



A Walk Down Nollywood Lane

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Let's Walk...



History has it, that the first set of Nigerian feature films were made by great men such as Hubert Ogunde, Ade Afolayan, Francis Oladele, John Ifoghale Amata, Eddie Ugbomah, Jab Adu, and Ola Balogun, to name a few. For these early pioneers, theater and films provided an avenue to empower people to reflect on the Nigerian society as well as serve as a tool for education.

But in 1992 Nigeria's home video industry, popularly known as Nollywood, took a dynamic turn with the release of the movie *"Living in Bondage"*. The movie tells the story of a man who in his pursuit for wealth and power, kills his wife in ritual sacrifice. Produced by [Chris Obi-Rapu](#) and screen written by [Kenneth Nnebue](#) and [Okechukwu Ogunjiofor](#), *Living in Bondage* set the pace that would forever change the face of the home video industry within Nigeria and across the African continent.

For the first time, Nigerians began to appreciate the fact that they could provide low-cost entertainment by expanding the themes of existing local television soap operas and turning them into home videos.

Much More Than Home Videos: Cinema Screening

One of the biggest criticism from early practitioners in the film industry is the fact that Nollywood is not a film industry but a home video industry. In fact, many detest the name "Nollywood" for its lack of originality. But today, movies from Nollywood are quickly evolving from merely being home videos available via DVDs. An emerging trend is for these movies to be screened in cinemas across Nigeria. Take for example, *A Mile from Home* (2013), *Last Flight to Abuja* (2012), *MAAMI* (2012), *Tango with Me* (2010), and *Arugba* (2008), which are all Nollywood movies that premiered in the cinemas in Nigeria.

From Books to Movies -- Adaptations!

Over the years, some of Nigeria's best literature have been adapted into films. These include: *The Concubine* (1966) written by Elechi Amadi and adapted into a movie by Andy Amenechi, *Things Fall Apart* (1958) written by Chinua Achebe, *MAAMI* (1987) written by Femi Osofisan and adapted into a movie directed by Tunde Kelani in 2012, *Kongi's Harvest* (1965) written by Wole Soyinka and adapted into a movie directed by Ossie Davis, and most recently, *Half of A Yellow Sun* (2007), written by Chimamanda Adichie and adapted into a movie directed by Biyi Bandele in 2013.

International Markets and Film Festivals

Love for Nollywood movies cuts across many countries especially on the African continent and amongst Africans in the diaspora. It is also not unusual for Nollywood filmmakers and actors to collaborate with other movie industries or for

Nollywood movies to be produced outside Nigeria. For example, the 2003 comedy *Osuofia in London*, which told the story of a man from a rural part of Nigeria who is struck by culture shock when he travels to London was partly filmed in London. Again, *Ijé* (2010), which told the story of two sisters with unbreakable bonds of loyalty was filmed both in Los Angeles and in Jos, Nigeria. A couple of other movies including *Mirror Boy* (2010) and *Anchor Baby* (2010) were filmed outside Nigeria while movies like *Amazing Grace* (2008) and *Black Gold* (2011), involved collaboration between Nollywood and Hollywood actors.

A good number of Nollywood movies have also been screened and celebrated at International film festivals with the goal of exposing global audiences to Nigerian films. For example, Nollywood movies have been screened at [Seattle International Film Festival](#) in 2013, [New York African Film Festival](#) in 2010, [Nollywood Week](#) in Paris (2013), [Subversive Film Festival](#) in Croatia (2011), [Nollywood Now!](#) in London (2010), Swansea Bay



International Film Festival, International Youth Film Festival, [Boston International Film Festival](#) and most recently [Film Africa](#) in London (2013).

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