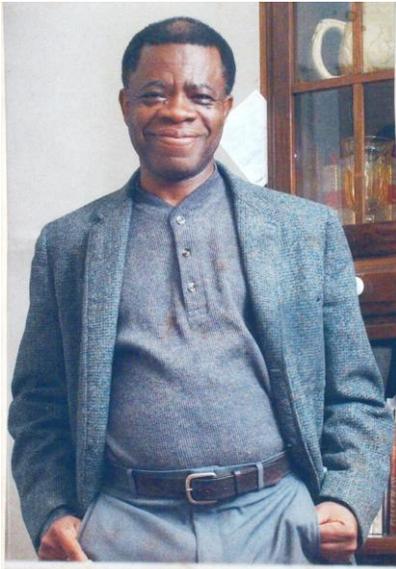


RESEARCH ACTIVITIES (2013-2014) by PROFESSOR DANIEL AVORGBEDOR, SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS, DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC (also Institute of African Studies)

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

Visualizing Music, Musicalizing the Visual: A Study of the New Modernity and Sensibilities among Select Contemporary Ghanaian Visual Artists



This is an ongoing longitudinal research which examines the intersections of individual creative expressions and enduring cultural legacies with focus on the employment of music, both as significant cultural symbol and as marker of Ghanaian modernity, “tradition,” and new aesthetic directions and as represented in the works of select contemporary visual artists of Ghana. Case studies focus on art exhibitions in diverse venues such as hotels, the national airport, museums, public parks and independent art galleries in Accra and by individual artists such as Sadic, Anoff, Maame Serwaa, etc. A special dedicatory segment is devoted to the late Nii Amon Kotei (1915-2011), designer of Ghana’s Coat-of-Arms—this segment includes an analysis of a recorded conversation of 1987 on his personal philosophy of music and the visual arts. (See his portrait and listen to audio clip of conversation from the links below.)

The overall objective is to establish a model for interpreting and assessing the scope and directions of the global impact on Ghanaian art, the role of popular culture and internationalism in contemporary Ghana, the aesthetic-cultural significance of individual response and creativity, and the significant place of music and related cultural expressions that qualify and thus explain cultural affirmation and innovative tendencies in contemporary Ghanaian visual art. The study considers also the hybrid and yet selective audiences as part of the new Ghanaian modernity in the context of the contemporary visual art where music symbolism and general artistic sensibilities are continued and at the same time dynamically reconstituted. Data and Research findings are complemented by a study of parallel processes, products, and representations from the contemporary Ghanaian literary market of fiction and novel where music continues as a potent cultural symbol and marker of “tradition”, progress, and innovation. The study

draws on principles of musical hermeneutics, art history, aesthetics and criticism, postcolonial identity, global tourism, glocality, and postmodern consumerism.



Fig. 1: Late Amon Kotei (from a print presented to the researcher, 1987)



Fig. 2: From the corridor of Nubuke Gallery



Fig. 3: Two visual artists: Nana Anoff and Maame Serwaa Bonsu



Fig. 4: A painting by Maame Serwaa



Fig. 5: Prof. Avorgbedor stands next to “coffin for a musician” at the November 2013 (creative) coffin exhibition, Alliance Française, Accra.

Additional photographs and video clips of interviews and exhibition events will be available in the near future directly at the researcher’s homepage: <http://beaconpros.com>. (Visit the same link for current art exhibitions and performance events in Ghana.