METAPHORICAL RENDITION OF CASSIA TORA ROOT FORMS IN PAINTING

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF FINE ART,

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,

ZARIA, NIGERIA

MAY, 2019

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MAY, 2019

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this Thesis titled METAPHORICAL RENDITION OF CASSIA TORA ROOT FORMS IN PAINTING has been carried out by me in the Department of Fine Art, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this Thesis was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Stephen Chinedu Achugwo

Date

CERTIFICATION

This Thesis titled METAPHORICAL RENDITION OF CASSIA TORA ROOT FORMS IN PAINTING by Stephen Chinedu Achugwo meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Painting of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to: my parents - Sir Hyginus Achugwo and Mrs Nneoma Janet Achugwo; my brothers - Chief Bonaventure Achugwo, Mr Irenaeus Achugwo, Mr Chidiebere Achugwo, Don Bongo Achugwo, MrToochukwu Achugwo; my sister - Ngozi Rose Achugwo and my cousin - Mr Desmond Mbaeri.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER PAGE.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

FLY LEAF.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

TITLE PAGE.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

DECLARATION.....iii

CERTIFICATION.....iv

DEDICATION.....v

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....vi

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....x

ABSTRACT.....xi

LIST OF FIGURES.....xiii

LIST OF PLATES.....xvi

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study.....1

1.2 Statement of the Problem.....3

1.3 Justification of the Study.....4

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study.....4

1.5 Research Questions.....4

1.6 Significance of the Study 5

1.7 Delimitation of the Study 5

1.8 Conceptual Framework 5

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND ARTWORKS

2.1 Review of Related Literature 7

2.1.1 Cassia tora Plant 7

2.1.2 Visual Metaphors and Metaphorical Rendition of Forms 12

2.1.3 Well-being 17

2.1.4 Post-Impressionism 19

2.1.5 Modernism and Postmodernism 20

2.2 Review of Related Artists and Artworks 22

2.2.1 Root-inspired Paintings 23

2.2.2 Other Root-inspired Artworks 47

2.2.3 Visual Metaphors with Unconventional Materials 74

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design 93

3.2 Practice-based Research Design 95

3.2.1 Source of Ideas and the Use of Resource Materials 96

3.2.2 Source of Materials 97

3.2.3 Translation of Ideas 101

3.2.4 Techniques Adopted 102

3.3 Reference to Established Movements and Artists 102

3.4 Data Collection 103

3.4.1 The Primary Source of Data 103

3.4.2 The Secondary Source of Data 104

3.4.3 The Instruments for Data Collection 104

3.4.4 The Tools for Data Collection 106

3.4.5 Visual Characteristics of Cassia tora Roots 106

3.5 Systematic Illustration of Process and Procedure 111

3.5.1 Studies with Pencil, Pen and Ink 112

3.5.2 Studies of Other Plant Roots 122

3.5.3 Studies with Watercolour 129

3.5.4 Studies with Oil Pastel 130

3.5.5 Studies with Oil Colour 134

3.5.6 Studies with Acrylic and Ink (Abstract Compositions) 136

3.5.7 Studies with Unconventional Materials 145

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF ARTWORKS PRODUCED

4.1 Describing and Analysing Selected Artworks Produced 151

4.1.1 Phase I: Singular Element 152

4.1.2 Phase II: ‘Romeo and Juliet’ series 159

4.1.3 Phase III: Nodal Forms 163

4.1.4 Phase IV: Multiple Elements 168

4.1.5 Phase V: Roots of Fashion 177

CHAPTER FIVE: CATALOGUE

5.1 Artist's Curatorial Statement and Philosophy 183

5.2 Portfolio 186

5.2.1 Phase I: Singular Element 186

5.2.2 Phase II: Romeo and Juliet 195

5.2.3 Phase III: Nodal Forms 197

5.2.4 Phase IV: Multiple Elements 202

5.2.5 Phase V: Roots of Fashion 213

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary 216

6.2 Conclusion 219

6.3 Findings 220

6.4 Recommendations 222

6.5 Contribution to Knowledge 223

REFERENCES 224

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ABSTRACT

Metaphorical Rendition of Cassia tora Root Forms in Painting

This study is a Practice-Based research, which explores the root forms of Cassis tora plant with the aim of creating paintings that reflect on the well-being of Nigerians metaphorically. Plant roots from the natural environment possess interesting visual features such as line, rhythm, depth and space. Root forms have not been adequately explored in painting. Similarly, metaphorical rendition of forms in painting has not been exhausted. These facts present an opportunity for further research of Cassia tora root forms. The Conceptual Framework of the study is driven by features of Post-Impressionism that are characterised by emotional contents and symbolic colours, anchored by the works of Vincent Van Gogh. Van Gogh rendered forms metaphorically with short brush strokes and symbolic colours, reflecting on his emotional anguish and the plight of the poor people around his neighbourhood. Similarly, this study is contextual. It utilizes the conceptual structure of visual metaphor, to draw analogies with Cassia tora root forms and societal happenings in Nigeria. It begins by reviewing Cassia tora plant, focusing on its origin and the visual features of the roots. Beside theory, the study reviews related works consisting of root-inspired paintings, root-inspired works in other media and visual metaphors done with unconventional materials. Works of Vincent Van Gogh, Barbara Snyder, Cedar Lee, Gary Tonge Alexa los Reyes and many other artists were reviewed. This revealed that the upper part of plant and other natural images of the environment are included in the compositions. There are little attempts at metaphorical rendering of root forms. The major focus of these artists is technical dexterity instead of contextual approach. The primary source of data for this study is from the samples of Cassia tora roots, upon which the foundation of the research is established. The data are also sourced from societal happenings, allegories and speculative

notions. The Instruments for data collection are direct observation, participatory observation, interview, photography and drawing. The tools for data collection are cameras, sketch pads and the retrieval systems such as compact discs and flash cards for capturing images. The exploratory and developmental processes led to the production of research paintings. The artworks are created in five phases, according to the five objectives. The first phase laid emphasis on the visual analysis of Cassia tora root forms, which is made of a taproot, branch roots and nodes. Phase II relied on the entwining of two Cassia tora root pattern to make statements regarding love and unity. The picture planes at Phase III are totalised by Cassia tora nodes. Phase IV series of paintings relied on multiple Cassia tora root patterns. They dwell on depth, bright colours, space and time. However, Phase V series of paintings were created with Cassia tora root forms, collage technique and unconventional materials including woollen yarns, raffia, Jute, polythene, beads and fabric offcuts. The research found that in some paintings created with multiple elements of Cassia tora root forms (at Phase IV), the crowded root forms and depth appear like a forest; an expression of so much depth. This symbolises a fiesta, as the environment is charged into a celebrating mood. The composition is a metaphor for peaceful coexistence. The study concludes that in the light of contextual process, analogy and conceptual blending, artists are capable of generating knowledge by rendering root forms metaphorically in painting. The study recommends that further researches should be carried out to reveal other ways of rendering Cassia tora root forms in painting, such as performatives, kinetics and site-specificinstallations.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Cassia tora Plant, Illustration, Unknown Artist, n.d. 8

Figure 2: Cassia tora in its natural habitat, Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2015 9

Figure 3: Cassia tora in its natural habitat II 10

Figure 4: Cassia tora Plant II 10

Figure 5: Tree Roots and Trunks, 1890, Vincent Van Gogh 23

Figure 6: Roots of a fallen giant Sequoia, 2015, Barbara Snyder 26

Figure 7: Deep Roots, 2011, Ruth Palmer 28

Figure 8: Deep Roots II, 2005, Ruth Palmer 28

Figure 9: Free Within,2010, Ishrath Humairah 30

Figure 10: Perseverance, 2010, Ishrath Humairah 30

Figure 11: Roots, 2012, Mary Schiros 33

Figure 12: Deep Roots, 2013, Cedar Lee 36

Figure 13: Grounded, 2013, Cedar Lee 38

Figure 14: Sunset, 2013, Erika Pochybova-Johnson 41

Figure 15: Roots, 2005, Alexa de los Reyes 44

Figure 16: Sidewalk, 2010, Alexa de los Reyes 46

Figure 17: Testing the digital tools, Wilcott, 2015 48

Figure 18: Roots, work in Progress Wilcott, 2015 48

Figure 19: Roots, 2005, Justin Wilcott 50

Figure 20: Root-inspired handshake, Unknown Artist, n.d. 52

Figure 21: Roots of Development, Unknown Artist, n.d. 53

Figure 22: The Thriving Pine & Roots of Well-being, Unknown Artist, n.d. 54

Figure 23: Roots (Illustration in progress), Unknown Artist, n.d. 56

Figure 24: Roots, Unknown Artist, n.d. 58
Figure 25: Root-inspired tattoo, Unknown Artist, n.d. 60
Figure 26: Root-inspired tattoo II, Unknown Artist, n.d. 61
Figure 27: Tree Root Canopy (Animation), 2005, Gary Tonge 63
Figure 28: Woman-Tree, Unknown Artist, n.d. 64
Figure 29: Humus, 2012, Giuseppe Licari 66
Figure 30: Humus (with viewers), 2012, Giuseppe Licari 67
Figure 31: Humus (with viewers II), 2012, Giuseppe Licari 68
Figure 32: Chinese Armchair, Unknown Artist, 18th Century A.D. 70
Figure 33: Chinese Root Table, Unknown Artist, n.d. 71
Figure 34: Cannabis Sativa, 2014, Dayla Luttwak 72
Figure 35: Allium Cepa, 2010, Dayla Luttwak 73
Figure 36: Allium Cepa (Detail), 2010, Dayla Luttwak 73
Figure 37: Allium Cepa (Detail II) , 2010, Dayla Luttwak 73
Figure 38: Line by Line, 2015, Eva Obodo 75
Figure 39: Bad Case II, 2009, Eva Obodo 75
Figure 40: Human Resources, 2013, Uchay Chima 77
Figure 41: The Hunt, 2012, Jacob Jari 79
Figure 42: Aja Nsukka, 2014, Nnenna Okore 81
Figure 43: Versatility, 2006, El Anatsui 83
Figure 44: Double Image Syndrome, Jerry Buhari, 1992 85
Figure 45: Spikes-8, 2012, Hadieh Shafie 87
Figure 46: Spikes-8 (side view detail), 2012, Hadieh Shafie 88
Figure 47: An Illustration of the Research Design for this study 94
Figure 48: Coral Beads 97

Figure 49: Synthetic Beads 98
Figure 50: Raffia Trays 98
Figure 51: Raffia Hat 98
Figure 52: Discarded Jute Sacks 99
Figure 53: Sourcing Polythene sheets from discarded rice sacks 99
Figure 54: Woollen Yarns 100
Figure 55: Woollen Yarns II 100
Figure 56: Fabrics offcuts 100
Figure 57: Cutting Polythene sheets from Rice Sacks 101
Figure 58: Polythene stripe, peeled from sacks 101
Figure 59: Cassia tora Root Samples 107
Figure 60: Cassia tora Root Samples II 108
Figure 61: Cassia tora Root Samples III 109
Figure 62: Cassia tora Root Samples IV 110

LIST OF PLATES

Plate I: Tafasa, Pen on Paper 113

Plate II: Tafasa II, Pencil on Paper 115

Plate III: Tafasa III, Pencil on Paper 116

Plate IV: Tafasa IV, Pencil on Paper 116

Plate V: Tafasa V, Pencil on Paper 116

Plate VI: Tafasa VI, Pencil on Paper 116

Plate VII: Tafasa VII, Pen & Ink on Paper 117

Plate VIII: Tafasa VIII, Pen & Ink on Paper 117

Plate IX: Tafasa IX, Pen & Ink on Paper 118

Plate X: Tafasa X, Pen, Ink & Pencil on Paper 119

Plate XI: Tafasa Tea, Pen on Paper 120

Plate XII: Tafasa Tea II, Pen & Ink on Paper 120

Plate XIII: Tafasa Tea III, Pen & Ink on Paper 121

Plate XIV: Tafasa Tea IV, Pen & Ink on Paper 121

Plate XV: Grassroots, Pen on Paper 122

Plate XVI: Grassroots II, Pen & Pencil on Paper 123

Plate XVII: Grassroots III, Pencil on Paper 123

Plate XVIII: Tomato Roots, Acrylic on Paper 124

Plate XIX: Onion Roots, Acrylic & Pen on Paper 124

Plate XX: Waterleaf Roots, Pen on Paper 125

Plate XXI: Tree Roots, Acrylic on Paper 125

Plate XXII: Tree Roots II, Acrylic on Canvas 126

Plate XXIII: Tree Roots III, Acrylic on Canvas 126

Plate XXIV: Tree Roots IV, Pencil on Paper 127
Plate XXV: Roots of some weeds, Pen on Paper 128
Plate XXVI: Springs, Watercolour on Paper 129
Plate XXVII: Springs II, Watercolour on Paper 129
Plate XXVIII: Waves, Oil Pastel on Paper 130
Plate XXIX: Singles, Oil Pastel on Paper 131
Plate XXX: Singles II, Oil Pastel on Paper 132
Plate XXXI: Singles III, Oil Pastel on Paper 133
Plate XXXII: Singles IV, Oil Pastel on Paper 133
Plate XXXIII: Singles V, Oil Pastel on Paper 133
Plate XXXIV: Singles VI, Oil Pastel on Paper 133
Plate XXXV: New Waves, Oil on Canvas 134
Plate XXXVI: New Waves II, Oil on Canvas 134
Plate XXXVII: Waves II, Oil on Canvas 134
Plate XXXVIII: Waves III, Oil on Canvas 135
Plate XXXIX: Rays, Acrylic and Gold Ink on Paper 136
Plate XL: Rays II, Acrylic on Canvas 137
Plate XLI: Waves IV, Acrylic on Paper 137
Plate XLII: Waves V, Acrylic on Paper 138
Plate XLIII: Echoes, Acrylic on Paper 138
Plate XLIV: Echoes II, Acrylic on Paper 139
Plate XLV: Echoes III, Acrylic on Paper 139
Plate XLVI: Echoes IV, Acrylic on Paper 140
Plate XLVII: Echoes V, Acrylic on Paper 140
Plate XLVIII: Echoes VI, Acrylic on Paper 141

Plate XLIX: Echoes VII, Acrylic on Paper....141
Plate L: Echoes VIII, Acrylic on Paper....142
Plate LI: A Letter to Kandinsky, Acrylic on Paper....143
Plate LII: Another Letter to Kandinsky II, Acrylic on Paper....144
Plate LIII: Fashion Trends, Polythene & Jute....145
Plate LIV: Fashion Trends II, Beads & Jute....145
Plate LV: Fashion Trends III, Beads, Woollen Yarns....146
Plate LVI: Fashion Trends IV, Woollen Yarns, Jute....146
Plate LVII: Fashion Trends V, Jute, Polythene & Fabric offcuts....146
Plate LVIII: Fashion Trends VI, Fabric offcuts,....147
Plate LIX: Fashion Trends VII, Fabric offcuts,....147
Plate LX: Fashion Trends VIII, Polythene,....147
Plate LXI: Fashion Trends IX, Woollen yarns and....147
Plate LXII: Fashion Trends X, Fabrics and Polythene....148
Plate LXIII: Fashion Trends XI, Fabrics, Polythene and Stripes....148
Plate LXIV: Roots of Fashion III (work in progress), Stephen Achugwo, 2017....149
Plate LXV: The Researcher working on Root of Fashion III....149
Plate LXVI: The Researcher working on the Root of Fashion IV....150
Plate LXVII: Germination of Gold, Ink and Acrylic on Paper....153
Plate LXVIII: Hero, Oil on Canvas....154
Plate LXIX: Guerrilla Warrior, Oil Pastel on Paper....155
Plate LXX: Aso Rock, Oil on Canvas....156
Plate LXXI: Bless them Mama Africa, Oil on Canvas....158
Plate LXXII: Romeo and Juliet, Gauche on Paper....160
Plate LXXIII: Romeo and Juliet II, Water Colour on Paper....161

Plate LXXIV: Romeo and Juliet III, Gauche on Paper....162
Plate LXXV: Nodes of inspiration, Oil on Canvas....164
Plate LXXVI: Nodes of inspiration II, Oil on Canvas....165
Plate LXXVII: Gyrating Stars, Oil on Canvas....166
Plate LXXVIII: Reflections, Oil on Canvas....167
Plate LXXIX: Flames, Oil on Canvas....168
Plate LXXX: Roots of inspiration, Oil on Canvas....170
Plate LXXXI: Digging for gold, Oil on Canvas....172
Plate LXXXII: Forest of Wisdom, Oil on Canvas....174
Plate LXXXIII: Fiesta, Oil on Canvas 120 cm x 150 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016....175
Plate LXXXIV: Forest of Wisdom II, Oil on Canvas....176
Plate LXXXV: Roots of Fashion, Jute and Polythene....178
Plate LXXXVI: Roots of Fashion II, Polythene, Woollen Yarns & Fabric offcuts....179
Plate LXXXVII: Roots of Fashion III, Woollen Yarns, Fabric offcuts,....180
Plate LXXXVIII: Roots of Fashion IV, Jute, Polythene, Raffia, ...181
Plate LXXXIX: Germination of Gold II, Ink and Acrylic on Paper....186
Plate XC: Germination of Gold III, Ink and Acrylic on Paper....187
Plate XCI: Guerrilla Warrior II, Acrylic on paper....187
Plate XCII: Guerrilla Warrior III, Oil on Canvas....188
Plate XCIII: Guerrilla Warrior IV, Oil on Canvas....189
Plate XCIV: Hero II, Oil on Canvas....189
Plate XCV: Hero III, Oil on Canvas....190
Plate XCVI: Hero IV, Oil on Canvas....191
Plate XCVII: Aso Rock II, Oil on Canvas....192
Plate XCVIII: Bless them Mama Africa II, Oil on Canvas....193

Plate XCIX: Bless them Mama Africa III, Oil on Canvas.....193
Plate C: Bless them Mama Africa IV, Acrylic on Canvas.....194
Plate CI: Romeo and Juliet IV, Oil Pastel on Paper 195
Plate CII: Romeo and Juliet V, Oil on Canvas 196
Plate CIII: Romeo and Juliet VI, Oil on Canvas.....196
Plate CIV: Nodes of inspiration III, Oil on Canvas 197
Plate CV: Nodes of inspiration IV, Oil on Canvas 198
Plate CVI: Gyrating Stars II, Oil on Canvas.....199
Plate CVII: Gyrating Stars III, Oil on Canvas 199
Plate CVIII: Reflections II, Oil on Canvas 200
Plate CIX: Reflections III, Oil on Canvas 201
Plate CX: Flames II, Enamel on Canvas.....202
Plate CXI: Flames III, Oil on Canvas 203
Plate CXII: Flames IV, Oil on Canvas.....203
Plate CXIII: Roots of inspiration II, Oil on Canvas.....204
Plate CXIV: Roots of inspiration III, Oil on Canvas 205
Plate CXV: Digging for Gold II, Oil on Canvas.....206
Plate CXVI: Digging for Gold III, Oil on Canvas 207
Plate CXVII: Fiesta II, Oil on Canvas 208
Plate CXVIII: Fiesta III, Oil on Canvas.....209
Plate CXIX: Fiesta IV, Oil on Canvas 209
Plate CXX: Fiesta V, Oil on Canvas.....210
Plate CXXI: Forest of Wisdom III, Oil on Canvas 211
Plate CXXII: Forest of Wisdom IV, Oil on Canvas 212
Plate CXXIII: Roots of Fashion V, Fabric offcuts, Jute & Woollen Yarns.....213

Plate CXXIV: Roots of Fashion VI, Fabric offcuts, Polythene & Woollen Yarns 214

Plate CXXV: Roots of Fashion VII, Fabric offcuts, Woollen Yarns, Jute, ...215

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The natural environment is full of plants with various roots systems, such as taproots, which could serve as sources of inspiration for artistic expression. Roots of plants, from natural environment, are interesting creative imageries, which have not been given adequate attention. Plant roots can be read in different ways and serve various purposes, as the subject of root is broad. Roots are the organs of plants that typically lie below the surface of the soil. Roots of Cassia tora lie below the soil. There are also aerial, adventurous, fibrous and tuberous roots. Roots are the veins which sustain life of plants by providing support, water and nutrients. Cassia tora is an element from the natural environment that is regarded as weed by agronomists and most farmers. According to Pankaj (2002), Cassia tora plant is also known as C.tora sickle sienna, sickle pod, Tora, Tovara, Chakvad and Foetid Cassia. It is known as 'Tafasa' in Hausa language. It is a dicot legume with healing properties, mostly found in the tropical countries of Asia and Africa. The root pattern of Cassia tora is composed of a taproot, branch roots and nodes. These components could provide a creative impetus, to create paintings with metaphorical rendition of forms.

In linguistics, metaphor is used to express imagery in words. It is a Figure of speech that equates two different things for the sake of comparison or symbolism in order to suggest a resemblance (Hagberg in Gaut and Lopes, 2005). It is a word or phrase used to compare two unlike objects, ideas, thoughts or feelings to provide a clearer description. For instance, the phrase 'going back to my root' means going home. Root forms have been extensively used in linguistics as verbal metaphor. Munteanu (2014) observes: "The 'language' that

writers and painters use finds its parallels in form, structure and intent." This explains the need for metaphor in compositions, such as painting.

An artwork produced through a metaphorical rendition of forms is known as visual metaphor, pictorial metaphor or analogical juxtaposition. (Nordquist, 2017). Metaphor is incorporated in visual and auditory art, to portray events, thoughts and imagery. Carrol (2001) claims that some artworks are considered as metaphoric, because they communicate in the same way as verbal metaphors. It is not mainly the exploration of form in a medium that results into a work that is metaphorical. In other words, visual metaphor is idea based. It is a combination of form and content.

In painting, metaphorical rendition of forms came to prominence in modernist era. Postimpressionism, Fauvism, Symbolism, Expressionism, Abstract Expressionism, Cubism, Dada and Surrealism are among the modern art movements that used metaphorical approach. In Postmodernism, metaphorical rendition of forms is used by Minimalist, Video, Performance, Conceptual and Installation artists. Metaphorical rendition of forms is further elucidated by the works of some contemporary artists, such as HadiehShafie, El Anatsui, Eva Obodo, Jerry Buhari, Mua'zu Sani, Jacob Jari, NnennaOkore, EzeNgene and SuzanAnthony-Dingba. Shafie uses luminous circular scrolls as metaphors in her works, to express the seductive power of love and passion (Ritzel, 2016). In another instance, Jari uses discarded materials in his work as metaphor, that expresses the need to give an individual a second chance to make amend of his past mistakes (Joshua, 2015).

Despite these aesthetic developments, neither the metaphorical rendition of forms nor the use of root forms has been exhausted in painting. Root forms appear to be subjects for creating compositions in painting that have not been given attention by Nigerian artists. Some artists have studied elements in nature, especially roots in the production of their

artworks.Vincent Van Gogh, IshrathHumairah, DaylaLuttwak, Mary Shiros and others have explored roots alongside elements and principles of design.

DaylaLuttwak uses steel to produce root-inspired metal sculptures while Tonge deploys aerial roots in his animation. Despite the beauty of their realistic depictions, the root forms are not rendered metaphorically. The researcher acknowledges their concepts, philosophies, materials, styles and techniques, in consideration with the elements and principles of design inherent in the root forms, especially line, colour, texture, depth and movement. A closer look at the root-inspired works of these artists shows that there is little attempt at rendering root forms metaphorically. In most of the paintings reviewed, other plant and environmental imageries are added to the composition. These facts point to the need for an in-depth study of root forms. Captivated by the root forms of Cassia tora, the researcher embarks on a task to develop compositions in painting that would thrive on metaphorical rendition of root forms.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The use of plant roots to create painting composition, especially in transforming space and forms, remains among the areas that have not been given adequate scholarly attention by Nigerian painters. Some artists have made significant contributions to knowledge in the study of plant roots. However, few have solely studied root forms for the purpose of artistic expression in painting. Vincent Van Gogh, IshrathHumairah, Cedar Lee and Mary Shiros are among the artists who have used root forms in producing paintings. In the paintings of these artists, it is observed that beside root forms, the artists added the images of plants and other landforms to their compositions. They made little attempts at drawing analogy between the root forms and socio-cultural affairs, such as well-being. Roots were depicted for their literal visual translation. Their major focus is technical dexterity with the elements and principles of design, hence this study.

1.3 Justification of the Study

This study is justified as it will add to the existing practices for rendition of forms, within the context of contemporary art practices. The common practice by artists working with nature is mostly realistic styles of interpreting plant roots. A metaphorical rendition of forms in painting has not been given adequate scholarly attention in Nigeria. The works of revolutionary artists, like Vincent van Gogh, and contemporary artists, such as Erika Pochybova-Johnson, El Anatsui and, Eva Obodo, who, in their quest to create new thinking, have also created new languages peculiar to their arts. As another evidence that art involves aesthetics and intellectual importance, this study is also justified as it follows the same manner in its attempt at possibly creating new thinking.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to use the root forms of Cassis tora plant to create paintings that will reflect on wellbeing of Nigerians metaphorically. The objectives are to:

i. explore the dynamic features of Cassia tora root pattern in painting;
ii. infuse symbolic colours into the root forms to enhance their metaphoric content;
iii. generate compositions in painting with the nodes of Cassia tora;
iv. create paintings with multiple root patterns of Cassia tora; and
v. lift the metaphoric content of Cassia tora root forms using unconventional materials, such as beads, raffia, jute, polythene, woollen yarns and fabric offcuts.

1.5 Research Questions

i. How can the dynamic features of Cassia tora root patterns be used for painting?
ii. How can the metaphoric content of the root forms be enhanced with symbolic colours?
iii. In what ways can compositions be generated in painting with the nodes of Cassia tora?

iv. In what ways can paintings be created with multiple root patterns of Cassia tora?

v. By what means can the metaphoric content of Cassia tora root forms be lifted using unconventional materials?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant, due to its deviation from the traditional way of depicting a subject matter such as root by using Cassia tora root forms to create conceptual paintings. Creating painting using Cassia tora root forms is an aesthetic statement that serves as an innovative approach for painters in portraying emotional and socio-cultural well-being. It is a stimulus of philosophical thoughts that invokes the notion of 'elevating the ordinary (weed, such as Cassia tora)' to the 'extraordinary visual symbol'. It transcends the phenomenon of root beyond its botanical garden into an icon of artistic expression with profound metaphorical significance.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study is restricted to the use of roots as a source of inspiration in painting. It focuses on the roots of Cassia tora specie (Leguminosae Family of Plants) located in Zaria, Nigeria. The choice is due to its distinct visual characteristics that the artist considered to be uncommon with the root systems of other plants.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study hinges on the ideas of Post-Impressionism with particular reference to the abstract paintings of Vincent Van Gogh. Post-Impressionists tenets were based on the portrayal of emotion, intellect and visual imagery. They deployed vivid colours, often thick application of paint, and real-life subject matter. Van Gogh was more inclined to distort forms for expressive effect as exemplified by "Tree roots and trunks". He redefined forms to express his emotions. His dedication to articulating the inner spirituality of man and nature, led to a unique fusion of style and content that resulted in

dramatic, imaginative, rhythmic, and emotive canvases (Adams, 2011). Van Gogh used an impulsive, gestural application of paint and symbolic colours to express subjective emotions. As stated by Gardner and Kleiner (2013), Van Gogh "explored the capabilities of colours and distorted forms to express his emotions as he confronted nature." capabilities of colours and distorted forms to express his emotions as he confronted nature."

This study adopts Van Gogh's approach of rendition of forms, thus serving as a major stimulus in articulating a concept in painting with the root forms of Cassia tora. In Van Gogh's paintings, forms are transformed with short strokes of lines with symbolic colours. In like manners, this study deploys textured planes, impasto background and root forms combined with symbolic vibrant colours to create compositions in paintings. With the combination of various Cassia tora root forms however, the study extends Van Gogh's ideas in painting. Van Gogh's paintings focused on expressing his emotions. The researcher's compositions in painting conversely, transforms root forms in diverse ways, as metaphors for inspiration, hope, aspiration, reincarnation, hero, among others, that reflect on the well-being of Nigerians.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND ARTWORKS

This Chapter is a review, consisting of two sections - literature and artists with their artworks. The review provides the context within which the research is situated and shows how it would address pertinent painting issues.

2.1 Review of Related Literature

This section reviews related literature under the following sub-headings:

- Cassia tora Plant Roots
- Visual Metaphors and Metaphorical Rendition of Forms
- Well-being
- Post-Impressionism
- Modernism and Postmodernism

2.1.1 Cassia tora Plant

Cassia tora belongs to the Leguminosae Family of Plants. It is a dicot legume; an herbaceous annual foetid herb that originated from India. (Pankaj, 2002). The adult plant is 30-90 cm high. It has alternative pinnate leaves with leaflets of three opposite pairs that are obviate in shape with round tips. The leaves are 3-5 cm long. The stems have distinct smelling foliage when young. Cassia tora yellow flowers occur in pairs with stamens of unequal length, producing flat pods that are four angled, 10–15 cm long and sickle shaped. There are 30-50 seeds within a pod.



Figure 1: Cassia tora Plant,Illustration, Unknown Artist, n.d.
https://2.imimg.com/data2/RA/RW/IMVENDOR-2039084/puad1-250x250.jpg

Figure 1 is an Illustration of Cassia tora plant, showing the components parts, which include leaves, flowers, buds of seeds and roots. Cassia tora is a plant known as a wild weed, wild peanut or pastiche that has many healing benefits. It grows alongside other weeds and shrubs in fields and bushes. The roots are composed of interesting design elements. Cassia tora plant grows in Zaria environ and in many towns in Nigeria.

2.1.1.1 Cassia tora in its natural habitat



Figure 2: Cassia tora in its natural habitat,Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Figure 3: Cassia tora in its natural habitat II
Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Figure 4: Cassia tora Plant II
Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

2.1.1.2 Cassia Tora Roots' Survival Strategy

Roots are the veins which sustain plant life by supplying nutrients and water. Roots are the organs of plants that typically lie below the surface of the soil. Taproot system, such as Cassia tora roots lie below the soil. Other root systems, including fibrous roots and tuberous roots live beneath the soil. However, there are some roots that typically live above the ground, which include adventurous roots, ropey ropes and aerial roots. Within the soil habitat, Cassia tora roots possess a survival strategy that is distinctively weedy in nature, which evokes certain feelings and metaphorical tendencies.

Cassia tora is generally classified as a weed. A weed according to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.) is a "general term for any plant growing where it is not wanted". Similarly, Encyclopaedia Britannica (n.d.) defines a weed as "any wild plant that grows in an unwanted place, especially in a garden or field where it prevents the cultivated plants from growing

freely". In an interview (on 12th May 2018) with Professor IshayaDauda, who teaches at the Agronomy Department, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, pointed out that there is a survival strategy that differentiate weed from other plants. Such strategy includes the ability to grow in a variety of places outside its natural habitat, scramble with other plant roots for food, survive with limited resources, reproduce in large numbers and save its seeds over a long period of time until a favourable condition for germination.

In plants life, the roots provide nutrients, water and support. In order to provide adequate resources, or get a better supply to its plant, some weed roots, including Cassia tora roots attack other plant, by inflicting their roots with poisonous enzymes. The poison retards the growth of the neighbouring plants. Cassia tora roots utilize this survival strategy to compete victoriously against other plant roots. This strategy provokes metaphorical propensity attributive of well-being.

2.1.1.3 Cassia tora Roots' Healing Attribute

Cassia tora plant roots possess healing attribute, which include anti-microbial activity, anti-diabetic activity and anti-inflammatory activity. It is known by Pharmacologist to possess certain phytochemicals that can be used as an alternative therapy. According to (Supare and Patil, 2015): "Cassia tora is a medicinal plant showing larvicidal activity against Anopheles stephensi which was confirmed by its alcoholic extract against Anopheles stephensi". There is on-going research to explore its chemical extract for the treatment of various chronic pathological conditions. The healing attribute of Cassia tora roots evoke the feeling of hope and provoke other metaphorical predispositions that are essential in articulating the phenomenon of well-being. It could be used in creating painting compositions by substituting the well-being of Nigerians with Cassia tora root forms. To do so entails an

understanding of the conceptual structure of visual metaphor and stories relating to the well-being of Nigerians.

Could it be possible to utilize Cassia tora roots herbal attribute to cure societal ills? Is it possible to use Cassia tora root forms to revitalize the well-being of Nigerians? Yes, it is possible, metaphorically. Van Gogh's Post-Impressionist paintings are conceptual medicine, as they focused on revitalizing the well-being of the poor miners and rural dwellers. A root-inspired painting, titled 'Sunset', created by Erika Pochybova-Johnson highlights the need for this civilization to live in harmony (Symes, 2014). This research provides painterly answers to these questions through series of visual metaphors that reflect on emotional and socio-cultural well-being of Nigerians.

2.1.2 Visual Metaphors and Metaphorical Rendition of Forms

"Those words are most pleasant which give us new knowledge. Strange words have no meaning for us; common terms we know already. It is metaphor which gives us most of this pleasure.", so says Aristotle, as referred to by Nordquist (2017). A metaphor utilizes two things, which include a vivid statement or a conspicuous visual, to suggest something else. It does so without the 'as or like'. Kadry (2015) explains: "Visual metaphor is a powerful tool; visual metaphors allow expression of concepts that might not have a linguistic equivalent in a foreign language, concepts that appear as taboo in a foreign culture, concepts with a heavy emotional connotation, or abstract concepts that are otherwise hard to express through words". Whether it is visual or verbal, metaphor is a bridge between art and life. Visual metaphor is the representation of a person, a place or an idea by a visual image that suggests a particular association, (Nordquist, 2015). A visual metaphor is an image used in the place of or in conjunction with another image to suggest an analogy between the images or make a statement with them.

Visual metaphor is an artwork produced through metaphorical rendition of forms. Metaphorical rendition of forms enables the artists to express intellectual and emotional information and link those ideas to the technical stages of creating artworks. As such, the elements and principles of design act as motivations as opposed to a focus for visual metaphor to be utilized in meaning making (Smoke, 1982). The semiotic process of going from simple to complex analysis, is not limited to the scientific use of verbal metaphors. It can also be found in the employment of visual metaphors. Gombrich (1971), argues that images and symbols have meaning and appear in different forms. They function as visual codes which evoke an impression of cultural value. Such visual metaphors require a cultural context for interpretation. He gives the example of the traffic lights in which the colour red is coded to signal 'stop' and green to signal 'go'.

2.1.2.1 Contextual language

Metaphorical rendition is based on contextual art approaches. Visual metaphor hinges on contextual language for meaning making. Both the viewer and the artist must speak the same contextual language and should know the meaning of symbols in order to make meaning from the artwork. Both must think metaphorically in order to comprehend the visual metaphor. (Dissanayake, 1974 and Stankiewicz, 1996). With contextual language and its interpretation of ideas one can make sense of the phenomenon of root and its association with well-being.

The context of the metaphors is an essential factor in the argument about the conceptual structure of visual metaphor. The context includes the artist, artwork, viewers, space and other artistic, social and cultural influences. These contextual components communicate with each other through transactive networks. Transactive networks represent the dynamic systems. Transactive networks according to Serig (2006): "evidence doing,

carrying on and communication-a practical transaction between elements within the network. And further, investigating these networks enables a more thorough understanding of the conceptual structure of visual metaphor". This contextual approach is different from the conceptions of visual metaphor that place the meaning wholly on the artwork.

2.1.2.2 Metaphor as "Seeing-As" (Substitution)

A metaphor sets one thing close to another to create the impression that they possess similar forms, such as same gesture or meaning. Metaphor shows how patterns of meaning traverse and resonate one another (Zwicky 2003). It is a phenomenon of 'seeing-as' in which one whole is substituted by another in order to suggest a common meaning shared by both. A metaphor can be both true and false. Consider the statement 'falling down the rabbit hole' as a journey into the mysterious. Although the rabbit hole is not an exact narrative, it captures the embodied experience of losing rational control and plummeting into the mysterious. The 'rabbit hole' carry embodied experiential truth and echo experience. Metaphors according to Morey (2011): "awaken the senses because they transfer somatic understanding and deep gestural and visceral memories of the body". Metaphors engage a wide range of experience.

2.1.2.3 Analogous Comparison

Gombrich, according to St. Clair (2000), titled his group of articles 'Meditations on a Hobby Horse'. This title reflects his belief in visual metaphors. He viewed the hobbyhorse as equivalent to a real horse because it can be ridden metaphorically, which shows that there is a transfer of qualities from one sensory experience to another. He was concerned with the interpretation of symbols in art history with a focus on cultural value. In one of his investigations, Gombrich (1971) tries to find out why gold, for instance, "has become a visual metaphor of value and why it has developed into derivative metaphor of noble simplicity"

Gombrich (1971) provides understanding on various ways pictorial structures are created to convey visual metaphors. To understand how symbols, organise visual space, one can find organised this knowledge of visual space around the concept of visual literacy. It addresses the internal structure of the visual metaphor. The significance of the individual elements such as tone, colour, line, texture, and proportion and how these are manipulated within a visual space to create either tension or harmony within the confines of visual syntax. He notes that visual space is organized in that it provides guidelines for the construction of art (St. Clair, 2000). His work provides the basic elements of art that can be learned in order to understand visual metaphor. Similarly, Anthony-Dingba worksdraw analogy between the pawpaw tree and female figure, to comment onwomen affairs (Anthony-Dingba, 2016).

2.1.2.4 Conceptual Structures of Visual Metaphor

There is a conceptual structure to the creation of visual metaphors by artists that closely aligns with the cognitive view of metaphoric thinking (Serig, 2006). A Visual metaphor is a strange pairing of two things that creates a new conceptual visual expression and meaning that none of them had alone (Bateman, 2014). This is epitomized in this study by the pairing of Cassia root forms and the well-being phenomenon. The process of metaphorical thinking emanates from perception (Arnheim, 1969; Edelman, 1995; Efland, 2002; Lakoff, 1993). Perception is based on sensory experiences, including observation, classification, and conceptual thinking.

The structure of metaphoric thinking is referred to as conceptual blending (Fauconnier& Turner, 2002). It is also described as frame restructuring (Schon, 1993), conceptual mappings (Gibbs, 1992; Lakoff, 1993; Winner, 1988), and image schemas (Lakoff& Johnson, 1987 in Efland, 2002). Each description includes a codification of the sensory experience enabling placement within a memory system, with the abilities to retrieve

and reorganize or blend. Whether the terms of frames, maps, schemas, or domains describe the system, reorganization or blending is necessary for metaphorical thinking.

Thinking metaphorically represents mind-body interconnectedness from sensory experience to conceptual blending. This mind-body interconnectedness destroys the dualism of a mind operating separately from the body. The conception of mind being interconnected with the body is not new, but only in recent scientific history does it gain acceptance. It replaces the uncertainty of Descartes who, while implicating a connection, never articulates one and keeps the mind as separate and surrounded in mystery (Damasio, 2003). Discovery and inventiveness through metaphor exemplify the mind-body interconnection realized in art.

2.1.2.5 Conceptual blending

A metaphor in which one idea (or conceptual domain) is understood in terms of another is described as a conceptual metaphor. Mattick,(2003) observes: "Metaphor changes not only the way we think about the new range of objects a concept is applied to, but the meanings of the concept itself". Metaphor is essential to the thought process. It is a symbolic transformation that enables an artist to think creatively which is widely considered to be a cognitive necessity (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005). The process of creating visual metaphors, the sensory emotional and cognitive systems are engaged, which allow information to be perceived and transferred from one domain into another (Feinstein, 1982).

Such transformation of information happens in a form known as conceptual blending. 'Line by Line' (Figure 38) by Eva Obodo is a vivid example. Through conceptual blending of societal happenings, linear forms, space and time, the mixed media composition reflects on the future and present situations, line by line. In another instance, EzeNgene blended discarded food vessels and hunger phenomenon in his works, to comment on the economic crisis in Nigeria (Ngene 2015). Conceptual blending involves key components such as

restructuring, mapping, classifying, observing and conceptual thinking (Serig, 2006). These thought processes are similar to the 'SCAMPER' strategy of creative thought (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005). The 'SCAMPER' strategy enables artists to substitute, combine, alter, multiply, eliminate and reverse ideas, in order to create conceptual works.

2.1.3 Well-being

Well-being is a contented state of being happy, healthy and prosperous. (Merriam Webster Dictionary, n.d.). It can also be described as the condition of being contented, healthy, or successful. Most meanings of well-being centre round personal satisfaction, which infer a sound human condition, happiness and success (Sussex Publishers, 2018). In many countries, including Nigeria, the government emphasises the need for strategic planning, democratic decision-making, and a sustainable development approach that meets the well-being of her citizenry. The importance of well-being has been widely acknowledged in all facets of the society. The well-being phenomena is exemplified by 'The Thriving Pine & Roots of Well-being' (Figure 22). The visual metaphor was designed to motivate students of the Dartmouth College (Trustees of Dartmouth College, 2018).

This study dwells on some aspects of well-being, which include environmental, cultural, social, emotional and economic well-being. Cassia tora root samples, which serve as the subject matter of the research are collected from the environment. Despite the association of Cassia tora root forms with the environment, the metaphorical contents of this study is dominated by social, cultural and emotional well-being.

Environmental well-being, also known as environmental wellness "is being aware of the interactions between the environment, community, and ourselves while optimizing and conserving resources through mindful use." (Trustees of Dartmouth College, 2016). It encourages you to practice habits that promote a healthy environment through understanding

of the role of our natural resources, conservation of energy and recycling. Although the metaphorical focus of ‘The Hunt’ by Jacob Jari (Figure 41) is based on social well-being, emphasizing the need to offer an individual another opportunity to correct past mistakes, its reliance on recycling contributes to the well-being of the environment. Environmental well-being is typified by Barbara Snyder’s ‘Roots of a fallen giant Sequoia’ (Figure 6). The landscape painting composition is based on her pursuit of "fresh, natural and alive" subjects and scenes. It expresses the beauty of the natural environment with the depiction of a fallen giant Sequoia roots, trees and other landforms.

Cultural well-being is the vitality that individuals and communities enjoy through participation in recreation, creative and cultural activities and the freedom to retain, interpret and express their arts, history, heritage and traditions. These instances of cultural well-being manifest in New Yam Festival, celebrated in Eastern Nigeria. However, social well-being is the extent to which one feels a sense of belonging and social inclusion. It is affected by lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. A wedding ceremony epitomizes social well-being. Visual metaphors, especially the artworks based on environmental, cultural and social well-being talk more of societal than personal issues. ‘Sunset’ (Figure 14), a root-inspired panting by Erika Pochybova-Johnson is an example. The artwork pays tribute to nature’s purity, by elaborating the idea of coexistence in a world of peace, harmony, and mutual consolation.

On the other hand, visual metaphors, such as paintings based on emotional and economic well-being address more of personal than societal issues. Emotional well-being refers to positive mental states, such as happiness, satisfaction, love, hope, inspiration and perseverance. This exciting emotional idea is encapsulated by HadiehShafie’s ‘Spikes-8’ (Figures 45-46), with the seductive power of love and passion. However, there is a slight variation to this conditionality when a painting is reflecting on economic well-being.

"Economic well-being is the ability to make economic choices and feel a sense of security, satisfaction, and personal fulfilment with one's personal finances and employment pursuits" (Council on Social Work Education, 2016). Subsequent financial security consists of the ability to absorb financial shocks, meet financial goals, build financial assets, and maintain adequate income throughout the individual's life-span.

2.1.4 Post-Impressionism

Post-Impressionism is a term applied to the reaction against Impressionism. It is among the most influential movements in Modernist era. Modernism is a major revolution in art that evolved conceptual description of artwork in addition to the perceptual narrative of art (Adams, 2011). Modern artists' approach was very radical, as they rejected the conventional style of naturalism and abstracted forms in their compositions.

Post-Impressionism began few months after the last Impressionist exhibition in 1886. The major exponents of the Post-Impressionist movement are Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh and Georges Seurat (Gardner and Kleiner, 2013). These artists were earlier influenced in their paintings by the Impressionist style, which includes naturalism, vivid colour and depiction of light. Adams (2011) contends: "Like the Impressionists, the Post-Impressionists were drawn to bright colour and visible, distinctive brushstrokes. But Post-Impressionist forms do not dissolve, and their edges, whether outlined or defined by sharp colour separations, are relatively clear".

The Post-Impressionists style hinged on abstract qualities and symbolic content. They sought synthesis in the soul of man and in the substance of things. They viewed artworks as stimulation and solace (Gardner and Kleiner, 2013). This study adapted the emotional content of postimpressionism. However, instead of adapting the feeling of anguish, as expressed by some works of van Gogh, this study rendered root forms metaphorically, expressing the

socio-cultural and emotional well-being of Nigerians. Elements and principles of design were used to enhance the conceptual and contextual processes. The research also utilized the symbolic bright colours of postimpressionism, which dwelled on glowing lightness of colour with less emphasis on darkness.

2.1.5 Modernism and Postmodernism

The artistic movement known as modernism evolved from growing emphasis on the worth, autonomy and achievements of the individual, as both the subject and the creator of art. Novitz (2005) in Gaut& Lopes (2005) explains:

> Influenced by the philosophical doctrines of the Enlightenment, modernism tended to the view that works of art were individual, quite unique, objects of beauty created by the imaginative endeavours of highly talented individuals. The boundedness of art, its separation from life, its intrinsic artistic nature, capable always of a true explanation, and capable of carrying real values that could, and in the best cases would, survive across cultures and times, are all doctrines that are intimately related to the central thought of the Enlightenment, and all help characterize what art critics now refer to as modernism. Coupled with this is the idea of genius: that some people have outstanding natural talents, a natural brilliance, and are capable of designing, more or less from scratch, wholly unique and exceptionally valuable artefacts that are works of art.

High modernism, towards the end of the nineteenth century, saw the essence of the visual and musical arts as residing in their formal properties; it was this that distinguished them from life as well as from non-artistic artefacts. Modernism is a major revolution in art that marked the change from the perceptual narrative of art to conceptual description (Adams, 2011).

Modern artists' approach was very radical, as they rejected the conventional style of naturalism, and abstracted forms in their compositions. Most of their paintings retain some identifiable features, like clues of resemblance. The most influential movements of modern art are: Fauvism (1905-7), Cubism (1908-14), Futurism (1909-14), Expressionism (from 1905), Dada (1916-24), Surrealism (from 1924), Abstract Expressionism (1948-60) and Pop

Art (1955, 1970) (Adams, 2011). Fauvism demonstrated the independent power of colour. Fauvist painters highly subjective approach to art was in contrast to the classical content-oriented outlook of the academies. Futurists introduced movement into their canvas. Expressionism popularized subjectivity in painting and showed that representational art may legitimately include subjective distortion. Dada focused on performance art and ready-mades. Surrealism generated, an unusually, new set of non-rational images. Abstract expressionism popularized abstraction. Post-Impressionism laid emphasis on abstract qualities and symbolic content (Adams, 2011).

The postmodernists approach to painting can be described as an extension of the modernist's style and techniques. It began with an attack on the modernist boundaries of art by refusing to see art as purely formal and distinct from life. Postmodern art can be regarded as a willingness to appropriate the ready-made objects of everyday living and to subsume them under the rubric of art (Adams, 2011). A postmodern artist can create works that required the viewer's intervention to create or complete the work. Viewer intervention is very apparent with visual metaphors as they keep the viewer pondering over the meaning of the artwork.

Postmodernists lay more emphasis on idea as the major driving force of their works. Gardner and Kleiner (2013) contend: "postmodernism involves examining the process by which meaning is generated and the negotiation or dialogue that transpires between viewers and artworks". Postmodernism overturned the idea that there was one inherent meaning to a work of art or that this meaning was determined by the artist at the time of creation. Instead, the viewer becomes another important determiner of meaning.

Notable art movements in postmodernism include conceptual art, minimalism, video art, performance art and installation art. These movements are diverse and connected by

certain characteristics. Minimalism and Pop Art paved the way for later artists to explore questions about the conceptual nature of art, its form, its production, and its ability to communicate in different ways. From the late 1960s and 1970s, artists turned away from painting and sculpture to experiment with new formats, including photography, film and video, performance, large-scale installations and earth works (Gardner and Kleiner, 2013).

Postmodern artists use diverse abstract and representational forms to convey their ideas, reflecting on the social and political concerns of its cultural context. Some Postmodern artists appropriate the style and methods of mass media advertising to investigate issues of cultural authority and identity politics. Some artists have adapted some features of Minimalist art to create works that encourage more personal interaction and emotional response among viewers. These aesthetic qualities and experimental approaches to art are demonstrated by the works of some contemporary artists, such as 'Sunset' by Erika Pochybova-Johnson (Figure 14), 'Roots' by Alexa de los Reyes (Figure 15), 'Line by Line' and 'Bad Case II' by Eva Obodo (Figures 38-39), 'The Hunt' by Jacob Jari (Figure 41), 'Versatility' by El Anatsui (Figure 43), 'Double Image Syndrome' by Jerry Buhari (Figure 44) and 'Spike-8' by HadiehShafie (Figures 45-46).

2.2 Review of Related Artists and Artworks

This section reviews selected artworks of some artists, which relate to this research in terms of contents, forms, contexts, ideas and philosophy. The review was carried out under the following sub-headings:

- Root-inspired Paintings
- Other Root-inspired Artworks
- Visual Metaphors with Unconventional Materials
- Deduction from the Review of Literature

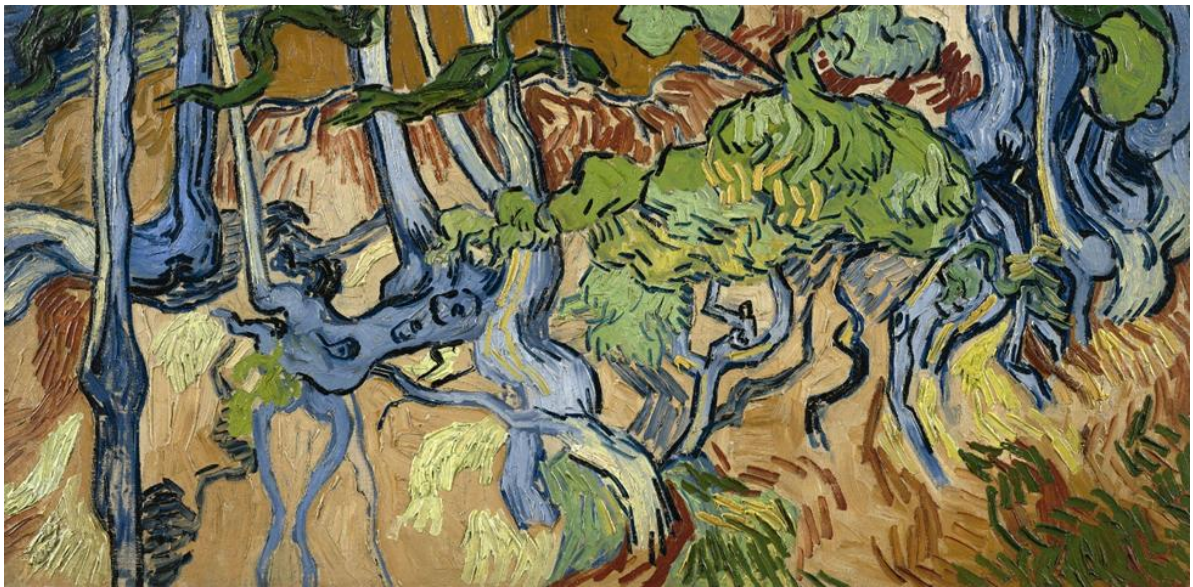
2.2.1 Root-inspired Paintings

Under this sub-heading, the study reviewed selected paintings that were inspired by root-forms. The selection ranges from realistic to abstract compositions. The artworks were produced with various conventional painting media by artists from different countries with diverse creative culture.

2.2.1.1 Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890, Netherlands)

Van Gogh, to a great extent was a self-taught painter, who gained his footing as an artist by passionately copying prints and studying nineteenth-century drawing manuals and lesson books, such as Charles Bargue's Exercises au fusain and Cours de dessin (Van Gogh Museum, 2016). He felt that it was important to master black and white drawing before working with colour. He started by learning the fundamentals of Figure drawing and rendering landscapes in accurate perspective. In 1882, Van Gogh moved from his parents' home in Etten to The Hague Netherland. In The Hague he was taught by his cousin, Anton Mauve, a leading Hague School artist. That same year, he executed his early artworks in watercolour before working with oil colours. From this period till his death, Van Gogh created most of his works with oil colour (Van Gogh Museum, 2016).

Van Gogh's approach to painting was dominated by the exploration of the capabilities of colours and distorted forms to express his emotions as he confronted life. His dominant



symbolic palette ranges from ochre to vermilion and malachite. Van Gogh expressed his wish that hisluminous paintings “sung a lullaby with colour”, underscoring the expressive role of colour in his art. After his death, subsequent painters, especially the Fauves and German Expressionists built on van Gogh’s use of colour and the expressivenessof his art (Van Gogh Museum, 2016).

Oil on Canvas, 50 cm x 100 cm,
http://ichef.bbci.co.uk/wwfeatures/wm/live/1280_640/images/live/p0/42/7h/p0427hgc.jpg

In ‘Tree Roots and Trunks’ (Figure 5), the picture plane is cluttered with bright colours and abstract forms. The painting depicts a slope with tree trunks and roots from trees used for timber, growing in a marl quarry. The quarry is located round Auvers in France. The work was not entirely completed, which explains its unfinished appearance. It is probably Van Gogh's very last painting (Van Gogh Museum, 2016 and Sooke, 2016). The composition of ‘Tree trunks and roots’ is inspired by van Gogh’s wish to express life’s struggle, using the root forms of twisted roots as metaphor of his emotional anguish. At a glance, it depicts a jumble of bright colours and abstract forms, prompting some art historians to identify Van Gogh as an important forerunner of abstract art. On a closer observation however, the plant forms that totalize the picture plane becomes clearer. The painting is composed of tree roots, plants, leaves, and sandy forest floor of brown and yellow beneath them. These plant forms are rendered on the canvas with short brushstrokes and outlines.

The symbolism in these twisted tree roots, could be perceived as an experiment in the vitality of line, colour and the uncountable force of nature. The dominant colours are yellow ochre, sienna and cerulean blue. The colour combination teases the eye with possibilities of making sense of a field or a hill, but then scramble them into chaos. This is due to the contrasting colours, and the linear arrangement of the roots and other plant forms.

‘Tree Roots and Trunks’ is a good attempt at metaphorical rendition of root forms, as Van Gogh made an effort to express his personal feelings though the Post-Impressionist painter’s original intension is not clear due to the unfinished nature of the work. The metaphoric inclination of ‘emotional anguish’ was not clearly stated by the artist at that moment he was creating the root-inspired painting. It is a critical concept, articulated by art critics, who believe that the emotional state of Van Gogh that was marred by economic failure, deeply affected this painting. Although the abstract painting differs from this study in terms of the use of colour and lines, it is relevant to this study in view of the metaphorical rendition of root forms in painting.

2.2.1.2 Barbara Snyder (USA)

Barbara Snyder is an artist, who lives and works in California. She studied at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo; where she got a Bachelor of Art and a Master of Education Degrees in History. She has a passion for photography and the environment - seascapes, vineyards, desert, mountains, forest and waterfalls. The major inspiration in her works is the pursuit of "fresh, natural and alive" subjects and scenes (Barbara, 2012 and FineArtAmerica, 2017). This aesthetic direction is accentuated by the following oil-on-canvas painting.



Figure 6: Roots of a fallen giant Sequoia, 2015, Barbara Snyder
https://fineartamerica.com/featured/roots-of-a-fallen-giant-sequoia-barbara-snyder.html

'Roots of a fallen giant Sequoia' (Figure 6) is a naturalistic landscape painting, executed in a horizontally oriented format. The centre of the picture plane is dominated by the roots of a giant Sequoia tree. There are other trees depicted in the background. On the foreground, there are shrub and grass. The dominant colours of the monochromatic painting are emerald green and yellow ochre. The roughness of the root forms intensifies the textural quality of the painting. The work typifies the serenity of a virgin forest. However, the artist's interpretation never went beyond the literal meaning of representing nature. There is no attempt by the artist to abstract the root forms, thereby confirming the claim of the researcher that most root inspired paintings are rendered realistically with little attempts at abstraction and metaphorical rendition of the root forms. Nonetheless, this style enabled the researcher in unravelling the visual characteristics of roots.

2.2.1.3 Ruth Palmer (b. 1959, Scotland)

Ruth Palmer is a Scottish contemporary artist practicing in Alberta, Canada. She paints in diverse styles and subjects, including abstract, still-life and landscapes. She works with various mediums, including acrylic, oil colours, photography, digital and computer. She is known for her spontaneous colourful compositions, such as her popular contemporary Christian abstract works (Palmer, 2017 and Saatchi Art, 2017). Palmer in Saatchi Art (2017) explains:

> I follow nobody's rules but my own. I like it this way. This is the process that works for me. I know that being self-taught gives me an advantage. I approach my work with an almost child-like naivety and do not have outside influences to interfere. I am continuously experimenting with subjects, textures and colours. Preconceived notions are nothing short of restricting. My art has to be spontaneous and unplanned.

While her primary influence is spiritual, based on Christian doctrine, her art is influenced by Manet's impressionist works and the 'colourful play and balance' of Kandinsky's expressionism. Like Kandinsky, for whom spiritual influences counted heavily, Saatchi Art (2017) opines: "there's a certain intentional separation with Palmer's art that allows viewers to participate in creating the artwork. The disunion is repaired when the painted form connects to the viewer's soul." This minimalist approach in the rendition of root forms is evident in the following paintings.

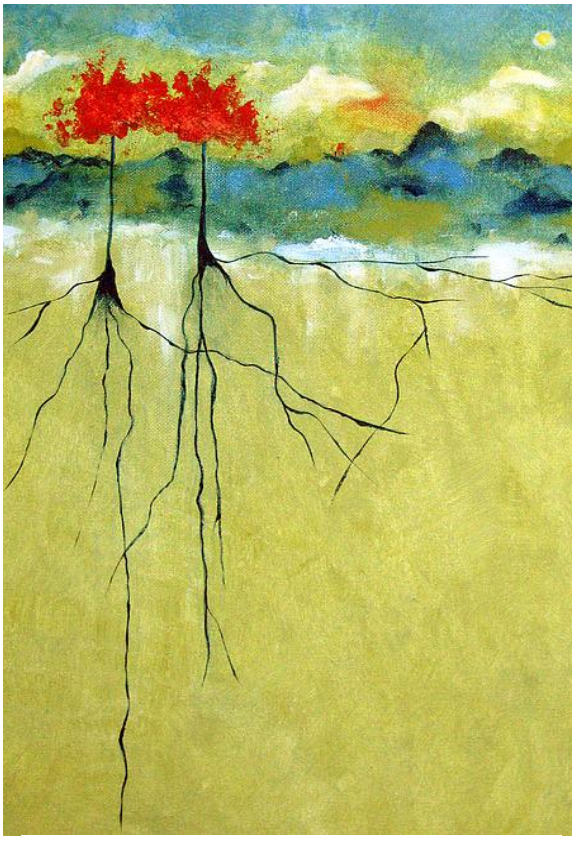


Figure 7: Deep Roots,2011, Ruth Palmer
Acrylic on canvas, 30 cm x 46 cm
https://cache2.artprintimages.com/..



Figure 8: Deep Roots II, 2005,Ruth Palmer
Acrylic on canvas, 30 cm x 46 cm,
https://imgc.artprintimages.com/...

'Deep Roots I-II' (Figures 7-8) are semi-abstract landscape paintings, executed in a vertically oriented format. The forms are rendered with sketchy lines and patches of colours. In 'Deep Roots I', a set of two plants bring life to the silent grassland environment. The colour combination is dominated by yellow hues. The upper part, which is about a third of the picture plane is congested with patches of blue and white, suggesting hills, whilst red patches represent the lush foliage of the plants. 'Deep Roots II' follows the same compositional pattern with a plant and different colour combination, dominated by monochrome of brown. Both paintings are not created with picture planes totalised by root forms.

Despite the fact that Palmer's paintings are mostly influenced by Christian doctrine, 'Deep Roots I-II' were not metaphorically rendered since the artist did not use the root forms to reflect on the Christian doctrine. The paintings were instantaneously created, dwelling on

experimentation with textures and colours. Besides the lack of metaphorical rendition of forms, both paintings do not conform to the research objectives in terms of the use of colour, perspective, space and lines therein. The roots are depicted with sketchy lines. She uses roots as appendages in the composition to support the upper half of the plants. The root forms are not replicated in the picture plane, thereby leaving lots of spaces in the compositions. Despite her minimalist rendering of root forms, the paintings are relevant to this study

2.2.1.4 IshrathHumairah (b. 1978, India)

IshrathHumairah is a self-taught artist from Hyderabad India. She has participated in many solo and group exhibitions in India. (Nehru-Wangchuck Cultural Centre, 2011). Her subject matter in painting is mainly landscapes, rocks, trees and other plant forms. Most of her landscape paintings have deep textures in oil medium, working layer upon layer. (Saatchi Art, 2017). She is constantly experimenting with colours, textures and mixed media. Her philosophy hinges on the notion of perseverance. She appropriates rocks, trees and streams as metaphors for perseverance, resilience and a belief. Her words: “In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins, not through strength but by perseverance.” (Humairah, 2010). Her perseverant notions are emphasized by the following paintings.



Figure 9: Free Within,2010, IshrathHumairah

Gesso & Acrylics on Canvas, 120 cm x 90 cm
http://wanderingmist.com/...

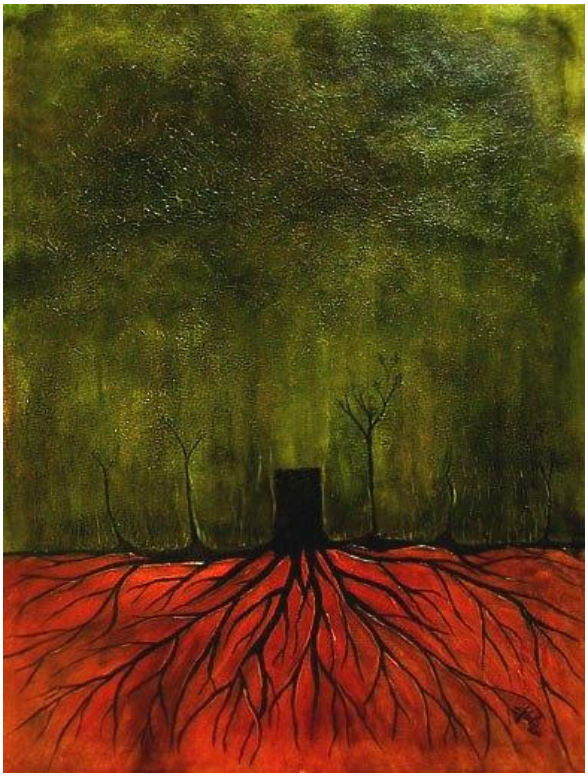


Figure 10: Perseverance,2010, IshrathHumairah

Gesso & Acrylics on Canvas, 120 cm x 90 cm
http://wanderingmist.com/...

'Free Within' (Figure 9) is motivated by Humairah's perception of life. She reminisces: "It gave birth to new saplings from within. What I thought of painting as dead was living within. The little plants made themselves out of the earth's crevices." (Humairah, 2010). The painting is composed of rocks and roots. The colour combination consists of orange, blue, green and brown hues. At the upper part of the painting, there is a set of huge rock on top of another set of smaller rocks. It is from the top of the lower rocks that some roots sprout out. The black roots spread over the orange rocks at the lower part of the picture plane.

The idea behind the execution of 'Perseverance' (Figure 10) came to IshrathHumairah while she was pondering over a root-inspired composition within her neighbourhood. She recalls: "It happened in my mind when I was gazing at free within with its deep earth and sky above" (Humairah, 2010). She imagined a big tree, wanting to come out of the crevices. The

tree in her thought was enormous. Its strong branches stood tall against the deep forest greens. Its roots are strong and spread out beneath the soil.

In ‘Perseverance’, there are two distinct parts. The upper part is covered by a flat patch of green that portrays the lush foliage of the forest. Beside the forest there are also some trees depicted realistically. The lower part which is about half of the upper part is composed of orange and black colours. Humairah used thick modelling paste to mould the root forms. After the paste dried, she used Acrylic to finish the painting. The orange foreground represents the soil. There is an impression of a fallen tree suggested by the leftover of a tree trunk at the centre. It is from the leftover that black branch roots spread over the entire lower part of the composition.

The rendition of root forms in both paintings does not completely conform with the research objectives because there are realistic imageries of other forms, such as trees and rocks, which are significant components of the compositions. The picture plane of ‘Free Within’ is dominated by rock forms whist ‘Perseverance’ is dominated by an impression of lush forest. However, both paintings are good attempts at metaphorical rendition of forms. The fluidity of root forms and the warm colour combination were utilized in the study.

2.2.1.5 Mary Beth Schiros (b. 1956, USA)

Mary Beth Schiros is an American artist, teaching painting in Michigan. She earned her Bachelor of Art in Visual Art at the University of Michigan in 1984. Schiros works are mostly in acrylic, oil, ink, watercolour and charcoal. (Atkinson, 2008). Her inspiration comes from plant forms, human figures and imagination. In her artist’s statement, Schiros (2017) explains:

> I am a firm believer in the idea that creativity is a universal part of life. The process of making art is an opening up of oneself to the community. Teaching art is the process of giving a part of yourself to that community. I teach the creative process, for the

> pure enjoyment of connecting with others and watching an idea grow. I also believe that creativity needs to flow freely from the soul. The freedom of creativity can only be realized when you tap into oneself, without reserve, or internal criticism. There is much learned and absorbed by our eyes and our minds, which are beyond verbal description. Art is a visual description, whether it is simple, beautiful or strange, it is a way of showing something that words cannot. Artist freedom is an alternative manner of considering things, which induces the ability to derive ideas, and style from various sources.

She believes that whatever grows around the environment has much more to it that is hidden.

This aesthetic direction is expressed in the following painting.

Figure 11: Roots, 2012, Mary Schiros



Gesso & Acrylics Print on Canvas, 61 cm x 61 cm
https://images.fineartamerica.com/images-medium-large-5/roots-mary-schiros.jpg

'Roots' (Figure 11) relies on the spontaneous nature of water media, which expands the character of the composition, illuminating the plant roots. Schiros' technique entails coating a sheet of watercolour paper with light green gesso, the second with blue and the last with red. She then stamps each paper on the canvas to create her composition. The colour combination is dominated by orange and green colours. The upper part, with some trees is a quarter of the lower part. The lower part is composed of curvilinear lines that depict roots meandering from the distant trees.

Despite her philosophy of 'the hidden nature of growth', in 'Roots', Schiros did not utilize the root forms to substitute, describe or express issues, ideas, events or emotions. Her experiment with water mediums focused on technical issues in painting, such as perspective, colour and plants forms. The rendering of root forms with stamping technique and perspectives differs from the research objectives because of the inclusion of other forms such as sky, trees and grassland. However, her rendition of root forms was helpful to this study. The warm colour combination was used to articulate excitement. The idea of 'the hidden nature of growth' was utilized in 'Multiple Elements' (Phase IV) especially in the development of 'Digging for Gold' series of paintings.

2.2.1.6 Cedar Lee (b. 1981, USA)

Cedar Lee is a Portland Oregon-based contemporary artist. She studied visual art at the Goucher College in Baltimore Maryland and graduated in 2005 with a Bachelor of Art Honours in studio art and a Minor in writing. In her senior thesis show, titled 'Roots and Wing', she exhibited large-scale paintings. Lee used root forms to reflect on her nuclear

family, which she refers to as her roots. The aesthetic direction of ‘Roots and Wing’ is highlighted by the following paintings.

Figure 12: Deep Roots, 2013,Cedar Lee



Oil on Canvas, 120 cm x 120 cm
http://images.fineartamerica.com/images-medium-large-5/deep-roots-cedar-lee.jpg

Executed in a square format, Deep Roots (Figure 12) depicts a tree standing on top of a hill with branch roots shovelling deep into the soil. It is a semi-abstract painting dominated by tones of sienna, yellow ochre and blue. Cedar transforms the meandering roots and the hill top into contours. 'Deep roots' is a metaphor, symbolic of life and family. Lee (2017) explains:

> being plugged into the universe, fully experiencing life, being fully present in your body and in the present moment, holding onto and honouring our personal histories, our families, where we came from. At the same time the part of the tree above ground, as it reaches into the night air, towards the stars, feeling the breeze, can represent imagination, desire, reaching and dreaming towards the future, our spiritual side, our abstract side, our ability to create our own reality, our own futures, our own new traditions and values.

Lee believes that in order to attain a balance of full human experience, "people must be both grounded, in their bodies, honouring and celebrating their roots, and airy, for lack of a better word: active in our minds, experiencing emotions and non-physical connections to others and to all of life." Lee (2017). The next painting 'Grounded' follows the same metaphoric approach and colour combination, with some variations in the root forms and textural effects.

Figure 13: Grounded, 2013,Cedar Lee



Oil on Canvas, 120 cm x 120 cm, http://www.artbycedar.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/grounded.jpg

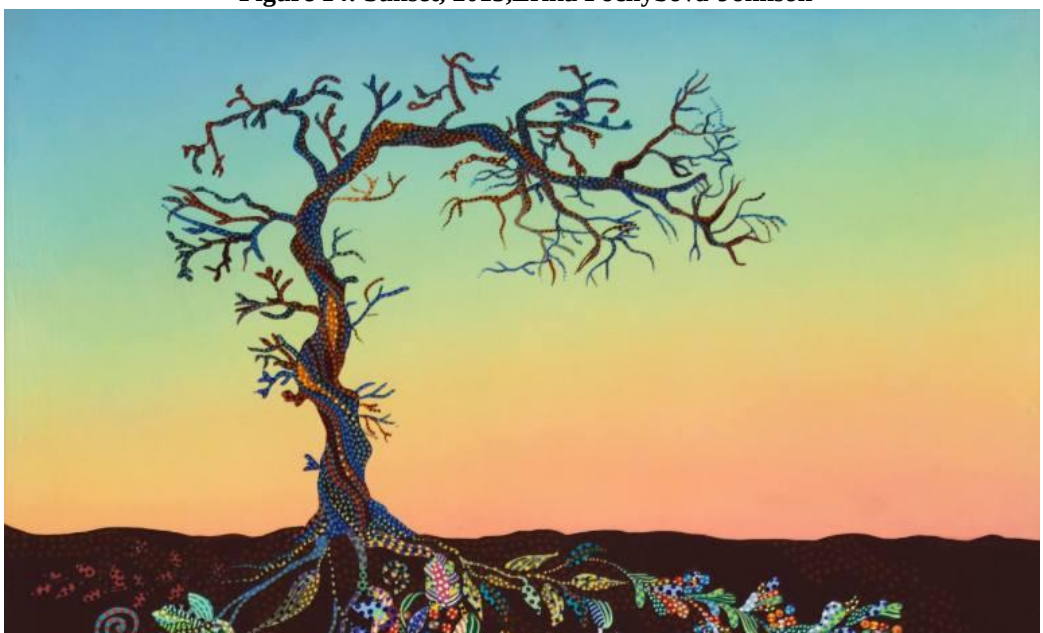
Executed in a square frame, ‘Grounded’ (Figure 13) is a semi-abstract painting, with a colour combination consisting of blue and sienna hues. On the picture plane, a tree with aerial roots, stands on top of a hill. There is an arc of white stroke at the top right side, suggesting the moon. This is encased by a ring of light brown that reflects the moonlight over the serene environment, giving an impression of a night scene. The background is dominated by blue hues representing the sky. The night scene is brought to life by the glittering stars, represented by swam of white dots. The foreshortened tree at the top left side of the picture plain, suggests that the position of the viewer is at the base of the tree. The foreshortened tree trunk brings more attention to the roots. The lower part of the painting is dominated by a chequered foreground of roots and stones. She uses more of zigzag lines to represent the roots.

In ‘Deep Roots’ and ‘Grounded’, the composition is not restricted to root forms. Roots are not detached from the tree and other natural imageries, including grassland, hills, forest and the sky are added to the composition. The use of perspective does not conform to the research objectives, since Cassia tora roots are distorted in most of the research paintings; the sky and ground planes are eliminated. However, Lee’s idea of ‘Roots and Wing’ and its metaphorical propensities, such as family roots was helpful for juxtaposing Cassia tora root forms with social and cultural well-being in this study. The contour-linear use of root forms was very vital in developing chequered compositions with Cassia tora roots forms, especially in ‘Romeo and Juliet’ series of paintings (Plates LXXII-LXXIV and CI-CIII).

2.2.1.7 Erika Pochybova-Johnson (Slovakia)

Erika Pochybova-Johnson is a Slovakian artist, practicing in Texas. She is a self-taught artist.Her unique style of painting involves elaborate combinations of brightly coloured dots, shapes and lines (Pochybova-Johnson, 2010 andHoover, 2012). She works with a variety of natural forms, including animals, plants and landscapes. She explains: "I want to pay tribute to nature’s purity and hope that our civilization will learn to live in harmony with that" (Symes,2014). This aesthetic direction is vividly epitomized by the following painting.

Figure 14: Sunset, 2013,Erika Pochybova-Johnson



Acrylic on canvas, 86 cm x 61 cm, http://4.bp.blogspot.com/...

In Sunset (Figure 14), Pochybova-Johnson deploys a combination of flipping and intricate dot techniques. A plant is turned upside down. The roots are upside, enlivened by sunset, whilst the lush foliage is recreated underground. The seesaw transposition of plant foliage and roots symbolizes the ups and downs of everyday life. This unique style blends contemporary aesthetics with old European Art. Commenting on 'Sunset', Pochybova-Johnson asserts:

> I like to portray characters, symbols, and natural phenomena that coexist in a world of peace, harmony, and mutual consolation. I try to remind my viewers of the wonder when encountering something new and beautiful… My process is developed intuitively and improvisationally as I work. Visionary images are created by collapsing the three-dimensional realm into a two-dimensional veil of colour spots that is intended to send the eye in pursuit of the enigmatic. But if the paintings can't get you there, words won't bail me out. (Artscenetoday, 2013).

She believes that the arts in general are means of sharing the human experience. In her words: "The visual arts, in particular, imbue an object, such as a painting or sculpture, with a wordless language of thought, emotion and visual experience" (Artscenetoday, 2013).

'Sunset' does not completely concur with this study due to the sky and hills incorporated into the composition. Roots are not detached from the flipped tree. Perspective was incorporated into the composition in the portrayal of natural forms, such as sky and ground planes. Cassia tora roots are distorted in most of the research paintings whilst other natural forms are deemphasized in the research compositions. However, Pochybova-Johnson's ideas as explicated by this work was essential in this study. It was helpful in the formation of 'Nodal forms' series of paintings (Plates LXXV – LXXVIII and CIV – CIX). The metaphorical propensities of her philosophy of 'living in harmony with nature's purity' was also explored in this study.

2.2.1.8 Alexa de los Reyes (Puerto Rico)

Alexa de los Reyes is a Puerto Rican contemporary artist, practicing in the USA. After obtaining a Bachelor of Art in History and Literature, she got enchanted with art, and went back to University to study Visual Art. She studied painting at Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, and Printmaking at the Liga de Arte in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Her acrylic and oil on canvas paintings capture the abstract effects of reflection and refraction of water on the human forms. Speaking on her artistic process, inspiration and perspectives, Reyes (2017) reveals: "The experience I try to share is one of mystery, intrigue and wonder." She started painting seriously a few years after graduating from college, where she studied history and literature. She recalls:

> I always thought I would be a writer, and I am employed largely as an editor, but I discovered that I feel much freer expressing myself through paint rather than words. The impulse for painting comes from the same place, however - the desire to examine, interpret and share my perception of the world. My approach to painting is influenced by literary concepts and constructs - metaphors, analogies and symbolism - but my medium is visual. (Symes, 2016)

While painting in Puerto Rico, Reyes experimented with an image of web-like vertical drips. When she came across such drips from Old San Juan's amazing banyan trees, it was an amazing moment as she recalls: "I like to settle into this rhythm of roots and branches, layers and drips." (Reyes, 2017). She was captivated by the enormous trees' ropey roots (also known as ropey ropes), hanging from their branches to the ground. The ubiquity of these patterns, makes her paintings to be meditative. These metaphoric attributes are typified by the subsequent paintings.

Figure 15: Roots, 2005, Alexa de los Reyes



Acrylics on Canvas, 61 cm x 76 cm, http://www.lexrey.com/files/alexareyes/roots1opt.jpg

In ‘Roots’ (Figure 15), a rectangular plane of orange colour occupies the upper part of the picture plane. The lower part of the painting is covered by white curvilinear lines, spreading over a shady background of blue, brown and green hues. Reyes uses dripping lines to represent ropey roots hanging on giant trees. The cluster of lines suggests a thick forest. The orange top part suggests sunset over the environment. This research does not agree completely with Alexa’s style, in this composition, as the upper part is flat with no attempt at echoing the root forms and colours below. However, this study concurs with the use of curvilinear lines. Such linear technique was employed in this study, especially in the formation of the ‘Roots of Inspiration’ series of paintings (Plates LXXIX and CX - CXI).

Figure 16: Sidewalk, 2010, Alexa de los Reyes



Acrylics on Wood, 61 cm x 61 cm, http://www.lexrey.com/files/alexareyes/rootssidewalkseries-i_0.jpg

'Sidewalk' (Figure 16), was inspired by mystery of analogous images in the environment. Alexa learnt that strange patterns are everywhere, from condensation on windows to cracks in the sidewalk. She exploits these strange forms in this painting. Elucidating the symbolism and meaning underlying her works, as cited by (Symes, 2016), Alexa says: "this pattern has caught my eye in many unexpected places and forms - streaks of rust on New York subway station walls, cracks in the sidewalk, light reflected underwater, and in images of cerebral neurons and the circulatory system." The irregular linear pattern of 'Sidewalk' differs from 'Roots' (Figure 15). The linear pattern also differs from the root-inspired compositions of this study. However, the paintings show another ways of utilising root forms in creating painting composition.

2.2.2 Other Root-inspired Artworks

This section reviews root-inspired artworks selected from various artistic creations outside painting. Roots forms have been used in diverse ways as subjects for artistic expression, as such the review is carried out in line with the aesthetic and metaphorical direction of the study. The selection includes root-inspired illustration, design, animation, sculpture, furniture and installation.

2.2.2.1 Justin Wilcott (USA)

Justin Wilcott is digital media artist, practicing in California USA. He is a visual effects specialist in Media Software, such as Maya Dynamics, Lighting, and Animation. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Digital Media at Drexel University USA (2010). His interest in visual art is the creation of three dimensional depths as represented in a two dimensional output space. He transforms two dimensional works (referred to in digital lingo

as grounded compositions) into three dimensional works. He also creates compositions using hard surface modelling in Maya with the aid of orthographic drawings. He works with both analogue and digital techniques of sketching and representation. The following work is a product of his digital sketching techniques.

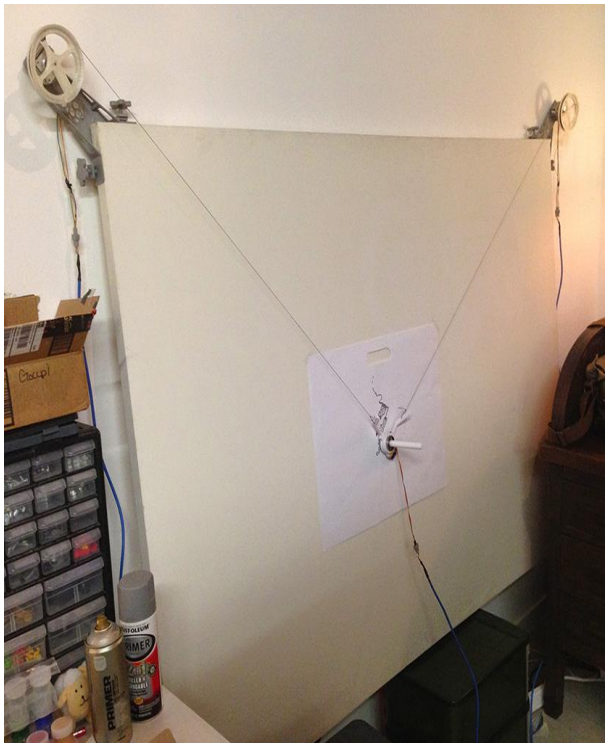


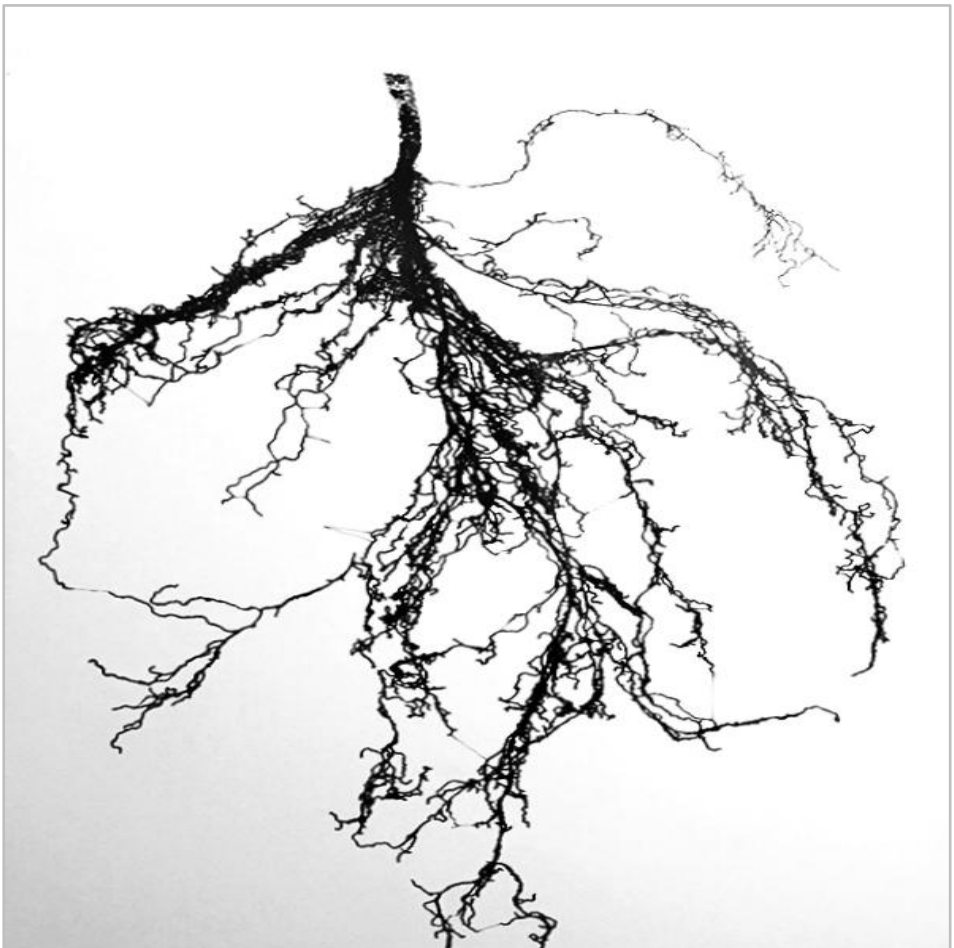
Figure 17: Testing the digital tools, Wilcott, 2015
http://justinwilcott.com/wp-content/uploads/...



Figure 18: Roots, work in Progress Wilcott, 2015
http://justinwilcott.com/wp-content/uploads/...

In 'Testing the digital tools' (Figure 17), Justin Wilcott tests the digital media tools, which include software and hardware needed for the creation of the artwork. At a closer look, one can see the drawing machine with its two wheels clipped to the canvas. There is an automated drawing marker in the middle of the wire connected to both wheels. There is another wire that connects the marker to a computer gadget. From the computer, the digital media artist instructs the marker to physically produce his digital composition in any suitable colour combination. In Figure 18, work is in progress on the composition of 'Roots'. At this stage it remains a few strokes of ink from the digital marker to complete the large scale drawing.

Figure 19: Roots, 2005, Justin Wilcott



Digital Media on Canvas, 210 cm x 170 cm, http://justinwilcott.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IMG_0329.jpg

'Roots' (Figure 19) is a black and white drawing that depicts a taproot system. In his words: "This is my second canvas painting with the GOCUPI drawing machine and my 3D Printed paint pod accessories" (Wilcott, 2015). The drawing is naturalistic. However, the digital process is a metaphor for the change of time – from the machine age to this age of digital revolution. The artwork is essential for an in-depth study of the visual features of roots in this study.

2.2.2.2 Roots-inspired Illustrations and Designs

Figure 20: Root-inspired handshake, Unknown Artist, n.d.



https://i.pinimg.com/564x/b2/ac/88/b2ac8814a68a5c7f3b1904e3ad9ba33e.jpg

The untitled illustration (Figure 20) expresses the phenomena of welcome. The upper part of the composition portrays two tree trunks standing on grassland, while the lower part portrays a handshake by two root inspired hands on a black foreground. The style differs from the non-objective nature of the research paintings. The untitled illustration is composed of a combination of realistic landforms and abstract hands. The lower part however, aids the study by revealing other visual features of roots. The distorted hands show other metaphorical ways of rendering root forms. The idea of welcome as expressed by this artwork is essential in articulating emotional and socio-cultural well-being with Cassia tora root forms.



Figure 21: Roots of Development, Unknown Artist, n.d.
https://www.guidestar.org/ViewEdoc.aspx?eDocId=1340307&approved=True

The Logo (Figure 21) is a brand of an Organization known as Root of Development Inc. The Organization is a foreign mission that "helps impoverished communities in Haiti obtain the resources they need to manage their own development" (GuideStar Profile, 2018). It is a logo created with an image of a plant and three-word text (ROOTS OF DEVELOPMENT). The upper part of the plant is composed with abstracted figures in the mist of emerald green cloud, suggesting a lush foliage. The lower part depicts the roots and the text. The Logo serves as a visual metaphor that reflects on the hopes and aspirations of the poor people of Haiti. The idea of development as illustrated by this logo is essential in metaphorically expressing the well-being of Nigerians with Cassia tora root forms.

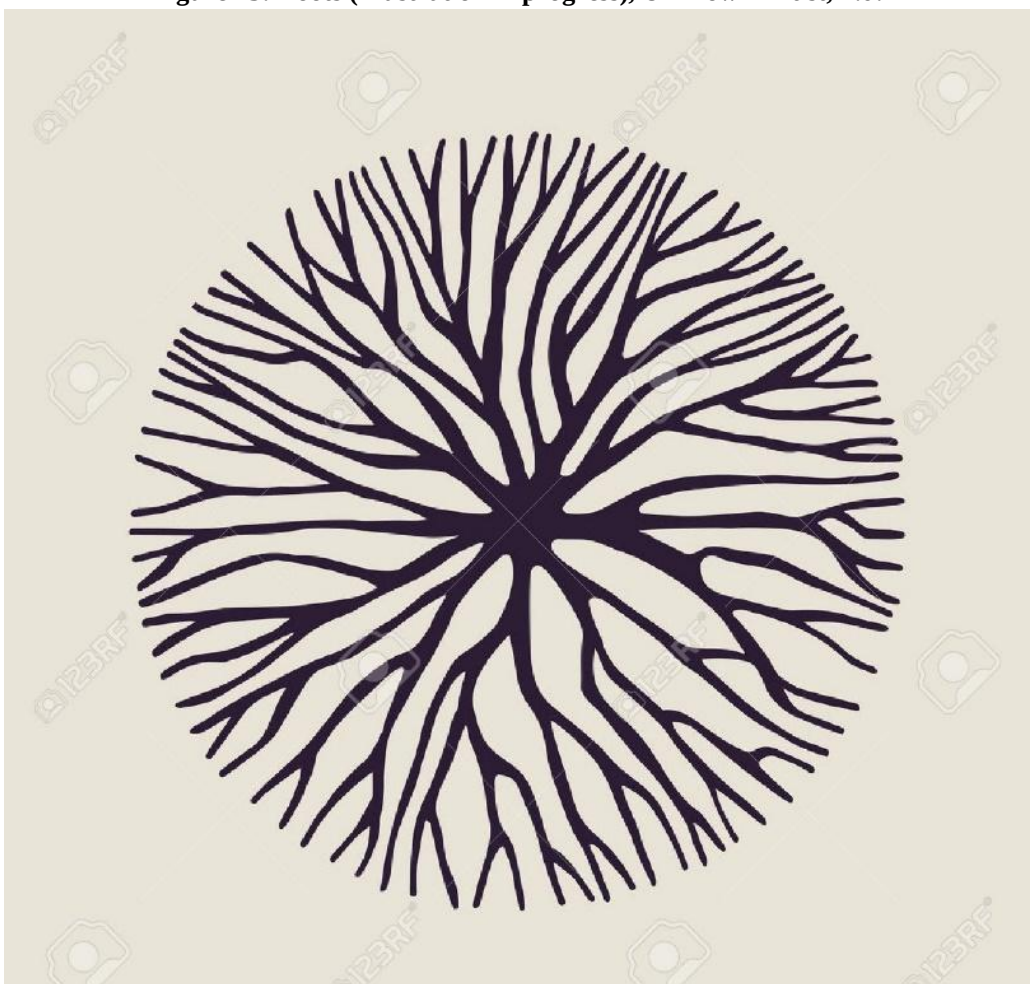
Figure 22: The Thriving Pine & Roots of Well-being, Unknown Artist, n.d.



http://www.dartmouth.edu/~healthed/roots.png

‘The Thriving Pine and Roots of Well-being’ (Figure 22) was designed to motivate students at the Dartmouth College (Trustees of Dartmouth College, 2018). Like the preceding Logo, the graphic design is created with an image of a pine plant and text of words that describe some aspects of well-being. The upper part of the plant is a triangular silhouette that appears like a foreshortened trunk and the foliage of a pine tree. Some branch roots emerge from the base of the pine trunk, spreading over the foreground. The fibrous root structure differs from Cassia tora root pattern because of the absence of the taproot. Nonetheless the idea of well-being as typified by this graphic design is essential to the formation of visual metaphors with Cassia tora root forms.

Figure 23: Roots (Illustration in progress), Unknown Artist, n.d.



https://previews.123rf.com/images/cienpies/cienpies1609/cienpies160900050/64055910-abstract-circle-shape-illustration-of-tree-branches-or-roots-for-concept-design-creative-nature-art-.jpg

In Figure 23, work is in progress towards the creation of ‘Roots’. The composition of black radial axis is already completed, waiting for colours.

Figure 24: Roots, Unknown Artist, n.d.



https://previews.123rf.com/images/cienpies/cienpies1609/cienpies160900043/64055894-abstract-geometric-circle-shape-with-colorful-tree-branch-illustration-ideal-for-creative-diversity-.jpg

'Roots' (Figure 24) is an illustration that can be described as a digital painting. The polychromatic design is composed of branch roots orchestrating a taproot. The artwork appears like a leftover from a plant that has lost its stem. Viewing directly from the top position, one sees the branch root orchestrating the taproot. The root structure is similar to the taproot system, such as Cassia tora root pattern because of the presence of a taproot. The colour palette is made up of black and tints of magenta, red, yellow and cyan.

2.2.2.3 Root Tattoo



Figure 25: Root-inspired tattoo, Unknown Artist, n.d.
https://www.flickr.com/photos/cloughridge/2644584636/in/faves-f_a_f_i/

The root inspired tattoo (Figure 25) on the back body of a lady is inspired by root forms. The illustration is composed of branch roots sprouting from the centre of the picture plane (the lady's back body). Although the composition is rendered in one colour (black), it is dynamic. The artistic creation can be viewed from any position with a retention of the complete meaning. The work shows the organic nature of roots.

Figure 26: Root-inspired tattoo II, Unknown Artist, n.d.



https://leonardomendoza.co/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/tree-of-life-tattoo-arm-32-tree-of-life-tattoos-on-sleeve-of-tree-of-life-tattoo-arm.jpg

The photograph (Figure 26) shows three images of a colourful tattooed bicep. It is a photo montage, made from a combination of three pictures of a tattoo, shot from different positions. It portrays roots forms of a couple cuddling each other. The tattoo differs from this study as the research paintings are non-objective. The polychromatic illustration on the other hand, makes a statement about marital life, in view of cultural, social and emotional well-being. These metaphorical attributes of the composition are essential to this research.

2.2.2.4 Gary Tonge (b. 1970, Canada)

Gary Tonge is an Art Director, who practices in British Columbia, Canada. He is an award-winning painter and conceptual artist, known internationally for science fiction and fantasy art. His produces animation with the challenge of using colour, images and emotions to create digital paintings and movies. He creates conceptual movies with various platforms and techniques, including high-end 3D modelling, rendering, and animation. Tonge's works feature subject matters from futuristic spacescapes and revolutionary vehicles to medieval landscapes and beautiful maidens (Red Moon Chronicle, 2011). Tonge explains:

> My personal art is my attempt to express that there is much more to life and the universe than many of us might think - that there is a greater reality out there, in the infinity of space and beyond our current understanding. I guess I like to try and get people to "think bigger" with my art. (Red Moon Chronicle, 2011).



Figure 27: Tree Root Canopy (Animation), 2005, Gary Tonge
https://pre00.deviantart.net/dd9f/th/pre/i/2005/181/9/c/tree_root_canopy_by_antifan_real.jpg

'Tree Root Canopy' (Figure 27) is a still-image extract from an animated video clip, created by Gary Tonge. It shows another contemporary way of creating root-inspired works, through digital medium. Describing his animation, Tonge, (2017) explains:

> This is a concept image illustrating an area with such enormous vegetation that you can actually walk under the roots of larger trees. I always loved the look of "A Bugs life" when they turned mere blades of grass into glowing cathedral-like ceilings and the like; I've just made the foliage larger rather than the characters smaller.

The animation is a semi-abstract spacescape composition. The compositional imageries of consisting of realistic highly exaggerated aerial roots, river, landscape, human figures and fog. Tonge's animation is necessary to this study, as it aided the researcher in accessing root forms. The metaphorical inclinations of 'Bug Life' are essential in discovering other metaphorical ways of rendering Cassia tora root forms in painting.

2.2.2.5 Roots-inspired Sculpture



Figure 28: Woman-Tree, Unknown Artist, n.d.
Tree, Flowers, grass & soil, https://i.pinimg.com/564x/8e/fb/be/8efbbea751ca549ff43504e0e4e73626.jpg

'Woman Tree' (Figure 28) is a sculpture, composed of some living plants, such as a tree with aerial roots, flowers, grass and soil. The three dimensional vestige artwork is an

evidence of the feminine qualities of roots. A closer look shows a transformation of a tree trunk into a female figure that is dressed with a tight gown. The aerial roots represent the lower part of the gown and its creases. The creases flow down onto the foreground of green grass and sand.

'Woman-Tree' does not conform with the objectives of this study in many ways. The research paintings are non-objective works that are restricted to the use of root forms while in 'Woman Tree' the roots are not detached from the female figure. The sculpture portrays a lady that is shapely. It can be described as a metaphor of life. The aerial roots however, play a vital role in the composition by bringing together various components of the sculpture. The artwork interacts with space and draws attention to women affairs, in terms of their social well-being. This lively idea is essential to articulating Cassia tora root forms that reflect on the well-being of Nigerians.

2.2.2.6 Giuseppe Licari (b. 1980, Italy)

Giuseppe Licari lives and works in Rotterdam. He studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna and Monumental Art at AKI Enschede, in the Netherlands. His work focuses on the cross-border of the natural world and the built environment. He uses different materials to explore his encounters. His installation constitutes places of memories. Public participation is the engine of his artworks, making his emotions "inevitably part of a collective experience." (Stehouwer, 2012). Licari describes his works as an open-ended process of exploration of human perception and how it can be provoked through discrete or bold interventions, firmly linked to site and time specific experiences. In his words:

> My work explores the socio-economical, cultural and political practices that intervene on, and alter the form of contemporary natural landscapes around us. Subject both of science and art, the landscape functions both as a mirror and as a lens: in it we see the space we occupy and ourselves as we occupy it. (Licari, 2012).

This metaphorical direction is vividly epitomized by the following Installation of real tree roots.



Figure 29: Humus, 2012, Giuseppe Licari
Installation with Tree Roots, Ceiling Construction & Halogen Lamps
http://www.giuseppelicari.com/images/Humus_Watou/_DSC7589.jpg

Figure 30: Humus (with viewers), 2012, Giuseppe Licari



Installation with Tree Roots, Ceiling & Lamps, http://www.giuseppelicari.com/images/Humus/_DSC8521

Figure 31: Humus (with viewers II), 2012,Giuseppe Licari



Installation with Tree Roots, Ceiling Construction & Halogen Lamps
http://www.giuseppelicari.com/images/Humus/Humus_photo_Aad%20Hogendoorn.jpg

'Humus' (Figures 29-31) is an Installation of tree roots at the Secret Gardens of Tent Gallery in Rotterdam. The site-specific installation "seems to transform TENT's central space

into a mysterious underworld" (Milovic, 2015). The roots propagate from the ceiling, streching down as if the trees are growing above it. The artwork reverences the soil layer that is essential for the growth of plants. The Installation redefines landscapes in an open-ended investigation of nature with viewers. The Installation reflects on the relationship between humankind and nature. It is a metaphor for growth and decay. The artworks differ from the research objectives, in terms of the three dimensionality of forms and the use of real roots and space. Nonetheless, the installation aided the study in unearthing the visual characteristics of roots. The idea of 'growth' portrayed by the real roots that seems to grow through the ceiling is related to well-being. It is vital to this study.

2.2.2.7 Root Carving

Root carving is also known as 'the art of the root' or 'root art'. Root carving is a traditional Chinese art form. The process of creating root art entails carving and polishing tree roots into various artistic creations. The major part of the carving is dominated by the natural shapes of the root, with a small part of the root recreated. Using roots to make furniture has been practiced since primitive societies among Asian countries, such as China. Root carvings are created from tree roots, which include tree trunks, burls and bamboo roots. Root art feature people, animals or other forms carved out of the wood root (Wikipedia, n.d. and Unique Quanzhou Program, 2018).

Figure 32: Chinese Armchair, Unknown Artist, 18th Century A.D.



Made from roots in Qing Dynasty, Qianlong era
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Fauteuil_racine_Chine_Quianlong_musee_arts_asiatiques_Nice.jpg



Figure 33: Chinese Root Table, Unknown Artist, n.d.
http://premium.bon-cloud.net/content/unique-quanzhou-program-chinese-arts-and-crafts-root-carving

The root carvings differ from the research objectives, in terms of the three dimensionality of forms, real space, materials and techniques. Nevertheless, they help the research in examining the visual characteristics of roots. They also suggest other ways of rendering root forms in painting.

2.2.2.8 DaylaLuttwak (b. 1943, Israel)

DaylaLuttwak is an Israeli sculptor, practicing in the USA. She studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Always drawn to metal works, she created jewellery early in her career, but progressively shifted her focus to sculpture. DalyaLuttwak's works explore the subterranean root systems that anchor and nourish the plants. Skilfully forging, hammering, welding and painting steel, Luttwak uncovers the hidden features of roots, by exploring the relationship between what grows below and above the ground. Despite the fact that many contemporary artists, such as Robert Lobe and Roxy Paine have exhaustively explored tree

forms in metal sculpture, McCullough (2014) finds: “few artists have taken so keen an interest in the lowly root.”. This underscores the researcher’s claim that only very few artists are interested in using root forms to create artworks. The following works are Luttwak’s metallic sculptures that typify the hidden splendour of roots.



Figure 34: Cannabis Sativa, 2014, DaylaLuttwak
Iron pipes and Glossy Paint, 192 cm x 96 cm x 12 cm
http://ca-doro.com/newyork/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Luttwak001_CannabisSativa.11.jpg

‘Cannabis Sativa’ (Figure 34) is a relief sculpture. It is created with a gold-coloured taproot and black branch roots that represent the hidden network of roots beneath the soil. Luttwak recalls: “The intention is to reveal that out of the black roots of the underground, the golden essence of the plant emerges.” (McCullough, 2014). In ‘Cannabis Sativa’, the artist ‘sought the golden balance arising from the contrast of vertical and horizontal black roots’ (McCullough, 2014). The artwork depicts plant’s root structure and its complex network, designed for tenacious growth. The kinetics of the composition emanates from the visual tension exerted by the upright branch roots orchestrating the taproot. The metal sculpture calls attention to an underutilized element of the Cannabis plant - the root system that supports its existence.



Figure 35: Allium Cepa, 2010, DaylaLuttwak
Metal pipes, 500 cm High (approximately)
http://www.dalyaluttwak.com



Figure 36: Allium Cepa (Detail), 2010, DaylaLuttwak
http://www.dalyaluttwak.com/roots-in-black-and-white



Figure 37: Allium Cepa (Detail II), 2010, DaylaLuttwak
http://www.dalyaluttwak.com/roots-in-black-and-white

Luttwak's root-inspired sculptures challenge aerial spaces, just as real roots are prone to transgress boundaries. It occupies space both inside and outside of a building. This is evident in 'Allium Cepa' (Figures 35-37) where the large scale metal sculpture draws attention of the viewer to the complex structure of plant root systems. 'Allium Cepa' means Onion-Vegetable (Luttwak, 2010). The artwork portrays the diversity of root systems. It is an experiment with a variety of vertical, horizontal and radial structures, emanating from root patterns of an onion plant. The composition is created with an interwoven root forms of thin to thick lines. The sculptures differ from the research objectives, in terms of the three dimensionality of forms, real space, materials and techniques. Nevertheless, they aided the study in unearthing the visual characteristics of roots. The idea of 'revelation and growth' and the metaphorical inclinations of 'the golden essence' as portrayed by the network of roots, are also vital to this study.

2.2.3 Visual Metaphors with Unconventional Materials

This section reviews selected artworks that were created through metaphorical rendition of forms. They are basically abstract compositions that reflect on socio-cultural and emotional well-being. The artworks are produced with various materials that are not commonly used for painting by artists from different countries and diverse creative culture. They are created with collage and other mixed media techniques.

2.2.3.1 Eva Obodo (b. 1963, Nigeria)

Eva Obodo lives and works in Nigeria. He is a Professor of Fine Arts and currently teaches sculpture and art education at the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Nigeria Nsukka. (Sowole, 2015). His ideas are grounded by metaphorical rendition of forms and materiality. He dwells on 'material essence' – a creative freedom that hinges on using the material to express his thoughts. He creates relief works using diverse techniques, including

wrapping and bundling of discarded objects (Arthouse Foundation, 2015 and Enekwachi, 2015). By creating abstract forms from discarded objects, Obodo calls into question opposing cultural forces as typified by the works below.



Figure 38: Line by Line, 2015, Eva Obodo
Jute, cloth, thread, dye, tempera, 216 cm x 120 cm x 8 cm,
https://guardian.ng/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Art-X.jpg



Figure 39: Bad Case II, 2009, Eva Obodo
Jute, cotton and dye, 209 cm x 106 cm x 10 cm
http://media.findartinfo.com/images/artwork/2012/12/a002954987-001.jpg

‘Line by Line’ (Figure 38) and ‘Bad Case II’ (Figure 39) are created with wraps of Jute, cotton, cloth, thread, dye and tempera. The artworks “reference material culture in a global context, in diverse ways.” (Buhari, 2015). The common theme is derived from his query of social issues, such as human conditions, which Obodo does by connecting thread in the works. These fibre works poke around the future as they deal with the present circumstances, line by line. ‘Line by Line’ is a polychromatic composition, dominated by blue and brown hues, while ‘Bad Case II’ is a monochrome composition of brown hues.

Although these hangings are not inspired by root forms, the idea of ‘Line by Line’ was helpful in mirroring the life of Nigerians and metaphorically rendering her well-being with Cassia tora root forms. The limited palette in the monochromatic ‘Bad Case II’ reflects on the economic crisis in Nigeria, whist the colourful ‘Line by line’ recounts the aspirations of Nigerians. The use of unconventional materials, such as jute and thread was helpful in the formation of the ‘Root of Fashion’ series of paintings.

2.2.3.2 Uchay Joel Chima (b. 1971, Nigeria)

Uchay Joel Chima is a Nigerian contemporary artist, practicing in Lagos. He studied Fine Art at the Institute of Management and Technology Enugu and graduated with an H.N.D. (1997). He is passionate about traditional events, society and memory. He focuses on mixed media and multi-media. In his mixed media works, he uses unconventional materials, including strings, sand, wax and polythene sheets. His work, according to Castellote (2015), “weaves a tapestry of memory, imagination, societal happenings and emotion.” The artworks interrogate social and environmental issues in Nigeria as epitomised by the following work.



Figure 40: Human Resources, 2013, UchayChima
Polythene sheets, Strings, Acrylics, 305 cm x 305 cm x 10 cm, http://uchayjoelchima.blogspot.com

Executed in a square frame, 'Human Resources' (Figure 40) is a mixed media work, composed of knots of various sizes. Heads and clothing are rendered with knots and draperies of discarded polythene materials (rice sacs). These knots and draperies represent Nigerians, dressed in traditional wears. The work interrogates the abundance of resources in Nigeria, especially human resources. The bright colours of yellow and orange express hope for a brighter future for the nation. White colour patches depict the dressing and convey the message of peace.

The theme could be summed up as hope and peace for a better Nigeria. The work is hinged on the idea of societal happenings in Nigeria, articulated through emotion, imagination and memory of abundant human resources that are presently being wasted in the country. The idea of 'societal happenings' is essential in mirroring the life of Nigerians and metaphorically rendering her well-being with Cassia tora root forms. The artwork can be described as a metaphor of peace and hope for a better Nigeria. Emotion, imagination and memory possess metaphorical attributes, necessary for this study.

2.2.3.3 Jacob JatJari (b. 1960, Nigeria)

Jacob JatJari is a Professor of Fine arts, who lives and works in Nigeria. He trained as a painter and an art historian at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. He holds master's degrees in Painting and Art History, and a Ph.D. degree in Art History. He teaches Fine Art at his alma Mata. (MutualArt, 2017). His philosophy is centred on the idea of second chance. He believes that everyone deserves a second chance to make amends of past mistakes (Joshua, 2015). His artworks are idea-based, dominated by a palette of discarded materials. The style is basically conceptual, allowing the viewer to engage with the medium. The non-figurative nature of his work enables a viewer to engage thoughtfully with the work. This contextual engagement and its metaphorical predispositions lead to fresh views about the previously discarded object. In his words:

> I employ objects which have been discarded such as pages of magazines, fabric off-cuts, straws and bottle-tops. In the case of the pages of magazines, I roll them up into capsules, a technique I learnt in Uganda. There could be different layers of interpretation to these capsules but suffice it to state that, like drug capsules, these word capsules could heal or destroy depending on their administration. The fabric off-cuts which I pick up from the dumps of tailors represent pieces of choices we make which are a part of us. I use the discarded objects to "heal" a defaced support, representing our country (Jari, 2011).

This metaphorical direction is vividly encapsulated by the following work.

Figure 41: The Hunt, 2012, Jacob Jari



Fabrics & a Mesh on Canvas, 89 cm x 119 cm

http://www.artnet.com/artists/jacob-jari/the-hunt-u01QpUyUoT25QLemkNSTiQ2

As the title suggests, 'The Hunt' (Figure 41) symbolises the collective aspiration of a community as they work together for a better life. The mixed media painting was produced with a mesh and Fabric offcut. The mesh is a window in the composition. Through the mesh circular holes, one can see images, reminiscent of hunting scenes of Cave dwellers. The silhouettes portray individuals hunting an animal. Besides silhouettes, superimposition, collage techniques and blurry effect were deployed. The mesh gives a blurry effect to the hunting scene, leaving the viewer to ponder over the event taking place in that space and time. The mixed media serves as another possible way for the researcher to use unconventional materials, such as Fabric offcut to create painting composition with Cassia tora root forms. 'The Hunt' is imbued with metaphorical propensities, materials and techniques, essential to this study.

2.2.3.4 NnennaOkore (b. 1975, Australia and Nigeria)

NnennaOkore is a Professor of Art at the North Park University, Chicago. (Gauss, 2014). Okore is inspired by the rhythms and contours of everyday life. Focusing on recycling, transformation and regeneration of forms, her works explore textures, colours and forms within her immediate environment. Gauss (2014) explains: "Through her work, she reveals impermanent earthy attributes of organic and twisted forms. Her intuitive approach to process begets intricate and unhindered layers of the process and materials". In corroboration of this view, Sowole (2016) states: "Okore is best known for her sculptures and installations that combine natural and discarded materials to create abstract, richly-textured forms." Her creative processes involve weaving, sewing, twisting and dying, as encapsulated by the following work.



Figure 42: Aja Nsukka, 2014, NnennaOkore
Burlap, Paper, Dye & acrylic, 76 cm x 150 cm
http://www.davidkrut.com/artistsImages/TwistAndTurns/000_NNENNA_AjaNsukka.jpg

Aja Nsukka (Figure 42) explores ephemerality and life cycles. The work is an exploration of ecological and man-made objects, through visual subtleties. The fluid form, harmony of colour and delicate texture are attributes of the physical world. It comments on aging, death and decay. The hanging was created with biodegradable materials, delicately interwoven, to reflect the essence and mystery of life cycles. The artwork comments on social, historical and environmental interconnectedness of collective experiences as mortals. Okore's idea of 'the rhythms and contours of everyday life' and the metaphor of life cycle are relevant to this study.

2.2.3.5 El Anatsui (b. 1944, Ghana)

El Anatsui is contemporary artist from Ghana. He is a Professor of Sculpture (emeritus) and taught Sculpture at the University of Nigeria Nsukka. He was earlier

influenced by motifs from his native textile cloths and Ulism style. The major driving force in his works is the desire to experiment. He works with clay, wood, cement, metals and found objects; testing the possibility of what each may yield in terms of scale, presence, colour, shape, and idea. Enwezor (2012) states:

> Reserved, wry, and philosophical, Anatsui is contemporary in every way. He creates his art in the tense boundary between tradition and modernity, medium and process. From one project to the next, his practice represents the search for sculptural solutions sensitive to prevailing idioms. He stringently emphasizes the primacy of process over compositional predetermination, concept over formal completeness, chance over pre-prescribed formulations.

Anatsui stresses that his cloths/clothes series encapsulate the essence of the alcoholic drinks which were brought to Africa by Europeans as trade items at the time of the earliest contact between the two peoples (Enwezor, 2012). His artworks serve as metaphors of socio-cultural change. This metaphorical essence is captured by the following work.



Figure 43: Versatility, 2006, El Anatsui
Aluminium & Copper wire, 600 cm x 732 cm x 17 cm
https://africa.si.edu/exhibits/gawu/images/Fowler-Versatilitylg.jpg

'Versatility' (Figure 43) highlights the notion of adaptability, and the twists and turns of human existence. The composition is dominated by motifs adapted from Adinkra and Kente cloths. It was produced with discarded liquor cans and bottle caps from Nigerian brands of whiskey, rum, vodka, brandy and other potent drinks. Kente is a strip-woven cloth usually worn in festival for special occasions (Kwame, 2006) while Adinkra are motifs, made of dyed and stamped textiles. Kente cloth and Adinkra motifs are symbols for African-ness (Ayiku, 1998). 'Versatility' is metaphor of body and mind that reinforces the importance of material beauty. The shinning colourful hanging reflects on socio-cultural well-being. It is a metaphor for coexistence. The metaphorical attribute is essential to this study.

2.2.3.6 Jerry Buhari (b. 1959, Nigeria)

Jerry Buhari is a contemporary artist and a Professor of Painting, who lives and works in Nigeria. He studied Fine Arts at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and obtained an MFA degree (1984) in Painting. He teaches Fine Art at his alma Mata. His themes are developed from everyday subject, environmental and socio-political issues, local and often global. From perceptual to conceptual, he has moved from conventional materials to unconventional ones (Obodo and Anikpe, 2014 and Offiong, 2015). In his words: "Today I can use anything to create my work from tissue paper to sticks, roots of a tree, scraps of anything durable or ephemeral. Essentially ideas, rather than aesthetics now drive my work; process is assuming higher importance than product. Idea takes on greater significance than product" (Buhari, 2015). Buhari believes that this kind of practice would make art handier to all. These metaphoric attributes are portrayed by the following work.

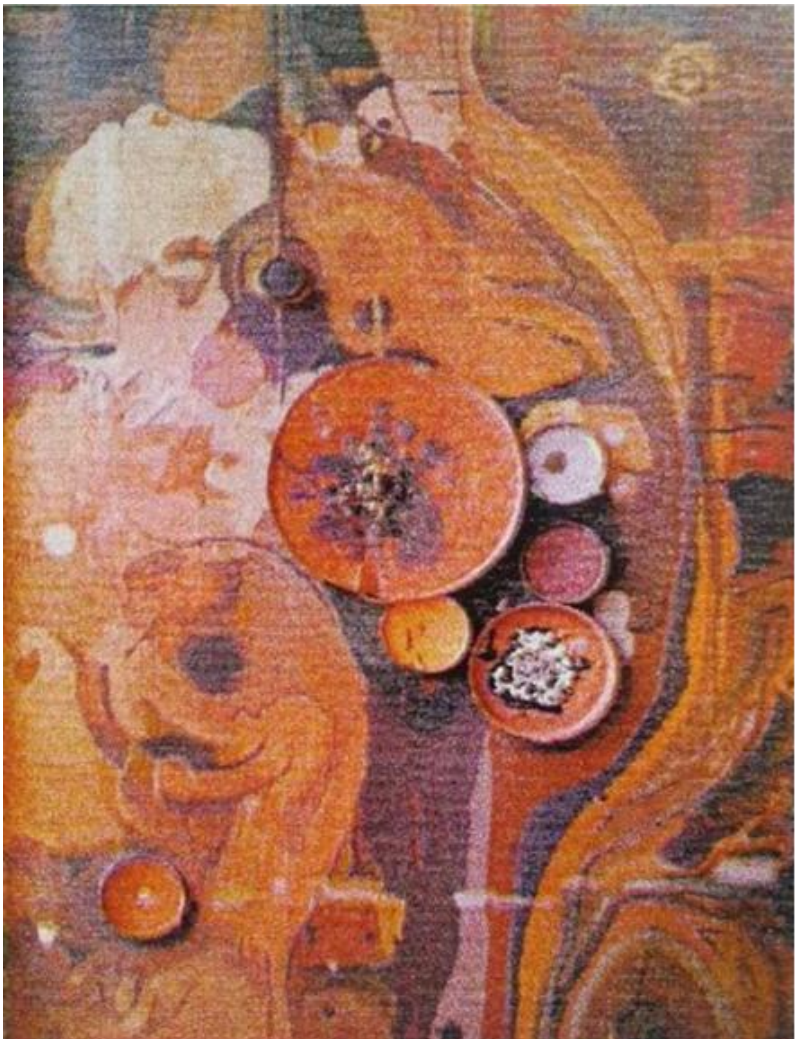


Figure 44: Double Image Syndrome, Jerry Buhari, 1992
Oil on Canvas, 84 cm x 100 cm, Buhari (2015). Inaugural Lecture: Visual arts as knowledge production. ABU Press Ltd. Zaria, Nigeria.

'Double Image Syndrome' (Figure 44) expresses the untrustworthiness of Nigeria's leaders. Various circular buttons represent the hierarchy of power, while the fluid forms represent the dynamic nature of Nigeria's multi-tribal and multicultural society. The colour combination is monochromatic, dominated by orange hues. The circular buttons, glued to the centre of the picture plane, intensify the sensation of movement and surface texture of the composition. The non-objective composition comments on the social-political issues in Nigeria. The fluidity of form was utilized in linking up the root forms in this study.

2.2.3.7 HadiehShafie (b. 1969, Iran)

HadiehShafie is a contemporary artist, born in Teheran, Iran. She studied painting at Pratt Institute in New York. She lives and works in Maryland USA. She produces tessellating scrolls of pen-and-ink drawings. Her major theme is 'Love and passion', which reveals the secret inner springs that fuel her art and life. Kurchanova (2015) asserts that Hadieh's calligraphic lines and delicate colours are just as staggering as the sculptures. She constructs them with several rolled, hand-dyed strips of paper. Her brightly coloured paper art is reminiscent of ancient handicrafts. It appears like digital pixilation. Hadieh was enchanted with the styles of Abstract Expressionism and Colour Field Painting Movements (Kurchanova, 2015 and Ritzel 2016). She developed the elaborate paper painting process from a passionate mix of Eastern and Western ideas through constant experimentation (Castro, 2016).

Shafie's works feature text, but the lettering lies beneath layers of paint and paper. Kino (2015) observes: "Upon closer inspection, one sees that each strip of paper is covered with Arabic lettering, although most of it is hidden deep inside the coils, as though the work were suppressing something else." In other words, Ritzel (2016) posits that 'Spikes-8' are "marked by vibrant, seductive colour and formal power." The metaphor of love and passion (eshgh) is epitomized by the following work.



Figure 45: Spikes-8, 2012, HadiehShafie
Ink, Acrylic & Paper in a circular tray,122 cm x 122 cm x 9 cm, http//www.leilahellergallery.com/...

Figure 46: Spikes-8 (side view detail), 2012,HadiehShafie



In ‘Spikes-8’, Shafie plays with movement of colours across a circular tray. Dominated by various tones of red, the vibrant composition gives an impression of an unfolding song. The key compositional elements are circles, spirals, cones and warm colours. Flatness in the production process is not intentional. On a direct view, ‘Spikes-8’ (Figure 45) appears like a painting on a flat support. A variety of thorny papers appear like concentric circles. But on a side view of ‘Spikes-8’ (Figure 46), one sees that it is three-dimensional, the spiky projections become very obvious.

‘Spikes-8’, is embedded with ‘Farsi’ word (eshgh) that means ‘love and passion’. Executed in a circular format, the composition is totalised by various mounts of cones and spirals into a tight circular tray. Each cone holds several pages, like the pages in a closed book that the viewer cannot read. Commenting on the content of the pages, as cited by Castro (2016), Shafie states:

> “I zeroed in on the word love, because inherent in its meaning are so many complexities. On a personal level I had fallen deeply in love for the first time soon after my arrival at Pratt, and then very quickly had experienced rejection for the first time. Both were new and devastating and alienating experiences that turned me inward emotionally and made me seek a better truth by turning toward poetry. I felt that the word “Eshgh” was heavily used in poetry but it did not exist in how people treated each other. Especially looking at what was happening in my mother land Iran. So writing it in a simple form and repeating it became a personal mantra to find and express its meaning visually both on a personal and political level.”

Shafie believes that it is beauty that allows the viewer to be pulled into the work. The research paintings do not follow the same method, technique and materials as in ‘Spike-8’. However, in this study, there is a considerable balance between form and content. As such, the study agrees to her philosophy of ‘love and passion’ and its seductive tendencies. The spiky seductive colours were influential in the metaphorical rendition Cassia tora root forms.

The arrangement of circles was essential in the development of Nodal Forms series of paintings (Plates LXXV – LXXVIII and CIV – CIX).

2.2.4 Deductions from the Review of Related Works

The review covered three categories of artworks, which include root-inspired paintings, other root-inspired artworks and visual metaphors executed with unconventional materials. The artworks analysed ranges from realistic to abstract compositions. They lay bare contributions of the artists that used root forms or metaphorical approach to create artworks. The works also show the area of challenges in the process of creating visual metaphors using root forms.

Under the first category, root-inspired paintings were reviewed. 'Tree Roots and Trunks' (Figure 5) by Van Gogh is an attempt at metaphorical rendition of root forms, as the artist tried express his personal emotions through the root forms. 'Roots of a fallen giant Sequoia' (Figure 6) by Barbara Snyder, is a naturalistic depiction, with less emphasis on metaphor. Similarly, the semi-abstract paintings of Ruth Palmer, Mary Schiros, Cedar Lee and Erika Pochybova-Johnson dwell on aesthetic consideration. In these compositions root-forms were not utilized as substitute for ideas, events or emotions. Root forms served as appendages that support the upper plant of lush foliage. Root forms were used in combination with trees and other landforms.

On the other hand, 'Free Within' (Figure 9) and 'Perseverance' (Figure 10) by IshrathHumairah as well as 'Roots' (Figure 15) and Sidewalk (Figure 16) by Alexa de los Reyes are good attempts at metaphorical rendition of root forms. The abstract paintings created by Humairah and Reyes nonetheless, basically rely on technical dexterity with less emphasis on metaphors. 'Free Within' and 'Perseverance' reflect on emotional well-being, while 'Roots' and 'Sidewalk' deploy ubiquitous images as metaphors of life's uncertainty.

The rendition of root forms in these root-inspired paintings was helpful in unravelling the visual characteristics of roots, such as organic patterns, rhythm of lines and harmonious colours.

Under the second category, root-inspired artworks done in other art forms beside painting were reviewed. Digital drawing, 'Roots' (Figures 17-19) created with automated machine by Justin Wilcott is a realistic depiction of a root pattern. The animation of Gary Tonge (Figure 27), the metallic sculpture of DalyaLuttwak Figure (34-36) and the handshake illustration (Figure 20) use root forms as metaphors, reflecting on environmental wellness and social well-being. The Chinese root carvings (Figure 32-33), 'Woman-Tree' (Figure 28) and root installation ('Humus', Figures 29-31) by Giuseppe Licari deploy real roots to create three dimensional compositions that comment on life, death and decay.

However, in the third category, works done with unconventional materials, which relate to this study in view of the metaphorical rendition of forms were reviewed. 'Line by Line' and 'Bad Case II' (Figures 38-39) are created with wraps of Jute, cotton, cloth, thread, dye and tempera. The linear forms reflect on societal happenings. The compositions are metaphors of socio-cultural well-being as they keep track of the past, present and the future. Similarly, 'Human Resources' (Figure 40) by Uchay Joel Chima, 'The Hunt' (Figure 41) by Jacob Jari, Aja Nsukka (Figure 42) by NnennaOkore, 'Versatility' (Figure 43) by El Anatsui, 'Double Image Syndrome' (Figure 44) by Jerry Buhari and 'Spikes-8' (Figures 45-46) by HadiehShafie dwell on metaphorical rendition of forms. Although the composition of these artworks are not compatible to this study, the creative ideas and the use of unconventional materials are vital to this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This Chapter dwells on the methods and techniques used to accomplish the study. *Metaphorical Rendition of Cassia Tora Roots Forms in Panting* is the summation of the experiences garnered during the period of research in terms of ideas, compositions, materials, themes, processes, procedures and techniques. The research methodology is presented under the following headings:

- Research Design

- Practice-Based Research Design
- Reference to Established Movements and Artists
- Adapting a Methodology
- Data Collection
- Systematic Illustration of Process and Procedure

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted the Practice-Based Research (PBR) methodology, which is compatible with studio practices as well as the methods and techniques used. Sullivan (2005) posits: “Informing theories and practices are found in the art studio (where) visual arts research has to be grounded in practices that come from art itself, especially inquiry that is studio based”. The choice provided sufficient freedom for the researcher to use relevant methods and techniques required at various stages of the study in the studio and outside the studio.

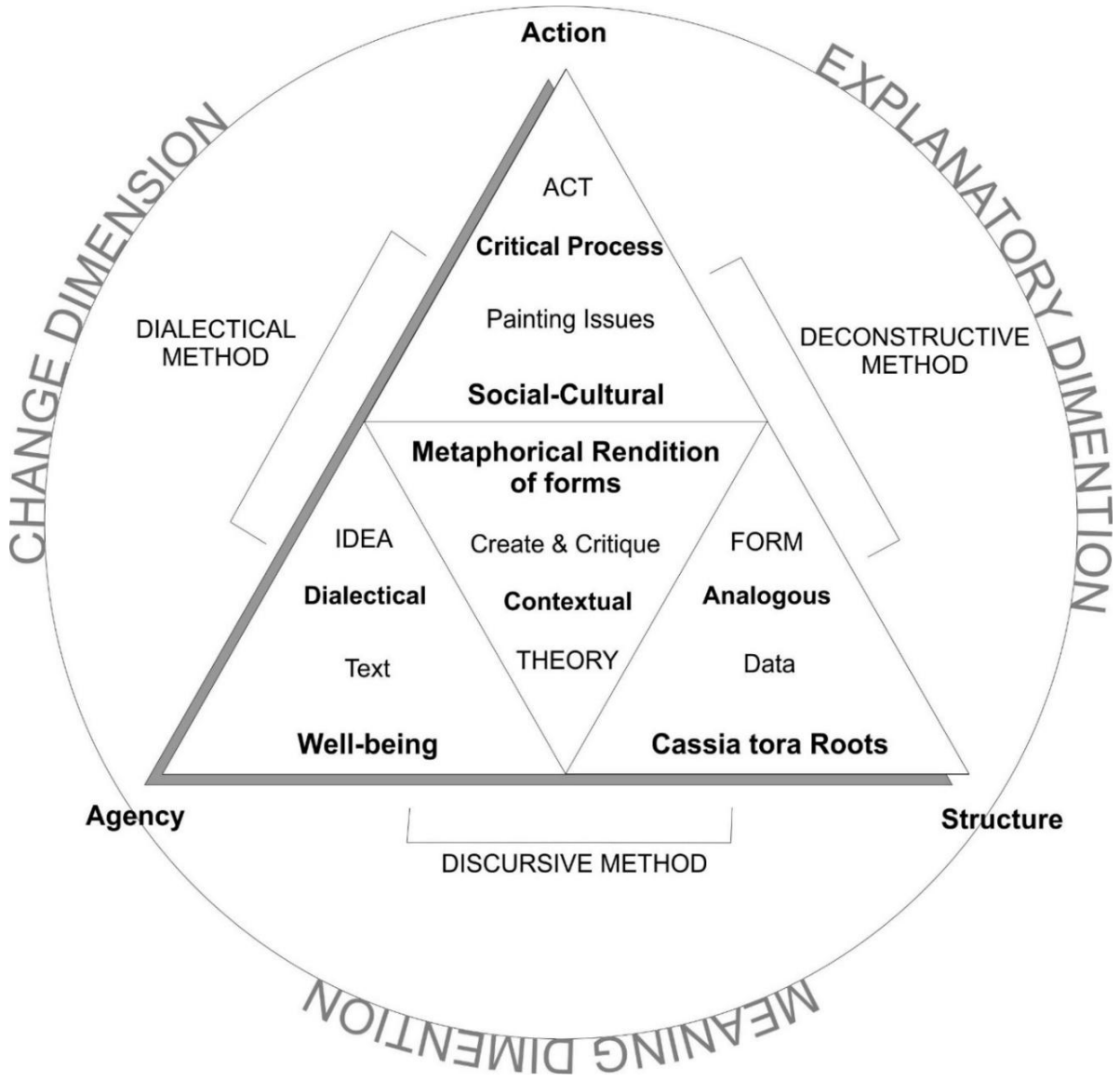


Figure 47: An Illustration of the Research Design for this study
Re-configured from Graeme Sullivan's Framework for Painting Research
Sullivan (2008) in Knowles & Cole (2008), Handbook of the arts …

This illustration (Figure 47) gives a clue to how the research was carried out. Data was processed from visual experience, intuition and practice. In the 'ACT' Domain,the studio environment enabled the researcher to be in control of the research processes and to proffer solution to the research problem. Research in painting can begin in any of these four domains. But to be considered research it needs to interact with at least another domain. In other words, it is the interaction of at least two domains that leads to the production of

knowledge in painting. The efficiency of the paths or braids through these domains determines the quality of the artwork as research (Sullivan, 2008 in Knowles and Cole, 2008). In the 'IDEA' Domain, the well-being phenomenon was analysed through a dialectical process that engaged the researcher in accessing diverse views on how to revitalize the well-being of Nigerians.In the 'THEORY' Domain, theartworks were created through a metaphoric approach and critiqued. In the 'FORM' Domain, Cassia tora root forms were used in the painting compositions to draw analogy between forms and contents.

3.2 Practice-based Research Design

"I never made a painting as a work of art, it's all research." So says Pablo Picasso, as cited by McNiff (2007). Practice-Based Research is a form of research that strides towards advancing knowledge and understanding, using practice, invention of ideas, images, performances or artefacts, where these lead to new or substantially improved theories (Barrett and Barnet 1984and Candy, 2006). It is a research conducted through practice and for practice purposes (Kaplan in Gray and Malins, 2004 and Candy, 2006). This entails a seamless connection among what can be shown, displayed, demonstrated or made and the theoretical verbal aspects.

The strategy applied at every stage of the research depends on the aim, the subject matter, and the research questions. The researcher has to be open-minded to the choice of methods as long as it deals with the study in an effective way.Borgdorff and Karlsson in Biggs (2011) assert: "The practice of making, creating (studio-based), is key to the method". The researcher has to explore and produce works of relevance to the study. This making process is comparable to scientific or technological approach. Other cases might require the methods and techniques used in the social sciences, such as engaged ethnographic research or

observational participation (Sullivan, 2010). Any of these could apply, depending on the research.

3.2.1 Source of Ideas and the Use of Resource Materials

Ideas for this study came from a variety of sources. The primary idea (or main data) for this study emerged from Cassia tora roots samples, upon which the foundation of the research was established. Each painting started with perceptual encounter with the subject matter. This enabled the researcher to have a thorough understanding the root forms. Toebosch (2014) finds:

Ideas come to many artists when they are ‘in transit’, moving from one point to the next. That is not so much about a specific moment, but about a state of being: a permanent sensitivity to what surrounds them. This investigative approach is open to everything that is ‘different’, whatever is surprising, remarkable and/or experimental to which this person wishes to relate.

Ideas also emerged from features of postimpressionism, such as emotional content and symbolic colours. Other sources of ideas came from Intuition and aesthetic speculations. As the research progressed, fresh ideas came from chance encounters, theory reading, library consultations and the internet. Sources of ideas also include the media, radio and Television programmes, videos, documentaries, books, magazines and journal articles, newspapers, among others. Another important source of ideas (or data) used in this study are the information and retrieval systems, which include CD, DVD, Computer hardware and software, Flash Cards, USB, Bluetooth and Micro SD Cards.

3.2.2 Source of Materials

The conventional materials used in the course of the study are: fabric canvas, papers, turpentine, gloss paint, brushes, oil, acrylic and water colours, pencils, pastel and glue. Phases I-IV series of paintings were produced with these materials. The materials used in Phase V (Roots of fashion series of paintings) are unconventional. They include discarded jute sacks, polythene sheets (cut from discarded rice sacks), woollen yarns, raffia, fabric offcuts and beads. The following images (Figures 48-58) show various materials used for the production of 'Roots of fashion' series of paintings.



Figure 48: Coral Beads
Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Figure 49: Synthetic Beads
Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Figure 50: Raffia Trays



Figure 51: Raffia Hat



Figure 52: Discarded Jute Sacks
Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Figure 53: Sourcing Polythene sheets from discarded rice sacks
Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Figure 54: Woollen Yarns



Figure 55: Woollen Yarns II



Figure 56: Fabrics offcuts
Photograph,Stephen Achugwo, 2017





Figure 57: Cutting Polythene sheets from Rice Sa **Figure 58: Polythene stripe, peeled from sacks**
Stephen Achugwo, 2017

3.2.3 Translation of Ideas

The initial translation of ideas entailed perceptual experience of Cassia tora roots. Ideas were translated into sketches, photographs or paintings at every stage of the study. Cassia tora root patterns were noted and sketched to establish how colours, line, and other elements and principles of design would be deployed. Several thumbnail-sketches were made at the early stages of the study from direct observations of roots and from photographs. This was followed by several studies with various painting media, and unconventional materials. These studies entailed a thorough experimentation with the Cassia tora root forms, in consideration of socio-cultural issues relating to well-being and painting techniques. The studies lead to the production of a body of root-inspired artworks.

3.2.4 Techniques Adopted

The researcher dwelled on observational and painterly techniques to resolve related painting issues and to achieve the aim of the study. Direct and participatory observation entailed an encounter with the roots of Cassia tora. Roots of other plants were also observed to ascertain the differences and similarities between them and Cassia toraroots, in terms of visual characteristics. Observations were recorded as notes and sketches. The painting techniques employed in the study hinged on the choice of materials. Two sets of works were produced. The first set of works (Phases I-IV) were done with conventional painting techniques and materials, dominated by vibrant colours whereas the second set of works (Phase V) were done with Collage technique and unconventional materials.

3.3 Reference to Established Movements and Artists

The reference to some established movements and artists provided the study with some knowledge that abound in the previous art movements.Painting is evolutionary and responds to change in culture. From the Stone age to this age of digital revolution, there have been continuous improvement and advancement in the quality and quantity of materials available for painting. Painting continues to advance in scope and definition. The painters' art practice and methodology continue to evolve. Early artists' approach was basically representational. They began with the attempt to capture forms realistically. With the discovery of more colours and expansion of colour palette, painters achieved photographic resemblance.

In the Modernist era(late 19^{th} Century), photography emerged with the invention of camera. In light of this development, painters' approach of forms changed from realism to include abstraction. This trend continues in postmodernism with new styles. However, in postmodernist era, painters' approach and style have expanded to include realism,

abstraction, appropriation and conceptualism. Painting has moved off the canvas and off the wall. For the contemporary artists, proliferation of culture, tradition and advancement of technology continue to provide more options of ideas, materials, philosophy and extensive platforms and approaches to the production of painting than artists in any of the earlier era of art. This trajectory of artistic evolution continues.

This study reviewed features of these major critical eras of art. The researcher analysed the philosophical grounding of Modernism, focusing on Post-Impressionism. Postmodernism and Contemporary art were also examined with regards to the tenets and practice of selected artists, with the view of drawing analogy with identified painting issues, content and forms.

3.4 Data Collection

The data for this study entailed gathering of relevant information that were needed for this research, which include selected root samples, related works, stories, allegories and speculative notions. Data Collection is presented under the following sub-headings:

- The Primary Source of Data
- The Secondary Source of Data
- The Instruments for Data Collection
- The Tools for Data Collection

3.4.1 The Primary Source of Data

The primary source of data for this study was from the samples of Cassia tora roots, upon which the foundation of the research is established. Some of the plants were uprooted from their natural habitat at the garden of the Faculty of Agriculture, Ahmadu Bello

University Zaria and brought to the studio to serve as creative models for the study. Each painting started with perceptual encounter with the roots of Cassia tora.

3.4.2 The Secondary Source of Data

The secondary source of data came from the vibrant colours of Post-Impressionism, allegories, stories, societal affairs and materiality. Ideas came from Intuition, aesthetic speculations, chance encounters, theory reading, library consultations and the internet. Data was also sourced from documentaries, books, magazines, journal articles, newspapers and the electronic media, which include social media, Television programmes and videos.

3.4.3 The Instruments for Data Collection

The Instruments for data collection are direct observation, participatory observation, interview, photography and drawing.

3.4.3.1 Direct Observation

The plant roots were directly observed at the garden of the Faculty of Agriculture, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, to ascertain their suitability for design before some root samples were selected for the study. At other subsequent stages of the research, such as during the studies and at the developmental stages, direct observation was utilized in the studio for an in-depth visual analysis of Cassia tora root forms.

3.4.3.2 Participatory Observation

Under participatory observation, the researcher transplanted some Cassia tora plants close to the studio. He also harvested and sowed the seeds. He uprooted some Cassia tora and other plants and brought them to the studio to serve as creative models for the study.

3.4.3.3 Interview

The researcher conducted an interview in July 2015 with Professor IshayaAudu (a lecturer at Agronomy Department, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria) to find out the real name of the uprooted plant samples chosen for the research. Professor Audu confirmed one of the samples as Cassia tora, a member of Leguminosae Family of Plants. He described Cassia tora as a plant that is basically regarded as a weed.

The researcher interviewed some people from Kano, residing in Samaru Zaria, on the healing attributes of Cassia tora. They informed the researcher that they prepare tea with Cassia tora plant, which is sedative and revitalizing. With this information the researcher pondered over the revitalization of the well-being of Nigerians. The interview yielded deep insights to the conceptual blending of well-being phenomena and root forms in this study.

The research also interviewed some of the artists, whose artworks were reviewed in this study on the ideas behind their works. The interview was conducted through email and telephone conversation, since most of the artist are practicing in different countries, far away from Nigeria. HadiehShafie, IshrathHumairah, DaylaLuttwak, Gary Tonge, Cedar Lee and UcheChima are among the artists interviewed. The interview broadened the knowledge the researcher had about metaphorical rendition of forms and the use of roots forms.

3.4.3.4 Photography

The researcher took photographs of Cassia tora plants in its habitat and the Cassia tora roots (Figures 60 - 63). Photography was also used in capturing the images of the artworks produced as well as documenting various stages of the research.

3.4.3.5 Drawing

Drawing played a vital role in capturing images required for this study. The researcher made several drawings of Cassia tora roots, as typified by 'Tafasa' and 'Tafasa Tea' series of drawings (Plates I - XIV). Drawing was used in the collection of secondary data, which include allegories, speculative notions and stories reflecting on the well-being of Nigerians. Drawings of other plants roots (Plates XV - XXV) were also made in order to acquaint the study with the distinctive visual characteristics of Cassia tora roots. Drawing was also used in conceptual blending of root forms and aspects of well-being, as epitomized by 'Tafasa Tea' (Plates XI - XIV) and Abstract Compositions (Plates XXXIX - LII) series of drawings.

3.4.4 The Tools for Data Collection

The Tools for data collection are Camera and sketch pads for capturing images. Other tools used include the information and retrieval systems consisting of CD, DVD, Computer hardware and software, Flash Cards, USB, Bluetooth and Micro SD Cards.

3.4.5 Visual Characteristics of Cassia tora Roots

Cassia tora roots are characterized by the following functions: penetration of soil, downward and lateral growth, water and mineral intake, conduction, storage of materials, branching and anchorage. A Cassia tora root pattern is composed of a taproot, branch roots, hairs and rhomboid nodes. It has design elements such as line, shape, form, texture, depth and (colour) brown. After collecting Cassia tora plants, the researcher transplanted some samples near the studio. He also planted some Cassia tora seeds. This effort helped in providing adequate root samples for thorough examination of the subject matter. The following Cassia tora roots samples (Figures 59-62) were collected for this research.



Figure 59: Cassia tora Root Samples
Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2018



Figure 60: Cassia tora Root Samples II

Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2018



Figure 61: Cassia tora Root Samples III

Zaria, Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2018

Figure 62: Cassia tora Root Samples IV



A group of Cassia tora root samples are displayed in Figures (60-61). Cassia tora root patterns are vividly captured on Figures (62-63). The nodes were very fragile and most of them broke off when the researcher was pulling the Cassia tora plant from the soil. Nevertheless, with a closer look at 'Cassia tora Root Pattern II', one can see some of the nodes.

3.5 Systematic Illustration of Process and Procedure

As a step for better understanding of the subject matter and pertinent painting issues, it was essential to synchronize the studio practice with sets of artistic theories akin to the painting production. This was accomplished through drawings and colour studies undertaken within the studio and other suitable places. The photographs and physical samples of Cassia tora plants were used. Several compositions were generated with Cassia tora root forms using various drawing and painting media, including pen, pencil, ink, water colour, pastel, coloured pencils, gouache, acrylics and oil colours. These media were used interchangeably by the researcher, to ascertain which medium or a combination of media that was more suitable for a particular painting to be executed. The works produced during the experiments (Plates I-LXVI) are presented under the following headings:

1. Studies with Pencil, Pen and Ink
2. Studies of Other Plant Roots
3. Studies with Watercolour
4. Studies with Oil Pastel

5. Studies with Oil Colour
6. Studies with Acrylic and Ink (Abstract Compositions)
7. Studies with Unconventional Materials

3.5.1 Studies with Pencil, Pen and Ink

The studies began with realistic drawings of the Cassia root system, consisting of a taproot, branch roots and nodes, using pencil, pen and ink. The purpose of the representational drawings (Tafasa series, Plates I-X) was to analyse the visual features, such as line, rhythm and texture. Another task carried out was the creation of abstract compositions with Cassia tora roots forms (Tafasa Tea series, Plates XI-XIV).

Plate I:Tafasa, Pen on Paper



Size: 46 cm x 55 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate II:Tafasa II, Pencil on Paper
46 cm x 55 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate III:Tafasa III, Pencil on Paper
17 cm x 12 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate IV:Tafasa IV, Pencil on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate V:TafasaV, Pencil on Paper
46 cm x 55 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate VI:Tafasa VI, Pencil on Paper
15 cm x 12 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

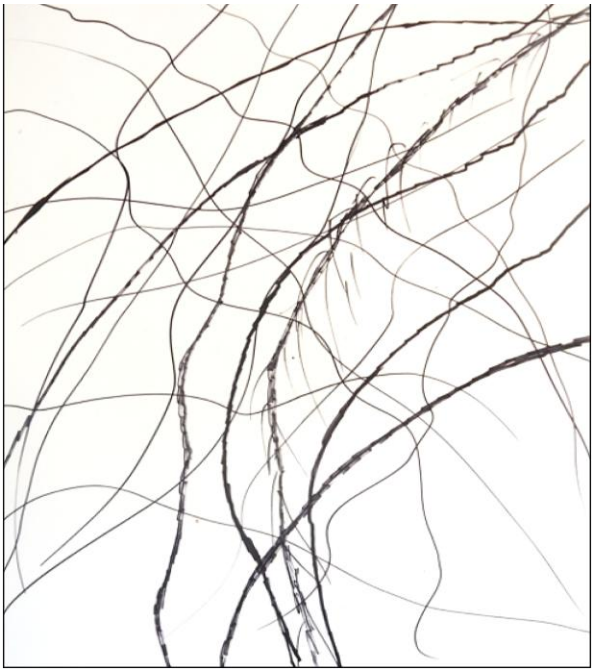


Plate VII:TafasaVII, Pen& Ink on Paper

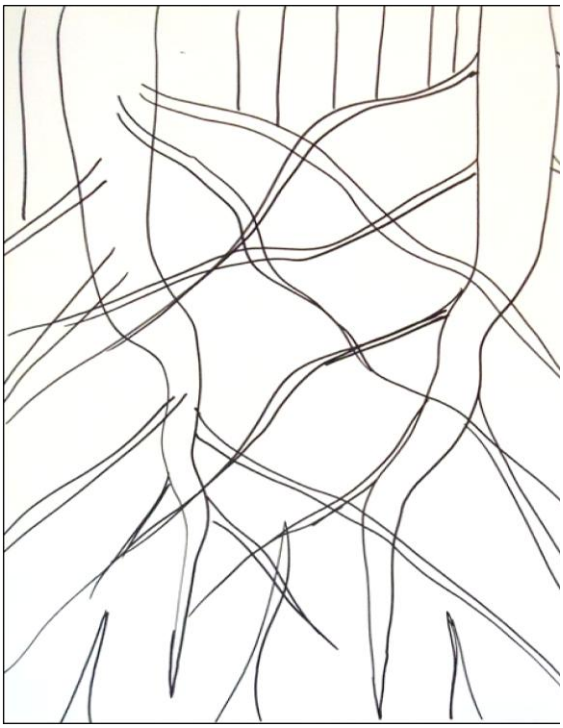


Plate VIII:TafasaVIII, Pen & Ink on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate IX:Tafasa IX, Pen & Ink on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate X:Tafasa X, Pen, Ink& Pencil on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XI:TafasaTea, Pen on Paper
Ink on Paper, 28 cm x 21 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

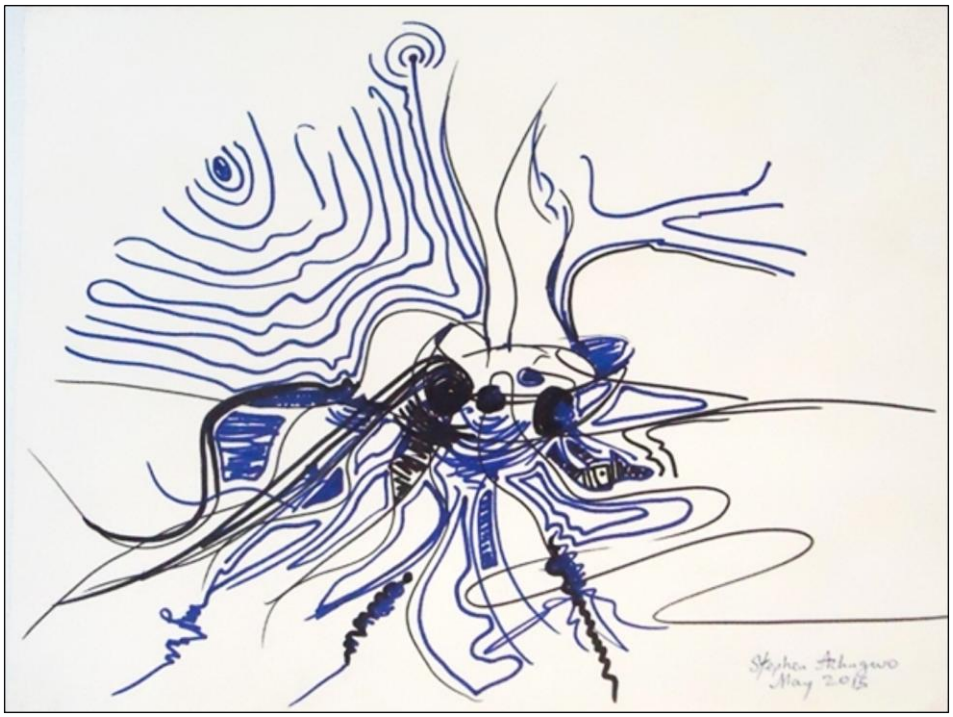


Plate XII:Tafasa Tea II, Pen& Ink on Paper
24 cm x 28 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XIII:TafasaTea III, Pen & Ink on Paper
15 cm x 12 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XIV:TafasaTea IV, Pen & Ink on Paper
15 cm x 12 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

3.5.2 Studies of Other Plant Roots



Plate XV:Grassroots,Pen on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XVI:Grassroots II,Pen& Pencil on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

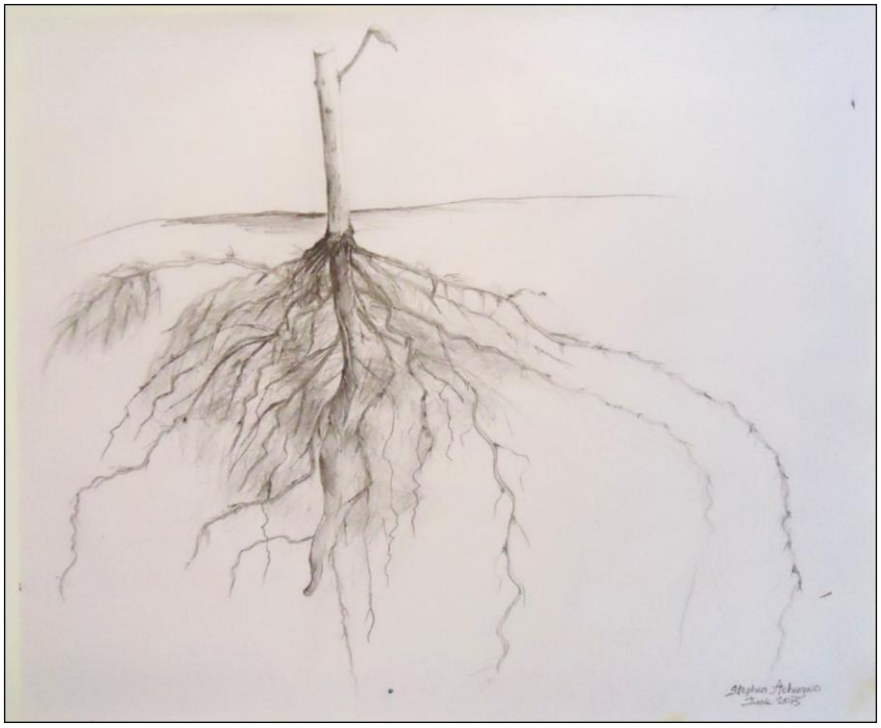


Plate XVII:Grassroots III,Pencil on Paper
46 cm x 55 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XVIII:Tomato Roots,Acrylic on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XIX:Onion Roots,Acrylic &Pen on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XX:Waterleaf Roots,Pen on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXI:Tree Roots,Acrylic on Paper
46 cm x 55 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXII:Tree Roots II,Acrylic on Canvas
80 cm x 60 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXIII:Tree Roots III, Acrylic on Canvas

60 cm x 80 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXIV:Tree Roots IV,Pencil on Paper
55 cm x 46 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

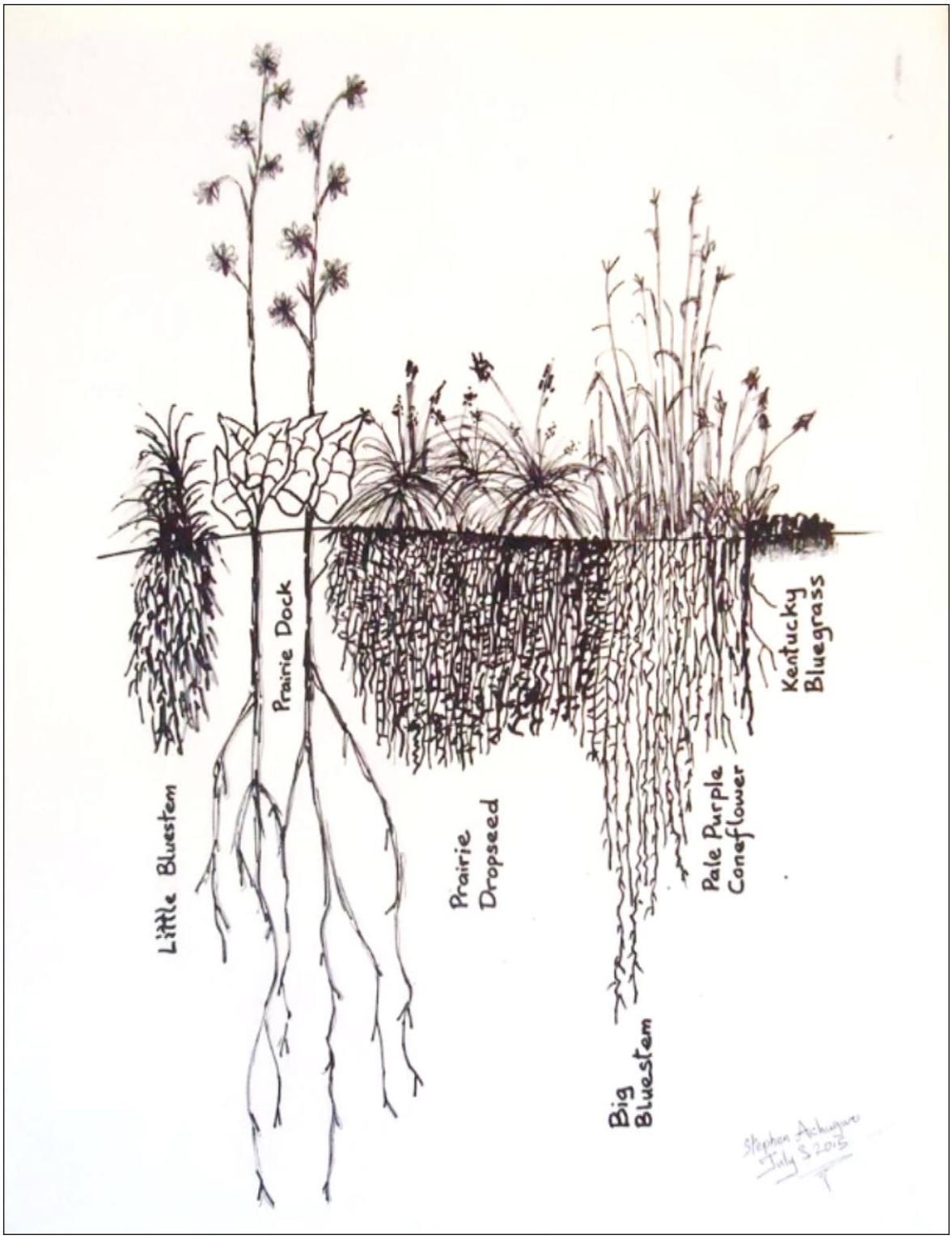


Plate XXV: Roots of some weeds,Pen on Paper
124 cm x 91 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

3.5.3 Studies with Watercolour

Studies with watercolour were carried out to evaluate Cassia tora root forms as well as to ascertain the suitability of watercolour for further production of the research paintings.

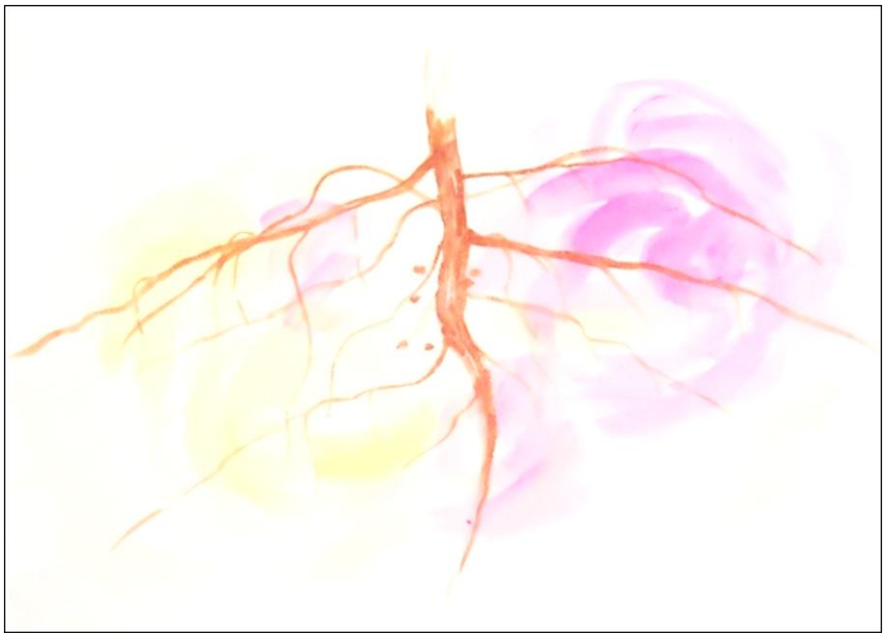


Plate XXVI:Springs, Watercolour on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

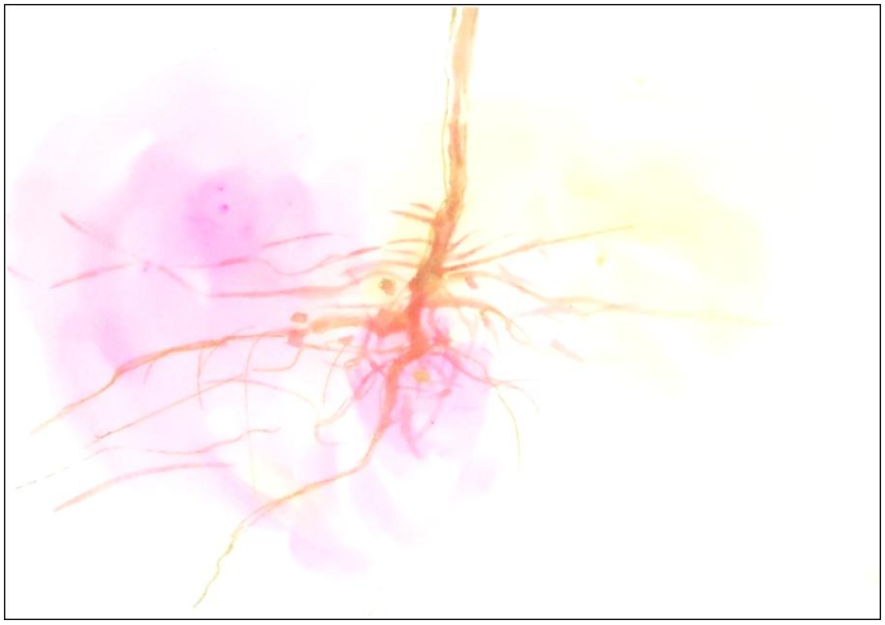


Plate XXVII:Springs II, Watercolour on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

3.5.4 Studies with Oil Pastel

Studies with Oil Pastel were carried out to analyse the root forms as well as to ascertain its suitability for further production of the research paintings.



Plate XXVIII:Waves, Oil Pastel on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXIX:Singles, Oil Pastel on Paper
35 cm x 30 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXX:Singles II, Oil Pastel on Paper
30 cm x 35 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXI:Singles III, Oil Pastel on Paper
15 cm x 12 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXII:Singles IV, Oil Pastel on Paper
35 cm x 30 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXIII:Singles V, Oil Pastel on Paper
15 cm x 12 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXIV:Singles VI, Oil Pastel on Paper
14 cm x 13 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

3.5.5 Studies with Oil Colour

Studies with oil colour were carried out to evaluate the root forms as well as to ascertain its suitability for further production of the research paintings.



Plate XXXV:New Waves, Oil on Canvas
71 cm x 70 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXVI:New Waves II, Oil on Canvas
70 cm x 56 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXVII:Waves II, Oil on Canvas
90 cm x 120 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XXXVIII:Waves III, Oil on Canvas
100 cm x 140 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

3.5.6 Studies with Acrylic and Ink (Abstract Compositions)

Studies with Acrylic and Ink were carried out to evaluate the root forms as well as to ascertain their suitability for further production of the research paintings. This stage of studio experiment laid bare possible ways of using Cassia tora root forms in compositions. This resulted in the production the following abstract compositions.

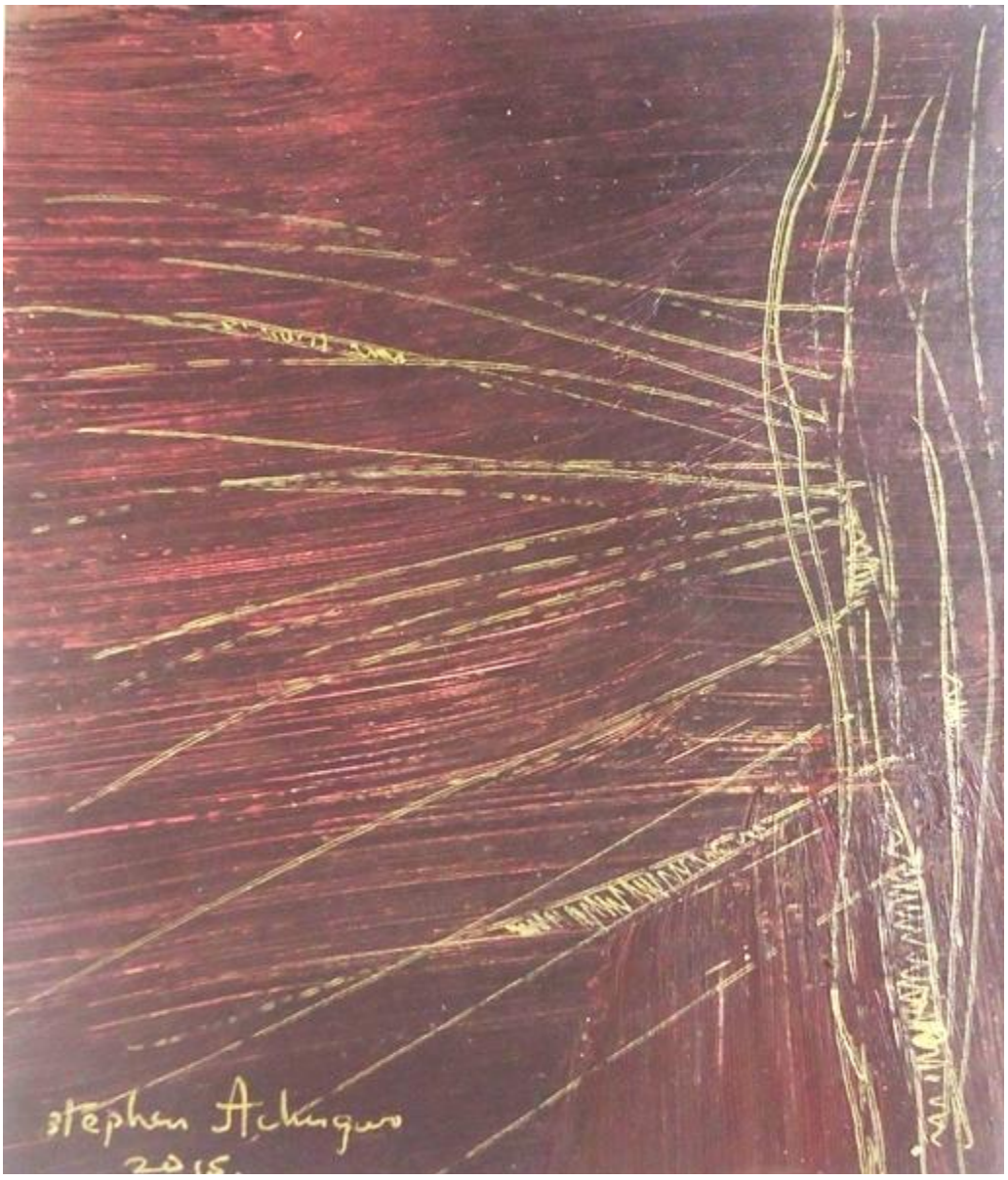


Plate XXXIX:Rays, Acrylic and Gold Ink on Paper

30 cm x 27 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XL:Rays II, Acrylic on Canvas
48 cm x 76 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLI:Waves IV, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLII:Waves V, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLIII:Echoes, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLIV:Echoes II, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLV:Echoes III, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLVI:Echoes IV, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLVII:Echoes V, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XLVIII:Echoes VI, Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

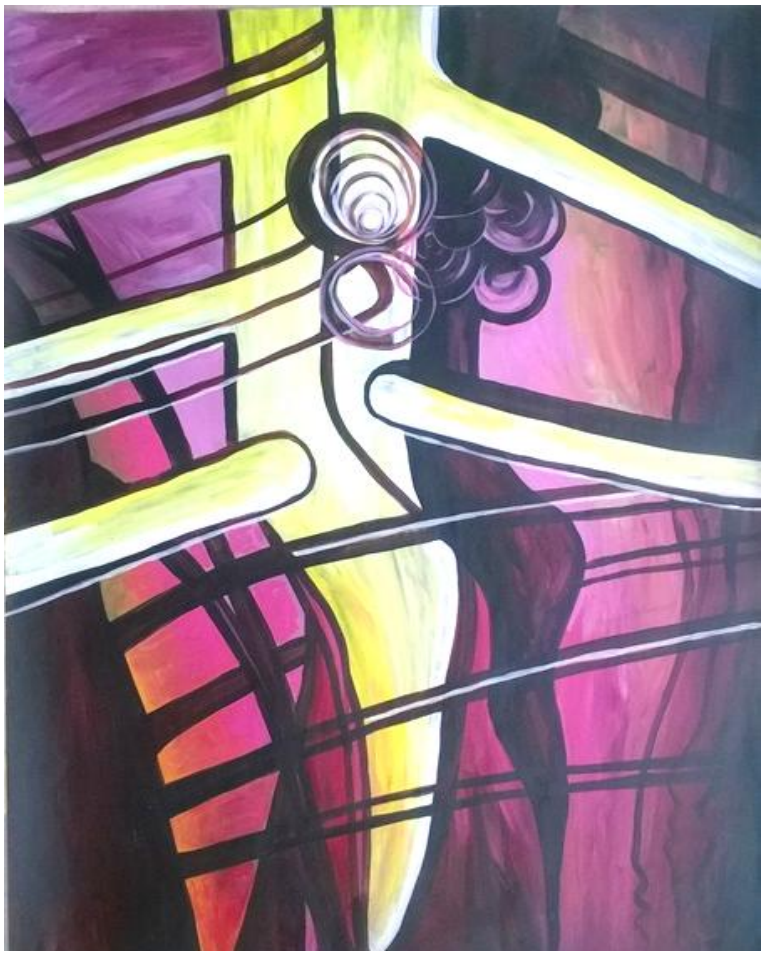


Plate XLIX:Echoes VII, Acrylic on Paper

124 cm x 91 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate L:Echoes VIII, Acrylic on Paper
124 cm x 91 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate LI:A Letter to Kandinsky, Acrylic on Paper
124 cm x 91 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate LII:Another Letter to Kandinsky II, Acrylic on Paper
124 cm x 91 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

3.5.7 Studies with Unconventional Materials

Studies were carried out with unconventional materials to ascertain their suitability for the production of the research paintings. The range of materials explored include woollen yarns, fabrics offcut, raffia, beads, jute, polythene sheets and glue. Collage technique was used, which involved cutting out the patterns and gluing the layers to the supports. Knowledge gained from this experiment was utilized in the production of 'Roots of Fashion' series of paintings. Some works from this experiment are displayed below.



Plate LIII:Fashion Trends,Polythene & Jute

17 cm x 15 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LIV:Fashion Trends II, Beads & Jute

14 cm x 17 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LV:Fashion Trends III, Beads,Woollen Yarns



Plate LVI:Fashion Trends IV, Woollen Yarns, Jute &Raffia, 18 cm x 17 cm Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LVII:Fashion Trends V, Jute, Polythene & Fabric offcuts
20 cm x 38 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LVIII:Fashion Trends VI, Fabric offcuts,
Jute & Polythene, 23 cm x 20 cm,
Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LIX:Fashion Trends VII, Fabric offcuts,
Jute & Polythene, 23 cm x 20 cm,
Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LX:Fashion Trends VIII, Polythene,
Jute & Fabric offcuts, 23 cm x 18 cm,
Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LXI:Fashion Trends IX, Woollen yarns and
Polythene stripes, 70 cm x 60cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LXII:Fashion Trends X, Fabrics and Polythene
120 cm x 140 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LXIII:Fashion Trends XI, Fabrics, Polythene and Stripes
120 cm x 138 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LXIV:Roots of Fashion III (work in progress), Stephen Achugwo, 2017

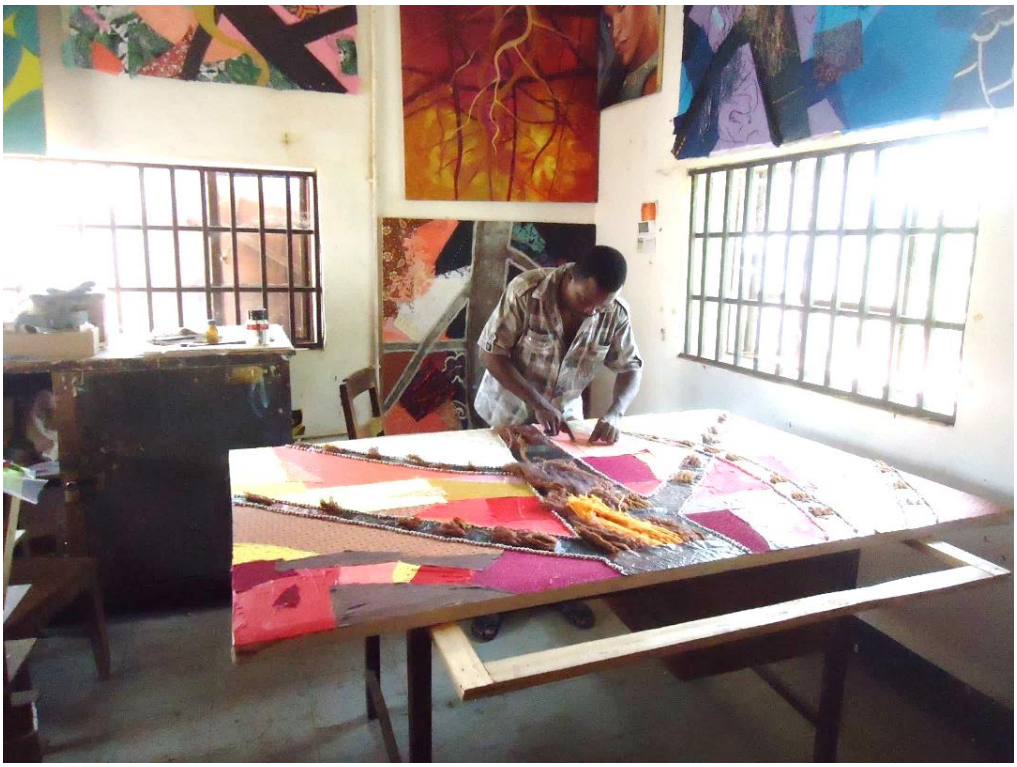


Plate LXV:The Researcher working on Root of Fashion III

Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate LXVI:The Researcher working on the Root of Fashion IV

Photograph, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF ARTWORKS PRODUCED

This section deliberates on selected artworks produced within the course of the research based on content, context, form, technique and materiality. One hundred and twenty-five artworks (Plates I-CXXV), in form of drawings and paintings were produced. Twenty-two paintings (Plates LXVII- LXXXVIII were selected for detailed deliberations. They are grouped in five phases in chronology with the five research objectives and displayed on sequential plates, labelled to show titles, year of production and medium of expression.

4.1 Describing and Analysing Selected Artworks Produced

Enchanted by Cassia tora root forms and their metaphorical propensities of survival and healing attributes, the artworks are rendered with a variety of conventional painting media, unconventional materials and diverse techniques. The Cassia tora root forms are the dominant visual components of the compositions. The metaphorical components involve contextual, dialectical and analogous approaches akin to the survival and healing attributes of Cassia tora roots. The artworks selected for discussion are categorized under the following phases:

- Phase I: Singular Element
- Phase II: Romeo and Juliet
- Phase III: Nodal Forms
- Phase IV: Multiple Elements
- Phase V: Roots of Fashion

'Singular Element' series of paintings dwell on a Cassia tora root pattern, replete with a taproot, branch roots and nodes. Paintings in 'Romeo and Juliet' series rely on two Cassia

tora root patterns that intertwine each other on the picture plane. The picture plane of each painting in 'Nodal Forms' is filled with Cassia tora nodes. The compositions in 'Multiple Elements' integrate three or more Cassia tora root patterns. However, 'Roots of Fashion' series of paintings rely on a combination of Cassia tora root patterns, unconventional materials and collage technique.

4.1.1 Phase I: Singular Element

Singular Element (Phase I) consists of 'Germination of Gold', 'Hero', 'Guerrilla Warrior', 'Aso Rock' and 'Bless them Mama Africa' series of paintings (Plates LXVII - LXXI and LXXXIX - C). 'Germination of Gold' is naturalistic depiction. The other four works are rendered in semi-abstract style. The artworks lay emphasis on the visual analysis of the subject matter. The major compositional component is single Cassia tora root pattern, referred to as 'Singular Element'. The compositions dwell on contrasting colour combination between the root forms, backgrounds and space. Space takes on a seesaw appearance, between outdoor scenery and room space.

The major compositional elements among the 'Singular Element' series of paintings are branch roots, a taproot and nodes. There is distinct variation in colour combination, shape, depth and the interaction between space and root forms. The common theme among the Germination of Gold', 'Hero' and 'Guerrilla Warrior' series is a view of the 'risen hero', who defied all odds in conquering his enemies on a battle field as a metaphor for inspiration. The works draws analogy from the survival strategy of Cassia tora roots, which is characterized by dominance, to personify the notion of victory achieved through courageousness and perseverance. However, 'Bless them Mama Africa' draws analogy from Cassia tora healing attributes, to extend her helping hands to Nigerians while 'Aso Rock' utilizes the Cassia tora visual features to describe the organs of government in Nigeria.

4.1.1.1 Germination of Gold



Plate LXVII:Germination of Gold, Ink and Acrylic on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

'Germination of Gold' (Plate LXVII) is composed with a Cassia tora root pattern that represents the 'risen hero' and a dark background of brown hues symbolic of the battle field. It is rendered in a naturalistic style, depicting the basic structures of Cassia tora root pattern, replete with a taproot, branch root and nodes. There is no modification in proportion; one can see the relationship between the various components of the root system. Cassia tora roots are depicted with glittering gold ink, enabling the subject matter (the hero) to stand out from the dark brown background as well as projecting the bragging rights of the hero. The painting is made from a direct approach, through a direct observation of freshly uprooted Cassia tora plant roots.

4.1.1.2 Hero



Plate LXVIII:Hero, Oil on Canvas
112 cm x 92 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

As the title suggests, Hero (Plate LXVIII) a view of the 'risen hero', who defied all odds in conquering his enemies on a battle field as a metaphor for inspiration. In each painting, the 'risen hero' is suggested by a Cassia tora root pattern that dominates the left side of the picture plane. 'Hero' (Plate LXVIII) is composed with a Cassia tora root pattern and a background of red and yellow hues. It explores the Cassia tora roots components, including a

taproot, branch roots and nodes. The warm colours give the impression of heat felt in the afternoon in Nigeria, as well as expressing the intensity of the battle. Rough textures are infused into the background with thick patches of colour. Space appears like a colourful cloudy environment, evoking a feeling of excitement. The warm colours are symbolic of celebration and joy of victory after the battle. The 'Hero' is depicted with a Cassia tora pattern of magenta and yellow hues.

4.1.1.3 Guerrilla Warrior



Plate LXIX:Guerrilla Warrior, Oil Pastel on Paper

91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

Whether a warrior is at the middle of the battlefield or in the middle of the jungle, survival and domination are the vital keys for victory. In this composition, the Guerrilla Warrior (the risen hero) is portrayed with a cross section of the Cassia tora root pattern and

colourful textured background. Guerrilla Warrior (Plate LXIX) shares a common theme with the previous paintings. The 'risen hero' is suggested by a Cassia tora root pattern that dominates the picture plane. The colourful background is the climax of the celebration that accompanied the victory by the warrior.

4.1.1.4 Aso Rock



Plate LXX:Aso Rock, Oil on Canvas
122 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

'Aso Rock' (Plate LXX) is a visual metaphor that describes the organs of government in Nigeria. The supreme leadership structure is represented by Cassia tora root forms. At the left side of the painting is a singular root element of Cassia tora, depicted in tints of magenta

and yellow. This root unit represents the office of the Presidency at Aso Rock. It is in this office that major political decisions are taken for the governance of Nigeria. Whilst the taproot stands for the president of Nigeria, the thinner branch roots represent other arms of government, consisting of the Legislators – Senators and House of Representative Members, Judiciary, and the Ministers.

There is a cross-section of the root pattern of Cassia tora on the right side of the picture plane, depicted in shades of purple. This segment is far bigger in scale than the singular root element on the left side of the composition. It represents the people of Nigeria and the diverse culture, languages and ethnic groups. The Nigerian people's hope and aspirations are enshrined in the circular nodes. Cassia tora nodes are portrayed with circular planes tones of purple hues.

Space is appropriated as the well-being of Nigerians, which is affected by the inconsistent leadership since independence. The space in this composition also represents the common space (Nigeria territory) shared by the leaders and the followers. The negative spaces are depicted in light tones of magenta, enabling the root forms to be clearly projected from the composition as well as intensifying the depth. The interaction between the branch roots of the large root segment, the nodes and the branch roots of the singular root element, speak more of the cordial relationship between the government of Nigeria and her citizenry. The root patterns are outlined with cerulean blue. The outline epitomizes the sovereignty of Nigeria and encapsulates the common democratic aspirations of Nigerians.

4.1.1.5 Bless them Mama Africa



Plate LXXI:Bless them Mama Africa, Oil on Canvas

127 cm x 141 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

As the title suggests, 'Bless them Mama Africa' (Plate LXXI) metaphorically lends a helping hand to Nigerians. It is composed of a cross-section of the taproot and branch roots of Cassia tora. The nodes are completely eliminated. It is a monochromatic composition, dominated by tones of yellow ochre and sienna. On the right edge of the picture frame is a segment of the taproot, which appears like a tree trunk. From this segment, branch roots sprout out, spreading diagonally downwards over the picture plane. At a glance the background appears like a room space, as if the world has come to an end. On a closer look, it appears like an environment lit with sunset. 'Mama Africa' is represented by a segment of

taproot. The branch roots serve multiple purposes in the composition. They represent various tribes of Nigeria as well as the helping hands of 'Mama Africa'. The warm colour combination of yellow symbolizes hope for the nation.

4.1.2 Phase II: 'Romeo and Juliet' series

'Romeo and Juliet' series of paintings (Plates LXXII-LXXIV and CI-CIII) dwell on Cassia tora root patterns and symbolic bright colours. The root forms are depicted with bright colours. The nodes are deemphasized in the composition to lay emphasis on the taproots. The background of the first painting, 'Romeo and Juliet' (Plate LXXII) is made of dark shades of grey and black, while the second painting 'Romeo and Juliet II' (Plate LXXIII) is composed of a polychromatic chequered background. However, the third painting is more geometric than the first and second paintings as the organic shapes and curvatures of Cassia tora roots are redefined with straight lines.

Despite the disparity in terms of the colour combination and rendition of root forms, there is a thematic consensus that emerges from the series. The common theme is a view of two Cassia tora taproots that intertwine each other. The intertwining is reminiscent to the depth of the power of love that intertwined Romeo and Juliet. The double root units of different colours represent couples from different ethnic region in Nigeria. The background represents the diverse culture and traditions of various ethnic groups in Nigeria. The dual root forms are rendered metaphorically, buttressing the speculative notion that with time the ethnic and religious conflicts affecting the well-being of Nigerians would fade away, paving way for a country that is known for peace, unity and progress.

4.1.2.1 Romeo and Juliet



Plate LXXII:Romeo and Juliet, Gauche on Paper
80 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

In ‘Romeo and Juliet’ (Plate LXXII), the taproots and branch roots are depicted with bright colours. The nodes are completely eliminated from the composition to lay emphasis on the taproots. The background is made of dark shades of grey and black. On the left side of the picture plane, white Cassia tora taproot is intertwined by another taproot of brown colour. The entwined taproots represent couples from different tribes in Nigeria. The disparity of the taproots colours highlights the disparity in language, culture and tradition in Nigeria. But the intertwining shades light on the notion of unity as time passes by.

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4.1.2.2 Romeo and Juliet II



Plate LXXIII:Romeo and Juliet II, Water Colour on Paper
91 cm x 124cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

'Romeo and Juliet II' (Plate LXXIII) follows the same compositional format as in the first painting with two Cassia tora taproots roots that entwine each other, reminiscent to the depth of power of love that intertwined Romeo and Juliet. However, there is some modifications in the root forms and background of the second painting. The picture plane is chequered by branch roots emanating from the taproots at the left side of the painting. The couples from different ethnic regions in Nigeria are represented by double root patterns of magenta and yellow hues. The polychromatic chequered background is symbolic of the changeable fortune of Nigerian Nation.

4.1.2.3 Romeo and Juliet III



Plate LXXIV:Romeo and Juliet III, Gauche on Paper
80 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

'Romeo and Juliet III' (Plate LXXIV) is rendered with similar metaphorical direction like other artworks in Phase II with vibrant colours and the amalgamation of double root units. However, the third painting is more geometric than the preceding paintings. Straight lines are deployed in the composition with a hard-edge technique to transform Cassia tora root forms. The tinted polychromatic background exhibited by the second painting are substituted with enriched tones of warm colours. The enrichening of hues and transformation of Cassia tora root forms in 'Romeo and Juliet III', epitomize the transformation of the well-being of Nigerians.

4.1.3 Phase III: Nodal Forms

Nodal Forms (Phase III) consist of 'Nodes of Inspiration', 'Gyrating Stars' and 'Reflections' series of paintings (Plates LXXV-LXXVIII and CIV-CIX). The compositions were generated through various experiment with Cassia tora nodes and monochromatic backgrounds. In each composition, the picture plane is totalised by nodes, which are depicted with circles. The Cassia tora nodes are irregular in shape, brown in colour but in the following compositions, they are depicted as circles and replicate the background colour. This brings fluidity and the effect of motion to the monochromatic compositions. Sketchy impressions of the branch roots are added into some of the compositions to give a sense of direction to the nodal forms.

The Cassia tora nodal forms appear like circular bubbles. The forms and the monochromatic background spiral around each other. Traditional references to perspective are eliminated, which lay bare various nodal forms in order to communicate deeper emotions. Contending on circles, Emerson (2017) postulates:

> The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outwards to new and larger circles, and that without end. The extent to which this generation of circles, wheel without wheel, will go, depends on the force or truth of the individual soul.

This statement is corroborated by Cassia tora nodes as they aid in sustaining the plant with nutrients in difficult weather, environment or time. Nodal forms are rendered as a metaphor of hope for a better life in Nigeria.

4.1.3.1 Nodes of inspiration

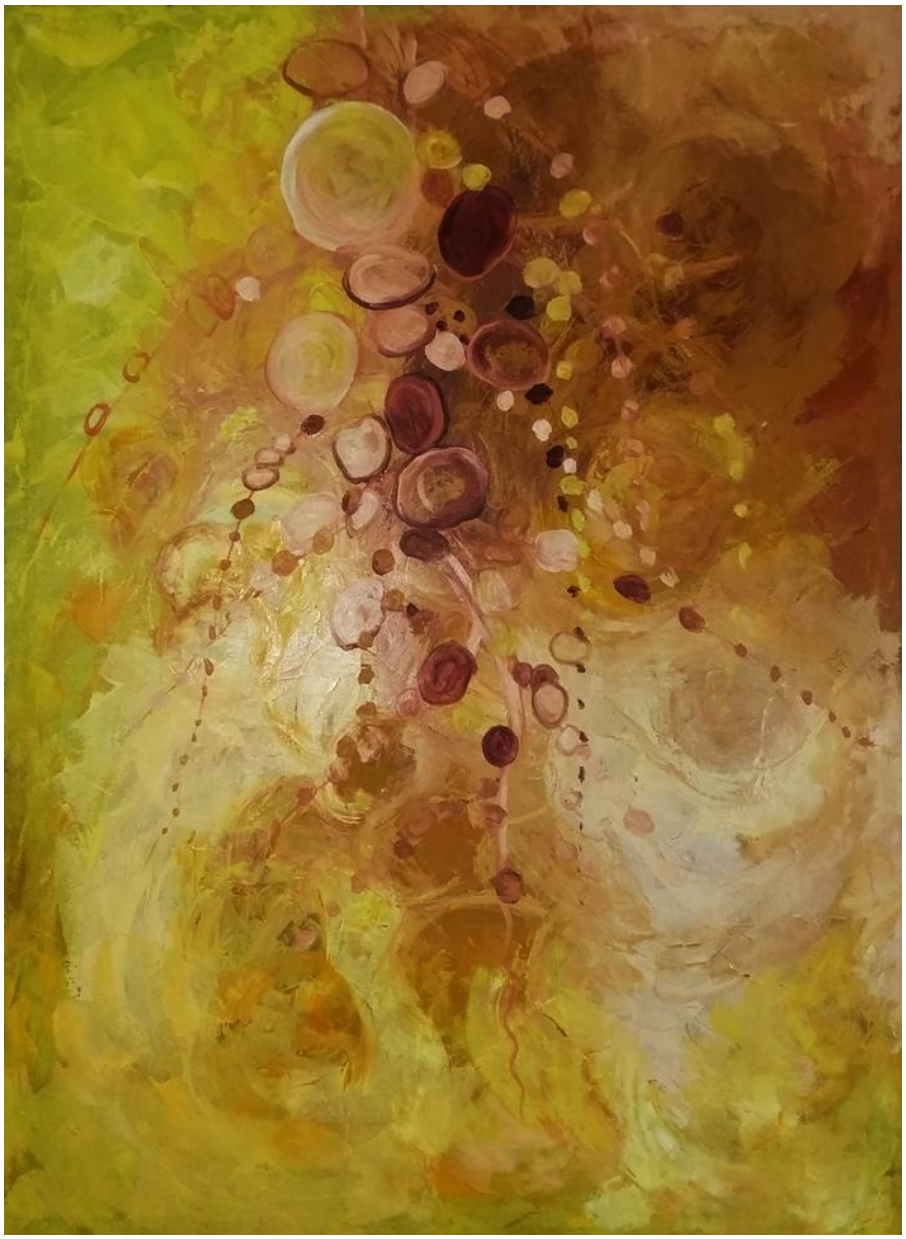


Plate LXXV:Nodes of inspiration, Oil on Canvas
134 cm x 99 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

The composition of 'Nodes of Inspiration (Plate LXXV) is dominated by tones of yellow ochre and burnt sienna. Nodes are depicted with circles and oval shapes. The natural colour of Cassia tora roots is dark brown, but in this painting, the nodal forms replicate the monochromatic background. Sketchy impressions of the branch roots are added to the nodal forms to give a sense of direction to the root patterns. Yellow colour is a visual symbol for

hope. The dominance of yellow in the visual space highlights the hope for the betterment of the well-being of Nigerians.

4.1.3.2 Nodes of inspiration II

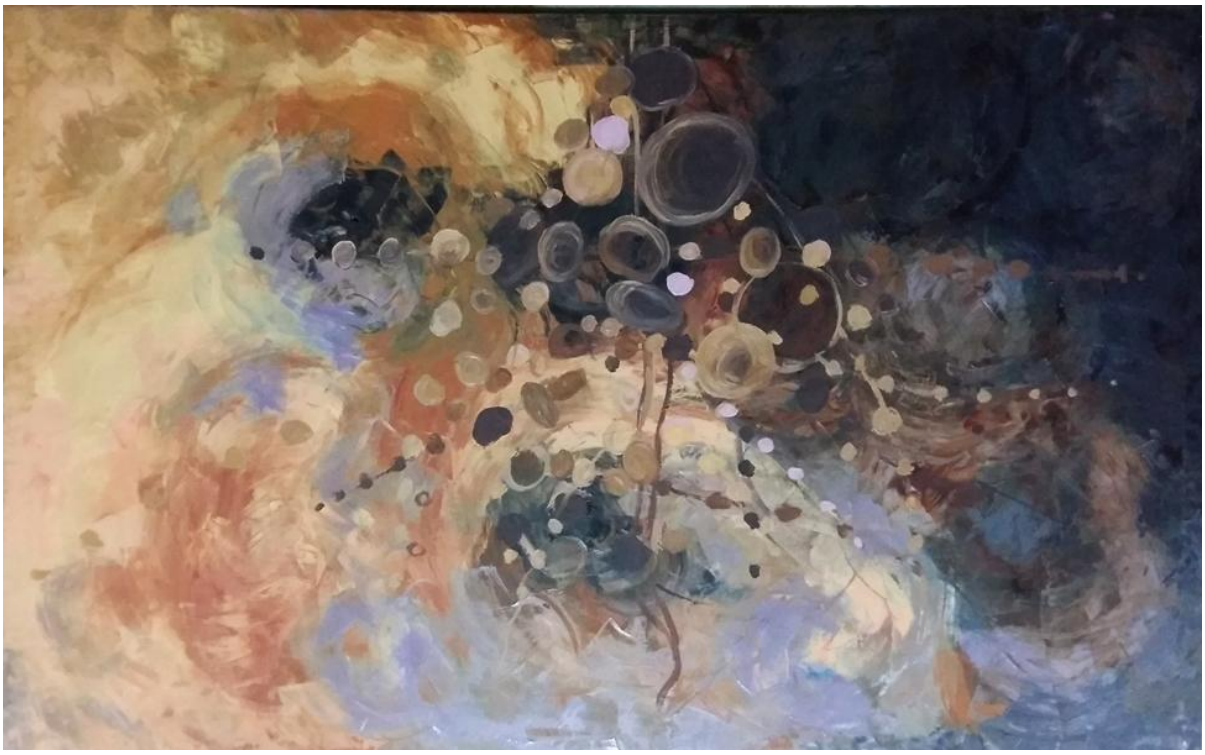


Plate LXXVI:Nodes of inspiration II, Oil on Canvas
86 cm x 144 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

` The composition of 'Nodes of Inspiration (Plate LXXVI) is an extension of the creative ideas explored in the previous painting. The picture plane is dominated by nodal forms and a background made of yellow ochre, burnt sienna and grey hues. The jumble of forms in the composition create a sensation of motion. The crowd forms are reminiscent of the economic crisis currently experienced in Nigeria but the bubbles give the impression of hope for the resolution of the economic crisis.

4.1.3.3 Gyrating Stars



Plate LXXVII:Gyrating Stars, Oil on Canvas

137 cm x 107cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

The composition of 'Gyrating Stars' (Plate LXXVII) is different from the previous paintings as the nodes stand out from the background. The taproot and branch roots are completely eliminated from the composition, thereby freeing the nodal forms from the root pattern. The picture plane is filled with various sizes of nodes, depicted with various tones of alizarin crimson and yellow ochre. These warm colours enable the nodal forms to stand out from the negative space, portrayed in grey. The nodal forms give impression of stars gyrating in space.

4.1.3.4 Reflections



Plate LXXVIII:Reflections, Oil on Canvas
153 cm x 102 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

'Reflections' (Plate LXXVIII) follows the same thematic focus of hope. However, rigid lines are introduced in the composition. The outlines boost the effects of transparency, reflection and refraction. The lines also enhance the rhythm of the nodal forms.

4.1.4 Phase IV: Multiple Elements

'Multiple Elements' (Phase IV) consists of 'Roots of inspiration', 'Flames', 'Digging for Gold', 'Fiesta' and 'Forest of Wisdom' series of paintings (Plates LXXIX - LXXXIV and CX - CXXII). The paintings have common compositional feature that is characterised by multiple Cassia tora root patterns. 'Roots of inspiration' relies on circular forms and ripples of curvilinear lines that totalize the picture plane. 'Flames' relies on Cassia tora root tips. 'Digging for gold' dwells on concentric orientation of the root forms. 'Fiesta' and 'Forest of wisdom' series dwell on crowded root forms, depth and space as well as the sensation of movement, sound and time.

4.1.4.1 Flames



Plate LXXIX:Flames, Oil on Canvas
110 cm x 140 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

‘Flames’ (Plate LXXIX) is composed with multiple Cassia tora root tips that are turned upside-down. The picture plane is totalised by root tips of red, yellow and brown hues. The kaleidoscope of Cassia tora root tips gives the impression of flames. At the right ride of the painting, there is a root tip depicted in tones of yellow ochre, with a pair of branches that spread across other root tips. The root tips phantasmagoria, buoyed by warm colours, re-enacts the allegory of reincarnation, expressing the notion that the end of a generation marks the beginning of yet another generation – world without end. The composition is a metaphor for regeneration and hope.

4.1.4.2 Roots of inspiration



Plate LXXX:Roots of inspiration, Oil on Canvas
137 cm x 77 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

‘Roots of Inspiration’ (Plate LXXX) is an abstract painting, composed of circular and linear forms of various thicknesses and brown hues. The production method began by dismantling the Cassia tora root components – the taproot, branch roots and nodes. These root components are then re-arranged, fused together and transformed as circular forms and ripples of curvilinear lines that totalize the picture plane. At the top centre of the composition, there are some circular forms of magenta, blue and yellow hues depicting the nodes. Two pairs of branch roots emerge from both sides of the nodes, spreading across stripes of curvilinear lines.

As the title infers, the monochromatic painting, ‘Roots of Inspiration’ lays bare the sources of inspiration and the meditative forces that inspire an individual to make progress in life. The metaphorical rendition of forms draws analogy from the healing attributes of Cassia tora roots with the well-being of Nigerians. The background of both sides of the picture plane is composed of dark brown hues. But in the middle of the composition there are linear forms made of lighter tones of yellow and brown colours. At the top centre, the circular nodes seem to be falling down through the brighter space; reminiscence of the falling of the gift of Manna from heaven. As such, ‘Roots of Inspiration’ is articulated as a metaphor for inspiration.

4.1.4.3 Digging for gold



152 cm x 107 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

‘Digging for Gold’ (Plates LXXXI) is a monochromatic painting of blue hues. The title is influenced by the researchers believe that the treasures of this world are hidden beneath the earth and one must dig deep to find them. It is composed of multiple elements of

Plate LXXXI:Digging for gold, Oil on Canvas

Cassia tora. The composition is filled with Cassia tora roots that are arranged concentrically in a trench-like structure. It is reminiscent of a mining shaft, dug by miners that are shovelling gold dust underground. The taproots from various radial axis across the picture plane tend to tie through their root tips. The branch roots spiral towards the central axis. The concentric and spiral arrangement arouse a sensation of centrifugal forces that tend to pull in the viewer into the deep whole beneath the earth. It also evokes a feeling of loss in a strange environment. The painting is rendered metaphorically, re-enacting the allegory of ‘Three feet from Gold’. It is a metaphor for perseverance and hope for future achievements.

4.1.4.4 Fiesta and Forest of Wisdom Series of Paintings

'Fiesta' (Plate LXXXIII) and Forest of Wisdom (Plates LXXXII and LXXXIV) series of paintings reference common themes about the societal happenings in Nigerians. The reference includes 'variety is the spice of life' (an allegory) and the New Yam festival, celebrated annually in Eastern Nigeria. The metaphorical rendition of root forms dwell on depth, cluster arrangement, movement, noise, space, time and crowd forms which resonates local melodies. 'Forest of Wisdom' and 'Fiesta' are visual voices that sing to labour; a labour that sings to the agricultural tradition of Nigerian farmers and the well-being of the nation.

In each painting, multiple Cassia tora root patterns are deployed to the picture plane. The metaphoric contents draw an analogy between the crowd forms and socio-cultural well-being of Nigerians. The picture plane is crowded by a variety of root patterns, which appear like a forest found in eastern Nigeria. The paintings reflect on the New Yam festival (Iri Ji Ohuru), held in some parts of Eastern Nigeria. 'New Yam' is celebrated annually in August at the beginning of harvest season. It is a cultural event that is characterised by a theatre of art forms, such as music, performance and folklores. The multiple root forms represent the celebrants and their spectators. Though 'Fiesta' and 'Forest of Wisdom' series of paintings share common thematic direction, there are some variations among the three paintings in terms of the rendition of root forms, choice of root components, colour combination, rendition of the time of the day and the sequence of events. The following three paintings - Forest of Wisdom (Plate LXXXIII), Fiesta (Plate LXXXII) and Forest of Wisdom II (Plate LXXXII) are synopses of the events at the 'New Yam' festival. They are visual metaphors for unity, peace and progress.

4.1.4.5 Forest of Wisdom



Plate LXXXII:Forest of Wisdom, Oil on Canvas
152 cm x 183 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

'Forest of Wisdom' (Plates LXXXII) is monochromatic painting composed of multiple Cassia tora root patterns and a background of yellow ochre and brown hues. The composition also relies on space, depth, light, time and crowd forms. The picture plane is crowded by a variety of Cassia tora root patterns, which appear like a forest. The crowd forms represent the villagers and their spectators. The dominance of yellow hues in the warm colour combination and the brightness of the composition is symbolic of early morning sunrise. The nodes are completely eliminated from the composition. The absence of the nodes signifies that the village has been cleansed from all sorts of sins, restoring trust among

the people. At this moment, there is peace, unity and excitement. With the early morning sunrise, the village is ready to celebrate.

4.1.4.6 Fiesta



Plate LXXXIII:Fiesta, Oil on Canvas120 cm x 150 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

'In 'Fiesta' (Plate LXXXIII), the celebration is at climax. The dominance of red hues in this composition is symbolic of the hot afternoon weather in Nigeria. It is afternoon and the socio-cultural activities have shifted from the forest of wisdom to the village centre. It is hot and it is 'New Yam' Festival! The fiesta is now at full gear. Nodes are now introduced into the composition. The nodes enshrine the aspiration of the people.

4.1.4.7 Forest of Wisdom II



Plate LXXXIV:Forest of Wisdom II, Oil on Canvas

152 cm x 183 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

'Forest of Wisdom II' (Plates LXXXIV) is the third painting chronicling the sequence of socio-cultural events at the New Yam festival. It is a monochromatic painting that dwells on depth, blue hues, space and time. The cool colours are symbolic of evening, serene environment and quietness. It is evening and most of the activities are over. 'New Yam' festival is still on, as epitomized by the crowded root forms, but not at full swing at this time of the day. It will soon be over for the activities. Nonetheless, the celebration continues tomorrow.

4.1.5 Phase V: Roots of Fashion

'Roots of Fashion' (Phase V) consists of mixed-media paintings (Plates LXXXV - LXXXVIII and CXXIII - CXXV), created with a taproot, branch roots and nodes. The artworks produced under Phase V differ from paintings produced at other phases of the study in terms of materiality, techniques, the tactile and textural qualities of the compositions. Unconventional materials and collage techniques are used in the production process to enhance the metaphorical contents of the works, in preference to the conventional painting materials, such as acrylics, pastels and oil colours. Unconventional materials consisting of jute sheets (recycled from worn out jute sacks), polythene sheets (recycled from discarded rice sacks), woollen yarns (used for hair attachments), raffia sheets (from local trays, hats and fans), discarded fabrics offcuts, synthetic beads and coral beads were used.

Fashion is among the three basic necessities of life. After food and shelter, fashion follows. Trending fashion is a significant factor in revitalizing the socio-cultural well-being of the community. In each painting, the picture plane is dominated by a taproot, which epitomizes the omnipotence of change in fashion trend. Under a common thematic focus, the paintings narrate the trajectory of fashion trend in Nigeria, making multiple references to societal happenings, culture and tradition of Nigeria as well as the proliferation of foreign fashion, culture and tradition. However, there are some variations in compositional structures of the paintings regarding the choice of materials, colour combinations, techniques and the tactile textural qualities.

4.1.5.1 Roots of Fashion



Plate LXXXV:Roots of Fashion, Jute and Polythene

102 cm x 165 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

'Roots of Fashion' (Plates LXXXV) is a mixed-media painting, composed of a cross-section of Cassia tora root pattern and flat planes. The roots forms are created with pieces of jute, cut out from discarded jute sacks (Figure 52). Similarly, the flat planes are created with polythene materials, sourced from rice sacks (Figure 53). These discarded food sacks were initially used for the packaging and distribution of food commodities, such as rice, beans, sugar and garry within Nigeria, African countries and across different countries in the world.

Jute and polythene materials are used in this composition to enhance the metaphoric content of Cassia tora root forms. Jute has been in use by traders and farmers for food packaging since time immemorial. The worn out jute bags with turn parts and stripped edges are due to such a use. Cassia tora roots forms of jute materials epitomize the evolution of fashion in Nigeria. The brown earth colours of jute are also testaments of the long history of

fashionable wears in Nigeria. The chequered planes of brown, yellow and silver are symbols of the variety of fashion styles in the country.

4.1.5.2 Roots of Fashion II



Plate LXXXVI:Roots of Fashion II, Polythene, Woollen Yarns &Fabricoffcuts
122 cm x 182 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

The second painting, 'Roots of Fashion II' (Plate LXXXVI) is more colourful than the first painting. The mixed-media composition is related to the previous work in terms of the thematic focus akin to fashion trend in Nigeria, with a variation in materiality. It is a polychromatic composition, led by blue and yellow hues. The picture plane is dominated by cross sections of Cassia tora root pattern, created with blue and yellow layers, cut out from polythene materials. The Cassia tora root pattern, created with polythene is framed with a thick outline, made with woollen yarns. The polychromatic background is composed of sheets of colourful fabric offcuts.

4.1.5.3 Roots of Fashion III



Plate LXXXVII:Roots of Fashion III,Woollen Yarns, Fabric offcuts,
Beads & Polythene, 122 cm x 182 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

'Roots of Fashion III' (Plate LXXXVII) differs from the two previous works in terms of colour combination and materials. Beads are added to the composition of this third painting. A Cassia tora root pattern, created with layers of Beads, Polythene, Woollen Yarns and Fabric offcuts, symbolizes the abundance of fashion designs and dresses in Nigeria. From the polythene segments, strands of woollen yarns propagate downwards, replicating the downward growth of Cassia tora roots as well as the downward flow of long hairs. The woollen yarns, mostly used as hair attachments, enhances the tactile qualities of this composition. The colour zones of white, gold, yellow and red hues represent the foreign influence on Nigerian fashion. The tap root and branch roots are framed with local beads, which make the root pattern stand out from the composition. This denotes the uniqueness of traditional Nigerian wears when compared to other wears in the fashion world.

4.1.5.4 Roots of Fashion IV



Plate LXXXVIII:Roots of Fashion IV, Jute, Polythene, Raffia,
Woollen Yarns, Beads & Fabric offcuts, 152 cm x 183 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

The fourth painting, 'Roots of Fashion IV' (Plate LXXXVIII) relies on multiple references to a variety of themes, including 'variety is the spice of life' (an allegory), festival, wedding and other aspects of Nigerian culture and tradition. The picture plane is dominated by Cassia tora root forms. At the right side of the painting, there is a cross section of the root pattern with a tap root and nodes, created with jute material. From the taproot, the branch roots and nodes spread all over the picture plane. The nodes are depicted by various circular sheets of jute, polythene, woollen yarns, raffia and fabrics offcuts, framed with beads. They epitomize the abundance of fashion designs and dresses, ranging from the local to foreign

styles in Nigeria. The branch roots link up the nodes and various colourful planes, highlighting the relationships among various fashions worn in Nigeria for different social events. The colour zones of silver, gold, yellow and red hues represent the foreign influence on Nigerian fashion, while the circular layer made with raffia signify the uniqueness of Nigerian traditional wears within the fashion world.

CHAPTER FIVE

CATALOGUE

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section is an artist's curatorial statement, which narrates the inspiration and philosophy behind the researcher's works. The second section is a portfolio of thirty-seven works (Plates LXXXIX- CXXV) produced in the course of the research but were not included in the preceding chapters. The artworks are grouped in five phases according to the five research objectives.

5.1 Artist's Curatorial Statement and Philosophy

The image world is brimmed with visual metaphors with a recursive thematic focus on 'issues'. Most discourses on how to develop Nigeria is overshadowed by talks and visual metaphors based on issues, including economic, socio-cultural, ethnic, religious, political, security, infrastructural, agricultural, health, educational among other issues. It is always issues that dominate the talk, decision and implementation, yet in terms of development, Nigeria continues to lag behind compared to most nations. Studies have shown that too much emphasis on issues with less emphasis on the well-being of the citizens will not lead to the overall progress of a nation. For Nigeria to make substantial progress, considerable attention should be paid to the well-being of her citizenry. The peace and unity, which this country enjoys when the national team is playing a world tournament, are noteworthy examples of the benefits of investing in well-being.

Hence the need to revitalize the well-being of Nigerians with metaphorical rendition of root forms, as another vibrant way of articulating solutions to solving her problems. The philosophy behind these artistic creations is dominated by positive mental attitude. The artist believes that with positive mental attitude, a nation can make great progress. The

metaphorical rendition of root forms as visual symbols that reflect on the well-being phenomena relies on the researcher's perceptual encounter with Cassia tora roots and the socio-cultural life of Nigerians. This led to the redefinition of Cassia tora root forms in painting.

With Cassia tora root forms as a subject matter, the researcher creates subjective realities. A variety of techniques, including brush gesture, palette knife impasto, hard-edge, bright colours, linear expressions and collage were major interrogating elements in the rendition of forms. In the light of analogous and contextual processes, buoyed by the elements and principles of design, the research brings to bear the emotional content and symbolic colours of Vincent Van Gogh's Post-Impressionist style, made visible with vibrant colours in painting. Sullivan (2010) observes: "central feature of art practice is that it embodies ideas that are given form in the process of making artworks. Irrespective of the informing sources, media preferences, or image-base, the artist exercises individual control over the creation and presentation of artefacts as forms of knowledge."

Art exist as a duality of theory and practice. The absence of one renders the other incomplete and in an extreme circumstance, inconsequential. The portfolio is premised on giving the viewer a glimpse of the production phases of the root-inspired artworks. The duality of this catalogue reduces prejudices. Kleiner (2011) acknowledges there are shortcomings that freedom of interpretation poses, especially for the viewer in understanding works of art. Sullivan (2010) however, contends that such criticism fades away as the viewer absorbs the contextual implications of the works. Viewing the works from the viewpoint of the researcher's philosophy is appropriate, as the artist's personal and social worlds would be better understood if viewed from the artist's perspective. In other words, the viewer would have deeper knowledge about Cassia tora roots if the artist's personal views are comprehended.

A variety of titles including ‘Germination of Gold’, ‘Aso Rock’, ‘Bless them Mama Africa’, ‘Romeo and Juliet’, ‘Roots of inspiration’, ‘Digging for gold’, ‘Fiesta’, ‘Forest of Wisdom’ and ‘Roots of Fashion’ show that the artist’s thematic direction transcended beyond the physical roots. They draw analogies from societal happenings such as relationships, politics, farming tradition, new yam festival and fashion trend. Root forms are rendered as metaphors for inspiration, love, perseverance among other motivational themes. The compositional elements of the research paintings are dominated by Cassia tora root forms, though there are variations in materiality, techniques and the sizes of the canvases. Unconventional materials, such as jute, polythene, woollen yarns, raffia, beads and fabrics offcuts were used in Phase V.

The paintings produced are aesthetic documents of various studio experimentations with root forms, well-being phenomena, materials and techniques. They focus on rendering root forms metaphorically which is distinct from the traditional study of the Cassia tora roots. Works produced are visual metaphors or conceptual paintings because they relied on analogous, dialectical and contextual methods. The works reveal Cassia tora root forms metaphorical propensities as the compositions evoke a better state of mind for Nigerians. The portfolio provides the viewers with unprejudiced perspective, to ponder over the works, evolve their own interpretations and bring forth fresh views on root forms.

5.2 Portfolio

5.2.1 Phase I: Singular Element



Plate LXXXIX:Germination of Gold II, Ink and Acrylic on Paper

124 cm x 91 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

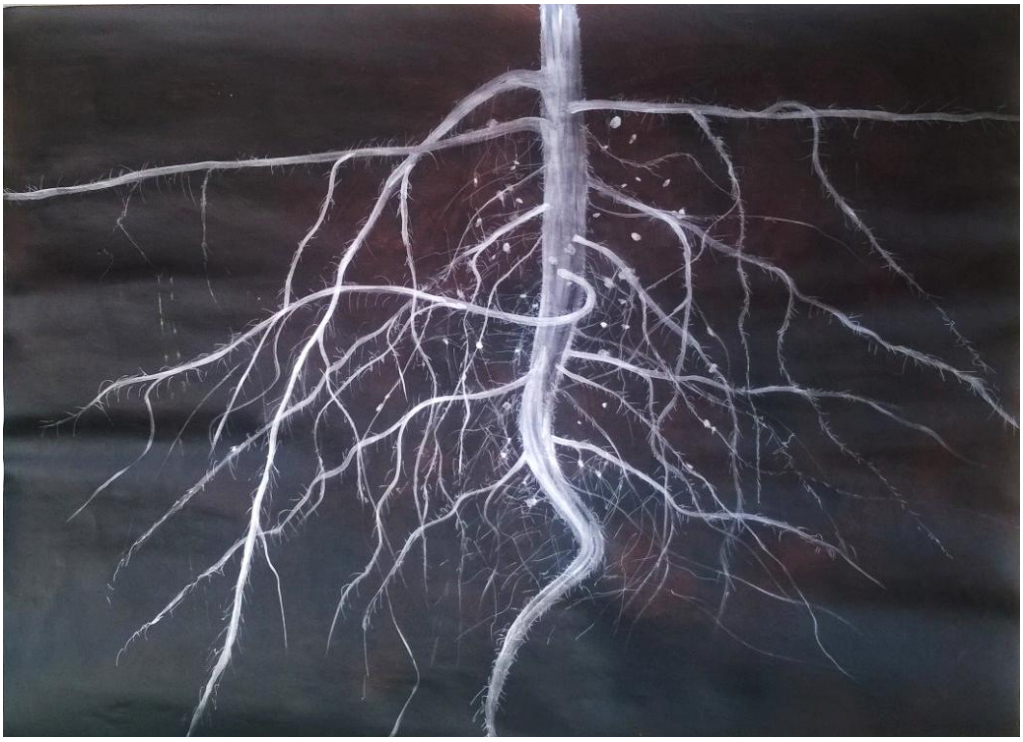


Plate XC:Germination of Gold III, Ink and Acrylic on Paper

91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCI:Guerrilla Warrior II, Acrylic on paper

91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCII:Guerrilla Warrior III, Oil on Canvas
99 cm x 93 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCIII:Guerrilla Warrior IV, Oil on Canvas
100 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCIV:Hero II, Oil on Canvas
143 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

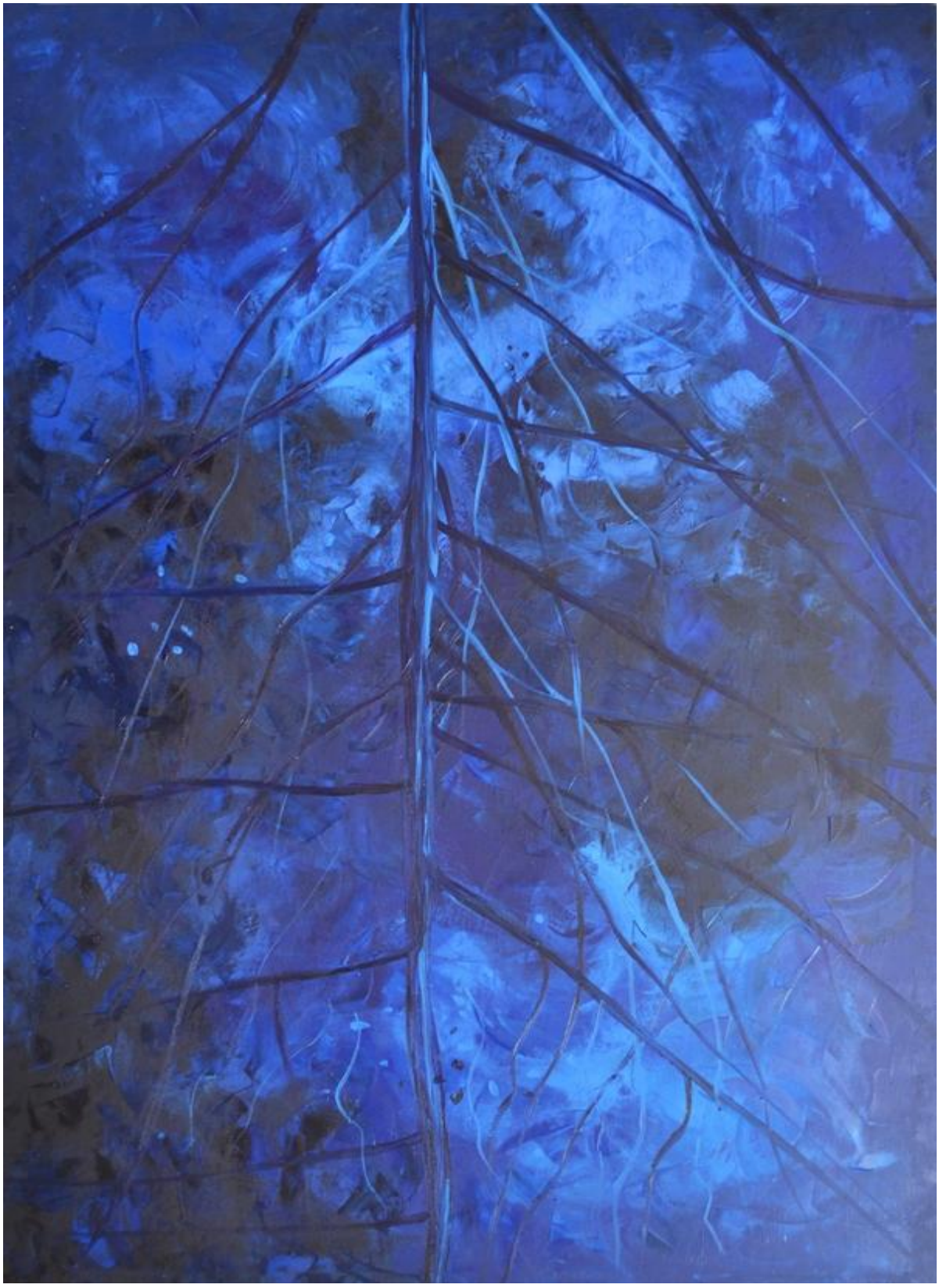


Plate XCV:Hero III, Oil on Canvas
143 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCVI:Hero IV, Oil on Canvas
75 cm x 79 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCVII:AsoRock II, Oil on Canvas
93 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCVIII:Bless them Mama Africa II, Oil on
120 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate XCIX:Bless them Mama Africa III, Oil on Canvas
122 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate C:Bless them Mama Africa IV, Acrylic on Canvas
77 cm x 61 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

5.2.2 Phase II: Romeo and Juliet



Plate CI:Romeo and Juliet IV, Oil Pastel on Paper
91 cm x 124 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate CII:Romeo and Juliet V, Oil on Canvas
112 cm x 165 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015



Plate CIII:Romeo and Juliet VI, Oil on Canvas
112 cm x 165 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2015

5.2.3 Phase III: Nodal Forms

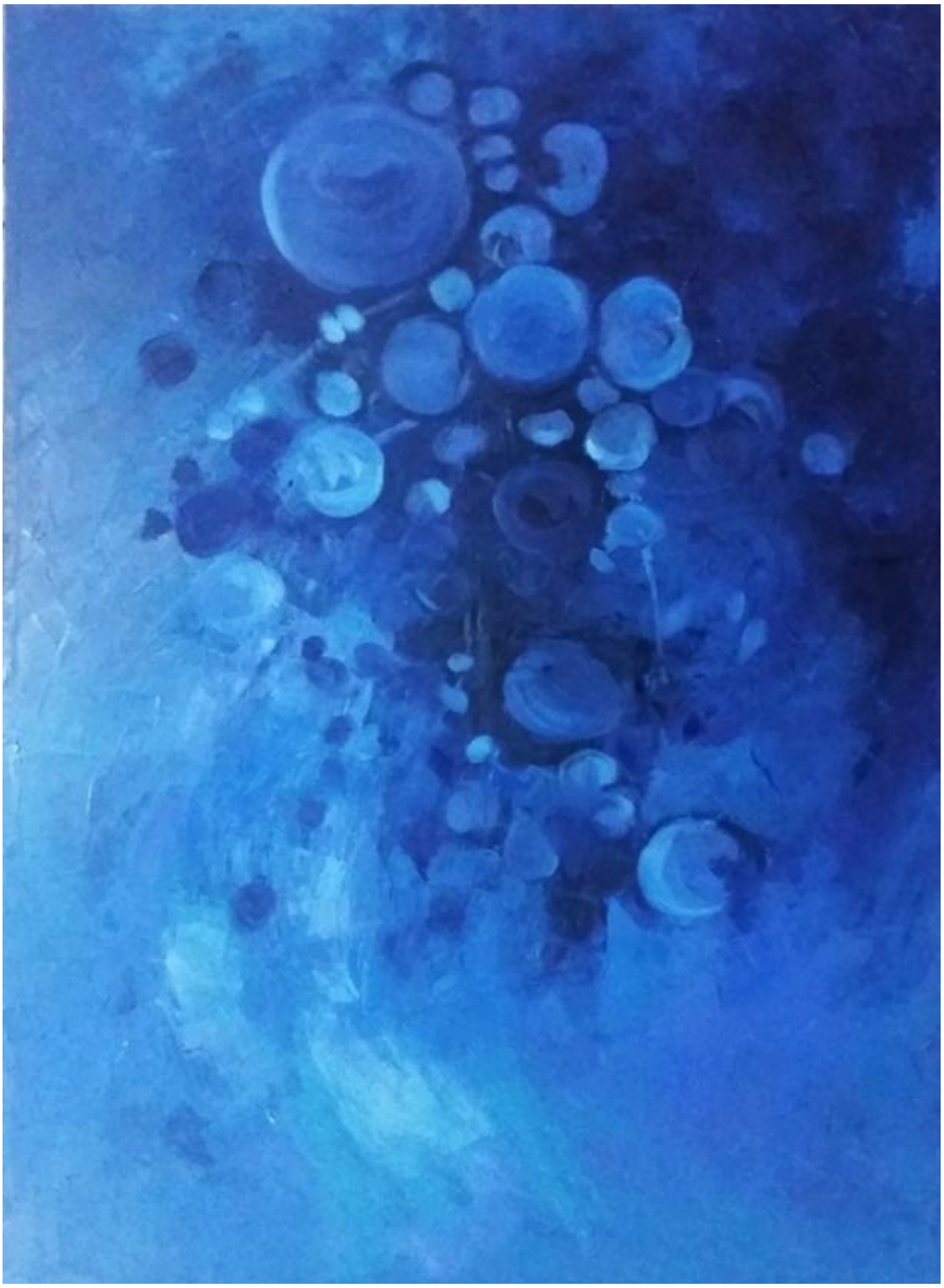


Plate CIV:Nodes of inspiration III, Oil on Canvas
130 cm x 90 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CV:Nodes of inspiration IV, Oil on Canvas
92 cm x 78 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CVI:Gyrating Stars II, Oil on Canvas
Canvas, 122 cm x 89 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CVII:Gyrating Stars III, Oil on Canvas
112 cm x 165 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CVIII:Reflections II, Oil on Canvas
142 cm x 103 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CIX:Reflections III, Oil on Canvas
147 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

5.2.4 Phase IV: Multiple Elements



Plate CX:Flames II, Enamel on Canvas
126 cm x 136 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXI:Flames III, Oil on Canvas
101 cm x 100 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXII:Flames IV, Oil on Canvas
100 cm x 93 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

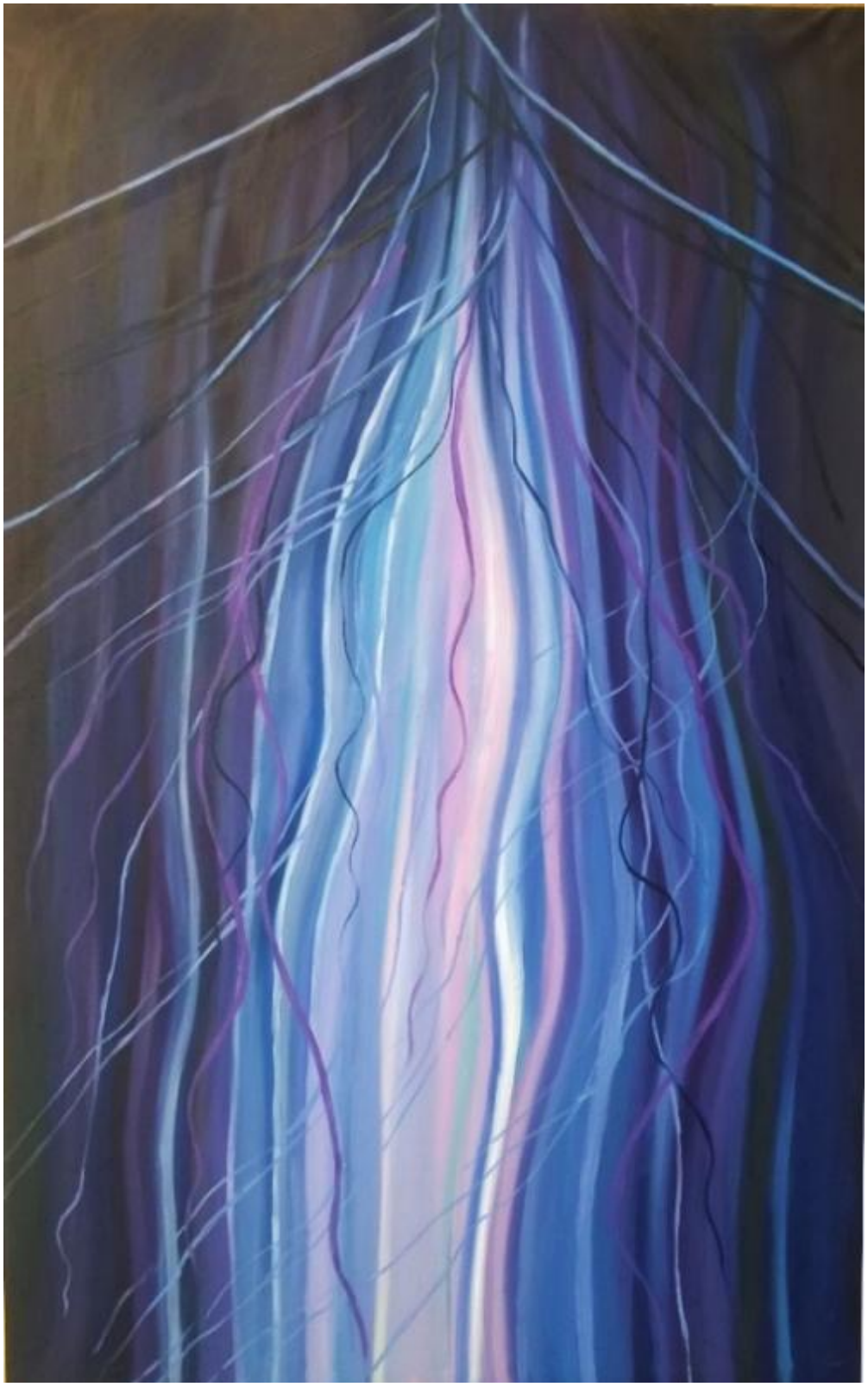


Plate CXIII:Roots of inspiration II, Oil on Canvas
162 cm x 102 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXIV:Roots of inspiration III, Oil on Canvas
102 cm x 153 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



122 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

Plate CXV:Digging for Gold II, Oil on Canvas



152 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

Plate CXVI:Digging for Gold III, Oil on Canvas



Plate CXVII:Fiesta II, Oil on Canvas
140 cm x 110 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXVIII:Fiesta III, Oil on Canvas
102 cm x 153 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXIX:Fiesta IV, Oil on Canvas
152 cm x 152 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXX:Fiesta V, Oil on Canvas
130 cm x 111 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016

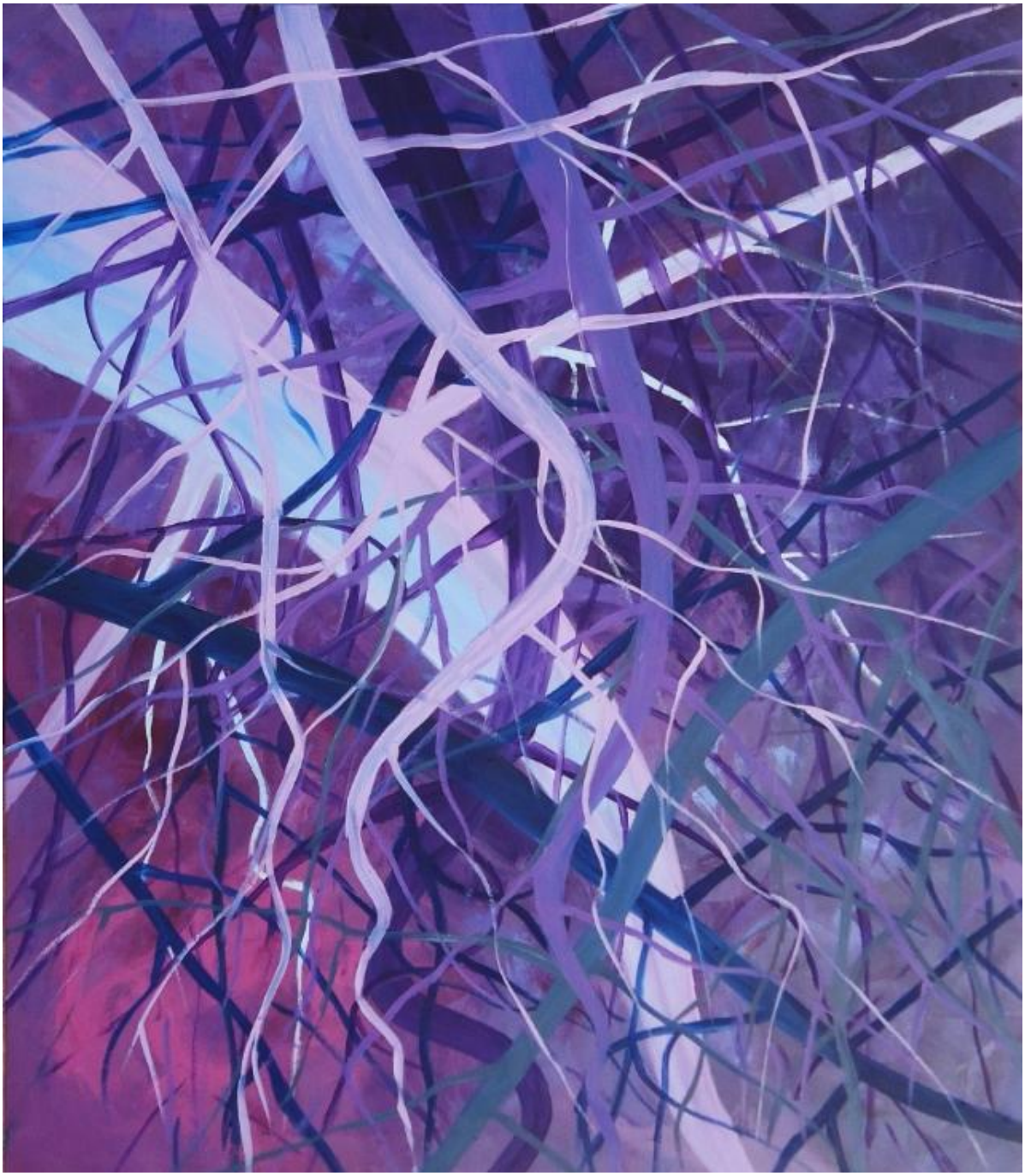


Plate CXXI:Forest of Wisdom III, Oil on Canvas
129 cm x 111 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2016



Plate CXXII:Forest of Wisdom IV, Oil on Canvas
121 cm x 152 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

5.2.5 Phase V: Roots of Fashion

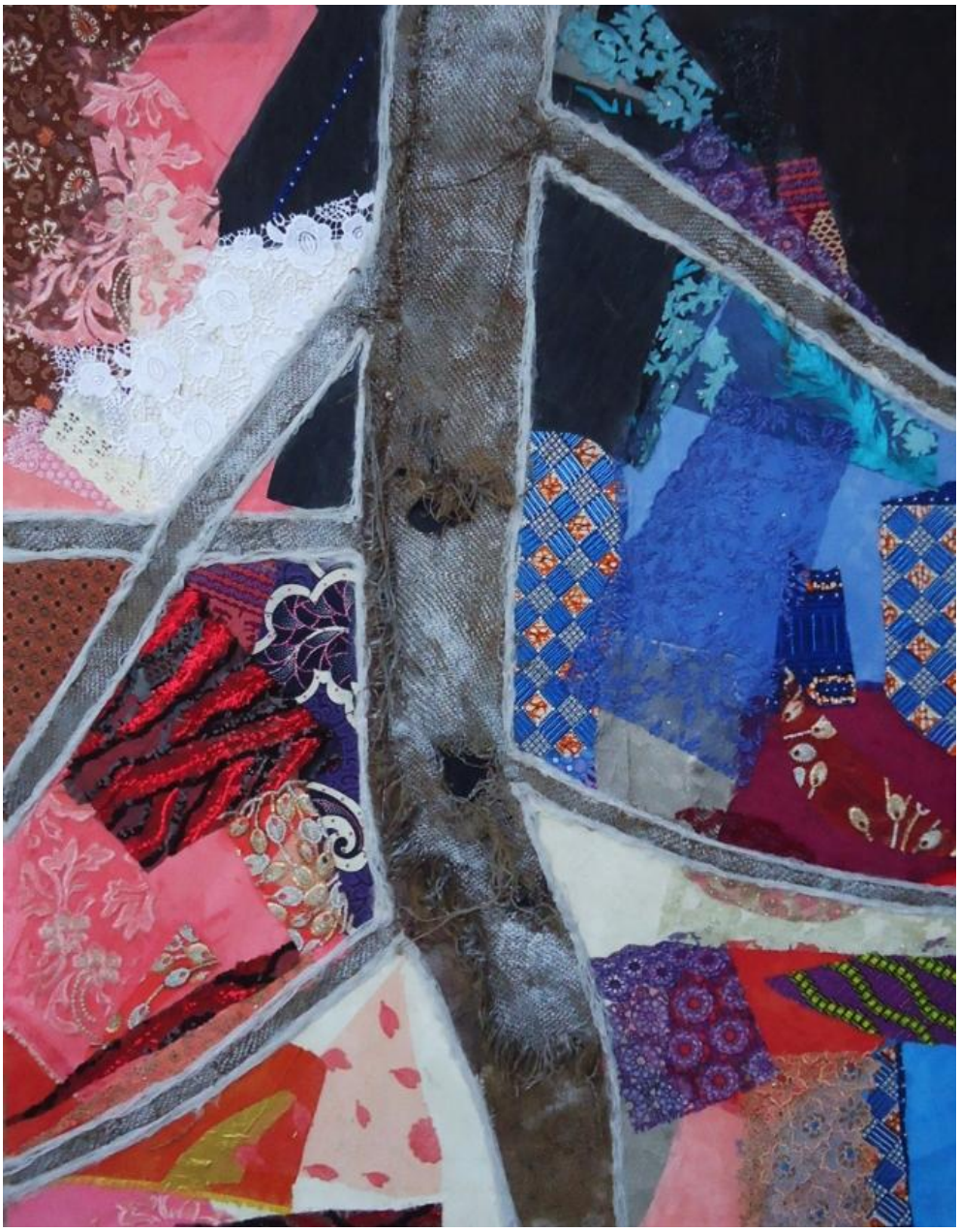


Plate CXXIII:Roots of Fashion V, Fabric offcuts,Jute & Woollen Yarns

152 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate CXXIV:Roots of Fashion VI, Fabric offcuts, Polythene & Woollen Yarns
152 cm x 122 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017



Plate CXXV:Roots of Fashion VII, Fabric offcuts, Woollen Yarns, Jute,
Polythene & Raffia, 122 cm x 182 cm, Stephen Achugwo, 2017

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

Cassia tora root pattern is composed of a taproot, branch roots and nodes. These components provide a creative impetus in creating paintings with metaphorical propensities. Metaphorical rendition of forms is idea based, contextual, analogous and rely on conceptual blending of form and content. Neither the metaphorical rendition of forms nor the use of root forms has been exhausted in painting. Vincent Van Gogh, IshrathHumairah, Cedar Lee and Mary Shiros are among the artists, who have used root forms in producing paintings. In the works of these artists, the realistic images of plants and other natural images from the environment were added to the composition. There are also little attempts at metaphorical rendering of forms, as the artists focused on technical dexterity and beauty of their compositions.

This offered the researcher an opportunity to further study the root forms with the aim of using the Cassis Tora root forms to create paintings that will metaphorically reflect on the wellbeing of Nigerians. The set objectives of the study are first to explore the dynamic features of Cassia tora root pattern in painting. Second, to infuse symbolic colours into the root forms with the intention of enhancing their metaphoric content. Third, to generate compositions in painting with the nodes of Cassia tora. Fourth, to create paintings with multiple Cassia tora root patterns. Finally, to lift the metaphoric content of Cassia tora root forms using unconventional materials, such as beads, raffia, jute, polythene, woollen yarns and fabric offcuts.

The Conceptual Framework of the study was driven by features of Post-Impressionism, anchored by symbolic colours and the emotional contents of the works of Vincent Van Gogh. A review of related Literature covered Cassia tora plant in terms of its origin and visual characteristics of the roots. It delved into the conceptual structures of visual metaphor. Postmodernism and Modernism were reviewed with emphasis on Post-impressionism in terms of their styles and techniques, emphasising on metaphorical rendition of forms. Beside theory, the study reviewed related works consisting of root-inspired paintings, root-inspired works in other media and visual metaphors done with unconventional materials.

A variety of root-inspired works analysed, showed the areas of challenges and contributions of various artists on the use of root images and the metaphorical rendition of forms. Root-inspired works of Barbara Snyder, Cedar Lee, Gary Tonge and other artists reveal that the upper part of plants and other natural images of the environment are included in the compositions. There are little attempts at metaphorical rendering of root forms. The major focus of the artists is the beauty of their depictions instead of using the root forms to reflect on societal affairs. This necessitated a review of related mixed media works, that were not inspired by root forms but were made with unconventional materials. The review gave insight to the use of raffia, jute, polythene, beads, woollen yarns, and fabrics offcuts.

This study adopted the Practice-Based Research methodology which is peculiar to the visual artist. Practice-Based is a form of research that strives towards advancing knowledge and understanding, conducted through practice for practice purposes (Candy, 2006). The research also involved certain amount of contemplation and writing. The primary source of data for this study is from the samples of Cassia tora roots, upon which the foundation of the research is established. The data was also sourced from the vibrant colours of Post-Impressionism, allegories, stories, societal affairs and materiality.

The process and procedure entailed preliminary drawings and colour studies with Cassia tora root samples. This led to the production of research paintings. Following the research objectives, the artworks were created in five phases. The first phase, 'Singular Element' laid emphasis at a visual analysis of the subject matter by creating compositions with single Cassia tora root pattern. The painting is a visual metaphor that highlights the notion of 'victory through perseverance'. In the second phase, 'Romeo and Juliet', the taproots of a set of two Cassia tora root pattern entwine each other, reminiscent to the depth of power of love that intertwined Romeo and Juliet. The double root patterns of magenta and yellow hues represent couples from different ethnic regions in Nigeria. At this phase, Cassia tora root is rendered as a visual metaphor, expressing the notion that the ethnic and religious conflicts affecting the wellbeing of Nigerians would fade away, paving way for a country known for peace, unity and progress.

The major creative elements in 'Nodal Forms' (Phase III) series of paintings are the nodes of Cassia tora. In this phase, the taproot and branch roots are de-emphasized in the compositions. In each painting, the picture plane is totalised by nodes, which are portrayed with circles. The colour of Cassia tora nodes is brown, but in the compositions, the nodes replicate colour of the background. This brings fluidity and the sensation of motion to the monochromatic compositions. The nodal forms are fluid as if they will dissolve into the background. The circles and ovals representing the nodes are articulated as bubbles of hope. The paintings are rendered as metaphors of hope for a better Nigeria.

In 'Multiple Elements' (Phase IV) series of paintings, multiple Cassia tora root patterns are deployed to the picture plane. The paintings also dwell on space, depth and lighter hues. The multiple root forms represent the celebrants and their spectators. The textured depth resonates local melodies. The paintings epitomize a visual voice that sings to labour; a labour that sings to the agricultural tradition of Nigerian farmers.

‘Roots of Fashion’ series of paintings (Phase V) were created with Cassia tora root forms, unconventional materials and collage technique. They differ from paintings produced at the preceding phases in terms of materiality and technique. Instead of the conventional painting materials, such as acrylics and oil colours, unconventional materials, consisting of woollen yarns, raffia, Jute, polythene, beads and Fabric offcut were used to create the paintings. The rendition of root forms with these unconventional materials analogously highlights the abundance of fashion designs and dresses, ranging from the local to foreign styles in Nigeria as well as the relationships among various fashions worn in Nigeria. This last series of paintings are metaphors for dynamic nature of the socio-cultural wellbeing.

6.2 Conclusion

Deducing from the outcomes of the objectives, redefinition of experiences can help people to live a happy life. The study dwelled on analogous juxtaposition of root forms and contents. The Cassia root Tora pattern is umbrella-like in shape and in monochromatic shades of brown. The taproot (central root) is orchestrated by branch roots and nodes. The researcher saw the opportunity that Cassia tora roots could offer in creating paintings. He reckoned the possibility of metaphorical approach in utilizing the root forms to create compositions.

Enchanted by the dynamic patterns of Cassia tora roots, the researcher carried out series of studio experimentation with Cassia tora root forms in the light of elements and principles of design as well as speculative notions, allegories, stories and societal happenings. This led to the production of non-figurative paintings. The final procedure was the analogous process which aided the researcher in juxtaposing Cassia tora root forms with storylines reflecting on the wellbeing of Nigerians. The paintings produced redefine root forms in diverse ways, such as metaphors for inspiration, perseverance, peace, coexistence, reincarnation, unity, progress, love and cultural evolution.

This study shows that artists are capable of creating knowledge by visually contemplating plant roots in painting. It is a stimulus of philosophical thoughts that invokes the notion of 'elevating the ordinary (weed, such as Cassia tora)' to the extraordinary' visual symbols. Hence the research has fulfilled the assertion by Read (1977) that art has no limit and that it is everything that can be imagined and expressed. Contemporary artists need to acquire more knowledge of the environment and ascribe meaning to them, so as to understand the future. This study concludes that metaphorical rendition of Cassia tora root forms in painting, has created not only visual metaphors that express hope for a better Nigeria but also visual symbols that transcend the phenomena of roots beyond their botanical garden into icons of expression in painting.

6.3 Findings

The findings are stated thus:

i. The research identified in 'Singular Element' (Phase I, Plates LXVII - LXXI and LXXXIX – C), the taproot, branch roots and the nodes as ideal features for painting. The textured background of green colour gives an impression of a battlefield. The metaphorical content of the painting focuses on the 'well-being' of Nigerians in view of perseverance and inspiration. For instance, singular root pattern of Cassia tora is appropriated as a hero, which serves as a metaphor for inspiration (Plate LXVIII). A combination of pink, cerulean, yellow and purple circular band of colours at the centre of the background, gives an impression of excitement that accompanies the victory.

ii. The research discovered in 'Romeo and Juliet' (Phase II, Plates LXXII-LXXIV and CI-CIII) that, in the light of analogies, the symbolic vibrant colours imbue the paintings with social meaning, relating to certain events, such as wedding. An

example is ‘Romeo and Juliet II’ (Plate LXXIII). The picture plane is totalised by a polychromatic composition of yellow, magenta, blue, brown and green. This colour combination typifies the colourful events in Nigeria, such as wedding. The yellow and magenta infused into the double root pattern that dominate the picture plane, evoke passionate levels of excitements felt during marriage ceremonies. Chequered planes of various colour zones represent families and friends of the couples. The colour zones also enshrine the hope and aspirations of the couples. The dynamic nature of the composition gives an impression of motion. The sensation of movement symbolizes prosperity and progress.

iii. The research found out that in ‘Nodal Forms’ (Phase III, Plates LXXV-LXXVIII and CIV-CIX), the background gives an impression of a space full of stars. For this research, it is a denoting of an entertainment arena, perhaps a club or a stadium. The nodal forms look like bubbles, which connotes some sense of fireworks. The composition could be likened to celebrations. They also invoke the feeling of hope. The rhythm reminds one of Atlanta ’96, when KanuNwankwo and fellow Under-23 men’s Team were being crowned with Olympic Golden medals they won at 1996 Olympic games held in Atlanta USA.

iv. The research discovered that in ‘Multiple Elements’ (Phase IV, Plates LXXXV – LXXXVIII and CXXIII – CXXV) the paintings created with multiple elements of Cassia tora root forms, crowded forms on the picture planes appear like forest, an expression of so much depth. For this study it is a denoting of festival; an environment charged into a celebrating mood. The rhythm of root patterns represents a crowd of spectators. The harmony of colours is a denoting of a peaceful gathering. This thematic direction is exemplified by ‘Fiesta’ and ‘Forest of Wisdom’ series of paintings, which chronicle the events at the ‘New Yam’ Festival.

v. The research found out that in ‘Roots of Fashions’ (Phase V, Plates LXXXV–LXXXVIII and CXXIII–CXXV) the paintings made with unconventional materials, the sheets of raffia, fabric offcuts, jutes, polythene, beads and woollen yarns symbolize fashion trends. The colourful patches represent changes in fashion caused by the influence of the cultures of other countries on Nigerian indigenous culture. An example of which are the unconcealed dress style at the beginning, later the concealed dressing, and a combination of the two currently experienced in Nigeria. Furthermore, Nigerian traditional textiles have been replaced by Western and Oriental import to Nigeria. Weddings have been split into traditional and English. The native attire is used during traditional wedding, whilst the foreign wears are used for the English wedding. For this study, the patches of materials of various colours show that culture of a people is dynamic, susceptible to cultural influences of other countries and continues to evolve.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends:

i. Further researches should be carried out to reveal other ways of rendering Cassia tora root forms in painting, such as performatives, kinetics and site-specific.

ii. Researchers, such as textile and graphic designers should study root forms of plants in order to contribute to the development of aesthetics.

iii. Cartoonists can adapt the root forms in their illustrations of stories, relating to the environment, animals, politics, among others, for the Newspapers and Magazines.

6.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This research established:

i. metaphorical possibilities of root form rendition in painting by utilizing Cassia tora root forms to create visual metaphors in modern Nigerian art;

ii. the creation of painting compositions that dwelled on analogous juxtaposition of the Cassia tora root forms with the well-being of Nigerians;

iii. the artworks produced with Cassia tora root forms as affirmation that aesthetic production in association with the elements and principles of design (such as line, rhythm, movement and colour) upon a canvas, are ideal approach for artists, in representing contemporary realities;

iv. an inter-disciplinary corporation among researchers, as some evolving research paradigms, such as Evidence-Based research methodology used in medical fields and Art-Based research methodology used in education and Social Sciences fields, rely on art-based methods;

v. beneficial links between art and other disciplines, including textile and graphic design.

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