

Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project Highlights

March 2019

Scholar Program 40

AFRICA ON THE MOVE

I was privileged to attend the 2019 Global Year of Africa at Michigan State University which explores MSU's rich history and connection with their many partners in and across Africa and throughout the African diaspora. This year the theme of the program is "Africa on the move" which focuses on the immigration of African to Europe and America in search for greener pastures and "better opportunities". The programme was held at 145 Communication Art Building.



In attendance was Prof. Manthia Diawara, Professor of comparative literature and African studies at New York University, Director Afro-American Affairs, and a preeminent critic of African cinema, author and filmmaker. We watched his recent film, "An Opera of the World" a film based on the African opera Bintou Were, a Sahel Opera, which recounts an eternal migration drama. The Bintou Were opera, filmed on location in Bamako, in 2007, serves as a mirror for Diawara to build an aesthetic and reflexive story, through song and dance, about the current and yet timeless drama of migration between North and South, and the ongoing refugee crises. The film ponders the realities of cultural encounters through the concepts of métissage and hybridity. The success and limits of fusing African and European perspectives are tested by interlacing performances from the Bintou Were opera, past and present archival footage of migrations, classic European arias, and

interviews with European and African intellectuals, artists and social activists.



This was my first time watching an opera, thanks to the rare opportunity of being a NAPP scholar. We had much fun and ate African food, which make me feel at home, after the movie session we interacted and exchanged contacts for future connections. It was wonderful, all thanks to NAPP scholars programme.



By: Philip Hegarty James

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