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VISION 2030 AND PEACE-BUILDING: AN ANALYSIS OF ALPHONS OKOSA'S “*UDO K'AYI N'AYO*” (PEACE)

Abstract

In African traditional society, music and music making has been used for both positive and negative indoctrinations. It is satirically used to ridicule a person, situation, state or character in an attempt to reform. It also serves the purpose of praise and eulogy to make way for improvement to foster a sense of consciousness on moral virtues such as love, peace, unity and progress. This paper examines, through analysis, the work of a composer, Alphonso Okosa “Udo K’ayi N’ayo” (Peace), exploring the textual nuances that buttress peace as a veritable ingredient in the society both now and beyond. Presently, there have been studies on Okosa focusing on his life, music and career. However, no study has focused on a detailed examination through analysis of his song “Udo K’ayi N’ayo” (Peace), as it buttresses peace-building. This paper therefore is an X-ray on the capability of a composer who prognostically doubles as a prophet and a preacher in buttressing peace-building through his musical art. This study adopts Agu’s (1999); Uzoigwe’s (1992) and Ezegbe’s (1982) criteria for identification and analysis of African songs. The criteria include: the form, the basic structural form, phraseology, presentational form and the text, performance, harmonic principles and styles, the rhythmic structure of the melody, tonal shift and instrumentation.

Keywords: *Peace-building, Alphonso Okosa, Africa, Traditional Music.*

Introduction

Over the years, humanity has expressed creativity and innovativeness through a myriad of artistic forms. One of the most practical means of expressing these natural and acquired skills is through music. Music in its content and styles represents significant aspects of social reality which is therefore an important means of information on the consciousness of a people. This is to say that music shapes and defines the way of life, duties and obligations of a people. Whereas music predominates in all facets of human activities, there is music performed for different purposes such as for works, social gatherings, religious purposes to mention but a few. Music performed during funeral is quite different from that which is enjoyed during marriage ceremony hence the difference in emotions of joy and sadness. Through the composer’s consciousness of the diverse medium of mood and emotions, the composer speaks to the future of his consumers by his compositional products.

According to Hornby (2000:766), music has been defined as “the arrangement of sounds in a pleasing sequence or combination to be either sung or played on instruments” This simply means that the language of music is not straight forward as is obtainable from some other disciplines

such as Medicine, Law, Engineering where the text and theory buttresses their nuances. Apart from expressing purely musical thoughts, it can also define definite emotions. Music from the point of view of literature and drama can be used to eulogize pictures and tell stories. Despite the fact that music is not emotion itself, it is capable of awakening thoughts, moods and feelings. Luther in Glennon (1980) writes:

Music drives away the devil and makes people happy. It at the same time induces one to forget all wrath, unchastity, arrogance, cruelty, grudge, malice and such other vices. I accord music the highest place and the greatest honour after theology (p. 2).

Music has been regarded and described as vocal because it is most widely practiced and accessible of all the arts. The author concurs with the above assertion while reiterating the wide margin in acceptance of music by humanity. Relating also to the emphasis on the above, Shakespeare in his book, *The Merchant of Venice* (1971), proclaims:

The man that has no music in him, nor is not moved with the concord of sweet sound; he is fit for treason, stratagems and spoils. The motions of his spirit are dull as night, and his affections dark too As Erebus, let no such man be trusted (p. 339).

Blacking (1976) described music as a "humanly organized sound". The implication here is that though there are many sounds in creation viz – some natural, others made by living things – only sounds which have been deliberately organized by man to specific ends – expression of emotion, touching of the senses and the emotions, communication of ideas, calming of the nerves or tuning the minds to certain planes of communication and worship – qualify to be called music. Thus, it is the organization that makes the difference. The aim and result of this organization of sounds will always vary from culture to culture. Suffice it to say that music in a society is by nature dynamic – expressing the changed, changing and still changeable environment.

Methodology

This study adopts Agu's (1999); Uzoigwe's (1992) and Ezegbe's (1982) criteria for identification and analysis of African songs. The criteria include: the form, the basic structural form, phraseology, presentational form and the text, performance, harmonic principles and styles, the rhythmic structure of the melody, tonal shift and instrumentation.

Music Composition

According to Onwuekwe, (2017) "Composition is the art of writing down original music for sacred or secular purposes for voices and or musical instruments" (p.218). Different composers have diverse ways of defining music composition. In as much as many composers of different backgrounds base their styles on elements drawn from the folk music of their locality, to greater extent, all the aspects of the culture of the people's belief, norms, attitudes and values are expressed in their music. In tandem with the above assertion, Uzoigwe, (1992) says,

Many countries of the world have produced composers at one time or the other who have in various ways, sought inspiration from the traditional music that

would represent its local sources and as well be international on its communication (p. 25).

Discussing further on composition, Agu (1992) says,

Composition involves a process through which musical creation are developed within the minds under the influence of creative forces, tailored by the social-cultural and religious demands and requirements of the society, and performed when words alone are found unsuitable for effective expression (p. 20).

Idolor (2000:1) in his definition of composition says, "Composition is the process of creating a piece of music and also refers to the music already created" He further explains that the creation of music involves a thoughtful organization of its basic elements. One needs a vivid knowledge of these elements such as: harmony, timbre, tonality, form, melody, rhythm, counterpoint and orchestration to be able to create good music. In his view on music composition, Onyeji (2014) opines:

The idea of rhythmic composition in music portends therefore a non-frivolous engagement with different note values but reveals and maintains a level of insistence on clear and purposeful commitment in the realization of rhythmic patterns for certain ramifications. Rhythmic constructions thus, go beyond assigning note values to occupy musical space and time to the morphology and agreement of individual units in a whole (p. 20).

Every musical performance has a composition as its main life wire. A performance cannot be satisfactory if the composition is bad. Sometimes, a good composition may not be performed well however, the beauty of a composition lies in its well-articulated performance. Therefore, it becomes imperative for music educators and composers to critically study certain considerations and aspects where the fundamentals are needed to upgrade the art of composition.

A Composer

A composer (Latin *comt ponere*, literally "one who puts together") is a person who creates music. The core meaning of the term refers to individuals who have contributed to the tradition of western classical music through creation of works expressed in written musical notations. Ewulu, (2014:22), defines composition as "the art of putting down imaginative thoughts through the medium of musical sounds and notes." In the popular and folk music, they are usually called songwriters due to the fact that the music generally takes the form of a song.

With regards to who should be called a composer, Nutting in Achinivu (1979) says:

I am thinking of a composer in the sense that Sam Akpabot, Wilberforce W.C Echezona, Fela Sowande and Ayo Bankole are composers: that is, men who consciously plan in advance the music they want to hear, and who are fully conscious intellectually of the qualities and relations of the sound which they choose (p.116).

In effect, to be a composer, one must be grounded in the rudiments of music. A composer is a person that is talented in the art of composition. There are many aspects and categories of composers depending on involvement and the society in which the composer belongs. There are composers that are formally trained, there are ones that are not trained and there are yet the ones that semi-trained. The last category falls under those that understudied the formally trained composers. Writing on composers, Akpakpan, (2006) opines:

Furthermore, it is important to note that at every period in music history, there had been tendencies for composers to evolve new compositional techniques... In the past hundred years, there have been strong urges for composers to liberate themselves from the norms and practices of the past: these have given rise to new forms of music with some degrees of uniqueness (p. 219).

Buttressing more on composers, Onwuekwe (2016) says: "A composer is one who puts down sounds systematically to produce music" (p. 5). Idamoyibo, (2007), in his own view on the resourcefulness of a composer reiterates:

A composer is a very resourceful music educator. He is the creative source through whom instructional materials like music scores are made available. His creative impulse leads him into the worlds of the unknown, to delve deeply in search of new knowledge or idioms, elements of style, structure of forms, texture or counterpoint, that may be simple or complex, implicit or explicit, impressive or expressive (p. 112).

Types of Composers

There are different kinds of composers as stated earlier. For the purpose of this study, three types of composers shall be discussed here. Discussing these three types of composers, Onwuekwe (2016: 6) observes: "the first category of composers have the initial talents of hearing beautiful melodies in the dream or when isolated, the art of writing down music is then learnt in the classroom." On the second type of composers, Onwuekwe (2016) continues,

Some composers that belong to the second category usually do not hear any sound either in the dream or elsewhere. They just learn the art of writing down or composing music during composition lessons. There is yet a third category of composers who did not learn the art of composition of music in school but can hear melodies in the dream, during bath, when driving or under different conditions (p. 6).

The implication from the above category is that the composer within the third category may not be necessarily literate and therefore music scoring is not negotiable. While those that fall within the third category may be literate but had no opportunity of learning the art of music scoring and so depend solely on rote method whereby conceived melodies are sung repeatedly. However, with the advancement in technology, composers resort to recording their music using the radio cassette and the phones, as the case may be. Nevertheless, the three types of composers mentioned above are all music composers. They in their different dimension either as: educators or instrumentalists help in promoting the traditions and customs of their localities and the nation

in general. It is worthy of note that the first category enjoys great advantage for the fact that they hear sounds and are able to put same sounds down either in staff or sol-fa notations.

Alphonso Okosa, belongs to the first category of composers. However, every composer is unique in his own way, in temperament, choice of idiom, thematic development, or improvisation. Discussing further on the indispensability and importance of composers and their compositions, Hurd (1968) says:

There is no one method of composing, composers works in different ways, entirely according to temperament. Some like to improvise on the piano, jotting down ideas as they go. Some like to work out the ideas on paper, going over them repeatedly until they reach a satisfactory shape. Some prefer to do all the work from memory only picking up a pen to write down the finished piece. And some perhaps the majority combine all the approaches. Whichever method one adopts, composing calls for enormous powers of concentration (p. 15).

Factors Influencing Composers in their Compositions

Basically, there are many factors that influence composers in the art of composition. Owing to the fact that some composers are formally trained, some are semi-trained while the others are trained by the formally trained. The semi-trained are those that do not have the opportunity to go to school to be trained formally. However, they have the opportunity to serve as apprentices under those formally trained. In so doing, they are able to acquire knowledge in the field of composition. Whatever influence discovered around a particular composer goes a long way in shaping the identity, life and practice of such composer. According to Onwuekwe (2017), in consonance to the above assertion opines:

Many factors influence composers in their compositions. These include (a) the family background (b) the school the composer attended; (c) the friends of the composer; (d) the religious background of the composer; (e) the musical need of the society in which the composer lives; (f) the needs and aspiration of the composer; (g) patronage (p. 230).

Aside all the above factors, mentorship contributes a whole lot in the shaping of the practices of a composer. In an oral communication with Samuel Nehemiah 'Bumneme Ojukwu (2023), a renowned and prolific composer of repute, he says:

Mentorship is an essential ingredient that spices the art of composition. Whoever sits under a mentor for some years understudying the mentor's artistry ends up either composing or conducting in the style of that particular mentor. That is why it is easy for an audience to say comfortably a particular professional that an amateur depicts in his or her composition or conducting (Sam. Ojukwu Personal Communication, August, 2023).

The Man Alphonso Okosa and his Music

Alphonso Nnanyelu Goziem Okosa is popularly known and addressed as (ANGO) by his contemporaries. He was born in 1925 in Igbo land, Southeastern part of Nigeria, precisely in Oba village, Uke, Idemili Local Government in Anambra State. He got married to Mrs, Ngozi Okosa and the union is blessed with four (4) boys: Chinedu, Amechi, Ubaka, Nnaemeka and one girl, Gloria. Nnanyelu studied at the Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. On his return, to Nigeria, he took up appointment in broadcasting and became well-known as the leader of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation choir in Enugu. ANGO taught rudiments of music to many students at Enugu and its environs and composed many sacred and secular works for choirs in Igbo land. Ekwueme (1997) has this to say about Alphonso's compositions:

ANGO makes music and although his harmonic imaginations are not very profound, his works provided a sensitive touch of light, caressing beauty, making effective use of the natural tonal inflection of the Igbo language in the top part. His judicious use of traditional instruments as accompaniments to sacred and secular songs made his works quite popular (p. 238).

Going by Ekwueme's position on Alphonso, and also observed in the analysis of Alphonso's work in this study certain rules of harmony were broken and some chord progressions did not measure up with the conventional simple rules of harmonic progressions. His handy compositions as at the time of this study include: Two Songs for Africa for SATB, Uwa Tate, Anta Fiong and Udo K'anyi na ario. Alphonso is well remembered with sense of nostalgia, the popular dance tune "Enenebe Ejeghi Olu" for which Enugu Choir was known. Alphonso took over the leadership of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) Enugu Choir now, Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) and managed it from 1970 to 1981. He retired from civil service and died in the year, 1998. His contemporaries include, Felix Nwuba, Dan Agu, Nwokolobia Agu, Kenneth Idemili, Sam Ojukwu, Dorothy Ipere, Achinivu Kanu and David Okongwu.

Okosa and Prognosis

Prognosis comes from the Greek pro "before" and gnosis "knowledge." According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (2003) "Prognosis is defined as pre-indication, which involves forecasting, predication and foretelling of the future: an advance indication of a future event; an Omen". It goes further to define an omen as a prophetic signification, an occurrence or object portending good or evil. Simply put, this is the ability of a composer to be able to foretell, forecast, predict, and prophecy through his composition. Prognosis may be for good, to commend and eulogize or for bad, to criticize in an attempt to reform. Okosa manifested the ability of a prophet in his music under review in this study. Speaking on the value of composers, Ojukwu maintains that one needs to be intellectually balanced to be able to fall in the category of a composer that can foretell a situation through his music. Speaking generally on music practitioners he says: Music as an academic discipline is not for lazy and mediocre people. It is only meant for people of great artistic, scientific talent with high intellectual ability who speak into the future through their musical compositions (Ojukwu personal communication July, 2022).

Talking about a composer as a prophetic oracle, he further says:

A composer is by nature a moralist, an oracle of prophecy who sees well into the future and a preacher who through his compositions preaches sermons touching on every subject of life and the world which materializes even when the music must have been composed for many years (Ojukwu Personal Communication Sept. 2022).

Prognosis is not only peculiar to art musicians, it also finds its way through many genres of music practices such as: Gospel, Pop, Juju, Art Music, Reggea, Highlife, Apala and Folk tales. Musicians who had consciously prophesied and spoken about the future through their songs include: Sonny Okosun in (Which way Nigeria, 1984), Chika Okpala in (Ukwu apua m oso, 1983), Sam. Ojukwu in (Chineke Doo: A Prayer for Nigeria, 1984), Eedris Abdulkareem in (Nigeria Jaga-Jaga, 2004), Alphonso Okosa in (Udo, 1978), Fela Anikulapo Kuti in (Suffering and Smiling, 1978) and Obi Igwe in (Ndi Ochichi, 2017).

Okosa possessed the qualities of a prophet and a preacher as enunciated by Ojukwu. The relevance of this composition is reflective on the psychological, physical, emotional, mental,

social, political and educational wellness of our country. His prophecy over the years is overt in the state of Nigeria as a nation hence the title of the song is: Peace to all nation.

The Textual Analysis of the Composition, "*UDO*"

This study adopts Agu's (1999); Uzoigwe's (1992) and Ezeigbo's (1982) criteria for identification and analysis of African songs. Based on the above, the textual analysis focused on five (5) headings a) Form, b) Presentational form, c) Text, d) Performance and e) Instrumentation. The work titled "*Udo ka ayi na-ayo*" is an original composition, composed precisely on May 8th, 1978 by Alphonso Okosa. He entered into petition and intercession as a Christian to explore the concept of peace upon all nations. The music was composed, forty-six years ago. The music opened with a repetition on the subject "*Udo*" which emphasizes the prayer aspect of the composition that seeks God's mercy and intervention. The entire music has a total of sixty bars excluding all repeats. The music is set for mixed voices of four parts namely: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. The music is written in three main sections. The first section pleads for peace for all nations (bars 1-10: repeated), the second section asks God to grant all nations the peace Himself (bars 11-26: repeated). The composer's insistence on God to grant the world peace was based on the fact that it is only God who grants lasting peace. The Bible recorded in John (14: 27) "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, give I to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful. Peace I leave with you". The third section enumerated: injustice, hatred, corruption and malice as vices that abound despite the search for peace (bars 27-44, repeated also).

The theme of the song is on intercession, where Okosa pleads with God to save all nations from the severe situations ranging from: murder, malice, hatred and wickedness as captured in the composition. All of these are evident in the present day society of Nigeria. Below are the lyrics of the song under review.

IGBO (Nkeji Mbu)
Udo, udo,
Udo dil'uwa nine,
Ayi na-ayo Chukwu

English (Section One)
Peace, peace,
Peace to the world,
We beseech Thee, O Lord

UDO K'AYI N'AYO.

ALPHONSO OKOSA. [1978]
Arr by Ewulu, Izuchukwu J.

ANDANTE.

SOPRANO
U - do, u - do, u - do di - lu - wa ni - le, a - yi na -

ALTO
U - do, u - do, u - do di - lu - wa ni - le, a - yi

TENOR
U - do, u - do, u - do di - lu - wa ni - le, a - yi na -

BASS

9
yo Chu kwu.

na - yo Chu - kwu.

na - yo Chu - kwu.

Nkeji Abuo
Ayi n'ayo k'o wel'amara Ya zit'udo
Zit'udo, zit'udo
O Chineke zidat'udo, umu gi na ayo

Section B
We beseech Him to send His peace by His grace
Send peace, send peace
O God send down Your peace, Your children are
pleading



Nkeji Ato
 Ayi nayo udo, ma ayi negbu ochu,
 Ayi nayo udo, ma ayi nebu iro,
 Ayi nayo udo, ma ayi nebu agha,
 O Chineke zidat'udo, umu gi nayo.

Section C
 We seek peace, yet we kill,
 We seek peace, yet we are in enmity,
 We seek peace, yet we quarrel
 O God send down Your peace, Your children are
 pleading.

27

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

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m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u-mu-Gi na - yo.

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u-mu-Gi na - yo.

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u-mu-Gi na - yo.

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u-mu-Gi na - yo.

UDO K'AYI N'AYO.

ALPHONSO OKOSA. [1978].

Arr. by Ewulu, Izuchukwu J.

ANDANTE.

SOPRANO

U - do, u - do, u - do di-l'u - wa ni - le, a-yi na -

ALTO

U - do, u - do, u - do di-l'u - wa ni - le, a - yi

TENOR

U - do, u - do, u - do di-l'u - wa ni - le, a-yi na -

BASS

9

yo Chu kwu. A - yi na - y'o we-l'a - ma-ra Ya zi-t'u - do, zi-t'u - do,

na - yo Chu- kwu. A - yi na - yo k'o we-l'a - ma-ra Ya zi-t'u - do, zi-t'u - do,

na - yo Chu- kwu. A - yi na - yo k'o we-l'a - ma-ra Ya zi-t'u - do, zi-t'u - do,

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zi-t'u - do, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo.

zi-t'u - do, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo.

zi-t'u - do, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo.

27

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

Ayi na-y'u - do m'ayi ne-gbuo-chu, ayi na-y'u - do, m'a-yi n'e-bui - lo, ayi na-y'u - do

37

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo. U- do, u -

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo. U- do, u -

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo. U- do, u -

m'a-yi n'e-bua-gha, O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u- mu_ Gi na - yo. U- do, u -

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u - do, u - do, u - do, -do, u - do, u - do, u - do, -do, u - do, U - do, u - do,

-do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do,

-do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do,

-do, U - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do, u - do,

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O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u - mu__ Gi na - yo.

O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u - mu__ Gi na - yo.

O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u - mu__ Gi na - yo.

O Chi-ne - ke zi-da-t'u - do u - mu__ Gi na - yo.

The Synopsis of the Song

In an attempt to summarize this song by Alphonso Okosa, it was obvious that the composer sought peace (Udo) by the time the nation had it in abundance compared to what is seen today. The situation of Nigeria as virtually seen in all facets of the country ranging from governance, politics, education, economy, security, health care and lots more are in danger and begs for lasting peace that comes from God alone. The composer believed so much that the divine intervention of God, the creator is imminent, as seen in the song. The composer believed that it is in God only that the people have hope for survival hence the Holy Scripture in (Acts 17:28), writes "In Him (Christ) alone we live, move and have our being". The composer therefore focused his absolute trust in God for mercy and intervention for a better society. A consciousness is raised in the composition that points to many vices in the society. However, Alphonso was optimistic and hopeful for a more refined, transformed, rejuvenated, renewed and a more committed society where true love, truthfulness, hard work, sincerity, honesty, humility, brotherly love, tolerance and tranquility abound both on the sides of the leaders and of the led. Today, Alphonso's prophesy in composition-forty-six years ago is in consonance with the nation's clamor for change, restructuring and total overhauling of the polity in the Nigerian State through peaceful co-existence, tolerance and love.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The textual analysis of Okosa's "Udo" in this paper has been based on Agu's parameters for identification and analysis of African music. The work is a choral song set for mixed voices of Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass (SATB). The message of the music is that of prayer which

emphasizes petition and intercession (Peace be to the whole world, we beseech Thee O God). Okosa's song is a valuable material for concert performances for mixed voices in schools, churches and institutions of higher learning where consciousness would be raised on the imperativeness of peace among people of the same and diverse backgrounds as found in Nigeria. The moral lessons derived from the song are useful for moral instruction in both primary and secondary schools to emphasize the importance of peace among pupils at their tender age and the adolescence stage of maturity.

Music educators should embark on more historio-graphical studies so that composers like Okosa would be discovered. In so doing, some other works with moral lessons as "*Udo*" would emerge also. This would enhance proper documentation.

Music students who could speak into the future through their compositions just as Okosa did many years ago should be encouraged to specialize in composition. Music educators should promote the art of storytelling through folk songs and folklores in the language of the people that teach morals.

All categories of composers are to be encouraged as each contributes to human and material development especially with regards to moral values, nation building and peace keeping.

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