**CORA Picks Date And Theme for LABAF 2019**

**--November 4-10; “EMERGE: Breaking into the NEW”**

As is traditional to the directorate of CORA, producers of the annual ***Lagos Book & Art Festival, LABAF***, the theme and date of the 21st edition of the festival was announced in the final sessions of the 20th edition on Sunday, November 11.

Held on the FoodCourt stage of the festival’s traditional base, Freedom Park Lagos​, the announcement came immediately after the ART STAMPEDE which discussed *“READING, The Endangered Necessity,”* which was the last plenary session of the weeklong 51-event festival, popularly dubbed “biggest Cultural Picnic on the continent of Africa”.

Secretary General of the CORA, and head of the LABAF team, Toyin Akinosho, before a gathering of about 200 revelers, declared that the theme for LABAF 2019 is ***"EMERGE: Breaking into the NEW,"*** while date is **November 4 to 11**. He said the theme was a natural sequel to that of the just-ended 20th edition.

Said Akinosho, "In 2017, we observed trends in our local and global political and cultural scenes, including the emergence of divisive politicians on global political stage; violent rhetoric and extremism on cultural stages characterised by rise to prominence of such groups as *Boko Haram, Al Shabab*, Fulani herdsmen insurgence, and so on; and we decided on the theme, ***"ERUPTIONS: Global Fractures and our Common Humanity".*** For 2017, we decided on the theme ***"RENEWAL: A World that Works for All"*** because we thought that after “eruptions” and disruptions should naturally come the process of rebirth. For 2019, we have chosen the theme: ***“EMERGE... Breaking Into The New”,*** which is to focus on the expected shift in government, following the general elections of February 2019, and the roles we as a people/the electorate will be playing in the succeeding four years to break free from the political shackles that have held us in bondage in the previous years thus, “emerging, and breaking into the new.”

And with that Mr Akinosho invited the gathering and general public to start ruminating over the theme, and especially to suggest Books and publications that capture the spirit of the theme. He asked them to watch out for more information on the festival's website: *www.lagosbookartfestival.org*; and to follow the festival's handles on insta and twitter at ***#labaf1.***

**REVIEWING LABAF 2018...**

For a week -- Monday, November 5 to 11 -- hundreds of literary enthusiasts and patrons of the arts joined in the "feast of Life and Ideas" that was the 2018 *Lagos Book & Art Festival (LABAF)*, savouring divergent artistic and cultural productions and expressions as presented in the 51 events that featured in the 20th LABAF.

The theme ***“Renewal... A World That Works For All”*** inspired several conversations around the state and future of our dear nation, Nigeria, and indeed the rest of the world; in particular focusing on impact of policies and actions of rulers on our collective humanity. The underlining idea, especially for Nigeria was to examine the processes of rebirth as the country enters its 20th year of Democracy, torch-lighting the fate and fortune of the citizens.

All literary and artistic events that held throughout the one-week duration of the festival were aimed at examining the issues that have trailed us as a people and country. Thus it was an avenue to speak out boldly on these issues, proffer new ways to kindle hope and in all, develop strategies to create a world of better possibilities.

This saw the involvement of people who have made their mark on nation building through their works -- academicians, creatives, federal and state officeholders, political aspirants and officials, students in primary, secondary & tertiary institutions, etc. It was a huge carnival of ideas for people of divergent age, political and cultural temperaments and experiences.

Remarkable in LABAF 2018 was the unprecedented huge involvement of youth demographics in all levels of the discussions, and in particular the intra/inter generational exchanges and relationships that the well-curated panel discussions and showcases gingered.

We dare to say that the purpose of LABAF 2018 has been served.

Again, we say many thanks for your presence and contributions.

NB: *What have been your experiences through the festival? Kindly share them and also tag us to all of your posts. We will be waiting to engage with you!*

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***www.lagosbookartfestival.org***