

Mentor's Introduction

DAVID W. ECKER
New York University

Chew Teng Beng and Moses Oladipo Fowowe, both currently doctoral students in the Department of Art and Art Education at N.Y.U., exemplify the growing number of outstanding individuals from around the world who are drawn to the department for their graduate studies.

Mr. Chew is a painter, printmaker, and papermaking artist who has received international recognition for his work; he is also a Malaysian art educator who is dedicated to the advancement of traditional arts of his country. He holds an M.F.A. degree from the University of Michigan and is now working toward the Doctor of Art degree at N.Y.U. Specifically he is investigating the artistic potential of paper handmade from Malaysian fibers through the creation of paper artworks. This research shows promise of contributing both to the expanding cottage industry and art education programs with which he is associated.

Mr. Fowowe is a graduate of the University of Nigeria with a B.A. degree in Fine and Applied Arts, and of Syracuse University with an M.F.A. in Ceramic Art and Design. A lecturer in ceramics in the Department of Applied Arts at the University of Benin, he is working toward a Ph.D. at N.Y.U. He is investigating the social, economic, and artistic meaning of Yoruba traditional art and their bearing upon art education in Nigeria. Not coincidentally, I believe, the former chairman of Mr. Fowowe's department, Solomon Wangboje (now the Deputy-Vice Chancellor of the University of Benin), received his Ph.D. from our department.

In my view, Beng and Moses have informally taught as much as they have learned about the kind of art education appropriate to developing countries, and as a consequence have identified the research problems having the highest priorities in their respective regions of the world. They are part of an increasing number of present and former graduate students committed to the exploration of the significant but relatively neglected relationships to be found between the traditional arts and contemporary art education. I was especially pleased that Beng and Moses participated in the first meeting of the newly formed special interest group of NAEA members on Living Traditions in Art, and that they were invited to make the following presentations as part of Working papers in Art Education.