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All original submissions should come in English or French. Materials in other languages shall be accepted as long as they are followed with their English translations.

Presentations and In-citations follow the MLA 2003 format.

All submissions are normally treated on the basis of first come, first served.

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Introduction

THE sixth edition of *Journal of New Poetry* comes as a tribute to Africa's lady of song, Miriam Makeba. It was fitting that we dedicate this volume to the late symbol of African womanhood whose talents had served to place Africa on the world music map. We present a memorial, "The Makeba Story", as a suitable review of Mama Afrika's own life story, and an arrangement which makes the life and work of the late singer provide impetus for the study of the poetic and visionary crafts of Africa's living and departed singers and poets.

The focus on poetry and music recognises the significance of both artistic forms to contemporary African experience. African musical artistes, as Miriam Makeba of South Africa and Fela Kuti of Nigeria exemplify, seem as committed to the yearnings and aspirations of the people as their poets are today's indispensable spokespersons and activists for the alienated of the continent. Together both articulate the alter- or counter-voice against the debasement of art in politics, propaganda, control and manipulation by welders of modern information dissemination machinery. Thus this volume takes historical, sociological, literary, aesthetic perspectives on the evolution, practice and emergence of African poetry and music as mutually reliant and dependent creative media of art in society. It proposes that music should weave naturally, and most perceptibly with religious functions of art in a social communion that holds greater purpose for individual and communal well being.

Trailing our 2009 **Theme Study** list is the critique of Igbo music and modern religious ideals followed by an examination of Fela Anikulapo Kuti's revolutionary preachments which both serve as an interrogation of artistic expressions that expand discursive space and provide alternative constructs and possibilities about African realities, cultures, and identities.

In **Perspective** a study of socio-linguistic innovations in recent poetry reveals how larger hegemonic influences in the lexical construction of modern Nigeria poets. A hypothesis that the muse of history is evoked through oral

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traditions and memory, and the rhetorical devices of poems written in Nigerian Pidgin have made helpful readings on recent African poetry. We have also studied some poetics of traditional marriage and birth songs and compared oral performance poetry and music of African expressions just as the intersections of poetry and music, and the mutual interactions of both art practices within social, cultural and political differences engage our **Literary Chat** discussants.

By these entries our premise that music in Africa are expressions of the spiritual bond between man and his ancestors, his inner essence, or spirit and physical needs, and that through colonial and postcolonial experience, African music have been at the frontline of the liberation struggle, is clearly justified. The exploration of music as part of African aesthetic and existence truly holds much benefit for contemporary literary studies.

GMT

September 2009