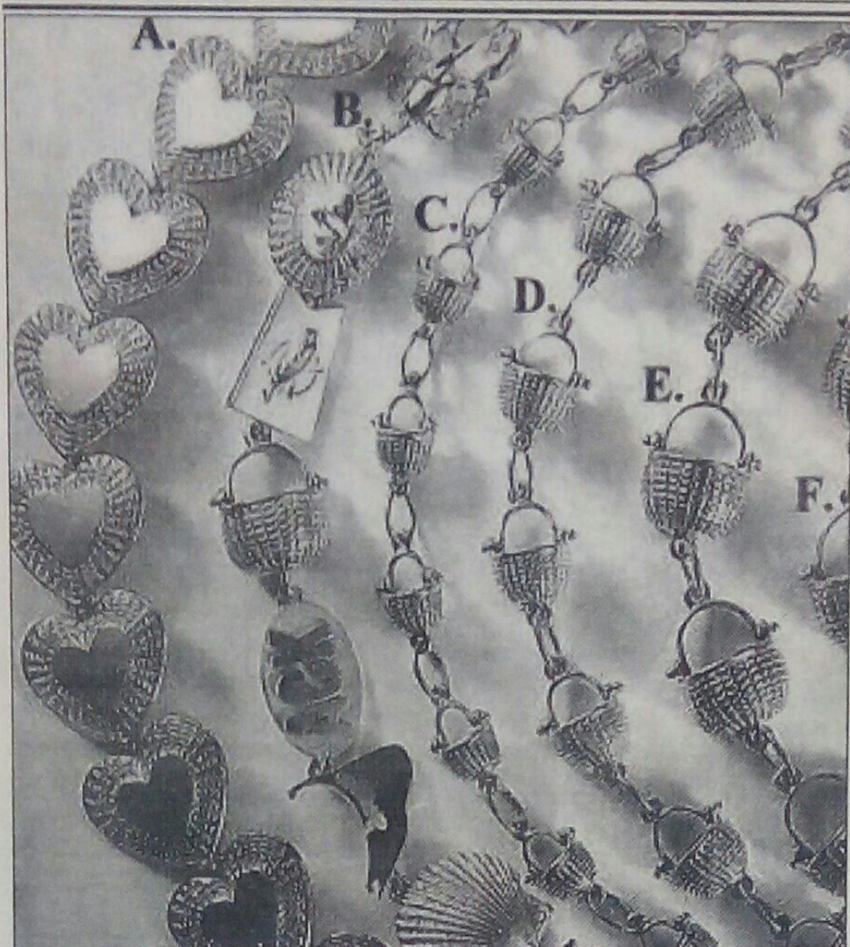


ARTS



• Jewellery

Jewellery workshop at museum

By Funmilola Omoike

A workshop organised by the WY (Women and Youths) Art foundation in collaboration with the National Museum, Lagos, is tagged *The Jewellers Feast On Gold And Gemstones*.

The founder, a lecturer at the Department of Creative Arts, University of Lagos, Dr Peju Layiwola says, "due to several requests another workshop has been slated to hold from December 5-10 2005 at the National Museum, Onikan Lagos".

This jewellery workshop will include intensive lessons in gold smiting, beadwork and gemnology. Why gold smiting? This is because it is a rare opportunity to learn the art because in the curriculum of most art schools gold or silver smiting does not appear. So art students may graduate without any knowledge of the art.

According to her, "in the art of metal smiting, I was taught by mostly foreigners, who were invited to teach by late Professor Irein Wangboje. This availed us the rare opportunity of learning about various methods of working precious metals. He thought it wise to introduce the jewellery and silver smiting as a specialisation area on his return to Nigeria. The course later metaphorized to metal design

to encompass other aspects of metal working."

She says, "In my work at the University of Lagos, I try to introduce jewellery as a course of study and the students are responding positively". The participants will be

taught the various methods of working gold, this will include both the traditional and more modern

approaches to gold working. Other aspects will include the repairs of broken jewellery and gold identification. They will be taught how to produce earrings and other items of jewellery into as many

shapes as their imagination can allow. The participants were taught how to identify various carats of gold and how to smelt and refine. Other exercises will include working with wire or filigree work and also fashioning jewellery from sheet gold of 9-carat quality.

For this workshop, participants will be provided with gold for working and they will be allowed take away the jewellery they produced, so as to have a sense of fulfilment anytime they see it.

Gemnology will cover stone identification and will provide

hands on experience of cutting gemstones.

The art of gem stone cutting is such a viable industry that government should support. Nigeria as a country will get more foreign reserves if many of the unemployed youths are taught how to cut stones instead of selling raw and uncut stones. We can, in fact, export already cut stones, which have a much higher value because artistry is involved. The beauty of a stone is in the cut of the stone. The various ways in which light is reflected by the facets bring out the brilliance of the stone.

Nigeria is so blessed with mineral deposits and human resources. All we need do is empower the people with skills and the rest will be history. How do we then cut stones to international standards? The answer will be provided in this workshop which will be facilitated by Mr Zepheniah Ndaja from Maidiguir.

Beadwork also will teach several methods of stringing beads and the making of exotic designs of necklaces and earrings. Teaching the participants, several techniques such as the spiral rope, chevron chain, illusion and beaded bead techniques, latest designs in the fashion industry.