

WOMEN IN THE MOVIES

Main Arena, Tuesday 10th March 2009, 10am -1300hrs

Host:- Esther Ekanem

MC:- Sebari Diete-Spiff

Chairman/Special Guest of Honour: - The Distinguished Senator Chris Anyawu

Special Guest: - Kaine Agary, 2008 Winner LNG price on Literature

Celebrated Film Makers

Stephanie Okereke – “Through the Glass”

Emem Isong – “Reloaded”

Nkechi Obiora – “Balm in Gilead”

The Distinguished Senator Chris Anyanwu declared the session open. In her speech, she charged the female participants to uphold and exemplify wholesome values and virtues whilst narrating her experiences in Spain where she was part of a delegation that were shown young Nigerian women working as prostitutes under the watchful eyes of their pimps. She spoke on the ills of looking for easy money and charged the participants to use their skills and talent as filmmakers to portray positive images of women.

Esther welcomed the participants and gave a brief insight into what the session was all about and then introduced the MC, Sebari.

Sebari gave introduction about each of the women whose films were to be screened along with an introduction of Kaine Agary.

About 15 mins of Stephanie Okereke’s film, “Through the glass” was screened after which Stephanie gave insights into how the production came to be, why she chose to shoot her film in America, her experiences whilst filming and how she was able to use her Nollywood background to shoot her film in 2 weeks much to the surprise of the American cast and crew. This was followed by many animated

questions, acknowledgements from participants, and even one pledge of a donation to support and encourage the filmmaker.

Emem Isong's film "Reloaded" was screened for 15 minutes, followed by questions from the participants, however, many of them were related to Nollywood films in general, why Emem used the same actors in all her films, what about uses new faces and the lack of suspense in Nollywood films etc. One of the male participants commented that actresses have a habit of perpetually arriving late on set. Emem recounted numerous instances when that was not the case and pointed out that in general there are many actors and actresses that she has worked with over the years who are consummate professionals and always punctual.

Unfortunately Nkechi Obiora's film "Balm in Gilead" could only be screened for 10 minutes because of technical problems with the equipment. The interactive session indicated that there were very few participants interested in documentary production. After relating the challenges she faced in raising money for the production, Nkechi gave the participants insight into her choice of title for her documentary which she produced from footages she had gathered from following the former DG of NAFDAC, Prof. Dora Akunilyi, in her fight against the presence of fake drugs in Nigeria. The filmmaker fielded many questions one of which centered on why Nkechi would struggle so hard to produce a genre of film that doesn't appear to be a money maker. The filmmaker assured the participants that one can make money from documentaries especially through the internet.

The interactive session became quiet animated as many of the participants had questions, observations that they wanted to make. Due to time constraints the session was eventually brought to a close by Sebari, leaving some of the participants and the filmmakers to continue their interactions in the foyer.

"Women in the Movies" was informative, well received with 100 delegates in attendance. No doubt the session would be a welcomed inclusion in the BOBTV Festival line up especially if it provides insight into other aspects of film production such as make-up and costume. The session needs to expose participants to more information on the production of documentaries as many of

the participants were ill-informed about this genre of film and in particular its money making possibilities.

The filmmakers embraced the opportunity to screen their films and field questions and left the session with insight into how audiences perceive their work.