

NEED FOR PROFESSIONALISM IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT INSTALLATIONS IN SELECTED NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY THEATRES

Margaret G. Akpan (PhD)

Department of Theatre and Film Arts

University of Uyo

Margaretakpan@uniuyo.edu.ng

&

Ekemini E. Effiong

Department of Theatre and Film Arts

University of Uyo

Ekeminieffiong@uniuyo.edu.ng

Abstract

It is very unfortunate that some Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot really boast of a theatre that is well designed and sufficiently equipped for effective hands-on learning by theatre students. This is the result of assigning the contract of designing the theatre and installation of equipment to technologist, architects, technicians and designers who do not know the unique feature a theatre structure or facility should possess for effective learning outcomes. Some of the facilities of these institutions of higher learning get improved in these acts at the detriment of academic excellence, research and professionalism. Using Participant-observations and library research methods, this study focuses on the need for professionalism in architectural design and equipment installations in select Nigerian Universities. Findings show that many Nigerian universities do not have adequate space to stage their productions. Some of the architectural designs of many theatres are not handled by experts who have insight of the field, leading to theatre houses being in shambles; and that theatre equipment are not sufficient in many universities resulting in poor production qualities. The paper concludes that leaving an intricate sector of the theatre in the hands of unprofessional persons may wreck the creativity of the theatre and may lead to an irredeemable collapse of the profession. It recommends that there should be an all-round installation and revamp of theatre architecture, and that the tasks should be handled by experts in theatre study towards encouraging scholarship, professionalism and cultural development in the society.

Keywords: Equipment, Installations, Professionalism, Theatre Architecture, University-Theatre.

Introduction

The use of amateurs and unqualified persons instead of professionals in the construction and equipment installations of educational theatres in our tertiary institutions necessitated this study. The Microsoft Encarta dictionary defines a professional as **“somebody very competent: somebody with a high degree of skill or competence; somebody very competent: somebody with a high or member of profession; somebody in skilled job: a worker in a paid occupation that usually requires a high degree of training; somebody whose occupation requires extensive education or specialized training”** (np). From the above, we can adduce that professionalism entails that someone has undergone training, acquired skill to be competent to carry out a job and to maintain standards while executing the job. A professional is one who can be trusted to deliver on an assigned job to the satisfaction of his clients through his application of learned skills especially in a critical domain of theatre like scenery.

The role of scenery in theatre practice has made the need to objectivise the construction of theatre architectures across Nigerian universities a necessary task; considering the trends of its artistic and cultural plunge. Apart from the subjective aspect of the scenery in the stimulation of psychological responses to human thoughts towards environment on stage, “performances as well as theatrical and dramatic elements are to be presented within an arranged space or venue, in such a way that it can be

seen clearly by the audience” (Jacob, 2023:34). This narrows performance to thought expressed or philosophy projected and scenery to environment. There is a significant bond between action and place as exemplified in content and scenery of the theatre towards identifying the circumstance of people's background in their action within the society.

Along this line, Brockett and Hildy (2003: 292), elaborate on Charles Darwin's idea “that human behaviour when viewed (is) a product of heredity and environmental forces... determined by factors largely beyond any individual's control”. Being that theatrical productions are viewed as both spectacle that entertains and as an instrument for self-reassessment, the psychological connectedness of a character's environment to the character's all-round development has a significant socio-psycho linkage with the “selves” in the audience. To Udofia (2021: 649), “human's disposition “in the exercise of will (is) aided or deterred by the environment”. Thus, in observing the physical outlook of a properly made theatre scene, one can conclude that through it, the properly shaped mind can be conceptualised. For this purpose, theatre becomes a mirror for man's self-assessment (Cohen, 2006: 230). As such, there is need for an all-round reassessment of the tools with which their messages are projected.

Theatre architecture expands the personality of the characters, which implies that a well configured architecture has some identifiable feature that expounds the audience sense of the selves in an imaginary milieu. With the aid of creative decor, it commands a significant influence on factor of theatre immediacy. This means, the effect of the environment is spiced and heightened in the decor which is a technical factor. According to Johnson (2024):

The stage is always ornamented or decorated in keeping with the properties of the performance... The items of decor are intended to season the stage and make it 'palatable' to the taste of the audience.... A stage is not merely lavished with decor or drawn motif because bareness is not tolerated. No. A stage is given a decor attaché and artistic motif to enhance the preoccupations of the drama. Sometimes, characters on stage usually relate to the decor or motif so intimately that, the elements become appendages to the extension of their character (216-217).

The properly designed scenery portends a properly conceived production. Both ideas affect the wellness of the characters which the audience mirrors themselves. Apart from the need for a logical milieu in theatre, equipment properly installed can heighten the creative thrusts. Through the proper installation of equipment, imaginations on persons in actions, speeches and referents, spectacles and suggestions, or the totality of the construct taken to be the model, can be concretised. For one thing, “a model conveys a clearer picture of a proposed setting... concerned with the position and alignments of the components on stage” (Jacob, 2013: 245). Without the side-by-side placement of the requisite equipment in the necessary space as prescribed by a knowledgeable technical scenographer in the theatre, sincere effort in scriptwriting, directing, acting, costume, makeup, lighting and even management in audience engineering might waste for lack of finesse. According to Johnson (2003:209), “the director, irrespective of the play – elaborate or less – simply would subsume the performance to the nature of the stage and task his creativity or stretch his imagination to the limit of the challenge posed by the stage”. To get architecture proper and make installations suitable, there is need to consider insight and proficiency in technical theatre ground-plan and for fixing of visual component and accessories. This drastically affects the productivity level of academic theatre.

The challenges of hewing a suitable space for productions have contributed in the loss of material and human advantage in the profession. For Instance, without a befitting auditorium in which the audience from town can sit comfortably while consuming a particular show prepared by gown (the students), there cannot be a reasonable learning environment. Similarly, what would you expect from a theatre building that is not sufficiently padded with acoustic as well as sparingly furnished with lighting and

sound gallery? This is annoying especially now that information and communication technology has gone so sophisticated to the extent that even flat screen television in various homes are so large in displaying human figures that are almost equivalent to real human sizes seen on stage during theatrical productions. No doubt, the theatre would be seen as a building where unserious students and individuals (practitioners) play, drum, dance, jump, shout and act to entertain people who do not really have something meaningful to do or a good home theatre system to enjoy.

These opinions held by these fellows tend to be true because there is a great gap between the practice of theatre in Nigerian Universities and those in Diaspora, where academic theatre is designed in accordance with specifications and equipped in accordance with necessity. Considering this fissure in the discipline, there is a constant dislodgement of creative construct; there is a constant waste of credible crafts of other cognate units of the theatre; and there is a gap that only determination and execution of plans along the need may redeem. The gap is disturbing due to the difference in the attitude of key administrators of these institutions thus resulting in unmatched and unequalled quality of productions. This unrivalled situation is not because these countries are developed and Nigeria is developing, but it is as a result of the attitude of key administrators of our tertiary institutions towards anything Arts, especially theatre Arts.

However, it seems they are oblivious that Theatre Arts is blessed with a specialisation/stress area known as Theatre Technology (responsible for architectural design, equipment, and installation among other aspects of design); with attendant opportunities of entrepreneurship and innovation which would have been tapped for the development of both the student and the nation. Against this backdrop, the politicisation of appointments of educational heads in the Nigerian's tertiary institutions, leading to inappropriate decisions to comply with the wishes of the paymaster(s) through award of contracts to unqualified and incompetent persons to build educational theatres together with employing non professional as academic and technical staff has led to poor training of theatre graduates. This is a direct opposite of what happens in institutional theatres overseas where unnecessary political manoeuvrings are downplayed. There, competent professionals and necessary tools are provided to the training of practitioners to compete favourably with any sophisticated media like cinemas, home videos, among others. Being that theatre is an instrument of social reformation and development, it is professionally designed and fully equipped. According to Parker, Wolf and Block (2009):

An ill-equipped or inadequate shop with sparse working limits the types and amount of scenery that can be built and painted in it.... The overall area of a scenery shop depends on four things: the size of the stage, the shop it is to serve; the location of the shop in relation to the stage and storage areas; the number and kinds of production to be produced in an average season; and the nature of the shop's working procedure and personnel. The size of the stage, or in some cases several stages, that the shop will serve should determine the size of the shop itself. Because a large stage requires large elements of scenery, its shop would need a more expansive space on which to make them. Similarly, a shop serving more than one stage needs to have enough space to accommodate large quantities of scenery (114).

From the above assertion, it is evident that most of the challenges experienced by some institutional theatre arose from politically motivated appointments and decisions of the administrators who award contracts to non professionals who know next to nothing about the intricacies of the job. This is most noticeable in the building and equipping theatre architectures across Nigeria universities.

It is a truism that in the theatre profession, there are many veteran designers who not only build theatre houses but create vision of how space can be used from the initial idea to inspecting the finished building

with strict adherence to professional specifications. However, it is very saddening that these veteran theatre designers, skilled in the arts of theatre designs, equipment installation and management are sidetracked to award theatre construction contracts to architects who are not schooled in the arts of designing a decorous theatre. It is most heartbreaking that their expert advice is not even sought by the authorities before such contracts are awarded. Therefore, it is high time Nigerians debunked developing nation's mentality syndrome and embrace a developed and advanced one by doing what is professionally right through assigning professionals and experts to do what they know best, rather than downplaying the pungency of professionalism to ruin the academic system of the nation. This paper concentrates on the state of facilities and equipment in select Nigerian university theatres with the bid to investigate the problems of architectural design and equipment installations bedevilling theatre practices in many campuses.

The State of Facilities and other Equipment in University Theatres

In examining how venue and facilities affect the art and practice of theatre, Oni (2000) reveals the condition of design and technology in set design in relation to costume, lighting and stage management, soliciting for an independent examination of the state of different theatres in Nigeria, and further made known the sitting capacities of universities of Lagos, Obafemi Awolowo, Calabar and Nsukka. In his view, University of Lagos has a 2000-sit auditorium and a 600-sit at theatre, while Obafemi Awolowo University has Oduduwa Hall that sits 1200 audience. University of Calabar theatre and the University of Nigeria at Nsukka have a small 300 seats arts theatre while Princess Alexander auditorium has a sitting capacity of 500 respectively. In the same vein, Ododo (2004:79) observes that some of these major theatre buildings were built with proscenium stages in the wake and after Nigeria's independence. Proscenium is undeniably a theatre stage that was in vogue in Europe at the time. Of all the university theatres mentioned, it is glaring that the University of Lagos auditorium has, perhaps, the best technical facilities and equipment. In addition to the 2000 seats, in the University of Lagos arts theatre, 1300 seats are at the ground level while 700 are at the balcony. This theatre is equipped with motorised revolving stage orchestra-lift coupled with a 20-way counter weight flying system (four of which are motorised). Some of the equipment installed in the auditorium include a 120-channel rank strand pre-set dimmer board, sound mixer and a PA system, 2x 35 mm and 1x16mm film projectors (Oni in Asomba, 2000: 179).

However, a departure from Lagos to the state of the facilities in the arts theatre of the University of Ibadan reveals a wide gap between the two. For instance, Oni cited in Asomba (2000) posits:

The art theatre in Ibadan possesses stage house, mini II packs and a 30-channel control, 22'T Spots, 14 pattern 223/743, 4 follow spots and strip lights. The auditorium, which was initially designed for 304 persons, is currently sitting only 228. Other facilities in this theatre are timber and plywood floor finish, a manual flying system, cinema screen/cyclorama, orchestra pit, an apron and a worn-out stage curtain (176-177).

This contrast has shown the state of progressing and retrogressing theatre architectures and equipage in Nigerian universities.

Put differently, there are other theatre structures in Nigerian Universities that have structural departures from the proscenium configuration. For example, the ABU studio Theatre which was designed by a young American architect, Steve Erlich, with the outstanding involvement of Michael Etherton; Jos Open-Air Theatre; the Pit Theatre of the Obafemi Awolowo University and the Crab theatre of the University of Port Harcourt have some distinguishable professional finesse (Ododo, 1998:75). It is obvious that the uniqueness of each of these theatres “offer a new staging condition different from the prevailing European proscenium theatre houses/hall” (Ododo, 2004: 82).

Nonetheless, there are other theatres outside the University that are worthy of consideration in this study. They are the ones in public places which are owned and funded by govern and those owned and funded by individuals. Some of these are the National Theatre Iganmu, the old J.K. Rundle Hall and Glover Memorial Hall- all in Lagos. More so, aside from Demas Nwoko's new culture studio at Ibadan, other theatres with adequate and functioning technical facilities from government support include Colonel U.K. Bello Centre for Arts and Culture, Minna; the Cross-River State Cultural Centre, Calabar, and that of Oyo State Cultural Centre in Ibadan" (Ododo, 1996:117). In the view of Oni (2004:149), with the building and equipping of these theatres, stage performances attracted so many audiences into the theatre. The reason behind this huge audience attraction was due to the provision of adequate technical facilities and performance venue's. More so, adequate technical facilities contributed immensely to successful technical execution during theatre productions. In terms of visual and acoustic configuration, lighting and sound design from the art equipment provided coherence to the visual and oral aspect of theatre in meaningful dimensions. That means, a production can greatly be enriched with technical facilities.

Apart from the poor built of some of these theatres conceived to have evolved from unprofessionalism, there are social circumstances that still clog the wheels of theatre outlook in Nigeria. According to Asomba (2000:153), the economic downturn and socio-political stronghold of the country have since taken their toll on the once vibrant theatres in Nigeria. The effect is that a stage like the National Theatre of Nigeria in the early 90's which had sophisticated lighting equipment and standard stages for drama and other stage production has since been hit by this devastating economic crunch. As Atte (2000) acknowledges, the theatre house, among all, used to be lavishly equipped with the best and most modern lighting equipment but currently, the story is pathetic: the same national edifice, the numerous and workable technical facilities are grounded. To Ododo (1998:75), if such theatre is physically and functionally faulty, then, culture and artistic endeavour of the people would, of necessity, receive negative impact. This is not really far from the truth as university theatres are also in shambles.

Architectural Design and Equipment Installations in Nigerian University Theatres

The way a building is conceived may depends on the taste and resources of the owner, but the way it is made to look depends on the knowledge and disposition of the architect; yet in a special case like theatre, knowledge of the space/stage and availability of the requisite equipment are fundamental to its workability as a tool of socio-cultural promotion and preservation. According to Ododo (1996:113), "dearth of modern equipment ultimately affects the quality of production as most of those available are technically limited in terms of visual effect". That means, when there is paucity of theatre equipment, there would be inadequate aesthetics. This Limitation to practical is what determines the output of production, hence the quality of the outcome of learning by the student. That notwithstanding, certain proscenium theatres in Nigeria have been viewed to be richly adorned with necessary facilities. This has been made possible through the contact of the Nigerian theatres with that of the Europeans in their perception of aesthetics in the arts of the theatre. Consequently, some universities were able to benefit from this contact. Among those lucky few are Universities of Ibadan and Calabar theatres. However, as at today, these equipments have become obsolete, making the staff and students to rely on improvisation and recycling during performances. In most cases, many Departments of Theatre Arts do not have adequate space, some lack a good set of equipment, while some have both but lack the expert personnel to harness the technical spread of the theatre.

Away from this, the theatre is a composite art which each cognate complements the other for the ultimate synergy, yet there are certain practices that do not actually fill the opening of certain fissures based on the currency of time. A good example is the actor's lines convincingly establishing the locale and the decor to satisfy the visual and audio sensibility. This may be the reason Huberman, Brant, and

Ludwig (1995: 87) aver that "modern theatre has gone beyond the stage where actors are meant to speak lines that suggest location, time and atmospheric context." This implies that the action of the performance has to be marched with the environment in which it is taking place instead of the lines of the performer being contrived to lift the loftiness of the locale. Based on this, illusionistic scene design has emerged to play down artistic presence; thus, very little spectacle is left to the imagination of the audience. Thus, in the opinion of Odeh (2017), the object has shifted from the imagination of the audience to the skies of the new visual artist known as the scenic and lighting designers, who rely heavily on the use of quality materials and equipment to bring their imagination to reality. In the idea of Pareott cited in Enendu (2006: 166), no degree of skill can compensate for inadequate equipment; it is the impact of the technical facilities of contemporary theatre practice that aides the creation of reliable and quality stage design; and the fluidity and verve to create the much-needed theatre experience depend on the provision of good facilities and equipment. Meanwhile, as Payne submits, "these good tools if provided and properly maintained with quality materials carefully selected can go far and insure for the designer the nearest possible transfer of his concept into practical reality" (Enendu, 2006: 168).

Technical theatre practice in Nigeria is not encouraging due to either insufficiency or unavailability of some tools/equipment. This makes Enna (2000: 16) to intone that "the practice of theatre design in Nigeria is still far cry from what it should be." It is worsening each day in university theatres that are meant to train theatre practitioners who would improve the level of theatre practice now and in the future. Observing these lapses in theatre technology, there is tendency that the area may be handled perfunctorily without the practical depth it requires; and as it is, it may lead to changes in the approach for teaching and learning process of design and technical theatre courses in the Nigeria Universities. Technical theatre is a practice-based course; it requires space and equipment.

Educational theatre needs the harmony of theory with practice. As Nwadiigwe (2005), puts, "the Nigerian educational theatre is decaying and has continued to lack basic facilities and adequate manpower". It is not a good thing that technical theatre courses are mostly taught as theories due to paucity of technical facilities for practical. As Ododo (2000) further writes, "to train with obsolete equipment will surely not engender professional advancement". This lacuna has drastically affected the growth of hands-on learning in our tertiary institutions thus leading to speedy decline in theatrical aesthetics. Based on the views of these scholars, Gbilekaa (2006) corroborates that the practice of technical theatre in Nigeria which involves sets, costumes, makeup, sound and lighting is in inappropriate poor state. The practice of the designer, then, is bibulous when tools are not there to transform skills. Thus, the stranglehold of a good designer is the nuptial between his imagination and the tools for making it come to aesthetic substance. Prudent imagination requires an instrument of transformation. In the words of Odeh (2017), without tools, materials and other technical equipment to work with, the designer in the Nigerian theatre faces more challenges. Then, if there is going to be any change or resuscitation, it must start from the university theatre.

Below is the evaluation of the state of some theatre facilities and equipment in three universities namely University of Uyo, University of Ilorin and Akwa Ibom State University.

The State of Facilities/Equipment in the University of Uyo Arts Theatre

The University of Uyo Arts Theatre is a child of circumstance brought to the limelight. The stage was under construction as a normal, maybe, office or classroom but fortune turned it to the site for Theatre and Film Studies it is presently. This implies that it not built as a professional theatre but it is housing theatre professionals. It is a transformation from Model Theatre Studio to Arts Studio. The stage is lifted from a bungalow under the management of the Department of Theatre Arts to a multipurpose hall

without a control room. The Model Theatre Studio at Annex had a green room behind the stage but there was no scene dock; a section of the green room was converted into scene dock to accommodate and preserve used flats and scenic pieces for subsequent productions. Since it was not originally built for theatre purposes, there was no trap door on the floor of the scene dock that led to the workshop where all scenic pieces could be constructed and then hauled up manually into the scene dock, and from where they should be mounted on stage for productions like the one in the University of Ibadan Art Theatre. All those features would have been, at least, inherited in the new multipurpose edifice; yet there is no space to fix any of them. The design of the new building with its twin annex being a fantastic dance studio is big, bare and beautiful.

It is very frustrating that there are no provisions made in the University of Uyo theatre for the necessary equipment to be fixed even in the long run. The construction and mounting of set pieces are often improvised, sometimes, before the audience. Virtually every production has the tendency of going chaotic because of the running in and out of technical persons who need to fix one thing or the other if not for the brittle control of, may be, the production crew. According to Iyamah and Akpughe (2017), University of Ibadan Arts Theatre has scene shop which is directly behind the scene dock at the bottom of the two-storey building structure. It is fairly large enough for construction and painting jobs at least for an educational theatre. Nonetheless, it is so sad that Arts Theatre of the University of Uyo, which is a Federal University, cannot boast of such. Being that it is a new site recently occupied, there is hope that the gigantic edifice would be equipped with the requisite installations that befit its rotund opulence.

One devastating circumstance of unprofessionalism is seen in the box-office and audience relationship. Without much doubt, the way a stage is designed can make for a smooth box office operation or stir some uncontrollable bust-ups between theatre management and the audience. According to Umanah (2019:175), in the University of Uyo, "the numerous mishaps that characterise gate-taking such as bullying, irksomeness of audience, compromise of duty based on the ticket seller's relationship with the members of the audience (and) unnecessary commotion accompanying securing a convenient space" are frequent. Drawing from a critical unit like this along with the stress to improvise technical features that are lacking totally, it is obvious that the outline problems have put a lot of burden on technical theatre students as they are made to either provide or improvise tools needed to accomplish their tasks, thus dimming their interests of self-development in the area. If the stage was built or guided by a professional theatre designer, even when the equipment are lacking presently, the spaces for the installation of cardinal equipment would have been there to raise some hope. A presence without full decor is hope orchestrated towards faith.

That notwithstanding, the University of Uyo can boast of a viable workshop presently; it is only that it cannot whisper of theatrical facilities therein. The workshop sometimes takes the centre stage of a performing space due to its excellent and conducive space, but it is bare - bare for the mere fact that the architect built a mansion bereft of the rudiment a functional theatre. Surprisingly, Ibadan theatre does not only boast of a workshop; it is a workshop equipped with five power machines used basically for firewood works. Though not in a good form but can be fixed, the following are machines owned by Ibadan theatre art which University of Uyo never had: a stationary ban saw (floor design) for cutting irregular shapes: lathe machine for turning operations: surfaces planner which is used to plain woods to have a smooth surface: a cross-cut machine used to cut woods across the surface. Considering the fissure existing between space and spectacle towards aesthetics generation, it can be concluded that the University of Uyo theatre have a workshop that is installing in theatre design. With the competence and concern of the current Vice Chancellor, there is much hope that both the Arts Theatre and the Dance Studio would be equipped; and better still, under the strict execution of a professional theatre designer with which some of the highlighted anomalies would be corrected.

The State of Facilities/ Equipment in University of Ilorin Theatre

The University of Ilorin Arts Theatre structure houses a proscenium stage. There is scene shop constructed as part of the theatre structure, but the space does not accommodate the number of students admitted per class. This means, during practical, the space will not contain all the students to learn. Equally, no scene shop is constructed as part of the theatre structure. The current situation on ground is not encouraging when it comes to technical theatre practice. In this era where theatre technology has gone beyond the usual, the University of Ilorin theatre does not have a well-constructed control booth. This makes it impossible to use a follow-spot lighting equipment to follow an actor or a particular action on stage without sailing on the audience's head or being blocked in the audience without getting to the stage.

The State of Facilities/Equipment in Akwa Ibom State University Pinnacle Theatre

Akwa Ibom State University theatre is a multi-purpose theatre; yet it still lacks the expected equipage for a standard institutional theatre. The Pinnacle Theatre has backstage spaces, but they are not spacious enough for the purpose intended. The performance space is not wide and it often results in masking even in productions where characters are not much. There is much convenient space for audience, and staff offices. The practical aspects of set design and construction are carried out either on the stage, the auditorium or outside the theatre building, depending on the weather conditions of the day. The unavailability of a workshop and a scene dock rather creates a technically challenging environment. Surprisingly Pinnacle Theatre does not have sufficient construction tools, and basic hand tools needed by technical students for the construction of set pieces. This leads to many graduates of this institution scrambling for the practices of the same technical knowledge they had learned for years outside the department when they are supposed to put their knowledge to use for survival. As Umoh (2031), avers:

Incidentally, the strenuous activities such as written assignments, seminar papers, note and other theoretical exercises carried out by the students are creditably justified by the student's ability to solve arising challenges.... Why would some graduates of the arts enrol in further training on related trade such as fashion designing, carpentry, acting, and makeup, after spending a good number of years in the tertiary institution (102).

Umoh's position implies that Pinnacle Theatre is a fantastic edifice that lacks the requisite equipage with which students can depend on to forge themselves to entrepreneurial persons any theatre primarily fulfils in the society.

From the observation at the Akwa Ibom State University theatre, its shortage of backstage spaces for technical theatre practice has dealt a blow on the training of technical theatre students. Flat and set pieces lay about the theatre because of paucity of storage facilities which makes them vulnerable to destruction, as they are not well handled by students through the process of moving them from one place to another. Obviously, this has caused the over stretching of budget for production because they have no stock of flat to fall back on. So, for every production they construct new flats and set pieces. Students that are interested in set design and construction are discouraged because the facilities are not of standard for practice to take place. This kind of situation places burden on the student as well and hamper the free flow of learning process.

Minimum Academic Standard for Equipment and Facilities in Nigeria University Theatre

As enshrined on core curriculum and minimum Academic Standard (CCMAS) for Nigerian Universities (Arts) by National Universities Commission (NUC), (2022), the following are minimum benchmarks that qualify a university to dispense technical knowledge to students in Theatre Arts discipline. The basics are listed as subheads together with the components in the area.

Theatre Equipment: Theatre (fly system), build-a-workshop backstage, functional green room, 24 channel audio console, flat (backdrops 12 ft), AQJE mixer integrated Amplifier, video cameras, CD, cabinet, stereo graphic equaliser, 8-channel digital graphic equaliser for mixing effects processor, 2-channel compressor, projector, Badagry drum set (2 complete sets) Drum set of the cultural zone (2 sets) and sound projector.

Equipment for Media Studio: Loud speakers, stabilisers, CD players, DVD players, head phones, batteries, video camera (Panasonic limited GH5(4K), Amplifier, stereo/CD Deck, television camera, TV studio monitor, camera light, TV studio monitor stands, tripod stands, presenter stands , studio/programme guest table and chairs, studio furnishings, transmitter, computer, ICT routers, equaliser, studio cue light, studio light, cyclorama, amstrad studio 100 meter, microphone (hand held), shotgun microphone, wireless microphone (Sennheisser EW 112P), portable digital audio recorder, light reflector, lenses: wide angle, polarizer, zoom, (clear protective), boom pole, drones, cranes, ladder, step ladders, shock mount, audio(XLR), cables, microphone stands, Air conditioner units, three point lighting kit, memory cards, external hard drive, video and camera knapsack/ Bag and shoulder mount rig.

Lighting: Battery-operator, solar or main- operated lightning boot/desk, house lights, intelligent/moving lights projection screens, projectors, Fresnel lights, flood lights, follow spot, colour filter (gel), Gobo system for animation, Halogen lamp, Hazer/ Fog Machine, Pacan lights, digital follow spot, circuit strip light (on grid), circuit dimmer(on grid), pin cables, 15 amp cables, control cables colour frame, colour scroller, filament, barn doors and pipes (10' ft).

Sound /Music: CD recorder, keyboard/piano, recording studio, tape deck, transmitter, digit receivers, disc deck, DAT deck, jazz band set, traditional music instruments, lecture theatre sound systems, The Manhasset acoustic shield, music practice rooms, piano stools piano, computerised Yamaha keyboard, jazz drum set, assorted indigenous drums, cabinets and racks for storage and performance stage system.

Costume and Makeup Section: Costume rack, industrial sewing machine, butterfly sewing machine with regulators, sewing accessories, sewing kits, some stage props, wardrobe for costumes, costume Boxes, Art materials (construction paper, glue, scissors, magic markers, crayons, etc), makeup kits make up accessories, makeup mirrors with lights (free standing or wall mounted), construct a laundry shed with multiple sinks, washing machine, drying machine, electric irons, ironing board, buckets, basin, scrubbing brush, hand gloves, vacuum cleaner, clothes lined, detergents, bleach, detmold, clothes dye, moth balls air freshener and cleaning materials.

Carpentry: Construct a tool shed and carpentry workshops, hand saws, electric saws, chisel, drill, nails, coping saws, backs away, hand drill, rasps, pliers, cat's paw, ripping bar, screw drivers, riveter, screes plane, incline plane, vice, tape measure, spirit level (plumb line), ladder, step ladder, mag et, mallet, hammers, Jack hammer, sledge hammers, utility knife, sand paper and tool box.

Dance Studio: Dance studio mirror, make up mirrors, with lights and music stand banners curved wood dance floors, music stands, orchestra chairs, jazz drum set (2), keyboard, sundry indigenous drum sets (20), drum stands, metal gongs and full orchestra set.

Dressing Room: Dressing room with showers (female), clothes rack or stand, dressing room with shower (male), urinals, toilets female) 1, toilets (male), baby change station, Foyer/ front of-house, refrigerator and any other necessary items, counter for audience enumeration, close circuit, camera, first aid box.

Staff Offices: Digital television sets, DVD player, all in one desktop computer with in-built CPU, stabilisers, refrigerators, book shelves, trash basket and furniture and furnishings

Academic Staff: The recommended staff student ratio should be 1:30 in view of the need for more effective staff student contact and to encourage a more vigorous tutorial/ studio work system

Spaces: The use of space is crucial to the practice of Theatre/Performing Arts. Some of these are auditoria with complete shower and conveniences, and or adequate performance venues suitably equipped to serve the performance workshop needs of the department, a recording and practice studio, viewing and projection rooms, language laboratories, dark room, editing room, resource room (for storage of video, films, tapes, gramophone records, production albums, production books and script), rehearsal/ performance studios (for dance, music, design and oral interpretation), costume wardrobe/ room, carpentry/ tailoring, tools shed.

Library/Information Resource Centre: These include printed books, journals; play texts CDs, DVDs, hard drives among others.

Conclusion

The state of technical facilities in most University Theatre Arts Departments in Nigeria is quite discouraging. Most of the facilities are outdated and their quality is appalling. At the moment, Universities of Uyo, Ilorin and Akwa Ibom State University Theatre/Performing Arts do not have the adequate technical facilities necessary for staging elaborate shows. It is either the stage is too narrow with incomplete back stage support facilities for a large cast or the auditoria are poorly constructed without priorities for audience's convenience. Arts Theatre has a space but lacks equipment; Pinnacle Theatre has back stage but lacks performance space and equipment and Arts Theatre of the University of Ilorin has a scene shop but does not have learning space for of students. Without giving the universities the adequate attention they deserve, the discipline may face aesthetic challenge which may tamper with the outcome of their products (graduates).

Anything of importance in life left in the hands of amateurs and non professionals may not survive. A task like theatre architecture is technical and requires proficient skills for proper execution. Theatre professional should be the ones constructing or giving directives to theatre constructions from the beginning, middle and end of stage design and installations of equipment in Nigerian universities. It is appalling to learn that the contract of designing and building a theatre is awarded to persons who are not conversant with the peculiarities of the stage. This unacceptable deed is mostly done by administrators which detrimentally affect the theatre directly or indirectly, especially on the areas of architectural design and equipment installation.

Recommendations

Based on the forgoing, the following are recommended:

All the facilities and equipment in the area of technical theatre should be revamped and replaced with more functional and efficient ones.

Theatre Design and technology should be handled as a practice-based area to allow the students specializing in the area to develop while exceptional ones should be sponsored abroad to acquire more skills in the field.

Moreover, Vice Chancellors and governing councils of Nigeria tertiary institutions should put their personal interests aside and embrace the doctrines of ivory towers by giving the contracts of theatre design, construction and supply of equipment to professionals in order to promote excellent learning and all-round progress in the nation.

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