

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Thursday, 04 March 2010 21:23 - Last Updated Thursday, 17 March 2011 16:44



Emeka Ike is no doubt one of Africa's most talented and renowned actors. He has featured in countless movies and is admired for his acting prowess by millions of film lovers. Emeka is however strange. He is not arrogant like many mega stars would be. He is patient, soft-spoken and would take time to listen. That is probably why his career is a success story. When he came to Cameroon recently for a movie project, the Nigerian actor spoke to Ernest Kanjo and Efeti Moka. Excerpts of Part I of the interview.

How would you evaluate your stay in Cameroon?

It's been very resourceful and business-oriented. I found out youths in Cameroon are very talented and ready to learn.

Is there something you would always like to remember about Cameroon?

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Sure! The genuineness of the people and their welcoming nature. The people of Cameroon are nice and have no signs of aggressiveness in them.

How much of Cameroon did you know before coming to the country?

I knew much about Eto'o Fils, the international footballer. I knew much about Cameroon's national football team, the Indomitable Lions, known for their brilliant performance. I also knew the Cameroon flag, green, red, yellow. That is the much I knew about Cameroon. Now, I know quite much.

You would have found time to go around the capital city, Yaounde. What do you make of it?

Yaounde is a fast developing and great city. I think the Government should do more for youths who live here because I realized, many of them are traders whereas they've graduated from University. The Government could create more industries.

Which Cameroonian traditional dish did you enjoy most?

I love Kum-Kum and Okro. It has no match (laughs).

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You came to Cameroon for a movie project. What was your role in the movie?

Actor! I played the Prince who eventually became the King. You know this African palaver whereby children out of wedlock are considered outcasts. That was me.

As one of Africa's bests, we know you wouldn't just accept any kind of script. Why did you accept Royal Destiny?

It's culturally different from the ones I'm used to in Nigeria. So, learning another culture and language was a challenge for me. I found it fascinating and a lot of people from Nollywood were very surprised because they did expect that much from Cameroon. I find interest in refining whatever is unrefined for international value.

How did Aicha, the producer contact you?

Through Neba Lawrence, the director, who for long was trying to reach me via phone. When he finally did, he passed me on to Aicha with whom I spoke. At some point they caught my attention and I asked them to mail me the script so that I could read. So they did and that was that.

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Could you evaluate the work you and the crew did?

For now I think Africa is about to experience the biggest hit movie done in Cameroon. The lighting of the film is impeccable and the images superb.

How would you assess the Cameroonian actors and actresses?

They are coming up and will go places. I think with a little encouragement they will catch the media and make it big. Let me pay tribute the following who have marked me: Solnage yijika, Muma Pascal and Lynno Lovert.