

**...A platform to renew, build professional ties; get start-up opportunities**  
By Afolabi Adesanya



*iREP Documentary Film Festival has become not only a platform to premiere or showcase documentary films but also to present books on African films... has a stage for budding and established performers (musicians and dramatists) to perform for a global audience*



**CONCERNED** about the spate of omnibus film festivals across Nigeria, I had advocated, prior to and on my appointment as the Managing Director of Nigeria Film Corporation (2005 – 2013), for specialised film festivals in such genres as children, animation, documentary, *et al.*

When the promoters of *iREP Documentary Film Festival* came up with this focused film festival, it was a most welcome development, and a statement that we can have specialised film festivals in Nigeria.

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*iREP Documentary Film Festival* was conceived to promote documentaries telling the human story within historical, socio-cultural, religious, academic and even economic context, and it has lived up to the vision of its founding fathers in the past ten years. This is borne out in its annual themes.

On the annual platform of the Festival, we have seen films by young and old documentary filmmakers from across the world telling the human story poignantly. I was privileged to have my documentary film, *Artist. Activist. Administrator – Oba Gbenga Sonuga*, screened at iREP 2019, with Oba Sonuga himself present. Filmmakers have benefitted from various workshops anchored by experienced documentary filmmakers; the Q&A sessions after each screening gave filmmakers and the audience opportunity to discuss the films; and the impromptu side discourses.

iREP Festival has become the event to attend and renew or build professional ties and get start-up opportunities.

The narrative of *iREP Documentary Film Festival* is that it has become not only a platform to premiere or showcase documentary films but also to present books on African films such as Manthia Diawara's *African Film – New Forms of Aesthetics and Politics*, and Jonathan Haynes' *NOLLYWOOD – The Creation of Nigerian Film Genres*. iRep Documentary Film Festival has

become a stage for budding and established performers (musicians and dramatists) to perform for a global audience.

"A film festival is firstly a cultural event," opined Thierry Frémaux, "and something that we never forget." Ten years on, iRep Documentary Film Festival has established itself significantly as a cultural event and an annual event ticked on our film festival calendar to attend and participate.

Salute iRep, kudos to the visionary founding fathers and the board of trustees.

- *Adesanya, filmmaker, tv director, is one-time Managing Director of Nigeria Film Corporation, NFC*

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