

Summit Arts, Culture & Tourism

Day To Remember: Leo Frobenius' Collection Makes Impact In Abuja

By LEOMA EZEIKE

Tuesday 9th of November 2010 will remain a memorable day that would not be easily forgotten by art lovers, fun seekers and stakeholders in the tourism sector, as they thronged to Cyprian Ekwensi Art and Culture centre in Abuja to witness the remarkable exhibition of 'Leo Frobenius' documentation of cultural life in several regions of Nigeria 100 years ago.

On display, was a rich collection of past photograph taken by him that contains some rich attraction of images which brings to mind old memories of Nigeria especially pre independent era.

The exhibition attracted photo enthusiast which shows an example of how photo can reinvent the past and give hope to today's photographers.

Declaring the event open, the Minister of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation, Alhaji Abubakar Mohammed said "What we are doing today is indeed the beginning of a programme of cultural actions that would contribute to the envisioning of a prosperous Nigeria for generation yet unborn".

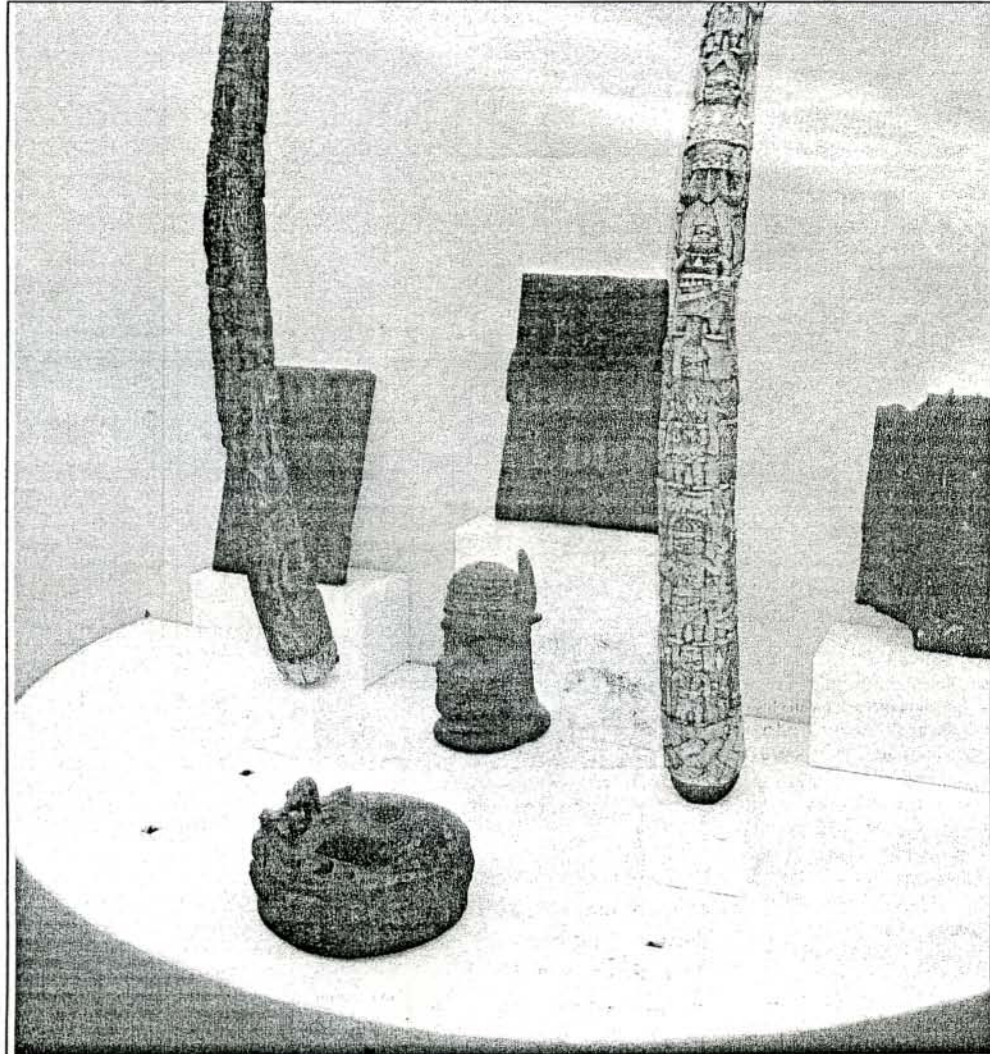
Mohammed described Leo Frobenius as a cultural icon and a great explorer that was born and raised in Germany but came to Africa, took pictures, made paintings and drawings that have stood the best of time.

In his words "Leo Frobenius was closely associated with this country from 1910-1912 and his travels produced more than three thousand images ranging from sketches, pen and oil painting, water colours, photographs and others".

He added that the works of Frobenius, gave a rich cultural impression of architecture, arts, handicraft, and the day to day life of both the common man and royalty in Nigeria.

The minister noted that there is need for the country to market what the predecessors have achieved in the past

According to him "all countries of the world are tapping into the wealth embedded in their cultural



heritage, to fashion out an image of themselves which they communicate to the world so, Nigeria cannot be different as we consume cultural products of other civilizations, we must as a matter of urgency market what our predecessors have achieved"

Mohammed explained that the exhibition will afford the society the opportunity to cross-examine their past, select what they consider delectable and through various instrumentalities, seek to perpetuate them.

Earlier, the Director General of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM),

Yusuf Abdallah Usman said "through this exhibition of archival materials, we make available to the Nigerian public an invaluable documentation of life in several Nigerian societies as they existed one hundred years ago".

Usman reiterated the Commission's commitment in playing its role by using the universal language of its collection to create and develop international understanding within a world in which some parochial people talk of clash of civilization, instead of seeing the unity in our diversity.

DG NCMM, expressed delight

that the exhibition came at a time when the Federal Government has renewed interest of ensuring that Nigeria assumes her position as a cultural giant.

The Chairman Senate Committee on Culture and Tourism, Sen. Dahiru Bako Gassol stated that the presentation contributes to "our understanding of Nigerian history and culture by bringing to life scenes of daily activities, arts and crafts, architecture and costumes in Nigeria 100 years ago pointed out the exhibition was aimed at educating and enlightening the society on their cultural heritage".