

BIOS & PICS



1. MAHMOOD ALI-BALOGUN

Chief Executive Officer, Brickwall Communications Ltd, Mahmood is an alumnus of the University of Ife film school. He produced and directed the 2011 award winning film "Tango with Me," a 35mm feature, the highest grossing Nigerian film in 2011. He directed the award winning M-net short film, "A Place Called Home" (1999). His documentaries include "Dance of the Maidens" (Traditional Marriage rites) 2005, "Berthing a Nation - Dividends of Democracy", "Trafficking in Women & Children" - the New Slavery (2002), "Environmental Pollution in Nigeria" (2003), "Child Abuse in Nigeria" (2001), "Highlife - The Endangered Music form" (2002).

Mahmood, the Chairman of the Audio Visual Rights Society of Nigeria (AVRS) - a collecting society for IP right owners. He was on the regulatory policy formulating steering committee of the Motion Picture Council of Nigeria, the Nigerian Television Authority Reform Implementation Committee (RIC) and review committee for the Nigerian Cultural Policy.

A member of the Directors Guild of Nigeria (DGN), Mahmood is on the advisory of Africa Movie Academy Awards (AMAA) and African International Film Festival (AFRIFF). He was on the Advisory Council of the Federation Panafricaine Des Cineates (FEPACI), President of the federation's 9th Congress in South Africa (2013); and ambassador to Nollywood Film Festival, Paris. A member of the jury of 2015 International Emmy® Awards, Mahmood has served as juror/panelist at such festivals as Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF), African International Film Festival (AFRIFF), Abuja Intr'l Film Festival and Zuma International Film Festival. He coordinates and leads the delegation to this conference/workshop.



2. CHIEF PEDDIE OKAO

Peddie Okao is a member of the Board of Directors, Audio Visual Society of Nigeria (AVRS), and the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of ProlensMovies Limited, a foremost National Film distribution company in Nigeria. He is a Screenwriter, Producer, and Director whose recent work "AGBONAYE" is up for screening here in Los Angeles.

Chief Okao who is currently the Chairman, Congress of Edo Movie Practitioners, is the proprietor of Prolens Film Academy, Edo State, Nigeria, and Chairman, Prolens Cinemas, a Neighborhood Cinema Chain building across the south-south region of the country.

A former banker of repute, proud Researcher of Cultural Africa, and an Accountant per excellence, Chief Peddie Okao has several certifications in various aspects of Film making including a certification in "Cinema & Censorship: Global Perspective" by Dr. Jude Akudinobi of this prestigious University of California.

A recipient of many awards, including the rare Royal "Award of Excellence in Cultural Africa through Films" by His Royal Majesty, Omo N'Oba N'Edo, Uku Akpolorkpolor, Oba Erediauwa (CFR), Oba of Benin, Chief Peddie E. Okao is an inspiring filmmaker who believes that disability is of the mind, and no one should enslave himself to it.



3. ANDREW N. AMENECHI

A veteran film maker, pioneer of NOLLYWOOD, accomplished Producer &writer, has over 24 years cognate experience spanning TV, advertising, marketing, multimedia and digital new media production, is presently the National President of the DIRECTORS GUILD of NIGERIA (D.G.N)

Andy has been engaged in the creation, production, distribution and broadcast of high end creative content, for the Nigerian Television and Film Industries, since 1997. He specializes in producing advocacy films with health related themes, from -“MORTAL INHERITANCE” (1997) to “HEART OF GOLD” (2009) directing award winning films, including - “Igodo”, “The Concubine”, “Oduduwa”, “Egg of Life” amongst over 190 feature Films.

Andy’s vision is the transformation of NOLLYWOOD into a world class brand in a structured, regulated and creatively conducive environment, employing the best technology, in telling African stories globally, using international best practices.

Andy’s mission is to create a distribution infrastructure of the future, within the evolving digital terrain, through the use of mobile /digital devices downloading original African entertainment content all over the world, with the potential of becoming first revenue stream option for African Film makers and creative content owners.



4. TUNJI BAMISHIGBIN

Tunji Bamishigbin started Theatre on the professional stage in 1976 prior to the Festac. He later studied Theatre Arts at the University of Ilorin with BA(Hons)1985. He did his Youth Service with the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and worked as a contract staff with NTA (National Service) as Script Writer, Actor and Assistant Producer/Director 1988 – 1990 within period he enrolled for full-time degree course in Law, 1987 and was called to the Nigerian Bar as Solicitor and Advocate of the Supreme Court of Nigeria in 1992.

He worked as Assistant Manager Corporate Affairs Department and later Special Assets Group of defunct Universal Trust Bank (UTB) between 1994 – 1996. He started his full time production company ROCKVIEW PRODUCTIONS along with Legal Practice in 1996 till date.

Tunji has created/directed/produced over 10 acclaimed Network Soap Operas and over 12 Films. He is married with children.



5. FIDELIS DUKER

Fidelis Duker is a native of Henshaw Town, Calabar in Cross Rivers State and one of Nigeria's foremost filmmaker who has written, produced or directed over 80 different motion picture content in his over 25 years as a creative entrepreneur. Some of his award winning works include NOT MY WILL, SCANDALS, BLOOD BROTHERS, PURE LOVE, LONDON BLUES, SENSELESS, NEMESIS, GIRLS NEXT DOOR, IMAGES, ELDORADO, HOT PASSION, DOCTOR DEATH amongst several others.

He has two Post graduate diplomas in Mass Communication and marketing from the Olabisi Onabanjo University and the Albion College United Kingdom respectively. Then he proceeded to Crawford University where he earned an MBA in International Business. Recently he acquired a professional certificate in Film & Television from University of California Los Angeles. A Former President of the Directors Guild of Nigeria and currently the Regional Secretary General of the Federation of Pan African Filmmakers (FEPACI).

A pioneer of the popular Nigerian Movie Industry called Nollywood with over 70 Feature films to his credit in his over 20 years of practice. He was elected Vice President of the Afrifestnet Steering Committee in April 2012 and via a change of leadership he became the President of the continental body for festivals in Africa on 13th of January 2013. He is the founder and Festival Director of the Abuja International Film Festival which is the longest running film festival in West Africa which has been on for 11 years.

He also founded the first film festival in cross rivers state called the Tinapa Film Festival and awards which held in April 2007 as part of the opening of Tinapa Studios. The Film Festival and award has since been renamed the Calabar Film Festival and Awards.

He is a member of the Directors Guild of Nigeria, Association of Movie Producers of Nigeria, Nigerian Institute of Public Relations and the Advertising practitioners council of Nigeria respectively.

Mr. Duker has made over 100 presentations at different local and international forum based on his in-depth knowledge of the global motion picture industry.

It is to his credit that as a filmmaker that several of the Nollywood Stars had their big break through some of his films, names like Uche Jombo, Bukkie wright, Desmond Elliot, Iyabo Ojo, Omoni Oboli, Rychado Agbor, Emeka amongst others.



6. BOND EMERUWA...

BOND EMERUWA started his career in television and film in 1985 as a script writer.

A veteran filmmaker.

Co-Director, Nollywood Workshops

A TED Fellow.

“INHERITANCE”- A movie on the incidence of sickle cell anemia, which won 10 awards at the Nigeria Movies Awards (THEMA'97).

“HEART OF GOLD”, Another multiple award

winning film (1998) which incorporated issues around spinal cord injuries.

“CHECKPOINT”- Nominated for best director at the 2008 African movie academy awards (AMAA)

“MOUNTAIN BLUES”- Best feature film at the Abuja International Film Festival(2007).

He was President of Directors' Guild of Nigeria (DGN) 2007-2011. Chairman, Coalition of Nollywood Guilds and Associations(CONGA) 2009- 2013.

A TED Fellow, He is a Co-Founder and Director of Nollywood Workshops. Working with filmmakers to find ways of utilizing the vastly popular Nollywood films to pass messages on topical health and developmental issues. Currently filming a new Hausa film "Dan Birni", a highly entertaining, star studded comedy film that incorporates messages on polio and Routine Immunization.

He is also Co-Creator, co-Producer and Director of a highly entertaining Enter-Educate Television series "NEWMAN STREET" that incorporates messages on Family planning and Malaria.



7. AHMAD SARARI

Name: Ahmad Mohammed Sarari

Position: MD / CEO and Producer

Company: Sarari Klassique Merchandise LTD

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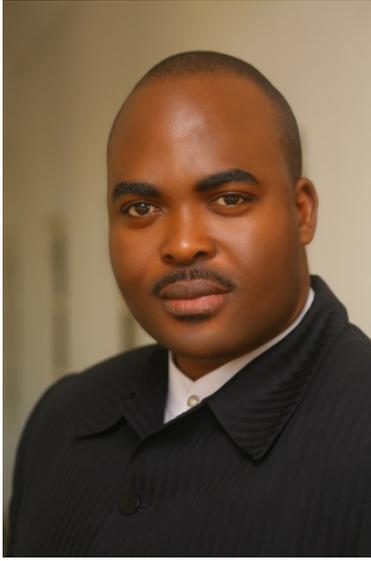
Website: www.sarariklassique.com www.kannyawards.org

Ahmad Sarari was born on 05/09/65 in an ancient city of Kano Nigeria. He's a microbiologist (MSc), Media consultant to MTNN, DDB Lagos, Media Perspectives, PRRINN – MNCH etc, a Founder & President of annual Kannywood Awards, a producer of Best Indegenious Film Zuma Film Festival 2006, a producer of Film titled "WARAKA" that was screened (at "Pavillon du Sud") during Cannes International Film festival 2008, a member of Advertizing Practioners Council of Nigeria, Board member of Audio Visual Right Society of Nigeria, former National Vice President of Motion Picture Practitioners Association of Nigeria (MOPPAN), Former North West Zonal Director of National Film and Video Censors Board, an independent Producer, Director and Distributor. He is currently the MD/CEO of Sarari Klassique Merchandise LTD and Kannywood Entertainment LTD.

Among the schools attended by Sarari are:

- Dantata Memorial Primary School, Kano
- Saint Thomas Secondary School, Kano
- G.S.S.Gwammaja II, Kano
- School of Basic Studies A.B.U Zaria
- Rostov on Don Medical Institute, Russia
- Moscow Medical academy, Russia
- Bayero University Kano

Mr. Sarari is married and blessed with three kids.



8. EMEKA OSSAI

Name: Emeka Ossai

Occupation: Producer/Actor and CEO, Golden Pyramid Prods. Ltd

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EMEKA OSSAI: Is an accomplished actor and member of the Actors Guild of Nigeria (AGN); Producer and Chief Executive of the company, Golden Pyramid Productions Ltd.

As a Film maker and through his production company, he made his first film titled THORNS OF ROSE in 1995; followed successively with CHECKERED FATE; DILEMMA; SWEET DREAMS; LIFE AND DEATH, etc. Through his first film, he gave the industry two unarguably fantastic female actors namely: OMOTOLA JALADE-EKEHINDE and SHAN GEORGE. He is a frontline member of the Association of Movie Producers of Nigeria (AMPN) and Audio Visual Rights Society of Nigeria (AVRS).

As a TV Producer he has two very successful, multiple Terrecotta Award winning and still running television series, COMFORT ZONE (sitcom) and CROSSED ROAD (drama); and a language (Ibo) sitcom series, ENU OFE, viewed locally in Nigeria and across several countries of the world and also with several Awards to their credit. Award winning Artistes like KATE HENSHAW-NUTTALL, ADEKUNLE SALAWU and NKEM IKE are products from these TV Series. He is also a founding member of the Electronic Media Content Owners Association of Nigeria (EMCOAN).

Emeka Ossai, who is an Africa Youth Ambassador and the 2008 /2009 Africa Movie Academy Awards (AMAA) Best Actor in a supporting role, had his secondary education at the prestigious Government College Ughelli, Delta State. From there he moved on to Nigeria's premier higher institution, The Yaba College of Technology, Yaba- Lagos (YABATECH) to obtain a National Diploma in Food Technology. Through direct entry, he yet moved on to the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB), where he bagged Bachelors of Science (BSc) Degree in Food Technology. Emeka Ossai hails from Utakwa-uno in Ndokwa west Local Government Area of Delta State where he is a traditional Chief (Onotu of Utakwa-uno) and is happily married with children.



9. MICHELLE BELLO

Born in 1982 in London, Michelle moved to the United States in 2001 to study Communications (specializing in Visual Media) at the American University in Washington D.C. After graduating in 2005 with her Bachelor's Degree, Michelle moved back to Nigeria to commence her career in the film industry. Michelle produced and directed her first feature film called *Small Boy* late 2007. The movie was nominated for two awards at the 2008 American Black Film Festival in Los Angeles. On the home front, *Small Boy* went on to win two African Movie Academy Awards in April 2009.

She subsequently returned to the United States and earned a Master's Degree in Communications, specialising in Film Directing in 2011. Her second feature film, *Flower Girl*, was released in Nigeria in February 2013 and has since won 'Best African Film' and 'Favourite New Nollywood Film' international awards as well as over 8 African awards and 7 nominations, including 'Best African Film'. *Flower Girl* has been screened in Los Angeles, London, Toronto, Aberdeen and Paris in addition to having premieres in Lagos, Accra and London.

Michelle was personally awarded the prestigious and much coveted Trailblazer Award at the Africa Magic Viewer's Choice Awards 2014 "for her commitment and demonstrated talent, her versatility and potential for cutting-edge approaches to African cinema". Featured on CNN, Forbes Africa and France 24, Michelle is the first female Nigerian director to have a UK theatrical release. She is currently developing her third feature film.



10. CHARLES NOVIA

Charles Novia is generally acknowledged as an avant-garde Nollywood filmmaker. A 1993 Dramatic Arts graduate of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Over the years, he has been involved with Nollywood in various capacities as a Scriptwriter, Producer, Director and critic as well as a foremost creative entrepreneur. He's the first major Nollywood filmmaker to write a book on the workings of the film industry in Nigeria and the book; 'Nollywood till November: memoirs of a Nollywood Insider' since its publication in 2012, has been well received by critics and scholars of the film sector in Nigeria. He is married to Happy Novia, who co-produces with him and they have a lovely daughter, Nosakhare. He lives in Abuja, Nigeria. Email: charles.novia1@gmail.com. Twitter: @charlesnovia.



11. DIPO ABDUL

As a Producer, Dipo Abdul has worked most of his life in the Entertainment and Marketing communication Industry.

He started his career in 1998 as an advertising Executive with creative-edge Ad agency, and has worked in various marketing management capacities within the leisure, Hospitality, Marketing Communication and Entertainment sector.

With a strong passion for the visual art form he has lead the creative Direction for Kiss Group since inception in 2005. Based in Lagos Nigeria, responsible for providing Entertaining and engaging experiential marketing solutions for some of the biggest brands in Africa.

His true passion remains storytelling and has worked the last two Decades producing, Live Events, TV programs, Radio Programs, commercial and Music videos. He has a strong technical background in cinematography, event lighting and Production design.

He made his directorial debut with DELUDED a short film (2014) written by Grace Edwin Okon. Winning the Best short film Category at the 2015 Best of Nollywood Awards. Deluded was Nominated in seven Categories at the 2015 In-short Film Festival in Lagos, winning the Best Cinematography and Best Actress Awards. Deluded was also nominated for Best short film and Viewer's choice Award at the 2015 African International film festival and the 2015 Abuja International Film festival.

He also directed and co-produced the feature film- My Creek Town Adventure (2015), The TV Drama Series 24-Seven (2015), The TV Comedy Series Cross Country (2016), and he is an associate producer on the South African/Nigerian Co-production Film Project "And the spirit Slowly dies" 2016.



12. IYEN AGBONIFO-OBASEKI

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Iyen Agbonifo holds a B.A[Ed][Hons] in French Language and a Post-Graduate diploma in Theatre Arts from the Universities of Benin and Lagos respectively.

She has worked professionally on stage plays, television and films as a costumier and make-up artist within and outside Nigeria. Her works on stage include: Idia, Morountodun, The lion and The Jewel, Obaseki, The Naming Ceremony, The King Must Dance naked, A dance for 'Ella[an adaptation of the Cinderella story. Movie credits are Evil thing ,Missing Angel, Brave Soldier, Eziza, 30 days, Tango With Me, Igodo and Adesuwa.

She's into Arts Directing. Some films to her credit as an Arts Director are namely: Married But Living Single and Invasion 1897. Iyen was also the Costume designer for Nigeria's Drama presentation at the 2012 London Olympics.

Iyen served as Member of the International Screening Panel for the Africa Movie Academy Awards (AMAA). She was Facilitator and Resource Person for workshops in Nigeria, USA, Denmark, UK, and South Africa.

She is the CEO of Aiwai Touch Ltd, a design outfit for film sets, make up, costumes and props.

Iyen is also a Director with Nollywood Concepts Promotion, an advocacy initiative that is using Nollywood films as a tool for information dissemination in the realization of vision 2020 and MDG's. She produced a movie on VVF titled "HAAJA" in partnership with UNFPA (the United Nations Population Fund). She has also co-produced other works such as Brave Soldier, Prisoner Of Passion, Seduction and Delicate Affair (a Nigeria/Ghana collaboration).

She won the Best Costume Designer for Igodo (1999) and Africa Best Achievements in Costume Design for Adesuwa (2012).