

## ...Continental powerhouse for African self-assertion

By Bolanle Austen-Peters



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I WOULD like to congratulate the Founders of *iREP International Documentary Film festival* on their 10th-year anniversary.

iREP continues to be a continental powerhouse at the forefront of propagating African stories globally. In their ten-year run, the team and the festival have provided Africans with a space to showcase our rich and deep-rooted stories and also the salience in taking hold of those stories and not allowing them to be told for us by non-Africans. It is iREP's celebration of Nigerian arts and culture, and the inspiration they have given to many young Nigerian artists, that have led them to achieving so much in the past ten years.

[Bolanle Austen-Peters - Wikipedia](#)

It was this shared vision of celebrating African arts, that led to Terra Kulture being the first supporter of iREP; giving them our space and facilities to birth this laudable dream before relocating to Freedom Park. In supporting this initiative at inception and having a shared vision of propagating African stories and talent, iREP gave me an award for my contribution to Nigerian arts and motion pictures in 2019. An honour which I cherish dearly.

iREP has been integral in inspiring, educating and promoting the African experience, which has greatly impacted the continent. Over the years, iREP has diversified the palette of the kinds of films we watch in Nigeria. They have showcased a myriad of non-fiction stories that deal with topics on the personal level, societal, identity, politics and culture.

In a shared mission with Terra Kulture of empowering the youth, iREP festival has focused on encouraging young people to take on documentary filmmaking, through trainings, workshops and inspiring talks by a cast of reputable guest speakers, on the importance of the medium to changing social narratives. As well as, the importance of treating the medium as a craft that should be studied in order to push the envelope of African documentary filmmaking.

Thus, in the subsequent years since the festival's inception, Nigeria has seen a marked increase in new and bright young documentary filmmakers. iREP has also acted as an important cultural platform for documentary filmmaking. A place where domestic and international filmmakers can congregate to network, share ideas, inspire and learn from one another. The

festival has been a platform for cross-cultural skills sharing and education of not only African stories, but worldwide stories.

Myself and the Terra Kulture team wish more success for *iREP International Documentary Film festival*. We hope that you continue inspiring, showcasing and pushing the envelope of Nigerian documentary filmmaking.

*\* Austen-Peters is a culture producer, entrepreneur, and founder of the prime art centre, Terra Kulture*

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