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# Entertainment

From Dublin comes  
'The Only Jealousy  
of Emer'

Tony Okuyeme

The stage is set for presentation of *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, a play by one of Ireland's best known writers, William Butler Yeats. Produced by Melissa Nolan and presented by the Nigerian Carnival Ireland, the stage production holds tomorrow at Freedom Park, Lagos.

Part of the Cuchulain Cycle of five plays written by Yeats about the life and death of the mythic Irish hero Cuchulain, *The Only Jealousy of Emer* continues Yeats' experiments with the Japanese Noh as a way of bringing onto the stage demons, ghosts and supernatural events as part of the natural world. Cuchulain has killed his son and in grief attempts to fight the sea. Half drowned; he lies in a state between life and death with his wife Emer and his mistress Eithne watching over him. But is he dead or is something far more sinister about to occur as these two women struggle to revive him?

Yeats approach to mythology, ritual and the supernatural resonates strongly with African culture and the exciting part of staging his plays with a Nigerian cast is that their work as actors naturally utilises their approach to rhythm, movement, song and verse.

Directed by Ray Yeates (a former Deputy Artistic Director of The Abbey Theatre), the production features two well-known Nigerian actors who have lived in Dublin for many years, Deji and Yemi Adenuga. Yeates has directed many of Yeats' plays in Ireland and the U.S. and recently directed this play at Torn Page in New York. In this production, Nigerian and Irish culture combine to create a unique experience.

# Contemporary dance is natural to me — Adeniji

Adedamola Frederick Adeniji, a versatile dancer and dance teacher, has featured in several major dance shows. In this interview with TONY OKUYEME, the Ondo State-born artiste talks about his expectations at the DanceStar World Finals holding in Croatia, among other issues.

Although computer scientist by training, you have carved a niche for yourself as a professional dancer. At what point did your career as a dancer began?

I have a National Diploma in Computer Science at Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, but I am a professional dancer. I want to be known as a dancer.

I have actually been dancing for a long time. My dance career started at age 17 while I was in senior secondary school. After school, I kept pursuing my dance career as a solo dancer/performer coming second in "Sprite Triple Slam" 2nd edition held in University of Lagos Sports Complex.

But professionally, I started dancing in 2014. Before then, I was a member of "The Spirit of David Gospel Dance Club" in 2011. As I said, professionally, I started my career as a dancer in 2014, enrolling into the "Dance Deal Training Foundation" as a student

and protege under Mr. Bimbo Obafunwa and a host of other great dance teachers, teaching dance styles like Latin, contemporary, jazz, traditional dance styles, hip-hop and ballet respectively. I graduated the same year, began training and working as a freelance dancer under great dancers like Lovette Otegbola, Mr. Victor Phullu, Ice Nweke, "Kaffy" Kafayat Shafau Ameh, Gbenga Yusuf and others.

What are some of the major productions you featured in?

I have performed in many productions. I was a backup dancer at some major television shows like Nigerian Idols, Techno Own The Stage, MTN Project Fame as back up dancer for 2015/16, as well as events such AFRIMA, UBA CEO Awards to mention a few. Also, I have featured in television commercials

like Diamond Bank, Orijin and La Casera, and Broadway Productions like "Gula on Stage, Dare Art Alade's "Love Like A Movie", Spirit of David Fire 2 Scorching Torch.

So how has it been?

It has been challenging, especially the fact that we are in a society that does not see dance as a profession, a form of livelihood. So it's been challenging. Life itself is a challenge, we don't stop growing

So, given the challenges, do still want to be a professional dancer?

Yes, definitely. It is a career for me. I am committed to it as a career. I have been selected to represent Nigeria in this year's DanceStar World Finals, which will hold May 22 to 27, in Croatia. DanceStar World Finals is the most prestigious event

of the year for dancers, teachers, parents and all dance lovers from Europe and all over the world. Over an entire week, there are amazing performances, great awards and prizes, workshops, international judges and so on. With a membership of over 55,000 dancers from more than 50 countries across the globe, DanceStar is the number one dance platform in the world.

Which genre of dance is your best?

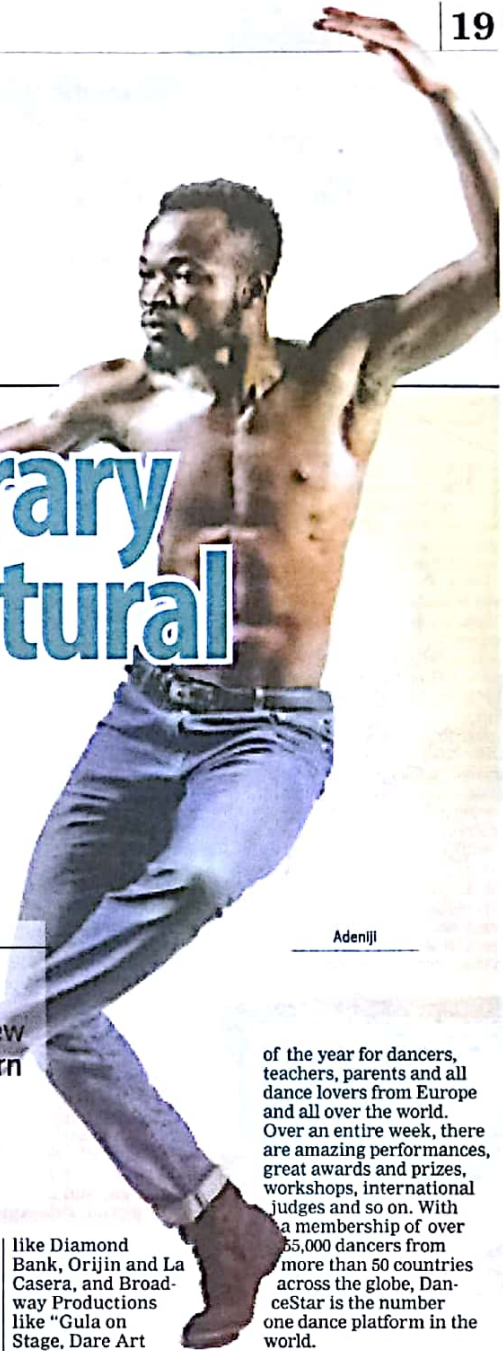
I am very versatile, but the particular dance flows naturally to me is contemporary dance.

What are your expectations?

I want to put Nigeria on the world map as a dancer.

How would describe yourself?

I am the last born of my family. We are six children – four girls and two boys. I am 29 years old. I was born and raised in Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria. But I am from Ondo State. I am a very versatile dancer and dance teacher, teaching in secondary schools, gym centers, events, bank events etc. I am a very purpose-driven dancer whose motor is "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger".



Adeniji