

Ikenga for "Philip Emeagwali"

By OBU UDEOZO @2002

our landscape is a catwalk of songs;
praise singing explodes
on every tongue.

trumpets and cymbals
more sonorous than April thunder
escort long drums and flutes
in their intoxicated tunes.

our native land
is a glow with melodies ...

nno, aka ikenga
elephants float
on your right thumb
to compel the spotlight upon us;
truth cracked

after your tessellated models
tore the digital divide:
their fresh Ayatollah of malice;
truth cracked,
when your chicken over oxen theory
defied the deified Seymour Cray
to deliver the crown of science
upon the African Sun

this hemisphere
is a Christmas of trumpets
our laughter season.

God who planted
the onyx stone of Gad
within us,
is redeeming that pledge
of our sunrise.

II.

our folks
are summoned
across the four winds
for a steaming fiesta
over Chineke's smile upon us;

so,
aka Ikenga
astride the surrealist oche ekwu
may courtiers rain you comfort
with peacock feathers.

our fatherland
is drunk with songs.

what Psalms
shall we engineer
for him who

beyond seven seas and seven terrains
captured the daybreak of foreign gods.

your Papacy in science
radiates in alien tongues.

what algorithms
of dance steps
shall unravel
this immanence of our race?

Philip Emeagwali,
your Madison Square Garden feat
over fractious fraternity
at the hot horizons of knowledge

redeemed the millennial eclipse
of our ravaged soul.

III.

your connection machine,
and honey-combed logic
in massive parallelism
awoke drybones
our God's gift
which vindicates Nwagu Aneke
that the children of Cush
shall outshine the first born;

but they slapped
conspiracy across your paths,
padlocks and platinum gates
saluted your dreams.

yet your Chi
lit your anointed breath

for the Onitsha pilgrim
whose pocket betrayed
even at home

to pluck the gold medal
of the computer age;

a tale Bill Clinton
sprayed to a world agape;
a sugared tale in our innocent ears ...

your trainloads of prizes
and caravan of honours
across the globe
a dizzying statistic
that at last,
God has poured
His Sovereign Spirit
upon all flesh.

our current godlike mode
of fecundity and genius
across the globe
is God's incomprehensible equity

upon all mankind;
whether Black or Yellow or Blue ...

Philip Emeagwali,
aka Ikenga
astride the surrealist oche ekwu
may courtiers slake your thirst
with divine wine.

mythic king
of our bloodline
we polish our music with lightening
and erect anthems
sky high
at our Maker's altar for a wonder child
and proof
that the lamb and leopard
shall chew divine grass
in Mount Zion
at the appointed feast

of our
Christ and Redeemer King.

- Amen -

OBU UDEOZO is a poet, painter and psychologist. He is of Igbo heritage and lives in Jos, Nigeria.

More information:

<http://emeagwali.com>

<http://emeagwali.info>

<http://emeagwali.ws>

What is an Ikenga?

- by Curator (Donita Brown)



Ikenga altar statuettes are found in sacred shrines of the Igbo-speaking people of southeastern Nigeria. They are personal power icons that are believed to possess protective spirits and provide success and achievement. The word "ikenga" translates to "man's life force" or "place of strength."