogy.

This volume, in fulfilment of its African diasporic concern and responsibility, ends with a fine performance review by Ekua Ekumah of Collective Artistes' and Chuck Mike's (director) production of Carlyle Brown's *The African Company Presents Richard III* at The Greenwich Theatre, South-East London on 19 February, 2009. According Ekumah, in choosing a storytelling style, the director and his team "took on an unapologetic mode of presentation", which gave one "a clear sense that Chuck Mike was on a mission to make strong connections in his direction of this production to Africa".