



Article

The Art of Music Composition: An Exposition

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Abstract: Music composition is both an art and an act. It is an art because it involves the combination of various structural elements of music such as rhythm, sound, harmony, melody, form and timbre (tone colour) etc which are logically organized to produce a vocal or instrumental piece. As an act, it involves the application of one's intellect towards presumptions, presuppositions and profound projections of a preconceived musical cell in a highly structured logically creative network of ideas to evolve a gamut of musical work. That music composition is a complex task cannot be over emphasized; hence it calls for enormous power of concentration. Composers attest that in composition, the principal creative act is music – something that is considered new is produced by combining the musical elements that a given society recognizes as a system. Generally, music composition, especially in Western music has certain intrinsic quality and laid down technical rules and theoretical dispensation that should be applied in order to arrive at a scintillating piece of music. This therefore challenges the researchers to write expositively on the art of music composition using scientific and musicological methods of research, through experiential knowledge and training in musicianship. Mention were made of some compositional techniques, styles and skills in music composition such as through compose, strophic, rondo, fugue, musical notation and orchestration, etc as well as improvisation and extemporization which has to do with the spontaneous creation of new music in the course of performance.

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1. Introduction

Music composition can be seen as a complex task involving many presumptions, presuppositions and profound projections. The art of music composition is an approach to creative writing which brings out a synthesis of musical ideas, motifs and sonorities aimed at getting that which ordinarily may not be realizable. This can be in the form of choice of lyrics, the language medium, and the musical style; such as, folk music (traditional music) or secular music, art music, sacred music (religious music) and popular music; all these variable came to mind whenever a piece of music is to be composed by a composer before going into the composition proper [1]. According to Hoiberg, musical composition can be defines as “the act of conceiving a piece of music and/or the art of creating music”. While Nwamara describes musical composition as that which implies “the creation of a unique musical event that may or may not be based on original musical materials, whether reference is to the process or to the completed work”(p.16). To Udoh, “composition is both an art and an act”. He further states that:

The word composition has been variously defined and also viewed at different angles. Basically, composition is an art of combining various structural elements of music: sound, harmony, melody rhythm, and form in a logical form to produce a vocal or instrumental piece. In fact, it is music creation (p. 34).

In a more simplified manner, Nwamara (2008) puts musical composition as “mere assemblage of musical notes”(p 17). Simple as it may sound but, suffice it to say that there is more to it than meets the eye. Nwamara (ibid) further elaborates that:

It can come either in the form of a melody (when the notes are assembled in succession) or in the form of harmony (when notes are assembled simultaneously). In some cases, the assemblage of various independent melodic lines brings about a kind of harmony, which results to what is known as counterpoint. Musical phrases are assembled to create musical sentences while themes are assembled to produce movements, which in turn give birth to forms through systematic assemblage [2]. Furthermore, another characteristic feature of sound, timbre (which is referred to as tone colour), can also be assembled to constitute a part of composition resulting from a careful use of various tone colours of different musical instruments. A composer enjoys ‘freedom of expression’ and so has freedom of choice in the formulation of his object. The composer expresses his emotions in sounds aiming at satisfying his sense of design. The important thing is for this design to be beautiful and capable of holding the attention of his listeners/audience.

Sometimes, the composer faces the dilemma of appropriate choice of style; whether to reflect western idioms so as to be trendy or to attract the modern audience, to employ the traditional/indigenous idioms so as to foster true Nigerian – nay African identity in art, sacred (religious), popular or folk music compositions [3].

Again, music composition is creative-oriented and talent-driven; hence the composer is seen as music creator or manufacturer. More often the onus falls on the composer to arrange a preconceived musical ideology in a highly structured and logically creative network or gamut of ideas for musical work. Generally, the composer as a music creator seeks to educate and convert the society through music art. More so, the ability or power to accomplish this task of music composition is historically inherited and venerated in the European music history. Thus Ekwueme writes:

In Europe, the “Renaissance man”, as epitomized by Michael Angelo, is the complete Man who in addition to his vast knowledge of science, engineering, philosophy and rhetoric, is also endowed with divine gift and ability to in painting, sculpting, composing music and generally creating works of art for the edification of his society”(p.63).

Here in Nigeria, it is noteworthy that many composers have successfully laboured to improve the social layer of the society through their compositions; breaking from seemingly Euro-centric compositions to Afro-centric compositions, using the indigenous idioms in their works. Hence, Onwuekwe states:

By this innovation, it is argued that composers should source for and rely on indigenous music of their people in the quest for creating their original compositions [4]. In doing this, there will be continuity in music of any given people because when traditional and modern musical practices are fused; it becomes a striking performance which incorporates a wide range of people’s musical preferences (p.269).

If there is the need to bring in foreign ideas, they do so very minimally. This is in line with Ofuani which states that: “As a composer and choir-director, I realized that Igbo vocal music compositions that project high percentage of indigenous speech-rhythm techniques with limited amount of superfluous and subjective rhythms win the admiration of the singers/performers and listeners”.(P.166). In the same vein, a research-music composition developed by Onyeji states that:

Research composition is an approach to composition in which in-depth ethno musicological research on indigenous music of a given culture informs the creative and

compositional theory of modern art music composition [5]. It is a composition process that enables a composer to produce modern African music of any length or magnitude by the study and application of creative elements and idioms from any identified African musical type or tradition (p.251).

A piece of music can be in the form of a written composition in musical notations – Staff notation and Tonic Sol-fa or as a single acoustic event (a live performance or recorded track). It can be composed before being performed, can be performed from memory, or through a combination of both. Compositions comprise of musical elements such as Pitch, Form, Rhythm, Timbre (tone colour), Texture, etc. These elements, according to Obiesie “serve as the composer’s *numero-uno* ‘building material’. The composer works with them in the same way artisans work with building materials”(p.3)The application of these elements varies from person to person or amongst composers and between cultures and compositional styles/genres. Composition can take place even during the performance, in other words, assembling musical elements spontaneously; this form is known as improvisation/extemporization [6], [7].

Composition as a branch in music discipline is also one of the many important aspects of the musical art. People who practice composition are called composers, and they employ certain compositional techniques to achieve the required objectives. Compositional techniques are the methodologies for creating or ‘manufacturing the music, which include writing musical notation, instrumentation, and handling musical ensembles (orchestration). Other skills include extended techniques such as improvisation, music montage, preparing instruments, using non-traditional instruments, and other methods of sound production. The effective application of these techniques is dependent upon the musical form chosen/adapted. The musical form can be seen as a conscious structure or design of a musical movement by composers. In a musical composition, some major elements of music which include pitch, tone colour (timbre), dynamics, rhythm, melody, and texture interact to produce a sense of shape, structure or organization of a musical work. In other words, form, according to Baker (1995) is “a concept or organization governing the order, character, meter, and key of a composition”(p.97).While Kamien has it that “form in music is the organization of musical elements in time”(p.66). In the light of the above, the musical form can simply be seen as the ‘musical blueprint or road map’ [8], [9].

More so, it goes without saying that these techniques draw a parallel to art’s formal elements. Sometimes, the entire form of a piece is through-composed, meaning the independent of each section of the music, with no repetition of any section. Other forms include strophic, rondo, verse-chorus or other parts. Some pieces are composed around a set scale, where the compositional technique might be considered the usage of a particular scale. Others are improvisation, which as earlier stated involves composing during performance, where a variety of techniques are also sometimes used. As Agu (1999) informs about melodic variations thus: “Melodic variations also depend on the capabilities of the soloist in the act of improvisation and extemporization”(p.17). Some are used from particular songs which are familiar. All things being equal, the application of any compositional technique is dependent upon the composer’s in-depth/experiential knowledge in music composition. A composer should be capable of manipulating the aforementioned elements of music; using the appropriate and right quantity and quality where necessary in music creation; just as creative artists and artisans use their building materials in construction of different types of building, to arrive at an impressive musical creation [10]. Having said much about the compositional techniques, styles, musical elements and the composer, it now left to know how the composer begins to create his work, as well as how the musical idea comes to him; the answers are not farfetched, thus the concept of inspiration, training, innate ability and hard work come to fore.

2. Methodology

Inspiration, Training and Musical Talent (innate ability)

The fact that most composers admit the existence of something known as inspiration, which serves as their bases for taking off to compose cannot be over-emphasized. No wonder Nwamara states that:

Personally, as a composer, I do experience some 'intermittent and irretrievable moments' when I find myself in a certain mood, which in turn brings about musical ideas flowing into my mind. It may be when have need to compose and sometimes not, but the important thing is that such moments exist and that is what I understand as moments of inspiration(p.25).

Going by the above personal experience, it is a known fact in primary science that 'for every action, there must be a cause', and in the same vein in music composition, for every inspiration, there is a stimulus. Some composers inspiration are stimulated when playing or extemporizing on a musical instrument while some draw their inspiration through watching films or even reading a poem as well as setting eyes on some biblical verses. According to Nwamara (idid, p. 26),

Another stimulus acknowledged by some composers of which I also attest to is that of time pressure. Necessity excites inspiration; therefore when the need for a particular kind of composition arises, pressure has a way of putting the composer in a particular state of mind that eventually stirs up inspiration.

This is in line with W.A. Mozart's motto, thus: "I am never happier than when I have something to compose, for that, after all, is my sole delight and passion" (Kamien, 2004, p. 231). Supporting the above ideology from another angle, Agu (2002, p. 86) adds that:

composers can draw their inspiration from annual music festivals organized by the various church denominations, the National and State music festivals...radio and television studios. Other sources of inspiration, he added, includes "audio and video recordings of an appreciable number of original Igbo compositions, folk arrangements, etc which are patronized by the composers' numerous audiences" and finally, "the churches, especially the Anglican Communion" that "usually patronize the composers by occasionally commissioning them to compose anthems for special services or religious occasions or ceremonies"(p.86).

As a composer, the researcher attests that greater percentages of my songs are inspired by religious sermons during church services and the Bible passages or verses.

Furthermore, one may tempt to ask if composition can be taught in the school. The answer to this can be both yes and no from different angles. This is because, as Nwamara (ibid, p. 27) points out, "the teaching and learning of composition is a complex and advanced stage of the musical art". He further states:

Coming from one angle, one can simply state or claim that 'composition cannot be taught but can only be learnt' and this seems to me a rightful claim owing to my experience as both a teacher and a composer. The teaching aspect of composition provides the student with basic and fundamental ingredients for composition, but this mere provision does not ensure any specific artistic result as 'the pencil in a student's hand does not ensure drawing, competency or competent drawing'.

In addition to formal training, it is believed that the basic thing about composition is for the intending composer to first of all, get abreast with various exercises in harmony and counterpoint and then graduate by carefully and dedicatedly studying the works of some notable composers, especially those he may regard as his idols before setting out to develop his own. More so, Onwuekwe

points out that the art of composition is not learnt in the classroom only; what the music composition teacher does is to help the student bring out what he already has because styles of composition vary from one person to the other(p.270).

3. Result and Discussion

In the history of Western music according to Kamien (ibid, p. 163), the great German composer, J.S Bach (1685 – 1750), Baroque Period, drew on the musical resources of three different lands in forming his personal style. “He avidly studied Italian concertos and French dance pieces, as well as the church music of his native Germany”. In the same vein, W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791), one of the child prodigies in music history, born in Salzburg, Austria, of the Classical Era, also learned from other composers throughout his life. Kamien (2004) states that:

As a boy, he was influenced by Italian operas and the graceful style of one Bach’s sons, Johann Christian Bach. The strongest influence on his later works came from J.S. Bach (dead and almost forgotten), and Haydn, the most famous composer at the time. From Bach, Mozart learned to write intricate polyphonic textures that flow smoothly. He arranged Bach’s and Handel’s works for performances at private concerts sponsored by Baron Gottfried van Swieten, a Viennese who was a passionate music lover. From Haydn’s works, Mozart learned ways to develop themes. But his musical relationship with Haydn was not one-sided. Some compositions by Haydn show traces of Mozart’s melodic and orchestral style(p.231) [11].

Regrettably, here in Nigeria, the story above is the same but most composers hardly admit studying their predecessor’s work thinking that they may be degraded along with their works. For instance, in one of the late Oliver Sunday Akanite’s (aka Oliver De Coque) album, titled “Expo 70” he quipped inter alia ...*o digh onye m muru egwu n’aka ya; o digh onye m kuolu band*. Meaning: “I did not learn music from anybody; I did not play for any band”. Conversely, Obiecha (2000) records thus: “After playing with many groups in Nigeria and Britain, he (Oliver De Coque) formed his own group in 1973 and has been highly successful”(p.109).

In addition to inspiration and training, there are other important factors that can make things work easily for the composer; such as innate ability or natural musical talent and hard work. Okafor (2005, p.2 -3) supports this view when he points out that (paraphrased): There are academics – Western trained musicians, people trained in all the rudiments and theories of the art – who may not necessarily be as proficient or as naturally gifted in performance...there are other people – gifted, excellent performers – who may not be trained academically or formally in the art, but whose natural talents release music, which the society accepts [12]. “Their music performs all the functions according to the books – they evoke, they move, they express and they inspire. These are the master musicians”. Also, Otugo supports this view saying that “it is essential that we recognize the fact that many, indeed, majority of composers and musicians alike, have not received any formal music training”(p.156). On the weight of the above, the researchers observe and admire, to some extent, the ingenuity of African music making or compositional procedures and techniques, especially when it is considered that most of the so called musicians and composers alike did not receive any formal training in music. In most cases, they rely on the single aid of their innate abilities, and create music and songs that are both harmonically and musically arranged [13]. A commendable fit it may seem; nevertheless, Nwajei points out that:

It must however be stressed that no amount of ingenuity in playing music by ear or composing music by the method of 'trial and error', can in any way equal the efficacy of the rudimentary knowledge of mechanics of composition, as well as the intrinsic quality inherent in any piece of music composed within the frame-work of certain lay down technical rules and theoretical dispensation(p.67) [14], [15].

There is no gainsaying the fact that here in Nigeria, the above scenario is very common; where you find some composers and performers who are in various other disciplines and professions like medical, engineering, legal, and even education perform very wonderfully in music. This, however, is part of this paper's thesis statement.

Thesis Statement

In our modern society and even in time immemorial, there is always this conflict between a child's musical talent and parental desires when it comes to educational development. In Most cases, it is the parental cum societal prejudice/ misconception toward music as a worthy course of study [16]. This is because, some uninformed saw music as a course that is zoned to the scallywags or belonging to the lowest echelon of the society; this, actually is very much worrisome. From the historical perspective, there are some notable musicians who were either discouraged, caricatured or not supported *ab initio* by their parents and the society for their choice of reading music as a course. These include, but not limited to Sir Sam Ojukwu – the music composition maestro and *numero-uno*; Sir Charles Ihemaguba – a retired Senior Music Lecturer; and, of course, one of the Baroque Period music giant, George Frederic Handel who, according to Kamien (2004, p, 181), his barber-surgeon father wanted to study law, not music [17], [18]. "By the time Handel was nine, however, his musical talent was so outstanding that his father relented somewhat and permitted him to study with the local organist, who was also a composer" [15]. However, there exists some 'black sheep of the music family'. These include some psychedelic youths and adult psychopaths who jump to any untoward music and call it musical experience. Temidire and Thompson gave full vent to the above stance and argues: "Is it not madness to hear that a music and dance culture now exists, called stripper". Stripper night club houses, they said are "houses where girls or ladies dance on stage naked". There is no gainsaying the fact that most of these crops of musicians were never properly educated/trained hence they took music to be jokes and fun making [19], [20]. By all indications, their music productions permeate all kinds of evil behaviour, bawdy and uncouth utterances instead of addressing serious socio-economic and national issues. Again, from the history of music according to Seaton and Kamien talked about Richard Wagner's undisciplined behaviour when he participated in the insurrection in Dresden. Thus, he ordered hand grenades and tried to incite disobedience among the king's soldiers. When a warrant was issued for his arrest, Wagner fled to Switzerland, as 'his revolutionary activities made him *persona non grata* in Germany. So, apart from talent, discipline, dedication and hard work also contribute immensely towards making a good composer [21].

Compositional Elements

Composition refers to creation of the work of art – music and a finished musical piece. Presently, it has formed a basic discipline in music study both at the undergraduate and the post-graduate levels. Composition can be defined as creation of an original piece or work of music. It is also the art of expressing one's emotions by combination of various elements of music in an organized manner; hence, a composer's mind can only be interpreted through his vocal performance – full choir or solo singing [22], [23]. There are four elements of composition, according to Henri (2019, p. 5). "These are Sound; Timbre (tone colour); Rhythm; and Form. When composing, it is always essential to carefully examine the elements and how they may be of use during the process".

1. **Sound:** Sound is the result of vibration through the air or other mediums and is heard when it reaches the ear of any living. Some of these sounds are perceived as complex, others are perceived as simple. There are sounds that are consonant, others extremely dissonant.

One of the responsibilities of the composer is to organize the sounds in such a way that it is representative of the piece that is being composed. Sound may be considered music if order is perceived, or noise if only chaos is discernable. Sound, whether perceived as music or noise, can be objectively analyzed in terms of four distinct categories [24]. These categories, according to Pen are: duration, pitch, dynamics, and timbre form the four basic elements of music... it is through manipulation of time, pitch, dynamics, and timbre that music has the power to condense a life time of experience into a composition that lasts but a relatively short time.

2. **Timbre:** Timbre is described as tone colour of a sound. More simply, timbre helps us to distinguish one sound from the other. For instance, if two different musical instruments – Flute and Oboe, play exactly the same note at an equal volume, we can still distinguish between their individual sounds.

This perceived sound characteristic that allows us to distinguish between instruments is, as stated above what we called tone colour or timbre. Strings, Wood-winds and voice are different in timbral quality. Each sound has a tone colour [25]. A composer colours his sound by arranging his music for various instruments or combinations of instruments in order to provide contrast and drama, or to highlight the formal structure. Considering timbre helps, not only with balance, but also with creating the appropriate mood or energy of a piece. Next is rhythm.

3. **Rhythm:** Rhythm in essence is a magical illusion of regulating repeated patterns of long or short durations of sounds. These can be grouped symmetrically or asymmetrically, either way, this element is vital to the process as it is directly related to the process of allowing the music to unfold.

Meanwhile, rhythm per se, as Kamien (ibid, p.38) points out,

is basic to life. We see it in cycle of night and day, the four seasons, the rise and fall of tides. More personally, we feel rhythm as we breathe. We find it in our heartbeats and in our walking. Rhythm forms the lifeblood of music, too. In its widest sense, **rhythm** is the flow of music through time.

Rhythmic patterns can define musical styles and structure. For instance, Henri (ibid, p. 6) states that “the **Waltz** will feel very different than **March**, which differs from a **Salsa**”. Additionally, Just as with sound and timbre, rhythm can be unique to a particular region and vernacular. How one handles the rhythmic process is essential to the process. The next element is Form.

4. **Form:** Almost everything we encounter has some sort of shape or pattern unique to its character. The form is either fixed or free; this is also true of music. Forms in music include Strophic, Binary and Ternary structures. Other common ones include Rondo, Sonata, Sonata Form (sonata allegro), Minuet & Trio, Suite, etc.

These musical forms give shape and containment for the music being created. As painters and artists create whatever they desire by the use of lines, colours and shading; thus creating an imagery or illusion to be perceived by the eye, music, also traditionally follows similar ideology.

For musical ideas to make/ or have logical sense to the brain, it is necessary to consult the roadmap – form and structure. No wonder Artist Henri was quoted as saying that: “Good composition is like a suspension bridge; each line adds strength and takes none away. That arbitrarily making lines run together is not composition; there should be connection and reason for the lines. In fact, to disagree with Henri would tantamount to folly, as speaking the language of music requires good sentence structure and proper

punctuation in order to convey a complete thought. Onwuekwe (2013, p.27) therefore intones that "Form is an important aspect of any musical composition that tells the composer where to go and how to get there". Carefully examining and considering those four elements mentioned above before, during, and after the composition process strengthens craftsmanship and offers new perspective. The craft of music creation can be rewarding if one is adept at composition, but not without a considerable amount of training, experiential knowledge and talent.

Theoretical Framework

Musical composition, music composition, or simply composition are both applied interchangeably in this section to give vent to the act of creating an original piece or work of music, whether vocal or instrumental, the structure of a musical piece, or to the process of creating or writing a new piece of music. Composition in its broadest sense is everything in music creation from the rudiments of notation to the details of how notes are organized (into rhythms, scales, chords, etc) as well as to the more advanced topics of harmony, counterpoint form, orchestration and so on. Compositional processes include composing at the piano or keyboard, writing down the music, and so on. However, the researcher as a composer adopts writing down the music symmetrically for proper evaluation before the final work. Giving vent to this Henri (2019, p. 9) states that:

Notating your music is the best way to clarify your ideas, especially the rhythmic ones. Also, analysis and self-criticism are much easier with a written copy. For a composition lesson, it is essential that you bring your music already notated, on paper or on computer disk. Verbal descriptions and demonstrations at the keyboard are impossible to evaluate effectively.

To develop a personal style of music composition, much emphasis on originality should be minimized. According to Henri (ibid, p. 10), "a personal style develops after you have written much music. Seek and find the sounds your ear hears, but try those which are fresh. Avoid clichés". This is because the use of clichés weakens what you are trying to say or brings to board musically. This is true for music composition as much as it is for English composition. To this end, Nwamara (ibid, p, 29) quips:

I began composition by understudying the works of many great masters (past and present, living and dead), Africans and Westerners alike thereby gaining much insight into their works and styles which contributed immensely towards my greater understanding of music and the formulation of my style of composition.

Another important aspect of musical composition is the choice of scale/mode for the notes to be used, as well as the lyrics. By this, the application of the appropriate ethos and pathos in music composition comes to mind. Music is part of life and can greatly affect the emotional condition of a person, especially when appropriate ethos (ethics and values of the society) and pathos (appealing to emotions) are applied in the arrangement of the lyrics, tone quality (timbre), rhythm and melody. Seaton (1991, p. 2) states inter alia... "One of the major contributions of Greek philosophy, shared by both Plato and Aristotle is the doctrine of ethos". Applied to music, this doctrine, he emphasizes is "the belief that music can powerfully affect human character and behaviour". Such belief...could be related to the spiritual life in the context of religion". Listening to some kinds of music and the compositional style, a person feels a lot including the moments when he/she feels that the moment has already happened, or feels something very dear and close to heart; it is usually phenomenal.

In other words, the positive or negative effect of any piece of music is dependent upon the composer's skill and vast in handling of musical notations, musical elements, orchestration and other compositional nuances. Hence, Agu (1999, p. 33) states that:

in doing this however, the composer's creative act is to be guided by certain rules like the proper placement of words to achieve intelligibility, ensuring that intervallic range of tones and ambit of the melody agree with the speech-tone patterns of the chosen text.

Usually, music composition is the art of expressing one's emotions by combination of the various elements of music in an organized manner. Thus the composer's mind can only be interpreted through his vocal musical performance – full choir or solo singing. More so, Scholes (1978) defines composition as putting together of words to make a poem or piece of prose, or notes. In music, the putting together consists chiefly in

1. Combining successive notes to make melody
2. Combining simultaneous notes to make harmony
3. Combining melodies to make counterpoint
4. Combining phrases to make sentences and sentences to make long passages
5. Combining themes and their treatment to make pieces or movements of pieces
6. Combining movements to make cyclic forms.

The above processes invariably are a systematic gathering of musical ideas and arranging them sequentially and meaningfully into melodic lines and movements, chord progressions, and various forms of harmonic series. It is, in fact the special way in which these musical ingredients (ideas) are treated, balanced and combined which brings to any composition the distinctive 'flavour' or style of its particular period – and at the same time provides characteristic 'fingerprint', according to Bennett (1984, p. 3) by which we may identify the musical style of individual composers. In the light of the above, the following general principles might apply as a method when composing. These, as Henri (ibid, p. 11) states, but not limited to:

- **Length vs. Material:** Is the length (phrase, section, movement) appropriate for the material?
- **Appropriate for medium:** Is the musical material appropriate for the instruments (voices) for which it is written?
- **Know your instruments (voices):** Thoroughly research the capabilities and characteristics of the instruments for which you are composing
- **Unity vs. Variety:** Is there too much repetition causing predictability? Or is there too much variety, also causing predictability? The result is the same. The trick is to write something that sounds inevitable but not predictable. Strive for background unity with foreground variety.
- **Control of the Elements:** Am I exercising control over each element of music?
- **Consistency of Style:** Either sticks to one style, or mix styles – but not both
- **Simplicity:** Direct, simple ideas often communicate better than complex structure.

In addition to the above principles and methods, the researcher opines that a composer should have a permanent medium in form of a Choral Group which he would from time to time use as testing ground (laboratory) for his original compositions. This, in essence would enable him to sieve out the unnecessary elements, also evaluate his music properly before taking to the public.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, the researcher has extensively examined the art of music composition, and rhetorically elucidated salient but useful ingredients of music composition. It is observed; in the course of this paper that music can be created instinctively, that is to say, without conscious theory or formal training in music – composition based on innate ability (talent). This category of composers, as earlier stated can rely on the single aid of a good and critical ear; create music and songs that are both harmonically and musically arranged. Nevertheless, the fact that no amount of ingenuity in playing or composing music by the method of trial and error, can in any way march the efficacy of the rudimentary knowledge of the compositional techniques, as well as the intrinsic quality inherent in a piece of music composed within the framework of certain laid down technical rules and theoretical dispensation cannot be over emphasized. It is also noted that some renowned composers such as J.S. Bach (1685 -1750), W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791), etc in the Western music history, diligently understudied the works of some famous composers before them in order to gain insight. The story is also the same of Prof A.O. Nwamara, who alludes his prowess in music composition to understudying the works of many great masters before formulating his own style of composition coupled with Divine given talent.

Furthermore, it is worthy of note that vast knowledge of the idioms of one's immediate environment, as well as the Nigerian cultural milieu can enrich composition and foster efficient social commitment. This is because, music composition that resonate the ambience of our national socio-cultural, socio-political, socio-religious or socio-cosmopolitan point of view ensures perfect treatment of rhythm and melody.

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