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Keynote paper: *Ensemble of merry voices; nagging public  
consciousness*

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## **Ensemble of merry voices; nagging public consciousness<sup>1</sup>**

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**[In the African indigenous conceptualization and practice the musical arts has a singular connotation, hence indigenous terminologies do not commonly offer a discrete term for the sonic component, for instance. Rather the generic term is further discussed with qualifying terms that distinguish the peculiar manifestations: Thus, the musical as sonic phenomenon, as poetic dance, as dramatic/mimed enactment, as activated pictorial/plastic texts, or combinations thereof. At the point of inspiration and cogitation, the various strands implicated in a particular holistic product created for a specific purpose are ramified, a unity underlain by the sound musical. In the process of production and concrete experiencing the included branches then manifest as unique mediums of expressing the same purposive creative inspiration. At the point of perception the included mediums of expression are again unified.]**

*Prompter*

The musical arts is a science, metaphysical and clinical, an applied science:

- Of psychical health care and cure
- Of human and animal sensitization
- Of human as well as polity health management
- Of attitude formation and reformation
- Of overall system mediation and wellness
- Of benevolent spiritual and mystical connections

These are the cardinal intentions and calculations underscoring the theoretical and musicological sense as well as the human-societal meaning of African indigenous musical arts knowledge systems and experiencing. The key concepts that underpin this discussion will necessarily recur in the process of elaborating on the topic as per African creative philosophy and principles.

Scientifically processed and systematically deployed in contextual sites, the musical arts of indigenous African cultures is, for instance, an effective psychiatric and psychoactive appliance. Materials for some music instruments, the sonic constructs, formal modes of musical arts administration, and the textural ramifications of some musical arts types including choreographic designs and dramatic enactments incorporated were researched to effectuate specific clinical objectives – curative/restorative/generative. These include

- Administering stress therapy

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<sup>1</sup> This discussion is reflective, and is not concerned with conforming to the prescriptions of conventional scholarship literature.

- Redressing psychological injuries
- Management of clinical madness as well as healing of acquired psychosis inducing anesthesia
- Dispelling or correcting systemic indisposition (bodily or societal)
- Inducing mass hysteria and stabilizing emotions.

It then follows that the indigenous musical arts, as a unique and primordial societal institution, was conceptualized, designed and ramified as applied science and art.<sup>2</sup> It was originally an institution invested with the authority to transact serious societal business. The musical arts could still be conceived, rationalized and applied to discharge purposive roles in the contemporary human and polity milieu. Entertainment is implicit in the original sense, meaning and practice of musical arts expressions and perceptions, but served as a medium, an enticement, and an appetizer that promoted the core critical role of the knowledge field in indigenous African life and polity systems. The pursuit of abstracted entertainment aspirations is a recent, modern development championed by the commercial music speculators, and also the academia. Consequently the integrity, virtues and prodigious capabilities of the science have become grossly compromised in contemporary creative and educational inspirations as well as aspirations. Musical arts has become a diversion instead of a core business of life, and accordingly the public imagination about, and overall societal regard for the knowledge field as well as its community of practitioners has become farcical. In the academia the synergy of music, dance, drama and motive visual arts as a proactive force field has been exploded. The creativity siblings have become classified, studied and practiced as disparate disciplines. And within music further disciplinary fissions increasingly stress and conflict and split the community into isolated enclaves of specialization.

### **How we view what we do**

The “ASME National framework for Music teaching standards July 2005” represents a comprehensive intellectual as much as practical framework on which training and practice in contemporary music education could flourish with impressive results. Some key aspects that harmonize with this discussion situate the crucial issues of creativity, musical meaning and the value of music in human life. The point of departure here is to urge the projection of these humanly grounded imperatives into public imagination and action. They are in tandem with the

<sup>2</sup> My use of the term, ‘musical arts’ instead of ‘musical sciences’ is already a consciously preferred misnomer for the conceptual field.

philosophies, theories, purposes and practices that were invented, perfected and patented in the old and enduring musical arts knowledge systems. Abiding old wisdoms need to percolate and query contemporary academic theorizing and application in the musical arts. The diabolic brilliance of modern-civilized humans is producing inventions of society, technology and fun that engender lawlessness and inhumanity all over the globe. There is urgency for a metaphysical force that should purposively challenge as well as redeem the crassly deviated sense of fellow humanness. The syndromes of egomaniac power and rabid materialism must obviously be afflicting the minds that orchestrate the traumatizing atrocities against humans, which are being experienced globally.

I have dared to ruminate on the topic: “Ensemble of merry voices; nagging public consciousness” with a vision that it is a dire necessity to counter the trend through re-imbuing humane instincts in the present and future humans. The humanistic philosophy and science of the original musical arts knowledge system is the misunderstood and thereby ignored effectual force that need to be re-visited and advanced to rescue the escalating mass psychosis and villainy.

My intellectual worldview is that I can never be superior to the mental civilization that formed my current human-intellectual capabilities. A person who scorns the intellectual nurture of a sound mentor vomits blighted brilliance. As such I have unwavering respect for the intellectual profundity and sublime humanness of the ancestral lore that has made possible our current intellectual posturing. Hence I prefer to rely on discerning the indigenous as the knowledge base for appraising the human sense of the present and making projections for a sublime posterity. The acclamation for the fantastic inventions that are currently devastating human minds and polity systems is a dirge for a self-annihilating human race. Nevertheless, I repeat that time-tested measures could still be re-searched, advanced and launched to humanize brilliance, and nurture a sober human posterity. With this hopeful tune I wish to briefly ruminate on the embodied word-motifs that structure my topic of discussion.

### **The sense and meaning of *Ensemble***

Musical arts is a performed reflection of the corporate ethos of its society. When proactively conceived it as well mediates and shapes the trends in the society. The intention of an indigenous musical arts ensemble is to instill sense of individual importance in members through according unique ensemble identity to every collaborator in the community action. A humanizing musical arts ensemble or community action then transpires as a harmonization of compatible sonic or human individualities. As such the accomplishment of group objective commands every member

to express self-integrity within community collective. In a community polity that practices equity the role of individuals or groups is not to serve as supplementary humans boosting the inordinate or self-purposed Ego of a leader or a privileged few. The psychic injury of feeling subordinated or inconsequential will be obviated. All fingers are not equal; but every finger has its peculiar capability. Every human has peculiar physical or mental attributes and capabilities that can enrich community experience. The equity principle ensures that anti-human or anti-societal dispositions can be effectively contained. Musical structures and performance organization are intuitive reflections of the modal ethos of a cultural milieu. Every layer in a typical indigenous African ensemble texture is a finger – a thematically complete and distinct role-player. All layers are inter-complementary although there might be a guiding motherly voice. The extraordinary bonding energy of the principle of complementation thus generates spiritual communion and humanning bonding as well as conjures humane and psychical composure.

The world is increasingly conflicted by the systemic psychosis generated by the ideologies of controlling and regimenting the less privileged in all aspects of governance and other societal affairs. Modern ensembles or community constructions violate the basic humanning principle of respecting, recognizing, harmonizing and staging all calibers and qualities of different individualities. Self-serving and monopolistic dispositions mark the leadership and followership conscience in current public and corporate affairs. So, welcome stress, frustrations, frictions, reactive discords and the pandemic culture of violence.

[Poser: Have the contemporary specialist practitioners of the musical arts, within and outside the academia corrupted the core humanning role of the musical arts as the watchdog of public conscience?]

### **The sense and meaning of *Merry***

A gathering is merry when well-disposed members share spiritual communion and emotional empathy in interactive manners that generate psychical catharsis and fellow-love in a community. This is the benign spirit of play that marks indigenous musical arts as a beneficial experience. Flippant entertainment was not an aspiration in indigenous musical arts conception and practice. And comparison of capabilities rather than competition marked the humanning spirit of a musical arts gathering. Public performance as well as promoting standards was a communion rather than a confliction of participating individualities. A merry experience becomes a healthy spiritual catharsis when it is either a reward for accomplishing an undertaking or when it facilitates at the

spiritual level, a process of accomplishing an abiding human/communal objective. When merriment implies an escapist indulgence it exacerbates a depressed or vacuous state of being - an aftermath of the euphoria of riding ephemeral fun. The current packaging, marketing and promotion of fun or entertainment for its own sake is farcical merry making, and diverts masses from engaging with salubrious issues that ensure purposeful living.

[Poser: Should modern musical arts education and practice be concerned with providing disembodied fun and entertainment in public space?]

### **The sense and meaning of musical arts *Voices***

Voices articulate sounds that embody or actuate messages, emotions and actions as the case may be. There are also inaudible subliminal voices that are not always taken into serious account when communications and actions are discussed. These include the mystical voices of inspiration and intuition that become translated into eloquent creativity, text-loaded actions and moods. Musical arts voices could be mystical, instrumental including the human voice, and corporeal. They blend into textures and sonic energies that engineer and effectuate purposive communal action, and which generate or regenerate beneficent human dispositions.

- Mystical voices in musical arts situations are phenomenal communications perceived when they transform categories of performers, actors and audience into ethereal dispositions and altered state of consciousness
- Material objects and vocal organs produce intangible sonic energies that actuate or effectuate tangible actions and reactions in humans and other environmental life forms to reflect the sense and meaning of a musical arts expression
- Corporeal voices are poetic or purely artistic-aesthetic dances that use the human body to express sonic structures and affects. Texted costumes and props enhance the corporeal communicating of cultural and sensational meanings

Therapeutic health imperatives inform the science of material, and the technological design of indigenous music instruments. Ingestible rough and bitter materials from nature engender physiological health. Similarly calculated rough and dissonant sounds engender psychical health. Indigenous instrument manufacture researches raw reverberating harmonics that massage brain tissue and other sensitive body organs thereby imbuing psychophysical health. The somatic energy generated by uninhibited participation in mass dancing coerces shared spiritual communion, thereby imbuing humanly sensitive dispositions.

[Poser: Are the academic practitioners refining as well as purifying instrumental, spiritual and structural voices of the musical arts of psychophysical health contents and values?]

### **The sense and meaning of *Nagging***

The musical arts has the capacity to engineer love and negotiate amity. Aptly configured and deployed it bonds humans at inter-personal as well as inter-cultural levels irrespective of artificial geographical/political borders and human categories. The vocabulary for conforming musical arts products is universal even though there are dialectal rationalizations that communicate tastes, or accomplish peculiar objectives within cultural enclaves. The musical arts had, and still has the potency, basic to performance designs and musicological logic, to shape attitudes and contain criminal dispositions in humans as well as society at large.

Anti-social as well as inhuman atrocities have imperiled human life since the onset of what is celebrated as the modern civilized mind. This has partly resulted from abandoning the original musical arts philosophy, theory and educational system that humanize, coupled with the civilized human's fancy for inventions that destroy life sensationally. Inculcation of sublime human instincts commands that education bureaucrats, musical art philosophers and practitioners as well as commercial producers/promoters need to deliberate the propriety of indulging sensationalist musical arts inspiration, aspiration, creativity and sensitization. It is, for instance, a promotion of criminal disposition to argue musical arts out of contemporary school syllabus, or to treat it as tokenistic or ancillary/optional subject in curriculum planning. The school system constitutes the most viable contemporary sites for performing the sense and meaning of community. The indigenous societies thoroughly researched, formulated and deployed the musical arts primarily as a science of psychophysical wellness for all, and general human-societal management. Hence compulsory musical arts education for all was practiced in subtly formal procedures and sites. It is absurd, therefore, that modern education practices instituted by the unoriginal minds that run the contemporary polity systems in many African countries, for example, are eluded by the centrality of the musical arts to the generation of healthy human and polity systems as exemplified in indigenous human education system. Where musical arts education is included in the syllabuses and curricula, humanning virtues are sparse because the education planners and practitioners pursue fanciful theories, being ignorant of the creative principles that make the musical arts an effective humanizer. It is common knowledge that virtuous attitudes and humane instincts become enduring for life when inculcated at the critical early stage of societal upbringing, particularly in

contemporary pre-school and primary education. The philosophical underpinnings, theoretical principles, material resources and performance imperatives that would make the musical arts an effectual humanizer demand that curriculum prescriptions and classroom methodology should derive from abiding indigenous models.

School musical arts thinkers and practitioners invent dichotomies, and construct differences in human intelligence and creative ingenuity by foisting the theory and practice of European classical music as the only ideal. The fashionable theories of difference are not informed by cognitively research, perception and analyses of the profound cultural intelligence of indigenous world cultures in Africa in particular. The prioritization of the European classical theory and practice aggrandizes the instincts for intellectual-cultural domination. The status quo thereby facilitates the exploitative designs of modern political, religious and business ideologies as well as promotes theories of human-intellectual differences. Self-fulfilling intellectual and business elite thereby commit crimes of systematic mental disorientation such that learners and consumers alike are dissociated from the prodigious intellectual merits and many practical benefits of indigenous knowledge treasures. The human present is now reactively bemoaning the abuse of the intellect of others by nagging and responding in manners that shock the self-conceited sensibility of the elite perpetrators. Violated humane conscience nags for restorative initiatives, particularly in curricular and classroom sites. The diseased materialistic minds of the commercial abusers of musical arts mandate could be redeemed when the scholarship community that fashion as well as direct mass education and bureaucratic practices embark on corrective imperatives.

Nagging urges resisting and remedying the mental injuries and physical impositions that negatively impact the psychological equanimity of a human collective or an individual. The moral integrity of contemporary musical arts theories and practices in and out of the school system should perturb persons who still have consciousness of the profound potency and purposive virtues of the abandoned, humanly anchored indigenous creative models.

[Poser: Have the musical art scholars and educational practitioners self-conceitedly refrained from crusading to reinstate the divine mandate and capacity of the musical arts as a primary force that sanitizes and moralizes societal practices as well as coerces salubrious psyche?]

### **The sense and meaning of *Public***

Public is a human collective transacting a shared ethos. The public implicated in musical arts

conceptualization and conscientization is a human as well as intangible spirit collective included in the sharing of metaphysical communion. Some musical arts creations are tailored to administer and mediate the sanity of a collective human polity or ethos through fostering fellow-feeling dispositions. The vision, design and public sense of contemporary school musical arts cater for the peculiar tastes of an elitist minority, and scarcely includes the human majority. The philosophy, content and methodology thus discriminates human categories that should benefit from school musical arts transactions.

Every culture's musical arts product that furnishes a framework for its replication has peculiar as much as universal musicological procedure - a systematic theory of composition and practice. These are valid intellectual and material resources for the study of theory and history in non-discriminatory or non-prejudiced classroom education. As such, inclusive curriculum that does not discriminate human and cultural categories is of the moment. The inability to source or discern the theory and history of indigenous music lore is the failing of musical arts scholars and educators. My argument is that the philosophical, theoretical, musicological, material and humanistic worth of indigenous musical arts creations are actually more profound than the favored elitist European classical genre that celebrates flamboyant, often egotist music-imaging. The potent force of indigenous musical arts effects concrete outcomes beyond the entertainment seasoning implicit in the idea and sensing. Entertainment is then a condiment that facilitates the 'swallowing' of the substance, which is the beneficial, often bitter medicine that the indigenous musical arts primarily administer.

Every musical arts type or style in a cultural milieu is loaded with historical texts that deserve to be told for purposes of affirming sense of original intellectual integrity in learners. The challenge in musical arts scholarship is to design contemporary advancement imperatives for the indigenous. The entrenched exclusive focus on the history of written music, albeit of deified individuals and abstract musicology, is partial education in musical arts history and knowledge. The history of oral indigenous musical arts tracks the history of knowledge constructions in medical, political, social, economic, religious and musicological developments in a society. Musical arts scholars and practitioners in and out of the classroom have continued to perjure the divine oath of the discipline since the construction of modern-civilized attitudes. The exclusion or exploitation or expropriation of the bona fide owners of musical arts products for materialistic or selfish pursuits is intellectual dishonesty.

[Poser: Who is the public for contemporary music scholarship and education posturing?]

### **The sense and meaning of *consciousness***

Consciousness commands steadfastness in upholding the basic ideals that ensure stable, durable and all-accommodating co-existence. It implicates cherishing a sublime conscience that accords salubrious psyche. The current disciplinary conscience in and out of the classroom practice and experiencing of the musical arts in all its ramifications is embattled, self-destructing, and undermines the dignity of the field. This contemporary human mentality is obsessed with the pernicious ideologies of competition, excellence and perfections, which ironically are not within the authoritative determination of any human person. Who is the perfect or excellent human? Who strives to lose? Who is the psychically sober winner? These are artificial, virtual and often injurious constructs, mocked by the subjective and relative assumptions of the self-aggrandizing judges. The siren of competition as well as the bogey of humanly elusive excellence and perfection breeds bitter rivalries, rancor and criminality. Competition induces perverse practices in all visions and spheres of contemporary human aspirations.

Humanly attributes and humane-conscience are fast becoming endangered virtues among the generality of privileged mankind. The canker of competitions and the illusions of excellence instill selfism, clinical psychosis, diabolic dispositions and exploitative Ego. The ensuing compulsion to destroy The Other in order to win imperils the survival of the human species. The indigenous wisdom cherished standards and comparability while inculcating the spirit of sober achievement that fosters healthy human psyche. The contemporary obsession with competition and excellence, driven by obsessive materialism and vanity, are demonic, and amputate consciousness for what is in the salubrious interest of all humans. Hence the escalating incidents of mass psychosis, criminality and the destruction of life being perpetrated all over the globe! The fiendish features of the glorified illusions of excellence driving current governance, industrial, business, social, religious, and educational inventions and practices are increasingly traumatizing the masses of the world. In practice the gospel of competition, excellence and perfection aggrandize the disingenuous schemes of the privileged and violates the human worth and psychological health of others. The frustrated and disaffected masses are increasingly restive, and when not totally subjugated, react in violent manners that exacerbate the global mass psychosis.

I rely on indigenous African exemplars as well as contemporary experiences to aver that purposefully inspired and designed musical arts creations have the innate capacity to play a

principal role in containing the psychological maladies and anti-human dispositions globally. The academic musical arts community is in a position to instill consciousness of human values and virtues in the public milieu through proactive school music education for all from pre-school to secondary education.

*[Poser: Are there critical societal and human issues that school musical arts education can tackle beyond fostering transient entertainment and fun?] My answer is in the affirmative. The mission could be accomplished on condition that the school music fraternity eschews self-conceit, and is then able to proactively re-deploy the mystical, humanning force of the musical arts to restrain the inhuman schemes of diabolic minds. Conscientious musical arts educators have the responsibility to nurture not injure public imaginations about the profound meaning of the field right from fundamental early education. Flippant fun corrupts. When fun is not ballasted with human virtues the young in particular are diverted from focusing on self-actualization. In the indigenous philosophy of life fun must have life education content, and was additionally cherished as a reward for worthy achievement, not a preoccupation or an entitlement.*

### **How the public perceives what we do**

Authentic indigenous musical arts is a mystical act of solemn love between the proactive music-giver and the participant/empathic music-receiver. The consummation transpires in public space. The offspring is the re-generated spiritual and psychophysical wellness of the conjugal partners. The partners were genetically compatible because both the giver and the receiver have sound cognitive knowledge of the idioms, objectives and modus operandi. The perturbation that compels my reflections is about whether in contemporary experience, musical arts conceptualization, production and dissemination could still constitute an act of solemn love among humans.

It is obvious that the music education community knows what it is doing – self-loving. What is, perhaps not so obvious is whether the literary as well as professional music community has adequate consciousness about whether what it is doing constitutes estrangement of the masses. It could seem improper to query what the generality of brilliant professionals believe that they are performing expertly; hence some of the arguments in this presentation are very likely to irritate or offend esteemed colleagues. Protecting, instead of welcoming interrogation of a comfort zone is only human, or rather, only modern-human. Still we dare to reflect on the meaning and conscience of musical arts studies and practices in contemporary human societies globally.

### **Fear of difference**

A community with a binding ethos engenders group strength by recognizing and harmonizing differences of opinion and aptitudes. The idea of difference, like mistake, is a positive, progressive, and generative force. The danger is with how it is perceived and engaged with.

What we constantly call a thing is what it means to us; and yet what it means to us could be a false notion about what its innate nature is. Sometimes also what we consistently call a thing begins to influence how it perceives and represents itself; hence most African cultures are very circumspect about the names given to their offspring. No person can afford to remain sane if he is forever addressed as Mr. Madman. There is need to resolve terminologies of difference and discrimination that are prejudicial, and that have been invented and perpetuated in scholarship orientations as well as public imagination. Prejudiced notions of difference disable perception of the innate nature of non-European classical music. In school music education there are assumptions about informal and formal learning, absence or presence of theory, simplicity and complexity of structures, notions of the aesthetic etc, based on shallow perceptions or outright negation of the cultural truth. Prejudice is a human disposition, but engineers jaundiced perception; open-mindedness enables recognition, and endows cognitive insight in research and analysis. Musical arts education in global space will benefit immensely by engaging seriously with the actual creative logic and human intention of the music genres and categories so far excluded in curriculum imagination, content and practice. I have already argued that all human as well as cultural music, of any age and time, is theoretically and historically valid for mentally emancipating music studies. The closer the study materials are to the musical arts imagination and immediate experiences of learners the more appropriate for affirming their nodal human dignity. Otherwise we could be covertly indulging mental and cultural colonization instead of facilitating mental and cultural cross-fertilization. The music education community would then be mediating and healing the global culture of intolerance, discrimination and sophisticated inhumanity.

Formality and informality of musical arts education are constructions of difference deriving from detached perception about how different human cultures manifest sameness. Systematic procedure and formula for replication of experience mark formality. There is no indigenous African culture, for instance, that did not institute graduated systematic sites and processes for imparting knowledge of the culture's musical arts expressions. An education system that enables imbibing knowledge in realistic performances of life is probably more enduring than virtual reality education.

The fact that a musical arts product is recognized as culturally peculiar automatically proves that there is replicable theoretical premise for its origination, conformation and advancement. Self-invention rather than discernment of inherence has marked research orientations and scholarship productions that have ventured into discussing the cultural knowledge systems outside the European literary genres. Scholarship in the Euro-classical knowledge domain is replete with interpretive re-inventions and perspectives. Indigenous knowledge systems or products are autonomously and innately theoretical, and constitute accessible and replicable body of performative knowledge lodged in human memory. As such, it is presumptuous and profane to invent and impose extraneous theoretical premise for researching or discussing an indigenous knowledge system or manifestation that is already theoretically autonomous. It is intellectual arrogance, in fact an exercise in self-deception for a modern scholar to attempt upstaging the intellectual authority or deny the theoretical validity of indigenous knowledge constructs. The task of the scholar, culture member or foreign, is to be a universal interpreter of the autonomous language that the culture speaks in its authoritative intellectual productions. And yet, self-arrogating modern intellectuals propound extraneous theoretical and analytical premises ever before encountering a theoretically grounded indigenous knowledge subject. The result is impressive research prescriptions and some published literature faulted by the prejudiced research assumptions, and the misrepresentation of cultural knowledge truths appertaining. It is, nevertheless, pertinent that modern scholars can advance inherent theories for contemporary relevance without radicalizing the original out of cultural sensibility. In such an exercise the marrying of different sameness must eschew prejudices

Simplicity is often a mask for profound substance, potency or puzzlement; the seemingly elaborate or grandiose could be ostentatious and lack sublime substance. Many modern knowledge creations and products are flamboyant or fanciful, often contrived for sensational and euphoric fun that mal-orientate the public about valuable and virtuous living. Terseness of language marks indigenous musical arts knowledge systems such that every concise element of composition or configuration of texture embodies profound texts and stimulates reflective elaborations. The task for modern musical arts scholarship, education and creativity is the capability to unpack the texts through cognitive research. Thereafter the knowledge markers must be re-configured if need be, for constructing modern realities ingrained by the abiding original human virtues and intellectual template. New knowledge creations and applications that are intellectually engaging while objectively transacting humanistic issues in public and private domains will then begin to emerge. Then musical arts education, as much as educators and professionals, will attract noble public

respect and recognition. It is ironical that modern music compositions that cater for sheer entertainment are dubbed serious compositions. On the other hand, indigenous classical musical arts creations are those that transact momentous societal issues, and as such, must be included in classroom studies of societal conscience, and also in the celebration of creative profundity.

Modern-sophisticated imaginations and constructions of the aesthetic often mask flimsy or base nature. There is need to ground aesthetic aspirations in humanistic virtues. Elegance has scant innate human virtue, but flashes great outward affectation that could dazzle and diabolize the psyche of the actor as much as perceiver. Aesthetic qualification has cultural prescription and manifestation. And different colors of the aesthetic need to be understood and taken into account in installing global notions of the aesthetic in contemporary human imagination. Notions of the aesthetic furnished and promoted in the media with respect to dress culture, food taste, human appearance, musical arts etc, are insensate commercialism. They are often diabolic, and harmful to psychical and physiological wellness of mesmerized and trusting masses. Some African indigenous exemplars of the aesthetic quality are marked by health-first considerations. They are experienced as noble, virtuous and purposeful beauty. In the musical arts for instance, aesthetic perception is spontaneously demonstrated in expressive motive-emotive dimensions, which immediately becomes a factor of spontaneous creativity and spiritual health enhancement. The naturally ugly, bitter, rough, rugged and disagreeable in experience, generally foreground sources of beautiful psychical and physiological salubrity that not many dare to experience. Thus, the differences that we hastily construct and label in aesthetic/beautiful and the opposing terms are often informed by virtual perceptions.

There is virtue in appreciating difference as a human imperative. A positive attitude towards 'mistake' as different from the expected makes it a factor of creative growth and intellectual development. The compatibility as well as complementation of difference is the only reason mankind and all of nature is able to regenerate. After all, it is the union of the essential difference between the female and the male that makes an offspring naturally possible. But the egomaniac, modern genius feels too superior to draw inspiration from the models of nature in order to conduct harmonious life and relationships. Attempt to eliminate difference could engender psychosis in the eliminator while traumatizing the victim. Intolerance of difference foments prejudice and hatred; hatred fecundates criminality. When a person hates others, it is actually the self, the own inadequacies that she/he subconsciously hates. Hatred is often generated by the recognition that an object of hatred has something unique that the hater lacks, and is not disposed to cultivate or

accommodate. So she/he resorts to destroying the possessor in order to stop being reminded about what she/he lacks. The more a person strives to harm what is hated the more psychic injury she/he incurs, because quite often the object of hatred is not aware of, or is not even bothered about being hated. When the object of hatred is destroyed the hater experiences only transient relief, and thereafter feels compelled to habitually destroy again in order to gain another temporary respite. A person consumed with hatred is an irredeemably sick soul and mind, and an enemy of society. So it is with the increasing religious, political, economic, educational, cultural and business discriminations or hatreds euphemistically termed competitiveness.

### **Pleading a humanning conscience in what we do**

Restive masses are increasingly resisting the deleterious schemes of a very few ensconced elite who expect to be feared or celebrated by dehumanizing or destroying the life of others. Masses are systematically brainwashed and bamboozled to celebrate superstars, and after the euphoria only sink into more depressive sense of self. Masses are coerced to worship ego-obsessed rulers, and thereafter experience increasing expropriation and dehumanization. Modern religious leaders appropriate God-image to mal-orient followers about the meaning of being godly, and so the believers increasingly miss out on salvation in life. Masses are charmed to celebrate the chimera of competition and excellence only to be defeated by the shattering impact of failure. Masses are mesmerized with the euphoria of vacuous entertainment and fun, and become bereft of the humanning virtues and values of purposive artistic communion. Masses of learners are being nurtured with mechanistic education that disables humane instincts hence the escalation of machine-generated criminality.

Music is a humanizer. Music studied as purely sonic phenomenon deviates from the original meaning of the musical arts. The music education community needs must ponder what contribution it could make in the urgent mission of redeeming a world overwhelmed by diverse criminality, and the insecurity of life appertaining. While the musical arts fraternity celebrates achievements, we must be conscious of the nagging voices of increasingly disenchanting and restive masses.