



*First Episode*  
**MR. FUJI: BARRY WONDER**

**Produced and Directed by**

**PROFESSOR SAHEED ADERINTO**

WINNER, THE 2023 DAN DAVID PRIZE  
(THE LARGEST HISTORY PRIZE IN THE WORLD)  
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, USA.

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## Producer and Director



**P**rofessor Saheed Aderinto is a Professor of History and African and African Diaspora Studies at Florida International University, USA. In 2023, he won the \$300,000 Dan David Prize—the largest history prize in the world—in recognition of his “outstanding scholarship that illuminates the past and seeks to anchor public discourse in a deeper understanding of history.”

## About The Fuji Documentary

**F**rom a country on the threshold of disintegration during a thirty-month Civil War in the 1960s, the 1970s in Nigeria ushered in a major cultural and artistic revolution made possible by millions of dollars in revenue from the global oil boom. In the process, Afrobeat was born. Juju finally left the shadow of highlife. Pop music, Jazz, Rock and Roll, and Reggae all found comfortable homes in dance halls across the country.

The cultural rebirth of the 1970s reached its climax in 1977 when Nigeria hosted the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture—the most spectacular spectacle of cultural display in postcolonial Nigeria.

This documentary is about Fuji, one of the numerous musical creations and re-creations of the period. Today, Fuji is the most dominant of the Yoruba musical traditions, influencing so many other genres, including Afrobeats, hip-hop, and even gospel music.

Shot in libraries, museums, galleries, archives, art centers, universities,

private homes and public events across southwestern Nigeria, in Europe, and the United States, the first episode of the Fuji Documentary tells the incredible story of Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, the man who created Fuji.







# Review of

## Mr. Fuji: Barry Wonder The First Episode of the Fuji Documentary



By

Professor Emeritus Karin Barber  
University of Birmingham  
United Kingdom

This engaging and richly informative documentary explores fùjì, one of Nigeria's most popular music genres, through the life and work of its founder Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister. Combining archival photos and film clips, contemporary performances, and interviews with a wide range of the musician's associates – band members, sound engineers, actors and actresses, family members, friends, fùjì artists, media scholars, fan club organisers—its expert editing moves us swiftly and satisfyingly through a multitude of facets of the art of “Barry Wonder”.

These include the historical context of the Nigerian civil war followed by the oil boom; Barrister's biography, from a disadvantaged childhood to extraordinary fame, wealth and social prominence achieved through the sheer genius of his musical creativity; the history of the fùjì musical genre itself; the internal dynamics of the band and Barrister's relations with patrons, politicians and the press; Barrister as husband and father; his last years, illness and death in 2010; and the impressive efforts made by his legions of fans to come together to create lasting memorials.

The director and producer of the film,

Professor Saheed Aderintō, is a leading cultural historian and authority on Nigerian popular music. His immersive, participatory research method has yielded remarkable results in this project. Participants are clearly at ease in the interview situation and are given space to elaborate commentaries that are both thoughtful and candid. Each recorded interview is divided into sections and distributed throughout the film, so that by the end you feel you are getting to know the participants as distinctive, often eloquent individuals.

There are also many beautiful performances by fùjì artistes in Barrister's honour sprinkled throughout the film. Though factually detailed and sophisticated in approach, the dominant note is one of respectful admiration for a unique cultural figure. How he envisaged his own legacy, how people remember him, and how his influence lives on, are key themes throughout the documentary. Aderintō himself not only speaks movingly to the camera on the impact of Barrister's art but closes the documentary with a performance of a fùjì praise-poem of his own. The film is beautifully put together and entirely captivating -- a landmark in popular music documentation.





# Praise for The Fuji Documentary

The director and producer of the film, Professor Saheed Aderinto, is a leading cultural historian and authority on Nigerian popular music. Though factually detailed and sophisticated in approach, the dominant note is one of respectful admiration for a unique cultural figure [Sikiru Ayinde Barrister]. The film is beautifully put together and entirely captivating -- a landmark in popular music documentation. Àjànákú kojá “Mo rí nnkan firí”, bá a bá rerin, ká a sọ pé a rerin!

Professor Emeritus Karin Barber, DBE, FBA  
University of Birmingham  
Author of *The Generation of Plays: Yoruba Popular Life in Theatre*

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Professor Saheed Aderinto is a masterful storyteller who successfully brings his prodigious skills as a historian to documentary filmmaking. This film brilliantly tells the story of Fuji music as it emerges in the cultural efflorescence of post-independence Nigeria and then goes global. This film is a must-see for music fans and anyone interested in understanding the creative spark currently igniting Nigerian music, film, and art.

Professor Jesse Weaver Shipley  
The John D. Willard Professor (Dartmouth College)  
Author of *Living the Hiplife: Celebrity and Entrepreneurship in Ghanaian Popular Music*

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An oratorical-historical masterpiece, Aderinto's Documentary engages the rich rhythmic archive of Fuji, a major Yoruba musical genre with roots in Southwestern Nigeria. It is a compelling account of the postcolonial transformation of the Nigerian soundscape... Here, Aderinto announces his versatility as a debutant filmmaker, while continuing to prove his worth as a world-class historian-ethnographer.

Professor Omotayo Oloruntoba-Oju  
Adekunle Ajasin University  
Author of *African Theatre Aesthetics: A Comparative Study of the Plays of Wole Soyinka and Femi Osofisan as Paradigms*





# Praise for The Fuji Documentary

**S**aheed Aderinto's rendering is masterful, and the visual prose is uncommon. With this film, he has proven to be the master of the subject and a brilliant visual narratologist. This documentary is rendered with stunning visual beauty, providing uncommon scholarly insights into the making of the most consequential genre of popular music in contemporary Nigeria.

Professor Onookome Okome  
University of Alberta  
Co-editor of *Popular Culture in Africa: The Episteme of the Everyday*

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**P**rof. Saheed Aderinto has created a documentary that is richly entertaining, insightful, and incisive. It is a landmark exploration of Nigeria's musical history, inviting us to a deeper appreciation of the profound cultural expression that Fuji music represents. Congratulations to Prof. Aderinto for this invaluable work.

Femi Odugbemi, fta  
Co-Founder/Director, IREPresent International Documentary Film Festival  
Voting Member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

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**A** triumph. *Ìṣẹ̀ takuntakun lẹ̀yí!* Adéríntó's interwoven voices of participants, performers, and specialist observers, render a moving history of *fújì*, a modern, popular, music idiom that offers viewers a revealing glimpse into an optimistic time in post-independence Nigeria.

Professor Adélèké Adéèkó  
Humanities Distinguished Professor, The Ohio State University  
Author of *Arts of Being Yoruba: Divination, Allegory, Tragedy, Proverb, Panegyric*

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**T**his wonderful documentary by Professor Saheed Aderinto pays tribute to Sikiru Ayinde Barrister and to a whole crucial dimension of Nigerian cultural history. It's lively, warm, rich, and fast-paced, crowded with testimonials and insights by people who were close to Barrister. Like the film maker himself, it wears its authority, lightly.

Professor Emeritus Jonathan Haynes  
Long Island University  
Author of *Nollywood: The Creation of Nigerian Film Genres*

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# Praise for The Fuji Documentary

I was transported and transfixed. Professor Saheed Aderinto's documentary film on the fuji pioneer Sikiru Ayinde Barrister shows how history is made up not only of dry archives, but of lived orality, meandering anecdote, gossip and the everyday emotions of the people.

Dr. Carli Coetzee

President of the African Studies Association of the United Kingdom

Editor, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*

Chair of Lagos Studies Association Publications Committee

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This trailblazing documentary by one of Africa's enigmatic historians and culture activists situates Fuji as a musical genre whose lyrics and instrumentation capture the common people's joys, fears, and aspirations. This documentary film has deservedly and permanently placed Fuji alongside major musical genres worldwide.

Professor Tunji Azeez

Lagos State University

Co-editor of *Inside Nollywood: Issues and Perspectives on Nigerian Cinema*

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Prof. Saheed Aderinto's epic, 'The Fuji Documentary,' is rigorously researched and deeply populated with knowledgeable people. It is an emotional deep dive that does justice to the legendary pioneer of this homegrown genre. Take a bow, Prof!

Ed Emeka Keazor, FRSA

Director of the award-winning "January 15, 1970."

Associate Director of the Showmax HBO Series: "The Journey of the Beats."

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Professor Aderinto's powerful 120-minute documentary weaves together biographical, critical, and anecdotal narratives interspersed with musical excerpts to paint a holistic picture of the remarkable career of Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, the late Nigerian superstar of Fuji and one of Africa's icons of popular culture in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century.

Professor Bode Omojola

The Hammond-Douglass Five College Professor of Music

Mount Holyoke and the Five Colleges

Author of *Yoruba Music in the Twentieth Century: Identity, Agency, and Performance Practice*







### Script, Translation, and Subtitle

Professor Saheed Aderinto

### Editor, Colorist, and Postproduction

Aderibigbe Abiola Provost (Rare Edge Studio, Ibadan)

### Crew and Videography

Busuyi Adeleye  
Tolani Onike  
Rosemary Popoola  
Timothy Afolabi  
Jose Cuello  
Aderibigbe Abiola Provost  
Wale Ayanniyi  
Yusuf Adekojo  
Joseph Ololajulo

Bunmi Shorunke  
Temitope Banire  
Helen Ugah  
Kabiru Amusa  
Samuel Yusuf  
Tobi Richards  
Toye Adegaju  
Jacob Adesina

### The Cast of Mr. Fuji: Barry Wonder

Hon. Samsondeen Balogun  
Otunba Adisa Osiefa  
Alhaji Aderoju Ayanwale Yekini  
General Kollington Ayinla  
Alhaji Sefiu Alao Adekunle (Baba Oko)  
Alhaji Rashidi Ayinde Merenge  
Alhaja Salawa Abeni  
Excellency Mickey Adisa  
Elder Dayo Odeyemi  
Easy Sawaba (Late)  
Adebiyi Adebayo Ishola (BarryReborn)  
Mr. Akintunde Akinteye  
Otunba Wale Ademowo  
Mr. Tunde Busari  
Chief Demola Oyefeso  
Hajia Fadheelat Oreoluwa Dikko  
Pele Tajudeen  
Otunba Okunola Olatokunbo Muhilly

Mr. Abiodun Ayeni  
Agbaakin Ademola Adesigbin  
Ms. Remilekun Kasali (RemmyChanter Asatainment)  
Mrs. Adebisi Dedeke  
Mrs. Olanireti Falade  
Moji Wonah  
Pa Aderemi Adeoye (Ade Radio of Idi Arere)  
Professor Saheed Aderinto  
Mr. Ropo Ewenla  
Alhaji Taiwo and Kehinde Oni Bembe Oru  
Aisha Modupeola Yakub (Lady Barry)  
Alhaji Fatai Afaro (Captain Rashidi Ayinde Merenge Band)  
Mr. Johnson Ayanlowo  
Students of the Department of Music Technology, The Polytechnic Ibadan  
Students of Music Department, University of Ibadan  
Students of Florida International University

**“Mr. Fuji: Barry Wonder,”  
was shot at the following locations:**

#### Ibadan

The Cultural Center  
The Tunde Odunlade Art Gallery  
The J.F.Ade Ajayi Library  
The Nigerian Tribune Library  
Radio Nigeria  
Obafemi Awolowo (Liberty) Stadium  
Mapo Hall  
National Archives  
Oyo State House of Assembly  
Department of Music Technology, The Polytechnic Ibadan

Wole Soyinka Art Theatre, University of Ibadan  
The Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan  
The Zoological Garden, University of Ibadan  
Department of Music, University of Ibadan  
The Botanical Garden, University of Ibadan  
Imramats Lounge, Elebu  
Strings Studio, Akobo  
Oludasile Fuji Studio, Samanda  
Cocoa Bean Café, Bodija  
Sheik Niyass Kaolack Mosque, Ona Ara

#### Lagos

Fuji Chamber, Isolo  
Department of Creative Arts, University of Lagos  
Natural History Museum, University of Lagos  
Remmy Chanter Asatainment, Isolo  
Salawa Abeni Booking Office, Ikeja

#### Abeokuta

BAD Studio, Olusegun Obasanjo  
Presidential Library And private homes, events,  
and parties across southwestern Nigeria





### United States

Philadelphia Marriot Hotel, Philadelphia  
Florida International University, Miami  
Sandrell Rivers Theater, Miami  
San Francisco Marriott Marquis, California



### Library, Archives, and Digital Repositories

National Archives, Ibadan  
J.F. Ade Ajayi Library, Ibadan  
Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan  
Nigerian Tribune Library, Ibadan  
Nigerian Nostalgia Project  
UNESCO Digital Library  
Radio Nigeria, Ibadan  
Nigerian Television Authority, Ibadan  
The Red Cross Digital Archives  
Oyo State Library Board, Ibadan

# Special Thanks to:

Hon. Samsondeen Balogun (Barrister's Son)  
Elder Dayo Odeyemi  
Ms. Remilekun Kasali (RemmyChanter Asatainment)  
Professor Yetunde Zaid (University of Lagos)  
Dr. Olatunde Barber (University of Lagos)  
Dr. Kehinde Popoola (University of Ibadan)  
Mr. Tunde Odunlade (The Tunde Odunlade Arts Gallery, Ibadan)  
Mr. Saheed Ojubanire (Media Manager of Alhaji Sefiu Alao Adekunle)  
Mr. Timothy Ajiboye (The Polytechnic, Ibadan)  
Dr. Sheyi Kehnnny (University of Lagos)  
Reverend Niyi Dahunsi (Radio Nigeria, Ibadan)  
Dr. Felix Ajiola (University of Lagos)  
Mr. Wale Ogundipe (National Archives, Ibadan)  
Mr. Gboyega Adelowo (National Archives, Ibadan)  
Mr. Jegede (Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan)  
Mr. Leye Fabusoro (CEO Rare Edge Media, Ibadan)

Mrs. Adeyinka Oyedele (Nigerian Tribune Library)  
Mrs. Falana (Oyo State Library Board)  
Dr. Adeolu Ogunsanya (University of Ibadan)  
Mrs. Oghogho Jacinta Odubanjo (Radio Nigeria, Ibadan)  
Mrs. Bolatito Janet Joseph (Radio Nigeria, Ibadan)  
Dr. Samuel Ajose (University of Ibadan)  
Mr. Edward Dickson (Nigerian Tribune)  
Mr. Jimoh Surajudeen (Oyo State Library Board)  
Mr. Ed Emeka Keazor (Lawyer, Historian, Filmmaker)  
Dr. Bashiru A. Lasisi (University of Ibadan)  
Professor Senayon Olaoluwa (University of Ibadan)  
Dr. Seunfunmi Olutayo (University of Ibadan)  
Mr. Ayanfe (Nigerian Television Authority)  
Dr. Kudus Adebayo (University of Ibadan)  
Professor Sola Olorunyomi (University of Ibadan)  
Mrs. Gbadamosi (The Polytechnic, Ibadan)  
Mrs. Abiona (National Archives, Ibadan)

## Visual Artists and Illustrators

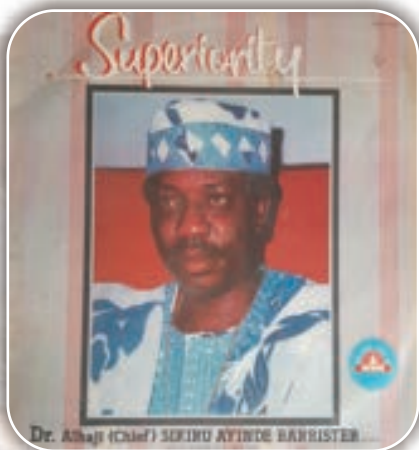
Bankole Toyeeb  
Onos Graphics  
Paddy Art

Motoon Art  
Damilola Ajayi  
Segun Jacobs

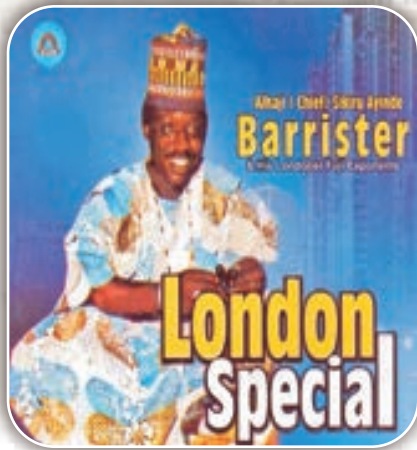
Oladipo Adesina  
Lilien Chidera Ezeugwu  
Christiana Edoghogho Omoregbe









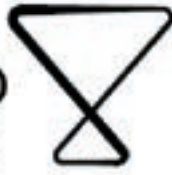




# Funding for the Fuji Documentary

**FIU**  
FLORIDA  
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DAVID  
PRIZE



**Western  
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