DEVELOPING PAINTINGS FROM YORUBA MUSIC

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project report, entitled "Developing Paintings from Yoruba Music," is a record of my original research. It has never been presented elsewhere in any application for a Higher Degree. All the quotations and information utilized and their sources are acknowledged by means of references.

Ajayi Adewale Olusegun

8TH AUGUST 1998
Date

CERTIFICATION.

This project report entitled "Developing paintings from Yoruba Music" by Ajayi Adewale Olusegun meets the regulations governing the award of the Masters of Fine Arts. Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God almight who remains my inspiration, and also to Funmi, Yemi and Selinah Ajayi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Making a success venture such as this project is such an uphill task which would not be possible, without the support of certain persons who I am very much indebted to. I sincerely appreciate the untiring assistance, support and suggestions of my two supervisors, Mr. Jerry Buhari and Mallam Mu'azu M. Sanni.

I would like to acknowledge the immeasurable help rendered by my classmates Deji Ajose and John Oyedemi, their criticisms and advice have really contribuited to the successful outcome of this work.

I would not want to forget my late mentor Mr. Gani Odutokun whose fatherly counsel have really caused me to determinedly face the presures and challanges encountered in the course of this study. Although he is gone, the indelible impression he created in my heart will remain.

To Chief Ebenezer Obey Fabiyi, whose song was adapted in this research work. His impact is really acknowledged.

My special thanks go to all friends and well wishers within and outside Zaria who I cannot mention because of space constraints. I really appreciate you all.

ABSTRACT

Developing Paintings From Yoruba Music

By

Ajayi Adewale Olusegun

Developing paintings from Yoruba Music is an experimental study in painting carried out to develop visual concepts as well as to reveal the level of interelatedness between painting and music.

The Juju Music of Chief Ebenezer Obey was used and his songs which are considered educative were employed. Yoruba music contain the songs and instrumentation; and therefore, traditional musical instruments like Talking Drum, Bata, and Thumb Piano were introduced in the compositions.

A review of literature was carried out to show the contribution of some artists who have done similar work concerning the relationships between painting and music.

A collection of data was done through making studies of the selected musical symbols from music textbooks; and also of musical instruments. A collection was made of selected Obey's recorded pieces of music on audio cassettes. Sketches were created from listening to these pieces of music in pencil and charcoal. These preliminary drawings (i.e the sketches) served as data for the study.

The study was categorised into four groups.

i. Fussion of symbols and space

ii. Fussion of symbols, instrument and space

iii. Fussion of II with forms

iv. Fussion of II with forms developed from the lyrics of the selected son (The Horse the Man and his Son)

The works executed in the course of this research are presented as plates.

At the end of the research, it was concluded that visual messages is Yoruba Music can be visually interpreted and that oral art could be translated into pictorial art.

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DEFINITION OF SPECIAL TERMS

Afro Fuji	Modernised Fuji Music
Afro Juju	Modernised Juju Music
Agidigbo	A box to which iron strips are fixed at one end and made to pass over a low bridge to which they are also bound.
Apala	Sentimental traditional Yoruba Music, more popular among the Egba people of Abeokuta in Nigeria. Set of four or two drums: One side of each covered with membrane, originally meant for ritual worship of Yoruba god, Sango but is now being used for entertainment.
Eyo	A Yoruba masquerade; typical of people of Lagos in Nigeria.
Fuji	Traditional Yoruba music developed from Jiwere (Local musicians who feature during Ramadan period).
G Clef	Musical symbol representing treble clef.
Gwoge	Hausa local musical instrument made with calabash and animal skin.
Iya Ilu	The lead instrument of a set of five drums used for drundun ochestra. Both surfaces are covered and they looked like an hour glass.

Juju	**A contemporary Yoruba music named after a wooden tamborine with jingles, popular among Yoruba traditional musicians.**
Minstrel	**A professional entertainer.**

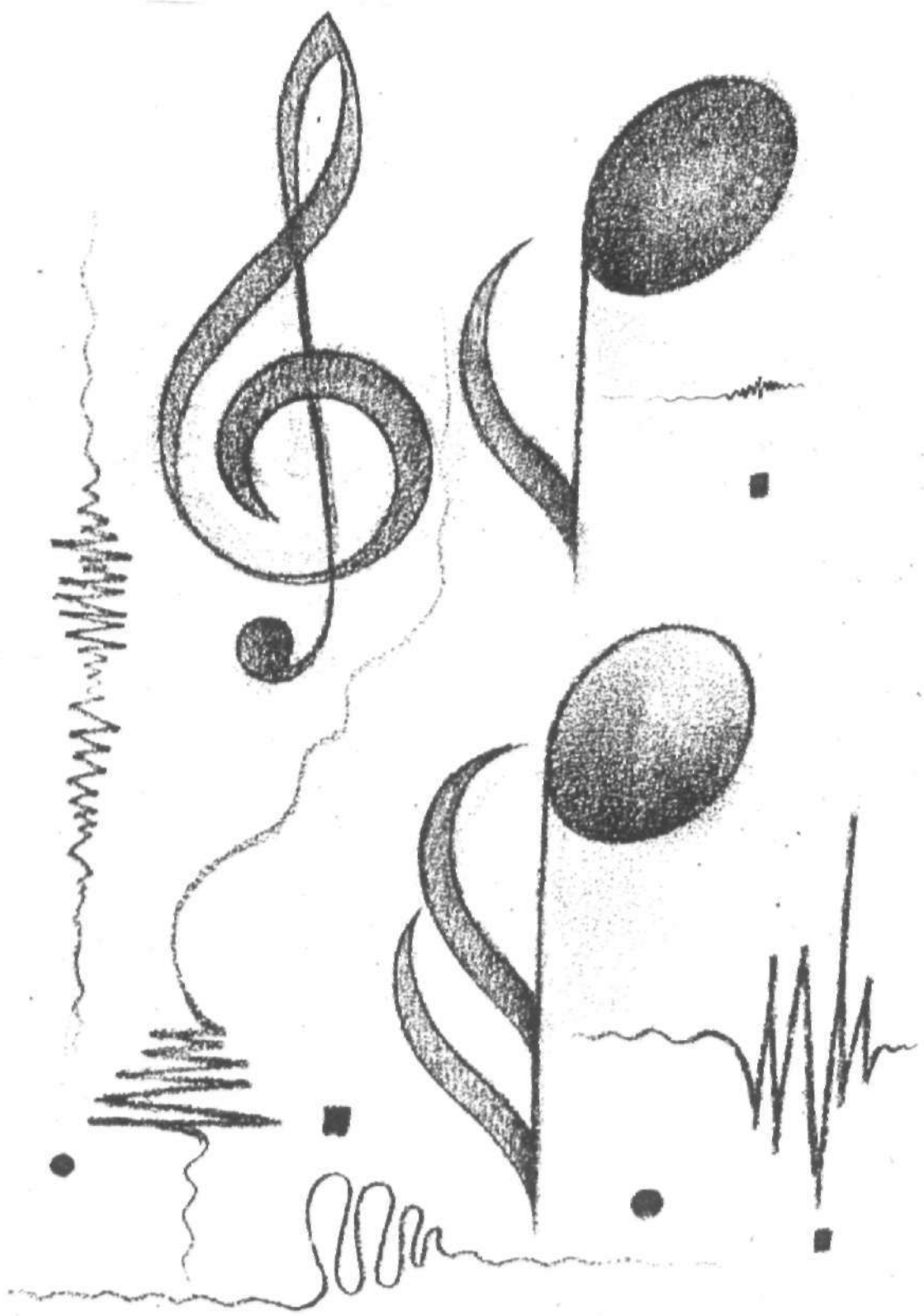


Figure 1

Study for - Musical symbols

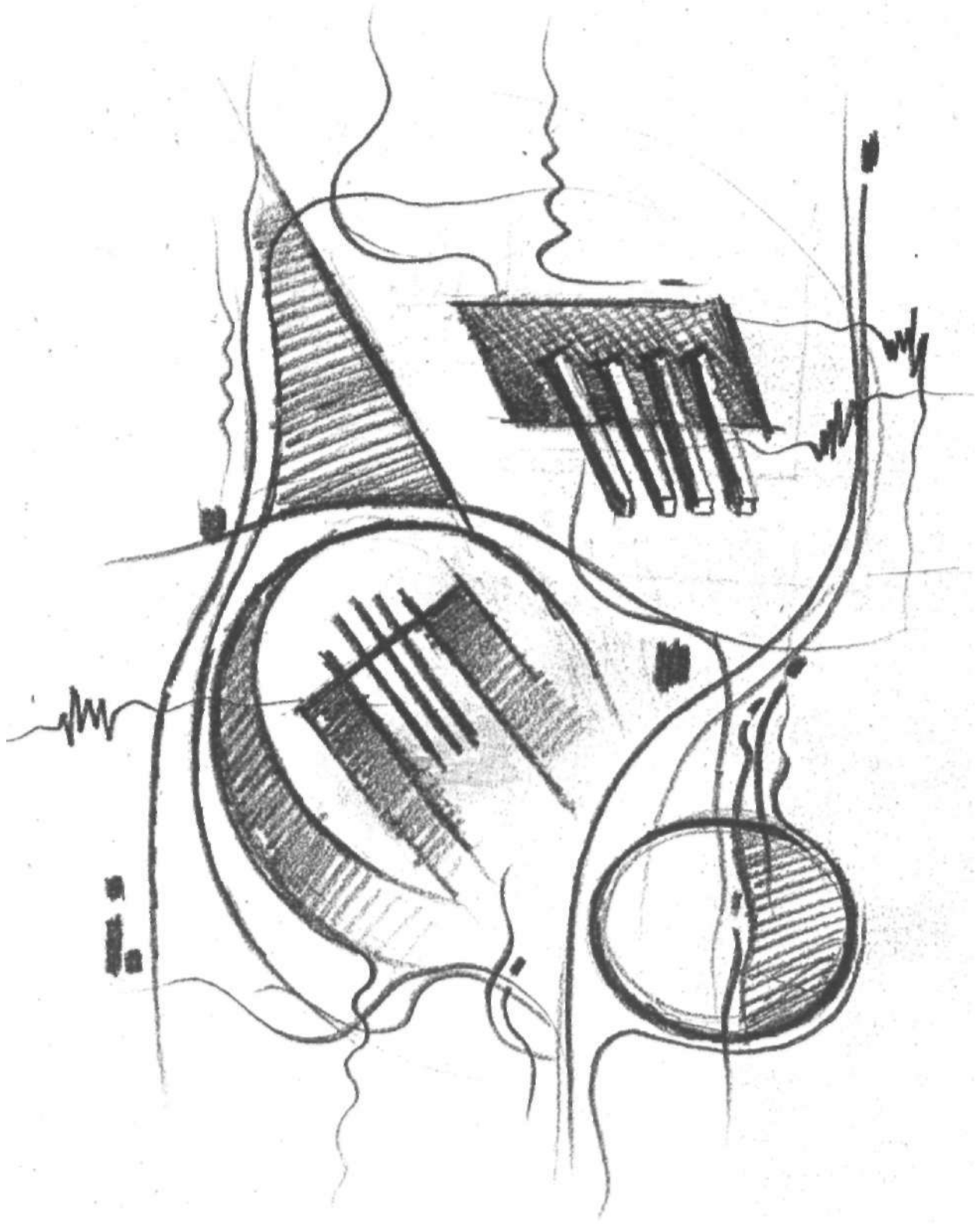


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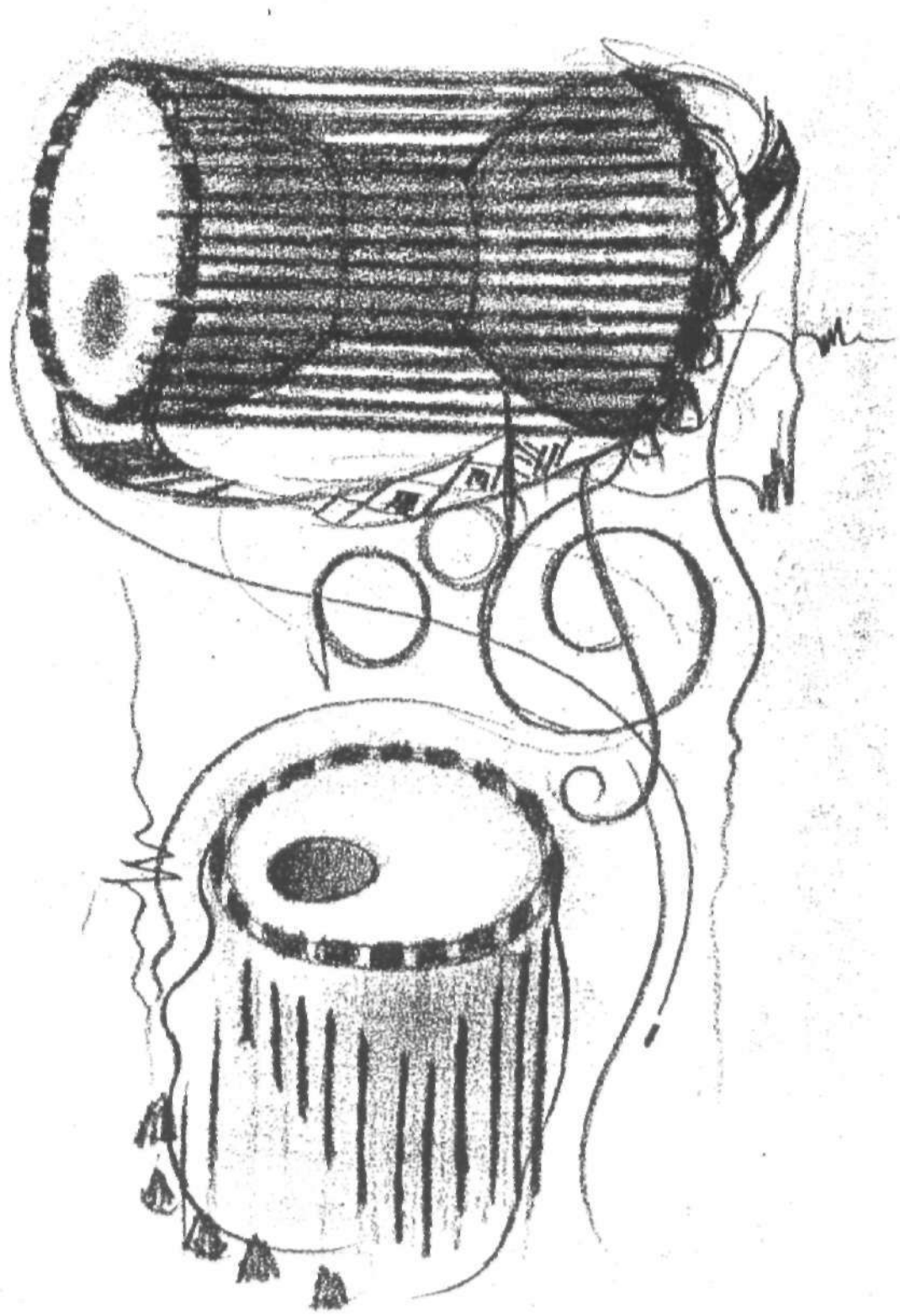


Figure 3

Study for - Iya Ilu (Talking Drum)

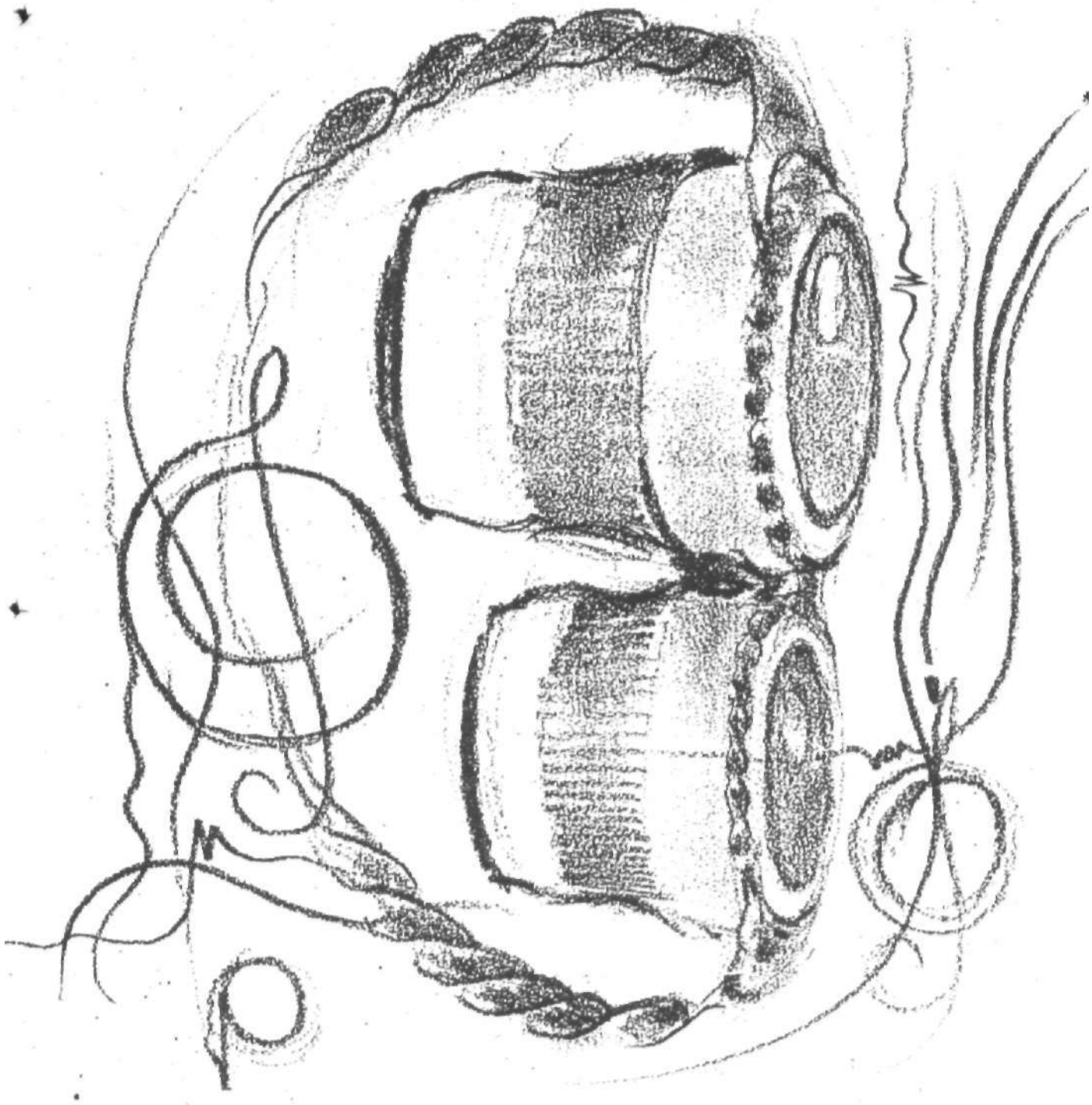


Figure 4

Study for - Bata

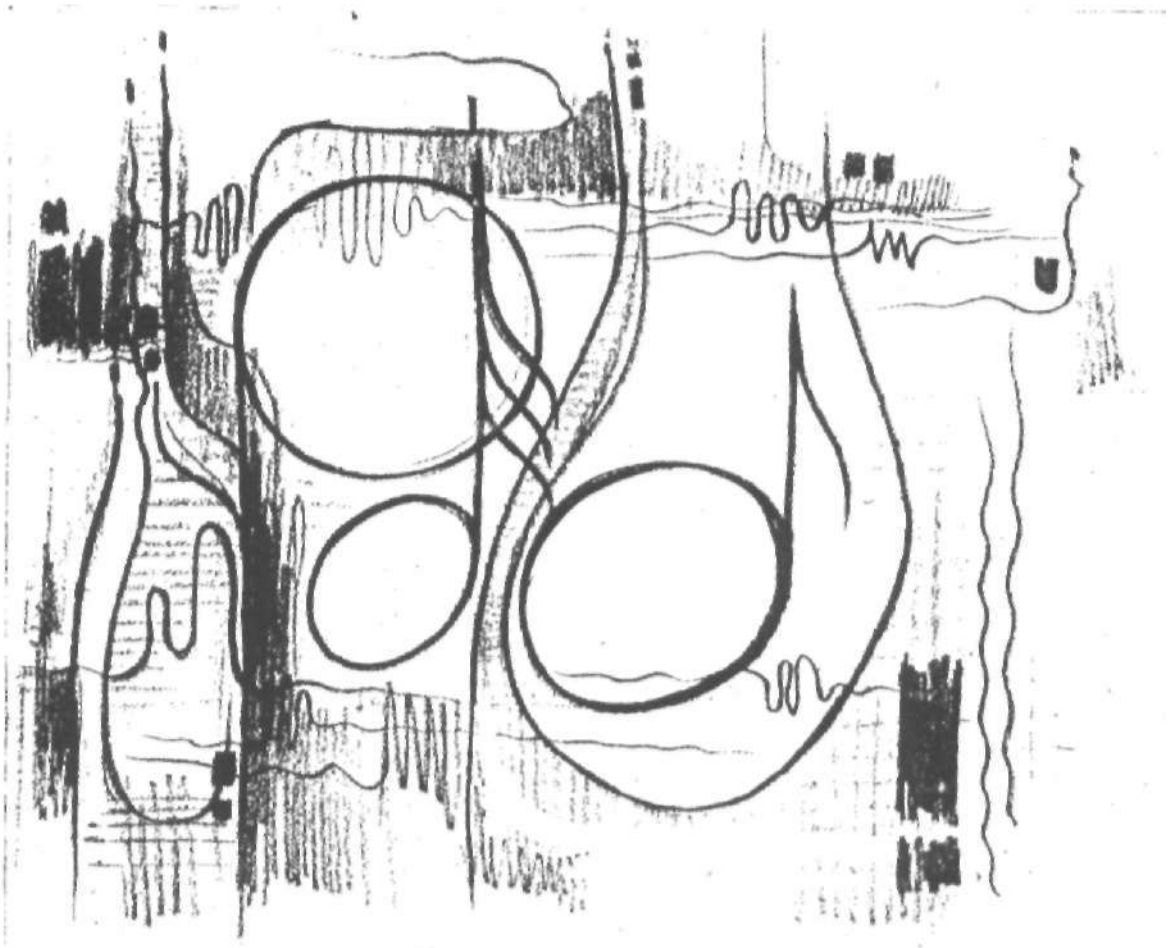


Figure 5

Study for - Composition No. 3

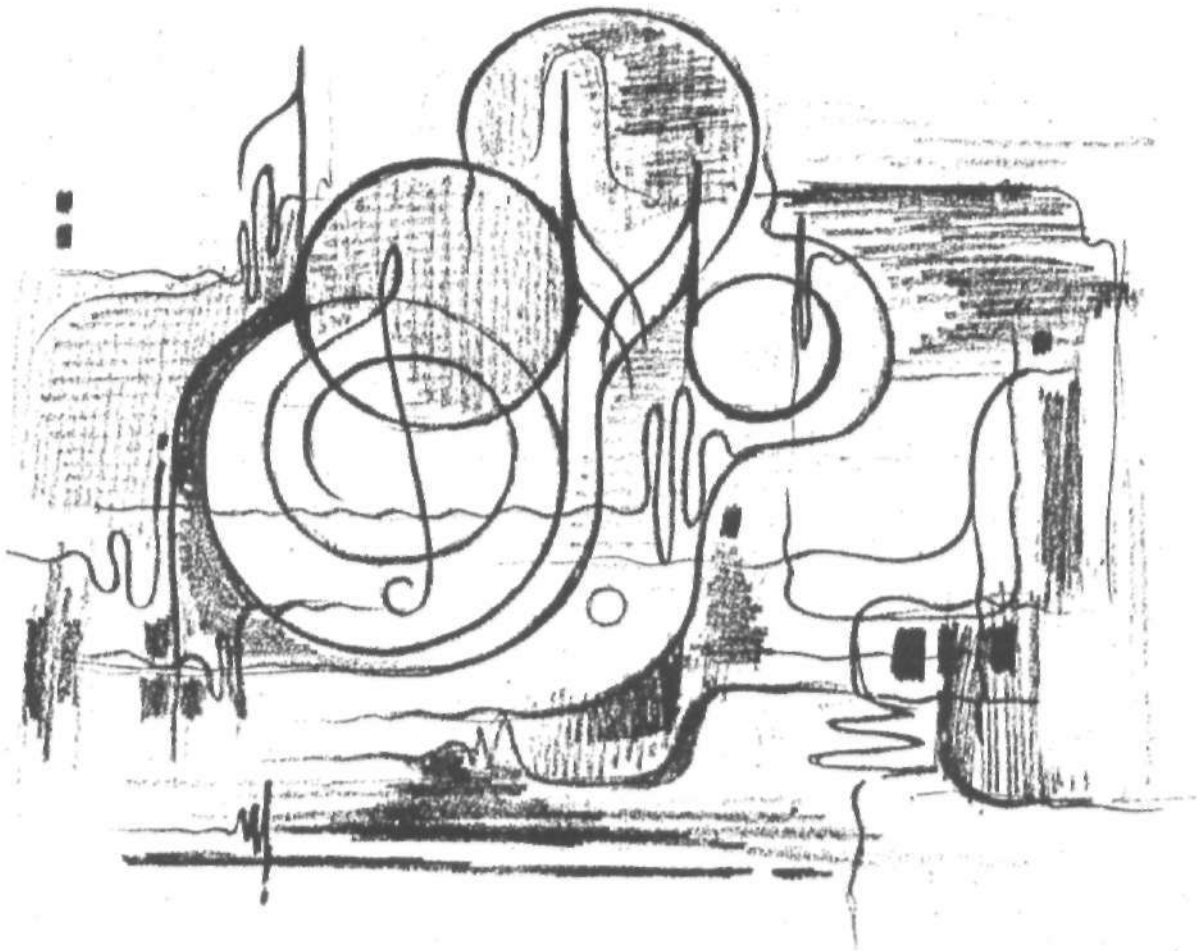


Figure 6

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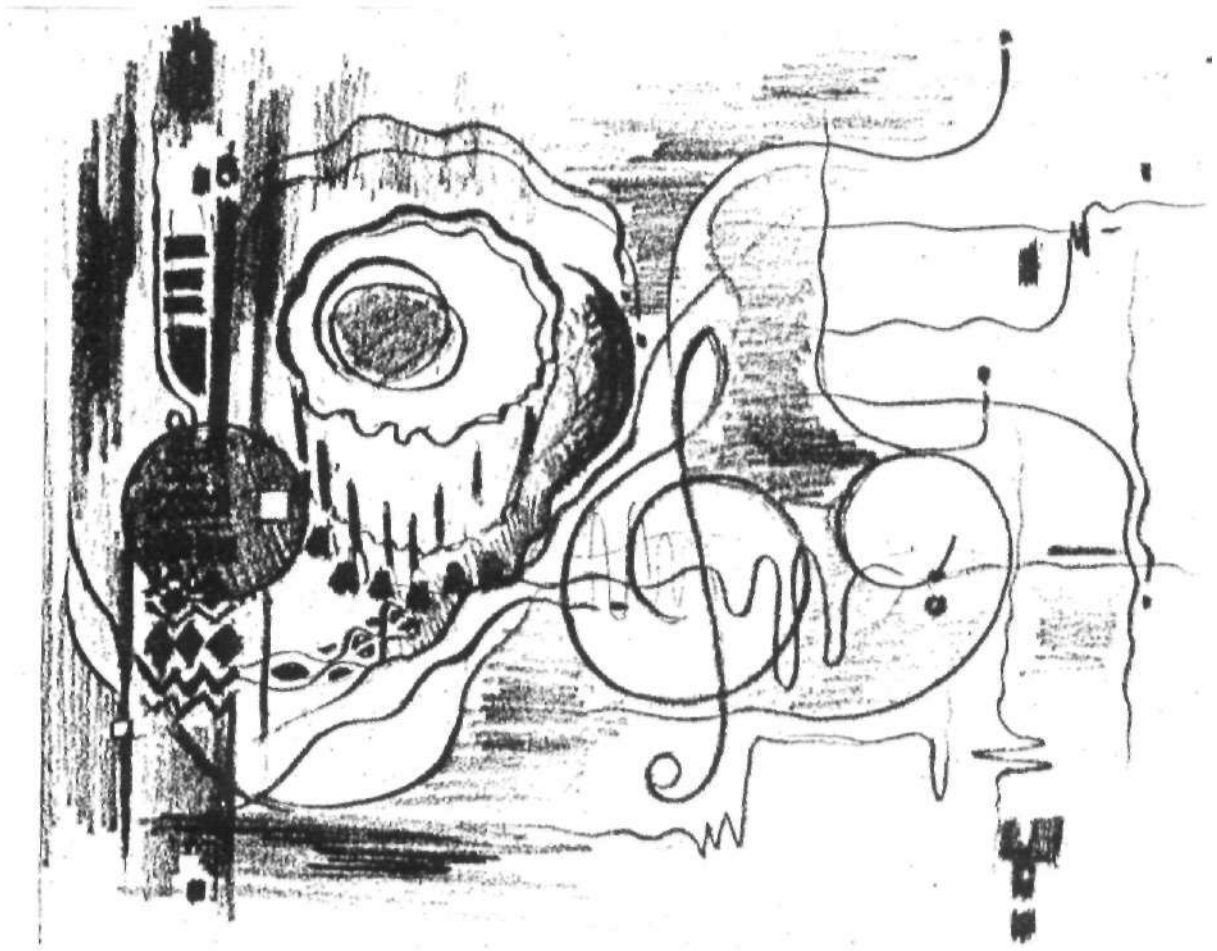


Figure 7

Study for - Composition with Iya Ilu II

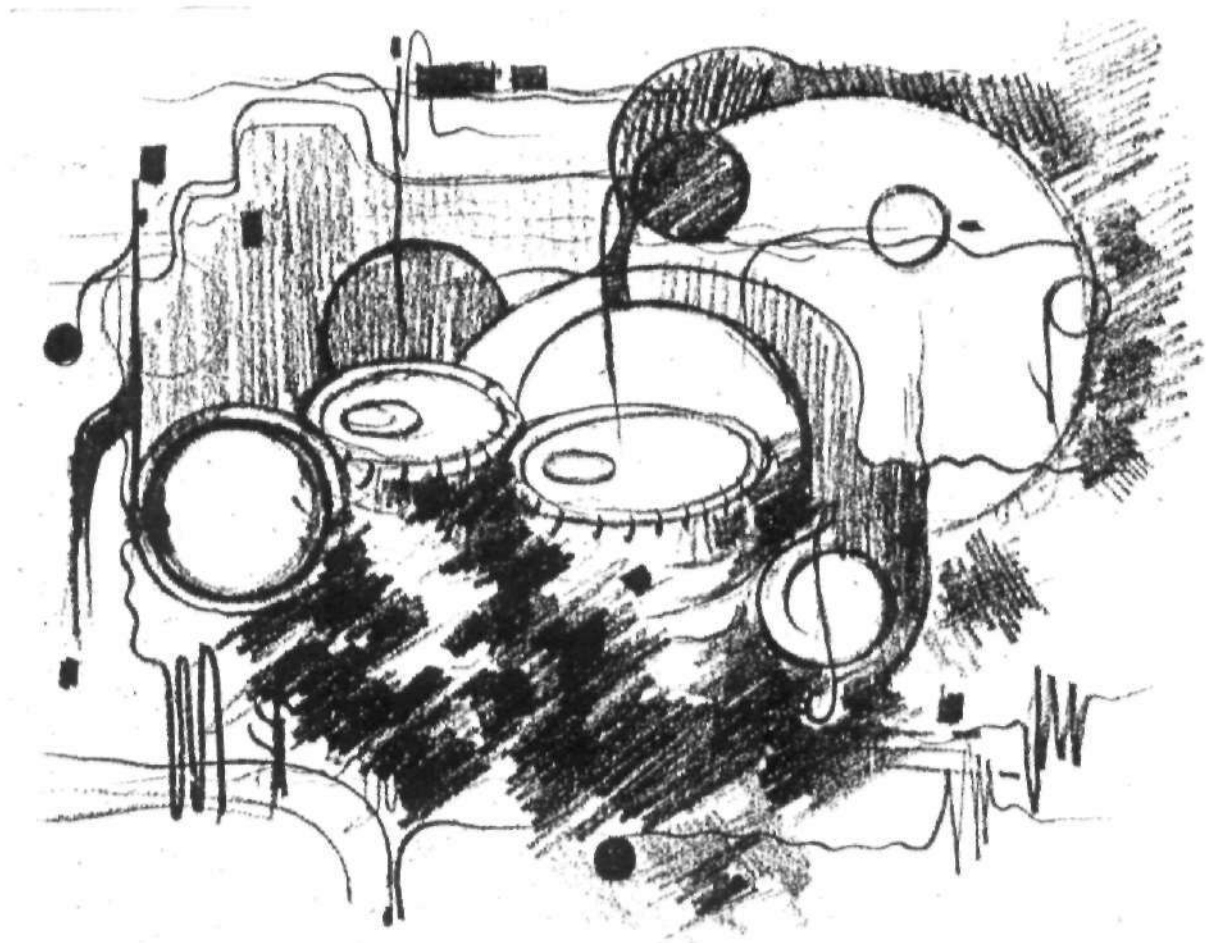


Figure 8

Study for - Composition with Bata

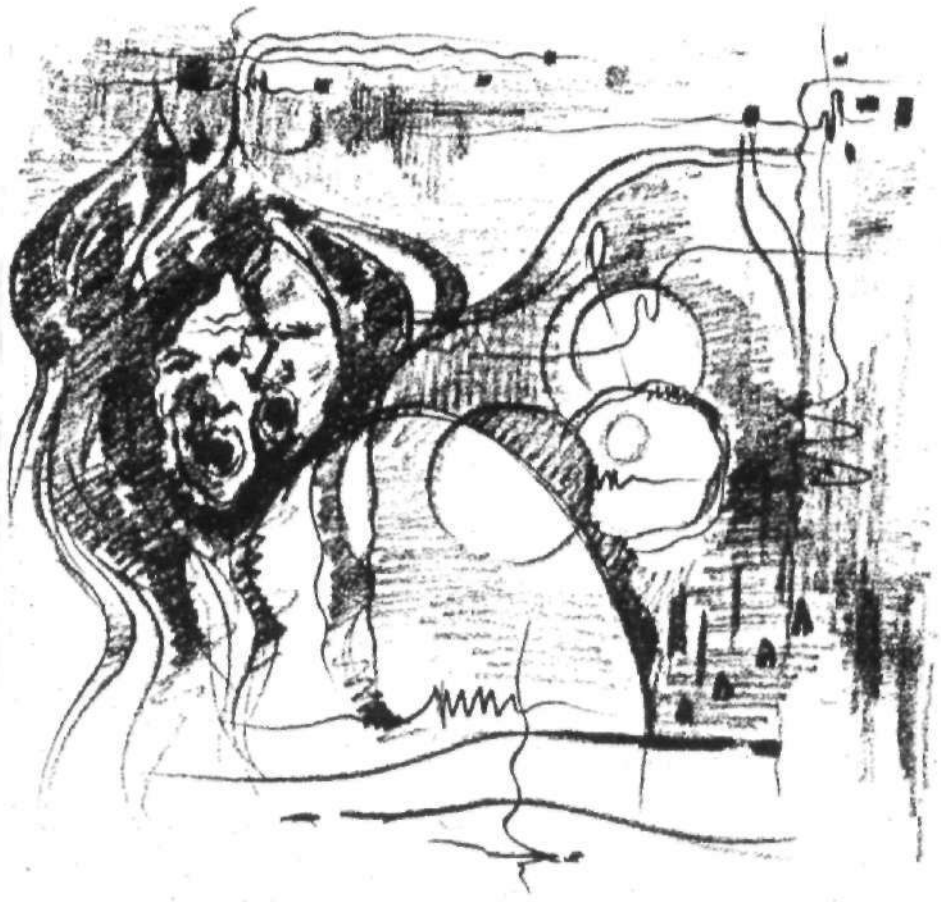


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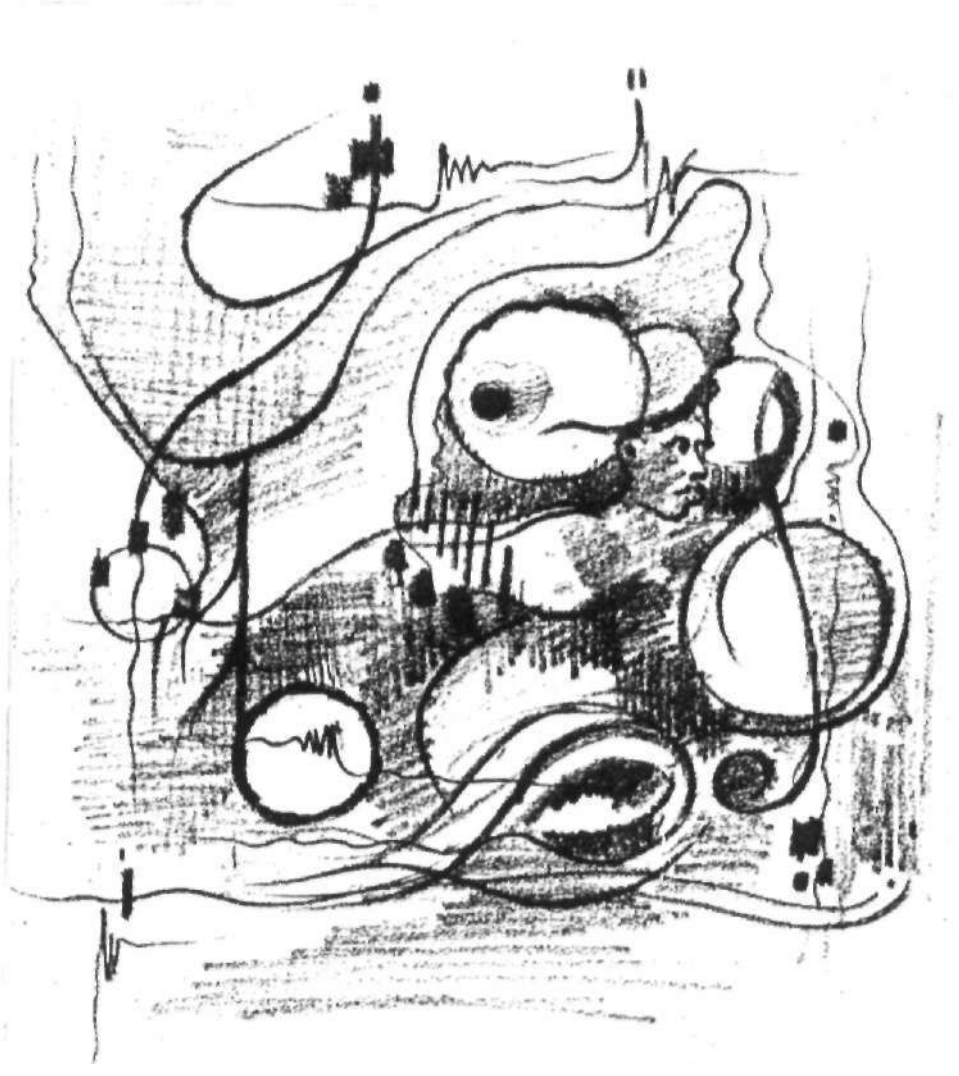


Figure 10

Study for - Let the Music Play



Figure 11

Study for - the Man on the Horse



Figure 12

Study for - Son on the Horse



Figure 13

Study for - Both on the Horse



Figure 14

Study for - Both Trecking

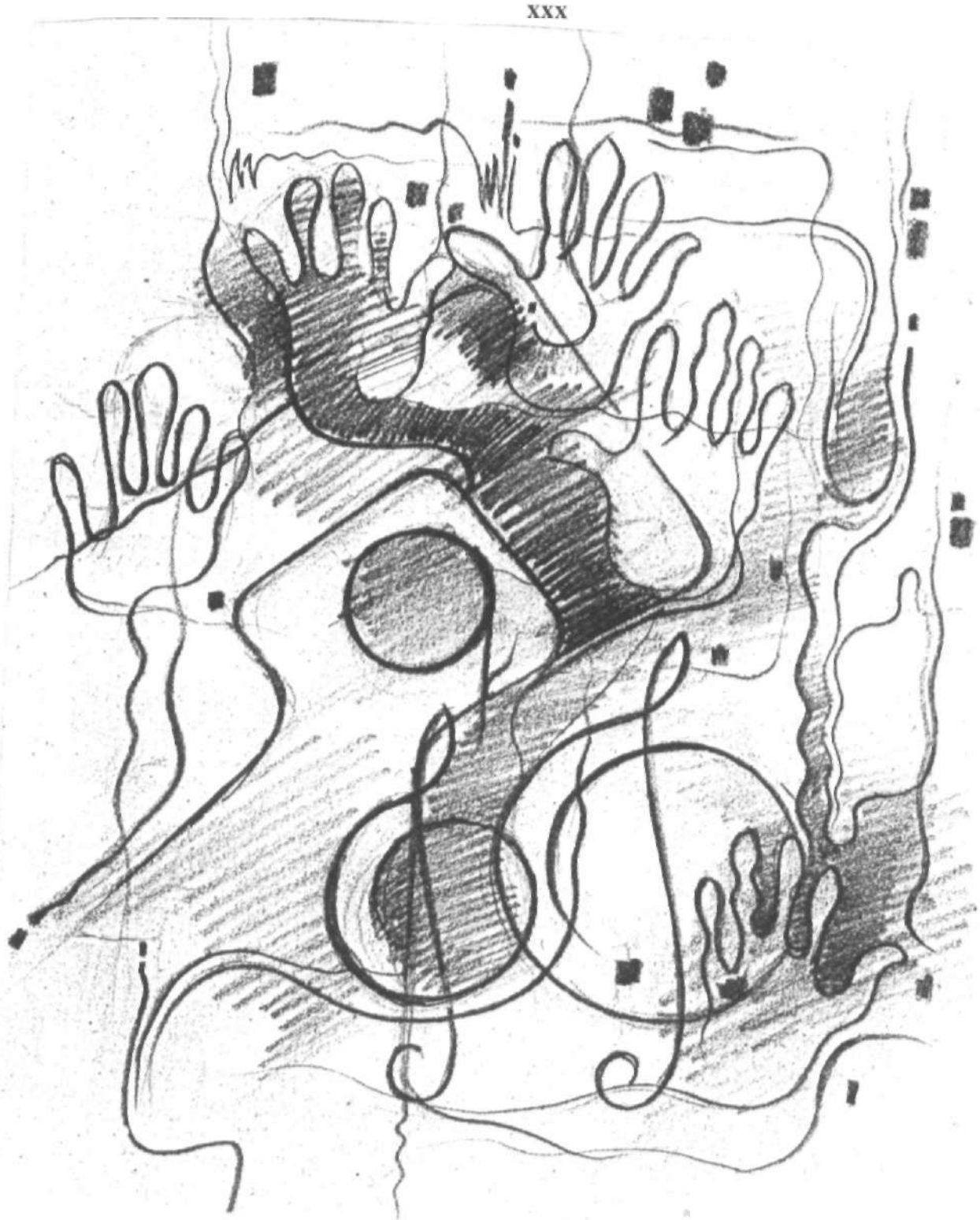


Figure 15

Study for - Be Yourself

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Every Yoruba son, be it traditional or modern, carries a message for its listeners. The message address socio-educational issues and at times aims at correcting certain ills in the society. Songs are frequently composed (orally) in order to praise or abuse individuals, to express love or hatred, or to propagate accounts of events. Hence the Yoruba saying "Orin nii siwaju ote" meaning "Songs precede an intrigue".

Yoruba is a tonal language, which means that one word can have several meanings depending on whether the tone is low, mid or high. The musical tone of the language enables messages to be conveyed through it by means of a whistle or with the talking drum. Many traditional Yoruba songs are formed spontaneously on special festive occasions and at times from traditional folklores. When one of such song is taken up by a modern musician, he generally substitute milder words for abusive ones.

Yoruba singers serve as the people's "watch-dog", therefore, as oral artists they are expected to see and hear more than an average human being. Hence they become acutely sensitive.

Contemporary Yoruba music include: Juju, Fuji, Highlife, Apala, and recently in response to modernisation, Afro-Fuji, Afro-Juju among others.

1.2 Historical Background

The name "Yoruba" is applied to a historical group of people numbering several millions, who dwell within the western geographical region of Nigeria and some neighbouring countries, namely Republics of Benin and Togo, but it appears that they did not have a common name before the Christian missionaries began to call them so after the language of the former Oyo Kingdom - "Yooba". Beside their common language, the Yoruba are united to a large extent by a common culture, and by tradition of a common origin from the town of Ile-Ife in the present Osun State of Nigeria. According to Biobaku (1973):

> It does not seem, however, that they have constituted a single political entity as it is even more doubtful whether before the nineteenth century, they referred to each other by a common name. Before the imposition of the European rule... the Yoruba were divided into numerous independent kingdoms.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to develop paintings based on the visual translation of contemporary Yoruba music with specific focus on the Juju music of Chief Ebenezer Obey Fabiyi.

Although there has been various attempts at painting musically oriented themes by artists in Nigeria, there is not known any systematic and comprehensive interpretation specifically focused on Yoruba music. It is hoped therefore that this study will reveal the hinden treasures and

dimensions of Yoruba music in another medium that may be widely readable.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study are firstly to attempt to adapt oral art into pictorial art for socio-educational purpose. Secondly, adapting the verbal messages in Yoruba songs as a source of inspiration and exploring the music with the visual medium. Thirdly, using the outcome of this research work for the purpose of developing a new expression in painting derived from music. And lastly, in order to have a clear visual representation of the musical nature of the study, musical symbols were employed. They include "Quaver", "G Clief" and "Sound Waves".

1.5 Significance of the Study

In the light of Leonardo da Vinci's words quoted by Heydenreich (1959) that "... as it is a fact that, that which is admitted to the consciousness through the ear is not as forceful as that which come through the eye". This study therefore, is an attempt to interprete visually, expressions of verbal messages of songs that are heard through the hearing senses, to messages that are seen through the sight senses, that their meaning and impact may assume greater significance and lasting impression. It is also hoped that Yoruba music will be taken to another level of appreciation through this study.

Thirdly, the re-interpretation of Yoruba music in visual plastic

medium it is hoped will create the necessary linkage and interelatedness of different artistic expressions.

1.6 Delimitation and Scope

This research work concerned itself with a selected number of specific types of songs that are considered deeply meaningful and educative in the Juju music of Ebenezer Obe. Such songs like "The Horse, the Man and his Son", "Precious Gift" and "Eto Igbeyawo" (The plan of Marriage) are some of the types of musical works that were used. The songs speak about life, human relationship in a deeply philosophical sense as against commercialised Juju music.

Juju music is recognised and accepted locally and internationally. It has had tremendous impact in addressing fundamental issues on the structure of society.

Chief Ebenezer Obey's music was chosen as a case study for the fact that he is one of the most popular and most consistent among Juju Musicians in Yorubaland today. His consistency in style cuts through three decades of intense creative work of exceptional music embued with meaning and philosophy. His songs are deeply philosophical and are considered to be morally instructive and picturesque by the researcher.

Yoruba music can not be studied in isolation. In the music itself, there are various musical instruments involved, which means. Yoruba music is made up of the songs and the instruments that create them.

therefore, traditional musical instruments which include: "Iya Ilu" (Talking Drum), "Agidigbo" (Thumb Piano), "Bata", were introduced in some of the paintings in the course of the research. The aesthetic qualities in the shape of the selected instruments and symbols formed the basis for their selection. The use of modern instruments was not considered.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT WORKS AND LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher has tried to look into relevant written materials as well as works of some artists in Nigeria and abroad. A systematic survey of these materials was made from pre-history to the present age of what has been done in the relationship between music and painting.

The artists include; The cave painters of Gasulla Gorge, an Egyptian Tomb painter, Euthymides, Brygos painter, Etruscan Tomb painter, Bartolommeo Passerotti, Paolo Veronese, Michelangelo, Dirch Van Baburen, Marc Chagall, Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Hailan, Nissan Engel, Ema Iyang and Danjuma Kefas.

Musical representation in painting is not a new idea. The pre-historic painters of the cave period, precisely the middle stone age (Mesolithic), exhibited their proficiency in relating music to painting. This fact reflected in the rock painting found in Gasulla gorge dated 8,000 - 3,000 BC. (reviewed plate 01, page 7). The painting revealed a group of five warriors holding bows and arrows. They are arranged in a perspective row and depicted following a rhythmic movement, perhaps dancing to the music of an invisible musician.

Egypt and the ancient Near East abound in pictorial representation of musicians and instruments. A fresco frament from the tomb of Nebamum dated 1450 B.C. (reviewed plate 1, page 8), showed four seated ladies and two nude dancing girls participating in a musical show. Of the four seated, three seemed to be clapping and singing, while the fourth played a reed. The artist captured

vividly the girls dancing as they twist their body.

The Greco-Roman world, left behind them many visual records depicting musical scenes and instruments with admirable exactness. These are especially vase drawings and paintings, for example, an outline drawing on a vessel titled "Revelers" dated 510-500 B.C by Euthymides (reviewed plate II, page 9, depicts three male nude figures.



Reviewed plate oi

"Warriors in Ritual Dance" (8000-3000BC)

Rock painting in Gasulla gorge. Approx. 22.5cm.



Reviewed plate i

"Musicians and Dancers" (1450 BC)

Fresco from the tomb of Nebamum



Reviewed plate II

"Revelers" (510-500 BC) by Euthymides

Outline Drawing on Vessel Approx. 30.5cm high

The artist appeared to be less concerned with anatomical descriptions, and as De la Croix H. and Tansey, R.G., (1980) puts it, "The fairly typsy dancers mightly enjoying themselves....." They were shown turning and twisting their bodies perhaps to the tune of the music of an invisible musician.

Around the same period, precisely 490 B.C a Brygos painter (an anonymous artist who was named after the potter whose vases he decorated) in an outline drawing on a vessel titled "Revelers" (reviewed plate III, page 11) depicted seven seminude figures. One was playing a flute and others (dressed like warriors) in calculated dance steps, in what may be called a worrior dance.

A great number of frescoes and mosaics that depict relationship between music and painting remained after the Roman era. Their topics oscilate between the mythological to secular, including revelries, music lessons and other related themes. A fresco titled "Revelers" from the tomb of the Leopards, Tarquinia (reviewed plate IV, page 12), dated 470 B.C, revealed the attachment of the Greek to music. The artist captured three young men, one covered with a simple light scarf, the other two in elegant wrappers appeared hurrying through a garden.

According to Winternitz (1967), in the middle ages, "... subjects were for a long time limited to illustration of the scripture (especially of the apocalyptical themes), the Rex psamists and the 150th psalm., above all the Utrecht Psalter, abound with portrayals of musicians (never angels) surrounding the Psalmist." (reviewed plate V, page 13) Winternitz (ibid) continued, ".of the biblical musicians,



Reviewed Plate III

"Revelers" (Precisely 490 BC) by Brygos Painter

Outline Drawing on Vase Approx 25.5cm wide



Reviewed Plate IV

"Revelers" (470 BC)

Fresco from the tomb of Leopards, Tarquinia.

Approx. 107cm x 193cm



a. Psalm 147.



b. Psalm 150.

Reviewed Plate V

Illustration of Scripture "Psalm 147 and 150"

Ink on paper

Renaissance imagery retain king David playing psaltery, harp or, with the end of the 15th century, more often Lira da braccio" (reviewed plate VI, page 15).

In the later page of the Renaissance, when the artists regained freedom from the autocratic court and religious art more than ever before, musical themes flourished possessing a more refreshing and creative flavour, in their paintings. In addition, the revival of Greco-Roman master pieces and inventions of new musical instruments, inspired the artists to render musical themes, they portrayed not only the musicians with their instruments, but also dancers as well as viewers who gathered to enjoy the music. The painting "Allegory of music" by Paolo Veronese (1528 - 1588) (reviewed plate Vii, page 16) rendered in a realistic manner, revealed three ladies and a boy. Two of the ladies played the violine and the flute, while the third lady sat in a reflective mood, and the boy appeared to be engaged in some delicate dancing steps. "The Lute Player" dated 1595 by Michelangelo (1475-1664) (reviewed plate viii, page 17) also a realist works, is another example. He painted a boy playing a lute and on the table beside him was a violin and music booklets. Yet another painting by Dirch Van Baburen titled "Musical Party" (1923), reviewed plate IX, page 19) showed four figures of three instrumentalists and a female singer.

In this modern age of experimentation, of revolution and dynamic movements; expressionism, cubism, abstraction, to mention but a few, painters still treat themes that are music oriented. A survey of works from the 19th



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King David playing violin (End of 15th Century)

by Bartolommeo Passeroti (1529 - 1592)

Oil



Reviewed Plate VII

"Allegory of Music" (Late Renaisance) by Paolo Veronese

Oil



Reviewed Plate VIII

"The Lute Player" (1595) by Michaelangelo

Oil 239cm x 302cm

century to the 20th century reveals that at one time or another, painters have attempted works that drew ideas or inspirations from music. Although the subject matter still centred around the musicians and their instruments, the realistic and naturalistic approaches of the former periods gave way to new traditions synonymous to the modern era.

Marc Chagall: (1889 - ?)

The opportunity March Chagall had to work in the Yiddish theatre in Moscow had a profound influence on some of his paintings which were essentially musical. According to Arnason "... this opportunity to work on a large scale in the theatre has continued to fascinate him and to inspire some of his most stricking paintings". "The Green Violinist" (1918) (reviewed plate X, page 21), of the Fantasy period, depicted a green faced violinist who was caught up in his own music. He was comfortably seated on a stool whose legs were balanced on top of two houses. Among his audience were a bird and a dog; (these are likely to be the musician's pets). Chagall's choice of green colour for the musician's face could be to describe his transcedence into the melody of the violin. In the background was a co-instrumentalist holding a guitar while there was a dancer suspended in the sky. The cloud appeared to be the sound waves coming from the violin.



Reviewed Plate IX

"Musical Party" (1623) by Dirch Van Baburen

Oil 251.5cm x 330cm



Reviewed Plate X

"The Green Violinist" (1918) by Marc Chagall

Oil 197.5cm x 108.5cm

Pablo Picasso (1881-1984)

Pablo Picasso was a painter who featured in several of the art movements in Europe. Under these movements, Picasso produced works that are biased towards music. Three works were selected for this review namely "Mandolin and Guitar" (1924) (reviewed plate XI page 22, two versions of "Three Musicians" reviewed (plate XII page 23 and reviewed plate XIII, page 24). These works revealed his proficiency as a painter and his ability to combine flat patterns with lines. "Mandolin and Guitar" is a composition of two stringed instruments placed in the centre of the table, encompased in a juxtaposition of abstract colour shapes of vivid reds, blues, purples, yellows and ochers. The musical instruments are recognised by their strings. The two instruments are similar in outlook, but gives different tunes. Mandolin gives soft tunes while the guitar gives sharp tunes, and these could have influenced Picasso's choice of the colours employed in their execution. The table cloth was made of patterns while the walls of the room and the window were represented with tilted wall planes and receeding perspective suggesting the movement of sound on the canvas of music.

The two versions of "Three Musicians" are masterworks of cubist tradition. Both had three figures each seated in a row frontal against an enclosed back wall. they were all masked figures depicted in flat colour shapes arranged to create a bold but harmonious unity.

The first painting (reviewed plate XII, page 23) is generally intricate and varied in form and colour. The three figures here are shown playing a musical instrument each.



Reviewed Plate XI

"Mandolin and Guitar" (1924) by Pablo Picasso

Oil **142cm x 202.5cm**



Reviewed Plate XII

"Three Musicians I" (1921) by Pablo Picasso

Oil **206.5cm x 191cm**

Looking at the painting from the left side, a violin, flute and mini keyboard, and there was a musical sheet spread before them. The second painting (reviewed plate XIII, page 25) compared to the first is simple and somber in form and colour. The first and second figure from left were shown playing the flute and guitar respectively, while the third figure spread out a music sheet, perhaps to make the reading easy for his colleagues. The symbols in the music sheet were just impressions of lines and dots. In these compositions, Picasso was only interested in the musicians performing with their instruments. The figures with their instruments appeared "casual" in their presentation. They remind one of the "uninvited" traditional praise singers in Yoruba land who perform at ceremonies to make "quick money."

Juan Gris (1887 - 1927)

In Juan Gris "Guitar with sheet of music" (1926) (reviewed plate XIV, page 26), he manipulated forms of the four stringed bass guitar in creating the composition. discussing about this painting, Arnason (ibid), has this to say, "…. he reduced these familiar objects of cubist still life to stark, simple shapes separated by intervals of tangible as solids." He made use of bright primary colours; the red for the cloth, the yellow for the Guitar's body, the blue of the sky, are highlighted by light shades of yellow, ocher; and white for the music sheet. The neck and head of the guitar were eliminated to create room for the body and the strings to be clearly identified. Grils' choice of bright reflected seen reflect the strong tune of the instrument used.



Reviewed Plate XIII

"Three Musicians II" (1921) by Pablo Picasso

Oil **200.5cm x 221.5cm**



Reviewed Plate XIV

"Guitar with Sheets of Music" (1926) by Juan Gris

Oil 63.5cm x 79cm

Hailan

This impressionist painter employed the use of multiple colour scheme in his works. He used colour as a descriptive tool to capture the serenity of the scenery he was trying to portray. In his choice of colour, he used soft lines of blues, purples and green (to compliment and create life), yellows and reds. In "Garden melodies" (reviewed plate XV, page 28), a female violinist was captured inside a flower playing her instrument, perhaps to attract her companion who was another female figure standing at a distance. the second painting "Le Jardin de la Musique" (reviewed plate XVI, page 29) appeared like the second half of "Garden Melodies" with the same colour scheme. The distant figure could now be seen standing beside the violinist with her flute. They were both composed as if giving a backup to the song being rendered by the waterfall beside them.

In these paintings, Hailan combined impressionism and stylisation, he was able to fuse his forms and space together by using dark shades of colour to enclose his forms. The flower and the ladies were depicted emerging from the dark hues of prussian blue, viridian green and burnt umber. Violin is in the class of instruments used in sentimental music; and with the painter's choice of colours and such items like rose flowers in the composition, one could conclude that the musicians were rendering a love song.



Reviewed Plate XV

"Garden Melodies" (1995) by Hailan

Oil **61cm x 76cm**



Reviewed Plate XVI

"Le Jardin de la Musique" (1995) by Hailan

Oil 61cm x 76cm

Nissan Engel

Nissan Engel is an artist who works in mixed media. He made use of materials like musical note sheets, wrapping paper, cristal stone and artist oil colour, to execute these works in pure abstract. He stucked these items around on his canvas and then employed the use of artist oil colour to fuse their edges into space.

In "Capriccio" (reviewed plate XVII, page 31), certain objects like wrapping paper were suspended with black thin lines of musical waves. Around the lower part of the painting by the right, the musical sheets were spread to the view of an invisible violinist whose instrument was balanced at the botton towards the left corner. The figure of the violinist could only be outlined by the dark shadow that runs out of the painting to the left. Engel used subtle shades of grey, blue, violet, yellow oche, crimson and moss green.

And in "Oratorio" (reviewed plate XVIII, page 32), a singer held a keyboard, his head could be seen around the upper part of the painting. the artist also stucked musical sheets on the work and with oil colours, drew lines to symbolise musical sound waves. His choice of colours here are similar to the first painting reviewed except that they are stronger and much more concentrated.

Engel's choice of colours in these works showed that he was influenced by the tune of the various instruments he used. In the former, he used sombre shades of colours, which goes well with the soft tunes of violin. While in the latter, the use of strong colours and the juxtaposition of these collage materials

mimicked the aggresive feeling of the sharp sound from the instrumentalist. The works of Nissan Engel in nature and rendition was a direct opposite of Hailan's works. While Engel engaged the use of hash colours, Hailan employed soft hues.



Reviewed Plate XVII

"Capriccio" (1995) by Nissan Engel

Mixed Media 40.5cm x 51cm



Reviewed Plate XVIII

"Oratorio" (1995) by Nissan Engel

Mixed Media 40.5cm x 51cm

Udo-Ema Inyang (1944 - 1989)

The painter Ema Inyang is a Nigerian artist who produced a series of works on music. His style is a combination of realism and impressionism, he also borrowed from the cubist tradition of using geometric shapes to break forms in his compositions. In the treatment of his figures, he employed realism, although with an analytical rendition in some parts.

Among his works in review is the painting "Yoruba Drummer" (Reviewed plate XIX, page 35). The drummer is depicted beating the popular "Iya Ilu" (Talking Drum) which is common among Yoruba musicians. Inyang took his time to show the embroidered regalia in a captivating array of red and yellow with a tint of white. In the painting, the three primary colours were used; yellow and red for the background. For the figure, he used blue lines and portrayed him emerging from the background. In the background to the left, there was a reflection of dancing women dressed in white blouse and blue wrapper, and the right, Eyo masquerade.

Inyang in another painting titled "Ntimi" (reviewed plate XX, page 35), reflected the culture of the people of Cross River State of Nigeria. He employed the same analytical/cubist tradition in the painting, lines were used interwovenly portraying rhythmic movements as in sound waves. He made use of the same colour scheme as in "Yoruba Drummer" but with viridian green added. This is a painting of female dancers wearing white blouse and big skirts. The beads worn around their bodies resembled the quavers and staves in musical symbol.



Reviewed Plate xix

"Yoruba Drummer" (1974) by Ema Inyang

Oil **91.5cm x 122cm**



Reviewed plate XX

"Ntimi" (1975) by Ema Inyang

Oil 107cm x 122cm

Kefas Danjuma (b. 1958)

Kefas Danjuma is another Nigerian painter who produced some paintings with musical theme. His painting "Musician outside the City Gate" (1995) (reviewed plate XXI, page 36) portrayed the culture of the Hausa people amongst whom he lives. The main figure in the painting is a Gwoge player, playing his instrument by the entrance of the city. In the background are figures that appeared to be dancing to the rhythm from the musician. The figure whose face he treated in yellow and a touch of blue was fused into the background that comes out in prussian blue. Red was also used on the cloth of the figure and on the floor.



Reviewed Plate XXI
"Musician outside the City Gate" (1995) by Kefas Danjuma
Oil 84cm x 122cm

Conclusion.

This review has been able to look at the works of some old masters and as well as contemporary painters both in Nigeria and abroad, and have analysed their contributions in the relationships between painting and music. The review looked into how these painters approached their subject matter in different manipulations of materials, techniques and styles of presentation ranging from the nature of the forms of the figures and the musical instruments and symbols in their paintings. The researcher realised that most of these painters concentrated in their different ways on depicting the musician using diverse musical instruments; and in some cases, included dancers.

In this study, the researcher has looked at the relationship between a particular type of music and painting. The work was essentially concentrated on creating paintings from listening to Yoruba music. The approach was almost pure stylisation but with a combination of semi-abstraction. The choice of the instruments was relatively connected to the Yoruba musical instruments and other cultural elements. These factors basically differentiated this study from the works reviewed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Materials/Presentation

A selected paint media which includes oil colours, charcoal and pencil were utilized for the purpose of this study. The main supports were canvas for the paintings and paper for preliminary studies.

At a point in the course of the research work, the researcher moved from the conventional approach of single panel picture to multiple ones whereby 4 or 5 panels of canvas were used to paint a single picture. This was to create a sequential visual interpretation of the narration of the selected song.

3.2 Data

The data for this research is made up of studies and drawings as well as sketches derived from selected musical symbols and Yoruba musical instruments. The researchers made use of detailed illustrations and photographs of musical symbols in music textbooks and manuals; and for the instruments, through his personal contact with them in the market where they were displayed for sale; and also as an insider at certain social gatherings where such instruments were used, with particular focus on "Iya Ilu" and"Bata".

A selection of Ebenezer Obey's recorded pieces of music on autio cassettes was gathered.

3.3 Data Collection/Preliminary studies:

The procedure by which data was collected for this research study involved making studies of various musical symbols and Yoruba musical instruments, a selection of "Quavers" "G-Clef" and "Sound Waves", and also "Iya Ilu", "Bata" and "Agidigbo" were made. These selections were made based on their inherent aesthetic qualities. In addition, sketches were made of these musical symbols and instruments mentioned above in pencil on paper.

The researcher later developed the sketches of the selected musical symbols into detailed representational drawings to enhance their visual reinterpretation in colour. Close analytical study of the selected musical instruments was carried out where they were hung for sale.

The researcher made detailed representational drawings of them on the spot in chacoal on paper. (Figures 2-4, pages XVII-XIX). On the spot studies of these musical instruments were made in order to deal with the unnecessary cost of purchasing them. In this process, the researcher found that in their sale points, they pose some aesthetic qualities.

Ebenezer Obey's recorded pieces of music on audio cassettes were gathered. A selection of the following three was made after listening to them on cassette player, they are; (a) "The Horse, the Man, and his Son", (b) Precious Gift" and (c) "Eto Igbeyawo" (The plan of marriage). These set of songs were then listened to several times on cassette player and a

final selection was made of "A" above based on the message of the music. Drawings were then made in pencil on paper derived from the lyrics of the song. Imaginative technique was employed. (Figures 11-15, pages XXVI to XXX).

The son which was sang in Yoruba language is translated thus: A man was going on a journey with his son and decided to use his horse. The man as the father climbed the horse back and asked his son to treck along. Not long after, they met some people who accused the man of being wicked by not allowing the son to ride in his stead. He quickly jumped down, lifted his son unto the horse back while he is turn trecked beside them. A little while, they met some people again who mocked after the man for his foolish act; he then joined his son on the horse back. Shortly after that, they met other people who accused both of them for being wicked by riding together on the poor horse.

The man now confused, jumped down, carried his son down and they both trecked along while the horse trotted behind them. After covering some disctance, they met people who mocked and wandered how they will not ride their horse. The man so confused did not know what to do than to stop to ask himself; "what can I do to satisfy this odd world?".

The musician now concluded and advised his audience that there is nothing one can do to satisfy or please the world. One should only do one's best.

From the interpretation above, the researcher arrived at five segmental drawings in pencil on paper (Figures 11-15, page XXVI-XXX), the first four describing every experience the man had with people. However the fifth was the researcher's imaginative drawing to describe the musician's word of advice for his audience.

3.4 Data analysis

The transformation of data collected for this study into finished paintings was classified into four groups. This was to create a clear and systematic interpretation of the various themes treated. It was also to understand the developmental process of the work, i.e. from simple to complex forms. The classification is as follows:

i. Fusing musical symbols with space

ii. Fusing musical symbols and space with musical instruments

iii. Fusing II with forms.

iv. Fusing II with forms developed from the lyrics of the song. (The Horse the Man and his Son).

i. Fusing Musical Symbols with space

This category of paintings marked the begining of the research study. The researcher here attempted marrying musical symbols and space together, and as much as possible not allowing the forms of the symbols to disappear totally into space. Basically, these musical symbols are only being represented with lines, but attempt

was made to create volume within the body of the symbols i.e Quavers and G-Clef (as the case may be), with the use of chiaroscuro method, while the overlapping of the symbols upon one another created a three dimensional effect as well as depth. Wherever the symbols used are separated from one another, lines of sound waves are used to connect them. This was done to create balance in the compositions. (Plates I to V makes up the paintings in this category).

ii. <u>Fusing Musical Symbols and space with Musical Instruments:</u>

Studies made in this category was a development from the first category. Although the same method of diffusing forms of the symbols into space as experimented in the first category was employed to introduce the musical instruments, but then the instruments were given more prominence, for identification purposes, and the symbols in most cases formed the background for the instruments. (Plates VI-X).

The part of the instrument that determines the sound was emphasized; to avoid unnecessary ambiguity in design. The "top membrane" of the drums used were clearly depicted while in the thumb piano, the part that contains the "iron strings" was used to achieve rhythm in the compositions. The detail illustration of other features of the instruments that would distract attention were either

eliminated or suggested with lines; especially plates VIII and X.

The number of the symbols used here was reduced (compared to the first category) to achieve a feeling of musical sounds; while the sound waves were freely used as usual.

iii. <u>Fusing II with Forms</u>

At this stage in the study, the researcher introduced human forms into the works. This experiment was carried out and the works produced were used as reference point in carrying out the execution of the works in the preceeding stage. These works also served as preliminary studies for the following stage. Plates XI and XII makes up the paintings in this category.

The method of fusing the forms of the instruments with space as in the previous category was introduced here as well. In the paintings, the heads of the figures were given prominence. The remaining part of the bodies were fused into space and only outlined with lines of sound waves. The musical symbols and instruments used were concentrated at an angle. Apart from the top membrane that are clearly visible, every other part could be identified with lines used to bring them out of space. This was so, for the figures to be clearly identified.

iv <u>Fusing II with forms developed from the Lyrics of the Song</u>

This category represented the culmination of the research

work. Having experimented with forms in the previous stage, the studies made from the lyrics of the selected song was introduced. Instead of the figures emerging from the background, the forms were allowed to difuse into space, and in most cases, lines were used to identify the forms. This was to allow the flow of broad sound waves which depicts the serene nature of the melody in the music.

At this point in the course of the research work, the researcher introduced a multiple panel approach whereby five panels of the canvas were used to paint one picture. Colours were allowed to flow from one panel to the other and when observed, each panel tells its own story but together with the rest form a part of the picture in the five panels. This was to give room for continuity from one panel to another.

3.5 Role of colour

In the course of the research study, colour played a significant role at various stages. In the first category of works, colour was used for descriptive purposes and simultaneously as appealed to the imagination of the researcher. It was not used to interprete the functions of the musical symbols employed.

In the second and third categories, the sound or the tone of the musical instrument used at a particular time reflected in the choice of colour used. In the paintings where drums were used in the above

mentioned categories, (plates vi), viii, and x) cool shades of colours were used. This was because these instruments produces soft sounds; while in the paintings where thumb piano was used, warm and brilliant colours were employed (plates VII and IX), the reason being that the instrument produce sharp and high tonal sounds.

In the fourth category, the mood of the people in each painting determined the colours used. In the first panel, warm colours were used, expressing the happy mood of the people as they embark on their journey. As the journey continued and they started reacting to people's remarks, the warm colours began to turn cool in the subsequent panels to express their state of melancholy. In other words, the brilliant shades of tinted viridian greens and lemon yellow as revealed in the first panel, gradually turned to yellow ocher and cool shades of viridian greens and purples as the work progressed.

Colour dots were used in all the works to create colour harmony. Hence they were distributed haphardly over all the paintings.

It was said at the begining of this write-up that Yoruba is a tonal language. The whole body of works created in this research was dominated by subtle tonal expression.

CHAPTER FOUR

CATALOGUE OF WORKS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter consist of the catalogue of works that were executed in the course of the research.

The works are made up of photographs of works executed and presented here as plates.

Problems encountered as well as discoveries and observations made in the course of the study are discussed. A summary of the research work is presented and with recommendations based on the results achieved from the study.

4.2 Introduction to the body of works

Seventeen paintings were executed during the study. They are categorised into four:

1. Fusing musical symbols into space-plates I to V.
2. Fusing musical symbols and space with musical instruments plates VI to X.
3. Fusing 2 above with human forms - plates XI and XII.
4. Fusing 2 above with forms developed from the lyrics of the song "The Horse the man and his son" plate XIII to XVII.

4.3 Catalogue of Works

"Composition No. 2" Plate I (page 47).

This work consisted of two "G" clefs and three quavers. One big "G" clef was centralised wearing a value of purple and orange colours. The body and the tail were outlined with a strong line of purples while the "head" outlined with orange was balanced within a shade of yellow and white and placed at the top right corner of the painting.



Plate I

"Composition No. 2" (1994)

Oil 76cm x 89cm

The second "G" clef is shown almost disappearing into space towards the top left corner but being salvaged by an arrow of sound wave swimming from the right, and with a dot in orange to create depth. Two of the quavers could be spotted juxtaposed like two dancers with their heads swung towards the left. One is wearing a yellow head and the other orange. The third quaver appeared sunk into space and was highlighted with a yellow wave that took its source from another purple wave around the two quavers.

Yellow, orange and purple colours were used in the composition. The overlapping effects of these colours in some areas created an illusion of more colours.

"Composition no 3" plate II (page 49).

This painting was the third executed in the course of the research. It is a composition of three quavers. The biggest among them was stylized having a circular "head" unlike the other two that have the normal oval shape. The smallest of the three served as the connecting link between the other two. Yellow ocher hue was used at the bottom right corner to support the weight of the quaver that is being held up in a sac.

"Composition No. 4)" Plate III (page 50).

This is a painting of two "G" clefs. The forms of the bigger one could be seen to the left side of the painting executed like the opening of a turnel, highlighted in yellow to be identified within the dark environment it was submerged in. The tail was fused into the boderline of the painting at the bottom left corner with the head reflecting the colours of the body. A line of sound wave was used to suspend the yellow clid.

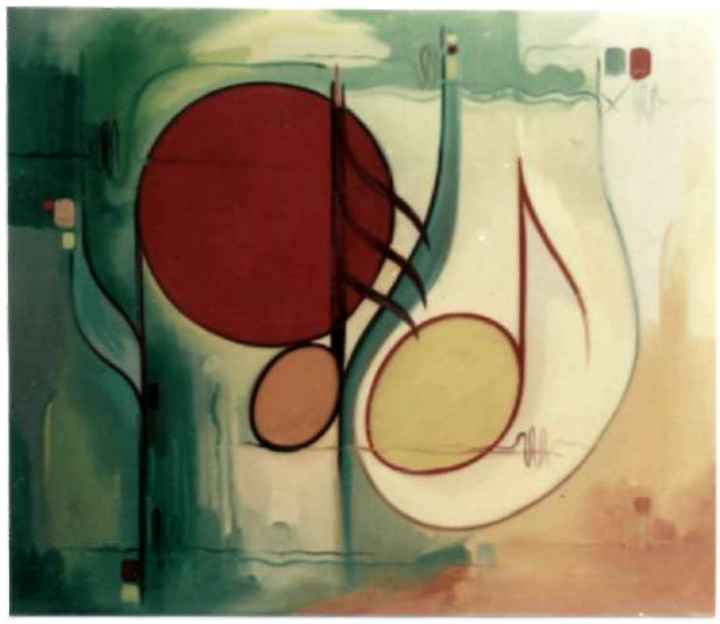


Plate II

"Composition No. 3" (1994)

Oil 76cm x 89cm



Plate III

"Composition No. 4" (1995)

Oil 76cm x 89cm

The second rendered in green and purple, overlapped the bigger one. The form was fused into space but outlined with strong purple lines. The work is a manipulation of lemon yellow, viridian green and purple.

"Composition No. 5" , Plate IV (page 52).

This painting contains four musical symbols of two quavers and two clefs. All tightly composed, overlapping one another. They were all arranged and connected together with webs of sound waves. The scheme is made up of yellow, red and purple. The arrangement of the symbols reflects the spool of a cine camera and as the waves whirls round, it gives a feeling of motion. By the lower part of the top symbols, a "G" clef was fused into space to create depth, and it was outlined with the tail of the small quaver.

"Composition No. 6" Plate V (Page 53).

In this painting, still within the second category, more colours were used and rendered in values of cool colours. This was an attempt to create another painting different from the previous ones with warm colours and limited pallete.

The forms of all the symbols are clearly defined except the smallest "G" clef that was fused into space, and form identified with a line of blue wave descending from the top towards the right hand corner. The bright highlight of the big clef was to attract the attention of the beholder towards the painting.

"Composition with **Iya Ilu I (Talking Drum), Plate VI** (Page 54)

This being the first painting to be executived in this category was a development of "Plate IX", in scheme and in nature.



Plate IV

"Composition No. 5" (1995)

Oil 76cm x 89cm

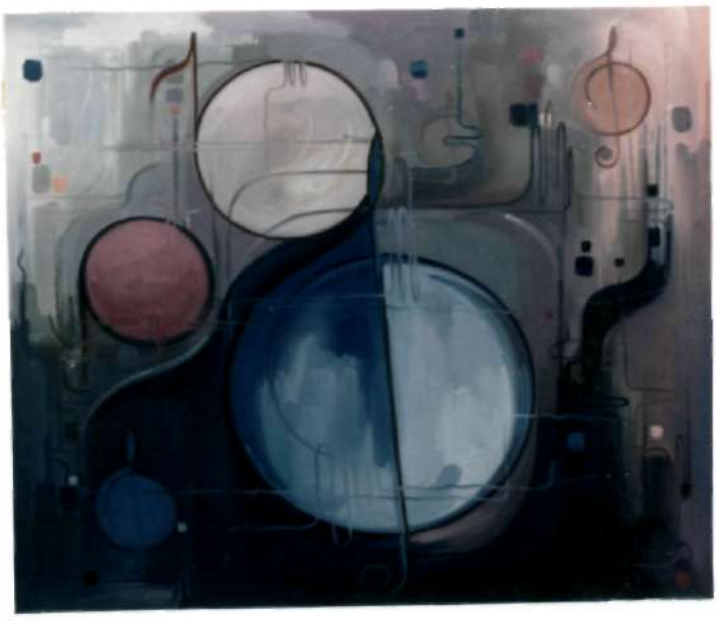


Plate V

"Composition No. 6" (1995)

Oil 76cm x 89cm



Plate VI

"Composition with Iya Ilu I" (Talking Drum) 1995

Oil 61cm x 91.5cm

The two drums were fused into space and they can only be recognised by their top membrane which was executed in tints of cerulean blue, and yellow ocher with purple.

The only musical symbol which is a "G"-Clef could be spotted in the middle top of the painting. It was partially fused into the background. The use of musical symbols was reduced here to allow the musical instrument to be clearly identified. The few sound wave lines used could be seen around the two drums. The brush strokes coupled with the wave lines depicted a female profile facing downwards the right corner and the dark value of colours shielding the two drums could be taken for the dancing torso.

"Composition with Agidigbo 1" (Thumb Piano), Plate VII (page 56).

In this painting, the researcher went back into limited palette and vibrant colours were used. It contains five symbols of two clefs and three quavers. Yellow and red which are the two basic colours employed in this work were evenly distributed. The symbols were fused into space, while the colours were used to balance one another, for example, the yellow ball around the top left corner was also created to balance the yellow background of the opposite corner. The tumb piano was represented with the metal strip and was depicted in a dark hue background made of the symbols.

"Composition with Bata Drum" Plate VIII, (Page. 57).

A set of two identical drums were placed juxtaposed, except that one is bigger than the other, this being the nature of Bata drums. The membrane was clearly identified and the body of the drums were fused into space. The dark values

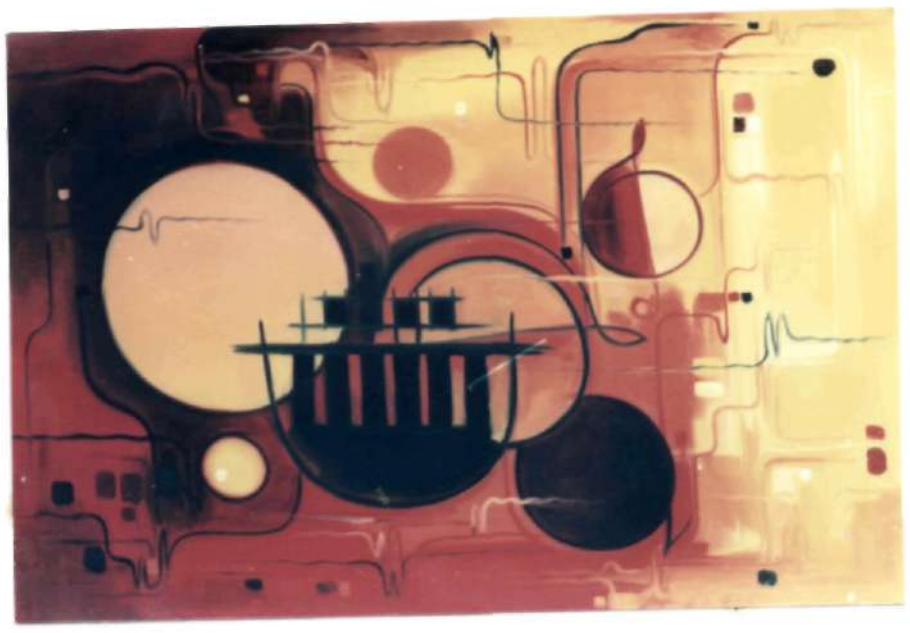


Plate VII

"Composition with Agidigbo I" (Thumb Piano) (1995)

Oil 61cm x 91.5cm



Plate VIII

"Composition with Bata" (1995)

Oil 71cm x 91.5cm

of colour into which the drums were encomposed allowed their forms to come out clearer. Flat brush strokes of emerald green on the big drum suspends it along with a line of black sound wave extruding from the top left corner of the painting.

The use of ivory black colour was introduced in this painting and the experiment gave the work a different outlook from the others executed in the course of this study. Emerald green, and purple with a touch of lemon yellow was also used. Four symbols were used, i.e two quavers and two G clefs arranged haphazardly around the drums. A big circular space was created at the top right corner to make an opening for depth in the work.

"Composition with Agidigbo II" (Thumb Piano), plate IX (page 59).

Here, the forms of the musical symbols were totally fused into space. The big clef was recognised with lines of blue that outlined the form. The musical instrument was suspended by the big clef and another small quaver that was submerged in the shade of purple. the clef was also supported by a ball of ultramarine blue hue around the right bottom corner. The lines of the sound wave acted as supporting cords. The musical instrument has the most outstanding features among the characters in the painting. Composed in shades of blue and red. The metal strings of the instrument were depicted with strong hue of prussian blue.

"Composition with Iya Ilu II" (Talking Drum), Plate X (page 60).

This is one of the paintings in the third category of this study. The irregular round shape rendered in purple represented the membrane



Plate X

"Composition with Iya Ilu II" (Talking Drum) (1995)

Oil 61cm x 91.5cm

of the drum. Lines of sound wave was used to outlines the other parts of the drum. The vertical lines suspended on the body of the drum serves as the tuning cord that is usually lined up round the drum. Right under each cord is a bell like structure which vibrates as the drum is beaten. the symbols used were a clef and a quaver. Dark and light values of colours were used for compositional balance.

"Two Minstrels" Plate XI (Page 62)

Two minstrels as a painting came about as a result of the search on how to introduce the forms developed from the selected song into the symbols and the instruments, to make a composition. The human heads were used for the experiment. Here shades of prussain blue was concentrated at an angle in the painting presenting hevy sound waves with broad lines. The study which is made of two heads were submerged within the shade, which also formed part of the forms of the body of the figures. Highlights of surrounding colours were made to reflect on the face of the figures. The symbols and the instruments were also assembled, overlapping one another, with lines of sound wave as the link, but they were concentrated upwards.

"Let the Music play", Plate XII (Page 63).

The painting is of a female dancer whose forms were fused into space. This study was to be the peak of this experiment at this stage in time. The features of her body were outlined with lines of sound waves, while her left hand encircled a clef. Talking drum was done in a tone of yellow ocher to compliment the blue scheme. This painting paved way for the execution of the preceeding ones.



Plate XI

"Two Minstrels" (1995)

Oil 76cm x 89cm



Plate XII

"Let the Music Play" (1995)

Oil 84cm x 84cm



Plate XIII

"The Horse, the Man and his Son" (1995-97)

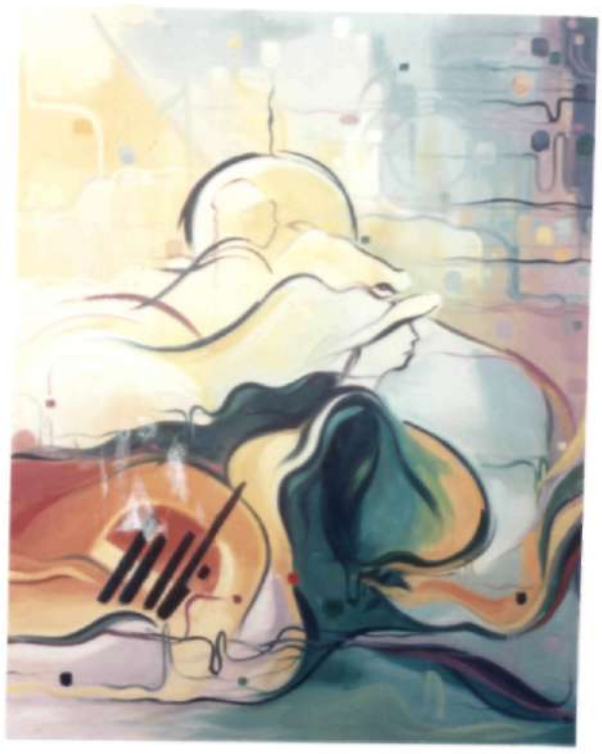
Oil 89cm x 71cm x 5



Plate XIV

"The Man on the Horse" (1995-97)

Oil 89cm x 71cm



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Plate XV

"The Son on the Horse" (1995-97)

Oil 89cm x 71cm

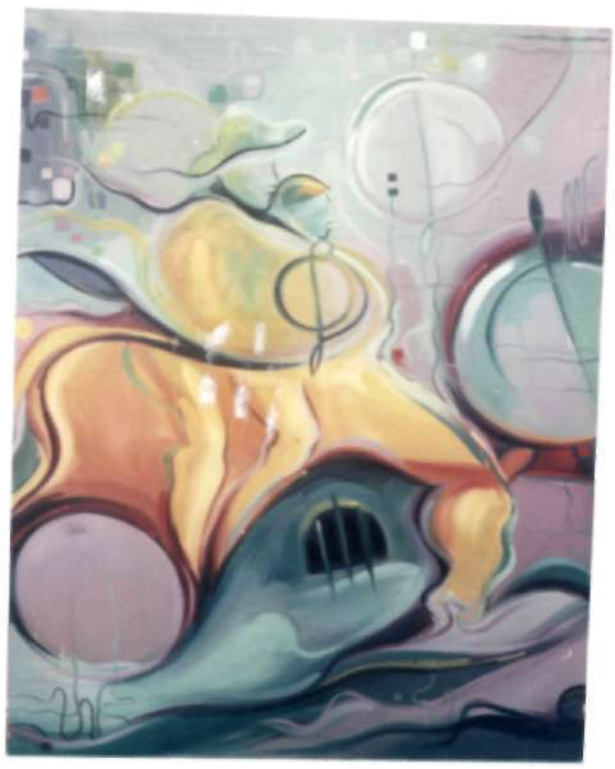


Plate XVI

"Both on the Horse" (1995-97)

Oil 89cm x 71cm



Plate XVII

"Both Trecking" (1995-97)

Oil 89cm x 71cm

The musician concluding, sings, as a human being, one can never satisfy everybody at same time. He advise "do your best and leave the rest". This was visualised in the fifty panel (Plate XVIII page 70). Five human palms were depicted raised up. Beginning from the top down in ascending order, four are executed in hues of green. The last palm at the bottom right corner was executed in red. The first four in green symbolises; for one reason or another, your possibly having the majority of people behind you is not the reason to believe everybody agrees with you. There will always be somebody, somewhere that is against you; hence the red palm.

The separate panel approach helped in expressing the segments into which the song is made.



Plate XVIII
"Be yourself" (1995-97)
Oil 89cm x 71cm

4.4 Problems and Solutions

In the course of this study, many problems were encountered. They ranged from technical to creative, but they were variously treated.

The first problem was selecting the musical instruments that would be used. This was solved by a careful observation of the most common instruments the musician uses for his music. They are made up of "Talking Drum" "Bata" and "Thumb Piano". It was found that these particular instruments are deeply embued with aesthetic qualities.

The second problem had to do with visualising the objects in the selected song. (The horse the man and his son) the musician reflected horse in the title of the son and as well on the images on the album cover. At the begining of the son, he introduced; "Esin pelu ketekete" meaning "Horse and Donkey..." the researcher then was faced with the problems of selecting between the two animals. Eventually, the horse was adopted to justify its use on both the cover of the album and in the title, and for the fact that the musician himself mentioned it in the song.

The researcher was also faced with the problem of fusing the symbols and the instruments with space. The problem was solved by dissolving the boundaries of areas of these items and allowing the space within their boundary to interact with the item through blending with brush. Lines were used in defining spaces and objects and for compositional manipulations.

Multiple panels was introduced when the problem of interpreting the various facets of the themes in the song. (The horse, the man and his son) arose. the researcher had to join all these panels together from the back for the purpose of working on all of them at the same time. This helped in manipulating the various colours of the background within each panel to move from one to another through a gradual continuity.

4.5 Observations and Discoveries

Certain discoveries and observations were made in the course of this study.

It was discovered that in the painting where multiple panels were used, each panel could stand as a complete and independent work on its own. It was also discovered that the multiple panel approach allows for a higher degree of freedom of expression.

Two of the musical instruments used (Iya Ilu and Bata) have to date escaped modern innovations in terms of design. This makes them uniquely timeless.

Another observation made was that some of the paintings in the first two categories (Plates III and VIII) gave a landscape scenery. This was achieved while attempting to create depth in the painting.

It was observed in the course of data collection that artists who have produced art works based on the relationships between painting and music have tended to concentrate on a photographic frame work were musicians

performing with their instruments as well as dancers were created. Often times the compositions are purely of modern musical instruments alone. This was observed in the review of relevant literature. It was also observed that work produced at the final stage of this study could be effectively adapted for murals.

Line was found to be a very powerful expressive element in the interpretation of music through painting. It has the interractive definition and fusion of the sounds of the various musical instruments into harmonious creations.

4.6 Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

This study has examined ways of developing visual concepts for painting with the use of verbal message in Yoruba songs, thereby developing a unique expression in painting.

A visual adaptation of oral art into pictorial art was looked into and ways were found for achieving a fussion between the two for socio educational purpose.

The research work started by looking at the effort of some artists who have tried to merge music and painting. It continue in the studio practice whereby sketches and drawings of a selected musical symbols and instruments were developed. Figure studies and sketches were also made from selected songs of Chief Ebenezer Obey; as data for the research work.

Furthermore, the painting studies started by creating fussion between space and the selected musical symbols whereby a visual balance is created.

The second stage was the fussion of musical symbols and traditional musical instruments. Parts of the forms of the two were fused into space, and lines were used to define these forms in some areas to disallow their total dissolution into space.

In the third stage, human forms were introduced into the second stage: and the fourth stage which is the final stage brought about the introduction of the studies and sketches developed from the selected song into the second stage.

In this research work colour was used as a means of expressing melody and tunes. This was achieved through the sensitive employment of a deep dialogue between felt response of the music with an instinctive interpretation of the same.

Colour dots were also used freely and spontaneously for design purposes and to interpret single sonorous sounds.

In conclusion it can be said that this research has shown that it is possible to produce an interpretation of music into painting and the works created can form an interactive dialogue of two creative mediums. Probably, more importantly, the challenge of showing the interelatedness of the various levels of artistic expression, be in music, dance, sculpture, painting, among which seem to have been abandoned with modern art is

possible and attainable.

Recommendations:

It is hoped that recommendations made in this chapter will help artists and those that would be interested in this artistic process benefit from the discoveries and observations made.

The researcher shares opinion with Danjuma (1991) who suggested that documentation of Nigerian artist that are dead and those still living, should be carried out by artists and as well as art historians. As noted by him "... to give a source of reference for the younger generation of artists in the development of their artistic abilities and to leave a legacy for posterity".

It is also believed that there still exists more areas that can be explored in the relationship of art and music. Other ethnic groups in their rich cultural heritage can be taken up within and outside Nigeria for a similar work.

The researcher also recommends that any interested artist who wish to continue this study or to embark on a similar project should acquint himself or herself with some basic and elementary knowledge of music.

The use of computer to analyse music today is no longer a dream. It is even possible to simulate this in colour. These facilities can form a new ground for a study of this nature.

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