**Big salute to big master artist Kolade**

By Ozolua Uhakheme

Assistant Editor (Arts)

 After touring Nigeria for six years armed with his camera, Moses Oghagbon, one of Nigeria’s contemporary artists held a solo art exhibition Scapes from Nigeria, at Nike Art Gallery Lekki Lagos in September 2011. It featured a rare collection of the nation’s landscape among others. That effort set the tone for the subsequent shows that culminated into the annual Argungu Series.

Since 2013, when Oghagbon initiated the Argungu Series of exhibition at the Terra Kulture, Lagos, the Nigerian art scene has been constantly inundated with rich collection of landscape paintings on Argungu and its heritage. He has also celebrated the famous annual Argungu International Fishing and Cultural Festival through his exhibition series in the past five years.

But this year, Oghagbon has shifted the paradigm by dedicating the ARGUNGU SERIES 7 to honour one of Nigeria’s master artists Kolade Oshinowo, who will be 70 on February 6.  It will hold at Terra Kulture Gallery, Tiamiyu Savage Street, Victoria Island, Lagos between February 17 and 26. By this singular effort, the Yaba College of Technology trained painter, water colourist and photographer has demonstrated his strong belief in the artistic philosophy of Oshinowo and also a way to say a big thank you to a master of all times.

According to the artist, ‘in this exhibition, I am exploring mixed media painting and featuring diverse mediums of paintings from Argungu International Fishing and Cultural Festival and my Kebbi state experiences to tell the story of the great people of the ancient Northeastern Nigeria, Argungu Emirate of Kebbi State in particular.’

No fewer than 40 works will be exhibited and they include Common goal Argungu (mixed media) Study Bisi (charcoal), Memories on Argungu I and II (mixed media) African beauty (oil on canvas).

He said it is pleasing identifying with legendary Kolade Oshinowo the great master of masters, his teacher and an icon that has influenced the contemporary landscape of Nigeria art in no small ways. He added that for Oshinowo at 70th ‘I am using this great opportunity to celebrate, honour and to say a big thank you for touching my life positively and that of others.’ Dedicating the show to Oshinowo is to be expected after all Oghagbon was a student under him at Yaba College of Technology Lagos, Nigeria, in 2003.

On the link between Argungu series 7 and Oshinowo’s 70th birthday celebration, the artist said it is about a ‘father and son documenting and representations for generations to come’. He described the Argungu series art exhibition is an idea born out of the need to engender positive propagation and promotion of the rich cultural artistic heritage of the Argungu Emirate of Kebbi state for generations’ developmental consciousness in a sustainable manner.

“It is important to acknowledge that visual documentation/representations are very potent tools of communication for social consciousness and orientation. Information disseminated re-vibrates indelibly in the recipient’s sub-conscious perpetually. The bedrock of meaningful development in any society or community has been identified and established as the conscious and passionate appreciation and respect for prevalent cultural trajectory,” he said.

Assistant Editor (Arts)   
THE NATION Newspapers, Lagos.  
08023058761, 08112662687  
  
Recipient Media Save Arts awards (Overall Best Report), ICCROM, Italy 2001,  
Nominee, Nigerian Media Merit Award (Muazu Prize for Tourism Report of the Year, 2013)  
Recipient Bruce Onobrakpeya Foundation (BOF) Critics Award (2016)

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