CREATING SCULPTURAL FORMS INSPIRED BY THE *IJELE* MASQUERADE

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this Thesis entitled ***Creating Sculptural Forms Inspired by the Ijele Masquerade***was carried outby me in the Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

The information derived from existing 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 any University.

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CERTIFICATION

This thesis titled ***Creating Sculptural Forms Inspired by the Ijele Masquerade,*** by Ephraim KelechiUgochukwu, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Sculpture of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge, visual arts practice and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to God Almighty. I give Him praise and honour. He gave me the grace through our mother Mary to persevere, pursue this degree to the end and the realization of this thesis. In the same vein this study is dedicated to my mother; Mrs. Victoria ChiawolenwaUgochukwu, Mr.ChinyereLovethUgochukwu (My beloved wife), and children.

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ABSTRACT

The cultural identity of African people is gradually dying, scholars likeIkwuemesi (2000) believes that; the influx of western ways of life threatened the continued existence of the foundation of Igbo culture. The situation worsened, given to the fact that most parts of Igbo land were reduced to ruins during the 1967 – 1970 Nigeria-Biafra civil war, they embraced the western way of life, thereby neglecting their precious and priceless cultural practices. This is also evidenced in the gradual dwindling and extinction of the masquerade practices, and has equally become obvious in the so called technological advancement, and unperfected technological growth which has led to many system failures. Some Igbo cultural practices absorbed the Western way of life into its cultural activity in sustenance of her practices like the *Ijele* masquerade. An *Ijele* of 1950 differs from that of 2016 because the *Ijele's* of 1950 and 2016 represent what is obtainable during their time and technological development. This research created sculptural forms from the *Ijele* masquerade and also created awareness on masquerade activity especially the *Ijele* masquerade, even though this cultural activity tried to blend with the modern time, people still see the practice as being fetish. The problem of this study is that visual artists, have not explored the individual forms that make up the *Ijele* masquerade, and they have not been able to isolate and study these forms, artists have also not carefully considered the philosophical, and artistic perspectives inherent in the *Ijele* form for sculptural dialogue. The objectives of the study were; to identify and produce sculptural relief elements of the *Ijele* masquerade, extract various sculptural forms cladded with coloured fabrics inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade, create female forms from the *Ijele* masquerade, explore the possibilities of producing female and animal forms as they co-exist within the natural environment, extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade, create an outdoor installation sculpture, that will be a culmination of all the basic forms extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade. The research was guided by the theory of Hans-George Gadamer (1900-2002) and the philosophy of the Natural synthesis (the idea of borrowing from traditional elements and concepts to be infused into formal art). The research methodology discusses the various methods explored especially the practice-based research method. Scholars and traditional artists were visited for data collection on the *Ijele* masquerade, the materials used to actualize the studio exploration and its written components were discussed. The works produced were discussed in line with the objectives of the study, in the context of the *Ijele* Anambra Igbo philosophy world view, which was guided by the research questions. The findings were discussed in line with the objectives of the study which are that; *Ijele* masquerade's upper section is made up of sculptural representations of human daily activity, and the spiritual world, while the lower section comprises of uli signs and symbols. The symbols are philosophies of day to day living of the people. It also contains animal forms like; the *Enyi* (elephant), *Oko-okpa* (rooster) *Ngwere* (lizard), *Eke* (python), *Oji* (kolanut), *Kpakpando* (star) among others, these motifs are significance to the Northern Anambra Igbos. It was observed that the *Ijele* masquerade is a female masquerade, the head gear seen on the series of *Munaonye ga agba egwu* (who will dance with me) that emanated from the studio exploration was inspired by the Igbo *Isi Nwoji* motif. This research created sculptural forms of human beings and animal as they co-existed within the environment, which shows activity of sacrifices, before and after the enactment of the *Ijele* masquerade performance, a lot of ritual cleansing are done for both the performerand the entire community, and the research also created an outdoor installation sculpture of the *Ijele* masquerade titled *Elegance* measuring 6m X 3.4m. The researcher concludes that the *Ijele* masquerades created by the traditional

artists are meant for entertainment and for the Igbo to reaffirm their place in the co-existence between them, the ancestors and the gods. The study has also revealed that, the present-day traditional sculptors are no longer commissioned by villagers and individuals to produce masquerade, primarily because of the advent of Christianity and the introduction of Western cosmetics. The research recommends that, for forms to be derived from *Ijele* masquerade; the motif (*Ije Nwa Ugo, Isi Nwoji, Kpakpando, Akara ndu, Ichi na Mbi ezi*) can further be explored by researchers, other materials can be incorporated to aid in deriving sculptural forms, as a medium of expression in studio exploration.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

AbubaAkpu:	Cassava leaf.
Agworo-agwo:	Spiral of concentric circles.
Akalaka:	Ones destiny.
Akpakwuru Ijele:	Ijele's lower segment.
Akupe Ijele:	Ijele's fan
Alammuo:	Land of the spirit.
Anyanwu:	Sun.
Chiukwu:	The supreme God.
Dibia:	Native doctor or a diviner.
Eke:	Python.
Eke-Ogba:	Ijele's centre, part of the Ijele masquerade, where the royal python is found to be positioned.
Ekwe:	Wooden gong.
Ekwensu:	The devil.
Enyi:	Elephant.
Igba Ijele:	Special musical instrument used during the *Ijeles* performance.
Ije Nwa Ugo:	Movement of the eagle.
Ijele masquerade:	A special type of masquerade popular among the Igbo people of the Northern part of the Omambala area in Anambra State, Nigeria.
Ikwe*:*	Stool.
Isi Nwoji:	The part of akola nut line where it allows for easy breaking.

Ji:	Yam.
Kpakpando:	Star.
Mbe:	Tortoise.
MboAgunaOkaraOuwa:	Leopard's claw and half-moon.
MboAgu:	Leopard's claw.
Mgbede:	A ritual done to mark the passing from girlhood to womanhood.
Mgbi ezi:	Out door.
Mkpu Ijele:	Ijele's upper segment.
Mmanwu:	Masquerade.
Mmuo:	Spirit.
Ngwere:	lizard.
Nna Ijele:	Ijele's father.
Nne Ijele:	Ijele's Mother.
Ntupo:	Dots.
Ofo:	The symbol of an Igbo man's power of authority, and also the symbol of Igbo religion.
Ogene:	Metal gong.
Oja:	Flute.
Oji:	Kolanut.
Oko-Okpa:	Rooster.
OkwaNzu abuo	Two bowls of chalk.
Okwa Nzu na Eke:	Chalk bowl and python.
Onu Nwa Nnunu:	Elongated beak of bird.

Onwa:	The moon.
Onye Nku:	Someone carrying a fire wood.
Onye Nnta:	Hunter.
Onye uweojii:	Police man.
Otenkwu:	Palm wine tapper.
Ubom*:*	long drum.Musical instrument.
Uli Ichi:	Uli facial scarification symbol.
Uli:	A decorative patterns done on the human body, especially women. It is made by using liquidsfrom the uli tree and its fruit.
Uyo:	Rattle, a musical instrument.

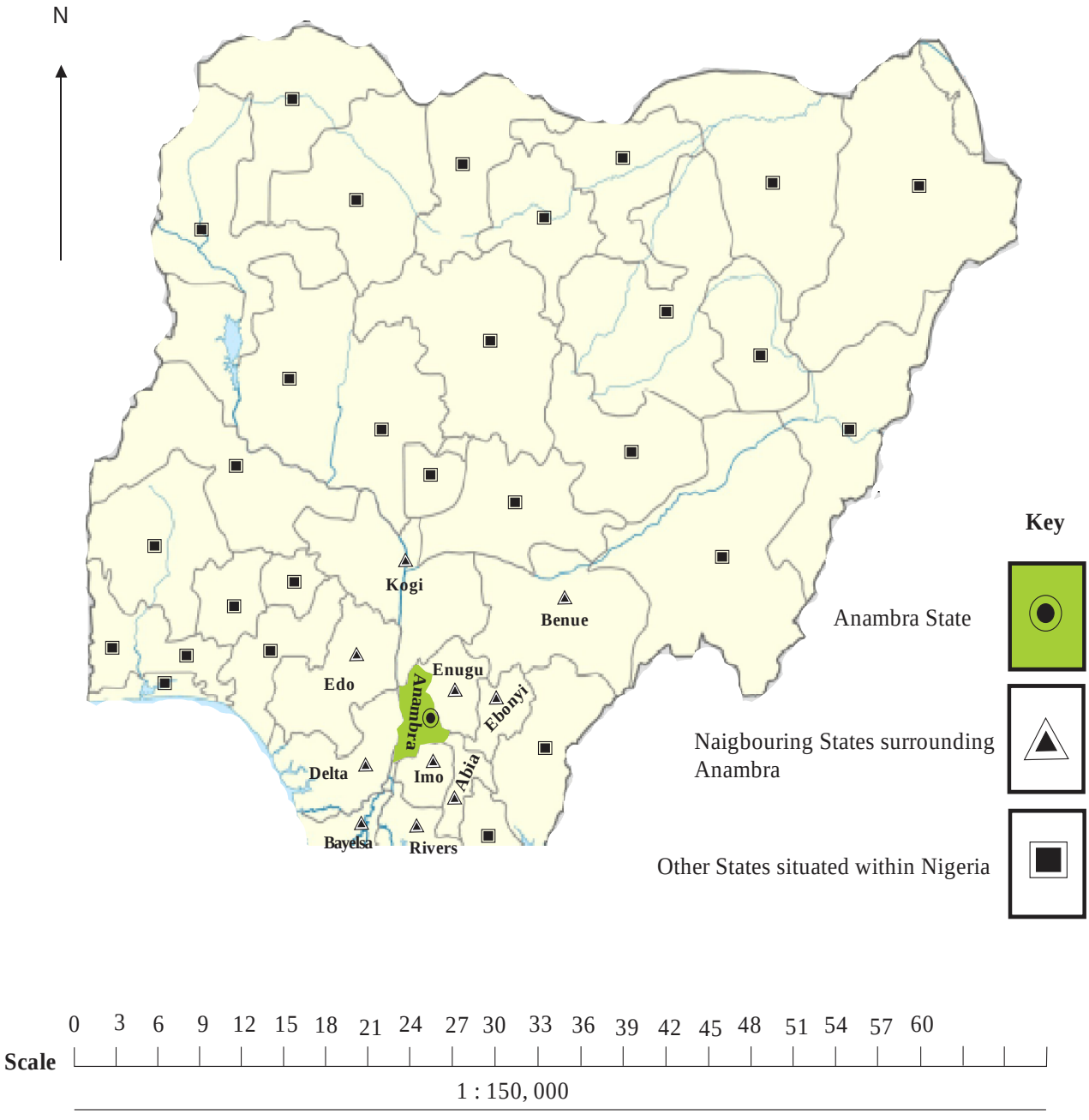


Fig 1: Map of Nigeria showing Anambra State indicated in green, and other naibouring sates (Kogi, Enugu, Benue, Ebnoyi, Abia, ImoAbia, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and Edo State)Source: https://anambrastate.gov.ng/our-maplgas/, Retrieved on April 16, 2017.

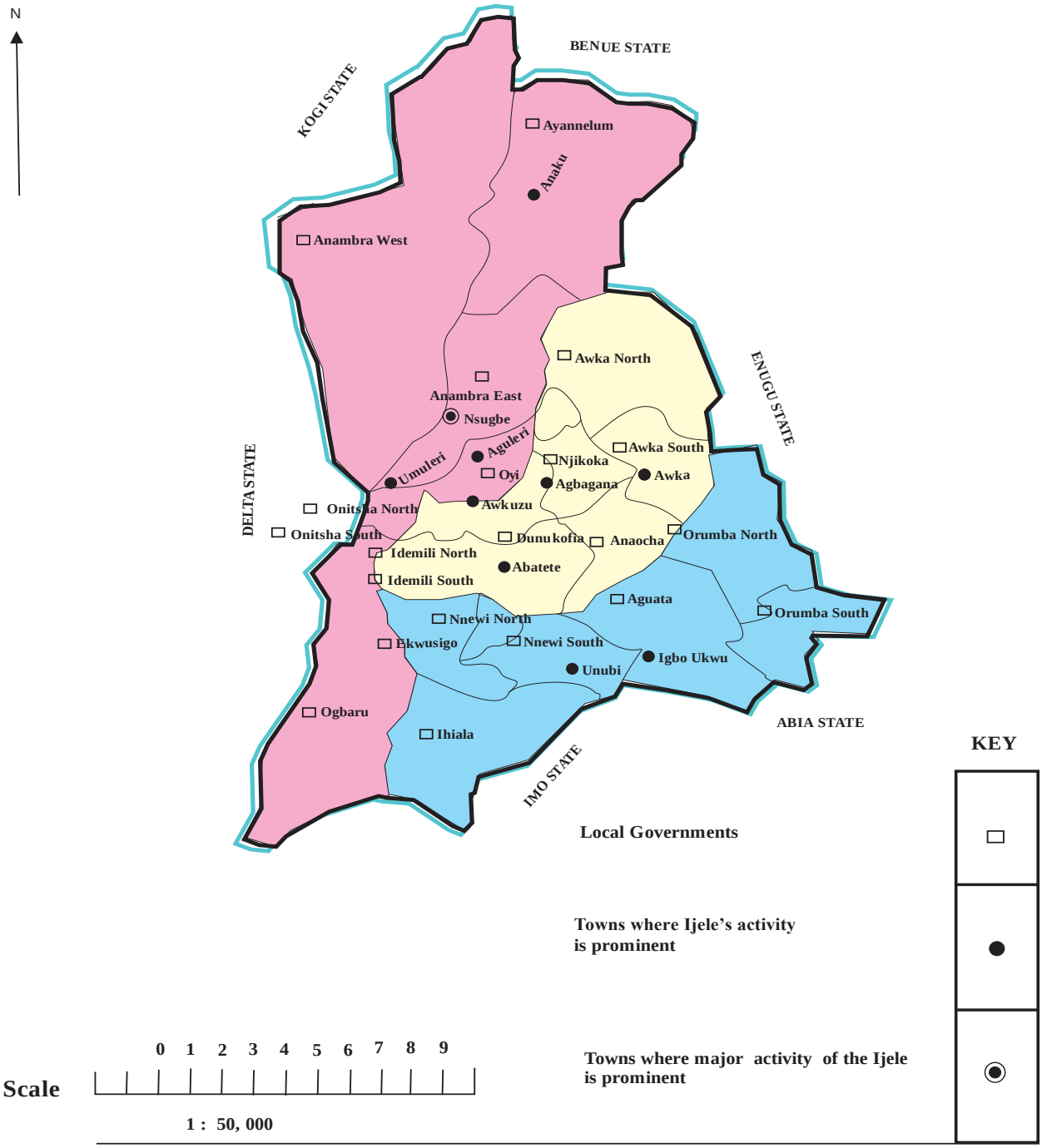


Fig 2: Administrative Map of Anambra State showing towns, indicating where the Ijele Masquerade activity takes place. Source: https://anambrastate.gov.ng/our-maplgas/, Retrieved on April 16, 2017.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the Study

The originof the Omambala people is not quite clear. History has it that as a result of Exodus, mass movement of the tribe of Israel, following the instruction from God, which led to the migration from Egyptto various parts of the world. Some of them came to the confluence of Rivers Niger, known as Oma Mbala River. According to 2006 Census, Omambala people were more than four million, and ranked 10th of the 36 states of the federation (Jannah, 2014).

Anambra State is an anglicised version of the original Oma Mbala; the native name of the Anambra River. The origin of its name is derived from the Anambra River (Omambala) which is a tributary of the famous River Niger. The capital and the seat of government are at Awka, Onitsha and Nnewi which are the biggest commercial and industrial cities. The indigenous ethnic groups in Anambra state are the Igbos, which forms 89% of the population and a small population of 2% of the Igala, who live mainly at the north-western part of the state. The people of Anambra State share boundaries with Delta State to the West, Imo State and Rivers State to the South, Enugu State to the East and Kogi State to the North. This northern part of the Omambala area is where the *Ijele* masquerade activity is most popular,(Maduagwu, 2013).Figs. 1 and 2.

Olottah (personal communication, March 03, 2015)stated that; *"Ijele* was originally intended to scare away the early missionaries who came to Igbo Land. The masquerade also is engaged in the celebration of royalty and greatness in Igbo land".

A dance group called Akunechenyi from Umuleri and Aguleri community in Omambala area started the practice of the *Ijele* masquerade. The first village in which the dance was introduced was Umuatuolu village of Umueri, followed by IgboenuAguleri, Nsugbe, Nneyi Umueri and Naando. *Ijele* masquerade activity is popular among the communities of the Omambala area of Anambra State, which comprises; Anaku, Awka, Omor, Nsugbe, Aguleri, Umuleri, Awkuzu, Nteje, Ogbunike,

Nkwelle-Ezunaka, Umunya, Achalla and other neighbouring communities (Nwa-Ikenga, 2011), (Fig. 2)

Nwanna (2007) states that, "the origin of the *Ijele* is similar to that of most Igbo masquerade, which is still obscure".Okachi (2015) is of the view that, in ancient times about fouty-five masquerades performed ontop of the *Ijele* masquerade.

According to Nwa-Ikenga (2011), during any *Ijele* performance, seven cannon gunshots are released in the air before and after the entertainments. In some Igbo land, communities that have the *Ijele* masquerade believe it connotes admiration, worship, awe, veneration, astonishment, amazement and devotion fit for royalty. *Ijele* has its special music and dance popularly known as *IgbaIjele* (drums of *Ijele*) used for musical accompaniment when it is performing. Its musical instruments include four different sizes of drums, metal gong (*Ogene)*, long drum (*Ubom)*, Rattle (*Uyo)*, wooden gong (*Ekwe)*, and flute (*Oja*) among others. Nwa-Ikenga (2011) states that, "*Ijele* comprises a family of five; Mother (*NneIjele*), Father (*NnaIjele*), Police man (*Onyeuweojii*), Palm wine tapper (*Otenkwu*) and fan carrier (*IjeleAkupe)*.

Nwanna (2007) supports that, "the *Ijele* is usually accompanied by other masquerades *agbogho-mmonwu* (maiden spirit) and masquerades in police costume that clear the way for the *Ijele* and act as a harbinger heralding the coming of the *Ijele*".

Ijele in Igbo land is seen as a metaphysical entity endowed with physical form and multiple meanings. Aniakor (1978), Robinson (2010), and Nwa-Ikenga (2011) are of the view that, the *Ijele* masquerade is decorated with figurine depictions of the everyday aspect of human life. Three main categories dominate the masquerade's design: human and their daily activities; the spirit world; animals and forestry.

Nwanna (2007), Ogbechie (2009), Nwa-Ikenga (2011) Mbanaja (2012), and Okachi (2015)posit that the *Ijele* comprises of two segments: the upper and lower segments divided at the center by a big python.

The upper part or the headdress is called (*MkpuIjele)*. It contains depictions of important moments in life; images of women in labour, and men climbing fruit trees are placed besides critical political experiences, while the lower segment is called (*AkapkwuruIjele)*or (*Ogbanibe)* expressed in the myriad of colours of velvet materials with dominant colours of red, yellow, green and black. *Ijele's* reflective mirror creates beauty. This mysterious mirror is belived to have the magical power to detect anyone with charm or destructive weapon.The mirror represents royalty and might. To the Igbo, it also captures the saying 'I wish you what you wish me' meaning that when one looks in the mirror, what one sees is a reflection of him or herself. The center of *Ijele* is called *Eke-Ogba* (Python) representing the earth goddess, Ala, the soul of Pan Igbo deity.

In the past, it took about one hundred artists and their assistants to work for six months continuously in preparing the *Ijele* costumes before the performance. Presently, it can take one traditional artist a period of one to four months to produce the *Ijele* masquerade because of technological advancement.Most part of the *Ijele's* costum is made up of textile materials. Before the invention of sewing mathchins, the act of sewing was done manually, at present, the use of matchines has helped in speeding up the processes of sewing. A large *Ijele* will be done by six skilled artists for about two months, working for about six hours per day and seven days a week (Nwanna, 2007).

Ijele only appears once every four years to commemorate harvest and execptionally at the death of a Chief, and can also perform once a year at an Ofala festival of any Igbo community king who has the financial capability to own an *Ijele* masquerade.

In summary to all that is described of the *Ijele* masquerade by various scholars, one can say that *Ijele* is a collection of love poetry with its forms, motifs, and movement. *Ijele* is like all the poems written by poets, in a particular language and subject which are compiled into one singul form. It is rich in assorted forms, colours, and myth.

A masquerade is a tool for uniting people with a sense of pride and social and historical continuity. It is believed that masquerading narrates cultural cosmology and produces visual and verbal narratives of cultural identity (Ogbechie, 2009).

Masquerades are sent from the spirit world through an ant hole to interact with human beings (Enekwe, 1987). In the early times during the slave trade, masquerades were used for intimidation, to scare people, catch and sell them into slavery. Presently they are portrayed as dead men that came back to life. They play, dance and make fun. They tell stories of what happened in the spirit world and spoke with the harsh voice and people admired masquerade activities (Ejiofor, 1984).

According to Urama (2012), masquerade sees human life as the highest value in the perception of reality and does everything possible for life to be enjoyed on earth, which fosters the relationship between human beings, the society and ancestors. Okoye (2007) states that,

> Apart from masquerades being performers, they are unarguably the most popular form of communal cultural expression. They are figured as ancestral characters who presumably take on physical forms on the invitation of the community to participate in important communal ceremonies or perform specific social or religious roles. The traditional Igbo masquerade deploys postcolonial discursive strategies as mimicry, allegory, parody, ridicule and translation in its engagement with colonialism.

Masquerades serve as visible expressions of spiritual force and authority that validate the beliefs of society, and reinforce acceptable social modes of conduct. They also symbolise the spiritual power that eradicates social evils. Igbo people believe that, spirits are capable of animating any material object; the masquerade has been a vehicle for the manifestation of the dead and other supernatural forces, including nature spirits and deities, as well as idols created by the imagination and reinforced using ritual and magic (Seleh, 2010).

Artists in the contemporary time, explore the use of the masquerade as a concept in creating artworks. Contemporary artists are seen to borrow from traditional elements. Ogbechie (2009) also suggests that, "it might be more useful to consider all contemporary engagements with indigenous cultures as forms of appropriation that adapt cultural concepts, signs, and symbols. Contemporary African art appropriates indigenous traditions of visual culture in its search for significant ways".

Stokstad (2008) states that, "in searching for ways to express an African identity in art, some of these artists draw inspiration from indigenous traditions" Most contemporary works have a clear relationship

to traditional African folklore, belief systems and imagery. Nwanna (2010) supports the above submission that, "African art contains elements of traditional art; thereby establishing continuity from traditional to contemporary". Filani (2013) confirms the above statement that, "African contemporary artists now engage and experiment with unconventional materials known as new media, including installation, performance, video art and other formats" In the words of Frank (2008), "most artists are experimenting with modern styles as they search for new ways to express their roots. Modern African sculptures are seen to reflect both the preservation of local sculptural traditions and the introduction of styles, and techniques from outside the continent".

It is possible to see the evidence of borrowing of ideas infused into the created works of art, and there is the manifestation of creativity whereby the artist produces something new and distinctive within the range of forms and patterns which become a part of the innovation in the design (Bascom and Herskovits, 1959).

African mask was first recognised by Europeans as art in 1905 as well as its aesthetic value, and thereafter became worthy of scholarly attention, and its timeless quality became noticeable to the world at leange (Adams, 2007). According to Aronson (1991), it attracted and inspired the Western artists, like Pablo Picasso, when he paid a visit to his friend Amedeo Clemente Modigliani and saw the Congo mask displayed on his wall. This mask encountered by Picasso, inspired the development of cubism in art. It also inspired other artists like Andre Derain, Georges Braque, and Henri Matisse. African artists who have equally explored the use of the mask as a source of inspiration are; Ben Enweonwu, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Kunle Adeyemi, Ken Okoli, Peter Akinwumi, among others.

In understanding aesthetic issues properly in sculpture, more traditional values need to be considered like the *Ijele* masquerade of Anambra State. *Ijele* is an embodiment of philosophy, general life experience and value attached to the Anambra Igbo. This is visible and evident in its complex nature. Ogbechie (2009) writes, "*Ijele* masquerade possesses forms and conceptual ideas which if analysed and transformed could enhance appreciation of aesthetics in the expanded adventures of post-modernist sculpture."

To further buttress the need to use the *Ijele* masquerade as a source of inspiration to create sculpture, Ikuemesi (2000) believes that,most part of Igbo land were reduced to ruin because of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war of 1967 – 1970, and moreso, the influx of western way of life (Christianity) threatenedthe contined existence of the foundation of Igbo art and tradition. Nwosu (2014)states that, "*Ijele* masquerade is known as the biggest masquerade in South Sahara Africa, it is a unique intangible heritage that belongs to the Igbo people of Nigeria and was listed in the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) archive as Intangible Cultural Element in need of urgent safeguarding".Thus, the *Ijele* masquerade can be manipulated and used as a source of inspiration in creating sculptures and for posterity.

This resrarch looks at two Ijele sculptural installations created by two different artists. One by Nweke Kogulu titled "Ijele masquerade" displayed at the 1984 Exhibition "Igbo Art Community and Cosmos" organised by the Fowler university of Calofonia (UCLA) Museum of Cultural History, Los Angeles, USA and the other by Micheal Chukwukelu titled "Igbo Ijele masquerade" displayed at the Museum of cultura History Oslo, France in 1989. This forms the basis on which this research draws inspiration from the Ijele masquerade forms (Figs: 2 and 3).



Fig. 3: Igbo *Ijele* Masquerade I, Nweke Kogulu.Mixed media, 3.66m, high
Source:http://ukpuru.tumblr.com/post/ijele-under-construction-by-nweke-kogulu-and-three.1984 Museum of Cultural History.



Fig. 4: Igbo *Ijele* Masquedare II. Michael Chukwukelu, Mixed media. 4.30 m high. Source:Museum of Cultural History Oslo France 1989.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is that *Ijele* masquerade is not like other masquerade because of its unique nature and accumulation which comprises of the interpretation of the Anambra Igbo philosophy world view, represented in sculptural forms and uli motif design, this also includes the way it moves and glides, coupled with the activity that is happening around it. Scholars have written on the *Ijele* masquerade, but non of these scholars have attempted to isolate the activities happening around the *Ijele* masquerade.

The ability to undertake the studio art based-practice research is unique in its nature, compared to other deciplines like Art history, Art education, Textile design, Ceramics amongothers, despite the fact that they both under take the same qualitative research methodology thus, exploring the possibility to deconstruct the forms found on the *Ijele*masquerade is challenging because of its tedious nature.

13. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to create sculptural forms that are inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade, while the objectives are to:

i. identify and produce sculptural relief elements of the *Ijele* masquerade;
ii. extract various sculptural forms cladded with coloured fabrics inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade;
iii. create female forms from the *Ijele* masquerade;
iv. explore the possibilities of producing female and animal forms as they co-exist within the natural environment,extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade;
v. create an outdoor installation sculpture, that is a culmination of all the basic forms extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade.

14. Research Questions

Pertinent questions to the research are as follows:

i. what are the possibilities of producing, sculptural relief elements of the *Ijele* masquerade?

ii. How can the various forms of the *Ijele* sculptures be extracted and cladded with coloured fabrics?

iii. what is the possibility of creating female forms from the *Ijele* masquerade?

iv. In what ways can sculpture be obtained from the *Ijele* masquerade using the female and animal forms as they co-exist within the natural environment?

v. What are the possibilities of creating an outdoor installation sculpture that represents a culmination of all the necessary forms extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade?

15. Justification of the Study

The *Ijele* sculptures rendered in three dimensions by the traditional artists appears to be rigid and clustered. The research creates sculptures that posseses the qualitie of (naturalism and abstraction) modern and contemporary art style, which is lacking in the sculptures that are seen on the *Ijele* masquerade. The Igbo uli motif symbols rendered at the lower section of the *Ijele* masquerade, are usually illustrated in two dimensional forms, the research re-creates uli motif in three dimensional sculptural forms, for cultural preservation. *Ijele* is threatened by extinction because of the dominance of Christianity over African traditional religious practice, which has led to a decline in the initiation into masquerade cults. Consequently, it becomes imperative that *Ijele* sculptural forms be documented for posterity.

16. Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it creates sculptural forms which are inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade that provides new innovative ideas that open the frontiers of exploration in creating art. This study creates sculpture installations through art practice, which provide the viewer with new insight into the

traditional *Ijele* masquerade performance. This study also serves as a reference point for museums, archaeologists and historians. The other beneficiaries include government ministries, tertiary institutions, art educationists and students of art.

17. **Scope of the Study**

In this study, the scope is focused on creating sculptures inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade, popular among the Igbo people of the Northern part of Anambra State, using mild steel rods, and fabrics.

18. **Conceptual Framework**

This research is guided by the theory of Hans-George Gadamer (1900-2002) and the philosophy of the Natural synthesis (the idea of borrowing from traditional elements and concepts to be infused into formal art).

Gadamer in Weinsheimer and Marshall (2006) emphasises that, "to think historically always involves mediating between those ideas and one's thinking. Tradition or what is handed down from the past confronts as a task. It requires active questioning and self-questioning, interpreting it means precisely to bring one's perceptions into play".

The *Ijele* sculpture is created by considering its cultural context for proper understanding. In the words of Cordwell (1959) "African art forms are discussed regarding their cultural setting and the dynamics of change expressed in the creativity of the makers". This means that some of these art forms which range from household utensils to masking should be properly evaluated from the background where the created works emerge.

Natural synthesis came to limelight at the time Nigeria was to attain independence, and there was a new spirit of awareness and the awakened sense of nationalism in response to Negritude. Artists during this period responded to a new challenge of artistic expression which helped to inspire nationalistic ideals. The theory of Natural synthesis was propagated by a group of young artists called the Zaria Rebels, and formally known as the Zaria Art Society, formed in 1958. This occurred at the then Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology (NCAST) Zaria, now Department of Fine Arts,

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; with the primary purpose of reconsidering the legacy of early modern Nigerian artists. They desired to explore new techniques and ideas to preserve and transform Nigerian traditions and legacy. According to Grillo (2008),

> The fire of nationalism was at its, height, and it was only natural that artists and art students of those times began to re-examine themselves against the new consciousness of people shaking off the shackles of colonisation. Most of us were learning about the great revolutionary movements in art history then; movements like impressionism, cubism, surrealism, etc. and the natural urge in all truly committed students was to search for our true identity through diligent, sincere, visual statement of our thoughts, experiences, emotions and influences.

Natural synthesis merged the best of the indigenous art traditions, forms and ideas with theWestern concepts. Their paintings and sculptures incorporated cosmology, folklore and traditional philosophy, together with depictions of everyday life and culture. Its members include; Yusuf Grillo, Simon Okeke, William Olaosebikan, Uche Okeke, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Demas Nwoko, Oseloka Osadebe, Okechukwu Odita, Felix Ekeada, Ogbonaya Nwagbara and I. M Omagie. After the students graduated in 1961, the group dispersed, and this played an important part in the disseminating of their ideals. Many of them went to teach in other art schools where the concept of natural synthesis continued to flourish (Oshinowo, 2008). According to Pruitt (1999), "they promoted ideologies which channelled their artistic energy into defining their 'Africanness' as well as those which assisted in acknowledging their African ancestral legacy."

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature on masquerades and its adoption for art. It highlighted: (a) Concept of universality (b) Mask, masquerade and Igbo Cosmology, (c) Type and Classifications of Igbo Masquerades, such as: Day Masquerades, Night Masquerades, Functions of Masquerades, Masquerades as Source of Entertainment. (d) The Secrecy of Masquerade, Initiation and Practices. It further drew attention to (e) *Ijele* as a Symbol of Conceit and Authority to the Northern Anambra Igbos, and (f) The Paraphernalia's of *Ijele* and its Significance.

The second part reviewed three-dimensional sculptures of various artists comprising foreign and Nigerian artists that have represented masks, masquerades or ancestral spirits and gods as subject matter, like *Atlas* (1973) by Lee Lawrie. *Chimera of great beauty* (2000) by Emeral Magpie.*Maiden Spirit* (1992) by Ken Okoli.*Asa Mask* (1995) by Chidi Okoye.*Mask I* (1995) by Godwin Nwajei.*Dialogue of the Wise* (2010) by Peter Akinwunmi.*Mask of Growth* (2007) by Franklin Egwali.*Emedjo* (1974) by Bruce Onobrakpeya.*Adamu Orisha* (2005) by Odungide Ekpo.*Masquerade* (2009) by Ruben Ugbine.*Representative* (2011) by Philips Nzekwe.*Songo* (2008) by Lamidi Fakeye.*Ancestral Mask* (2008) by Cliff Nwanna.*Ancestral Masks IV* (2009) by Kunle Adeyemi, and *Odi*(1990) by Sussanne Wenger.

2.2.1 (a) Concept of Universality

The universe is commonly believed to be the totality of existence, which includes planets, stars, and galaxies, contents of intergalactic space, and all matter and energy. In similar terms, the Cosmos is ordered and metaphorically referred to as 'the world'. This cosmos reveals a baffling number of diverse forms of created things. These elements share the same similarities that can be identified within the universe. Contemporary view of the universe evokes a deep sense of its outwardly dense

mystery, obviously boundless in space and time. It is dynamic, unfolding, organically interrelated cosmos, marked by some degree of unpredictability together with forms of order (Hayes, 2003).

For man to interact or commune with God and Goddess, there is a fact that there must be that connection between the two distinct dualities (the world of the living and that of the spirit). The traditional African setting provides this clear distinct duality. In traditional African society, all of life is seen as an integrated whole. Nature, living things, humans, the ancestors, and a supreme being or beings all share in one world. There is a hierarchy of being with inanimate objects, continuing through plants, lower animals, and humans to the ancestors and arriving at a supreme being or beings at the top, and not all beings are conceived as equal (Mitchell, 2011).

Campbell (2008) States that,

> The cosmos in African setting is visualized as a spherical ground with its upper and lower hemispheres fits tightly together or as a divination tray with a raised figurate border enclosing its flat central surface. Among the Yoruba of the Western Nigeria, It consists of two distinct inseparable realms: *IleAye* (the visible, tangible world of the living) or *odeorun*, (the invisible, spiritual realm of the departed). These also includes *ara*/*okuorun* (primordial and deified ancestors), *Orisa* (gods and goddesses), and *ajogun* and *ebora* (spiritual entities), both benevolent and malevolent.

It is believed that the benevolent and evil spirits are made up of dead ancestors whom during their lifetime either were good or bad to people whom they came in contact with. And it is believed in Africa that how one lives determines which ancestral line one would belong to. The Igbo have a similar perception of the same cosmos. They believe that the world is made up of two planes: the physical and the spiritual world. It abhors the tendency to a digital categorization of things, there is a dual traffic and interaction between the inhabitants of the two worlds, in this way, the understanding among the Igbo is that spiritual beings and cosmic forces are highly intermingled, especially when one transcends to the other world. The activities of spiritual beings and forces often directly impinge on the affairs of humans in the human world(Nwoye, 2011).

The maintenance of social and cosmological balance in the world with both the living and dead becomes, therefore, a dominant pervasive theme in Igbo life, they achieve this balance, for instance,

through divination, sacrifice, appeal to the countervailing powers of their ancestor who are the invincible father figures against the powers of the malignant, and non-ancestral spirits, and socially, through constant realignment in their social groupings. The Igbo religion as of any other religion or ideological system rests with the cosmology (Uchendu, 1966).

Cosmological framework can equally be referred to as a people's way of organizing their activities which explain the how and why of daily existence. Symbols give rise to thought or creative intelligence and creative intelligence gives rise, in turn, to the customs and codes of the society, which are so internalized, from childhood onwards, that they go unquestioned as a way of life, and all areas of life are part of an integrated whole. It also assumes the continuity of generations believing that the ancestors do not die out but are re-born through reincarnation, which is called belief and custom of a people.

Nwoye (2011) states that,

> "the principle of universality can be seen in the characteristics of cultural similarity. In relation and interaction with the environment, all people develop cultural trait peculiar to their environment and adopt foreign cultures to suit their environment. For example, the use of English is fast becoming universal, but each people speak English and it is very easy to discriminate between British English, Irish English, American English, Black American English, and African English".

He further maintains that Igbo worldview of the human world is perceived as a mirror of the spirit world. In this way, the traditional Igbo cosmology inspires and sustains a religion that is this-worldly affirming and knowing that human life and the general welfare of the human world are the central focus of attention, thrust of most religious activities among the Igbo, are the enhancement of human life and the promotion of human beings total wellbeing.

Ejiofor (1984) argues that, there is some degree of similarity in universality of culture among all ethnic, tribal, national and racial people of the world, that is, human cultures resemble one another up to a point, different cultures only value their common elements differently, in so far as one puts the

accent here, another there and that is ordering, the relation of the elements to one another that determines the difference between cultures.

In summary, worldview can be understood in terms of a unified picture of the cosmos explained by a system of concepts, which orders the natural and social rhythms, and the place of individuals and communities. The basic assumptions and perceptions of the universe give orientation and value to people's lives (Nwoye, 2011).

Artists in religious traditions have also created artworks that map the cosmos, showing the origin of the world, the structure of the universe, spiritual beings, the place of humans in relation to the gods, or a diagram of time. According to Irivwieri (2010) "the artists continually change their interests, attitude and techniques as dictated by their individual enquiries into the nature and essence of art or due to associative influence from other artists". Campbell (2008), created and illustrated her point by using a Mandela radial balanced geometric diagram; she augmented the images of deities, humans, and symbols of the universe. Together, they formed a map of the structure and relationship among all entities of the cosmos. In accordance with Hindu or Buddhist beliefs by meditating on the Mandala, people can begin to grasp those cosmic relations and understand their place within them.

The *Ijele* is believed to be the Mother Earth Goddess since God is regarded as the father that lives above. *Ijele* is believed to be both pantheism and panentheism in nature and exists in material world like God to the 'Anambrarians'. Pantheism is the belief that God is fully expressed in nature or the material world. Pantheism literarily claims that God and the universe are identical. Pantheism received its classical formulation in the ethics of the seventeenth-century. Baruch Spinoza argues that "besides God, there is no substance, nor can any be conceived"If God is one with nature and its processes, then God is in the storm, breeze, ice, and snow, meaning that God is immanent (exists in all parts of the created universe). Pantheism means that God has both a timeless, unchanging nature (is transcendent) and a historical changing nature (is immanent in this world). God is nature and everything that exists within a transcendent God. So God is large enough to reconcile an apparent contradiction. God is both expressed in the world and existing beyond the world, both immanent and transcendent. Panentheism

is the belief that God is expressed in the world and that the world and all that is exists in God. *Ijele* possesses these qualities and attributes as the mother goddess (Mitchell, 2011).

To some Igbo communities especially the Northern part of Anambra State, the *Ijele* is a representation of the earth goddess and also the world, which comprises of different elements of universals that are repeatable, or recurrent entities that can be exemplified by many particular things. It is believed that the *Ijele* represents the whole universe because of its symbolism. This is visible in its appearance rendered in a careful dexterity.

Robinson (2010) submits that, this image of the Igbo cosmos, in conjunction with the layers of meaning and detail of the masquerade and all its figures, embodies Igbo values and beliefs. *Ijele* not only portrays but also define power and status.

The universal was what is always and everywhere; the term *cath'holou* (Catholic), which Aristotle used was based on a root signifying whole and carried no connotation of the sum of particulars. The world of substantial objects was generated as a sculptor imposes shape upon inert matter, and the perceivable things contained the universals not only through the intuition of the observer but embodied the actually, through the nobility of their birth (Arnhiem, 2004).

In consideration of the Igbo cosmos, the Northern Igbo Anambra cosmological summary is evedent in the *Ijelel* masquedesymbols,with all its paraphelenia and their belives system, and which also includes general life experinceis and cultre. *Ijele* is revered and respected in their everyday life encounter, this is shown in all the replications rendered on this gentle spirit, as the Northern Igbo Anambra cosmos.

2.2.2 (b) Mask, Masquerade and Igbo Cosmology

Before discussing Igbo philosophy of mask, masquerade and Igbo Cosmology, it will be pertinent to know where Igboland is located, their occupation, celebration, and masquerade activity in relation to the Gods, so that one can have a proper insight of Igbomask, masquerade and cosmos.

***Location*:**Nwoye (2011) and Okoroafo (2012) posit that, the Igbo belong to the Sudanic linguistic group of the Kwa division. The Igbo language is characterized by its tonality, the monosyllabic root-

words and an absence of in flexional endings. This ethnic group is considered to be one of the largest and most influential in West Africa Nigeria. Igboland is situated on both sides of the lower parts of the River Niger, with its bigger portion lying by the Eastern side of the river.

The Igbo have a common border with the Igala and the Idoma on the Northern part of Nigeria, the Ijaw and Ogoni on the South of the country, the Yako and Ibibio on the Eastern boundary and the Bini and Urhobo on the West of Nigeria. The principal rivers are Niger, Imo, Anambra, and the Ulasi River. The Niger divides the Igbo into two uneven areas. The bulk of the population lives east of the Niger, with heavy concentration at Okigwe, Orlu, Owerri, Onitsha, and Awka. The other part of the Igbo group lives west of the Niger.

***Occupation*:**The Igbo are an ethnic group of south-eastern Nigeria in Africa. They are mostly farmers; staple crops are *AkpunaJi* (cassava and yam). The harvesting of *ji* (Yam) is important to the Igbo people. This usually heralds a lot of activities held annually to celebrate its harvesting known as *IwaJi* or *IriJi*. Masks and masquerading are one of the most common art styles performed in Igboland which also forms part of the yam harvesting season celebration. A lot of masquerades are seen to be part of the celebration (Ejiofor, 1984).

In the words of Okodo (2012)from the pre-colonial period till date, Igbo people work a lot on their farms as they are mostly engaged in agriculture.

Their agriculture is the un-mechanized style of farming which demands a lot of energy on manual labour. They faced their work from clearing the bush to cultivating and harvesting. But when the farming season comes to an end, which is from the beginning of the dry season, mostly in October, they have much time to spend. They also have plenty to eat as they would be harvesting their crops.

***Celebration*:** They start the celebration with new yam festivals to thank God for the good yields of their crops and pray to Him to give them long life to see the same festival the following year. Various Igbo communities begin to celebrate different festivals in honour of various deities. The spectacular performances of people and masquerades at various village squares are always manual. The Igbo Masquerades are made to be seen in motion during ceremonies or religious rituals; they are generally

intended to facilitate communication with the spirit world. Masquerades can embody powerful forces and are believed to have supernatural abilities. When members of masking societies perform wearing masquerade costume, they cease to be themselves; they become mediums, able to communicate directly with the spirit realm(Mittler, 2000).

***Masqueradeactivity*:**The greater relationship between the gods and the Igbo man is always cordial in time of festivity, especially during masquerade display. Okachi (2015) states that, masquerades are used in dances and ceremonies to teachlessons, to initiate, serve as symbols of the spiritual force or authority that validate the basic belief of the society, and reinforce acceptable social modes of conduct,and symbolise the spiritual authority that eradicates social evils.

Various age-grades are usually engaged with such activities. Before harvest, they engage and commission the artist for the finest mask spirit. Griffiths (2005) submits that,the presentation of the masquerade as a community religion and as historical and social reference, functions as an instructional instrument for a cultural philosophy, and is interpreted by artists both within and without the community as a means of preserving a strong belief in the philosophy for the benefit of that community. Masks have functioned religiously and aesthetically in West Africa from earliest times. Local tradition ascribes their origin differently to divine revelation and directions are given by the dead in dreams (Okachi, 2015).

The Igbo idea of masquerading is the reincarnation of the dead ancestors who continue to take interest in the affairs of the living descendants or relations. It has been established that there are two broad categories of supernatural forces, the deities headed by *Chukwu* and the earth goddess and other spirits which the masking activity falls into. However, the ancestors are believed to also play a major role in the lives of the people.

Enekwe (1987) States that,

> The ancestors, conceived by the Igbo as the invincible segment of the lineage, are the highest authority in Igbo social life. Their authority touches everything, and their proximity to the gods enables them to mediate between supernatural beings and man. An example of this is the

> *Ofo* that every linage head carries as a symbol of ritual and power manifests the just power of the ancestors.

He maintained, and emphasized that the ancestors are not conceived as gods, but are merely human souls and are never defied by the Igbo. They act as powerful mediators between the gods and the living.

In African tradition, masquerades are symbolic representation of unseen supernatural forces which is evident in masquerade performance and above all in the Igbo *omenala*, moral codes. In the words of Tansey and Kleiner (1996) "The Igbo *omenala* (moral codes) were believed to be handed down to the Igbo-man by the earth goddess *Ala* or *Ani* from time ancient". Ejiofor, (1984) and Okoroafo (2012) corroborate this assertion; *Ala* is endowed with so many religious foundations adored perhaps because of its permanence and for the fact that all things come and return back to it. Achebe (1958) supports this assertion; *Ani* played a greater part in the life of the people than any other deity. She was the ultimate judge of morality and conduct. She was in close communication with the departed fathers of the clan whose bodies had been committed to earth. Ben *et al* (2011) states that: *Ala* is not only referred to as the great mother earth goddess, it is also known as the mother of nurturing.

Moral codes are classified into major and minor offences, some of the major offense and likely consequences are; for example, stealing of yam from a barn or farm is death penalty, and defilement of masquerade or revealing to women could lead to being beheaded or shot by the *Omabe* masquerade popular among the Idoma and Nsukka Igbo communities, the *AchikwuAnyasu*, and other masquerades used for law enforcement.

According to Ejiofor (1984), the laws of the earth goddess were codified in the memories of the older generation as categorised. Those that regulated domestic life to ensure community harmony, those who regulated the sexual urges of men, those designed to protect the economy, those which emphasises the normal rhythm of nature and those who protect the relationship with the spirit world.

Some other scholars like Arinze (1970) believe that, for real tender devotion to good spirits such as *Ala* requires a good relationship. The Igbos are found to associate child's naming with *Ani*. In honour of the spirit names like *Anizoba* (May *Ani* save), *Animaku* (*Ani* knows the source of wealth) among others are given to children to maintain that relationship.

The deity plays a role in the life of the people on a daily basis. If the people discover that there is something lacking in their conduct, they promptly offer the appropriate sacrifice to atone for their sin. This was why Jell-Behlsen (2014) said that, Human beings find themselves in a permanent power play, between the different and at times antagonistic forces of the universe. The cosmic balance between the divine forces, nature, and human beings must constantly be renegotiated, groomed, and maintained.

Igbo relationship with the lesser gods and the ancestors is contractual, friendly and reciprocal. Obligations must be kept by both gods and man. Just as mortals suffer when they break their contract, the gods are punished or destroyed whenever they fail to carry out their obligations to the Igbo. The Igbo believes that there are two ways of dealing with such gods. They may be burnt, and their priests driven away or may be abandoned by their worshippers, since the Igbo shear the belief that the gods are dependent on the sentiments of men, as well as offerings and sacrifices, in order to survive.

Africans were believed to have been communing with the gods before the coming of the Europeans; this is evident in the traditional festivals. Africans were already dealing with God before Europeans came on the scene. They had known that the idea of God evokes love, faith, perseverance, courage, mercy, forgiveness, and fair play long before the Europeans, and these indigenous Africans know, first hand, the realities of the deity in and among them over the years (Emechete, 2008).

In the African tradition, masquerades serve as pleasant resting place for ancestral spirits when put in performance. Masking is the most popular, the most versatile, and the most entertaining public performer in Igbo land. From the religious point of view, a masquerade has the force of an invocation and introduces extra-human forces into the human sphere, making possible the displacement of chronological time by primordial time in which mythical beings commune with the living and manifest their powers.

In the word of Sporre (2006) in dealing with the spirit world, tribal people act out relationship with spirits in dances and other dramatic ceremonies. Sometimes they disguise themselves so as to assume the role of the spirit. Griffiths (2005) is of the view that, masquerades of Nigeria display a highly animated ritualistic form of masked dancing, where the masquerade personify ghosts from the past, where evil is exorcised, where purification is invoked, where the spiritual, moral and cultural education of the existing community is redefined.Uzo (1997) opines that,

> "The term 'masquerade' can refer to a masking performance, a masked performer, or the character embodied by the mask itself. Masquerades are considered in the Igbo tradition to be reincarnated dead ancestors possessing supernatural powers. They are called *Mmuo* or *Mmanwu* (spirit, masquerade), and usually varies from community to community, and from village to village".

Nwanna (2007) states that, the Igbo share the belief that bodies of dead members of the society, after a proper rite of passage, are transfigured into a masquerade (spirit) locally known as *mmonwu* (spirit of the dead). These spirits of the dead normally return on festival or ritual occasions or during serious communal crises as masquerades.

The ancestral spirits may be invited to visit the earth physically in masques and such masquerades are also referred to as *Egungun*. They represent ghosts; in this case, most specifically, of their dead ancestors. They leave their heavenly abode periodically to visit the humancommunity. The belief in the periodic visitation of ancestors tothe human communities is a common religious belief in mostAfrican societies(Griffiths, 2005).

Asobele (1985) believes that,*Mmonwu* derives its force from the fact that *Mmuo* in Igbo language means spirit and *onwu* means death. This means that originally *Mmonwu* might have been conceived as a manifestation or concretization of the spirits of particular dead ancestors, just as is the case with *Eyo* in Lagos Island, being *Adamorisa*, the spirit of a dead ancestor.

Mmanwu, which is masquerade, is one major aspect of Igbo traditional drama. The masquerade is ordinarily the representation of the ancestors in the human world. The masquerade operates as the

ancestor and so has the protection of manipulating man as a source of entertainment, social controller and religious reflector (Okodo, 2012).

Nwabueze in Okodo (2012) supports this view, he states that,

> "In the earliest period of Igbo history, the ancestors were consulted through divination, but later their physical presence became necessary when rituals were evolved. The need for physical representation of the ancestor necessitated the emanation of ways of representing the physical presence of the ancestral spirit. It was this situation that led to the evolution of the masquerade as a dramatic character".

In the words of Widjaja (2011) masquerades are associated with spiritual elements, as according to Igbo belief, they represent images of deities or sometimes even dead relatives. The identity of the masquerade is a well-kept secret and performed exclusively by men.Odiaka (2013) also submits that, masks and masquerades known in Igbo language as *"Mmanwu na Mmuo"*. *Mmuo* is regarded as the spirits of the dead persons of a town.

Ikebude (2009) explains that, there is also the belief in the land of the living called *Uwa*, and the land of the spirits or *Ala mmuo*. When a person who has lived a good life dies in a socially-approved manner (suicide, for instance, is not approved), the person transcends to *ala mmuo* to continue living with the ancestors, and interceding for the living as a member of *ndi ichie*. A person who did not live a good life, or died a bad death, or does not receive a proper burial, becomes an *ajo mmuo*.

Enekwe (1987) also believes that, the spirit of those who died accidentally, committed suicide or died prematurely are called *Ekwensu*(the devil), they cannot reincarnate. They never enter the spirit world. Instead, they return among the living to cause bad deaths. Mittler (2000) also explains that death is not considered the end of life for those who have lived and died well. Rather, death initiates a good individual's spirit into the world of ancestors. When the soul separates from the body, it joins its ancestors and remains nearby to influence the living. Ebihigbo (2010) states that,

> "the Igbo philosophy of life after death also manifests in *Mmonwu* masquerades that are brought out from the land of the spirits with O*ja* (a very small instrument in the gamut of Igbo musical instrument). It is carved and produced when the wood is still wet, only to be used when properly dried. The Igbo call it "*Akanta, osisikpolunku n ekwu okwu*" (dead and dried but still talks loud)".

The ancestors are those who lived well during their live time and also died in socially approved way, are usually honoured with sacrifices. They are believed as ancestorsto watch over the living, and are periodically reincarnated among them. The unhappy spirits who die bad deaths, and lack burial rites, cannot return to the world of the living, or enter that of the dead. They wander homeless and dispossessed". This implies that life for the Igbo moves in a complimentary fashion. From conception, through birth, puberty and adulthood, to ripe old age, the Igbo are preoccupied with the optimal enhancement of their lives. In that way, a successful life here on earth is understood by them as a sure passport to gain one a good place among the ancestors, an important place of habitation in after life(Widjaja, 2011).

Asigbo (2010) corroborates this statement by saying that,masquerade is seen as symbolization and manifestation of the continuing relationship between the living and the dead. This is so because of the Igbo's strong attachment to the issues of *Mmonwu* (masquerade) and the spirit world.

Okafor (2008) submits that,

> "there is a plausible semantic explanation that the term *mmonwu*which originated from the combination of *mmuo* (spirit) and *onwu* (death) to denote its essence as spirit of the dead. Igbo anthropology accommodates a widespread belief in supreme and unique God. *Chukwu* (the Great Spirit), *Chineke* (the Creator Spirit), *Osebuluuwa* (the Lord who upholds the world), *Ezechitoke* (the Spirit King Creator), *Okasiakasi* (the Greatest Being), etc. are some of the appellations with which this God is addressed".

The traditional Igbo people also believe in the lesser spirits, *mmuo* and the ancestors through whom they can also go to *Chukwu*(Oraegbunam, 2009).Galembo (2004) opines that, African masking generally invokes deities, nature spirits and ancestors. When a person wears the mask, and its costum that person takes on the entity that the masquerde represents.

Oguduasaa (2013) submits that, in Igbo culture, the masquerade embodies the spirit and human worlds. The mystique surrounding the masquerade is one of the key components of the Igbo culture

that survived Western influences. Mitller (2000) is also of the view that, the ensembles are worn to honour ancestors during public dances, associated with the spirit world. These costumes are abstract creations, when performing; dancers whirl and twirl in circles. These movements symbolically show the past, present, and the future are intertwined in a continuous cycle encompassing birth, life, departure, and return.

The common and most important thing about masking is the concealment of the face and head of the masquerader. In the words of Enekwe (1987) "the face relates to the soul, while the head is the focal point of transformation and the vital centre of magic and power".

Various studies in the traditional African masquerade practices have shown that theories exist which try to explain the origin of masquerading; the first general conclusion is that many women in African communities practice witchcraft, and use it to oppress and intimidate the men folk especially at night.

According to Asigbo (2010) to provide a counter force to this supposed conspiracy by women, the men folk got together and decided to form the masquerade cult from which women were generally excluded. Supporting this, Ododo in Asigbo (2010) maintains that, "The tremendous power women (sic) wild and their fearful capacity as witches have therefore been positioned as the key reason why the men folk instituted the masquerade art and logically exclude female overt participation"

The second general conclusion is based on the fact that, masquerades are believed to be ancestors on brief moment set out to the world of the living. Asigbo further asserts that this belief stems from the cosmic view of the African world which conceives of the world as cyclical, tripartite and interdependent, with each plain of existence believed to be incomplete without the company of the next. Thus, the ancestors overcome by an incomprehensible nostalgia and yearning for the company of man, manifest as masquerades to commune with the living. In such cases, these masquerades exhibit the characteristics of specific ancestors and can as the occasion demands, foretell the future and perform other ritual functions. Spirit manifests are thus, physical manifestations of the continuous presence and interest of the ancestors in the affairs of the living.In the words of Illah in Asigbo (2010)

believes that, “the ancestors are believed to travel back to the living, through the mediant persona to partake and celebrate with their living offspring, in a re-invigoration of their relationship”

The Igbo cosmology conceives the spirits or supernatural being as active participants in their authority.They are not inordinately fatalistic or fearful of their wrath. While accepting their authority, the Igbo regard the gods as equally inadequate as themselves. Only the Supreme Being is complete. With him the Igbo respect and reverence are superlative and unconditional (Enekwe, 1987).

2.2.3 (c) Types and Classifications of Igbo Masquerades

In Igbo land, masquerade activity is classified into two which are: day and night masquerades. These masquerades are saddled with some societal functions within the community, and the secrets of masquerades are always kept from non-initiates.

Robinson (2010) states that,

> “the rich variety of Igbo masquerades rests on a male-centric hierarchical system that relies on initiation and age grades to perform the masquerades. Every masquerade of the Igbo is considered a spirit. Many are the incarnate dead returning to perform a regulatory or fertility function. The spirits that inhabit the masquerade are said to come from the other world where these dead ancestors reside”

Oguduasaa (2013) is of the view that, masquerades are classified into categories based on specialization. Each masquerade possesses particular attributes (warrior-like prowess, mystical powers, youthfulness, and old age) and specializes in one or more skills (dancing skills, acrobatics, and other ritual manifestations).

Widjaja (2011) submits that,

> masquerades (*Mmanwu*) are held in accordance with the community native calendars during festivals, annual festivities, burial rites and other social gatherings. The masquerades are geared in colourful robes and masks made of wood or fabric. Some masquerades appear only at one festival, but the majority appears at many or all.

Ugonna in Ikebude (2009) and Oyeneke (1987) agrees that there are two basic types of *mmuo* masquerade spirits: visible and invisible. The visible *mmuo* masquerades are meant for the public. They are often more entertaining.

Sound is the main tool for masquerades. The masquerader uses his voice to scream so as to be heard throughout the village. The masks used are usually fierce looking and their interpretation is only fully understood by the society's members. These invisible masquerades call upon a silent village to strike fear in the hearts of those not initiated into their society. There are also two categories of *mmonwu*: the spirit and the human or secular categories. Spirit masquerades live in *ekwuru*,(masquerade house)andare highly venerated, while human form masquerades are those whose forms are revelled to the public.

According to Oyeneke (1987) the invincible masquerades can also be broken down into three groups: *Achikwu Ocha/Ojii*, *Agu Mmuo*, and *Ogbagu*. The *Achikwu Ocha* (White masquerade) acts as village surveillance; the spirit is known for entertainment activities. *Achikwu Ojii* (Black masquerade) is an opposite of the *AchikwuOcha*masquerade. It is believed to not only protect the village, but also to punish and execute a criminal. There is also a second group of invincible masquerades like *Agu mmuo* (tiger spirit). Their characteristic is horrible, screaming sound. The third is the *Ogbagu*, also known for dance entertainment.

In the words of Asigbo (2010) African masking is a serious engagement that requires not only mental and physical alertness but also, spiritual fortification. He explains this because ancestral masquerade or spirit manifests are not mere human beings but manifestations from the spirit realm of the ancestors and other disembodied beings seeking communion with mortals. Gore (2008) submits that,masquerades are charged with medicines that provide metaphysical protection when they compete and ensure their efficacy and success in public displays. Masquerading may involve one person team or a team made up of instrument players, vocalists, dancers, masquerade advisers, and the masquerade itself.

Griffiths (2005) opines that,masqueraders are regarded as special people in their communities forming a crucial and fundamental link between past and present generations. Their methods of displaying and presenting their ancestry is handed down with ritualistic care and thoroughness from generation to generation, they represent in fact the collective spirits of the ancestors whooccupy a space in heaven. These ancestral spirits are believed tobe in constant watch over the survivors of human beings on earth. They bless,protect, warn and punish their earthly relatives depending on howtheir relatives neglect or remember them. The ancestral spiritshave collective functions that cut across lineage and familyloyalty. They collectively protect the community against evilspirits, epidemics, famine, witchcraft and evil doers, ensuring thewell-being, prosperity and productivity of the whole community in general.

All Igbo towns have their masquerade cults and masquerades, but some have more masquerades than others, for instance, in Enugu State, Ugwuoba, Oji River, Enugwu-Ngwo, Enugu, stand out, though Nsukka and Nkanu areas are also known for their advanced masquerades like the ones that require a lot of charms. For the Anambra, people of Agulu, Agulu-Uzo-Igbo, Igbo-Ukwu, Nnewi, Nanka, Ekwulobia, Umunze and Afikpo people in Ebonyi, also have several masquerades too. For Abia, Arochukwu, Umuahia and other towns stand out with their *Ekpo* and *Ekpe* masquerades (Enekwe, 1987).

- ***Day Masquerades:*** Masquerades are classified into categories based on specialization. Each masquerade possesses particular attributes (warrior-like prowess, mystical powers, youthfulness, and old age) and specializes in one or more skills (dancing skills, acrobatics, and other ritual manifestations (Mbanaja, 2012).

Gore (2008) submits that,day masquerades emphasize display and performance within the public arena to an audience of members, other masquerade initiates, and non-initiates, including women and individual, these masquerades, like humans come in different ages and looks, as well as fame. For example, *Omewaluigwe* connotes a wise masquerade, known for

its talkative nature. *Adamma's* beauty represents the Igbo woman and her beauty. *Ada-mmanwu* a masquerade that dresses beautifully, with handbags, and face paints walks like a young girl. *Ojionu* masquerade is a water spirit represented with a headdress of crocodiles, sharks and other water creatures. *Mgbedike* masquerade is a fierce looking spirit that represents a warrior, and also a sword-wielding masquerade.

According to Robinson (2010) the Igbo are famous for their powerful, horned male *Mgbedike* spirit. *Agaba* masquerade is a warrior-like spirit, represented as a leopard masquerade. *Mkpamkpankụ* represents a serious, fully masculine-featured, brisk, aggressive, agile and notorious masquerade. *Okwomma* carries a cutlass, well sharpened. It uses this to shake hands, to collect money and to greet people who are in the cult, or other great masquerades. There are masquerades that assume the appearance of the creatures that they have their names attached which are: the *Enyi mmanwu* (Elephant), *mmanwu Ugo* (Eagle), *mmanwu Mbe* (Tortoise). There are also mystical masquerades, like the *Otawaru Ikpo* dreadful masquerade with charms that enable it dance on cassava leaves. Another terror is the *Odegwu Anya Mmiri* which sheds tears when it encounters an offender. It is a two-faced masquerade, and can move simultaneously in two directions. It is known to be dreadful that whoever it meets first as it leaves the shrine dies. In order to avoid human deaths, a ram is tied in its path, which perishes after it passes.

Gore (2008) says that,*Asirimasi* (Does not hide secrets) is a powerful solo masquerade noted for its capacity to neutralize the charms of hostile masquerades of other towns. *Asirimasi* mingles with the audience, dressed in a wrapper, in often humorous interactions, as if almost human itself. But at the same time it identifies and renders harmless hostile opposing charms by placing its walking stick in the shadow of anyone found to be exerting such means against other masquerades.

Okodo (2012) states that,the old mother masquerades demonstrate their ages, while the maiden masquerades demonstrate pride and the sense of selectivity of husbands, whereas the young male ones portray energy as their fathers control their household with jealous guards against the public glare at their wives.

The masquerades mentioned above are believed to operate during the day time, and also interact with human beings so as to foster good relationship between humans and the spirit world.

- ***Night Masquerades:*** Some masquerades only emerge at night and their presence is particularly identified by the sounds they make as they move, caused by the percussive metal pieces which are added to their costume and staff, example is the popular *Egungun* masquerade that is synonymous with the Yoruba people of Nigeria (Griffiths, 2005). Anagudo-Agu (2008) andOkodo (2012) concludes that, the night masquerade is dramatic. Take *Ayaka* masqueradefor instance, is composed of strong men, armed with spears and medicine; they come out at night at about 11.00 p. m and disappear again before dawn. They summersault in the air, climb trees, beat drums and sing in disguised voices from heights in order to create the impression of being air-borne ghosts. Popular among the night masquerades are also *Achikwu,*and *Omabe*. There is also the *Oga nigwe*, Gore (2008) Explains that,their presence is sometimes manifested the next day by a trail of torn-down trees or other damage and, when used in a judicial capacity on behalf of the community, by the death of an individual. For example, the night masquerade *Oga nigwe* (‘walks on the air’) emerges at night time to the sound of gongs and the next day has left a trail of broken branches that indicates that it moved through the air without touching the ground. Its medicines are so powerful that it can turn day to night and, if it encounters stray domestic animals, such as goats, and even wayward humans, it cannot be held responsible for any death it causes. Night masquerades also used to perform late on the last night of funerary rites of prominent individuals, in an area outside the compound, marked out by fresh palm leaves, which only the masquerade and its association members (and members of comparably ranked masquerades) were able to attend. Gore maintains that night masquerades are considered more dangerous and their access and viewing are restricted to senior men of the community who have initiated into them. Night masquerades are considered to generally have the most potent medicines,

linked to their capacities to kill, and individuals who encounter them in the night must be holders of important titles within masquerade associations if they are not to be killed by the encounter. Due to their nocturnal nature, sound is a key component of these masquerades, as the range of noises alerts non-members (which include initiates of other masquerades) to the presence of a particular night masquerade and warns of the consequences of encountering them. It is also important to note that some masquerades that operate at night time in a particular village can be seen to operate in the day time in another village, for example, *Omabe* and *Achu kwu* masquerade, enforce law in the land.

- ***Function of Masquerades:***In the words of masquerades played important roles in maintaining law and order. Children and young adults are made to be scared of masquerades. People are bound to tell the truth at all times to avoid the wrath of masquerades. In this capacity, masquerades are regarded as the means for maintaining peace and social order. They are primarily used as unbiased law enforcement agents(Ogbonna, 2012). Widjaja (2011) corroborates this statement by submitting that,masquerades are regarded as the means for maintaining peace and order and are primarily used as law enforcement agents.

In the event of a ceremony the whole village usually comes out for the ceremony of the colourful masquerades. While entertaining through dances and exhibiting extra-human feats, the masquerades would walk up to certain individuals and loudly expose any bad habits, crimes or misbehaviour of that person. As people would always take corrections from these exposures, the masquerades were effective in keeping up with traditional norms and values in the communities.

According to Asigbo (2010) masquerades therefore perform certain social control functions by enforcing discipline and upholding natural law. The powers of the masquerade cult are such that even kings are under their authority since they are believed to be agents of supernatural wisdom.

Thompson in Robinson (2010) explains that, the *Egungun* spirits are said to judge the living. Senior *Egungun* come as ancestors to hear disputes, enforce tradition, and uphold moral standards. Ogbonna (2012) submits that,

> "tough masquerades walk up to certain individuals and loudly berate them publicly for their hidden abominable bad habits such as coveting a friend's wife, serious crimes such as poisoning someone or other adjudged misbehaviours to society" As crude as this style seems in present day, they were very effective in instilling corrective measures to many would-be deviants of society. Thus, the traditional norms and values of the community were preserved without sacred cows flouting them on basis of economic and political clouts.

Nwosu (2010) opines that,masquerades are most outstanding or basic symbolic communications in Igbo-land. They are vital means of communication and communion in Africa. Masquerades, in this case, help African communities in a number of ways, by providing a certain framework for social control. Achebe in Things Fall Apart presents an indigenous African model of conflict resolution and peace building, which indeed tries to revalue the *mmanwu* (masquerade) as a source of philosophy of social action among the Igbo.

Masquerades that are used in enforcing law and order include the *Omabe* which is also a night masquerade. According to Aniakor (1978) *Omabe* spirit is a leopard. Elders and priests of Eha Alumona say *Agu na amaba ihe*, (the leopard tears away things). By this they provide the underlying meaning of the *Omabe* spirit as a ritual incantation of a leopard elders (*atama*) and *Omabe* priest (*odo*) add in elaboration that dry meat marks the end of pre-*Omabe* season while fresh meat heralds the *Omabe* season and spirit visitation. He explains that the dry meat symbolizes a period of poverty and helps to drive home to the *Omabe* spirit visitors the poor conditions of living so that in enormous proportions, they will usher in a season of abundance, of wealth, children and livestock. In effect, fresh meat replaces dry meat in the same way that poverty may give to wealth with the *Omabe* spirit visitation, and other masquerades that are used for enforcing laws are: *Ojukwu, Ekpe, Mgbadike,Mkpa-mkpa, Ịzaga and Ojiọnụ* among others.

- ***Masquerades as Source of Entertainment:***A masquerade character is an authentic spectacle that is seen as the highest form of art in Igbo-land. Masquerading is an important

element of entertainment, the Igbo's from all over the world would converge at home during the New Yam Festival or other festive ceremonies to *'gbaa mmanwu'* (celebrate the masquerade). Ogbonna (2012) states that, whenever masquerades play entertainment role, they also display a dual role of combining dancing, acrobatic displays and other extra-ordinary feats.

According to Okodo (2012):

> In Igbo-land, there are various traditional festivals and anniversaries of installations of traditional rulers. In a community, there would be up to four festivals that are celebrated annually.The festivals have seasons and the chief priests of the deities and some other traditional authorities gather to schedule dates of the festivals. When the dates are announced, people begin to make preparations of keeping the shrines of respective deities clean. They also repaint the idols and buy the items for the sacrifice. They would include fowls, goats or cows, kola nuts, food items and palm wine as the case may be. On the appointed date, the Chief Priest officiates at the shrine. He normally prays with kola nuts and beseeches God for good things through the mediator of the deities and ancestors in question. After offering prayers, he would drop a piece of kola nut to the deity before people would eat theirs. After, he would immolate the animal of sacrifice. The blood of the animal would be sprinkled on the idols. Later, the meat of the animal would be used in cooking a meal. It is the eating of the food that brings the ritual to an end.

Ikebude (2009) and Nwosu (2010) submit that,masquerades serve as models for distinctive cultural identity and entertainment. Masquerade performance can take place during important occasions like New Yam festival, apart from this occasion they are (spirit masquerade) the agency through which the communities unite and reify their existence as a link between the past and the present, their ancestors and the unborn.

According to Farinloye (2009):

> Masquerades are also used to honour the dead and pray to the gods for a successful planting season. Gore (2008) is of the view that *mmanwu* (masquerade)is a gloss for *mma onwu* (lit. 'beauty dead'), which draws on a range of ideas about funerary commemoration in which the deceased is displayed lying in state in his or her compound dressed in finery and surrounded by an array of beautiful hanging or rolled-up textiles.

Ejiofor (1984) says that, the body itself is also richly dressed in the most expensive outfit thus humiliating the poor, challenging the rich and tempting the thief. Masquerades usually go about

performing during these burial ceremonies. In these modern times, masquerades are used during the *Iri Ji* (eating new yam), Christmas, New Year, Easter and other such celebrations.

Oguagha in Nwoye (2011) opines that,

> among the Igbo, yam is regarded, as the king of crops and one of the indices for assessing a man's wealth is the number of yam tubers he has in his barn. The importance of yam in the economic and social life of the Igbo guaranteed the religious prominence of *Ifejioku* (yam god) in many Igbo communities. It also accounts for the dominant presence of yam as a ritual object in many Igbo religious ceremonies such as the Igbo naming ceremony, the *Okuku Onye Uwa* ceremony, and *Abam n'Obi* ceremony... consequently, the god of yam is accorded primacy of place among the people, and yam cultivation is a male occupation. Many religious rites are centred around the cultivation and harvesting of agricultural products.

Iroegbu (2010) states that,

> the *Iwa Ji Afo* or *iri ji ohuru* (annual yam cutting) is one of the biggest festivals celebrated by the Igbo beginning in the month of August of each year. Celebration lasts up to December of the year. In the period in which many communities celebrate their new yam festival, marriages are withheld as well as funerals. Serving food during the New Yam Festival is lavished on dishes of yam since the festival is symbolic of the abundance of the produce. Enough yam is cooked such that no matter how heavily guests and family members may eat. There is always enough at the end of the day. It is, in that sense, a season of merriment, commensality, abundance and hanging out together.

Daniels (2007) in Iroegbu contends that, this is also noticed in other West African regions such as in some Ghanaian communities where the feast is dubbed *"Homowo"* or "To Hoot at Hunger" Festival. Here, the people ritually mock against famine and apparently hope for a good harvest so no famine will hit the people in the coming year. Iroegbu (2010) pictures the farming ceremony,as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1977) describes: The pounded yam dish placed in front of the partakers of the festival,it was as big as a mountain. People had to eat their way through it all night and it was only during the following day when the pounded yam "mountain" had gone down that people on one side recognized and greeted their family members on the other side of the dish for the first time.

We all know that Achebe merely exaggerated in a metaphorical manner. It would not have been possible literally for a person not to see another at the other end of the table, even if a basin of food is

placed in-between them. Then again, new yam is usually not eaten in Igbo-land until due rite is accorded to the god of yam called *Ahiajoku, ifejioku* and *ajoku.*

The Igbo people answer names rooted to the deity of yam such as *Njoku, Nwanjoku.* Also, titles are taken after the deity for distinguished farmers such as *Eze-Ji, Owa-j*i and *Mma-ji.* In the words of Nwoye (2011) "In Igbo-land, an elaborate ritual ceremony preceded the harvesting and consumption of the new yam. In such a ceremony, the senior elder of each lineage is expected to offer sacrifices at the shrine, which is followed by a feast. It is after the ceremony that new yams are declared fit for consumption".

Oha (2001) also says that,

> Masquerade performs at funerals and community celebrations, always bringing liveliness into the occasion as it tries to scare away the audience. As a dramatic performance, it is an important means of transmitting cultural ideals about masculinity, bravery, and social redemption. Igbo land holds many festivities and cultural performances, most notably the masquerades and the New Yam Festivals.

Bentor (2008) states that, many aspects of Igbo culture that has been in decline in the late colonial and early independence days were intentionally revived…masquerade performances flourished from rural festivals and burial ceremonies the state-sponsored *mmanwu* festival. With colonization in the Twenteth century, masquerades became more relevant as an institution for cultural entertainment. Nowadays, they are used more for tourist attractions when they come out in colourful robes accompanied by traditional dancers and music (Widjaja, 2011).

The day to day life of the Igbos are generally broken down into several ferstes, and there are msquerades that take charge of the day to day life encounter of the people for example: the judicial system, and entertainment and some are used for security actions.

2.2.4 (d) The Secrecy of Masquerade

In the masking tradition, secret societies with varying degrees of religious section are found throughout the West Africa region. Not all use carved masks for masquerade performance, for

example members of some Yoruba societies wear only cloth costumes which completely cover the body, while one dancer representing the principle spirit may have a hard flat platelet covered with cloth on top of his head to which the spirit may come during a ceremony, and may wear an elaborate headdress of feathers symbolizing the powers of the spirit controlling the costume (Bascom *et al*, 1959). In the words of Widjaja (2011) the identity of the masquerade is a well-kept secret and performed exclusively by men. Oha (2001) gave a useful anthropological portraiture of Igbo tradition of masquerading and its secrecy as it is made in Chinua Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart*… he maintained that Achebe presents the Igbo perception of the *egwugwu* or *mmonwu* (also *mmanwu* or *mmuo*) (masked spirit) as the presence of the dead ancestor that must be revered and feared.People in a masquerading community in Igbo-land can tell who carries what masquerade, but they never talk about it. The glory and power of the masquerade seem to be constructed partly from the secrecy and sacredness accorded to cult knowledge. He further states that Achebe presents this condition of the cultural reinvention of knowledge:

> Okonkwo's wives and perhaps other women as well might have noticed that the second egwugwu had the springy walk of Okonkwo. And they might also have noticed that Okonkwo was not among the titled men and elders who sat behind the row of egwugwu. But if they thought these things they kept them within themselves. The egwugwu with the springy walk was one of the dead ancestors of the clan. He looked terrible with the smoked raffia body, a huge wooden face painted white except for the round hollow eyes and the charred teeth that were as big as a man's fingers. On this head were two powerful horns. (1986: 63-64)

Okafor (2008) also gave the same account but from the perspective that the women in the story knew the secret of the masquerade but maintained the expected official position by pretending not to know: In view of the secrecy attached to masquerade activity, she maintains that the masquerade character therefore represents another reality; the supernatural that links the performer to the spirit realm of ancestors. In the words of Uzo (1997) traditionally, masquerades have the highest level of freedom in a village. You cannot fight a masquerade. You cannot unmask it. And you have no right to say the name of the person under the mask, even if you know who it is. Once under the mask, he becomes sacred, a person used to embody the spirit. This was why Oha (2001) points out that, the Igbo masquerade activity reflects the politics of gender, whereby women are not initiated into the masquerade cult

mainly because they are regarded as being incapable of keeping secrets, and also could be defied when the woman menstruates. He further stated that only when a woman reaches menopause, such may be initiated into the cult especially if such women live in environments where the cult house (*ekwuru*) is located. In this case, it is feared that, if they are not initiated, their presence may endanger the secrecy and sacredness of the cult.

In authmost secrecy, even if the identity of the performer is known, no one talks about it, and not even when the performers relation is awere that the person inside the masquerade is one of theirs. Masquerade issues are not to be discussed by women, not even a male child that has been newly initiated can discuss such isseues with the mother.

Initiation and Practices: In the Igbo tradition mainly in Anambra, Nsukka, and Imo,*Iba Mmuo* or *Mmanwu* is strictly for initiation into masquerade cult. It is restricted from women and non-initiates, and they are not allowed to go close to one, not even discussing issues that relates to it. It is a taboo for those classified as non-initiates to attempt, and this is one of the reasons why some of them are seen caring canes in order to scare such people away.

In the view of Oguduasa (2013): the mythology of the Igbo masquerades relates to the initiation of adolescent males into manhood. Only initiated men participate in masquerades and these men support and maintain social order in the communities such as imposing and collection of levies from community offenders. There are processes of initiation into masquerade cult or man hood called *Iba Mmawu*. Some parts of Anambra might say *Igosi Mmanwu* (expose the masquerade).Usually; it is a period of transformation from one stage of one's life to another.According to Dinjos (2012) *Iba Mmuo*, meaning 'initiation into the spirit', is mostly practiced in Igbo land in south-eastern Nigeria. The candidates are usually boys between the ages of five and ten years. After a series of tests and if successful they are welcomed into the fold. Gore (2008) saysonly males can be initiated into masquerade, usually during their time within the youth age-set. It is also believed that in search of possible

replacements and mentorship masquerades look for responsible and potentially interested youths to induct and train up for masquerades.

The masquerade teaches the children signs, languages, chants, and their ways. Before being initiated the children are told that a masquerade holds a spider between its lips to produce its strange sounds. But then after initiation the real secret is revealed; it's actually papaya pipes laced with wool or webs that masquerades wield. This may differ from culture to culture. They are meant to believe formally that the masquerade leaves inside the ant hole, then after initiation the story changes, because truths are made known, the initiate is equipped and knows better. In the words of Gore (2008) masquerades enter the world of the living temporarily through the holes made by ants, either in the ground or in anthills. However, when they appear they do not represent named and identifiable forebears. Cole and Aniakor (1984) observed that, "never among the Igbo are they 'portraits' of individuals, nor do they refer to specific individuals who have lived despite being physical manifestations from the community of the incarnate dead."Asigbo (2010) States that,masquerades are said to manifest from ant holes or groves far removed from prying eyes. Ikebude (2009) agrees with this view as he submits that, masquerades are believed to emerge from, and retreat to ant-holes located in an inner section of *ekwuru*. (a house where spirit masquerades called *mmonwu,* 'live', and where ceremonies pertaining to their outing and retreat are performed).Cole and Aniakor in Robinson (2010) contend that the crucial aspect of masquerades spirit-makers are believed to leave the 'land of spirits,' *animmuo*, and enter this world through anthills which are considered passage-ways for all reincarnating ancestors." Illah in Asigbo (2010) explains that, the ancestors are believed to travel back to the living, through the median persona…to partake and celebrate with their living offspring, in a re-invigoration of their relationship.

Initiations usually take other forms and the acquisition of knowledge is supplemented by trials of endurance to prove that the candidate is equal to the responsibilities of adult life.Like the Age Grade Association.

Nwoye (2011) infer that, the Age grade associations are important in Igbo social organization and among many Igbo village and town groups and they are highly developed and in each case constitute a

part of the administrative machinery. Age Grade Associations are composed of age companies, which are formed triennially among boys, beginning from the ages of thirteen and fifteen years. Members of a particular age company elect their leader and choose a name by which to be known by other citizens of the village and town. About two or three age companies are then merged together to form an Age Grade Association.

Okafor (2008) is of the view that,menstrual flow is mysterious, powerful and destructive, so it is necessary to work around it with taboos that aim at protecting the women and those around her. This was part of the reason for not allowing pre-menopausal women to get involved in masquerade cult activities, replete with metaphysical powers that can conflict with menstrual power. Seclusion of menstrual women was believed to be necessary because of the power of the blood to attract, repel, and destroy. For example, when it attracts strong psychic medicine, it can harm the woman. Pregnant women are usually discouraged from watching powerful masquerades, because menstrual influence is believed to be extra-potent. During this period, when the power repels, it can destroy another power like that of a charm as used in masking. These are cults where men organize, control, and produce the masquerades even though selected women are sometimes inducted in some cults.She gave an account of how she was almost denied the chance of carrying out her research on masquerade because of how the issues of woman are seen in some part of African. She says that,

> "Some people are offended by any suggestion of women's participation in masking and vehemently refute it or try to subvert discussions of it. At the presentation of my research at the University of Nigeria in 1985, a scholar insisted that women were totally excluded from the activity and that as a gender-outsider".

These masquerades are revered and believed to be sacred because of the Igbo belief in the role it plays in their lives. One's devotion to a religious belief is the ability to manage things that are admitted to be sacred. Igbo people are very religious. A casual observer might pronounce them superstitious, but the fact is the belief in the spiritual exercises profound influence over every detail of their lives. Their religion is not an idolatrous one as that term is commonly interpreted. The idols are so called, being merely tangible symbols to assist them in the service and worship of the invisible (Ikebude, 2009). A

thing is sacred, because it inspires, for some reason or other, a collective sentiment of respect, which sets it apart and endows its representation in the conscious mind with such strength that it automatically prompts or inhibits certain acts (Durkheim, 2013).

2.2.5 (e) *Ijele* as a Symbol of Conceit and Authority to the Northern Anambra Igbo People

> "The *Ijele's* majesty is inherent in, and internal, to it. What can you give to the *Ijele*? How will you even approach it in order to bestow anything on it? Who are you to enter the square while it walks the square? Please note this: there are masquerades and then there is the Ijele! In the affairs of his people, and as it pertains to the everyday values of leadership and desire for group cohesion" (Ikechukwu, 2012).

From the above excerpt the *Ijele* can be classified as being sacred, peculiar and visible. It can be clearly distinguished and separated from other masquerades; it is a ceremonial masquerade that depicts the reach culture of the Igbo people. Its concept connotes the beauty of the universe. The *Ijele* is revered and regarded as the king of all other masquerades. Though, Ogbechie (2009) posits that, the concept of *Ijele* and its visual representation was developed and refined over several centuries and this concept properly belongs to the various Igbo communities who produced and used this masquerade for various ritual purposes.

The *Ijele* manifests command and ultimate respect, not just because of its ethereal presence but because it is believed to embody supernatural wisdom, strength and purity. Hence, it is above the imperfections of mundane man. This masquerade represents the cosmos mostly in Anambra Igbo culture and some part of Enugu State, composed of the physical form of the masquerade ensemble andits performance as a physical representation of sacred and non-spiritual knowledge (Daily NEWSWATCH 2013).

Cole and Aniakor in Okafor (2008) described the comparison of other masquerades to *Ijele* as a microcosm of Igbo history and social cosmos; *Ijele* is huge and represents a great spirit. Ojukwu in Ikechukwu (2012) states:

> "The *Ijele* does not ask the big and small masquerades to leave the Village Square when it wants to enter. They have to. They are not the *Ijele*. They are masquerades and that is the essential difference. The *Ijele* must take pre-eminence as a matter of course; there is no question of arrogance or preposterous self-inflation here. It is the nature of the *Ijele* to live thus. So do not expect that it will acknowledge the cheer and applause of the crowd, no. Do not expect that it will thank anyone for getting out of the way as it approaches. Absurd! There is no contemptuous air of superiority on display here no. It is just the natural majesty conferred on the *Ijele* by its very identity, as well as the triumph of the Aristocratic Principle of Nature".

This is confirmed in the words of Ogbonna (2012) the popular saying in Igbo-land *"Nnukwu Mmonwu puta, Obodo Agbaa oso"*- whenever, a big masquerade appears, the town runs away. The *Ijele,* holds its audience spell bound,by its physic adorned with expensive costume and shiny objects, making it gleam in the sun when it dances. There are no two masquerades that fit the description of the *Ijele*. This was why Ojukwu in Ikechukwu (2012) affirms the superiority of the *Ijele,* and states that:

> "it is strange, even amusing and absurd to hear people speak of the *Ijele* masquerade. There is no such thing! You may speak of big and small masquerades of which there are many, but the *Ijele* is not one of the masquerades. It is not a big masquerade because it is already the *Ijele* and the *Ijele* cannot be anything other than itself. That is why it is the *Ijele*. There are masquerades and then there is the *Ijele*. The latter does not dance for money because it is sufficient unto itself. It does not entertain because that is beneath its dignity. It does not ask anyone to get out of the way when it is coming, because it cannot contemplate that anything would possibly want to stand in its way".

The *Ijere* (soldier ants) moves in their mass, so it is also the nature of the *Ijele* masquerade to glide, move about in its complex form. Every other masquerade scatters at the sight or smell of the *Ijele*.

The Igboshave great admiration and reverence for the *Ijele*. In most cases, the word *Ijele* is used within the context of expressing mounumentality. For example, they are found to always attribute or call a beautiful tall elegant woman *Ijele Nwanyi* (beautiful woman), the same is also applicable if the woman is big or very fat in nature and appearance.

2.2.6(f) The Paraphernalia's of *Ijele* and its Significance

It is said that the *Ijele* masquerade design resembles circular Igbo buildings with conical roof; without a doubt, it is the most impressive of the masquerades performed by the Igbo people and is regarded as bringing peace to the community. The inhabitants of a particular village would create a masquerade from this breath-taking design, to promote harmony and communal dialogue. Each masqueared is then collectively owned and can only be used on special occasions on the authority of the kings and elders of the community (Arinze in Priston *et al*, 2008). Ugiomoh (2012) states that,

> "Its aggregate parts will always consonate to define the totality of an essence. Here, a disparate unit asserts their independence even in the context of the whole without diminishing their essence or that of the whole. Despite the fact that it encompasses all the spirits, it is composed of various forms of animals, humans, trees, in general term forms that are defined and undefined".

Enekwe (1987) observes that, the notable figures found in the *Ijele* comprise women in labour, men climbing palm trees to cut fruits, a chief making his annual appearance accompanied by his musicians, realistic figures of local animals, cocks or fowls, a man carrying either a child or his wife on his shoulders, a lady showing off her status, a well-dressed gentle man displaying his outfit, figures of colonial officials strolling with his wife or escorted by a policeman. There are figures representing the world of the spirits; animal figures are also represented such as leopards, and antelopes.

The *Ijele* is adorned with materials that are very expensive and rich in every aspect as the major disguise that imbues the spirit with supernatural essence, which is necessary for role-change. Aniakor in Robinson (2010) categorises the many figures represented on the *Ijele* masquerade into three: man and daily activities, the spirit world, animals and nature. The colonial District Officer is a prominent figure among the human and daily life sculptures. Ogbechie (2009) submits that, the *Ijele* masquerade is a combination of all the arts in society, which bring together all elements of aesthetic practice consisting of painting, textiles, sculpture, performance, and architecture, for the purpose of managing and enunciating sacred and secular knowledge.

Okafor (2008) explains that,*Ijele* is big, but its symbolism is larger than a house and as large as the Igbo cosmos. The icons on the massive gliding figure include representations of humans' activities,

animals, and even items of change such as cars and aeroplanes. It represents prosperity, joy, and celebration. It is *Ifenkili*, (a great spectacle).

Ijele is compared to the elephant because of its massive structure; this is also visible in its slow-paced walk. *Ijele's* size ranges from over four to six meters in height, with a diameter of three meters. Arinze in Priston (2008) and Jell-Behlsen (2014) observes that, prominent among the motifs is the *eke* (python). The *Eke* in Igbo mythology is a great and powerful Python. The Supreme water goddess, *NneMmiri* or *Idemili* occupies a prominent position in the pantheon of gods and goddesses. It can swallow a human being. This is usually located at the middle of the structure. It is believed to be a messenger or manifestation of god in many parts of Africa. The royal python can alter one's destiny even though a person's *akaraka* (destiny) life course has been structured. Enekwe (1987) also supports the assertion that, the *Ijele* has the power of the river whose god, *Idemili* (the royal python), represents. Noticeable among the motifs include hands, elephants, police, eagle feathers and white figures representing the supreme mystical authority of the ancestors. The figure on horseback at the top of the masquerade represents a colonial District Officer or Igbo king. Overall, the motifs represent the interplay of the spiritual, animal and physical worlds; all these portray and express the harmony that prevails in the Igbo communities. Robinson (2010) explains that, the presence of the European adds to the power of the *Ijele*. He is placed on the superstructure not as a mockery but as a power symbol. He represents the unlimited authority of the colonial era and provides validity to the rituals being performed. As the epitome of Igbo ideals "of achievement, authority, and status associated with the founding fathers/ ancestors," *Ijele* is symbolically charged masquerade. The presence of the colonial figure does, in fact, add a dimension of caricature and playfulness to a serious and powerful ritual. The *Ijele* masquerade is not simply a political commentary on colonialism. However, its main function is religious. It is a "symbol of the continuity and ritual well-being in the community of its owners," and, therefore, the presence of the European adds to the community's definition of itself.

In the words of Menkiti (2008):

> "*Anaghi akwu ofu ebe enene manwu*" meaning one does not stand still, in one place, to witness the great masquerade. The great masquerade referred to here can be considered to stand for the

> great masquerade of life as people live it the wide world over, whether alone or in groups, always with the citation of this or that reason for whatever it is that they do (sick). Within the Igbo world, the *Ijele* masquerade is the biggest of them all. It is grand, complex and bearer of ineffable mysteries. If one were to render truly a faithful account of what the *Ijele* stood for, one must first see right, and to first see right one must be prepared to move around with the moving spectacle. And regarding this *Ijele* masquerade, imagine, if you will, a towering edifice representative of the sum of village knowledge. Imagine this edifice, afoot, in locomotion through the village square. And as it moves through the square, its unbearable majesty in full display, now proceeding north, then proceeding south, then east and west, there is this buzz and anticipation among the assembled crowd, even as the crowd holds its collective breath, mindful of the heaviness of the ancestral burden, the risks, being borne by the carrier on whose head the towering architecture of the *Ijele* rests.

The process of creating the *Ijele* masquerade can be a complex and tedious task. This process may take a whole year and even more, usually created by a master initiated sculptor. Various designed are cut and sewn together; the *Ijele* is made up of materials comprising of various motifs as well as more than a thousand other pieces from which it is sculpted. Its armature construction is made from cane and bamboo using the appliqué technique fabrics, and foams are introduced to reduce weight.

Mbanaja (2012) is of the view that, the *Ijele* masquerade is about four meters tall so large that it takes a hundred men and lots of months' work to prepare the costume and build an outdoor house to hold it before a performance. Divided into upper and lower segments by a large python at the centre, the *Ijele* is constructed of colourful fabric on a skeleton of bamboo sticks and decorated with figurines and depictions of every aspect of life.

Asigbo (2010) states that,

> "The ancient cadences of masking rituals encompass a systematic framework for domesticating newness. The *Ijele* is an epitome of this ideal: it appears once every generation or at the funeral ceremonies of extremely important persons. For each of these appearances, the process of creating the masquerade and mediating its appearance shepherds a new generation of masquerade performers (initiates of the masquerade societies) through intensive training in indigenous knowledge designed to sustain them through adulthood".

Modernization and the influence of Christianity have changed masquerade perception and philosophy. However, *Ijele* masquerade activity, in-cooperated these changes into the activity, and this has in a way strengthened the masquerade believe system among the Northern Anambra people.

In support of this assertion, Deluca (2012) also infers that,

> "The masquerade is comprised of two segments. The top cylinder is adorned with doll-sized detailed effigies of various characters, such as little children. There are also figures of what appears to be a chief, a man, woman and a bird in a tree. The figures are arranged next to one another, with small spaces between each one, in two rows which appear to wrap around the upper level of the mask. The heads of the figures are attached to a slender stick running above the row, while the legs are held in place by a rope running below the row. Trees fashioned from ropes also adorn the shorter sides of the top cylinder. At the very top of the masquerade is a white man sitting on top of a horse wearing a hat and smoking a cigar. Right next to him is a figure of a black man holding a long flag pole. There are also two very long hands, possibly made out of cloth, sticking out from both sides of the masquerade. The form of a very large snake is coiled around the circumference of the top cylinder near the place where the larger bottom cylindrical skirt begins. The lower cylinder is just like the top, vibrantly coloured. Long beautiful cloths are hung horizontally on the masquerade, and the cloths overlap each other. The detailed geometric patterns seem to be abstractions of natural objects. Stars made from tessellated triangles are present. Swirls loosely suggesting spirals could represent natural forces such as water or the wind. Attached to the lowest part of the skirt-like bottom are ribbons of different colours adding to the overall impression of movement and rhythm, even when *Ijele* is stationary. As the masquerade made its majestic moves, small round mirrors attached to the fabric often catch the rays of the sun and shine those rays back into the eyes of the observer".

> We can compare the manifold variety of things in creation to the glassed mirror. Just as light strikes the various panes of glass and diffracts into an array of colours, so too the divine light emanates through the Word and diffracts in the universe, producing a myriad of colours expressed in a myriad of things, all reflecting the divine light in some way (Hayes, 2003).

Another account by Arinze in Priston *et al*, (2008) gave a full description of the *Ijele* installed at the Britain towers says "If you see *Ijele*, you have seen it all." At five meter high, this Igbo *Ijele* ceremonial mask (sick)- the only one of its kind in Britain - towers above all others in size, beauty, grace, majesty and elegance. (See Chapter 1, fig. 2).

In the words of Ogbechie (2009):

> The top cylinder is adorned with doll-sized detailed effigies of various characters, such as little children. There are figures of what appears to be a chief, a man, woman and a bird in a tree. The figures are arranged next to one another, with small spaces between each one, in two rows which appear to wrap around the upper level of the masquerade. The heads of the figures are attached to a slender stick running above the row, while the legs are held in place by a rope running below the row. Trees fashioned from ropes also adorn the shorter sides of the top cylinder. At the very top of the mask is a white man sitting on top of a horse wearing a hat and smoking a cigar. Right next to him is a figure of a black man holding a long flag pole. There are also two very long hands, made out of cloth, sticks out from both sides of the mask, a snake is coiled around the circumference of the top cylinder near the place where the larger bottom cylindrical skirt begins. The lower cylinder is vibrantly coloured. The detailed geometric patterns are seemed to be abstractions of natural objects, elements, and other motifs.

The motif patterns are created in geometric forms, turned against each other with a graphically out lined zigzagged lines, depicted in various colours of red, blue, yellow, green, black, and white which has helped in defining the motifs. These same figures are at times designed in these same colours. The use of colour is symbolic in an African setting, especially in the Igbo tradition. For example, colours like white represent peace; black connotes death, green is for vegetation and fertility, yellow is for protection, red is for attack or danger. This was why Arinze in Priston (2008) states that the motifs that adorn the *Ijele* form a kaleidoscope of colours and striking designs to illustrate the Igbo people's culture and belief system.

Colours are believed to possess significant meanings which vary from culture to culture. There is often a deeper meaning hidden away in traditional Nigerian costume designs which are also evident in the traditional dancer's groups or troupes like the *Nkpokiti*, *Atilogwu*, among others.

According to Carlyle in Ikebude (2009): aesthetic drive is the first spiritual want of man.The characteristics or powers of a specific masquerade are most often, embedded in its costume and the mask head. Beyond its size, it is the colour and variety of the *Ijele* masquerade head that makes it the king of Igbo masquerades.

The elements of the *Ijele* is so much attractive because of the representations of colours and the day to day life experiencies of the people represented on the *Ijele* masquerade both at the upper and lower section, this in a way defines the Igbo philosophy expressed on this masquerade. Though at the

present, many masquerade festivals are being relegated to the background because of the influence of Christianity, some are being modernised to meet up with the present day requirements. The Igbo culture in its virgin form was also in a way raped by the slave traders and abducted by Western civilization.

2.3 Review of Artists, Artworks Ideas and Philosophy

2.3.1 The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BCE) believes that artists represented nature the way it is, with the basic idea of the universal aspects of human nature, the artist must have a soul; he must have both vision and technique (Mitchell, 2011). Gadamer in Weisenheimer and Marshall (2006), equally states that, "to encounter the truth in art is not to look back to an original; art serves not as the mirror to the world that is there, but as a means to open one's eyes to new ways of seeing future possibilities."



Fig. 5:*Atlas* byLee Lawrie. Bronze: 14m.(1973),New York USA. Source: shmoop.com2015.

2.3.2 Lee Lawrie. Atlas sculpture depicts the Ancient Greek Titan Atlas holding the heavens.

The sculpture was created in 1937, rendered in Art Deco style, mounted at the Rockefeller Centre (Fig. 5). The entire sculpture is 14 meters high. Atlas connotes a person who supports a great burden, the giant god who holds the entire world on his back. This represents part of the second generation of Titans, the gods that ruled before the Olympians. In Greek mythology, Atlas was the primordial Titan who held up the celestial sphere, also known as the Titan of

astronomy and navigation. There are speculations that Atlas is depicted holding up the world because Zeus had punished him for playing a part in the Titan war in which the Gods almost lost because he was considered one of the strongest Titan. Some also say that when Zeus led a rebellion against his father Kronos, the king of the Titans, Atlas stuck with Kronos and did his best to help keep the upstart Olympians in their place. This famous conflict, known as the War of the Titans, didn't work out so well for Kronos, Atlas, and others. Zeus and the Olympians ended up winning the Titans, and they were thrown into the black pit of Tartarus, but Atlas, got an extra-special punishment. (http://www.shmoop.com/atlas-titan). Atlas, like *Ijele* in the physical representation, depicted being assigned with responsibility, both are seen carrying something. Atlas is seen carrying the world and its elements like one who is saddled with responsibility, in the same manner, *Ijele* is also seen carrying all the elements and burden that exist in the world.



Fig. 6: *Chimera of great beauty*by Emerald Magpie. Glass fiber, (2010) 140 cm x 91 cm Source: deviantart.com 2015.

2.3.3 Masquerade a surreal fantasy inspired curiosity creature sculpture (Fig. 6). Magpie imagined a little story in his mind making this piece, punished by a jealous Queen or Scorned King, Forcing her to cover her beauty with a humorous masquerade mask and removing her arms so as not to be able to remove the mask (deviantart.com, 2015). This sculpture also features a tiny solid Gold Key, tied around her neck; one is able to make out in the picture. According to Magpie Chemera of great beauty representsa carved classical beautiful face thatis now sealed and permanently lost under the mask, now

fused to the sculptures face. Masking involves covering or concealing of one's identity which is more prominent in African tradition especially masquerade festivals like we have seen in the literature review.

Magpie's sculpture can be compared to the Kentauroi or Centaurs, they are half man half horse savage that inhibited the mountains and forest of Magnesia. Legend has it that they were primitive race who made their homes in mountain caves, hunted wild animals for food and armed themselves with stones and tree branches. The Kentauroi were spawed by the cloud nymph Nephele who was raped by the impious Lapith King Ixion. Her double formed brood were deposited on Mount Pelion where the daughters of the centaur god *Kheiron* nursed and fostered them to adulthood. They were invited to attend the wedding of their half-brother Perithoos, the Lapith king but became drunk an attempted to carry off the bride and the female gusts. In was said that in the battle the Kentauroi were all wiped out (Wikipedia, 2015).

This same animal feature being represented in human being can also be seen in Satyroi, usually depicted as animal-like man with the tail of horse, assine ears, and upturned pug noses, reclining hair-lines and erect members. As companions of Dionysus they are usually shown drinking, playing tambourines and flutes.

Like magpie's surrealistic tendencies,filled with dreams and fantasy tales,the sculptures seen on the *Ijele* masquerade have the same quality (Figs. 2 and 3). It is filled with African metaphysical believes, connecting the spirit world to that of humans. The sculptures derived from the *Ijele* masquerade, especially the smaller sculpture has the potentiality to be displayed in-doors with its attractive colours which are also symbolic in the Igbo Anambra world view and in the context of the *Ijele*.



Fig. 7: *Maiden Spirit.*Ken Okoli, Mild steel, (1992) Size: 140 cm x 100 cm, Collection of the artist.

2.3.4 Okoli explores the *Maiden spirit,* with mild steel rods and metal sheet which gives the impression of the *Agbogho mmanwu* spirit, *Mgbadike* and *Okue-ekwe* masquerade (Fig. 7). The word Maiden implies; young and unmarried virgin, *Agbogho Mmuo* (Maiden Spirit) performs annually during the dry season especially in Anambra state, it is believed that during the *Agbogho mmuo* performance men dance as adolescent girls, miming and exaggerating their beauty and component,

tributes are also sang to both real and spirit maidens. The masquerade is said to exaggerate the smallest of a young girls ideal features, while the whiteness of her complexion is likened to "the purity of white chalk" a substance used for ritual in marking the body in both West Africa and the African Diaspora. The white pigment also serves as a ground for the elaborate uli decorations painted on young Igbo women's skin (Emory, 2012).

Here the artist tried to combine the features that are found in three masquerades, the *Agbogho mmou*, the *Mgbadike spirit* or *Agaba spirit* and *Okue-ekwe*. *Okue-ekwe* means'beater of gong', its aesthetic excellence, for both the visual beauty of its masking and costuming as well as the artistry of its famous singing, It is usually a group of five masquerades representing a father and mother with three daughters, led by the two *ori aja* ('the sacrifices') who bring the masquerade out into the publicarena. Visually it is embellished with appliqué textile patterningit is also powerful and medicinally charged.According to Gore (2008) *Okue-ekwe* is a highly popular masquerade that peoplewould rush to see when it came out to perform, both for itsvisual beauty as well as its role as a singing masquerade, which offered poetic yet highly satirical commentaries on the misdoings of individuals within the community, especially those who had gained social prominence. During performance, individuals would present money as an inducement to the masquerade not to reveal publicly their own misdoings, making it highly successful and profitable for its members.

In Igbo traditional beliefe, there are deferent cultures with varieties of masquerade spirits, the paraphernalia's seen in Okoli's *Maiden spirit* are typical examples of what is found in some of these masquerades. Dickson *et al*(2012) says; "culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts"

One can also say that the dome-shaped cap with its elements seen on Okoli's *Maiden Spirit* has the resemblance of the *Ijele* Masquerade, but this time not totally covering the whole body. The basic characteristic feature that defines a woman is not visible in this *Maiden Spirit*, but rather that of the male is more recognizable. This is so because women are excluded from partaking in the affairs of

masquerade activity. By combining these features, he used simple lines, which was graphically illustrated to tell his story of this gentle, energetic and vibrant masked spirit. Okoli's sculpture is represented in a relief form, while the sculpture derived from the *Ijele* masquerade by this research is rendered free-standing.



Fig. 8: *Asa Mask* Chidi OkoyeResin on hard board; 36 x 48cm, Source: Pinterest.com, 2015

2.3.5 *Asa Mask* by Chidi Okoye (Fig. 8) represents a female mask from Benin representing Queen *Idia* (Iyoba) the first queen mother of Benin and the mother to Oba Esigie king of Benin who ruled from 1504 – 1550 century.

The word *Asa* in Igbo connotes *beauty;* this was why Ugiomoh (2012) states that *Asa* is the utterance that brings things into being. Aniakor in Ugiomoh (2012) goes beyond the above to outline the Igbo concept of *Mma*, translated as *beauty*, as a category of human evolution. The extensions this concept accommodates as a metaphor is equally highlighted either as a derivative of a natural phenomena other than the human being and its actions. A girl or woman judged beautiful may then be called *Ugo mma*. Translated as an embodiment of praise, it also references the prestigious white eagle. In the same context a rare species of yellowish brown kola nut, wherever it is found, in the midst of kola-nuts is referred to as *Oji Ugo* (translated eagle's kola-nut). The word *mma* (beauty) as a human attribute also can define parts of human anatomy like the neck or human frame, virtue like character and names we bear supports Plato's idealism that life in the prior realm is unmoving. When a child is called *Nnenna,* (in Igbo) or *Iyabo* (in Yoruba) all of which means that the child is "the mother of the man", we are only in agreement with the idealistic intellectual relationship on which the canons of practice in African art are fore-grounded. What is in a name, one may ask? The name we bear also reveals the dimension of African aesthetics. Ugiomoh maintains people are direct reference to this value of in the names they give. For example the name *Ekelekhose*, which means the interior is beauty. This however is what the Igbo reference as *Agwabumma, Emelebunmma* and for the Yoruba *Iwa Le wa,* all of which mean "character is beauty".

In the above regard, in Africa the beauty of appearance is secondary. The characteristics of Ojiugo, Okonkwo's wife in *Things Fall Apart* is but one example. Conscious of her good looks, she was out on one occasion to enhance her looks. She engaged in this act without regard for her task to provide food for her children and husband. The husband, who returned home to be confronted with such irresponsibility, ruined the sanctity of the week of peace. He did this by fighting Ojiugo to a point of wild spread commotion that engulfed the neighbourhood. The brawl attracted the anger of the community because it occurred in the week of peace. The week of peace, as a holy period, was defined by this act. The same flamboyant hair-do and oblong face represented on Okoye's *AsaMask*are also found on the *Ijele* masquerade.



Fig. 9: *Mask* I. Godwin Nwajei,Wood,86 x 37 cm. Collection of the Artist. 1995

2.3.6 Mask I, rendered innaturalism and asbtraction style (Fig.9). Exploring wood as a medium of expression, his style of approach in carving combines recognizable identities of the human features in a slight composite assemblage. The profile and frontal elements in the human are brought together in one composition, which shows that of the grown adult. Exaggeration of the human form was first communicated by Plato. According to Ugiomoh (2012) the intellectual traditions that support the noticed deviation, though rooted in Africa, were first articulated by Plato in *The Republic*. In The Republic, he chides the artist of his

days for engaging in excessive realism. Such art works were third rate and removed from reality he maintains. The Neo-Platonist Plotinus (204-270 AD), of Egyptian origin, aptly defines the intellectual traditions that govern the idealistic tradition of African art. He states "the arts give no bare reproduction of the thing seen but go back to the ideas from which nature herself derives". In this regard "bodies live in the species, and the individual in the whole class; from there they derive their life and maintenance, for life here is a thing of change, but in the priori realm it is unmoving".

The sculpture produced by this artist has almost the same ideology with the researcher. Though, Nwajei approached his renditions from the realistic and abstraction style while the researcher renders his ideas from naturalism and abstraction style.



Fig. 10: *"Dialogue of the wise"*, Peter Akinwumi,Wood, Oil colour, and Aluminium, 105 X 70cm. Size: Collection of the Artist. 2010.

2.3.7*Dialogue of the wise:* (Fig. 10),from the title this connots exchange of ideas, channel of communication, discourse, interchange, discussion, information flow, negotiation among the elders or spirits. It is through dialogue that issues are deliberated and resolved also important decisions taken.

Various colours were adopted in the decision making of this masks, prominent among these colours are, the basic primary colours, and secondary colours, with the colour red dominating most part of this assemblage. There are similarities between what exists in *Dialogue of the wise*and the *Ijele* masquerade (Fig. 2) in terms of richness of colours. It is important to notethat these colours represents African, it is always made visible in traditional African activities. With its elongated forms which is a typical feature of the African mask. There is unevenness in the representation of the mask which could also stand for diverse cultures and tribes that exists in Nigeria, yet still, uniting and coexisting with one another. It is also true that no two persons are exactly the same, there must be some level deference that can be identifiable between them.

The inclusion of white paint on the surfaceprobably represents the white chalk use in Igbo African tradition, popularly known as *Ima Nzu* offered to one that visits the home of the Igbo's. It is a right of hospitality; the guest touches and spreads it on the wrist, to proclaim a purity of heart towards the gust. Nzu means white chalk and denotes wisdom, the white chalk is used to draw *Oguama* line on the floor this signifies purity and holiness in Igbo land; the foundation of Igbo cosmology and traditional religion. A similar tradition exists in Egypt which is known as *"Ma'at*. Whenever two or more Igbo elders meet each takes the white chalk and draws four or eight lines on the floor, according to rank as *Ozo* or none initiate. Chiism (2013) states; this act of reverence is regarded as a sacred act of offering

to life, the evidence of one's innocence, and calling on "*Ani*" (Mother earth) to witness before those gathered, that one comes with clean hands and heart to the gathering or meeting. This artist shows his dexterity in representing this eighteen headed *Dialogue of the wise*in its exaggerated forms.



Fig. 11: *"Mask of Growth,"*Franklin Egwali, Fiber Glass and Raffia, 150cm, Collection of the Artist.2007.

2.3.8 *"Mask of Growth"* (Fig. 11) unlike "Dialogue of the wise" created with less-colour. A closer examination reveals a Hausa man in a traditional stylized turban head band. With the raffia around it also reminds one of the *Ekpe* masquerade, popularly known as *Egbo* (Ibibio Leopard). Ani (2007) states that It is a secret society popular among the Efiks of Cross River State , Oron, of Akwa Ibom State Nigeria, Igbo's in Abia State, as well as South-eastern Nigeria. It's role is a ceremonious one, it was said that its member invented the *Nsibidi* script. *Nsibidi* is a system of symbols indigenous to what is now south-eastern Nigeria. The symbols are several centuries old, about 500 of these *Nsibidi* have been recorded, and were once taught in school to children, it was used in wall designs, calabash, and metal. It is used by the *Ekpe* Leopard secret society. There is a great deference between *Ekpe* and Ekpo, or *Ekong* also popular among the Cross River, especially in Akwa Ibom State.

The *Ijele* Masquerade encompasses all the colours that exists in the world, the same can also be attributed to *Ekpe Masquerader* in its full colour.



Fig. 12: *Emedjo* (Dancing Masqueraders), Bruce Onobrakpeya, Plastograph, 49cm x 67.5cm Collection of the Artist.1974.

2.3.9*Emedjo* (1974) is Urhobo word for Masquerades (Fig. 12), and the print shows dancing masquerades and their spectators who occupy the narrow frieze at the top of the picture. Onobrakpeya is a print maker and an experimental artist, he was inspired by the Niger Delta riverine festivals, the richly costumed dancers wear animal and human face mask including two horizontal ones, a crocodile and a boat. Onobrakpeya's physical environment, work culture, world view and philosophy, including religion and cosmology of the Urhobo people expose him to early artistic expressions, he was also inspired by his child hood moon light story tales (Musa, 2008). According to Jegede (1992) In Urhobo cosmology, shrines are essential in the promotion of an interface between the living and the dead. Onobrakpeya was quoted once to say that "one quality about Nigerian art works which stands above all other arts is the ability to create a mystic and generate a feeling of reverence thereby creating ideal mood for worship in a church or in the traditional shrines. Art should be the ability to draw out the essence of things".



Fig. 13:*Adamu Orisa,*Odungide Ekpo. Metal,51 x 19cm. Collection of the Artist.2000.

2.3.10 *"Adamu Orisa"* (Fig. 13). The Eyo Festival, also known as the *Adamu Orisa* Play is the traditional play of Lagos. It is usually a day's festival staged for the final burial obsequies of an Oba or a chief, and also in honouring of a deceased person who had contributed to the progress and development of Lagos. This play is not staged for any less important event. The white-clad Eyo masquerades represent the spirits of the dead, and are referred to in Yoruba as "Agogoro Eyo" ("Tall Eyo"), which is the general characteristics and philosophy of African masquerading (Wikipedia, 2015)

The *Eyo* are usually found in procession during performance, this movement in group is similar with the *Ijele*. *Eyo* involves individual masquerades coming together to perform as one, *Ijele* is comprised of an assemblage of deferent entities.



Fig.14: *Masquerade*.Rueben Ugbine. Ebony Wood, Size: 92 cm X 18 cm. Collection of the Artist, 2009.

2.3.11*Masquerade* (Fig. 14), by Rueben Ugbine, shows a representation of various forms explored in geometric pattern. The totem like masquerade depicts a gathering of spirits, like we have seen in some of the masquerades analyzed. This spirit is portrayed in the manner of the very tall masquerade synonymous with the Yoruba's in the Western part of Nigeria, which emanates from a box of between 4 to 5 square meter and stretches to about 12 feet or more. This geometrical representation can also be associated with the Cubist; its proponent was the legendary Picasso, inspired by African geometric forms. The rendition looks simple and yet complex. Its simplicity is seen in the elongated form, its complexity is evident in the intricacy and the basic formal arrangement of these forms. A close observation again reveals the inter-play of lines between these forms which may connote transition from one point to the other. In the Igbo cosmology, when an Ozo titled man dies he is believed to have moved over to the spirit world to continue his role in overseeing to the activity of those still living.

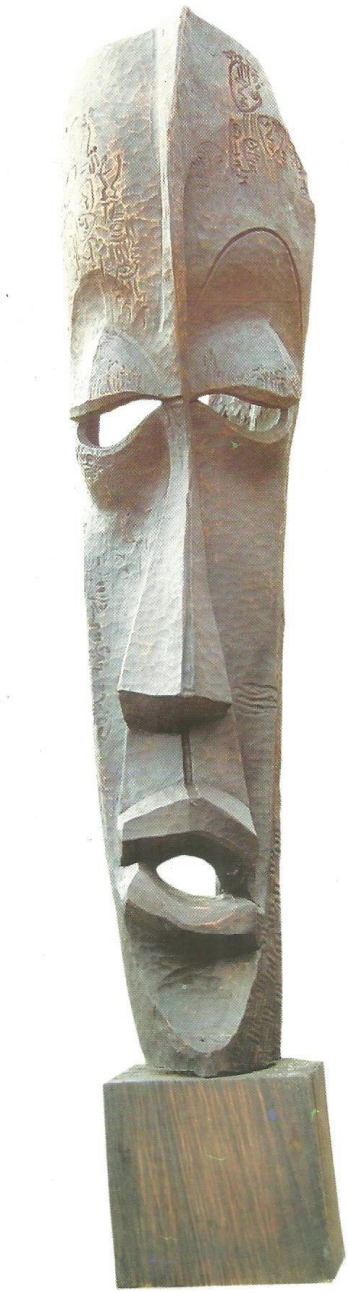


Fig. 15: *The Representative*, Philips Lexie Nzekwe,Wood,45 cm X 208 cm, Collection of the Artist.2011.

2.3.12 *"The Representative"* (Fig. 15). There is a combination of slight realism and more of abstraction. The incision visible on this sculpture indicates that of being marked by the owner or master, these marks are popular among Africans. For example some of the Igbo Ukwu facial relics showed a facial scarification by which the *Nri's* were identified with. It is popularly known as *Igbu Ichi* ritual scarification in Nri also known as *Ichi* of which there are two styles; the Nri style, and the Agbaja style. In the Nri style, the carved line ran from the

center of the forehead down to the chin. A second line ran across the face, from the right cheek to the left. This was repeated to obtain a pattern meant to imitate the rays of the sun. In the Agbaja style, circles and semi-circular patterns are added to the initial incisions to represent the moon. These scarification's were given to the representatives of the *eze* Nri; the *mbùríchi*. The scarification's were Nri's way of honouring the sun that they worshiped and was a form of ritual purification (Wikipedia, 2015).

Scarification had its origins in Nri mythology. Nri, the son of Eri who established the town of Nri, was said to have pleaded to *Chukwu* (the Great God) because of hunger. Chukwu then ordered him to cut off his first son's and daughter's heads and plant them, creating a 'blood bond' between the Igbo and the earth deity, *Ana*. Before doing so, Nri was ordered to mark *ichi* onto their two foreheads. Coco yam, a crop managed by females, sprang from his daughter's head, and yam, sprung from his son's head; *Chukwu* had taught Nri plant domestication. From this, the *Eze* Nri's first son and daughter were required to undergo scarification's seven days after birth, with the *eze* Nri's daughter being the only female to receive *ichi*. Nri, the son of Eri, also gained knowledge of the yam medicine (*Ogwu ji*). People from other Igbo communities made pilgrimages to Nri in order to receive this knowledge received in exchange for annual tributes. Though, the history of marking the face dates back to the fifth Century B.C. when some foreigners were said to have lived in Egypt. The Greek historian- Herodotus wrote that these foreigners, in an attempt to prove that they were not Egyptians, cut their foreheads with knives, creating marks which differentiated them from their hosts (Ani, 2007). According to Adeoye (2013) this practice was later adopted in other African countries, especially at a time when kingdoms were invaded and people were kidnapped. As such, clans started marking their members to differentiate themselves and also to be able to know where an individual belonged to, peradventure there were chances for their

return home. Although the incision seen on The Representative by Nzekwe are not as pronounced and defined as the *Ichi* scarification.

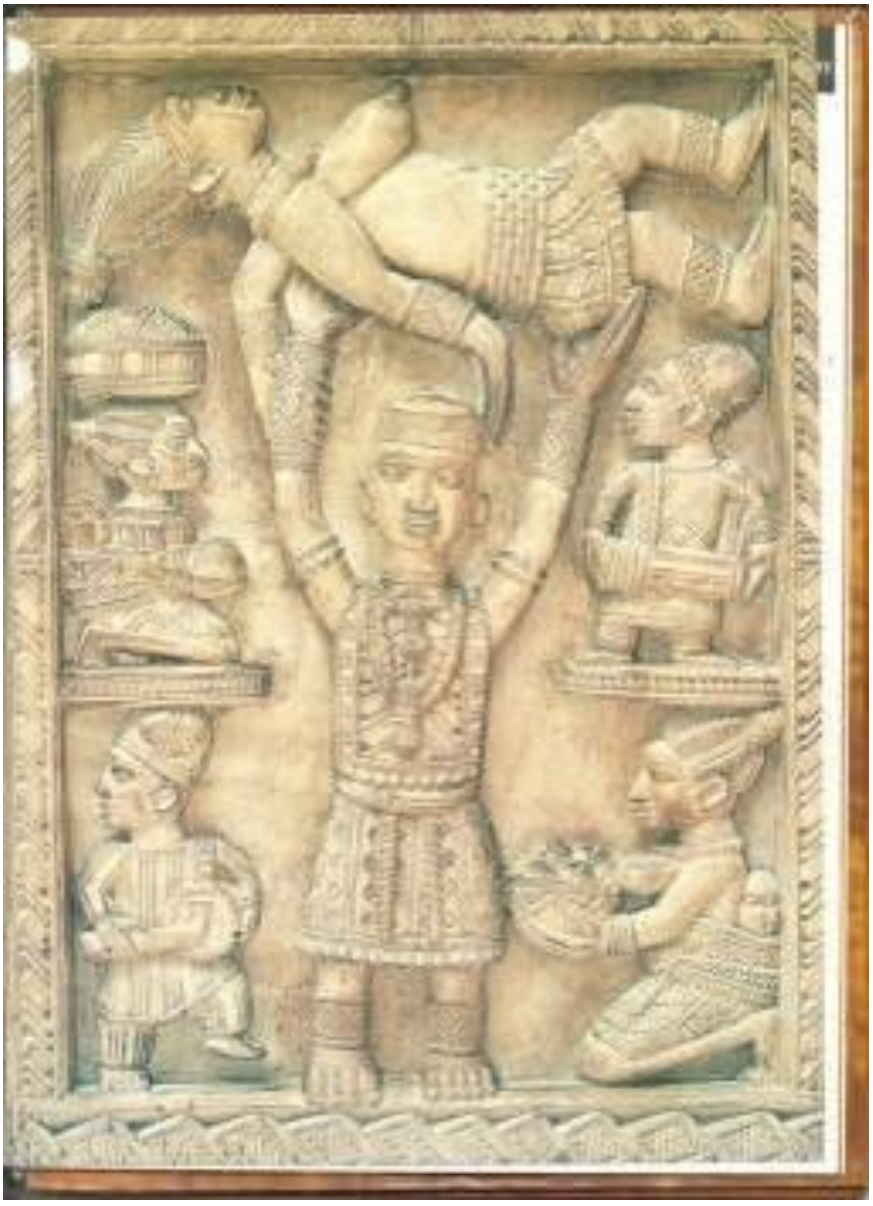


Fig. 16:*Songo*, Lamidi Fakeye,Wood,71 x 30cm, Collection of the Artist.2008.

2.3.13 In Sango (Fg.16). Sango is seen holding up his wife with four devotees and a *bata* and *dundun* drummers with two women kneeling with calabashes containing kola nuts probably in a festive celebration. Sango spirit embodies the physical and metaphysical attributes of the Yoruba god of Lighting and Thunder. Fakeye's visual story telling exposes the Yoruba mythology heroes; his work portrays traditional Yoruba religious or heroic characters. This artist employs the use of wood as a

medium to tell his story of the Yoruba legends in history to generations who may never be privileged to hear them narrated. According to Ademuleya (2008), Fakeye experiments with forms employing traditional materials and iconography in depicting contemporary themes and he is regarded as a bridge between traditional and modernity. His reflection on womanhood with great attention is seen in his interpretation of Sango holding up his wife; his forms are derived from the cannon of traditional imagery through reflecting his adopted semi-abstract style which he has been identified with.



Fig. 17:*Ancestral Mask*, Cliff Nwanna,Medium: wood, Size: 40 cm X 10cm,

Courtesy: Artist.2008.

2.3.14 Cliff Nwanna's Ancestral Mask (Fig. 17), seems not to represent any particular culture in Nigeria, but then again a closer look reveals incooperation of myriads of the Nigerian cultures. Nwanna's mask reveals a great sense of direction, order, reality, strength, and honesty of purpose, which has influenced the Nigerian modern art circle. This artist has a serious attachment to culture, customs and traditions; these are evidence in his works. He elevates ordinary life experience beyond what can be seen with the naked eyes thus revealing those subjects that matter to him. His mask illustrations are not just for the pictorial view, it is interpretive suggesting his salient message to the observer, there is calmness in this illustration which suggests the maturity of this artist, and this calmness was seen in Elijah's experience with the gentle breeze in which God appeared to exist. 1 Kings 19:11-12.

Then He said "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by", Then a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake;

After the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire came to a small gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

In the words of Noserime (2007), this artist uses his media and culture as an emotional part of his deliberation and ranges in handling from small freely treated the surface in which his media is appropriately applied. Its ridges rearing into the light and enlivening the surface, to elaborate and carefully establish a visual audacious statement; a niche in Nigerian Modern Art Scene. I would consider Nwanna to be a modern Nigerian Renaissance man in his ability to command his media, endowed with the spirit of modern Nigerian powerful expression. According to Babasehinde (2007), this sculptural work should not be viewed in a hurry. Apart from missing out the artist's intention for the display which may deprive one of the lessons to be learnt, one may also, by reading through likely,

miss out the message locked-up in the assemblage of symbolic lines and shapes he implores to define his images.

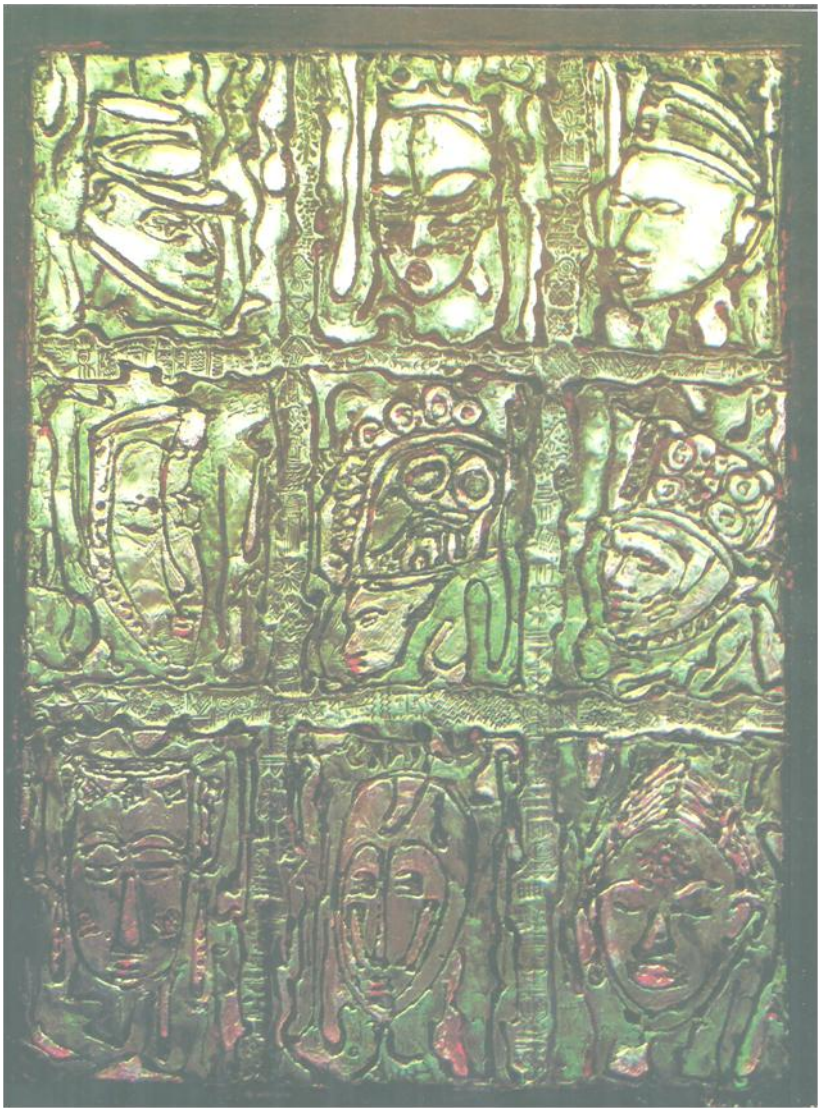


Fig. 18:*Ancestrial Masks IV*.Kunle Adeyemi, Metal Foil, Silver plated foil, Hand-colourd, Oil Colour,Size:123 cmX 92cm.Collection of the Artist.2009.

2.3.15*Ancestral Masks IV* (Fig. 18), by Kunle Adeyemi reveals collections different masks, rendered in metal foil which its technique involves impression is a collection of various masks from various parts of the country. The executed piece implored simplified abstracted forms, explored in semi-abstracted style. *Ancestral Masks* also connotes the convergence of spirits, probably to make decisions on important issues. God we were told single handily created the world, but when it was time to create man there was a consultation, (Gen 1:26) "Let Us make man in Our own image, according to Our likeness…" This implies that there was a meeting that led to making this important decision become

possible. So it is with family, community, a Nation, that dialoguing is necessary for there to be mutual understanding between parties.

The peculiarity of these works rests in the wealth of symbols, motifs patterns and traditional paraphernalia that is been used demarcate this sculpture, and the introduction of other style and formal finish shows the artist dexterity.



Fig. 19:*Odi,*Suzanne Wenger. Reinforced Concrete,4 metres, Osun grove.Courtesy: Ken Okoli.1990.

2.3.16 In the words of Okoli (2006) Suzanne Wenger after spending a good part of her active life recreating a home for the gods of Yoruba land started the sculpture that she titled Odi (Fig. 19).According to Songodare who was the guide of Okoli's researcher through the Osun groves and is believed to be the Songo (the god of thunder) incarnate and also an adopted son of Suzanne Wenger, Odi was conceived about twenty years ago, and the work started in the same year. Wenger has been working on this sculpture since then with the assistance of

Adebisi Akanji, and she says that the sculpture will not be completed by the time she transits into the land of spirits. Odi is located near the Osun River in the Grove. Okoli maintains; "for one who has encountered the sculpture of Iya Moopo by the same artist, the sight of Odi is more enchanting as well as captivating. Odi is an endless story as the artist wants it to be. The artist says that Odi represents the gathering of all the gods of the earth in a meeting in the presence of Olodumare, the creator of all things. Consequently, this concrete sculpture is composed of about eleven abstracted figures embedded with stones from the riverbed of the Osun River. The figures are so intermingled that the only way to assess their number was in counting the heads."

Okoli (2006)states that: Odi is about four metres high. The painstaking patience of the artist has put on show here again; the handling of concrete as a material and the accompanying dexterity is displayed in such a manner that the detailing of Iya Moopa appears as child's play when putting side by side with Odi. The artist's love of trees and the forest is made manifest once more in the art work". He maintains, "She indeed prophesied that she would be transited to the land of spirit before the completion of Odi, Suzanne Wanger passed on on January 14th, 2009. From the time of the conception of Odi till date, the work should be about 27 years now".

Wanger's gathering of the gods (Odi), can be seen to connote the same assembling of the gods and spirits in the *Ijele* masquerade, we have been educated that the *Ijele* comprises a composition of all the spirits. Each of these gods is said to perform deferent functions. The book of Acts of the Apostles 2: 3-4, states: "Then there appeared to them tongues of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". It is clear that they acted in oneness, agreement, unanimity, unity, togetherness, solidarity. The Odi, the Holy Spirit that rested on

the Apostles of Jesus Christ, the *Ijele* masquerade is comprised of individual spirits agreeing to come together co-operating to work in harmony. This can be associated with the saying in Igbo that says "Annoko onu nyuo manmiri ogba ufufu" (if individual persons come together and urinate at a spot it produces foams), in other words for there to be progress and achievements, cooperation must be seen to exist within a group of people or community.

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, having looked at the antecedents of masquerading in Igbo, classifications of masquerades, the functions of masquerades, Day and Night masquerade, and more also having looked at both Nigerian and Foreign artists in their handling of masquerades, my summation is that artist havenot executed or created sculptures from the *Ijele* masquerade as an object that can be represented individually in three dimensions, and considering the fact that these works were also created from various artists cultural backgrounds.

The sculptures reviewed in this study does not portray the characteristics of the *Ijele*, and none of these works have the quality and careful rendition that the works the researcher created from the studio exploration possesses, especially the combination of semi-naturalism and abstraction, and an incorporation of various colours, except for Atlas that depicts one carrying all the problems that exist in this world and Odi which equally portrayed accumulation which represnts the gathering of deferent spirits, can be referred to as having close similarity with the Akwunachienyi (male *Ijele* Masquerade) not even close enough to be compared to the *Ijele* masquerade in terms of appearance, accumulation and size. It is an embodiment of the whole masquerades of the world, especially within the African continent. What the researcher wants to do with *Ijele* is to look at those things that compose the universality of the work and break it down and derive sculptures from the *Ijele*.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the various methods explored and materials used to actualise the studio exploration and its written component. In the first part of this study, the examination of practice-based methodology and its exceptional nature is highlighted, which gives the reader an insight and understanding on how the practice-based research methodology is applied to current studio art practice. The highlights,include the source of ideas, materials, translation of ideas, use of resource materials and the techniques employed. The third event reference is made to notable artists whose methods of work are major influences in the execution of the art work for this research, and finally the adapting to one or variety of methodologies and systematic illustration of process and procedure.

3.2 Art Practice-Based Research

The practice-based research in the field of art and design involves a study of the interplay between a researcher-practitioner and his artistic work in progress. Within practice-based research it is the design process of moving from problem to solution, which is the point of departure for the rhetoric research direction to studio exploration.

The researcher adopts the practice-based research methodology. Sullivan (2005), believes that art practice as research inquiry in the "visual arts can be a form of research". Scrivener (2002), corroborates this view that,"the art making process is understood as a form of research and the art object as a form of knowledge. The knowledge spoken of here is the written text or component that gives insight to works created". The research direction of an artist involves a transparent process in which conscious steps are taken, knowledge is used to search for and articulate both the theory and

practice. The idea is more of qualitative in nature, where by the research is not stereotyped and tied to figures and numerical alone. However, its nature is more of being flexible to embrace other areas of the research to arrive at a conclusion (Nimkurat, 2007).

The research design adopted for this study, therefore is that which is diversified in nature. This embraces a wide variety of methodologies.In the words ofGray and Malins (2004), the characteristics of 'artistic' methodology are a pluralist approach tailored to the individual project. Methodology should be responsive, driven by the requirements of practice and the creative dynamic of the art and design work. It is essentially qualitative, naturalistic and reflective. It acknowledges complexity and real experience and practice – it is 'real world research', and all 'mistakes' are revealed and acknowledged for the sake of methodological transparency.

The technique employed is more of the relation between the mind and reality, between the researcher and the sculptures being created, not one of precedence; it is more of action and reaction, a process of taking against the wind. Read (2002) infers, "The artist in such a situation 'lives on his nerves'. He is forever analysing an unknown substance, attempting to resolve a mystery, to give form to vague intuitions". Reason (2000), believes that, Action research is a way of knowledge which brings ideas, theory and action together with the sole aim of creating practical knowing by the process of self-engagement in creating works of art. Bradbury *et al* (2011) states that, "action, participation and experience research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purpose, grounded in a participatory worldview, it seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their community"

The process undertaken by the studio artist in conceptualisation was described by Hall in Gray *et al*(2014), as a creative shaper, a participant-observer and a reflective practitioner. The issue here is that one is not the distanced observer wearing a white coat and goggles, and that one's participants are not 'lab rats'. Rather, together they are co-operatively developing understanding described as 'democratic

participation. Gadamer in Klapwijk (2014) believes that *Erlebnisse*, (experience) should be seen as the enduring remaining of moments lived in their full nearness. These are the material artistic genius transforms into works of art; the artwork begins in 'experiences', but rises above them to a universal significance which goes beyond history.

Kroll (2004) suggests that, those who undertake this kind of degree need to demonstrate some kind of split personality because of the need to produce both a creative and a critical component. The critical component can be called an exegesis, critical essay, dissertation, annotation, documentation, writing about doing, a linear argument in language, a rhetorical text to valorise the creative work, a reflective discourse to validate the creative component, a research paper that informs and positions the studio work.

Researchers who have explored the practice-based research in the studio and proven successful include Irmina van Niele's (2005) Dissertation titled "*Ambivalent Belonging "*University of South Australia, South Australian School of Art, Sue Lovergrove's (2002) Dissertation titled *"The Unsolidity of the Ground"* School of Arts; Australian National University Canberra; Kunle Adeyemi's (2012) Dissertation titled *"Innovative Exploration in the synthesis of Easel Painting and Printmaking"*,Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. From Ahmadu Bello University Zaria are; Sani, Mu'azu Mohammed's (2014) Dissertation titled *"Synthesis of Swange Dance Steps and Colours on Canvas"*; Irokanulo, Emmanuel Ikemefula's (2014) Dissertation titled *"Transforming the Aesthetics of Shadow as an Essence in Panting"*,Gbaden, Blaise Gundu's(2014) Dissertation titled *"A Postmodernist Interrogation of Walls of Partition"*;Lamidi Lasisi's (2015) Dissertation titled *"An Exploration of Stilt Dance postures in Mixed Media Sculptures"* and Ngene Eze's (2015)Dissertation titled *"A Metaphorical Exploration of Forms in Sculpture Using Readymade Food Vessels"*

3.3 Reference to Established Artists and Methodology

Action research consists of practice oriented method. It brings about new forms, ideas and understanding. It can be merged with practice-based research methodology. Furthermore, this study

equally adopts the "Reflective method" which was merged with practice-based and action research methodologies.

Action research is an interactive inquiry process that balances problem solving actions implemented in a collaborative context with data-driven collaborative analysis or research to understand underlying causes enabling future predictions about personal and organizational change (Reason *et al*, 2002).

Action research is democratic in nature, change is an important aspect of its flexibility, with the production of new knowledge and the development of practice, action research is context-specific and the process is also educationally empowering, as it involves dynamic linking to problem identification, planning, action, and evaluation. The researcher strives to understand a specific context in order to change it, and assumes that there is a connection between facts, values, feelings, and knowledge (Carr *et al*, 2014).

Action research is experimental in approach, which offers a research design that links this exploration process closely to its context, and is predicated upon the idea of a study having a practical purpose in view, leading to new understanding and knowledge. It has encouraged the ideas of the research process as spiral activity, going through repeated cycles. The researcher at the end of the studio work usually takes time off to reflect on what has been done in the studio. This, sometimes changes ideas or re-enacting a progressive concept. It could also involve an extensive component field work, which is substituted as workshop or studio in practice-based research (Blauxter, *et al*, in Lamidi, 2015).

3.3.1 Research Instruments:

The researcher employed observational technique, while the other means of obtaining information were through camera which helped the aspect of still images, photographs and video clips, internet, and drawings.

3.3.2 Source of Ideas

In line with the objective of this study, the translation of idea guided the researcher in developing the forms that are found on the *Ijele* masquerade in a conceptual form, Aniakor (2015) identifies various forms comprising of Humans, Spirits, Animals and forestry. The author states that; "three main categories dominate the *Ijele* masquerade design: man in his daily activities, the spirit world, animals and forestry. The headdress contains depictions of important moments in life; images of women in labour, men climbing for fruit are placed besides key political experiences"

Aniakor maintains that; all the artists bring in their '*Agwa*' skills to create the *Ijele* in its monumentality, like in theatre production so that it can perform at the center of the village square. It can be said that, the eye that behold the *Ijele* has seen the ultimate spectacle composed at a certain production line, it is an aesthetic vision of the universe, an aesthetic model which can be arrived at from their cosmology into art of cosmology (Aniakor's communication, February 5th, 2015).

The research was channelled towards the studio exploration. Some key steps were taken to direct the developmental stage of exploration since the research was studio oriented and termed practice-based, then a conceptual approach was considered through drawings and various sketches.

The researcher met with scholars and traditional sculptors that have written and produced the *Ijele* masquerade, especially in towns and villages like; Awka, Nsugbe, Abagana, Abatete, Awkuzu, Aguleri, Igbo-Ukwu, Unubi among others, to collect information on what are the actual characteristics of a complete *Ijele* masquerade, ascertaining the categories of the sculptures and motifs. The researcher also visited Nusgbe town to watch the Ijele masquerade in performance on the 7th April 2015, and also visited Omaba Community in Onitsha Anambra State on the 4th of October 2015, to watch the *Ijele* masquerade in performance.

In deriving sculptures from the *Ijele* masquerade, the researcher engaged critical observation to identify the forms embedded on the *Ijele* masquerade, as seen in Plates: I-III. The researcher used sight and camera to collect data by observing, taking notes and recording the various forms that exists on the *Ijele* masquerade.



Plate I:*Ijele* Masquerade in performance at Nsugbe on 7th April 2015, Anambra State. Photography Ugochukwu Ephraim.



Plate II: *Ijele* Masquerade in performance at *Iri ji* (New Yam Festival) on 4th October 2015, at Learning Field Omaba Community, Onitsha Anambra State. Photography Ugochukwu Ephraim.



Plate III: *Ijele* Masquerade in performance at *Iri ji* (New Yam Festival) on 4th October 2015, at Learning Field Omaba Community, Onitsha Anambra State. Photography Ugochukwu Ephraim**.**

3.3.3 Procedures

The studio exploration was generally executed in a conceptual nature. The researcher mentally contemplated on how forms and motifs seen and observed on the *Ijele* masquerade can be created in a conceptual way.

Some reference materials that contain images of the *Ijele* masquerade were gathered from the internet. Video materials were also gathered from the internet for inspiration, the researcher mental articulation led to developing sketches for the studio research. While watching the *Ijele's* performance, the researcher observed that there were various images and motifs represented on the *Ijele* masquerade.

The development of sketches started by rendering the forms individually and also categorising them into Human form, Spirit world, and Animals form, and also some of the motifs were carefully embedded in the images drawn while others were executed individually. The choice of the motif was the same seen at the Northern part of Igbo Anambra *Ijele* masquerade which formed part of the embellishment. After the sketches were developed in two-dimensions, the researcher proceeded to explore the forms in three-dimensions.

3.3.3.1 Procedures Undertaken During the Studio Exploration

3.3.3.2 Observation: this can also be referred to as, examination, surveillance, scrutiny, or study. In this case, it implies an in-depth mental articulation of ideas in deconstructing and rendering conceptual sculptures inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade, which was later translated into sketches. It is true that all the activity of creation starts from its conception; this was why Gadamer in Weinsheimer *et al* (2006) affirmed that, all philosophy starts from human practice. "We must not allow knowing to remain only on the conceptual level; we must remember that knowing emerges from our practical quest for meaning and significance". The tact which functions in the human sciences is not simply a feeling and unconscious, but it is a mode of knowing and a mode of being that requires a deeper conscious reflection. There is a saying that the eye cannot see what the mind does not already know, then, knowledge is acquired from our immediate environment through the process of observation.

3.3.3.3 Photography: Using reference photos as a basis for pictures provides one with a good source of raw material. Digital camera provided varied perspectives of viewing the *Ijele* masquerade.Samuels (1975) and Arnhem (2004) suggests that, photograph is a visual education which is based on the evidence that it is a statement. The picture does not represent the object itself but a set of suggestions about the objects. A photograph often stimulates vivid memory images of events, places and people. Digital camera played an important part in taking photographs of the forms that are represented on the *Ijele* masquerade, and researchers that have successfully used photography in their fields are Ajayi (2014), Lamidi (2015)and Ngene (2015), (Plates IV-VIII).



Plate IV: A close up of the upper segment of the *Ijele* mask. Photography: Ugochukwu Ephraim, 2015.



Plate V: Upper and lower segment of the *Ijele* masquerade. Photography: Ugochukwu Ephraim, 2015.



Plate VI: The python positioned at the top of the lower segment of the *Ijele* masquerade and its motifs bellow. Photography: Ugochukwu Ephraim, 2015.



Plate VII: lower segment and motifs on the Ijele masquerade. Photography: Ugochukwu Ephraim, 2015.



Plate VIII: A representation of *Idemili* also known as *Mami water* the water goddess at the lower section. Photography: Ugochukwu Ephraim 2015.

3.3.3.4 ***Drawings:***Drawings helped to define the actual nature of the sculptures that were produced. The study started with preliminary studies and drawings that were done on papers and sketch pad. The drawings created were both from photographs, sketches and from live observations. Do and Gross (1996). States that, the act of redrawing keeps the designer's mind focused on the element in question, causingthe designer to think about the element, and its relations with other parts of the design.Sketching is the quickest and most direct means to producing visual representations of ideas. The ambiguity of free hand sketching allows multiple interpretations and thus stimulates the production of more design alternatives. The linked acts of drawing and looking invite designers to recognize new interpretations of the alternatives they propose. By drawing and looking, designers find visual analogies, remember relevant examples, and discover new shapes based on previously unrecognized geometric configurations

in their sketches.Wachowiak (1985) also believes that preliminary sketches or drawings should be strictly followed in studio projects this would help students to be more inquisitive and exploratory about their surroundings. The following drawings are some of the preliminary studies made from photographs, video coverage and live observation and were categorised into three such as *Human and daily activity, Spirit world and Animalforms* for the purpose of understanding the form found on the *Ijele* masquerade.



Plate IX: Human and their daily activity. Preliminary drawings from the upper section, 33 cm X26 cm, pen on paper.2015.



Plate X: Human and their daily activity. Preliminary drawings from the upper section, 14 cm X19 cm, pen on paper.2015.



Plate XI: Human and their daily activity. Preliminary drawings from he upper section, 33 cm X26 cm, pen on paper.2015.

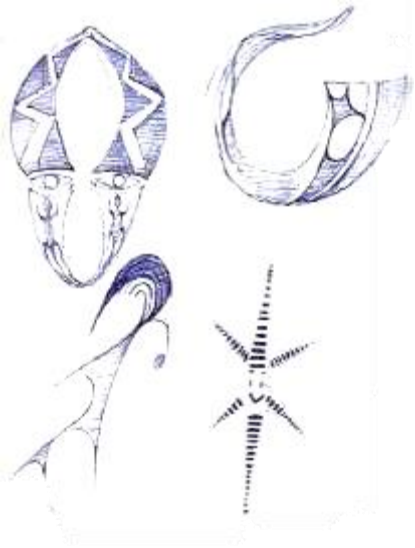


Plate XII:Spiritual world. Preliminary Drawings, 33 cm X26 cm, pen, pencil on paper.2015.



Plate XIII: Spiritual world. Preliminary Drawings, 33 cm X26 cm, pen, pencil on paper.2015.



Plate XIV:Spiritual world. Preliminary Drawings, 33 cm X26 cm, pen, pencil on paper.2015.

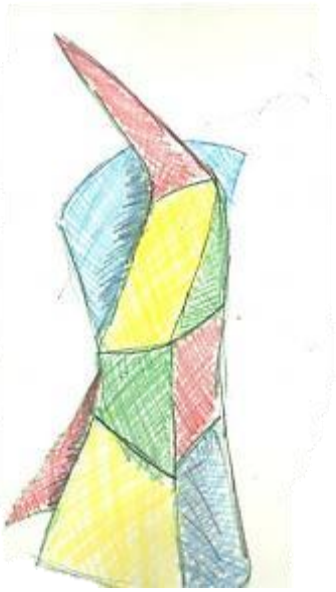


Plate XV: Spiritual world. Preliminary Drawings, 33 cm X26 cm, pen, pencil on paper.2015.

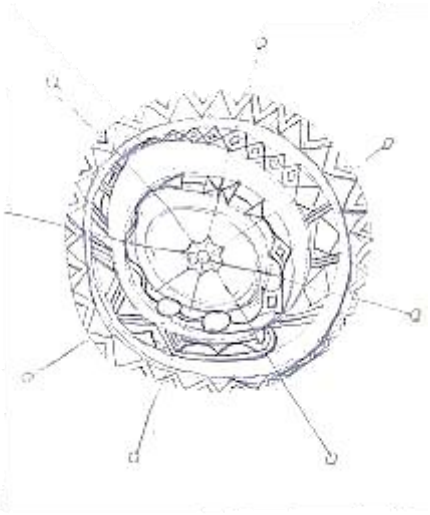
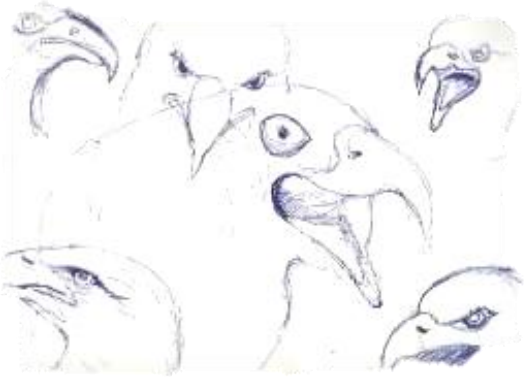


Plate XVI: Spiritual world. Preliminary Drawings, 33X26 cm, pen on paper.2015.





Plates XVII and XVIII:Animal and Forestry.Preliminary Drawings, 33 X 26 cm, pen /Coloured pencil on paper.2015.

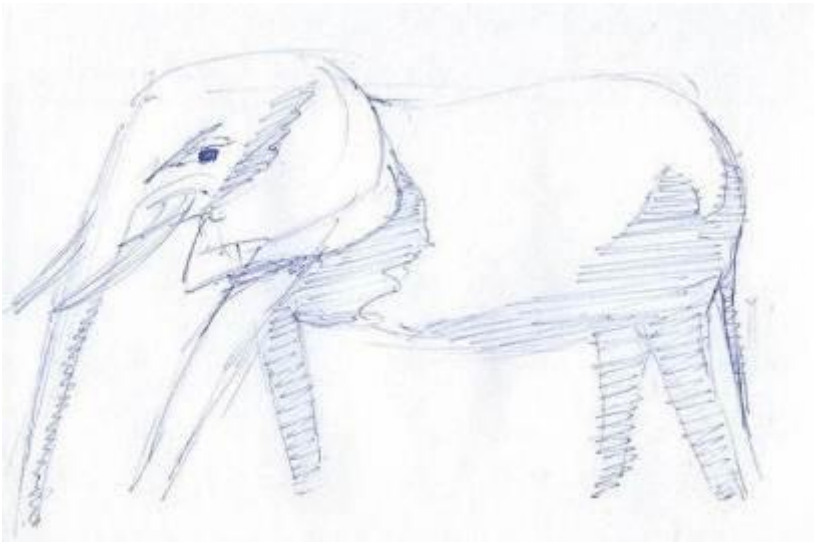


Plate XIX: Animal and Forestry. Preliminary Drawings, 14X19 cm, pen on paper.2015.

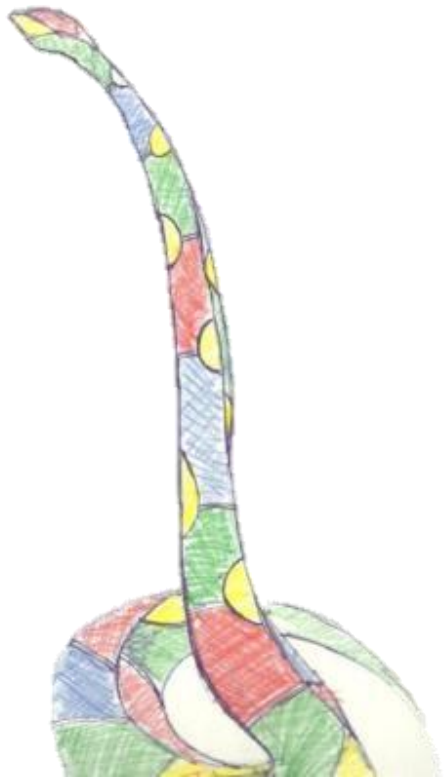


Plate XX: Animal and Forestry. Preliminary Drawings, 14X19 cm, pen on paper. 2015.



Plate XXI: Female Form I: Preliminary Drawings, 14 X 19 cm, pen and coloured pencil on paper.2015.



Plate XXII: Female Form II: Preliminary Drawings, 14 X 19 cm, pen on paper.2015.



Plate XXIII: Female Form III: Preliminary Drawings, 14 X 19 cm, pen on paper.2015.

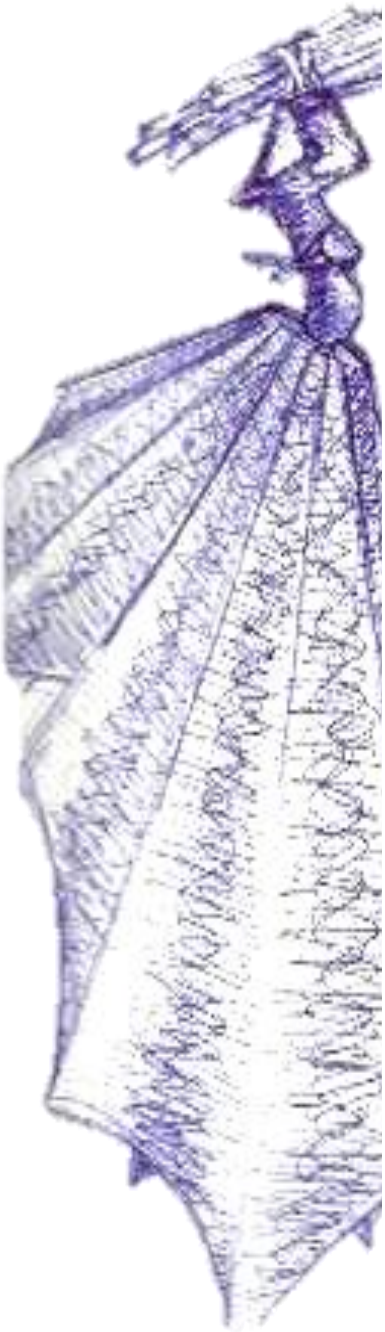




Plate XXIV: Female Form V: Preliminary Drawings, 14 X 19 cm, pen on paper.2015.

Plate XXV: Installation Panels. Preliminary Drawings, 14X19 cm, pen and coloured pencil on paper.2015.

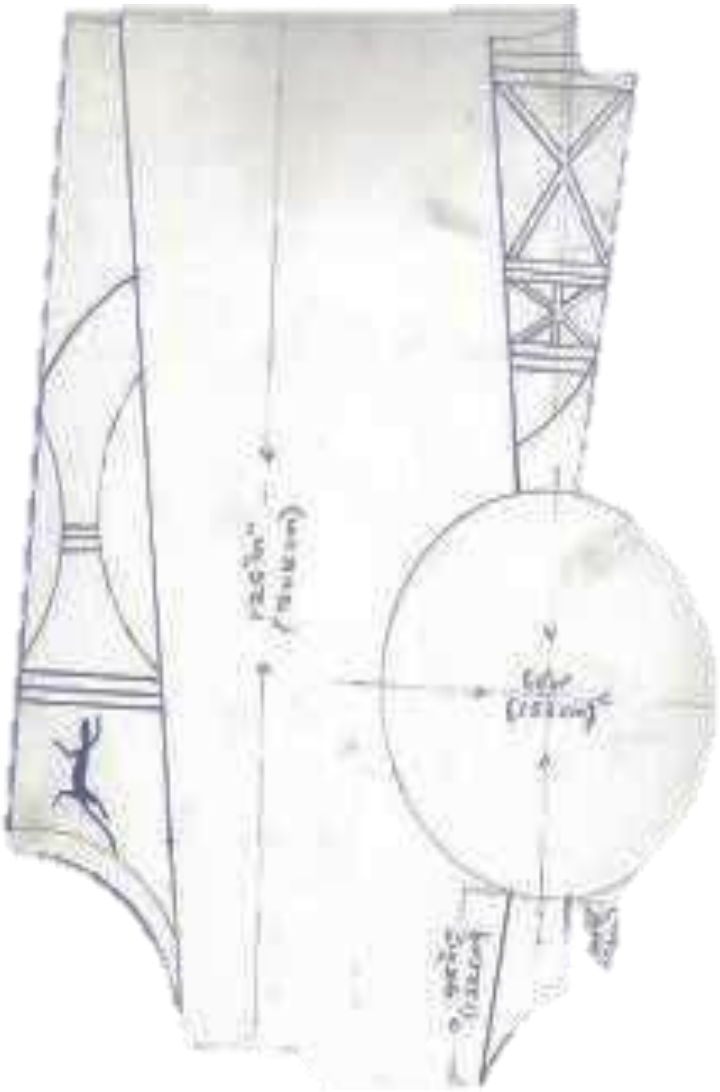


Plate XXVI: Installation Panels. Preliminary Working Drawings, 33X26 cm, pen on paper. 2015.

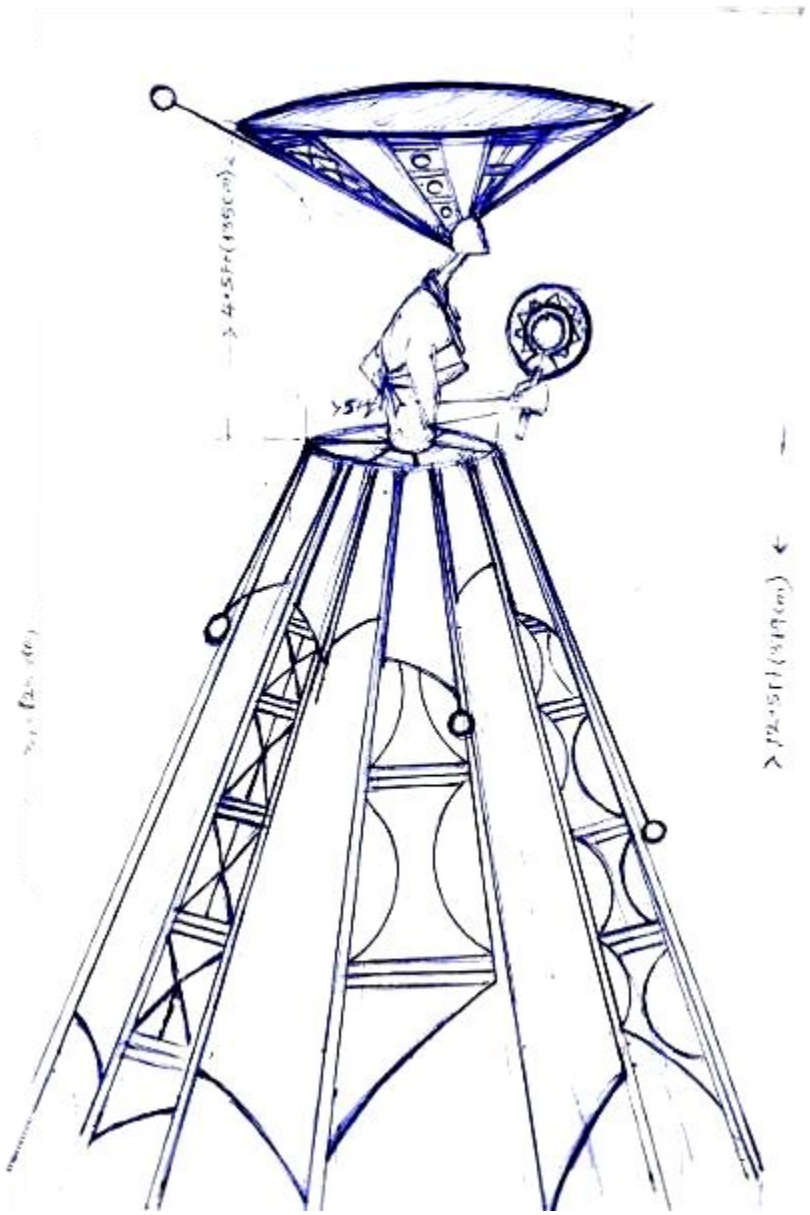


Plate XXVII: Full Outdoor Installation Panels and Top Cylinder. Preliminary Drawings, 33X26 cm, pen on paper. 2015.

3.3.3.5 ***Materials:***The materials used for the actualization of this research are: Flex Polyester fabrics, Polyester tapoline fabrics, Cotton fabrics, Taffeta fabrics, Adhesive white glue, Contact cement adhesive glue, and Polyester threads of different clours of Brown, White and Black, Mild steel rods of ½, 1½, 10mm, 12mm, and 16mm, and steel metal plate. Lighters, Soldering Irons, Paper Cutter, a pair of Scissors, Tailor needle (big size), *Nga* and *Nko* (needles of three different sizes) and a hook, Razor

blades and a brush, Arc Welding Machine, Flexible mild steel rod cutter, Angle grinder, and shire cutting machine. Kyser (2012) believes that,Artists can use almost any material to create a work of art. When an artist is deciding which material to use, he or she may consider how that particular materialwill help express his or heridea.



Plate XXVIII: Flex Polyester fabrics, adhesive white glue, contact cement adhesive glue, Cotton fabrics, Taffeta fabrics, and Polyester threads of different clours of Brown, White and Black



Plate XXIX: Polyester Tarpaulin canvas of different clours of white, Red, Yellow, Blue, and Green.



Plate XXX: ½ ‘inc’ Polyester threads of different clours of Green, Orange, Yellow, and Blue.



Plate XXXI: Mild steel rods of ½, 1½, 10mm, 12mm, and 16mm, and steel metal plate.



Plate XXXII: Lighters, Soldering Iron, Paper Cutter, a pair of Scissors, Needles of three sizes and a hook, Razor blades and a brush.

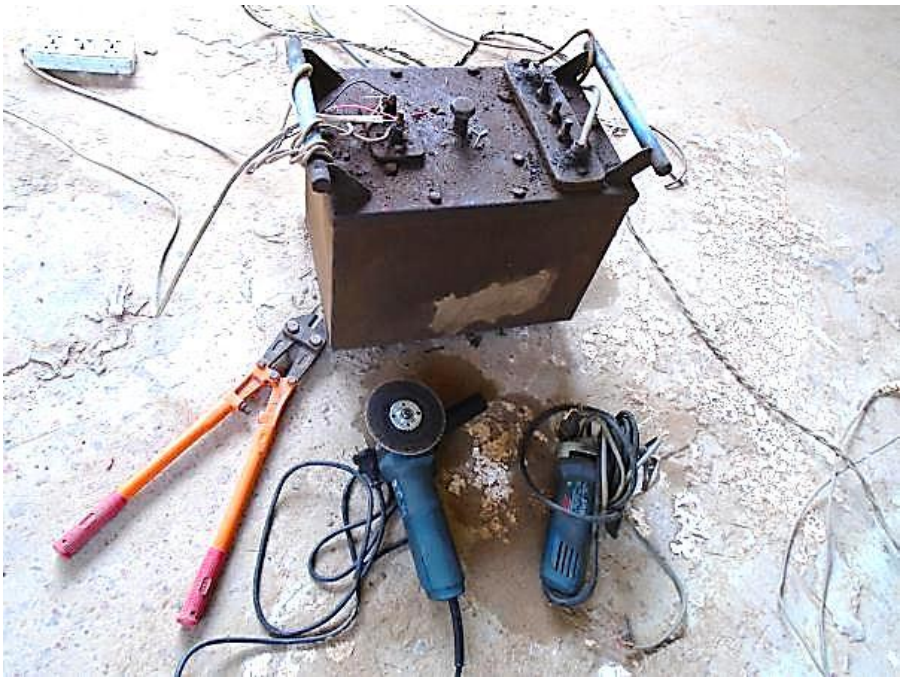


Plate XXXIII: Arc Welding Machine, Flexible mild steel rod cutter, Angle grinder, and shire cutting machine.

3.3.3.6 ***Fabricated Tools:***Theresearcher fabricated some *Nga* and *nko* (bigger needle and a hook) which made the sewing aspect easier. The installation sculpture had a bigger space, big needle used by the tailor was very small compared to the size of the synthetic thread that would be used for the sewing. Hence, the need to fabricate a bigger needle that will be adequate for the sewing became necessary. Kukhta, Sokolov, and Pelevin (2014)attribute the process of fabricating the metal art object that aids the artist in his work production as that whichrepresenting not only the material, but also shows a high level of artistic value. Art objects are exclusive products which reflect the different tastes and edges of personality realization in a rapidly changing world.

Plate XXXIV.



Plate XXXIV: *NganaNko* (Needle and Hook).

3.3.3.7 *Studio Exploration: (Welding)*

Kyser (2012) describes welding as a process of joining pieces of metal. It involves heating the metal until it is soft enough to join with another piece of metal thatthen cools to make a solid joint, and also Kukhta, *et al* (2014) explains that the manual arc welding with coated electrodes is currently one of the most common methods of manufacturing, installation and repair of various welded structures. The advantages of the method are the simplicity of the process and mobility of equipment. This method allows working in different attitude positions; it is possible to weld a large range of materials and thicknesses.

Armature Construction:The armature construction was carefully planned in such a way that allowed for positive and negative spaces within the sculpture. This further helped to enhance the sculptures.



Plate XXXV:The researcher at work in the studio



Plate XXXVI: The researcher at work in the studio

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3.3.3.8 ***Surface Painting*:** The process of painting the armature comes immediately after its welding. Anti-rust is applied first to help protect the metal against rust and then the application of the matt black paint, though this is applied to some of the sculptures produced, especially the ones without rough finishing.

3.3.3.9 ***Cladding:***This process starts first by placing the fabric on the constructed armature and tracing the desired part that needs to be covered with fabric on the constructed armature with a pen. The next step is to cut out the traced part with the aid of the scissors, and then lastly, the contact cement adhesive glue is applied at the inner part of the welded armature and left to dry for a minute or two before placing the cut out fabric behind the armature. The contact cement adhesiveglue and general purpose white glue also aids the cladding process which helps to hold the fabrics in place before it is permanently sewn on the welded sculpture.



Plate XXXVII: The researcher and his research assistant carefully cladding the welded sculpture.



Plate XXXVIII: Applying cement contact glue with brush, on a traced out part of the tapoline fabric.

- ***Effect of cladding with glue:*** During this process the researcher discovered that the contact cement adhesive when applied on the mild steel rod vanishes and blends with both the fabric and the mild steel rods, which gave a better result than the general purpose white glue that even though eventually dries, its traces are seen between the mild steel rod and the fabric and when also applied on the tapoline fabric it expands and softens the tapoline because of the chemical component contained in the contact cement adhesive glue, but after a while the fabric normalizes and goes back to its natural size(see Plates XXXIX and XXXX).

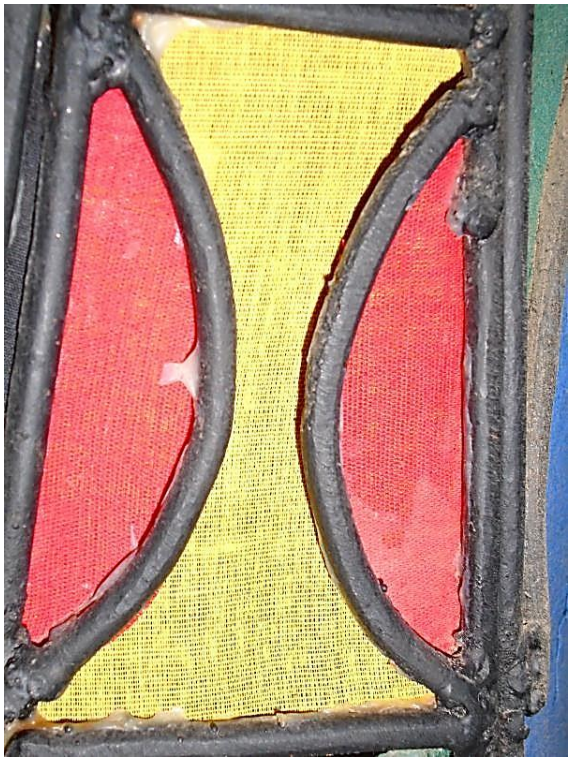


Plate XXXIX: Result and out-come of using white glue

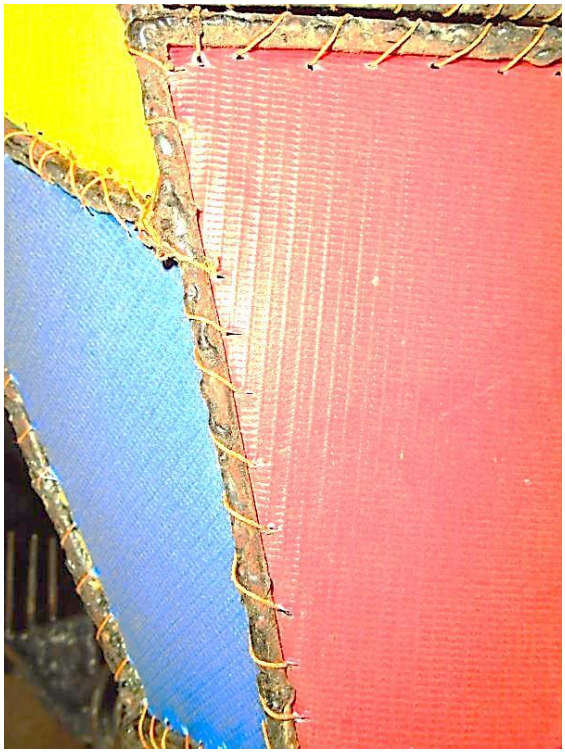


Plate XL: Result and out-come of using the contact cement adhesive glue

3.3.3.10 ***Trimming the edges of the fabric before sewing:*** After cladding the edges of the fabric is trimmed, so that there will not be an extra fabric spilling over to the area. This allows for neater and better finishing.



Plate XLI: Trimming the edges of extra fabric

3.3.3.11 ***Sewing and finishing:***This process is actually the last process and stage of the sculptures produced; it may not need further partination finish especially the *Mkpu* (upper section) of the sculpture. Kyser (2012) states that,the artist may decide to leave the texture of the surface. He/she may decide to abradethe surface of the sculpture until itis polished to a smooth finish, depending on the artist's intension.



Plate XLII: The process of sewing with small synthetic thread. on the smaller sculptures

3.3.3.12 ***Creating holes for ease of sewing:***For easy sewing the researcher used the soldering iron to create holes before passing the threads in-between the holes. This made it easier and confortable for manipulation, except in the case were one is working on a larger plat form that would require the help of another person, to be at the other end so as to pass the needle or rope from one end to the other. This activity took place on the installation sculpture,Plate XXXXIII and XC.



Plate XLIII: Creating holes with soldering iron, on the installation sculpture

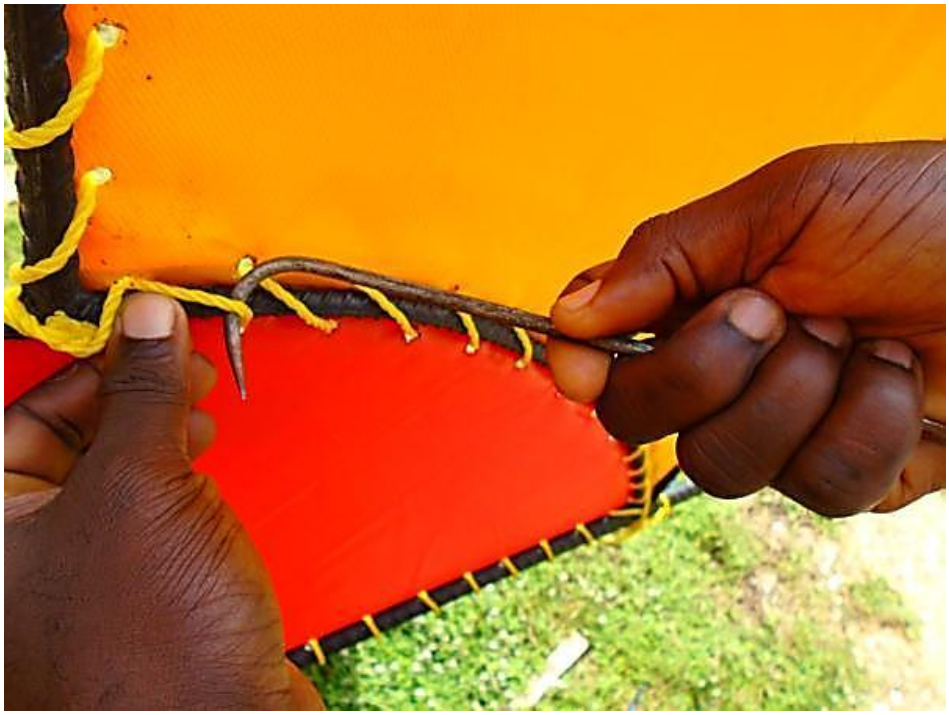


Plate XLIV: sewing through the already created holes on the Akpakwuru (lower section) installation sculpture



Plate XLV: Cladding and sewn of Lower section(*Akpakwuru*)

3.3.3.13 ***Uses of Nnga na Nnko (Needle and Hook):****Nnga* and *Nnko* allow for easy sewing and manipulation of the threads to pass through the holes created with the soldering iron, especially when one is working in a small area around the sculpture. One is able to pass the *Nnga* from one hole to the other effortlessly. The *Nnko* is used to pull the threads closer to one another, if there are spaces mistakenly left between the threads so that becomes tighter and stronger. The other end of the Nnko is used for adjusting the squeezed fabric when the glue applied on it is weak and the fabric appears to be pulping out or shifting away from the mild steel rod(Plates CIII and CIV).



PlateXLVI: The *Nnko* isused for pulling the synthetic thread, for a tighter an firm grip of the synthetic thread against the fabric and the mild steel rod.



Plate XLVII: The other end of the *Nnko* used to push the fabric behind the mild steel rod.

3.3.3.14 ***Prudence in Sewing***: During the studio exploration, the researcher noticed that a lot of the synthetic threads were in tiny bits, as a result of the off-cuts from the larger synthetic rope used on the outdoor installation. These bits were actually re-joined with the aid of heat and reused in production, plate XCIV, and XCV. Heat is also applied to the tied end with lighter and while it is still hot, the hand is used to blend it up and cover the knotting(plate XCVI).

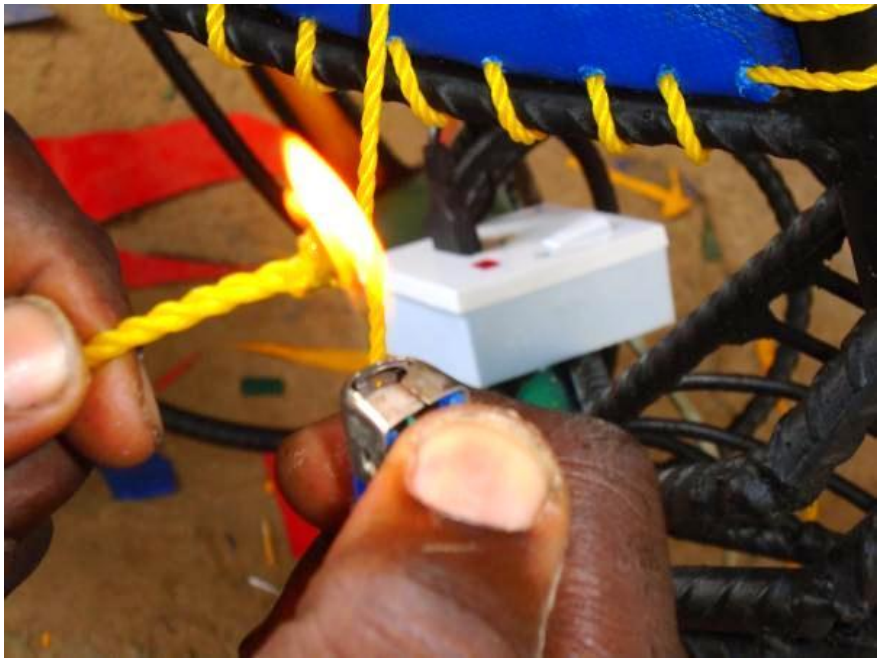


Plate XLVIII: Using heat to join two ends of synthetic threads



Plate XLIX: Mended and joined two ends of synthetic threads



Plate L: Using heat to seal-up the tied ends of the synthetic rope

3.3.3.15 ***Weather effect on fabric if excess glue is not cleaned immediately from the Surface***:Some excess contact cement adhesive glue was left on the fabric and due to the fact that it was exposed to the weather over a time, it revealed some stained patches on the sculpture and this patches can be removed by applying solvent (kerosene or fuel) on the stained area, and should be left to soak for five minutes before cleaning the affected area with a clean rag.one should also avoid allowing the solvent to get to the patinated mild steel rod. However, if ignored, over a time it would eventually fade as the ravaging weather encounters it.

3.3.3.16 ***Patina Finishing***:Vanish was also applied on the indoor rough textured sculptures as a patina finish, this enabled the enhancement of its natural colour and texture. Kyser (2012) states that, the artist may choose to apply a patina. A patina is a colour that forms on the surface of bronze due to chemical reactions between the metal and other elements. Sometimes artists will apply chemicals to the surface of a work of art in order to create particular patina.

3.3.4.1 ***Experimental Stage:*** The research adopts naturalism and abstraction style, using the process of an alternative to plating method in creating conceptual sculptures that are inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade.However, the earlier stage of the exploration experimented with cotton and Taffeta fabrics in which five works were first created and experimented upon. The researcher also considered the three categorisations of the forms found on the *Ijele* masquerade Human activity, Spirit world and Animal form.

3.3.4.2 ***Further Studio Exploration***:Further works were created from the studio exploration which in-cooperated the *Ijele's* musical instruments, the apparatus, Uli motif symbols, Eke and Oko-okpa.

Series of *Muna Onye ga Agba Egwu:*

The study created a total of 23 works comprising of freestanding sculptures and relief sculptures that are cladded with coloured fabrics, out of which 16 are free standing, from this 9 are rendered in female forms and 1 male figure. The other 6 are relief wall hanging sculptures depicting Uli symbol motifs found to exist on the *Ijele* masquerade. They were narrowed to Human activity, considering the fact that, everything that is and everything that is not, centres around human existence, the spiritual world exits because humans exist and lesser animals exits because humans exist, this gave rise to the concept of the Series '*MunaOnyegaAgbaEgwu'*. Intermingled relationships enables knowledge of how culture works and this allows human beings to have greater control over their own future because it provides the raw material of which they explore to rise to opportunity, every private interest of every man and woman is served by the enrichment of the traditional stories of his civilization (Bascom *et al*, 1959 and Benedict, 2005).

This exploration equally enabled the researcher to investigate the content of the *Ijele* masquerade in relation to its philosophy of Igbo Anambra world view. Each of the female forms portrayed human beings daily encounter and activities. It represents the personal emotions of human beings and their social condition which are the basic expressions of human nature such as: Celebration, Egocentric,

Meditation, Observance, Prime and Elegance, (Outdoor installation sculpture of the *Ijele* masquerade) undertaken on the premises of the Postgraduate Studio of the Department of Fine Arts Annex, located at the former Central Mechanical Workshop of the Ahmadu Bello University, Samaru, Zaria, in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, (LGA), Kaduna State, Nigeria.These works were analysed in Chapter Four of this study for proper understanding.



Plate LI: Creating holes for easy sewing with soldering iron, on the upper section of *Elegance*



Plate LII: Sewing the *Akupe* (*Ijele's*hand fan)



Plate LIII: Sewing the upper section of *Elegance*



Plate LIV: The upper section completely cladded with fabric and ready for sewing



Plate LV: The researcher cladding the lower section of *Elegance* outdoor sculpture



Plate LVI: Cladding almost complete at the lower sectionof *Elegance* outdoor sculpture



Plate LVII: The upper section is being positioned for coupling



Plate LVIII: Lifting up for position mounting



Plate LIX: Fully critiqued and ready for possible correction

Observation and Possible Corrections:Two things are obvious: (1) The right arm is resting on the lower section and it is agreed that, it should be raised up and distanced from the lower section. (2) The left part of the face appears to be scanty, and there is the need to clad some of that area with fabrics, taken into consideration the positive and negative spaces.



Plate LX: The right arm armature adjusted and ready for re-cladding and sewing



Plate LXI: The right arm re-cladded and fully sewn



Pate LXII: corrections fully implemented on the left side of the face and ready for re-mounting.



Plate LXIII: More corrections while mounted.



Plate LXIV: *Elegance* fully corrected and mounted.

Major Observations During the Exploration

- During the construction of the armature, the researcher had to consistently study and sketch the female figure for a proper understanding of the forms so as to be able to manipulate and shape the mild steel rods to the desired form. Kukhta, Sokolov, and Pelevin (2014) explains that, the main factors affecting the quality of welding in the manufacture of metal art objects are as follows: mobility of equipment, access to the weld area, the thickness of the welded parts, materialweldability.All these factors affect the appearance of welds which is the main quality criteria of products.The disadvantages of arc welding are the following: weld quality depends on the skill of the welder; difficulties in welding of thin metal (less than 2mm); surface contamination of the metal and slag splashes that causes the need of additional surfaces cleaning; shape distortion of metal that must be considered in the design.

- The process of using alternative to plating technique was also achievable,the rods were carefully cut to the actual sizes and shapes of the form, laid beside each other and welded to the point that the line between both rods is no longer visible, there is this total levelled surface, except for some of the parts that were intentionally left out as negative space to help create variety on the form. The negative spaces left out created balance between positive and negative spaces. It allows for that drama of visual interaction to take place. Though, this method saves one the burden from using and cutting metal sheet to cover up positive spaces, but then it requires burning more electrodes to help in achieving this method.

- It was obvious that the negative spaces created what can be called the fourth dimension. This dimension is said to be the other side of the world such as the spirit world, where the impossible

becomes possible. These empty spaces are seen as voids, left for a deeper interaction with the shadows when the light is cast on them.

- During cladding and sewn, it was observed that using the general purpose white glue to clad fabric on the armature was not as successful as when the contact cement adhesive (elastic) is applied. The white glue is seen to stick out on the edges and ends of the mild steel rods while the contact cement adhesive dries very fast, it is stronger and also disappears and not easily seen at the edges.

- When sewn, it is observed that using different colours of polymer thread helps to enhance the sculptures and it also helps to stretch the fabrics properly without allowing the edges or any of its part to squeeze, the taffeta fabric is another good material that gives one good result when sewn. It stretches very well and does not open up when a needle is passed through it.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF WORKS

4.1 Introduction

The forms that are found in the *Ijele* masquerade inspired the researcher to create conceptual sculptures, which defined the philosophy of Igbo world view that is summarised in the *Ijele* masquerade. It is believed that, for one to adapt from a source, that sourceshould be the same concept,especially in a studio research of this nature, and that idea must be discussed in its own context, this is in relation to the conceptual frame work of this study.

The study discusses the works in the context of the *Ijele*, guided by the philosophy of natural syntheses of the Igbo Uli. In actualising the five objectives of the study, the works discussed took into considerstion the conceptual frame work of the study, which looked at the total sumary of the *Ijele* masquerade activity and the nuancies in relation the context of the *Ijele's* essence, this process was also guided by Hans-Geroge Gadamer'stheory.

The research objectives areas follows:

i. Identify and produce sculptural relief elements of the *Ijele* masquerade.

ii. Extract various sculptural forms cladded with coloured fabrics inspired by the *Ijele* masquerade.
iii. Create female forms from the *Ijele* masquerade.
iv. Explore the possibilities of producing female and animal forms as they co-exist within the natural environment extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade.
v. Create an outdoor installation sculpture, which will be a culmination of all the basic forms extracted from the *Ijele* masquerade.

The researcher questions guided the research, which are geared towards the idea of taking from an existing culture (*Ijele* masquerade), that offers possibility of tapping from its rich values, to draw from the *Ijele* and its cultural symbolism and the Uli idea, one has to engage oneself mentally and physically, it involves complex intricate processes and activities of recall. *Ijele* is the conscious invocation of the collective experiences and encounter of a people with their past, their alteration into the present and a projection into the future. Gadamer in Weinsheimer *et al* (2006); states that, "history is the universal ground for the understanding of human's culture in the world"

The concept of African religion denotes the state of two parts meaning the term dualism, which was coined originally to mean co-eternal binary opposition. This same meaning is preserved in the Igbo world view, her idea of metaphysical and philosophical duality consisting of two parts which brought about the concept of supreme God (Chi-ukwu) who is responsible for taking care of heavenly activity while *Ijele* is the woman or mother (goddess) that takes care of the earthly activity as mentioned earlier. In relating to heavenly and earthly gods, human beings exert their superiority over lesser animals and everything within the domain. To some degree also, this study explored the universal concept of the Igbo world view by employing and representing these forms in abstractions depicting the Igbo Anambra activity which exists in the *Ijele* Masquerade (Enekwe, 1987). It is believed that everything exists in two; heaven and earth, male and female, old and young, man and woman, white and black. Looking at the human features you have two pair of eyes, two ears, two hands, two legs.

One also finds the same life form represented in the animals, the forest and the world of the spirits (Aniakor, personal interview, October 17th 2014).

Like the then "Zaria rebels," or Art society, this research has combined cosmology, folklore and traditional philosophy, and depictions of everyday life and culture. These also satisfied objectives I, II, III and IV of this study; to identify the forms found on the *Ijele* masquerade, derive sculptures from the forms, create female forms from the *Ijele* masquerade and equally explore possibilities of assembling some of the forms in sculpture. The concept of employingnatural synthesis in this study, looked at the *Ijele* masquerade and the infusion of the Uli symbols in the sculptures produced during the research exploration. Obiora Udechukwu adapted Uli essence of elegance and sensititity of line into his expression, Udechukwu'searly art was also characterized by imageries of amputees, refugees fleeing home, orphaned children and bombed out habitations. His adaptation of Uli concept became a powerful vehicle for social commentary and visual poetry (Okeke, 1995).

The medium of expression employed here by the researcher, differs from Udechukwu's medium of expression; while the artist employed the use of Uli pigments to aid his rendition and concept, which were in two-dimensional format, the rsearcher employed the use of three-dimensionality in creating sculptures that are infused withUli concepts,usingmild steel rods and fabric as a medium of expression, which is termed as mixed media. The sculptures created can be referred to as contemporary sculptures because of its nature and appearance.

However, the materials used may not be guaranteed to last forever, one may not rule out wearing out in future especially if exposed outside to encounter weathering conditions.

4.2 Integrating uli symbols on the welded sculptures

The researcher infuses the Northern Anambra Igbo philosophy world view, which is represented in the Uli concept and was adapted to the welded sculptures created from the *Ijele* masquerade. Uli symbols were inspired majorly by the things that are found within the Igbo environment.

No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities. Where else could any trait come from except from the behaviour of man, woman or a child (Benedict, 1959),

The "Zaria Rebels" were well noted for incorporating traditional folk laws (Natural synthesis) and its philosophy into modern art and it was based on the fact that they were exposed to their various traditional art styles and culture, meaning that it was what the culture projected as its own and having these at the back of the mind, the likes of Ben Enwonwu and Uche Okeke infused the traditional Uil concept into their arts, though Enwonwu dwelt on exploring traditional masks and masquerade with the Uli inscription visible in his creations. Uli is believed to be the dialect of the Igbos.

The careful decoration on the *Ijele* masquerade is usually created by artists, with the Uli background. Nwanna (2015) discovered that the Igbo design relates to what is called Uli. Even if it's not called Uli one sees that they have relationship with Uli, even the motif on Igbo Ukwu finds. Uli is the Igbo aesthetic preference. Is like a people that speaks different dialect. So it is the dialect of the Igbo man.

When you tell an Igbo man to design, you see Uli replicated all over his works and design. Uli from my own perspective represents the design or aesthetic preference of the Igbo, the likes of Uche Okeke, Ben Enwonwu, and Obiorah Udechukwu propounded on Uli. It is a common heritage; Uche Okeke took it to abstract dimension while Ben Enwonwu combined it with naturalistic approach to art. Enwonwu did a lot of series in *Agboho Mmanwu* and they were replicated with Uli spirals like *Agwolagwo,Edelede* among others. Chike Aniakor also did a lot of work on Uli (Nwanna personal communication, May 5th, 2015). According to Onuorah (2012)

> Black is the mostly used colour in a typical Uli painting, although other earth colours like reddish brown, yellow ochre and white are often included. The calligraphic nature of motif and design interpretation gave room for influences from paintings, drawings and prints produced by artists who also depended on African motifs for inspiration.

Onuorah observes that some distinct Uli designs appear to be reoccurring in the diverse concepts of artists, and they include *Isinwoji* (kola nut line), *okalaisi oji* (half of kola nut), *agwolagwo* (spirals and concentric circles), *onwa* (moon), ntupo (cluster of dots) and diamond shapes and pattern.

Uli and Nsibidi were Ancient writing systems of language among the Igbo people of Western Nigeria. Uli symbols are made up of spontaneous designs or are very simplistic or stylized drawings of lines and mythical animals (leopard, python, eagle, and lizard) or objects which are accepted as recalling, typifying, representing or standing for a character, word, and phrase or sometimes more elaborate meaning. Uli is a symbol of morality, beauty and inner goodness given most times to spontaneity following the creative flow of the artist, it has a more cosmetic or aesthetic inclination. An Uli artist was asked: what do you think about when you draw? She responded "before drawing you have to think of the pattern, then convince yourself that people will like it, you don't bear anything in mind, just create something that is beautiful" (Ani, 2006). According to Udechukwu (1990) "Uli artists draw from a corpus of motifs that is extensive and varies from region to region though there are units that are widely distributed throughout Igbo land, very many Uli motifs are abstractions based on natural forms local flora and fauna, celestial bodies-and man-made objects" It is believed that the Igbo Uli exits in various types such as;

1. *Uli-Oba* or *Uli Mkpo* (Rothmania fieldii): roundish in shape with rigid brown back.
2. *Uli Nkilisi* (Cresmaspora Triflora): a shrub plant which produces very tiny oval fruit that cluster into bunches on the stem when ripe.
3. *Uli Ede Eji* (Gardenia Imperialis): this species take on the look of cocoa pod with rigid or corrugated back during the early stages of its development, its length is about 7.65cm and its colour is usually green during the early stages of development but turns black when fully matured.
4. *Uli Mkpu*: this is a departure from other types of Uli in terms of material composition. It is larva of a particular type of insect which lives on the leaves of trees like the fig tree known locally as "*Ogbu*" and others like "Udo" and Ebenebe" tree.
5. *Ogalu:* When uprooted the bark of its roots are collected and beaten into a pulp and increase its liquid content, especially during the dry season.
6. *Ufie* or *Uhie*: this is obtained from the twigs and barks of cam wood.

7. *Nkasi-ana* or *Nkasi-ala*: this plant belongs to the cocoyam family and liquid can be obtained when the back is peeled off.

Uli applies not only to the tree and its fruits but also to decorative patterns which the liquid from the fruit is used to paint on the body. Many Igbo values have found expression in the Uli. In Igbo land, "*Mgbede*" is a ritual done to mark the passing from girlhood to womanhood. It is an elaborate ritual which helps to prepare the lady for the roles of wife and mother especially as these responsibilities would require a deeper knowledge and understanding of tradition and customary laws. During this period which can last up to six months, the girl is secluded in the fattening house, fed with food high in calories and allowed only to do undemanding activities like learning dances, designing walls with Uli and elderly Uli artists would decorate the young lady's body by painting intricate designs of Uli, using clear brownish liquid made from the crushed seeds of several plants species (Ani, 2006).

Every motif of uli painting on the body is symbolic in consonance with Igbo cosmology, which however varies among zones of Igboland. Each uli pattern is a visual art statement as exemplified in there motifs: Cassava leaf*(Abuba Akpu)*, Moon*(Onwa)*, Sun (*Anyanwu)*, Metal gong (*Ogene)*, Tortoise*(Mbe)*, lizard(*Ngwere*) and kolanut line*(Isi Nwoji or oji*). Some uli motifs were purely abstract as in spiral of concentric circle*(Agworo-agwo*), destiny *(Akala-aka*) and dots*(Ntupo*).There are very few communities where boys had their bodies adorned with Uli patterns during occasion such as masquerade festivals. Men did not involve themselves in uli body paintings. Where they adorned their bodies with pattern, it was for specific religio-magical reasons (Ikwuemesi, 2000).

The research replicated Uli symbols, and concept into the welded sculptures which ranges from kolanut line*(IsiNwoji*), lizard*(Ngwere*), Wooden gong(*Ekwe*),five hands*(AkaIse)*, Metal gong (*Ojene*), exoteric pattern*(Agworoagwo*), scarification(*Ichi*), Parallel lines (*UliNsewa*), circle of life*(AkaraOkirikiriNdu*),chalk bowl(*OkwaNzu*), Elongated beak of a bird(*Onu Nwa Nnunu*),python(*Eke*) 1,2,Leopard's claw composition(*MboAgu*) and Star(*Kpakpando*) Plates: LXV - VXXXIII.



PlateLXV:*Ngwere*1 (lizard) motif, infused at the lower section of the installation sculpture



Plate LXVI:*Ngwere 2* (lizard) motif, infused at the lower section of the installation sculpture

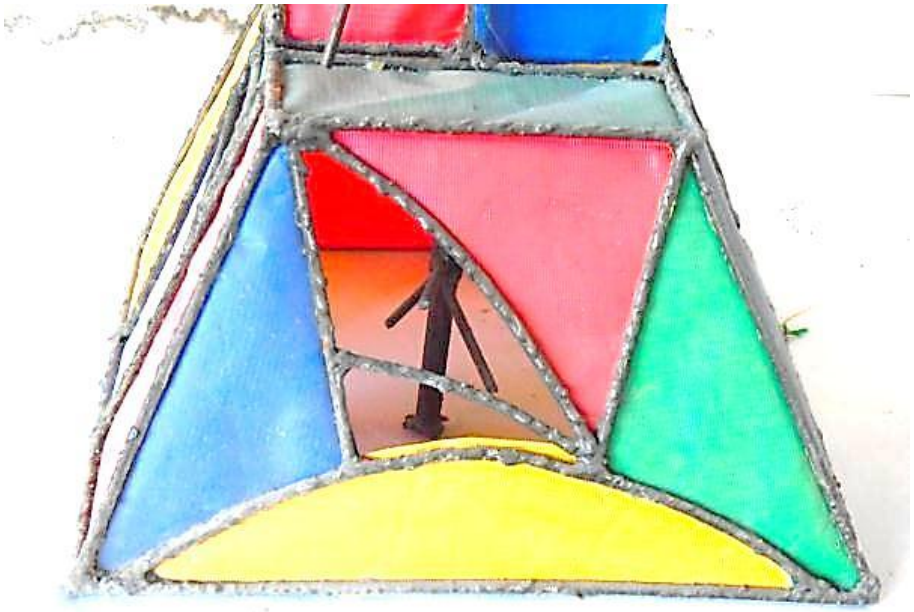


Plate LXVII: *Mbo Aguna Okara Onwa (Leopard's claw and half-moon)*



Plate LXVIII: *Onu Nwa Nnunu* (elongated beak of a bird)

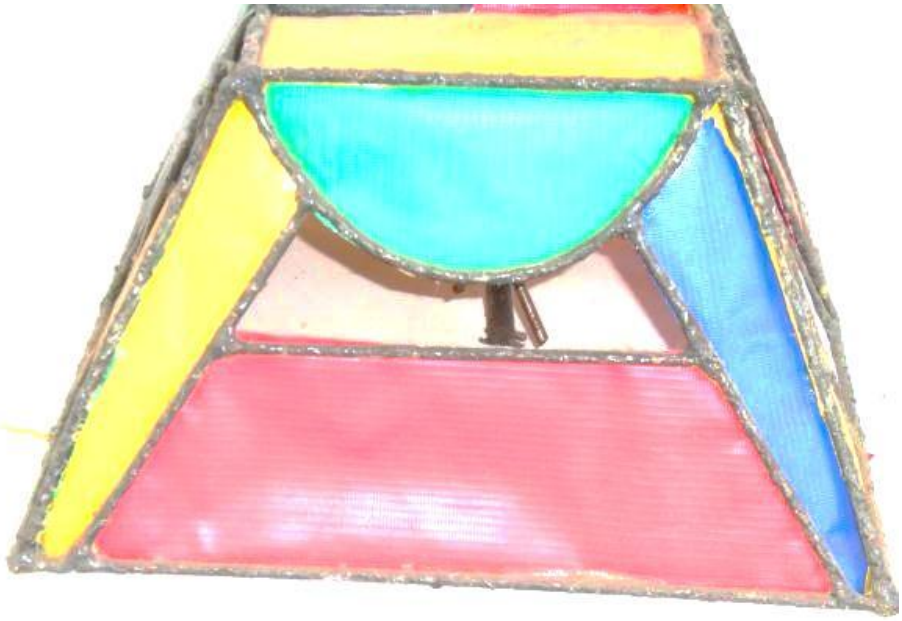


Plate LXIX: *Ekwe* (Wooden gong)



Plate LXX: *Okwa Nzu abuo* (Two chalk bowls)



Plate LXXI: *Ije Nwa Ugo* (Movement of the eagle)



Plate LXXII: Eke (Python) 1



Plate LXXIII: *Okwa Nzu* na *Eke* (Chalk bowl and python) visible on the lower section of the installation sculpture



Plate LXXIV:Oko-*Okpa* (Rooster)



Plate LXXV: Ogene (Metal gong)



Plate LXXVI:*Mbo Agu* (Leopard's claw composition)



Plate LXXVII: *Onwa* (A composition of the Moon)



Plate LXXVIII: *Onye Nnta* (Hunter) at the lower section of the installation



Plate LXXIX: *Onye Nku* (Fire wood girl)



Plate LXXX: *Anyanwu* (Sun)



Plate LXXXI*:Uli Ichi* (Facial scarification)



Plate LXXXII: *Isi nwoji* (Kola nut line)



Plate:LXXXIII: Kpakpando (Star)

4.3. Colour and its symbolism in the *Ijele* Masquerade:

The masqueradesignifies the identity of the ancestors, politics and medicine and the invisible world of the spirits. In whatever form a masquerade appears, colour is integral to its meaning. Colour in Igbo tradition is imbued with special symbolic and ritual importance. It signifies the major transit points in life and the eternal cycle of life and death (McNatt, 2007). Prominent among the colours found on African mask and masquerade are Red, white and black. These colours mean different things to different cultures. Gordon (2011) believes that, in different tribes of African culture different colours have a different meaning. Kaolin, white colour, can be a symbol of death, spirit or daylight but also good fortune. Charcoal, black, symbolizes evil. Ochre, red is used to mark a celebration of life. Yellow ochre and blue lye are also used.

The *Ijele* masquerade is believed to be encompassing. Notable colours found on the *Ijele* masquerade and their Igbo names are Red*Uhe*, Yellow *Edo*, Blue *Atulu*, Black *Ojii*, Green *Nndu* and White *Ocha*,

Red: signify danger and bloodshed.

Yellow represents happiness and warmth. It has both positive and negative connotations. In the positive sense, the colour yellow represents mind, hope, soul, and honour. Negatively, yellow can represent fear, coward, intellectual pride, illness, dishonesty, deceitful, timidity, weakness among others.

Blue signifies faith, heaven, healing, peace, unity, calmness, confidence, grace, tranquillity, water, dependability. In a negative sense, the colour blue can mean depression, sorrow, anxiety, and isolation.

Black connotes the unknown. It also represents antisocial behaviour that should be avoided, meant to be moral prohibitions. It is used to illustrate behaviours that are not acceptable in the society.

Green: symbolises growth, prosperity, the spirit of counsel, wealth, health, money, provision, generosity, new life, nature, eternal life, spring, fertility, youth, and the environment. On the negative side, the colour green can also represent envy, jealousy, pride, aggression, inexperienced, immature, misfortune.

White: represents purity and beauty. Jell-bahlsen (2014) states that, the colour white is the emblem and symbol of the cross roads, and communication that crosses the worlds of humans and spirits, with white chalk; the goddess worshippers skilfully blend artistic expression and religious belief. While McNatt (2007) believe that, the colour white, may signify the spirit world of the ancestors, the procreative power of sperm or the nurturing quality of mother's milk.

An Igbo priest or priestess habitually begins with these words, *Chi-ukwu were nzu*(God have this chalk!) when opening the dialogue with spirits, deities, or ancestors and praying with a piece of white chalk in hand, pressing it into small crumbs, throwing some, and blowing a fine powder onto the shrine, into the air, and to the invincible world beyond the skies. The eyes of the diviner or dibia who communicates with the gods and spirits to ascertain who the gods have chosen to perform the *Ijele* masquerade is heavily marked with white chalk, like a mask, make-up around the eyes signals special status and ability to communicate with the spirit world.

The white powder indicates spirit involvement and is used for marking the body in ritual dedication, feeding the spirits, praying, and drawing sacred symbols on the ground or on the body. White chalk or powder is widely used in West Africa and prominently displayed in ritual communication with the deities, and in the rites of passage, and examples are; birth, initiation and death. Colour dualism symbolizes the structured duality of reciprocal and balanced gender relations. It is reaffirmed and displayed in ritual when red blood is shed and deliberately contrasted with white limestone, chalk, white cloth, and white palm wine. White kola nuts are always paired with red kola nuts, and yellow chalk, perceived as red is matched with white chalk. This is also applicable in representing a male and female goddess among the Igbo, two colours are used mostly, white and red and in some cases if the goddesses worshipped are binary one has to put on the two colours of white and red. The theme of male and female duality is also expressed in the colours of shrine decorations and the worshippers' costume (Okpala, personal communication, March 17th, 2015).

4.4. Actualized Works and Interpretations:

A total of 23 works was created with mild steel rods and coloured fabrics. The sculptures produced were classified into two: (1) sculptures in the round, (2) relief wall-hanging sculptures.

In the final summary, 9 works comprising of Spiritual worldandanimal in relation to human was selected for analyses, and also 8 works of female forms comprising of a series of "*Munaonye ga agba egwu*" who will dance with me, which captured human and their daily activity, titled by the various human emotions, that forms part of the experiences which one may experience, following the preparation, and after display of the *Ijele* masquerade, was created and evaluated in the last sets of analysis of works in this chapter, such as:Egocentric, Celebration 1 and 2, Observance 1, 2, and 3, Prime, Meditation, and Elegance.

Creating and executing these works means that it is possible to explore possibilities in art practice research, also known as practice-based-research. It was a great task studying and being able to analyze the sculptural forms, accumulated in the *Ijele* masqueradeand what its true meanings are, especially the motifs that are found within, what it represents. *Ijele* embodies the Igbo values and beliefs. *Ijele* not only portrays, but also defines power and status of the Anambra Igbo.

The motif defines the artistic tendencies of a community to creatively express themselves with designs that are firmly rooted in their myths and their experience of life in the past, present and future. The symbols graphically reveal the outflow of organic forms from the core of the elements to point, line, triangle, square and circle (Okoye, 2006).

Agujiobi (1998) explains that, motifs are that parts of culture, that is collective experiences handed over from generation to generation. The experiences which may arise in an attempt to explain creation and natural phenomena, traditionally, motifs are expressions used for mural painting and body decoration or adornment. She maintains that, motifs also do not only complement words but also intensify the meaning through the fusion of feeling and reason. Motif doesnt simply refer to what it stand for in the way words do, it present qualitative example of the relationship between man and his neighbour, between nature and human consciousness and between the society and the individual, for example in *Isi Nwoji* 1 and 2 (kola nut line), Plates: LXXXIVand LXXXV,always drawn as motif on

the back of the human palm, as part of body decoration for Igbo women, this same motif also found as part of the decorations on the *Ijele* masquerade and most times beautifully combined with other motifs to add aesthetic beauty to the *Ijele's* regalia (the lower section). *Isi Nwoji* 1was combined with other motifs such as; basket for carrying sacrifices, sun, moon, and offering bowl.

When age-grades gather to discuss issues on how to display the *Ijele* masquerade *Oji* is the first thing that is eaten, to thank the gods for life and protection. *Oji* (Kola nut) occupies a unique position in the cultural life of Igbo people. *Oji* is usually the first thing served to any visitor in an Igbo home,it plays a very important role in the life of the Igbo people, and its role is symbolic in the socio-religious life of the people.*Oji* is served before an important function begins, be it marriage ceremony, settlement of family disputes or entering into any type of agreement.*Oji* is traditionally broken into pieces by hand, and if the Kola nut breaks into 3 pieces a special celebration is arranged, for the Igbo man, it also serves as a link between the world of the living and the dead (Chidume, et al, 2015).

Oji is a nut widely known and widely used in different parts of the country and serves as a symbol of good public relation. In Igbo cosmology, animals such as the *Ugo* eagle, symbolizes royalty and accomplishment. Its feather is always attached to the red caps of the titled men who have accomplished life's anticipations. The *Oji* and *Ugo* are must times adopted into names because of their symbolism in the Igbo philosophy such as *Oji-ugo* which are also in-cooperated into the forms and motifs that adorn the *Ijele* masquerade. The circles both at the center and the outer area in Plate LXXXV:*Isinwoji* 2contains reflections of everyday world as seen by the researcher, just as the inner circle reflects the uncommon reality or ritual reality of the cultural existence of Igbo Anambra people, so the outer circle is in contact with the human and ecological reality, which it equally expresses in the *Ijele* masquerade.

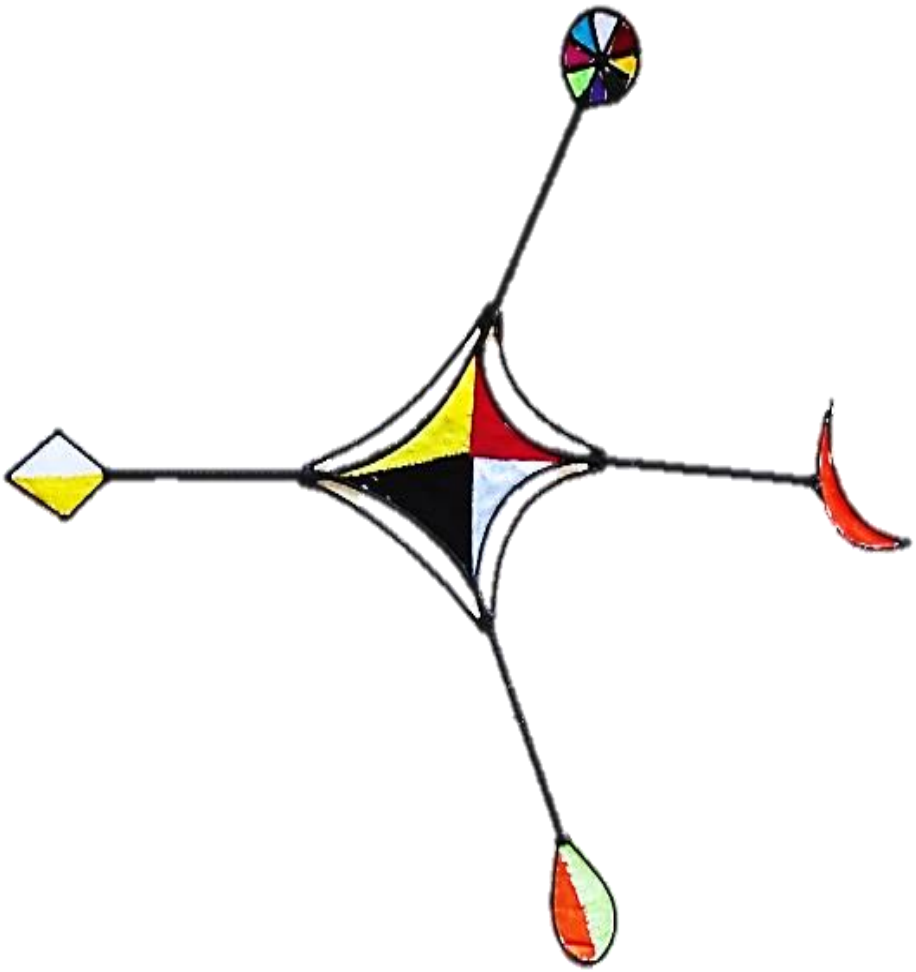


Plate LXXXIV: *Uliaka / isinwoji 1*, combined with Basket for carrying sacrifices at the left, the Sun at the top, Moon at the right, and Offering bowl at the bottom, mild still rod and fabric, 48 X 41 cm, 2015.



Plate LXXXIV, I*:Representation of basket for carring sacrifices*



Plate LXXXIV, II*: Representation of the sun*



Plate LXXXIV, III*: Representation of the moon*



Plate LXXXIV, IV*: Representation of offering bowl*

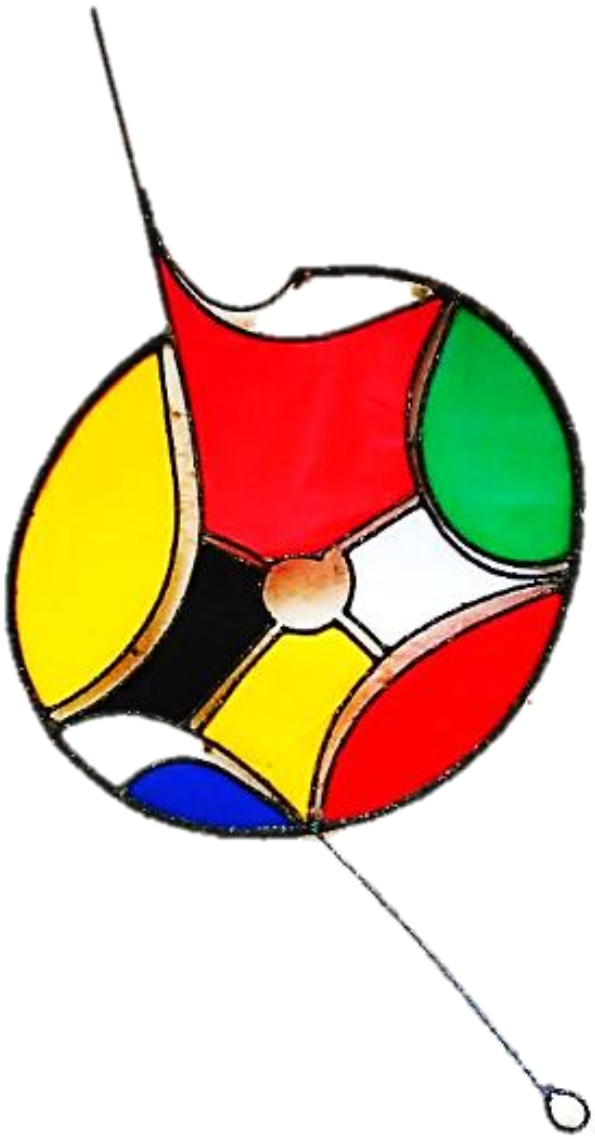


Plate LXXXV: *Isi nwoji* 2, mild steel rods and fabric, 125 X 61 cm, 2016.

Akara-okirikiri ndu Plate LXXXVI*:* Circle of life is a symbol that represents the unending circle of life which accommodates ancestral worship and reincarnation. The circle symbol meaning is universal, sacred and divine. It represents the infinite nature of energy and the inclusive of the universe. Samuels (1975), believes that the circle is associated with the number zero (0) which is unity, and with the number ten (10), which symbolizes the return to multiplicity. The number zero both symbolizes nothingness and marks the boundary between real numbers (1, 2, and 3, among others). In the number ten, the zero marks a place without changing it, else it would be eleven or nine.

Ichi: facial ritual scarifications are worn by men of the Igbo people. The scarification indicates that the wearer had passed through initial initiation into the highest society of NzenaOzo title, thus marking the wearer as nobility.

According to Abagworo (2013), "the scarification was found among men in the Awka-Nri areas and among a few women in the Awgwu and Nkanu areas. There are two styles; the Nri style worn in the Awka-Nri areas, and the Agbaja style worn in the Awgwu and Nkanu areas"

He maintains that the Nri style, the carved line ran from the center of the forehead down to the chin. A second line ran across the face, from the right cheek to the left. This was repeated to obtain a pattern meant to imitate the rays of the sun. In the Agbaja style, circles and semicircular patterns are added to the initial incisions to represent the moon. These scarifications were given to the representatives of the Eze Nri; the mburichi. The scarifications are the people of Nris' way of honoring the sun that they worshiped and a form of ritual purification.

Mgbiezi: (out door) Igbo use carved wooden panels as the entrance to doorways into the compounds of titled members of the prestigious men`s association *Nze* na *Ozo.* Carved doors and panels were adopted or used in the houses of wealthy families as a means of displaying wealth. Igbo doors are delicately carved with deeply cut abstract designs in striated and hatched patterns that catch the sunlight to produce high contrasts of light and shadow.

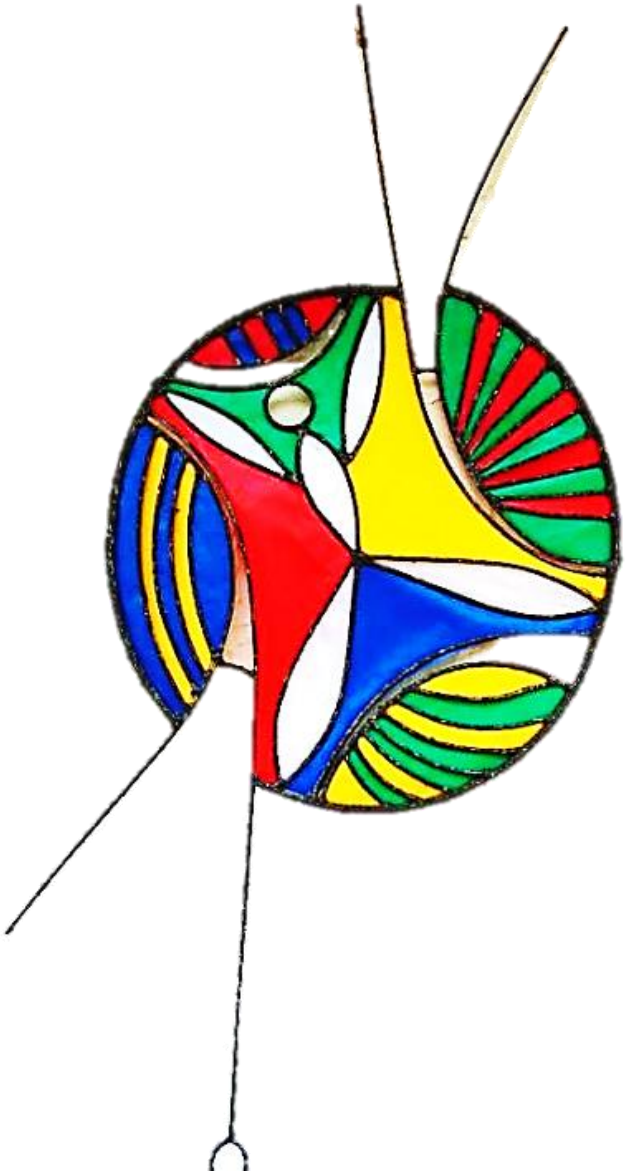


Plate LXXXVI*: Akara Okirikiri nndu, Ichi na Mgbi ezi,*miled steel rods and fabric, 165 X 64 cm, 2016.

*Kpakpando,*PlateLXXXVII: Stars are an ancient symbol that have many uses and meanings, depending on their form, and a number of points and its context. Stars are some of the most distant

things that are seen with our naked eyes. They can be used as symbols of physical distance, a long journey or something that is physically unobtainable, as well as many extensions of that, such as emotional distance. Stars are commonly associated with magic. In modern culture, wizards are often seen with stars on their clothes, and the act of magic can be visually depicted with stars. Stars may also symbolise a big change or turning point in a person's life, but they are also seen as a sign of sorrow. It is believed that if a person follows a star in their dream, this might be a sign that he or she is ambitious or has intuitive gifts. If the stars that are visualised during dreams are dull or red in colour, this might symbolise that there is a looming problem that has not been dealt with.

The star is symbolic usually represented as part of Uli design and also as an embellishment on the *Ijele* masquerade's regalia. The colours that exist in the *Ijele* are appropriately blended into*Isi Nwoji, Akara Okirikiri nndu, Ichi na Mgbi ezi* and *Kpapando* and they are situated within the context of *Ijele*.

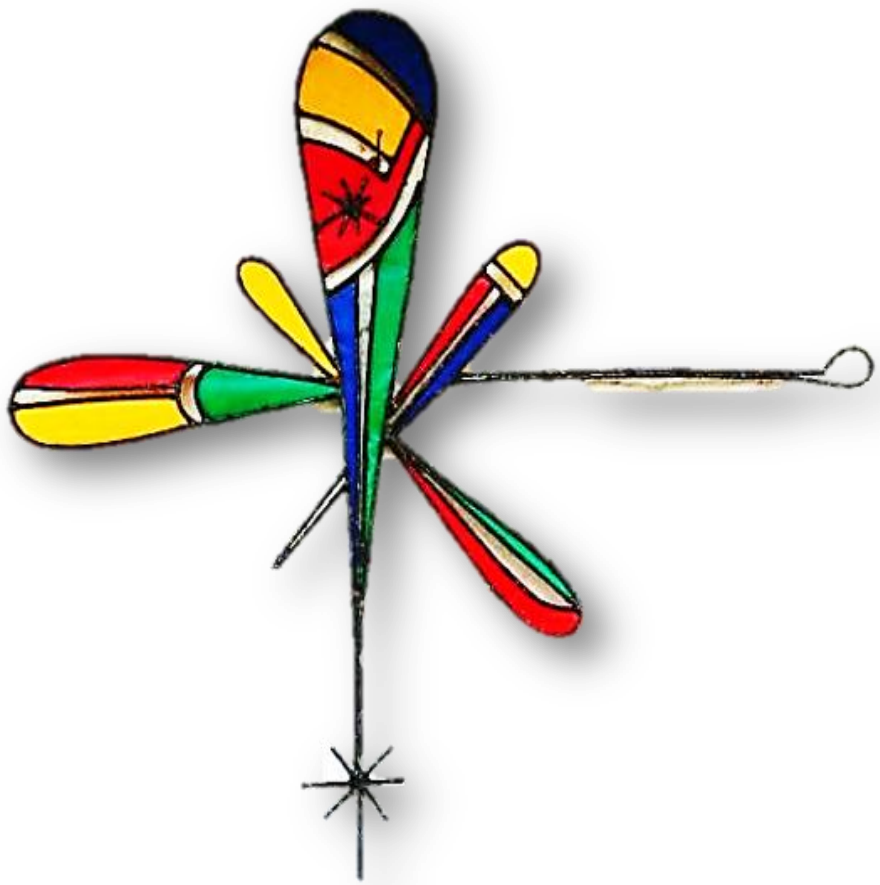


Plate LXXXVII*: Kpapando,* mild steel rods, and fabric, 104 X 112 cm, 2016.

Ofo, Plate LXXXVII: Some level of static movement and contra-posture are attempted in its rendition. In the world we living in, it is indeed possible for someone to suffer for a crime he or she never committed, such cases abound. Our art influences us, that is why artists narrate their experience through a medium; If an Igbo man's opinion was required he will metaphorically say; "his hands are clean"meanng "*Oji oho* or *Oji ofo*". Secondly, *Ofo* created by the researcher. In Igbo, land *ofo* symbolises and connotes a man's power of authority, honesty and righteousness. *Ofo* is the link

between Chukwu (God), man, the dead, the living, and the unborn. It is the central symbol of the Igbo religion. *Ofo* is usually made of wood and it is gotten from a tree that grows in Igbo land. It is a particular plant species called Detarium Senegalese also known as *Deuterium Elastica* by the Nigerian forestry Department. The Igbo have great respect for the ofo tree, it is neither to be cut with a machete or any object, women are not allowed to go near it or even touch it. *Ofo* is among the several cultic symbols which the traditional Igbo people employ in performing functions of religious, political, ethical and social importance (uniproject, 2015).

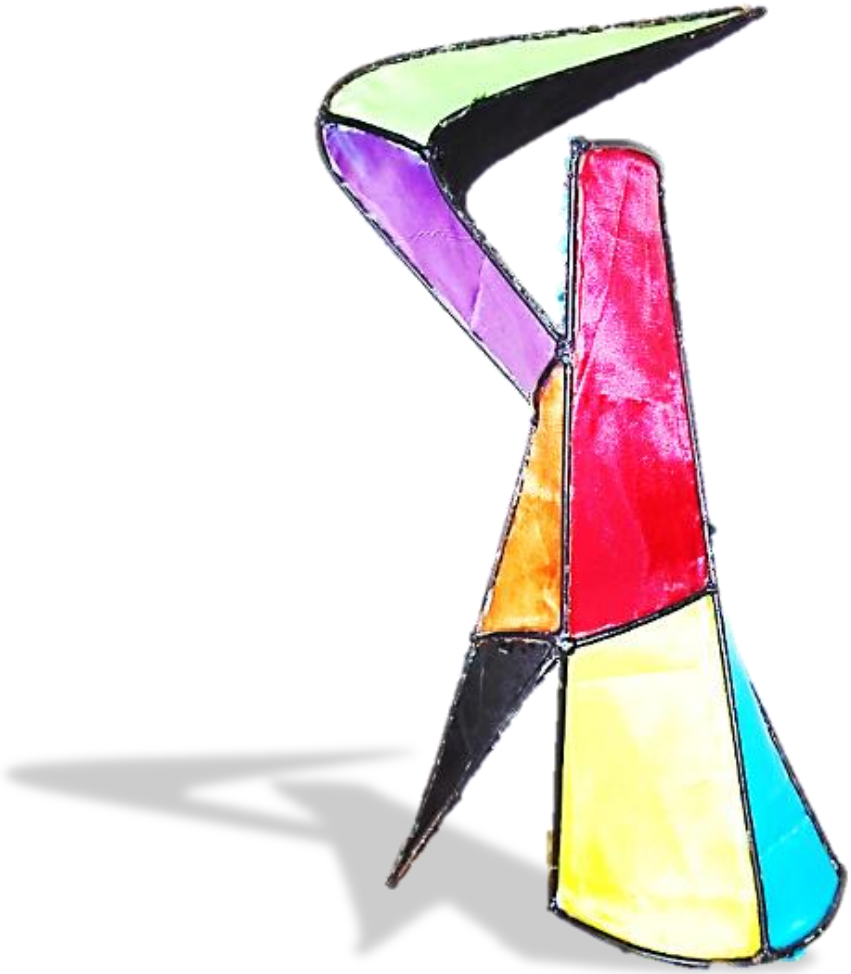


Plate LXXXVIII*: Ofo, mild steel rod and fabric, 61 X 30 cm, 2015.*

Akupe Ijele Plate LXXXIX:*Ijele's* fan, one finds a summary and the culmination of all the three Igbo world view represented in this piece. The use of the circle is symbolic; it represents an unending circle of life which accommodates ancestral worship and reincarnation. The big outer circle is combined with three other circles. The second touching the first at the bottom, followed by the third, which is placed at the center, this touchies the second circle at the top, and the last one positioned inside the third circle. These circles were meant to touch each other. It is a representation of the interconnectedness seen between this exciting world and the spiritual world. The first circle represents Human and their daily activity, the second the Spiritual world, while the third represents Animal and Forestry.

The first circle Plate:Human and their daily activity, is divided into four sections. Each section is depicted with various human activities, cladded with fabrics representing the three basic primary colours of blue, red and yellow. The first section with blue background has an abstract representation of a bicycle rider going or coming back from the farm. Second section cladded with red fabric has an abstract image of lady carrying firewood on her head, also possibly coming back from the farm. The third section claded with yellow fabric shows an image of a man climbing a palm wine tree. "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach" so says the popular saying. Food plays a very important part in the social life of all societies. Food is an important feature to great ceremonial functions, which is a part of marking special occasions such as; coming age, engagement ceremonies, naming ceremonies, marriage feasts, and achievement of high ranks in society, yam festival, planting and harvesting of crops (Ejiofor, 1984). This shows how important it is for an Igbo person to own, cultivate and harvest the farm land.

The fourth section cladded with green fabric depicts an image of people clustered together which suggests that they are in engrossed in a discussion. Probably they are also elders of a community in a congregation meeting; taking some vital decision that would affect and lead to the progress of the community and also conflict resolutions.

The second circle, the Spiritual world, the images were not represented or related with anything that showed that they are human or animal, but rendered in lines and symbols which also represents the

relationship between human and animal, cladded with; green, yellow, blue and red fabrics. Mirror is symbolic in the *Ijele* masquerade, it was also introduced into the Spiritual world concept, and this is a representation of the doorway into the Spiritual world only reveled to those that are specially favored by the gods and goddesses.

The third circle represents animal and forestry, cladded with blue fabric with no form on it. This emptiness represents void. The mirror is again represented here, placed at the background with a symbol of a bird. The mirror is the *Ijele's* eye during performance. It is this mirror that the *Ijele* uses to see. The mirror also represents the passage between the world of the living and that of the dead. The bird is symbolic; it is used most at times to represent the images of gods, especially the mask head rest. The next section is claded with yellow fabric, it has a representation of an elephant. The elephant is regarded as king of all the animals; this is why the image of the elephant is always represented on the *Ijele* masquerade, it is either illustrated as Uli symbol at the lower section or ceated in three dimensional sculptural form and assembled together with other sculptures at to upper section.

The three circles represent the co-existence of human, spirits and animal activity. They both need each other to exist and function properly. Humans need meat as a source of food for nutrition and the forest is the place of abode for this animals and the forest is seen as a place where both animals and spirits also reside. In a situation whereone has not lived in accordance with the society or the person develops an ailment that is strange, he or she is cast into the evil forest, that person is believed to have been cursed by the gods. Among the Igbo society, the forest is also a place, where those that equally die an unworthily death are thrown into. It's also believed to be a place where the most powerful herbalist or medicine man that posseses spiritual powers resides. Twins birth was formally regarded as taboo and they were always thrown into these forests because they are believed not to be a good omen until it was later abolished. There are other things that the Igbos considers as abnormal like: a person dying without anyone to attend to him, pounding the pestle on the ground instead of in the mortar while pounding fou fou, even if by mistake, a woman climbing a palm tree, a child cutting the upper teeth first, stealing of yam and fighting a masquerade (Arinze, 1970).

The last circle is cladded with white fabric background; it has an Uli symbol with one circled mirror placed at the top, and another triangular mirror positioned at the bottom of the same inner circle. Within it, there are two semi-circles facing and crossing each other. There are also three lines drawn vertically starting from the semi-circle bellow across the other inverted semi-circle to the top. This symbol represents a husband and wife mating and the three lines represent the number of children they will have. In Africa it is believed that the more children one has, shows how wealth a man is. But in this modern time studies and facts have revealed that the more children one has, the likely more responsibility, and the tendensies for the chanceses to provide adiquatlly for the family will be less. this has led to the introduction of family planning. Presently, it is also evident that the Western culture infiltrated Africa and the general mindset is that the least, a family should comprise of are: the man, his wife and three children at the most should make up a family.

The *Akupe Ijele* in reverse Plate: LXXXIX, II depicts a large circle, cladded with red fabric and the introduction of lines showing two crosses, the wider one has a circular mirror at the center, rendered in white colour, vertical stopping at the mid-section, and after the mirror, it continues downwards with green fabric. Towards the right is claded in blue fabric and the left is a yellow fabric. A red fabric line, horizontally runs across the top-most part of the big circle, crossing the wider white part of the cross from one end to the next. Vertically the yellow line equally runs across the red horizontal line, positioned at the right side of the wider cross. The researcher used these two crosses to represent the different Christian denominations and their different ideologies through the priests, evangelists, reverends, pastors among others. For them the claim is that, the aim is for one greater goal, which is

Jesus Christ and the ultimate and final goal is God. One cannot rule out the functions of a mediator which is in the person of the priest. Human being has always felt the need of a special mediator between himself and the object of his worship. Aristotle sees the necessity of having priests in every state (Arinze, 1970).

Looking at *Akupe Ijele* Plate LXXXIX, III, the shadow cast at the bottom is seen to be rendered in reverse form. It is a representation of what happens in the spirit world. The impossible becomes possible; there are stories that, if one is at the marketplace and wants to see a spirit the person should stand with legs wide open apart, bending down with head tucked between the legs, there is the possibility that the person might see a spirit.



PlateLXXXIX: *Akupe Ijele* I, *mild steel rod and fabric, 130 X 60 cm,2015.*



Plate LXXXIX: *Akupe Ijele* II (Detail)



Plate LXXXIX*: Akupe Ijele* III *(Detail)*

Eke, *Plate*XC*:*Python is always found seated prominently at the centre of the *Ijele* masquerade and it is symbolic. The philosophy of binary ideation and the Igbo worldview that things are meant to exist in two. The royal python is a messenger to the goddess and is believed to comprise of both male and female. The male is a harbinger of death on Igbo war drums, while the female is a symbol of death, rebirth, eternity and circular time. Death and life are two distinct aspects to the python's prowess, as is the creatively balanced opposition of gender, in a creature perceived as ambivalently as her patron goddess pythons, like idealised divine couples are believed to live in monogamous pairs.

Jell-Bahlsen (2014) states that, The water deities may manifest themselves to human beings in dreams, or through their messengers from the animal kingdom; *Ijele* changes her appearances, taking the form of strangers, animals, and particularly the python. He maintains that the python is a messenger to *Ijele*, is like the water-spirit and is a person, on the one hand, is the owners of the creeks and swamps, the guardians of the fish harvest, the forces of nature. The python is the patrons of human individualism in

both its creative and its destructive forms. She is the forces underpinning all that lies beyond the confines of the established social order. She can enrich village life and equally work with them.

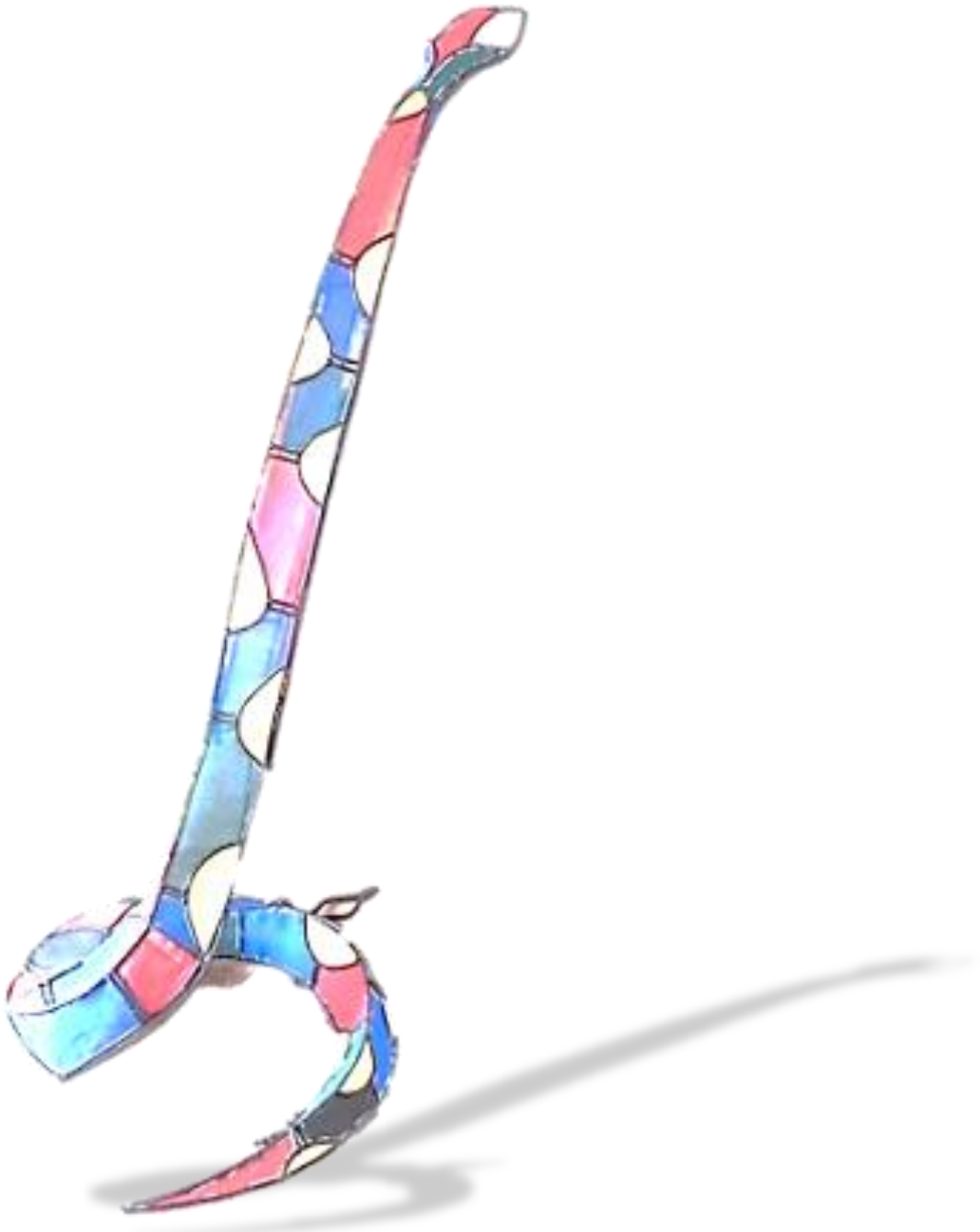


Plate XC: *Eke,* mild steel rod and fabric, 140 X 63 cm, 2015.

Oko-okpa Plate CXLII: This was reformed to fall in line with the new reformative stage. In the context of the usage in the *Ijele* masquerade, the Oko-okpa is symbolic. It is used for ritual cleansing of the carrier of the Ijeje masquerade before coming out to perform. And also, apart from the *Ijele*

masquerade activity; the Igbo traditional rights especially during the morning prayers offering which is made or offered to Chukwu the Supreme God with Oko-okpa (Chicken or fowl) especially the white one. At times the use of the chicken's egg is also permitted. It is also called Aja Eze Enu (sacrifice of the highest or being hung up above the ground). Scholars like; Arinze and Talbot (1970) believes that, these offerings are made for one and his families protection, mostly for a good omen and to also keep away evil misfortunes from befalling any members of one's family, and when he finishes he leaves the fowl on a stack to die and rot. Arinze (1970) states that,

> There are really sacrifices offered directly to God. In Ikwu Eze Enu the live fowl or pure egg is hung to a stake or palm mid-rib without being killed. The characteristics of a sacrifice to God are; (a) such sacrifices are never to be thrown on the ground, they must be elevated above the ground. (b) Filthy things are never used, and (c) it is always a sacrifice of joy.

Offerings made to the goddess must either be consumed by the congregation on the spot, or left behind; the site is littered with plates, small clay pots and offerings, including food items, carved dolls, objects, and money. At times, an animal not slaughtered in sacrifice is left behind and roams through the thicket of the out-of-bounds sanctuary until taken by the goddess, or devoured by one of her children or messengers, crocodile or python (Jell-Bahlsen, 2014). However; when the *Ijele* masquerade comes out to perform she is appeased with white goat or ram, not the Oko-opka because *Ijele* is superior to other masquerades, her size is always intimidating (Okpala personal encounter, 7th March 2015).This could also, possibly explains why the chicken or fowl is used for various occasions and ceremonies ranging from child naming occasions, wedding ceremonies, festival and even burial ceremonies.The researcher employed the use of lines in conveying the same representation seen in a life chicken**.**



Plate XCI: *Oko-okpa*, mild steel rod and fabric, 74 X 122 cm, 2015.

The study centres and narrows down on *Muna onye ga agba egwu*. It captures a series of sculptures rendedrd to represent female forms, which manifests as a result of human emotions, discussed in the context of humans relations to one another in the experience of coming in contact with the *Ijele* masquerade such as: Egocentric, Celebration 1 and 2, Observance 1, and 2, Prime, Meditation and Elegance, Plates: XCII, XCIII, XCIV, CXLVI, XCV, XCVI, XCVII, andXCVIII.

The site-specific *Ijele* installation is also inclusive. This outdoor sculpture is a culmination of all the studies of the studio exploration that gives insight to the forms created from the *Ijele* masquerade portraying humans emotions and domestic responsibilities.

Human beings are uniquely skilful at utilising systems of symbolic communication such as language and art for self-expression, exchange of ideas, and for organising themselves into purposeful groups through the emotions. Humans create complex social structures composed of many cooperating and competing groups, from families and kinship networks to political states. Social interactions between humans have established an extremely wide variety of values, social norms and rituals which together form the basis of human society. Curiosity and the human desire to understand and influence the environment to explain and manipulate phenomena or events has provided the foundation for developing science, philosophy, mythology, religion, anthropology, and numerous other fields of knowledge (Ejiofor, 1984).

Scherer (2003) believes that, five crucial elements of human emotion exist which are:cognitive appraisal, body symptoms, action tendencies, expression and feelings. From the component processing perspective, emotion experience is said to require that all of these processes become coordinated and synchronised for a short period of time, driven by appraisal processes. Although the inclusion of cognitive appraisal as one of the elements is slightly controversial, since some theorists make the assumption that emotion and cognition are separate but interacting systems, the component processing model provides a sequence of events that effectively describes the coordination involved during an emotional episode.

Scientific discourse has drifted to other meanings and there is no consensus on a definition of emotion. Emotion is often intertwined with mood, temperament, personality, disposition and motivation. In some theories, cognition is an important aspect of emotion. Those acting primarily on emotion may seem as if they are not thinking, but mental processes are still essential, particularly in the interpretation of events. For example, the realisation of danger and subsequent arousal of the nervous system such as rapid heartbeat and breathing, sweating, muscle tension is integral to the experience of fear. Other theories, however, claim that emotion is separate from and can precede cognition. Emotions involve different components, such as subjective experience, cognitive processes, expressive behaviour, psychophysiological changes, and instrumental behaviour. Emotions were biologically determined and universal to human culture and also the expression of the motion in the animal. Ekman especially argued that there has been no quantitative data to support the claim that emotions are culture specific. In his 1993 discussion on emotion, states that there is no instance in which 70% or more of one cultural group select one of the six universal emotions while another culture group labels the same expression as another universal emotion (Darwin, 1872 and Ekman, 1990, Kleiner and Mamiya in Ajayi, 2014).

The self is the subject of one's own experience of phenomena: perception, emotions, and thoughts. In phenomenology, it is conceived as what experiences, and there isn't any experiencing without an experiencer(the self). The self is, therefore, an "immediate given", an intrinsic dimension of the fact of experiencing phenomena. In some other trends of philosophy, the self is instead seen as requiring a reflexive perception of oneself, the individual person, meaning the self in such a view is an object of consciousness. The self has been studied extensively by philosophers and psychologists and is central to many world religions. The philosophy of self-seeks to describe essential qualities that constitute a person's uniqueness or essential being. There have been various approaches to defining these qualities. The self can be considered as that being which is the source of consciousness, the agent responsible for an individual's thoughts and actions, or the substantial nature of a person which endures and unifies consciousness over time (Wikipedia, 2015).

Dambrun *et al* (2011) state that, attaining happiness is linked to the self, and more particularly to the structure of the self. They propose that attaining authentic happiness is linked to the way we relate to the notion of a self, and more particularly to its nature.Cultural and social transmission is one of the principal variables that shape the individual which helps one to attain to happiness. Enculturation, socialisation and acculturation are the processes by which cultural transmission takes place. The concept of enculturation comes from cultural anthropology. As the term suggests, an individual in a particular culture acquires, through learning, what the culture deems necessary. The concept of socialization derives from sociology and social psychology can be defined as the process by which the human individual learns and internalizes the sociocultural elements of his environment throughout his life, integrates them in his personality under the influence of experiences and significant social agents, and thereby adapts to the social environment in which he must live to attain happiness (Berry, *et al* 2002).

Egocentric,PlateXCII:portrays the carefulness at which one devotes attention to ones-self. Also, means self-centeredness. Self-centeredness is an exaggerated sense of importance given to the self. By self-centeredness, one means that the self takes on a central point of reference with regard to many psychological activities such as connotation, motivation, attention, cognition, affect/emotion, and behaviour.

The exaggerated importance is given to the self-emerges mainly from self-centeredness and refers to the increased degree of which the individual considers that his own condition is more important than that of others and this takes unquestionable priority. Self-centred psychological functioning includes characteristics such as biased self-interest, egoism, egocentrism, and egotism. In contrast, one uses the term 'selflessness' to qualify the self's alternative psychological functioning. It is characterised by low levels of self-centeredness and a low degree of importance given to the self-such as not exaggerated. This style of psychological functioning is closely related to characteristics such as altruism, kindness, respect, empathy and compassion (Neff, 2003).

Markus and Kitayama (1991) distinguish between an independent self and an interdependent self. They postulate that individuals have strikingly different concepts of their self, and these variations are a function of differences in cultural settings. These different self-constructs affect the ways in which individuals experience themselves and others, and also affect their cognitions, emotions, and motivation. According to the present model, an independent self would be characterised by "self-centeredness," while an interdependent one would function in a "selflessness" way. An independent self is characteristic of an individual who perceives himself as being fundamentally separate from others, autonomous from the world and relatively unique. Individuals with a self that is interdependent have a strong feeling of connectedness with others. The emotions, which are expressed most spontaneously by individuals with an independent self-are ego-centered. These include jealousy, anger and pride (ego-focused emotions). Conversely, individuals with an interdependent self-experience mental states and emotions that are more centred on others (other-focused emotions). Examples of these include "feeling indebted to someone" or "feeling in harmony with someone" (Kitayama & Markus, 1990). Concerning motivation, attaining personal goals is more strongly linked to an independent self, while goals involving the concerns of others is characteristic of an interdependent self. Regarding self-evaluation and self-presentation, those who perceive the self as interdependent have a modest self, while those with a strong and independent self-are inclined to self-enhancement or self-promotion (Mezulis, Abramson, Hyde, & Hankin, 2004).

Dambrun *et al*. (2011), state that, cognitive distortions, resulting from various egocentric biases, are also associated with self-centeredness. Self-centered behaviours involve frequent impulses toward pleasurable stimuli and away from unpleasant ones. Specific affective reactions are associated with this style of psychological functioning, reactions: transitory pleasure (i.e., stimulus-driven pleasures) and afflictive affects. Attaining priority objectives such as obtaining gratification and avoiding disagreeable stimuli, creates a feeling of pleasure, joy and transitory satisfaction. These stimulus-driven pleasures are contingent upon the appearance or disappearance of certain stimuli. When the stimulus is present, the pleasure associated with it appears. However, as soon as the stimulus disappears or is supplanted by a new stimulus, the positive feeling fades. The appearance or disappearance of the stimulus itself is linked to a variety of phenomena, which are not under the control of the individual.



Plate XCII*: Egocentric, mild steel rod and fabric, 110 X 76 cm,2016.*

Celebration1, and 2,Plate XCIII, and XCIV:According to Ryan *et al* (2001), there are two types of Hedonic and Eudemonia happiness. Hedonic happiness occurs, when one is primarily seeking pleasant feelings and avoiding unpleasant ones, while Eudemonic happiness is conceptualised more in terms of optimal functioning. Ryff (1995), describe eudemonia "as the striving for perfection that represents the realisation of one's true potential". These two views of happiness illustrate two traditions whose philosophic roots are significantly divergent. While in hedonistic philosophy the aim of life is to maximise pleasure, other philosophers and religious thinkers like Aristotle, considers hedonic happiness as vulgar insofar as it condemns a man to be a slave to his desires. According to the Stoic

Epictetus, happiness does not involve enjoying pleasures, but rather occurs when one is free from desires.

The Buddhists use the term *sukha* to qualify authentic happiness, and this term closely resembles eudemonic happiness. Sukha can be defined "as a state of flourishing that arises from mental balance and insight into the nature of reality. Rather than a fleeting emotion or mood, aroused by sensory and conceptual stimuli, sukha is an enduring trait that arises from a state of mental balance and entails a conceptually unstructured and unfiltered awareness of the true nature of reality" (Ekman et, al. 2005). Hedonic and eudemonic happiness reflect two distinct psychological states. By trying to maximise pleasures and avoiding displeasures, the hedonic approach induces a fluctuating happiness in which phases of pleasure and displeasure alternate repeatedly. The experience of pleasure is by nature fleeting and dependent upon circumstances.

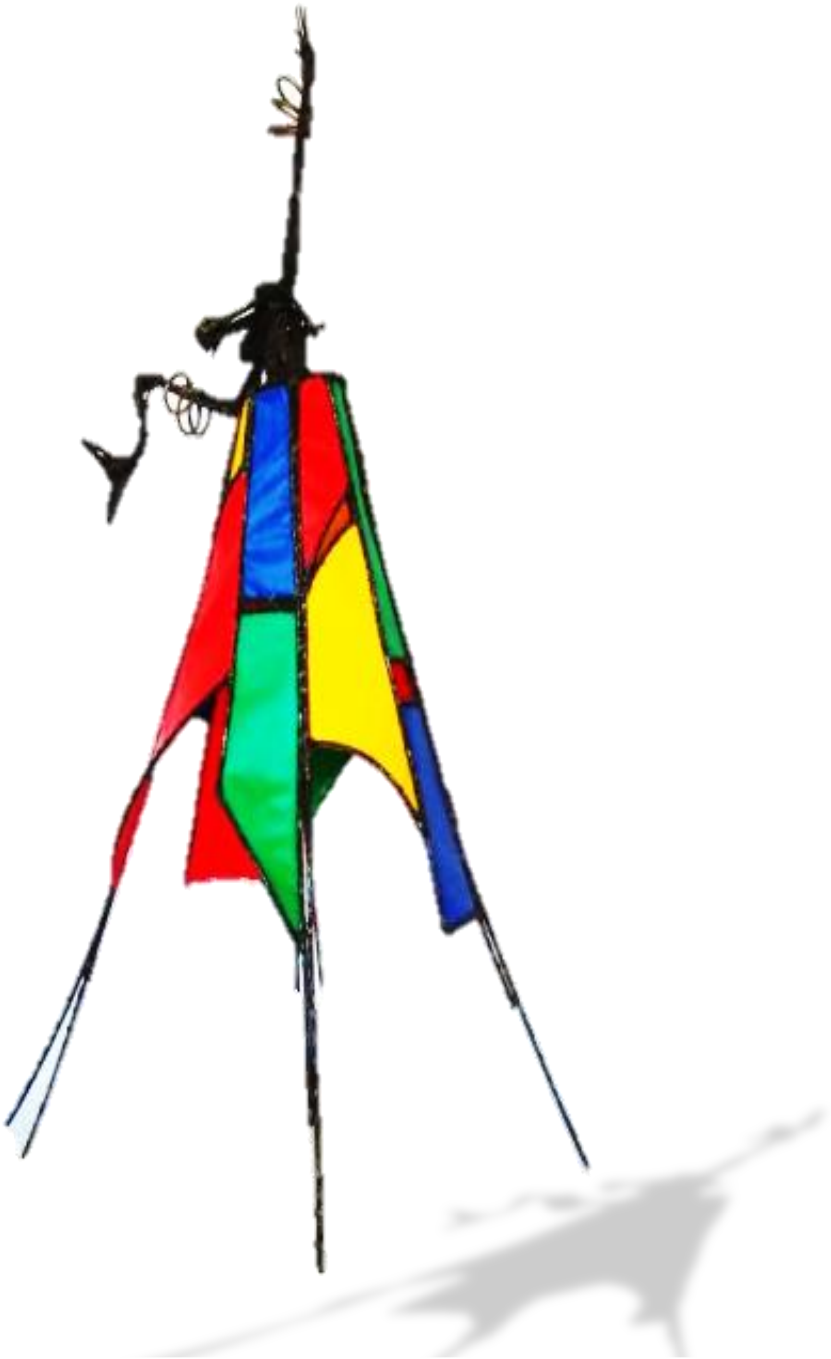


Plate XCIII:*Celebration 1, mild steel rod and fabric, 116 X 64 cm,2016.*



Plate XCIV*: Celebration 2, mild steel rod and fabric, 150 X 64 cm, 2016.*

Observance 1, 2, and 3, (Plate XCV, CIVand CV).In this context refers to the celebration of a religious occasion, or the practice of a religious rite and ritual purity ceremony. Religion refers to an organized system involving beliefs, practices, rituals, and symbols which allow the individual to connect to the sacred or the transcendent God, a principal superior organizer, or ultimate truth (Koenig *et al*, 2001).

In observation one sees a woman lifting up a basket with her right hand, she appears to be in a frenzy mood, her head is bent backwards and her left hand stretched out as if she was saying 'Please accept this offering and grant my request'. She is dressed in the normal dual two colours of red and white especially if the goddesses worshiped are binary (see chapter 4, page 3, colour symbolism). The introduction of yellow was to help compliment the two colours introduced.

When ritual purity is demanded the priest or priestess must wash his hands before offering sacrifice. So must the family head too, before the Morning Prayer with the offering of kola and probably some libiations. The victims are often washed too, especially their legs and mouths. For some spirits the priest must not taste oil before the morning sacrifice. As a preliminary to a sacrifice the diviner can order his client to sloghter a rooster and carry the dismembered parts to the bush-paths to inform the spirit that he is coming to make sacrifice to it. Also minor sacrifices can be prescribed before a major sacrifice to a 'big' spirit. The priest becomes the mediator between man and God. For one to achieve that union, one must be liberated from self. To realize liberation the ego or I must be left behind. The I that must be transcended is the I of both conscious reality of the senses and the I of subconscious tendencies and memories. To achieve liberation a person must see the difference between the illusory world of the matter and the real world of the spirit, the person must cease to think of himself as matter and identify himself with the absolute (Arinze, 1970, Samuals *et al*, 1975).

The priest is expected to be a good man. Above all he must not be a thief or criminal (onye nso Ani). In expiatory sacrifices for abominations the culprit repents sincerely of his misdeeds. However, in expiatory sacrifices for minor offences such as the breaking of the laws of a water spirit, the culprit often excuses himself and the priest helps him (Ejiofor, 1984).

The priest must be knowledgeable of the various forces and spirits so as to be able to mediate well. Arinze (1970) believes that, there are superior powers, invisible spirits, the ancestors, and there are also human spirits of wicked deceased people. The Igbo regards some of these higher powers as kind and reasonable, many as severe, and others as bad, wicked and capricious. Igbo sacrifice can be grouped under four headings: (1) Expiation, (2) Sacrifice to ward off molestation from unknown evil spirits, (3) Petition and, (4) Thanksgiving. He maintains:

1. Expiation: The Igbo believes that when one sins one makes the higher powers frown. The individual wishes to regain the favour of the higher powers. Igbo expiatory sacrifices fall into two distinct types sacrifices to remove abominations, and sacrifice for lesser offences.

2. Sacrifice to Ward off Molestation from Unknown Evil Spirits: The Igbo knows fully well that there is no effect without a cause. But he has his own ways of finding out the causes of evils and of seeking a remedy. When a person is sick, when a chain of misfortunes surrounds him, and if the disaster cannot be easily traced to human or known causes, then it is attributed to the invisible powers. These invisible powers may be the ancestors, some known non¬-human spirits or spirit with shrine, priest and cult, or some unknown ajo mmuo (bad spirit, devil). The molested individual finds out which it is from the diviner (Dibia). The fortune-teller prescribes sacrifice as the only way of escape from the evil machinations of these capricious and indignant spirits. This type of sacrifice is always called 'aja'. 'Ichu aja' is, in the strict sense of the word, to offer such a sacrifice to the evil spirits, and to them only. Sacrifices furnish the only way of escape from the evil designs and activities of malignant spirits. Failure to perform propitiatory sacrifices would make life unbearable; every department would labour under imminent threat of possible disaster.

3. Petition: Most Igbo sacrifices are sacrifices of petition. The Igbo believes that his many desires can be obtained if he has the proper recourse to the ancestors, the spirits, or God. Besides the traditional Morning Prayer, long formal prayer is almost invariably tied up with sacrifice. The Igbo wants to give something to make his prayer more expressive, more touching, more efficient. When the poor Igbo approaches a rich man to ask a favour, he takes with him a little calabash of palm wine, or some choice kola-nuts, or at least a bundle of firewood or other such presents. He acts in a similar way in approaching the ancestors and spirits. In this case it is a question of good spirits, each with his shrine and parti¬cular priest. A fortune-teller could be consulted, but often the Igbo pagan may not do so in this case, but will select a generously chosen victim according to the custom of the spirit in question, and go to the priest. The Igbos offer sacrifices for good health, for the recovery of the sick, to stop epidemics, for the preservation of travellers, for life in general and against death especially where it is rather frequent or where it gets at young people.

At betrothal and marriage sacrifices, for example, have to be offered especially to the ancestors and family protecting spirits, as well as to some spirits of fertility and Ani, the Earth Spirit.After marriage, it is most important for the couple to have children. Although the Igbo know that children come

ultimately from God, they also go to the spirits to ask for offspring with the conviction that they are following the proper procedure. A woman goes to the priest of the spirits Omumu and presents her offerings. Prayers at such sacrifices always start with a mention of God's name, then the spirit in question, other spirits, and the ancestors. In the sixth month of a woman's pregnancy, her husband takes a fowl, kola-nuts, palm-wine, alligator pepper and cowries to the oldest man in the town.This man (*okpala*) is the nearest to the ancestors and he is their representative. The ancestors are assured that the baby will be quite welcomed into the family. At funerals, many animals are killed especially goats, dogs and fowls.

4. Thanksgiving: The Igbo man is grateful. When one obtains his heart's request, one often makes a sacrifice of thanksgiving, which is almost always mixed up with hopes for future protection. The objects of Igbo cult and worship are God, the spirits, and the ancestors. The sense of nearness to them is in that order. The ancestors are regarded as nearest to man and as most interested in the family well-being. This explains why many family sacrifices of thanksgiving and good fellowship are directed to them. This also applicable to after childbirth, recovery from epidemic, triumph in war or in land case, the reunion of a member of a family after a long absence, also the sacrifice of first-fruits usually after harvesting of new yam and after performing the Ozo title taking, the candidate performs a sacrifice of wine, food, and a goat to Ifejioku to thank him for having provided the yams and other crops, without which the taking of the title would not have been impossible. He also performs a similar sacrifice to Ani for having preserved his life all through the entire period and he begs for future protection.

The insufficiency of a human being and his consequent inabi¬lity to walk uprightly is recognised by the Igbo. The Igbo recognises God's supreme dominion and knows that no spirit can do anything if Chukwu decides otherwise. This is why sacrifices are offered to atone and cleanse the *Ijele's* perforer in other to avert imminent dangers and calamities for everyone involved with the activity of the masquerade ceremonial display and also after the performance.



PlateXCV*: Observance 1, mild steel rod and fabric, 128 X 89 cm,2016.*

Prime:Plate XCVI,talks about the domestic aspect of human life such as careering for the basic wants of daily living in other words known as Active daily living. Leslie (2016) defined active daily living the things we normally do such as feeding ourselves, bathing, dressing, grooming, work, homemaking, and leisure.

Prime portrays first class beauty attention given to self, the sculpture shows a woman on her way to the stream, with heavy make-up and well-dressed, it shows that women do not take beauty care as second-class when it comes to the issues of dressing well and looking good in the public. The carefulness and dexterity at which Prime was rendered, shows the attention to which women devote to taking care of self, a vivid example in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, chapter 4, During the Week of Peace, Okonkwo's youngest wife, Ojiugo, goes out to plait her hair and neglects to cook afternoon meal for him. When she returns, Okonkwo beats her savagely because it was already late for him to eat his meal. Okonkwo's act was an abomination to the Igbo. No one is allowed even to speak unkindly to

another during the Week of Peace; Okonkwo's transgression threatened the harvest of the whole clan. Ezeani, the priest of the earth goddess, arrives before dusk. He rejects Okonkwo's traditional offer of kola nut and demands a stiff fine of goods and money from Okonkwo in atonement.

This also explains why the female *Ijele* masquerade is heavenly adorned with various decorations of sculptures, motifs and represents everyday life and aspects. Cole (1983) concludes that the *Ijele* is the sort that shelters a chief's gathering of elders. Hence, the *Ijele* is a prime symbol of leadership and authority.



PlateXCVI: *Prime,* mild steel rod and fabric, 136 X 91 cm,2016.

Meditation: Plate XCVII. The word meditation is used to describe practices that self-regulate the body and mind, also known as meditation, thereby affecting mental events by engaging a specific attention set. Different techniques of reflection/meditation exist. Some focus on obtaining insight into the nature of reality and the mind, as well as altruistic love and compassion. This is believed to free the mind from afflictive mental states and deconstructive self-clinging. Other forms of meditation have as their goals the cultivation of inner calm and attention. Numerous studies have examined the effects of long and short term meditation practices on both brain and psychological functioning, while other studies have focused on the clinical application of meditation. Cahn, observes that state changes from the meditative and religious traditions are reported to include a deep sense of calm peacefulness, a cessation or slowing of the mind's internal dialogue, and experiences of perceptual clarity and conscious awareness merging completely with the object of meditation, regardless of whether a mantra, image or the whole of phenomenal sense of meaning in their lives (Cahn *et al*, 2006).

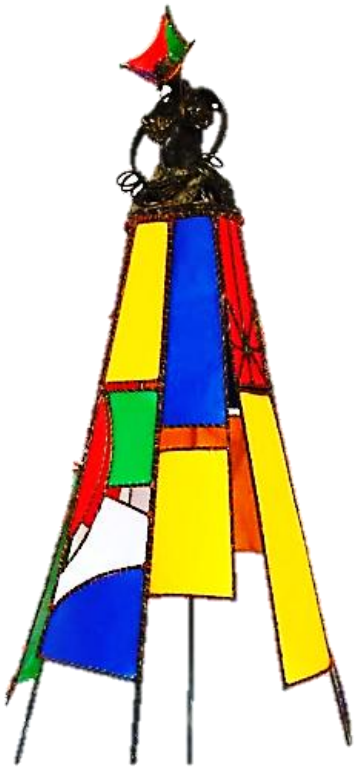
Meditation in this context implies, reflecting on activities of the *Ijele*, be it before or after the performance which the sculpture created represents. The age grade, the performer and all who connects to the chains of activity are saddled with the responsibility of taking stock of the entire event whether it turns-out positively or negatively. For the actualization of the *Ijele* to be achieved the conceptualization starts first in the mind. The researcher in like manner equally reflected on the possibility of actualizing conceptual sculptures that would be different from the forms found on the *Ijele* masquerade, adopting practice-based research methodology employing reflective practice and action research (Candy, 2006).

Cunliffe (2009) states that: reflection is a state of mind, an on-going constituent of practice. Reflective Practice can enable researchers to learn from experience about themselves, their work, and the way they relate to home, work, wider society and culture. It gives strategies to bring things out into the open. It can provide relatively safe and confidential ways to explore and express experiences. It

challenges assumptions, ideological illusions, damaging social and cultural biases, inequalities, and questions personal behaviours.

He maintains that reflective practice can enable enquiry into what you know, but do not know you know, what you do not know and want to know, what you think, feel, believe, value, understand your role and boundaries, how your actions match up with what you believe, how to value and take into account personal feelings. This form of reflection seems to enable practitioners to explore and experiment with areas of experience difficult otherwise to approach, such as: what you can change in your context; how to work with what you cannot, how to value the perspective of others, however, different they are to you, how others perceive you, and their feelings and thoughts about events, why you become stressed, and its impact on life and practice, how to counteract seemingly given social, cultural and political structures.

Also given that, the whole process is a continues process, the researcher continues to reflect on the created sculptures which are termed to be an open-ended process and exercise which can further improve/actualize research, the researcher agrees that there are another possible way that one could approach and actualize further studies extracting from the *Ijele* masquerade.



PlateXCVII: *Meditation*, mid steel rod and fabric, 157 X 74 cm, 2016.

Elegance (outdoor Installationsculpture *of the Ijele*) PlateXCVIII, is the monumental installation sculpture of the *Ijele*. Apart from its huge and intimidating structure, she is believed to be the mother earth goddess, in charge of fertility, caring like a mother who takes care of her home. Installation art introduces sculptural materials into space in order to transform our experience of it. It can be sight specific designed for a particular space. If installations are works created to fill an interior architectural space which is activated by the presence of human beings in the space. It should come as no surprise that artists would, in turn, come to concern themselves with the live human activity that goes on in space. Many may even conceive themselves or other people in their works as something similar to live sculptures, such live sculptures as performance art (Sayer, 2007).

In the words of Bishop (2005), "Installation art addresses the viewer directly as a literal presence in the space. Rather than imagining the viewer as a pair of disembodied eyes that survey the work from a distance, it presupposes an embodied viewer whose sense of touch, smell and sound are as heightened

as their sense of vision" Ogbechie (2009), states that: "when these crucial components (spectators) are missing from the setting the installation is not yet complete. There is no crowd of adoring audiences"

When an individual puts on the masquerade costum, he becomes one with the masquerade, and then becomes a performer. An example is when a masquerade performs in an arena or a stage, like the *Ijele* masquerade which could be called or referred to as performance. The Igbo society believes so much in diverse performance arts like masquerades, music, dance, songs, drama, and poetic chants, which are inseparable things that influence each other and serves as a link with the supernatural. The masquerading activity is an important vehicle to display performance (Urama, 2012).

The huge intimidating size of this welded sculpture can be seen as being quite imposing, its arrays of colours were carefully considered by the researcher. Encarta (2016), defined elegance as a combination of graceful stylishness, distinction, and good taste in appearance, behaviour or movement. It further defined it as stylishness, grace, style, sophistication, class, taste, classiness, chic, modishness, refinement and smart. Apart from the fact that the gigantic installation sculpture stands to intimidate, its elegant nature and appearance represents the true nature of the *Ijele* masquerade in performance, these are visible in the representation of the movement and the grace at which the welded sculpture holds and swings her hand fan.It is also the common nature of any woman who takes her time to dress gorgeously, would carefully walk graciously, majestically, and glide while walking along the road, because she is proud of herself and would always want people to pay nice compliments to her as she walks on.

The welded outdoor installation sculpture was also titled Macrocosm: meaning a complex structure, an example is the universe considered as a single entity that contains numerous scale structures (Encarta, 2016). *Elegance* contains within itself, numerous structures that sums up all the activity that was explored in the studio exploration. It is a culmination of all the works explored and created in the studio. The *Ijele* is believed to be comprised of conglomerates of activities; this explains the nature of the imposing welded sculpture titled Elegance.



Plate XCVIII: *Elegance*, mild steel rod and fabric, 6 m X 3.4 m,2016.

CHAPTER FIVE

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

5.1 Introduction

Artist Curatorial Statement and Philosophy

The curated exhibition is to help the viewer for a proper insight; the fifth objective of this study is to create an outdoor sculpture installation of the *Ijele* masquerade, a cumbination of all the studies into one monumental piece.

The production involved various stages such as: developing sketches from reference photographs, welding and construction of the armature, application of paint on the armature, cladding with coloured fabrics/all-purpose adhesive glue, sewing and finishing.

Nwanna (2015) belives that, after completing an *Ijele* masquerade, sacrifices must be made to consecrate it and after each successful performance, the *Ijele* is dismantled and stored in boxes, and sacrifices are again made to awaken the spirit-being before another performance. A live bird is tied under the disc platform, prayers and liberations are performed on various parts of the masquerade, first by the master artist who commissions the masquerade. Further prayers and libation are said each time the masquerade will be reassembled for performance and this time it will be coordinated by the village chief-priest or the leader of the community or age grade who now owns the *Ijele* masquerade.

Another scholar at Fine and Applied Art Department, Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe, Anambra State, who is also a traditional artist; M. Okpala (personal communication, March 07, 2015) also revealed that;

The gods are pacified before the *Ijele* comes out to perform. After pacification, strong herbalists are invited to make their own sacrifices against whomever that has the intention of destroying the *Ijele*. Six men are selected and tested after which three are selected and among those three, only one will be

confirmed by the gods as clean and worthy to be transformed and perform the *Ijele* masquerade (M. Okpala, 2015).

The researcher concludes that the *Ijele* masquerades created by the traditional artists were meant for entertainment and for the Igbo to reaffirm their place in the co-existence between them, the ancestors and the gods. This would explain why there was the need for that link of continuity after creating the masquerade for reassurance. The *Ijele* masquerade performance is complete when it encounters the audience. In like manner, the conceptual installation sculpture of 600 cm X 350 cmcreated by the researcher opens up a dialogue between the audience and the work. Domineering colours of Red *Mme*, White *Ocha*, Yellow *Edo*, Blue *Atulu*, Black *Ojii*, Red earth *Ajali* and Green *Nndu* were explored. Whatever the conflict that goes on in the mind of the spectator is also resolved within the same individual. Reiss (1999) states that: "the spectator is so integrated into installation art without having the experience of being in the piece. It introduces an emphasis on sensory closeness, on physical participation meaning that the viewer must walk into, around the work and experiences are also marked differently"

The materials used for the installation sculpture can be classified as materials that might last for some time, though, it is also ephemeral in nature because of the fabric material used and ferrous metal, which will also corrode with time due to its contact with the weather, and this may fade as time progresses. The researcher concludes that during the course of creating and interacting with these forms, that an artist is one who: Is creative, gets bored, takes risk, colours outside the lines, makes lots of mistakes, brakes the rules, work's independently, changes his mind a lot, has a reputation for eccentricity and dream's big.

5.2 Catalogue of Works

The works produced are evidence to the fact that the forms found in the *Ijele* masquerade, were explored in both out and indoor sculptural forms for the PhD Art practice-based in the studio. The works executed formed the body of works for this exhibition. The researcher will also like to say that the works are hereby catalogued and presented for scholarly digest.

5.3. Portfolio:



PlateXCIX: *Nna Ijele*, mild still rod, and fabric, 66 X 34 cm, 2014.



Plate C:*Nne Ijele*, mild still rod, and fabric, 66 X 34 cm, 2014.

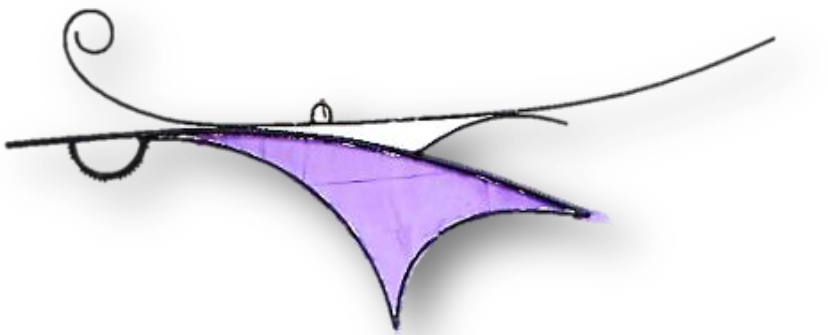
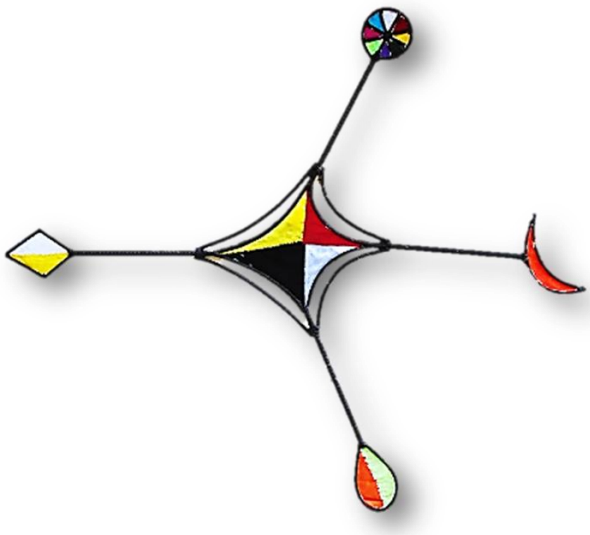


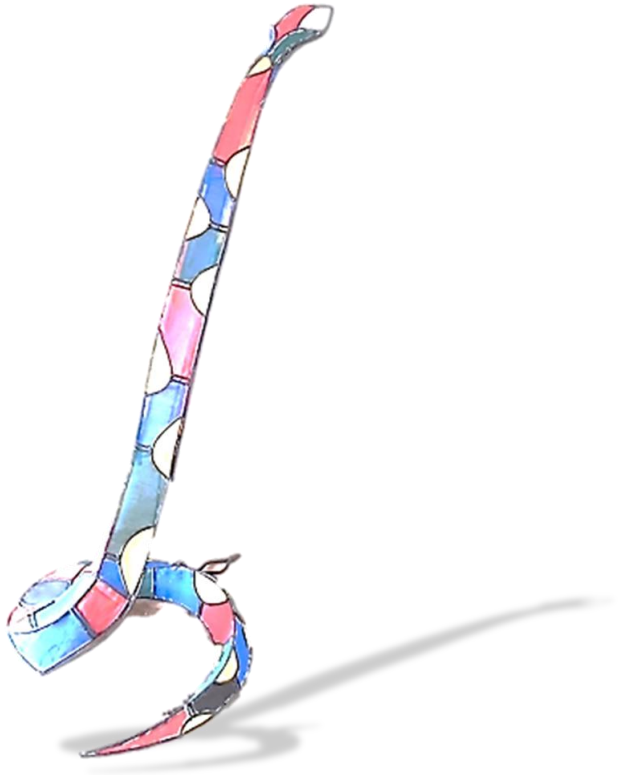
Plate CI: *Ije Nwa Ugo*, mild still rod, and fabric, 49 X 19 cm, 2014.



Plate CII:*Convergence*, mild still rod and fabric, 66 X 34 cm, 2014.



PlateLXXXII:*Isi nwoji I*,mild steel rods and fabric.48X41 cm, 2015.



PlateXC:*Eke*,mild steel rods and fabric.140 X 63 cm, 2014.



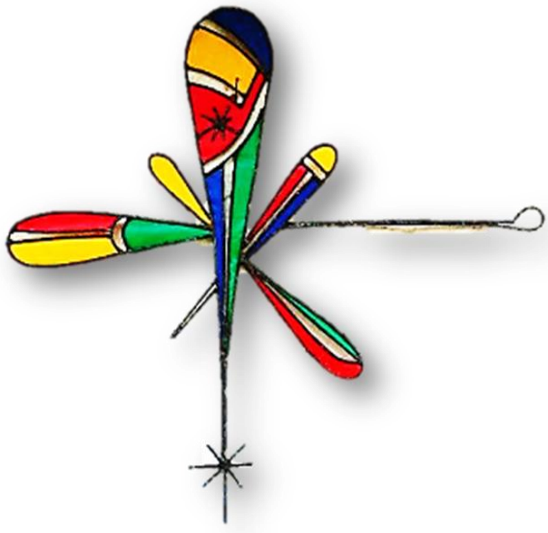
PlateXCI:*Oko-okpa*,mild steel rods and fabric.741 X 122 cm, 2015.



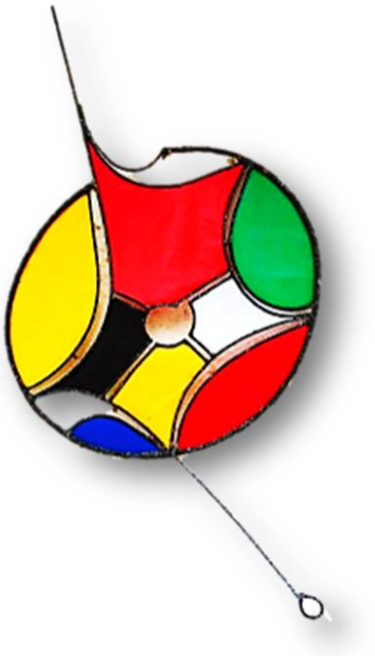
PlateLXXXIX:*Akupe Ijele*, mild steel rods and fabric.130 X 60 cm, 2015.



PlateCIII:*Opi na Igba,* Mild steel rods and fabric.145 X 40 cm, 2015.



PlateLXXXIII:*Kpakpando,*mild steel rods and fabric.104 X 112 cm, 2016.



PlateLXXXV:*Isi nwoji 2*, mild steel rods and fabric.125 X 61 cm, *2*016.



PlateLXXXVI:*Akara ndu, Ichi na Mgbi Ezi*, mild steel rods and fabric.165 X 64 cm, *2*016



PlateXCIII: *Celebration* 1, mild steel rod and fabric, 116 X 64 cm, *2*016.



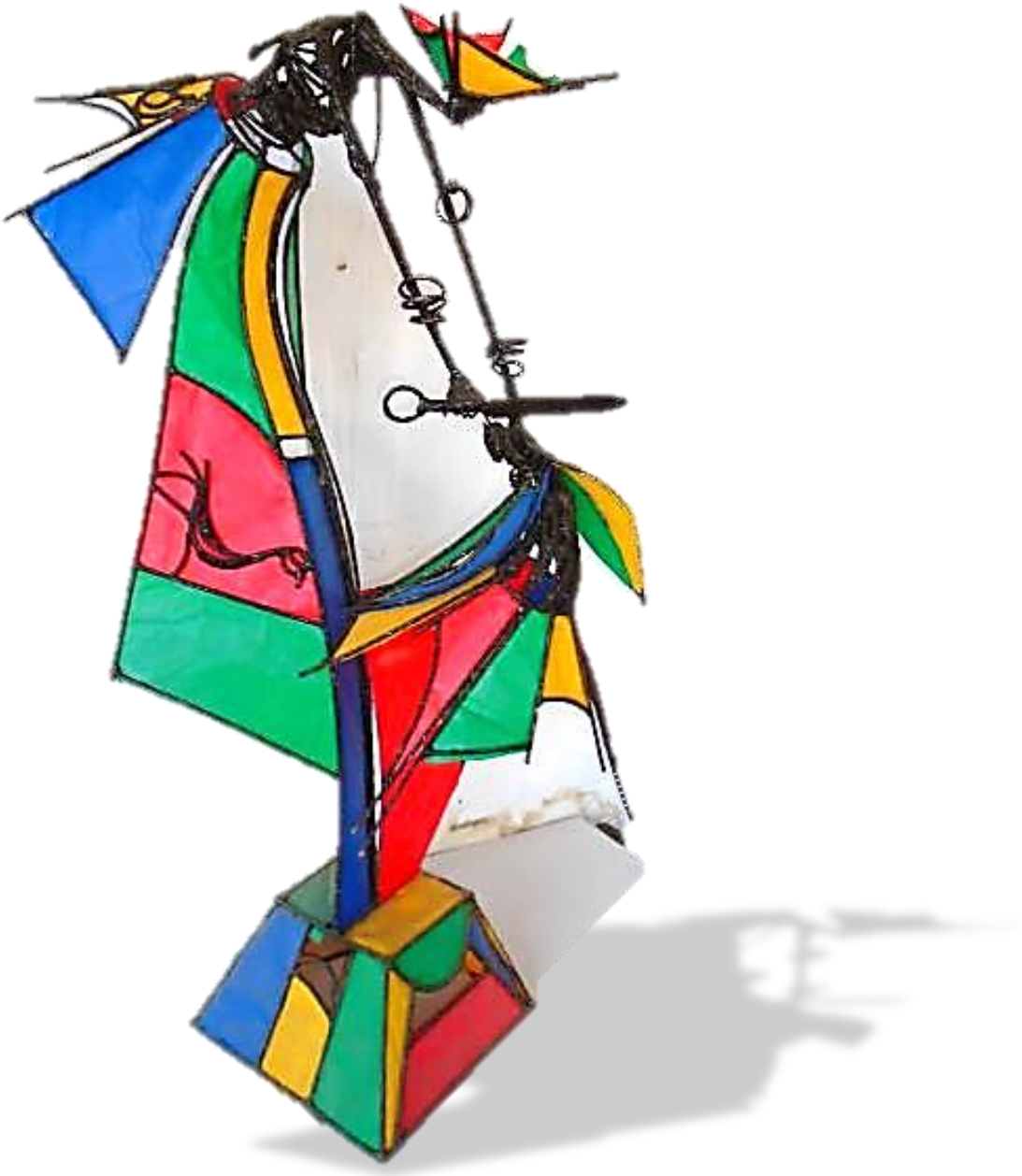
PlateXCIV: *Celebration* 2, mild steel rod and fabric, 150 X 64 cm, *2*016.



PlateXCII: *Egocentric*, mild steel rod and fabric, 110 X 76 cm, *2*016.



PlateXCV: *Observance I*, mild steel rod and fabric, 128 X 89 cm, *2*016.



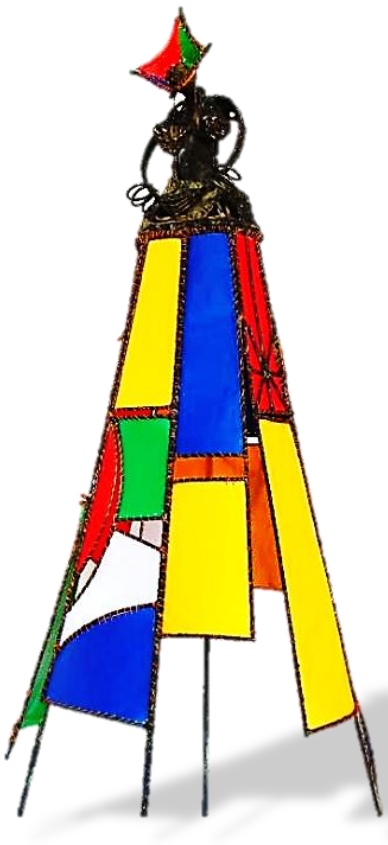
PlateCIV: *Observance 2*, mild steel rod and fabric,123 X 76 cm, *2*016.



PlateCV:*Observance 3*, mild steel rod and fabric, 142 X 92 cm, *2*016.



PlateXCVI: *Prime*,mild steel rod and fabric, 136 X 91 cm, *2*016.



PlateXCVII: *Meditation*, mild steel rod and fabric, 157 X 74 cm, *2*016.



PlateXCVIII: *Elegance*, mild steel rod and fabric, 6 m X 3.4 m, *2*016.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

African ancestral traditional masquerade can actually inspire other artists to create three-dimensional art forms. The masquerade explored here by the researcher is the *Ijele* Masquerade. The written text, which is the other part of this thesis, the idea of borrowing from the concept of the *Ijele* masquerade: Creating Sculptural Forms Inspired by the *Ijele* Masquerade. Scholars like, Marshal (2005), Leavy (2009) and Sullivan (2005, 2008, and 2010) among others, have proven that the studio based research can be successfully undertaken and results achieved by the researcher.

This study looks at the concept of masquerade and the *Ijele's* origin, various classifications and how scholars have called for the need to incorporate African signs and symbols into art. Scholars agree, that the *Ijele* possesses forms and conceptual ideas that if well analysed and transformed could enhance appreciation of aesthetics in sculpture. The study further looked at artists who have produced the *Ijele* masqueradein order to find the missing line, which is; *Ijele* masquerade's sculptural form has never been separated by any artist, but rather, they were created and represented in the same clustered form. Hence, the research aims to create single sculpture from the *Ijele* masquerade which was to emanate from the studio exploration. The study is justified because it takes into account that, the masquerade in question faces extinction because of the dominance of Christianity, over traditional religious practices. It is the hope of this study that, since *Ijele* masquerade activity incorporates new technology as the world advances, so too, the *Ijele* culture should be sustained to avoid extinction. The conceptual framework is hinged on the philosophy of Natural synthesis, which is the idea of borrowing from the tradition elements or concept to be infused into art, and notable artists like Yusuf Grillo, Simon Okeke, Uche Okeke, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Demas Nwoko and other notable artist infuse this concept into their

works. Hans-George Gadamer's philosophy equally guided the theory along with other philosophers.Review of literature was divided into two parts; which are texts and works produced by artists. The review of the text was also classified into various subgroups, while the review of works looked at the works of fifteen artists, their ideas and philosophy. The practice-based research methodology was adopted, which is qualitative in nature, it includes studio approach that helped the researcher understand and also interact with the sculptures,and Action research was also highlighted while engaged in the studio exploration as the works take form. Guided by the Igbo philosophical worldview, the sculptures were categorised into three: Human and their daily activity, spiritual world and animal form.

The works werecarefully produced then, follows the systematic illustration of the processes. The first step is detailed drawings of the forms, both from life observations and the use of photographic images, then the construction of armature, application of paint patina, cladding, sewing, and final finishing. The research creates a series of *Muna onye ga abga egwu* (who will dance with me). The works produced culminated into an installation sculpture titled Elegance, which also followed a systematic documentation of the processes. A total of twenty-five works emanated from this studio exploration.

Elegance installation sculpture; one is seen interacting with the installed *Ijele* sculpture. The provision is made for the viewer to walk into the piece. Hamilton in Gbaden (2014) attests to this as art which engages people. The audiences walk into the installation and encounter other works; they hardly need interpreters to run commentaries; they feel the art even before attempting to make meaning of it. In it, viewers are addressed directly by sheer virtue of the fact that this piece is large enough for us to enter into them. Our experience is marked differently from traditional painting and sculpture. Instead of representing light, texture, space and so on. Installation art presents these elements directly for us to experience. This introduces an emphasis on sensory immediacy, on physical participation meaning that the viewer must walk into and around the work (Bishop, 2005).Some works were selected and analysed, which includes discussions centred on content and context of the forms derived from the *Ijele* masquerade. It also includes the analysis of Uli symbols and motifs as it is replicated on the

sculptures derived from the *Ijele* masquerade. Chapter five includes the curatorial statement and finally the catalogue of works.

6.2Findings based on the five objectives

The forms that are found in the *Ijele* masquerade inspired the researcher to create an outdoor installation sculpture, which defines the philosophy of Igbo world view that is summarised in the *Ijele* masquerade. Some works were selected for analysis and were also discussed in the same context.

Research findings: In line with the research objectives, the findings of the study are:

1. That the *Ijele* masquerade is divided into two sections, the *Mkpu* (upper section) and *Akpakwuru*/*Ogbanibe* (lower section). The *Mkpu* is made up of several sculptures, representing a lot of activity, which are representations of the Anambra Igbo world view. While the lower section comprises Uli signs and symbols. The symbols are philosophies of day to day living of the people, this also eases communication. At the middle of the upper and lower sections, the *Eke* (python) is found to take a prominent position.
2. The sculptural relief elements found on the *Ijele* masquerade are mainly symbols inspired by Uli motif elements and at time also; *Ijele's* lower section is also inspired by drawing animal forms, especially the *Enyi* (elephant), *Oko-okpa* (rooster) *Ngwere* (lizard), and *Eke* (python) motifs. To the Northern Igbo Anambra, these animals are very important in the *Ijele* masquerade. *Enyi* represents the king of all the animals in the forest, the *Oko-okpa* is used for rituals, especially for cleansing the *Ijele's* performer, *Ngwere* is also used for diabolical means, while *Eke*, represents the *Ijele's,* messenger.Plate, CV: shows the *Eke* about to devour a human sacrifice. However, some other key Uli symbols found on the *Ijele's* lower section emanated from the studio exploration such as:*Isi nwoji* (kola nut line), *Akara nndu, Ichi na Mgbi*

ezi,(circle of life, facial scarification, and door of honour), *Kpakpando* (star), *Ije Nwa Ugo* (the eagles movement), plates: LXXXVI, LXXXVII, and CI. Other motifs that were explored during the course of the studio exploration are: *Ekwe* (stool), *AkaIse* (five hands), *Ojene* (gong), *Agworoagwo* (exoteric pattern), *Ichi* (scarification), *UliNsewa* (parallel lines), *Okwa Nzu* (chalk bowl), *Onu Nwa Nnunu* (elongated beak of a bird), *Ekwe* (stool), and *Mbo Agu* (Leopard's claw composition).

3. Female forms are derived from the *Ijele* masquerade. This is inspired by the fact that the *Ijele* is a female masquerade, which is unknown to many, especially non indigins. An encounter with the masquerade does not surggest male or female, because of the physical strcuture. The fact also remains that in the Igbo cosmology, it is believed that everything exist in two. There is also the male *Ijele*, known as *Akwunaechienyi.* There areless emphasis on elaborate colours and forms, which is typical to human beings. Women are more adorned and associated with beauty, while the reverse is the case with men. The research created a series of *Muna onye ga agba egwu* (who will dance with me), titled by the various human emotions that forms part of the experiences which one may experience, following the preparation, and after display of the *Ijele* masquerade, such as: *Egocentric, Celebration 1 and 2, Observance 1 and 2, Prime, Meditation, Helper,* and *Endowed.* Plates*:* XCIII, XCIV, XCII, XCV, CIV, CV, XCVI, XCVII, and XCVIII
4. This research creates sculptural forms of human beings and animal as they co-existed within the environment. Plate's: CIV, and CV, shows the activity of sacrifices, before and after the enactment of the *Ijele* masquerade performance, a lot of ritual cleansing are done for both the performer and the entire community. Plate: CIV, depicts the slaughtering of *Oko-okpa* (Male chicken) while Pate: CV, Shows the Eke (Python) about to devour a human sacrifice. This buttresses the fact that sacrifices are made by

the Igbo man either in atonement of offences committed or to ask and seek favour from the gods. This was attested to by scholars such as Arinze (1970), Enekwe (1987) and Jell-Behisen (2014) among others.

5. Finally, in the fifth objective, the study creates an outdoor conceptual installation sculpture of the *Ijele* masquerade titled *Elegance,*Plate: LXIV. It talks of stylishness, grace, sophistication, class, taste, classiness, modishness, refinement and smartness attributed to the female *Ijele* masquerade when in performance, and also recreated in the *Ijele* installation sculpture.

6.3Conclusion

The researcher concludes that the *Ijele* masquerades created by the traditional artists are meant for entertainment and for the Igbo to reaffirm their place in the co-existence between them, the ancestors and the gods. This would explain why there was the need for that link of continuity after creating the masquerade for reassurance. The *Ijele* masquerade performance is complete when it encounters the audience, in like manner, *Elegance*(conceptual installation sculpture) 600 cm X 350 cm, created by the researcher opens up a dialogue among the audience.Prominently visible are the domineering colours of Red *Mmee*, White *Ocha*, Yellow *Edo*, Blue *Atulu*, Black *Ojii*, Red earth *Ajali* and Green *Nndu* were explored and used for cladding the created work which also forms a kaleidoscope of colours. The *Mpku* (upper section) suggests movement, and in motion with the hand fan, on the left hand swinging to the right hand side, as if also talking back to her admirers. The researcher also, consideres the varying arrangements of colours in terms of its positive and negative spaces.

This study has revealed that,the present-day traditional sculptors are no longer commissioned by villagers and individuals to produce masquerade, primarily because of the advent of Christianity and the introduction of Western cosmetics.Scholars like Okeke (1999), Frank (2008), and Ogbechie (2009) believes that exploring one's own indigenous culture is a ready way out of the colonial entrapment that Western art idioms have done to African artistic expression. There should be a growing consciousness amongst artists to use a truly African idiom to relate the African experience,even though the Igbo art

infused western idioms into its artistic adventures, like the*Ijele* masquerade activity can be sustained, the dying *Ijele*, which usually features the Western ideology, can continually be used as a source of entertainment.

6.4 Recommendations

In line with the research findings, this thesis recommends that, for forms to be derived from *Ijele* masquerade; the motif, (*Ije Nwa Ugo, Isi Nwoji,Kpakpando, Akara ndu, Ichi na Mbi Ezi*) Plates: CI, LXXXII, LXXXIII, LXXXVI, can further be explored by researchers. Other materials can be incorporated to aid in deriving sculptural forms, as a medium of expression in studio exploration.

Elegance head gear was inspired by *IsiNwoji*symbol. These symbols can further inspire the creation of three dimensional sulptures from the *Ijele*masquerade, and the paraphernalia of the *Ijele* masquerade can also inspire the creation of sculptures if undertaken by researchers.

Areas for further studies

What has been done in this study is by no means exhaustive. Further studies can therefor be carried out on the *Ijele* masquerade.The *Akwunachienyi* masquerade (male *Ijele*) can be explored by resrearchers, despite the fact that the research mentionedthat the said masquerade is beyond the scope of this study, and indeed, other masquerades that are yet to be documented.

6.5. Contribution to knowledge

The study established that:

I. Deconstructing the forms found in the *Ijele* masquerade, into isolated relief, and in the round sculptural elements in practice based research, is a way of advancing visual art practice in contemporary Nigerianart.

II. The use of synthetic polyester fabrics in a new approach (exploring the use of metal rods, tapoline fabrics, synthetic threads, and adhensives) in creating

sculptures that are derivative of the *Ijele* masquerade, adds to the existing possibility in mixed media approach in sculpture practice.

III. A personal mode of expression in the use of metal steel rods, and fabric in advancing the *Ijele* masquerade motifs (Isi Nwoji, Kpakpando, Akara ndu, Ichi na Mbi ezi) can be explored in similar traditional masqueradeincontemporary Nigerian sculpture expression.

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APPENDIX 1

FIELDWORK SCHEDULE

Appendix 1 contains: Accommodation, Transportation, and Materials such as Micro Recorder**,** Digital Camera**,** Mobile Power Bank**,** Extra Batteries.

Accommodation: Onitsha - Hotel

Calabar - Hotel

Abakaliki - Residence/ Hotel

Lagos - Residence

Transportation: Public Road Transport

2.1 Materials

2.2 Accommodation

2.3 Transportation

1. Materials
    a. Micro Recorder
    b. Digital Camera
    c. Mobile Power Bank
    d. Extra Batteries
2. Accommodation
    a. Onitsha - Hotel
    b. Calabar - Hotel
    c. Abakaliki - Residence/ Hotel
    d. Lagos - Residence
3. Transportation

    Public road Transport

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRESTRUCTURE FOR SCHOLARS

Appendix 2 contains questioner structure for both scholars and traditional artists who have written texts and produced the *Ijele* masquerade.

Part – I (Bio-Data)

1. Names –
2. Former or Maiden Name-s Ditto
3. Date/Place of Birth –
4. Origin of Parents –
5. Religion –

Part – II (Ijele Masquerade Origin and Other Details)

1. *What is the meaning of Ijele and where does the masquerade come from?*
2. *Who are those that associate themselves with the Ijele masquerade?*
3. *As an authority in Igbo Ijele Masquerading activity, what are the Forms and Motifs that are found on the Ijele mask?*
4. *What do these motifs signify?*
5. *How long does it take to create the Ijele masquerade?*
6. *From observations the Igala people from Benue State claimed that the Ijele originated from them, how true is this?*
7. *From observations, varieties of Ijele masquerade exists does this mean that these Ijele's have other names?*
8. *What purpose is the Ijele masquerade meant for?*
9. *What day, time or period is the Ijele masquerade meant to perform?*
10. *Which other masquerade is compared to the Ijele?*
11. *Are there any ritual preparations done before creating and for the Ijele masquerade to perform in public?*

QUESTIONNAIRESTRUCTURE FOR TRADITIONAL ARTISTS

Part – I (Bio-Data)

1. Names –
2. Former or Maiden Name-s Ditto
3. Date/Place of Birth –
4. Origin of Parents –
5. Religion –

Part – II (Ijele Masquerade Origin and Other Details)

1. *What does the forms in the Ijele represent?*
2. *What does the motif represents?*
3. *The colours on the Ijele masquerade what are they and what do they symbolize?*
4. *When creating the Ijele is it mandatory or compulsory for these colours, figures and motifs to be represented?*

5. *How long does it take to create the Ijele masquerade?*
6. *How many masquerades accompany the Ijele during performance?*
7. *What type of song does the Ijele dances to?*
8. *What is Akunachienyi dance?*
9. *Is it the same as Igba eza dance ?*
10. *What day, time or period is the Ijele meant to perform?*
11. *Which other masquerade is compared to the Ijele?*
12. *Are there any ritual preparations done before creating and for the Ijele masquerade to perform in public?*

QUESTIONNAIRESTRUCTURE FOR MUSIC ARTISTE

Part – I (Bio-Data)

1. Names –
2. Former or Maiden Name-s Ditto
3. Date/Place of Birth –
4. Origin of Parents –
5. Religion –

Part – II (Ijele Masquerade Origin and Meaning)

1. At what age did you start singing?

2. Do you have any educational background?

3. *What is the meaning of your song Ijele elubego mu na onye ga agba egwu?*
4. *Does it have any connection with the Ijele masquerade?*
5. *Do you have your songs written or composed before producing it or it comes naturally?*
6. *What inspired you to singing Ijele elubego mu na onye ga agba egwu?*
7. *How many songs do you have to your credit?*
8. *What is your philosophy of life?*
9. *Who is your role model?*
10. *What is your view on contemporary music especially in Nigeria?*
11. *Can you sing one of your favorite song for me?*

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW

Appendix 3 contains transcribed interviews of scholars and traditional artists who have written text and produced *Ijele* masquerade and also excelled in their various fields of endeavour.

Chris Ebhigbo

What is Ijele – Ijele is a masquerade. The king of all masquerades performed only by the people of Anambra State. Popular among Ogidi, Ntegi, Omo, Anaku, Awka, basically Ijele is an Anambra people's masquerade activity.

Who are those that associate themselves with the Ijele masquerade – Ijele is made by a community, *Ijele* is a masquerade that is universal, both Christians, Muslims, and traditional religion people do take part in *Ijele* activity. *Ijele* originated from the Omambala area of Anambra State. In my place, we don't have *Ijele* masquerade but we have the *Ijele* dance. We never made *Ijele* masquerade before. Nri kingdom originated from Aguleri, *Ijele* is from Awka, Anaku, Omuo, even Enugu does not have an *Ijele* but they have Omabe which is the highest masquerade cult that exists. One of the highest place they produce masquerades are Orifite, Nnewi, adazi, Nnobi Umuoji, and Uke but they still don't have *Ijele* masquerade. Ijele is majorly from Ogbunike,Ogidi, Aguleri, Nteji, Umunya,Awkuzu and Umunya.

How long does it take to make the Ijele mask – I told you before we started discussion, you know in Igbo land we normally say we marry masquerade, you don't say you buy masquerade, a community can go to another community to teach another their own style of dance, meaning that they want to marry the masquerade. I did not go into the origin of *Ijele* in my thesis but I know *Ijele* originated from a concept of "what masquerade can we do to form the highest masquerade that exists in Igbo land". The Igbo is known for masquerade making. My thesis clarified that the Igbo are known for the highest production of masquerade, so it was believed that the only masquerade they could do is the *Ijele*. I don't know who brought the concept at first but I know it originated from Omambala people. In the music and others if you listen to the music they have two instrumental flutes that produce different sounds. This flute is gotten from gotten from an antelope horn called in Igbo *Akperi* or *Akpele*. The Anambra people use it to get their *Ijele* masquerade. The community that is invited to teach the other community would stay with them for two weeks, teaching them how to do the dance, then the craftsmen will also stay and teach them how to play the flute. After two weeks they will leave. Later they will be visiting to make sure they have successfully learned how to perform the *Ijele*, even the traditional artists will be there to guide them during rehearsals on how to produce and carry the Ijele.

They would usually have their rehearsal every four days. The person that has been chosen to carry the *Ijele* will also practice regularly with the mask. This would usually take place over a period of six months or even a year. Metaphysically there is no masquerade that doesn't go about without being fortified. The Ijele does not like the wind; it is an abomination for any masquerade to fall during the performance. They would implore a medicine man that will stop the wind whenever the Ijele performs.

As a scholar of the Igbo Ijele, which school of thought do you think has borrowed from the Ijele concept - I don't think that anyone has adopted the *Ijele* as a concept. But I know that some artworks at Nsukka and Awka have borrowed from the Ulli concepts which are also found in the Ijele masquerade. The *Ijele* masquerade is a representation of the whole universe; it evolves day to day activity of the Igbo people. The Mbari activity can also be related to the *Ijele* masquerade.

Is the Ijele known for by any other name – No. from my research *Ijele* is Ijele, there is no other masquerade that can be called Ijele, not in Igbo land. Every other masquerade is lesser masquerades. It is like crowning a king. It is from *Ijele* that other certain names emanate, like in my place there is this beautiful woman with a certain hair style and she is very tall, she was then christened 'Obu-Ijele'. People adopt names from the *Ijele* like Oji Ugo, Obi Achala, Adanma. Before *Ijele* comes in any community to perform there is always a serious preparation. Formally they use perishable materials to produce the *Ijele* masquerade but today they now build houses for Ijele and they use durable materials like foam and fabrics.

What is the yardsticks applied in the production of the Ijele mask – one thing you should know is that there are local artists that are concerned with how to go about the production of the Ijele. The process is more of trying; no part of the material is nailed. There is a division of labour amongst the artists, like you find sculpture, painting textile even some amount of graphics, everything about Ijele is more also more of abstractions and construction.

Which other masquerade is compared to the Ijele – In my place, Osonigwe is another masquerade that we see as the highest of masquerade? *Ijele* is the highest, during the yearly eight days festival of the

Eze Nri, *Ijele* comes out to perform and once Ijele finishes performing everybody goes home. Nri declared that *Ijele* masquerade is the highest masquerade in Igbo land.

What are the compositions on the Ijele masquerade –It depends on the artist. Modernization has also contributed; anything can be created on the Ijele. I also think that an original Ijele must be complete and must be up to ten feet high and must be more than three feet wide in diameter, any *Ijele* that does not meet up this measurement is to me is not regarded as a complete *Ijele*.

How long does it take to make the Ijele – because of poverty, that was what contributed to it taking a longer time in the olden days. This also delays the artists work. The materials used are bamboo and banana leaves. But today lighter materials are used to create the Ijele like foams and lighter Cain bamboos.

Chike Aniakor

What is Ijele – The *Ijele* cannot be explained. The word and meaning of Ijele I tried finding a perfect definition for Ijele, and then I came up with the philosophy of the Igbo representing their worldview in two. That is the issues of the Igbo cosmology which I consider as binary ideations where things exist in two. You have the land of the living and the land of the dead. Men and women, earth and firmament, they exist in binary relations, they are separate. For me, *Ijele* is an ultimate spectacle, because of its active surface. *Ijele* is filled with a lot of activities; you find birds, python, vegetation, zoomorphic elements, aquatic element and various human activities.

Who are those that associate themselves with the *Ijele* masquerade –

How long does it take to make the Ijele mask –

As a scholar of the Igbo *Ijele*, which school of thought do you think has borrowed from the *Ijele* concept –

Is the *Ijele* known for by any other name –

What are the yardsticks applied in the production of the *Ijele* mask –

What are the compositions on the *Ijele* masquerade –

How long does it take to make the *Ijele* –

Cliff Nwanna

What is Ijele – Ijele has an Igbo origin, is an Igbo masquerade. The spectacular thing about it is that it is the biggest masquerade in Igbo land and Africa. An average size *Ijele* is as big as a small hut. Apart from its form, it has some spiritual connotations too. Cosmologically the Igbo worldview is represented in *Ijele*, virtually every human activity is found in the Ijele. There are mirrors attached to the *Ijele* on all sides. It means; "I wish you what you wish me" as you look at the mirror you see a reflection of yourself. You can use *Ijele* to understand the Igbo worldview. The spectacular thing again

is, how is it possible for a performer to carry such a big load of such massive mask of the *Ijele*? These are the idea that is called the Igbo technology.

Who are those that associate themselves with the Ijele – Ijele is synonymous with the Northern Anambra, where you have between Anambra valley and Awka Igbo? Anambra valley we are talking of Aguleri, Akwuzu, Umuleri down to Awka, you have Awka, Abagana, Ugwuoba these areas and its surroundings are called the Awka Igbo and Idemili side they too perform the *Ijele*.

How long does it take one or a community to create the *Ijele* masquerade – mostly a community would commission a master artist to create the *Ijele*, which can take up to six months. But with modern technology it can be faster, if for any reason it is urgent the artist can bring more hands, but an average Ijele can take up to six months to be produced.

As a scholar of the Igbo Ijele tradition which school of thought has borrowed from the concept of the Ijele masquerade – The Idea of the Ijele in the academic relates to the masquerade approach which is diverse, it is all encompassing, everything you want to think of is existing in the *Ijele*, then, theoretically the idea of *Ijele* relates more to what is called structuralism. A lot of topics can be approached from diverse viewpoints; the idea of the Ijele is diverse. When one says that something is like Ijele it means that it has everything, anything you want to think of, that is one, then secondly, theoretically it relates more to structuralism. The structuralists' believes in institutions, if you talk about the Ijele it relates more to the theory of structuralism and this day's people are still trying to see what they can make from the idea of the *Ijele*.

Is the Ijele known by any other name – I don't think so, but we have different sizes of the *Ijele*, like in Awka the small size is called Ukwu *Ijele* and you have the normal size *Ijele*. The small size is used for small occasions. *Ijele* is an entertainment masquerade, it is not for warfare. There are masquerades for war, there are masquerades that are satirical, and they crack jokes and also correct some ills in the society. The Igbos have different kinds of masquerades, *Ijele* is clearly for entertainment. The normal size *Ijele* can only perform during an important cultural or traditional events. Once there is an *Ijele*, in any event, an Igbo man would say it is a big event o! for example, if the president of United State of

American's president Obama visits Awka, this would call for the *Ijele* to appear. What you would hear is '*Ijele* agbaa' meaning that the highest thing has happened. But not when there is a marriage ceremony, *Ijele* will not appear. *Ijele* is not a casual masquerade that you see every day.

Can the Ijele perform alone – Actually these days *Ijele* cannot perform alone, you have other smaller masquerades that do the supporting act; they do it in a theatrical manner. For instance, you have the *Ogbuefi* and lolo, and *Ulaga*, you may also have the Agboho Nmmanwu. Agboho Nmmanwu does some intriguing, wonderful dance steps that are complex and makes people wonder how they move their feet. All this heralds or announces the coming out of the *Ijele*. Normally Ijele will not come from its home like that. If the *Ijele* must perform, there should be a place where a small tent is made for it to come out from especially so that it comes outperforms and also goes back into rest or retire. *Ijele* does not travel as far as some one that is travelling from Onitsha to Enugu.

Are there any ritual activity involved in creating the Ijele which enables performance - There are a lot of rituals, starting first with the performer who is expected to undergo what is called seclusion so as to be holy, he has to sanctify himself. Then before the Ijele performs a live chicken is sacrificed so as to clear the way. There is a kind of spiritual force that the Ijele radiates, there is also negative forces this also helps to create a balance, normally there is also a medicine man that also accompanies the *Ijele*. The man will cleanse and do the necessary rituals to cleanse the *Ijele*. There is what is called in Igbo land that '*Akanmadu di ocha*' when your hands are clean it can repel most evil that comes your way, that is why the performer will have to clean himself, purify himself and then there would be some protective charms which the medicine man after some incantations *Ijele* will come alive, he evokes the spirit of Ijele, it comes alive, by the time you watch the *Ijele* performance is like the performer is under a spell not minding all the heavy load on the performer, coupled with the way he moves until he finishes he comes back to normalcy.

Which other masquerade is compared to the Ijele in Igbo land – Among the Delta Igbo they have the Wonder masquerade that is very tall and grows magically and comes back to compress and enters into a box. In Awka area there is what is called the Ogbunmma, which is not very tall but its grate and

warlike. Its performance can be compared to the *Ijele*. I must also put in that masquerades are now developing this day, you have new masquerades like the Enyi (Elephant), Ugo (Eagle) Ele (Antelope) and Ostrich, as things come in the Igbo artist that produces masquerade will add it to their vocabularies, the Igbo traditional is dynamic. Art holds a mirror in the society, whatever that exists in the society it is mirrored back to the society. Masquerade is a living art, it is not an art for museum and it is a living heritage.

What are the compositions in the Ijele – The Ijele has a dome like a headrest, the lower part that covers the lower portion there are different types of appliqué cloths. You see that the Ijele masquerade is a composite art; you have sculpture, textile, painting, installation. That is why I call it a composite art, it is all in one.

What are those forms that are found in the Ijele masquerade – In Igbo land, you have the spirit world, you have Ani Mmiri, you have enu ani, and you have the forest. When you talk about the spirit world the ruler or chi is Mammiwota, acceding to the Igbo cosmology which is symbolised by Eke which is the python. You now see that the *Ijele* must have a python around it that takes care of the spiritual world. you also see monkeys and other animals around it that cater for the bush. The human aspect you have, mother and child, a mother breastfeeding her child, a palm wine tapper, and every traditional activity is imparted. In the human world baby is very important symbolic, without given birth there won't be posterity. You have all these different worlds represented in the *Ijele*.

The motif on the Ijele what do they represent – When you talk about motif, I have done a lot of works on Igbo art and what I found out is especially in Igbo design most of them relate to what is called Ulli. Even if you can not call it Ulli you see that they have the relationship with that. Even the motif in Igbo Ukwu finds. I conclude that the Ulli could be the Igbo aesthetic preference. Is like a people that speak a different dialect. So it is the dialect of the Igbo man. When you tell an Igbo man to design, you see Ulli replicated all over his works and design. Ulli from my own perspective represents the design or aesthetic preference of the Igbo, people like Uche Okeke, Ben Enweonwu, Obiorah Udechukwu propounded on that. It is a common heritage it is not a Nsukka thing. Uche Okeke took it to abstract

dimension while Ben Enwoenwu combined it with a naturalistic approach to art. Enweonwu did a lot of series in Agboho Nmmanwu and they were replicated with Ulli spirals like Agwolagwo, Edelede among others. Ulli did not start with Uche Okeke. He took it to an enviable height with his follower Obiorah Udechukwu. They were both instrumental to Ulli development. Chike Aniakor also did a lot of work on Ulli but he is more of a historian. Okeke and Udechukwu were more of studio men so became more prolific.

Andrew Olottah

What is Ijele and where did Ijele come from – Ijele as it implies is an Igala word, meaning agree agree, move. So combining the two words and considering the size of the Ijele, I think the fear could this move is a question. *Ije* lee, so if it can be moved by an individual the answer to ti remains Ijele. The first one *Ijelee* the other one *Ijele,* this implies that it is a moving structure, an artistic moving structure. The origin of the Ijele cannot be ascertained.

How long can it take for an individual or a community to put up an Ijele – It depends on the number of artists working on the *Ijele*. Another one is the financial ability of the community; some of them do not remit money early enough for the artists to get his materials and work. Since I have been producing *Ijele* mask no community has ever made complete payment for my work. One works according to how the money comes in. And if you have some helping hands where artists like who have the skill to help and this saves time for its production. But in the case where you can do it alone it is ok. In the olden days artists use it to enjoy themselves because the moment you are commissioned to do such a work for an age grade or a clan depending on how each community perform their own. You know some artists consider what they eat because they will be feeding you, taking care of you until the job is finished. The third factor is considering technological advancement, initially you sew it manually with

needle in your hands. Now you have sowing matchines that are motorized it is faster so if it is commissioned and your mobilized fully it becomes easier, it can approximatlly it can take up to three months to four months. And it is also constructed in stages; first you get paml fronds which are the materials needed for its construction. You get it and allow it to dry so that it is light, and there is another one called Akulu Ekwe gotten from swampy area it can be manipulated to take any form or shape you want. You get it early enough so that it can dry, and when the actual work starts it is used as a binder it is used especially in the upper dome or segment of the mask.

Which of the villages are known to display the Ijele masquerade and how many Ijele mask have you produced – the people that perform the *Ijele* masquerade are the people of Omambala, Onitsha, Aguleri, Oyi, Igbariam, and Omo, one can say the people of Anambra State especially the East and Western areas.

Which other Masquerade is known as the Ijele – The Igala part where I come from, which is Inoma in Anambra West local government area it is called Egwu lile meaning big masquerade, it is still known as Ijele. The Igala share that word with the Anambra Igbo speaking people.

What purpose is the Ijele meant for – it is an artistic creation used for celebration, especially during festivals, burial ceremonies among others? When an important person dies, the person burial will not take place until the Ijele performs, after that the burial can commence.

From what you have said, it is possible for one person to own *Ijele* masquerade – yes, an individual can own an Ijele, but mostly it is owned by age grades of a community or a village.

Who are the artists that creates the Ijele, are they a special breed of people that is prepared to carry out this activity – No, I doubt if you know and study people, especially artists, you will discover that we all have different talents and skill, our gifts are different, you find out that what you can do is different from what I can do.

Are there any ritual activity involved in creating the Ijele – This question has double faces; depending on peoples believe. There are artists who are not Christians, and other people that believe in other

religion. There are some artists as far as consulting oracles, making incantations, they believe in ritual activity. I believe our art is a pure one; anyone gifted or skilled can do it without going to anybody for consultation or even consulting any spirit.

Which other masquerade can be compared to the *Ijele* – Well, *Ijele* is a unique masquerade, but in this modern time we now produce masquerades like Ugo (Eagle), Enyi (Elephant) and some other masquerades especially zoomorphic masquerades that behave like animals and look like animals comparing them, each one is unique on their own.

What specific day and time does the Ijele perform – We can talk about the period and not time. Ijele is seen as a unique masquerade. Ijele is performed during dry season and not during raining season. It performs during harvesting period, when raining has stopped. Another condition that is convulsive for the *Ijele* is that *Ijele* cannot perform where there is not enough space because of its size and cannot be controlled by one man. The wind is another that can affect the *Ijele* performance. If you schedule that the *Ijele* will perform today and you later find out that the weather will not be favorable for it to perform, the time can be rescheduled. The hot where the *Ijele* goes into rest is called the Oda. Once the Ijele gets into the Oda it is safe and can perform at another appointed time when the weather will be favorable.

What are the categorizations of the Ijele, in terms of its structure - *Ijele* has two major sections. The upper and the lower section, the upper section is the part that takes the shape of a glob, if you cut a ball into two parts, it is like a dome shape. It has the compositions of dulls and other things. They are those things that attract people when they look at *Ijele* while in performance. The lower part has motifs represented on them; you have panels of cloths that are meant for purely aesthetics.

Is it compulsory for all the forms to be fully represented on the Ijele while creating it, because according to various scholars some said they say forty-nine, others forty to forty-five and so on – it is not compulsory to represent all the figures. It depends again on the size of the Ijele you as an artist want to create. First of all, it is very necessary that before you set the plat form on which the dome structure will be set, you first the people that commissioned the work that you will like to see the

performer that is person who will carry the *Ijele* masquerade, by looking at him this will help you to structure your work to fit to his strength and his ability to carry the Ijele mask. One is to produce a very nice *Ijele* and another is to carry it and perform with it. Once an *Ijele* collapses especially during performance it is a taboo, it can be disastrous. It is a taboo in Igala and other Igbo culture. So, you consider the performer, you also consider the distance between where it will perform and the Oda where it goes back to rest. The distance is usually not too far. In some villages if the performer is not able to walk the length of the village community, the performer will be regarded to have dented to image of the family and this will continue from generation to generation. All these things are put into consideration while constructing the *Ijele*. This also helps to control the number of dulls or sculptures that are placed on it. You must also try and create a balance so that one side is heavier than the other. This also helps the performer to be able to balance when carrying the *Ijele* masquerade.

We are told that in the past you have other masquerades that dance on the Ijele masquerade, how true is this – No, it is not so. There are other masquerades that accompany the *Ijele* like the police, the *Nne Ijele* and others. In my place, we have a masquerade that is as big as the *Ijele*. it carries other masquerades on top let's say about three masquerades and we call it Akpele it is found in the Igala speaking part of Anambra. They are not designed as the Ijele, the numerous figures seen on the Ijele is not found on the Akpele.

What type of song does the Ijele dance to – Ijele dance to drum beats called Igba *Ijele*. There is also the Akwunacienyi that looks like the *Ijele*, it is also a masquerade but smaller to the *Ijele* masquerade, its music is also different from the Igba Ijele. The *Ijele* does not share the arena with other masquerades.

Ken Okoli

What is the Ijele – Ijele is a masquerade that is of the Igbo Origin, the south eastern part of Nigeria. Ijele masquerade is one of those masquerades that performs more of entertainment and spiritual functions, there is no masquerade that is as large as the Ijele, it is so because if you take a closer look at the Ijele you will see human figures, animal figures, and spirits, so the only thing you can compare to the Ijele or inferior to Ijele is the sculpture of Atlas. It represents a man carrying the world on his head. That is the only thing that comes to comparison to Ijele. Ijele has everything if you probably look with a magnifying glass you might even see an ant on the head of the Ijele. Ijele now becomes an in cooperation of everything about life. Ijele masquerade is practiced all over Igbo land especially the region you call Anambra State, which is the geographical location is called Anambra State. Then in a few parts of lower Enugu that shares bother with Anambra State. But I have not heard of any Ijele masquerade coming from Abia, or even Delta State. So this masquerade is prominent to that area. My permutation is because the claim that Nri is the cradle of Igbo civilization, so if you find this masquerade coming from that area or region that means that it is a pure Igbo masquerade. That is why you do not see any other masquerade that looks like Ijele among that part of Igbo land, as a scholar would call peripheral Igbos. Ijele masquerade comes from the cure of the Igbo nation. So these other smaller tribes of Igbo land who bother with other earthnic groups do not have Ijele. So Ijele comes from the heart of Igbo land so it is a pure Igbo masquerade. Most masquerade you find in Igbo land you find them in Igala land among the Idoma people like Alekwu Afia, it is the same Alekwu Afia among the Idoma that you find among the Igala. They call it Egwu Afia, among Onitsha people it is called Nmmanwu Afia, among Okpanam it is called Nmmanwu Afia, so there are similarities. Then even the Omabe masquerade, what we from the cure Igbo region call Omaba masquerade as it moves away from the cure and goes towards Nsukka they call it Omabe, so you can see that the Ijele is purely Igbo masquerade, it is of Igbo Origin. Igala people influenced Igbo land so much but you cannot see any Igalaness because among the Igala there is no masquerade that looks like or fits the cosmology of the universality like the Ijele.

What is the meaning of Ijele – Ijele means universe because it is an embodiment of the universe. But again Ijele is used to describe impressive that is gigantic, massive and very beautiful. If you see a woman and call her Ijele Nwanyi, that woman is tall beautiful, fair in complexion and has the right amount of flesh at the right places of her body.

The motif on the Ijele what does it signify – If you study Ulli marks and Nsibidi. Ulli share a lot with Nsibidi. Nsibidi is the sign that comes from Akwaibom, Ekoi among areas of South East also, though we do not share the same language, we share a lot. Some of the motifs you see on Nsibidi you also see on Ulli. And these are the things that you see in masquerades; because every masquerade is supposed to be an embellishment of the spirit of the people. When I say the spirit of the people, the spirit includes knowledge, metaphysical knowledge, and even empirical knowledge. It is manifested in their masquerades, just like Izaga masquerade that the stilt dance, you understand, that is where you see the beginning and end of physics and it is empirical, if you use your height and do the calculation that they usually do before they determine the height of the Izaga masquerade, anybody can use it, so its empirical.

You made mention of the Igala and in relation to Ijele's origin and those who owns it, does this also mean that the Ijele is also owned and practiced by the Igala – I will tell the story of the Igala people in Igbo land. Interestingly my great grandfather is an Igalaman, by the grace of God today we are Igbo's. One cannot over look the influence of the Igala in Igbo land. But if Ijele is of Igala origin how come it has disappeared and there is not a trace of anything that looks like Ijele among all the masquerades of the Igala people. Some people say that Omabe among the Nsukka people is of Igala origin, that you can understand because of the proximity of Nsukka people with the Igala, but a deeper study shows that Omabe comes from Awka Nri area which includes Nwafija, among Arochukwu people, that circle is the cure of Igbo land. I am telling you that the person who gave you this information go and check his origin he must be an Igala person. For me as a scholar, my views are supposed to be devoid of emotions and would be built based on logic. The logic is that if they gave us Ijele how come they don't have it? They gave us Nmanwu Afia which they call Egwu Afia, the Idoma people call it AnekwuAfia. They gave us that one, that masquerade is over six to seven hundred years old and it is still there and

still present, when the Onitsha people migrated from Benin about four hundred years ago NmmanwuAfia was already there, so the Igbos in Delta state were already playing NmmanwuAfia. So, how come they gave us NmmanwuAfia and it is still one of their wonder masquerades and they don't have Ijele. How come you can't see any Ijele coming out from River State, Imo, Abia, Ebonyi. If you do the geographical mapping of Ijele you will find it at the cure of Igbo land.

How long does it take to create the Ijele masquerade – The Ijele masquerade as a sculptor, it has an armature, it has a structural skeleton on which everything grows. So after the armature, the next thing that comes in is appliqué. It is mostly fabric, but the armature most times they use cane gotten from the swamp. It is flexible you can twist it to any angle you want and it is light also. This thing requires a lot of balance and a lot of physics hoes into it because if you put more of the objects on one side the wearer of the masquerade would not be able to control the balance so usually it is built on a center piece then, those objects would be added from one angle until you get a balance one side must never be heavier, you have to make the dolls and stuff them. Then those motifs you talked about, they are pisses of cloths that will be cut an sawn to the background. If you look at the Ijele you see that there is a lot of work put into it and an artist who has like three assistants can finish a very big Ijele in three months. Formally in the olden days why it took a longer time is because the artist would have to go for farm and also go hunting for meat to provide protein supplement for his family. There was no electricity in that era so he can't work in the night, now there is light he can afford to work at night and also get assistants and pay them.

Is there any other name by which Ijele was known – Ijele sometimes comes in a smaller version. This smaller version is called Akwunachienyi. Some people call in Aku na chie eny meaning are we standing and waiting for our friends, some will also say Aku ne che enyi your wealth is gathered and is waiting for your friends. Akwunachienyi's diameter might not be up to 2 mitres but Ijele is usually 2.5 mitres to 3 mitres if the person can carry it they ask the maker to make it bigger.

From observations there are various Ijele, does that mean that these Ijele's are known by other names – There are male and female Ijele. the male does not have the head rest but the female has. It more

flamboyant because she is associated with the earth goddess Ala or Ani depending on who is pronouncing it, depending on the dialect of the pronouncer. The earth goddess is the goddess of fertility that gives birth to everything. In the cosmos, there is a male and female. Chukwu is God minister, He has directors who take charge of everything. And everything about fertility has been given to a woman a female god and Ijele is a manifestation of the earth goddess hat is why she has everything about fertility.

What particular time, day and period does the Ijele come out to perform – ordinarily Ijele comes out once in a year, but if an important person, mark it very important person. This very important person can be a Chief or the Okpala of a town; you know we don't have traditional rulers, or NnaEgwu, that is the patron of Ijele. Every Ijele has a patron if the Nna Egwu dies, then the Ijele can come out and perform not minding when he died. Then secondly usually Ijele comes out during or towards the tail end of harvest. There is so much to eat and drink, people are not thinking of tomorrow, their banks are filled with food, but the making of the masquerade itself starts after food has been planted n the ground. So that period of waiting is when the traditional sculptors goes into work, that is why it takes him almost six months, at intervals he has to go to his farm and weed it. So when harvest has been done and there is so much to eat and drink that is when the Ijele will come out. Our people are not stupid, our wisdom suppers what the world has written or said about us. You know the dry season is when the Ijele comes out. Why does it come out during that period, one may ask, because the wind action might push it down so it is performed when it is not raining. You now see why they have shifted it to that period, also there are several reasons, the dry season, the food and plenty part, the rain maker will also not be paid much to hold the rain, so that the masquerade can perform.

Are there any ritual preparation necessary for creating the Ijele, if there are, who are those involved – I will take the questions one by one; are there rituals? Yes. Who are those involved; I will tell you in the cause of my discussion. You know Africa science honestly as far as am concerned it is to a large extent empirical. In the traditional era the artists who makes the Ijele before he makes it he goes for divination, divination is normal, even now some people go and ask their pastors how will it be ?. Then the spiritualists himself and his family has to feed, he will tell the sculptor that the gods said he should

bring this and that. Actually he needs this food for his family because the gods does not eat food, so having made this sacrifices he now has the courage to embark on the project, and his psyche has been busted up that he is backed by the gods, that the spirit of the gods are coming to posses the Ijele. Now haven done that who will wear the Ijele, they will have to go back to the diviner with three young man, then they will now find out from the gods who will wear the Ijele, and it is believed that if the person who the gods said should not carry the Ijele carries it it will fall. It must be a person who the gods approves of that must carry the Ijele. For me, I don't think that there is any mysticism involved in it. The major thing there is the physics of making sure that no part is heavier than the other part, between the circle if you put a stick at the center and its balanced and doesn't tilt to one side their won't be any problem. Its just like the Benin bronze casters at Igun, before they do bronze casting they slaughter chicken. We have foundry here, we don't do any rituals and yet our bronze casting is always successful.

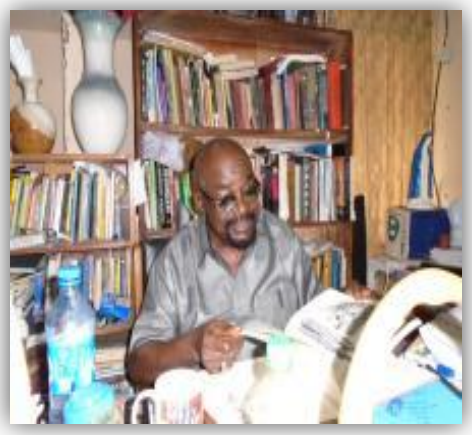
APPENDIX 4

PHOTOGRAPHS WITH AUTHORITIES, PROFESSIONALS AND TRADITIONAL SCULPTOR ARTISTS

Appendix 4 contains photographs with the interviewed parsons



1. The researcher interview Prof. Chris Ebhigbo, Federal University Ndufu Alike-Ikwo. Abakaliki Ebonyi State.



2. Prof. Chike Aniakor, Professor of Art HistoryCross River College Technology (CRUTECH),interviewed by the researcher



3. The researcher and Clifford Nwanna, (Professor of Sculpture and Art History) Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State,



4. The researcher interview Dr. Ken Okoli, Fine Arts Department Ahmadu Bello UniversityZaria, Kaduna State (A.B.U)



5. The researcher and Mr. Andrew Ollotha Lecturer/ Sculptor,Nnwafo Orizu Collegde of Education Nsugbe, Anambra State



7. The researcher and Chief. Samuel Okoye (Traditional sculptor, Abatete, Anambra State)





Onu

naambra State)

8. The researcher and Queen Theresa Onuorah founder of *Egedege* dance group (Music Artiste, Unubi, Anambra State)

APPENDIX 5

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Appendix 5 contains the summary of the persons interviwed with areas of specialisation, date of interview, location of the interviewed and remarks.

S/No	Names	Area of Specializations	Date of Interview	Location	Remark
1	Prof. Chris Ebhigbo	Academic/ Sculptor	**09/10/2014**	Abakaliki, Ebonyi	Successful
2	Prof. Chike Aniakor	Art Historian/Painter	**17/10/2014**	Cross River State	Partially
3	Prof. Cliff Nwanna	Academic/ Sculptor	**05/03/2015**	Awka Anambra	Successful
4	Dr. Ken Okoli	Academic/ Sculptor	**19/08/2015**	Zaria, Kaduna	Successful
5	Mr. Andrew Olottah	Academic/Traditional Sculptor	**07/03/2015**	Nsugbe, Anambra	Successful
6	Mr. Mike Okpala	Academic/Traditional Sculptor	**07/03/2015**	Nsugbe, Anambra	Partially
7	Chief. Samuel Okoye	Traditional Sculptor	**08/03/2015**	Abatete/Uke Anambra	Successful
8	Queen Theresa Onuorah	Music Artiste	**31/05/2015**	Unubi, Anambra	Partially
9	Mr. Justine Okwuba	Traditional Sculptor	**09/03/2015**	Awkuzu, Anambra	Partially
10	H.R.M A.E Chukwuemeka -Eri	Traditional Ruler OBU-GAD	**09/03/2015**	Nri Anambra	Nil