



What else can be written as a biography in the midst of the world splendid violists than to reveal the driving force behind the self motivated young man that left all the pleasures to take a risk in creating what will can call “bridge over trouble waters”. Growing up in a non musical family, a very challenging musical environment devoid of basic infrastructures/ necessities like those readily available in the western world. His experiences were quite similar to that of the founder of the Suzuki method during the Second World War. This period could be regarded as the dark age of music in Nigeria where music education is based on try and error with lots of personal experimentations. Imagine what the present world would be without WWI.

His musical life would have been a total mirage if not for his church’s attitudes towards development of music through what know as junior choir. He started his musical training in early 80s as a choir boy and was exposed to various musical instruments when he finally made it to the main (senior) choir (Recorder, drums, trumpet, piano and violin). He would have been introduced to violin earlier but he was sent away along with his peers by the violin teacher who told them that violin is meant for those with larger arms or big fingers. “None of us has ever heard of or seen a smaller violin because the only available sizes were the full size violins. As a result we waited until we were about 11-15 years before learning the violin even with the wrong teaching methods and books”.

The church has been the backbone of classical music development through annual choir musical performances, choral competitions and instrumental trainings. Titus benefited so much from these in the early 90s and was fortunate to have heard and seen violin being played at his peak at that time by Kehinde and Taiwo Sofuye (twin brothers). Their playing influenced so many kids to take up violins and they played a vital role in taking violin enthusiasts to the next level. Titus was inspired and encouraged to take up viola by Kehinde Sofuye who later became his violin/viola teacher and even played in the same quartet. His first violin and viola were provided by the former choir master Pastor Remi Collins and present music director Pastor Kolawole Sonaïke.

Being a violist here in Nigeria is quite challenging as you have no advance violist to learn from. I mean someone who knows how violists feel and who also know what it takes to play the viola. Resources for viola are sometimes very scarce that you have to buy good viola strings from abroad. He was unable to register for viola examinations because of lack of viola pieces and

information prevented the school of music from compiling a viola syllabus. Titus' personal viola and other accessories were donated to him by Rachel Barton Pine (Chicago based American violinist) and Peter Serman (instrument maker/repairer in America). He has been very active in getting donations of musical materials for other instrumentalists as a form of motivation. The compilations of viola pieces for MUSON graded examinations, provisions of original examination pieces, provision of concert pieces were made possible through the donations he got from Rachel's Foundation and the following violists: Garth Knox, Dr. Michael Kimber, Hellen Callus, Luis Magin, Louise Lansdown, Julia Davies, and many others.

Titus would have loved to study violin abroad at his teen but the huge fund needed to do so was not at his disposal at the time. He later turned to viola, due to lack of violists and has performed majorly with chamber groups across Nigeria. In 2007, he won the MTN Foundation scholarship to study music for two years at the Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON) and was a student of Mr. G Amoah, Ghanaian violinist. He was the principal violist of MUSON symphony orchestra and violist of Golden String quartet. Additionally, he was among the ten string teachers sponsored to Germany in March, 2010, for a one week Suzuki Violin Teachers' Training course (Level 1A) He is presently in South Africa studying audio engineering at SAE Institute on part scholarship. He would be studying privately with Marina Louw in Cape Town as he would like to perform pieces like Stamitz , Hindermith viola concerto and some of the Bach Suites. He is also planning to study music education (viola major) and composition at the University of Cape Town.

He is very concerned about helping the younger generations by making qualitative practical music education available to children of all social-economical levels in Nigeria and West Africa. "God has really helped me and I would like to be a bridge over trouble waters for others. It is a great honor to be listed among the viola icons, all of whom I have taken as mentors worthy to be emulated", he remarked.