Clothing - A Functional Artform

By

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"

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DECLARATION

I, the researcher, declare that this project and all experimentation, data collection from the field and ultimate writings of this thesis was carried out by myself and that all findings are true from my sincere observations.

Signature: 

Date: 16th August, 1997

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled "Clothing, A Functional Artform" by Weekes, A.J.H.; meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Masters of Art Industrial Design (Textile Design) of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My Darling Mother;

Giani Odutokun;

Fela Anikulapo-Kuti

And to World Peace.

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I wish to express my gratitude to those special people who showed sincere concern for my work and genuinely helped toward the completion of my project.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis entitled - Clothing - A functional Art-form is comprised of 95 pages, and illustrations in the form of 25 plates and 13 figures.

The aim of this study lay in producing a small collection of clothing as viable, visual art forms - as removed from "fashion", through its relationship with sculpture and painting, and to develop these art-forms as wearable art for the human figure.

The problem in this study lay in the removal of clothing from the platform of "fashion" to be placed on the platform of "visual art", as a vehicle for making artistic statements through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

This was not a comparative study, as both techniques of painting and sculpture are not confined to just the canvas, or the wood, bronze and clay media. Textiles, clothing, painting and sculpture have a lot in common and these include - design; composition; balance and form, all integral in the creative process.

The method of research utilized the experimental survey as the design and 3 data collection instruments were established - the primary and secondary sources of data, and the studio experiments, which involved the intense technique of the manipulation of textilcs/cloth/fabric into clothing. This included the technique of innovative stitching through the joining of the cut patterns, the applique method, the quilting method, machine embroidery - all of which attributed to sculptural and painterly effects.

Eight garments were produced in the studio, through the basic application of cut and sewing machine stitching. The materials used for culling, quilting, applique and embroidery, photographic reproduction of works and literature related to the study were documented.

In the findings, the sculptural and painterly qualities of each garment was established in reflection of the aims and objectives of this study and concluded that as wearable art reflective of African culture, the researcher's works could be worn within the society for any occasion.

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DEFINITION OF SPECIAL TERMS

Aesthetics : The theory or philosophy of the perception of the beautiful. That which makes something beautiful.

Appliqué : To apply, to attach one material to another; in painters vocab – "collage"; in textile terms – clothcollage" and "appliqué".

Art-Form : Any of the established forms of art be it visual arts or the performing arts, etc.

Bias-cutting : A technique of cutting on the 'cross' between weft and warp.

Clothing : A form of dress; apparel.

Contemporary : Up-to-date; modern.

Couture : French High Fashion of exorbitantly priced garments.

Culture : A people's way of life; a state of intellectual and artistic development; that which defines a people.

Design : To contrive, to formulate, to project, to plan… Design is visual thinking, perhaps of a higher order than verbal thinking. A preliminary sketch; a study.

Draping : A method of clothing construction where some bits of fabric on one part of garment, is drawn over, folded or placed on another part of the fabric of the garment to give particular shape to the garment. For example the East Indian women's Saris.

Esoteric : Intelligible only to the initiated of philosophical doctrines.

Embroidery : Ornamentation done with the needle, onto fabric.

Fabric : Woven, felted or knitted material, cloth.

Fashion : The prevailing style or mode of dress; prevailing practice.

Functional : Of having social purpose and value; practical.

Intangible : Unfounded; not grasped mentally; unable to be touched.

Neo-traditional : "neo" meaning "new" or "modern". Traditional meaning the surviving and thriving art traditions handled on to the present. Hence new tradition.

Opus : A work, normally literature

Organic : Pertaining to the nature of organisms, plants animals.

Painting : The art of laying on colours or producing representations in colours; a composition.

Prophylactic : Protecting against disease; preventive

Ritual : A prescribed manner of performing divine service; performance of rites and ceremonies especially in an elaborate or excessive way.

Sculpture : The art of cutting, carving, modeling or casting wood, stone, clay, metal, paper or textiles into representation of natural objects in-round or in-relief.

Superimposition : To lay upon something else.

Symbolic : Representative; signifying something.

CHAPTER – ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Food, Textiles, Clothing, Architecture, Painting, Ceramics, Sculpture – a never ending revolution in our everyday survival since the beginning of human existence on this ancient buoyant planet. Clothing is an art, a functional art-form -- the focal point of this study.

Cloth is a medium which is artistically transformed to clothing. The fibres that compose the cloth do vary and unlimited and these affect the very execution of garments. Cloth and Clothing – apart from food and shelter is one of man's basic necessities – born out of a natural instinct facility, for survival and continual preservation. Like food and shelter, it is a protective asset against life's trials and tribulations. Clothing can be quite eloquent by the story it tells, hence poetic – through its very construction and fabric used. Here in Nigeria, this is manifested by its vast cultures – the various peoples and ethnic groups that exhibit this fact.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Cloth on its own is an extremely and dynamically sophisticated medium – before the transformation process into clothing. Cloth is a need, therefore, clothing will always be functional, whatever its aesthetic values.

Today, different peoples of the world can be identified on the basis of what and how textiles are used. For instance, the Eskimo is recognizable for his extensive use of woolen and animal skin materials which provide warmth; the Chinese peasant in his ubiquitous dungarees or jumpers which is almost always dyed in blue with large sun hats and sandals; the modern Western woman for her work skirt and blouse (or suit); the Indian woman for her "Sari" – a loose fitting and very large wrapper under which she wears a blouse; the Arabian woman in her Sombre coloured wrappers and veils; the Masai with her beautifully designed armulets, beads and loincloth; the Xhosa and

> Zulu of South Africa with their brightly embellished fabrics rich in abstract motifs – such is the efficacy of textiles as a medium of identity and solidarity – Ogboli(1993).

In the pilot study the researcher was inclined to place clothing or the act of clothing oneself – akin to nature and its elements. For example, trees symbolize a fluidity in the continual cyclical phenomenon of nature's children through its composition, its prominence, and its multiple dimensions in the form, through its shedding and revival of new bark. Clothing symbolize sculptures of interwoven thoughts, all stitchery a stationary or mobile painting framed by the human form. The human form completes the painting, carrying each symbolic stitch to a communicable continuum.

> Held (1978) stated that; - Authorities have long debated the initial impetus that led human beings to clothe their bodies. As the species Homo-Sapiens evolved, the thick mat of hair that covered the body gradually disappears, and the denuded "creatures" were impelled to don artificial coverings. Was it a quest for protection from the elements, a desire for power and prestige, or simple modesty that made them take this step. ….. although virtually every culture we know has employed some sort of clothing (if only a tiny loincloth), modesty was a later development. Not until the wearing of clothes had become common place did people acquire vanity and the feeling that nudity was shameful ….. since the earliest civilizations were established in the warm regions of the earth, clothing was not essential for comfort or for protection from the elements. It seems likely then, that clothing first developed in a display of power, to frighten the enemy or to demonstrate the skill of the hunter – who adorned himself with furs as a testament to success in the hunt. Later, rudimentary textiles were substituted for the pelts, and clothing became a means of gaining social approval.

The increasing popularity of clothing led to a heightened demand for textiles, which in turn stimulated weaving. As variety in fabric patterns emerged, tribes began to engage in an exchange of designs……

On the garment's wearability, the researcher posed the questions:

ii. What makes a garment or piece of clothing wearable apart from the societal implications? Basically, any clothing possesses allowances for the head, the arms, and the legs to go through; the ability of the garment (fabric) to "breathe against the human body"; the capability of the legs to move forward and backward; the arms to swing freely; the head to move unrestrained; the entire body to sit without a problem or to move about easily in the garment – all of these factors and more are fundamental to a garment's wearability.

iii. Functionality also extends to when, how and where to wear a garment, which is essentially left to individual or society at hand. The weather is almost always the deciding factor, apart from the occasional protocol.

Procurement of good quality cloths of a varied range used as resource material, and made into clothing art was very important here.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i) To produce a small collection of clothing as viable, visual art forms-as removed from "fashion", through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

ii) To establish the data collection instruments toward the production of these clothing.

iii) To establish the experimentation processes to be utilized in the studio.

iv) To make these processes work within sculpture and painting.

v) To develop the design as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

i) How can clothing maintain its artistic statements through sculpture and painting as removed from "fashion"?.

ii) What are the data collection instruments to be used in this project?

iii) Can the results of these studio experiments work on human figure?

iv) How are these techniques applied in the process, to work within sculpture and painting?

v) What makes a garment wearable in respect to the techniques to be used in the production of these clothing artforms?

1.5 JUSTIFICATION

Clothing- a need in every environment – is an important and interesting cultural aspect in all societies. It is an everyday phenomenon which the researcher sought to re-emphasize in a different (original) form, from an artistic perspective. Because of the metamorphosized way of life in Nigeria and the rest of the world in general based on the adapted pre-occupation to accumulate so much in so little time, with scant recognition of the dignity of labour hence complete disregard to the quality factor which has penetrated all sectors.

One may take a stand on this re-emphasis through any of the art-forms including clothing, painting, sculpture, performing arts, creative writing, etc. This is a means of looking at the issues through these media in the hope of the preservation of mankind.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was significant in that it showed that:

ARTISTIC

i. The researcher's interpretations in the clothing art-form will be appreciated most especially in the technique of innovative stitching.

ii. This move will highlight the enormous possibilities that can be explored in garment design and construction, toward producing innovative clothing which reflects an affinity to sculpture and painting. Because this area has never really been fully explored, as far as contemporary "fashion" as an art is concerned, in Nigeria – this resulted in the researcher looking mostly toward foreign references.

EDUCATIONAL

i. This study will promote the researcher's work as a significant addition to the other prevailing art-forms in Nigeria.

ii. The researcher believed that this study will encourage other artists/designers in clothing to apply more innovation in their art, especially in the area of cut. Work documented for this study will serve as sources of reference.

1.7 POPULATION

The population is described as the totality of all elements, subjects or numbers that possess a specified set of one or more common characteristics – S.A. Adetoro (1986)

The subject matter here were the actual textiles used for the project. The textiles used were also found at different sources where the quality differs in each location. The locations included Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano, Lagos and Zaria. The fabrics experimented upon included Adire cloths, Luru cloths, Wax-prints, Cotton Shedas, Linens and Polyster Streteh.

1.8 ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Works to be produced from the studio experiments would be analyzed through an artistic viewpoint, looking at "new form" in clothing, as visual art.

A catalogue of the studio project would be developed.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURE

The method of research utilized the experimental survey as the design.

The experiment, to be done in the studio is based on cut and stitch of cloth toward effecting sculptural and painterly qualities. This included the use of local cloths, to be found in some old cities in Nigeria. The relevant data collection instruments are to be established.

1.10 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is delimited to the following chosen materials used for this project:

Cotton corduroy, Cotton Sheda, Leather, Adire, cotton industrial Print, cotton Luru and Polyester stretch-selected from the cities of Zaria, Kaduna, Kano, Ibadan and Lagos respectively.

1.11 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This project consisted of Five chapters. Chapter one dealt with the introductory aspects of the research while chapter two reviewed relevant literature and related works. Chapter three described the methodology of the study supported with the experimental process of works while chapter four and five explained the problems encountered, the prototype catalogue of works, the summary, conclusion and makes recommendations as well as listing references.

1.12 CONCLUSION

All conclusions were based on the findings within the research itself, with specification on the analysis of all data collected.

CHAPTER -TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The researcher's chosen topic "Clothing, A Functional Art-Form," needed to be fragmented into a few sub-groupings which was necessary to buttress the actual core of the research. The literature sources procured for this purpose was fairly varied enough in its content to warrant an incentive in making a strong point.

In relation to the aim and objectives of this research, the following sub - groupings were coined, to be expanded upon in analyzing researched literature: Art in General in Relation to textile/clothing; Fashion and Design; Nigeria; Fibre, Textile, Cloth and Fabric; Art in the very fibre of our lives; Thread in Art or art in Thread; Differences and Similarities in other Art-Forms : Sculpture plus painting – relationship to Cloth and Clothing; Modern Artists Works; Summary.

2.1 ART IN GENERAL IN RELATION TO TEXTILE/CLOTHING

Generally, textiles and clothing are rapidly changing in today's World, but what is interesting though is the fact that these subjects are; "still one of the great neglected areas of art historical research …that it can be demonstrated that textiles have been proved historically to be of greater significance than sculpture", Picton, (1991). Picton was poignant in making an aptly brief statement in his overall review of "African Explores - Twentieth Century African Art" exhibition, which focused mainly on the on the traditional and contemporary arts and artists of Africa- featuring sculpture pieces, painting and photography- while textiles and clothing was conspicuously leftout, avoided, put to the back or what have you. Vogel (1991), who wrote "Africa Explores", in response to her intricate researches of African arts culminating in the Twentieth Century African Art exhibition looked at various strains of "Art" as applied to Africa and as a result coined a few "labels" in relation to context of the differing visual arts. These included; "Traditional Art", "New functional Art", Urban Art' 'International Art', and 'Extinct Art'.

In a move to avoid the trap of labelling one's art or one's work, the Researcher was inclined to allow her work be absorbed by the perceptive qualities of the on-looker. But, as it was established that the topic of 'clothing' would have been focused upon from an artistic perspective - the most relevant of these labels initiated by Vogel was looked at in relation to the researcher's work. Vogel stated that;

> 'New Functional Art' is an art that will become traditional if it continues to be made by the next generation. This art is not usually identified with single ethnic groups... generally made on commission in rural villages, and small Towns... serves newly felt purposes in its community and is generally used in public contexts often performances that are not a continuation or an up-dating of older practices. The artist tend to be self-taught innovators. experimenting with an eclectic mix of materials and aggressive, and conspicuously different from traditional art. These new kinds of arts can reach a wide market making the artists famous. New Functional Art is usually more direct and expedient and really have more in common with traditional art and is progress oriented...

For most of this definition, its content projected a fair insight into the 'functional' aspect of the researcher's work on an external issue, but of course the inner sensibility of each work of art is an intangible aspect and can only be manipulated by the Artist herself. The danger of this 'New Functional Art' trapping label from which the researcher tended to avoid, is that it sought to box and package all art forms that somewhat conformed to its matter of factness giving no room for a progressive tangibility for the receiving eye and, this could also thwart an Artist's individual projected inner sensibility resulting in some mild form of frustration for both the Patron and Artist. This was because of the contradictory issues involved. This applied also to Vogel's other initiated labels in relation to her researches on African Arts.

Beckett (1988) said that;

> "If we want to appreciate art, the first sacrifice we must make is time... to assimilate a work of literature takes time. The same holds for music and drama, where we conform to the regulated time here... in other words, all to be 'learned', 'read','listened to' and that takes time."

The Author, who happened not to be an artist of any established medium, showed a strong conviction on the worldliness of art, its value and its progress. Despite this, she focused upon great women artists who were mainly of the European world, apart from one Iranian artist. Was this universal view of 'contemporary' art short sighted, in its failure to select also, great women artists of Africa, Asia and the Americans (mainly the Caribbean basin to Central and South America) for inclusion in her overall "refreshing, provocative and optimistic piece of art criticism" which indeed would have complemented her European counterparts? Was her lucid and informative commentary also short sighted in its failure to select more fibre/textile/clothing artists which would have shown her broad mindedness in creative contemporary art-form though she included the great fibre artist-Magdalena Abakanowicz from Poland -to uphold her position. Nevertheless, the researcher must congratulate Wendy Beckett for the statement she made on one's ability to appreciate art which the researcher quoted initially. It applies especially to those art-forms which are 'New' to the observing eye - for example, the researcher's own which challenges established conventions.

> The word ART derived from ARS the Latin word for 'skill' that is the exceptional talent manifest in any human endeavour... the word 'technology' derived from 'techne' and 'logos', the Greek words for 'Art' and 'Science' respectively, alluding to the systematic knowledge and craft associated with both utilitarian and non-utilitarian creations. Thus, the history of Art, in its broadest sense as an embodiment of human skills, would be the history of human ingenuity and contrivance; it would cover the range of human enterprise, in handicrafts and architecture, industry, medicine, government and law, religion and education ..... hence, the fact that artistic skill has a scientific or technical component-Lawal, (1990)

Lawal rightly stated in short that great works of art demand great skill or a mastery of it. This is an issue that needed an emphatic position here, which is an important element in appreciating a work of art. In viewing the researcher's work, one can see for himself. Clothing construction demand skilful knowledge and through constant practice, the art in it will illuminate itself.

Adejumo (1990) also contended; "there are two basic aspects of art, its aesthetic or representational context comprised of form and embodying style, and its meaning context comprised of subject and symbolic associations..... that artists must have the technical capacity to attain superior focal excellence in his art....."

So we see that both Adejumo and Lawal share the same view on artistic excellence, based on technical skill, not condoning the "two basic aspects of art"

This is where the fundamentals of design come in, the creative process that culminates in a masterful composition which establishes its 'aesthetics', embodying style', and 'symbolic associations', which applies to all art-forms, including the art of clothing.

2.2 FASHION AND DESIGN

Held, (1978) talked about the 'aesthetic impulse' where;

> It is believed that variety in design and the desire for enhancement of the created object followed closely upon the invention of fabric. Supporting this idea are examples from primitive cultures of mats, fishing nets and baskets in which several materials such as grasses, sinews, strips of skin have been combined indicating a basic interest in design and colour.

The researcher would have super imposed the phrase 'ancient traditions' (or any other less demoralising word or phrase) onto 'primitive' for this denotes something that is or was of little significance that should be thrown out the back.

Held continued that; "it is impossible to make anything without designing it, either consciously or unconsciously for design implies a series of choices".

This applies to all art forms - an apt assertion by Held.

"Implore you - do not perpetuate the common mistake by labeling me a designer. My clothes are not meant to be fashionable……". This is a strong assertion by artist Akuzuru, (1993). She gave a dynamic view point on 'clothing' as opposed to the widely pre-occupied notion of 'fashion' which is bent on superficiality, in terms of commercialism/materialism. She poetically stressed upon a more 'tangible' clothing, which is; "a sculpture of inter-weaving thoughts, all stitchery a stationary or mobile painting framed by the human form ;"and the design of clothing is unlimited. This is

somewhat echoed by the late famous French artist of clothing - Mme Vionnet in the 1930s. Vreeland (1977) quoted her ; "remember I never made fashion, I never saw fashion, I don't know what fashion is. I made the clothes I believed in. "Vreeland, author of the book; "Inventive Paris Clothes," featured Mme Vionnet as one of clothing's greatest artists amongst other great talents of dress design and making. A pioneer and revolutionary in her art form, she was well known for extensive use and mastery in cutting her fabrics on the bias, resulting in astounding imagery in clothing.

"There are no boundaries for what can be fabric, for what clothes can be made from... anything can be clothing." Miyake (1978). In the world of design, Issey Miyake is one of the most respected and celebrated clothing artists of all time. A pioneer of new technology and fabrics, dedicated to the on- going experimentation of cloth, his works continue to attract comments from Architects and Philosophers, and regarded by many as an Artist.

Holborn, (1995) stated: "His aesthetics are always tempered by function and practicality... seldom mention fashion and projected his clothing forms as visual creation, explicitly denying couture. Greatly inspired by sculpture, dance, theater, African art and the human figure, his work has been displayed in the controlled setting of the museum installation, yet his work only completed when his clothes are in motion, vitalized by the human body."

The book "Issey Miyake" by Holborn (1995), is a scholarly and extensive work on a great master of clothes making. Miyake's ideologies are very similar to that of the Researcher's aims, which lie on the projection of the clothing as a wearable art.

McDermott, (1981)looked at influential designs and design ideas in a period described as "Post-Punk" culture, based on extensive interviews with some of the designers who have helped to create the idea of British style" in the 80s from fashion and textiles to graphics and interior design. It gave a comprehensive survey of various reactions to 'new innovation' which led to a design evolution in an otherwise conservative society bathed in static nostalgic tradition. This was challenged and the now established 'British style' eventually won international acclaim- In a way this coincided with the Researcher's attempt at establishing something 'new' in terms of design in clothing, which may take time to be appreciated and accepted- much like in work of art. 'Street Style' looked at the work of great clothing artists, the most influential at the time being Vivienne

Westwood -who gave a history of their struggle for establishment within an establishment. Today, she is one of the world's most important clothing designers. "Cloth is highly valued in Nigerian society ...," Diogu, (1993). He continued on the same energetic path, that;

> "it is worthy to stress here that the viability of an art-form should not be accessed by the number of exhibitions of that product held on the either monthly or annual basis, but the viability could be accessed by the level of awareness, adaptations and diversity in the application of the end uses of the product in the society."

Diogu looked at the status of textiles in contemporary Nigerian art, gave a brief but comprehensive over-view on the history of textiles in Nigeria, the functions of cloth in Nigeria and the role of textile Artists in the society. His statement on the, 'viability of an art form' clearly stressed upon the functional issues as regards the art of textiles and its significance in contemporary societal needs. It is a scholarly paper which sought to increase, popularize and make use of the traditional cloths which are becoming a rarity in the country.

Ogboli, (1993) also made a significant contribution, on his stand on 'textiles as a medium of cultural identity,' where he focused upon fashion design and clothing manufacture. Here he, briefly : "identified two categories of fashion and designing: the traditional and the modern' and also briefly touched on; "the issue of fashion and societal values - as ways of identification, solidarity and aesthetics' and observed; "the attempted harmonization of the old and new in materials and usage."

So we see that both authors Ogboli and Diogu conveyed a parallelism in their synopses in terms of re-promotion of traditional cloths for use in contemporary design. 'Old but New,' is very much a practical reality in the Researcher's work, in terms of different fabrics experimented with other elements.

Design as a human cognitive reaction, implies conceptualization, innovation and creativity. In these terms design becomes the creation of visual structures and organisations of forms and motifs.

Bates, (1975) "Basic design" projected candid explorations on the principles of design as applied to Photographers, Painters, Sculptors, Architects, Decorators, Textile artists, where the design elements are expanded upon which included shape, texture, value, colour, unity, balance and rhythm.

> As textile artist Oguntona, (1986) stated:-The term Design in broad concept has implications for most human behaviour, especially with respect to manipulation of structural elements. The design phenomena started with the creation of Man himself when various anatomical pieces were modeled and the structured into what we know as the human body. Designs abound everywhere in the environment - from the far away architectural ant-hills to the fragile and intricate spider-web at the corner of the house. Design therefore, is inherent, integral and wholly related to Man's daily life.

These are incorporated in clothing, fashion and textiles, of which all come under one of Man's basic necessities, apart from food and shelter. Here, the significance of 'design' in human development cannot be more clearly projected and clothing is one of its most important recipients.

Eicher (1970) expanded on "Design Components of West African Textile Production" in that, "design and components which are culturally distinct include colour and motif" and that; "motif preferences are culturally distinct." She analysed two concepts on this issue:

> that of textiles as social documentation, in that textiles and dress, dress, as many other cultural artefacts - are socially significant and provide a visual record of social and historical events;
>
> I. that of textiles as cultural authentication, which refers to the transforming of a selectively borrowed cultural object by the receiving culture into differing levels of adaptation, which includes selective borrowing and using of an artefact; distinctive naming of an application of an additional design superimposed onto the original design of the artefact to make it more distinctive.

Once again, we have another writer who looked into the concept of 'old and new,' meaning the combination of the traditional cloths with contemporary applications - hence, the significant role of Textile Artists. Clothing, here too, is another issue where the reinstating of traditional cloths for

use in contemporary clothing art and design, could produce exciting results which could also serve the needs of the society. Here, the issue of the function of cloth materialized once again as an aspect of daily life, difficult to condone.

Holborn,(1995) said that: "Issey Miyake believed that design is the link between commerce and innovation...."

Carr and Pomproy, (1992) asserted that; "Design is related to invention. The process of design begins with market research and continues by originating new styles, developing samples, refining business objectives and achieving commercial garments." This is the commercial side of 'fashion designing.' Here the researcher stressed that though there is a fundamentality in the creative design arena between the fashion business and the profound, contemplative platform upon which the researcher took her stand from an artistic perspective- the researcher chose to decline from the mass-production oriented fashion circle, bent on immediate profits through the aggressive nature of gross commercialism - which the researcher believed constricts and stagnates the natural creative processes which thrive on perseverance, masterful skill, consistent quality and perfection. Once these factors were recognised by the observer of the finished work, and hence, became appreciative enough to the extent of wanting to purchase the work - in the end profit is gained - therefore, the artist eventually becomes financially successful, through constant proliferation. "Fashion Design and product Development" is a scholarly work by Carr and Pomeroy aimed at presenting fashion design as a commercial activity. The course was sequentially broken down into different stages starting from the 'Industry Structure ;' 'Design and Innovation;' 'Quality Control;' 'Materials ;' including fibres: yarns, testing, dyeing , developments, etc. 'Manufacture' to 'Costs of Product, development. So this was very much business oriented, but in some ways relevant to the Researcher's work, where intense organisation also plays a very important role.

Carr and Pomeroy, (1992) stated – "one of the most important factors which differentiates humans from other animals is their use of clothing. It is used not simply to provide a micro-climate for the wearer's body, but also to conceal the body and reveal its wearer's status and personality to others. To satisfy this concealing and revealing process diverse kinds of clothing are used."

One of the most mysterious aspects of clothing is fashion. Though, the researcher's work was inclined to veer away deliberately, from the constraints of what the term and the reality of 'fashion' constitutes, it is nevertheless a topic intended to be introductory in nature, that warrants a worthy brief analysis to the build up of the basics and artistics of clothing.

Anthropologists, psychologists and sociologists have all attempted to analyze this concept of fashion, but it can be said that fashion appears to be a social process in which some people begin by adopting the image of people unlike themselves. Those in the same sector of society tend to emulate their distinctive appearance, with publicity in the media playing its part, until the differentiation disappears and the process begins all over again in the research for new appearance.

It is the complex of activities and attitudes called fashion which influences the behaviour of different groups in relation to clothing.

Polhemus, (1978) made the important distinction that, "those in society who wear traditional, classic, relatively unchanging styles – use clothing as symbols of continuity or changelessness, while those who wear the latest fashions use clothing as symbols of change and progress". Polhemus contrasted the use of tartan in kilts, traditional since the late Nineteenth Century, with the fashionable uses of tartan in skirts or almost any other garment.

Rouse, (1989) identified, "fashionable behaviour as different from taste and as a sort of conspicuous consumption, implying some leisure time to pursue it, as being up-to-date, as seeking some part of prestige, and as being creative in some sense by selecting the styles which will be emulated. Fashion ideas are selected and promoted among groups in society at all levels. Hence a number of styles are developed which appeal to different groups."

Oguntona (1993) presented his view on fashion:

- Fashion is said to revolve in circles, hence it reflects historical, cultural, economical, political and social life of the Nation..... it should therefore, reflect a time and express people's mood and lifestyle. Like music, fashion is seasonal, temporary, fluctuates and fades but can resurface again with time..

can be likened to an epidemic which is contagious and spreads like wild fire. The life span may be short, when a new fashion hits town, the previous one mellows into history. It is only time and designers that play on the intelligence or the short memory of the fashion-conscious world. Sophistication means to keep abreast of new developments, trends, requirements and challenges posed by the modern day whims and caprices of fashion.

2.3 NIGERIA

Diogu, (1993) said that: "cloth is highly valued in Nigerian society. The status of textiles is determined to a large extent by the social and religious values of the society."

The primary role of woven cloth was its use for apparel fabric and the use was restricted to the adult members of the society.

Inspite of the restriction placed on the use of apparel fabrics by adults in particular the demand for local cloths had continued to increase in the society. Four important factors responsible for this growth were the abundance of cotton which is the basic raw material; the acceptance of textile art as a viable profession; the availability of a large indigenous population who use cloth for apparel fabric and various end uses for which local cloths have been subjected. The reasons stated above gave rise to the establishment of local textile industries in areas like Akwete, Oshogbo, Iseyin, Okene, Asaba, Kano, Giboko and Ilorin.

De Negri, (1976) asserted that: "The spread of Islam did much to promote the cloth industry in Nigeria. One of the first pre-requisites of the converted, was that he should clothe himself to the best of his ability". Therefore, this necessitated the production of greater amounts of cloth. "Generally, the spread of Islam in West Africa developed the introduction of writing and the establishment of Quranic scholarship. This had a profound lasting effect on embroidery, clothing and art," stated Heathecote (1972).

The diverse application of textiles in the society could be used to assess its status. In the traditional society, the following references are often made to reinforce the value of textiles i.e. cloth for wealth; cloth for protection; cloth for adornment; cloth for identity and cloth for passage.-Diogu (1993)

2.4 FIBRE, TEXTILE, CLOTH AND FABRIC

"Cloth is as natural a sculpture medium to use as stone, wood, or ivory have been or are still to other cultures. Cloth and related materials are a part of our everyday life, just as seal skin and ivory are a part of the everyday life of the Inuit Indian (Eskimo) who naturally makes utilitarian objects from materials that are close at hand." Kinser, (1977)

Oguntona, (1993), stated that; "the term textile work "opus textile", coined from the Latin verb "texere" – literally meaning to weave or plait has come to include utilitarian and ornamental fabrics developed into a medium of craftsmanship and creative artistry. "Textiles" as a subject demands a thorough understanding into the mechanisms of fabric manufacture. Briefly put, raw fibre – spun and woven – becomes cloth."

Fabrics, therefore, are the products of a chain of processes which start with the growth of some seed fibres as in the case of natural fibres, e.g. cotton – right through to ginning, carding, spinning and weaving.

Fibres are individual units or strands that are spun together to make yarn. Ultimately, therefore, the properties of any material for clothing and technical or industrial use must depend very largely on the properties of the fibre from which it is made. Fibre is the very foundation of any fabric.

All textile fibres are complex long-chain polymers. The difference between them is in the chemical nature of the polymer and in the physical structure. The terms 'natural', 'regenerated' and 'synthetic' fibres – the last two being grouped together as man-made refer to the origin of the polymer. Natural fibres are obtained directly from a plant or animal and, apart from cleaning process, are used largely as they occur naturally. Regenerated fibres are those made from a natural polymer, almost invariably cellulose, which has either been

regenerated in a fibre form (as in viscose from wood pulp) or has been subjected to some chemical modification and then spun in fibre form (as in acetate and triacetate). Synthetic fibres are made by industrial processes from polymers which have been built up from simple chemicals of which almost invariably, come from oil – Carr and Pomeroy, (1992).

"All cloth is made from fibrous yarns that are either woven, knitted or felted (fused) together. Felted fabrics are made of fibres that are interlocked by pressure, beating, moisture and heat – the oldest method of cloth making. True felt is made from wool fibres, sometimes combined with fur or hair" observed Kinser (1977).

Not all fibrous materials are suitable for textile purpose – certain qualities are desirable, i.e. length, strength, elongation, elasticity, uniformity.

2.5 ART IN THE VERY FIBRE OF OUR LIVES

The Fibre Art Movement was an important movement that fully matured itself from the beginning of the 1960s.It was a movement that established many great Artists of the fibre/fabric art-form which launched them into the arena of contemporary art.

According to Waller,(1977) "Textile sculptures,' She quoted (Barbana Kasten ,1974) " 'there became a marriage between fibre and dimensionality.' "Waller stated that, "the artist-craftsman" have sought to break from the traditions long associated with fibre and yarn that is, the closely constructed, the draped, the practical and pictorial, and to push into the environment to create the very walls, the volumes and the spaces in a total and three-dimensional manner. Hence, a monumentality in sculptural imagery projecting strong statements in contemporary art. Waller quoted (Leroi Jones 1974)

" 'sculpture is a religious affair ... maximal art... sculpture as a created object in space should enrich...' " -in relation to textile art form.

The artist takes the fibre, manipulates it into fabric, the fabric is constructed and built through continuous weaving, super-imposition of other materials of alien tactile qualities, twist, twine and sew into the sculptural form. This is akin to clothing construction and its processes. Clothing is that outer but not distanced sculptural shell, creating its own space.

Waller stated that; "...the core and essence of art is the concept, the imagery, the communication; the tools and the technique employed, however, indispensable, are supportive, the hands following the dictates of the mind."

Artist Wenger (1994) on sculpture, believed in the "on going process of pure form finding ... in the spiritual fecundity of silence replenished by sympathy". She declared that; "Art is total involvement into another unit of life and contented manifestations form." And she asserted that; "Ritual is art," art is Ritual". This speaks of the creative process and the environment which the Artist choose or creates for "total involvement' into the making of life form creations.

Waller (1974) observed that within the fibre art movement; "for some artists it was logical that the body itself became the armature, thus imparting movement and life to the textile statement and bringing us back full circle to the textile's original purpose as a body-covering but this time with what different implications. Shapes could now change from moment to moment ..."

Here we see the textile art becomes a "body-covering" or clothing sculptural art-form "imparting movement and life to the textile statement, mobility being the function of clothing. Here it also becomes performance art. Some of the greatest artists of fibre and textiles of the twentieth century in the last 40 years or so, whom Waller featured in her book, made some very important statements about their work.

Magdalena Abakanowiccz (1975) one of the very greatest, felt that:

Hand-woven fabric is not taken very seriously because it has been a part of our civilisation from the very beginning. Before becoming an element of decoration or tapestry emulating the art of paint, it was quite modestly a protective covering for man ... I started to construct woven material into three dimensional forms by sewing them together like garments or tents.

Another reference of clothing being akin to sculpture forms through experimentation constant.

Another Artist Jagoda Buic, (1975) said "everything starts with thread. In the legend of Ariadne, Theseus found the way out of the Labyrinth by means of thread -thread being the symbol of intelligence." Thread for the researcher is also that binding element of anchorage, essential in the construction processes of the garment. Thread holds also that painterly quality in terms of the surface design of the garment. It is mandatory in fabric sculptural forms, in utilising and creating space.

Claire Zeisler, (1973)another fibre artist was emphatic on the belief that; "One must know the technique or techniques from every point in order to become master of it, which means making it your own and which is the key to interesting work." Another statement, which echoed the excellence of artistic imagery through a well grounded technical skill, the root of any awe inspiring opus.

2.6 THREAD IN ART OR ART IN THREAD

The making of the garment demands the use of thread, and this is an obvious fact established well into pre-history. Although, it is true that; "garments can be fabricated through weaving, with a minimum of post-weaving construction that is; cutting and sewing"-(Held 1978). The use of thread in miscellaneous super-imposition for the embellishment of the garment poses a great necessity. This is generally taken for granted by many in the general public. The researcher, sees thread as an essential tool in sculpting or painting fabric, towards the construction of clothing as an art- form. The thread becomes the ink or paint, even in its element of anchorage.

In fact, looking at the tools used in producing works of arts, i.e., the welding machine, the power-saw, the chisel, the painting brushes, the painting knives- are akin to the scissors, pins, sewing machine, painting brunches used in the creative process of the researcher's art.

The materials used in both art-forms of painting and sculpture, be it concrete, canvas, bronze, paints, hair, cloth, paper, wood, plastic, shows the diversity in scope, producing varying results and this is applied to the art of clothing.

Belfer (1972), observed that;

> Stitching and appliqué work are among the most ancient arts and the needle was certainly a worthy tool for early man.From the many fragments that have been found, there is little doubt that the structuring and embellishment of fabric with surface motifs and patterns are activities which have origins going back to the earliest history of mankind. Beginning with the most basic scanning of utilitarian garments, skills slowly developed which seemed to parallel an instinctive need for ornamentation…

Here, Belfer clearly echoed what the Researcher stated initially. She continued her analysis on "stitches and stitching,"that;

> yarns and sections of cloth can be attached to the background fabric in many different effects. This is what stitching is all about essentially, using the yarns functionally, and in ways that emphasise the unique visual and tactile qualities of the material… in building shapes and form relationships within the work..

Belfer then from this point, stretched her analysis and expatiated on the appliqué methods through to machine stitching;

> …appliqué 'means to apply, to attach one material to another. An orientation with the vocabulary of the painter would probably suggest the term, 'collage' and in current exhibitions of textiles 'cloth collage' and appliqué'… incorporates applied areas of cloth or fibre to a background material. Fabric collage implies a relation to assemblage or multi-layered constructions of cloth with other appropriate materials… materials (fabrics, cloth) are themselves a stimulating source of ideas… Sophisticated in itself, in other words. Here, Belfer touched upon the painterly qualities of the appliqué method, which lends itself toward the development of dimension.

She continued with the assertion that:

> "The sewing machine has become an important asset to many textile artists since it can be used as a means of achieving a free type of 'drawing' on the cloth… efficiently aid in attaching sections of applied cloth to back grounds …' A major feature in the researcher's works, which contributed to their overall form.

Picton and Mack, (1989) in their joint project stated that;

> The appliqué method, also include such supplementary materials as beads and shells, metals and jewellry, animal fur and bundles of medicines, added to the already woven textile base... the technique can be seen to be well established throughout Africa on ceremonial cloths, banners, flags, skins, magical cloths... that the technique is certainly indigenous in Africa.

Presented here is an historical evaluation of the appliqué method, which is also a factor in contemporary textile arts. Picton and Mack's documentation on African textiles is a well written project which focussed mainly on weaving. The appliqué phenomena on which they branched is an extensive scholarly work supported by lively, colourful photographic illustrations which gave credit to their efforts.

> Sewn sculpture is not a popular art in the same sense that comics are popular, nor can it be a fine art in the modern sense. for when it aims at the high seriousness of what Tom Wolfe calls 'the painted word' or at the irony of pop Art, it is merely pretentious or cute... cannot escape into the realm of ideas-statements about statements, astound, or to express ideas about art. We cannot be in awe of sewn sculpture. Kinser, (1977).

A baseless statement such as this by Kinser, with no form of concretion, is merely an arbitrary slip on the backward platform which rides against the progressive virtues of contemporary art. Surprising though that she came out of the 1970s which was an era of phenomenal creative agility and magnitude, that produced some wonderful Artists. Sewn sculpture might not have been a 'popular art' then as she put it, but to demote what is potentially (or is nevertheless, today) a major art form to something 'merely pretentious or cute,' that it cannot emulate 'fine art' is a detrimental over-view. That one cannot be in the awe of the vast possibilities of the technique, through prolific experimentation which can leave the observer awe- inspired by the presentation.

Nevertheless in her analysis, it would have been a more acceptable presentation if she omitted her comparison to a 'comic' and 'fine art' altogether, and concentrated on the historical aspect based on technique, which she did very well.

Kinser continued; "...sewn sculpture may utilize the coloured and tactile surfaces of its materials for their naturalistic qualities... the three dimensional forms of sewn sculpture are pre-determined by flat shapes cut from cloth or cloth-like materials are dependant upon the pliability of those materials." This shows that sewn sculpture is a means of producing volume or dimension in a garment.

Kinser asserted that;

"Seam lines are the inherent linear element in sewn sculpture... considered more for their structural value, and always noticeable..."The researcher 's view here is that though one agrees on the factor of 'structural value,' seam lines with the use of concentrated thread colours could add another dimension to the entire structure itself.

"The type of seam, or quality of line, in a piece of sewn sculpture is an expressive detail...by the tactile and visual surface qualities of the cloth/fabrics, the sculptural forms may be given illusions of greater or lesser depth, of movement, of form where is none, and of naturalism."

The Researcher adds that the draping method or 'wrapping' of fabric is also another means of 'sculpting 'the garment or clothing, without having to use any thread for construction or seaming. Through the innovative experimentation on the draping or wrapping of cloth, directly onto the human form. this spontaneity in an Art-form could produce works of ingenuity.

Another informative source lies within the Ph.D. thesis by Heathcote, (1979) 'The Embroidery of Hausa Dress,' which gave a very significant, very wide descriptive documentation of the embroidery works on the traditional clothing of the Hausa people of Northern Nigeria. Henceforth, before venturing into the core of the study itself, the Author gave an historical account of West African dress in general, leading into the more tediously intricate study of embroidery.

Embroidery and drawing onto fabric adds a subtle tactile quality to the garment, hence, it is an attribute to the building up of dimensional form.

Heathcote stated that;

The spread of Islam in West Africa developed the introduction of writing and the establishment of Quranic scholarship. This had a profound lasting effect on embroidery, clothing and art. Quranic symbols, e.g. . motifs like the magic square and a variety of interface patterns... embroidery patterns were affected by the actual structure of the garment on which the embroidery was worked.

He also spoke of the "inscription of Koranic characters on the cloth itself," through the calligraphic skill, for the making of "charm gowns" which were "prophylactic instruments."

Embroidery is an art whose style perhaps developed from two distinct sources of inspiration. One interlacing form, somewhat oriental in character, while the other is composed of angular and spiral shapes which are more indigenous through its use as embellishments found on Hausa Pottery, wooden food bowls, body decoration and basketry. Though, the researcher's work did not bear strong elements of traditional embroidery on her garments, a technique of machine sewn embroidery was evident, once again bringing the basic thread into the light of having a drawing and painterly quality.

2.7 DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES IN OTHER ART-FORMS : SCULPTURE PLUS PAINTING – RELATIONSHIP TO CLOTH AND CLOTHING

The aim of this analysis was not to emulate sculpture or painting through the researcher's works, or to conclude that one art-form is finer than the other. Clothing is an art, and the results of the studio experiment projected the researcher's work which is clothing – as a viable art-form. Clothing is generally taken for granted as it has become a necessity that man cannot do without. It is a utility object. Much like painting and sculpture which were utility objects in ancient and traditional civilizations of Africa, Asia and even Europe where painting and sculpture were used widely for religious purposes in representing deities and in representing daily activities. The ancient

hieroglyphic writings, paintings, and sculpted architecture of the ancient Egyptian civilizations attested to this. (Plate i).

In Nigeria, the famous Benin bronzes, which were representations of ancestral Obas and gods, and in the East the Uli Painting – the loveliest of the body – painting arts, was carried out with Uli-dye.

Diogu, (1993) stated; "masking traditions contributed in a greater measure toward the development of textile art, attributed to the competitive spirit which challenged the craftsmen as they strive to excel one another in the production of innovative and creative masquerade costumes".

Plate II illustrates an example of traditional masquerade costume, functional in religious/ceremonial rituals, illuminating highly sculptural qualities through the incorporation of foreign objects and appliquéd forms. Finally the wearer brings the costumes into life – hence a "kinetic" sculptured metamorphosis. The wearer is the spiritual force behind the costume's symbolism.

The traditional textiles and clothing of Nigeria being quite varied, had many uses which was broken down in Chapter one, where cloth for wealth, cloth for protection, cloth for adornment, cloth for identity and cloth for passage were expanded upon.

Plate III illustrates a traditional garment which incorporated drawn and appliqué story lines. Coming from Northern Nigeria, "the drawn inscriptions on the garment are derived from Koranic texts. Small leather charm cases which also contain extracts from the Koran are attached to the inside of the garment" – Picton and Mack, (1989).

What is unique about the researcher's works is that the art forms encompassed all the examples of traditional, utilitarian paraphernalia mentioned above. It is an art-form of clothing design which entails the use of textiles, painting and sculpture – through the use of appliqué, quilting, machine stitch embroideries, innovative cutting and manipulation of the fabric. Innovative clothing can incorporate all the elements of traditional African culture, through these applications.

2.7.1 MODERN ARTISTS' WORKS

Here, clothing, sculpture and paintings by other artists were analyzed, in relation to the researcher's project works of clothing art-form.

The researcher began by looking at the works of some great textile artists, an apt beginning to this analysis, as far as the relationship of the researcher's works to other art-forms are concerned.

i) Magdalena Abakanowicz – Polish

Plate : IV

Year : 1971

Here the artist talked about "constructing the woven material into three-dimensional forms by sewing them together like garments or tents …." . We see examples of the assembly and joining of woven shapes, much like garments in the illustrations. Her materials included jute, sisal and wool. The scale of her works are vast: the materials monstrous. In some ways, her work takes on an architectural dimension, simply because of its sheer size and ability to envelope in totality its immediate surroundings. Weaving with fibre and yarn as a technique is her art, which she does directly with her fingers interlacing the yarn into the warp without aid of shuttles or harnesses. Tactile and textural quality of her work is awe inspiring, with varying relief forms incorporated.

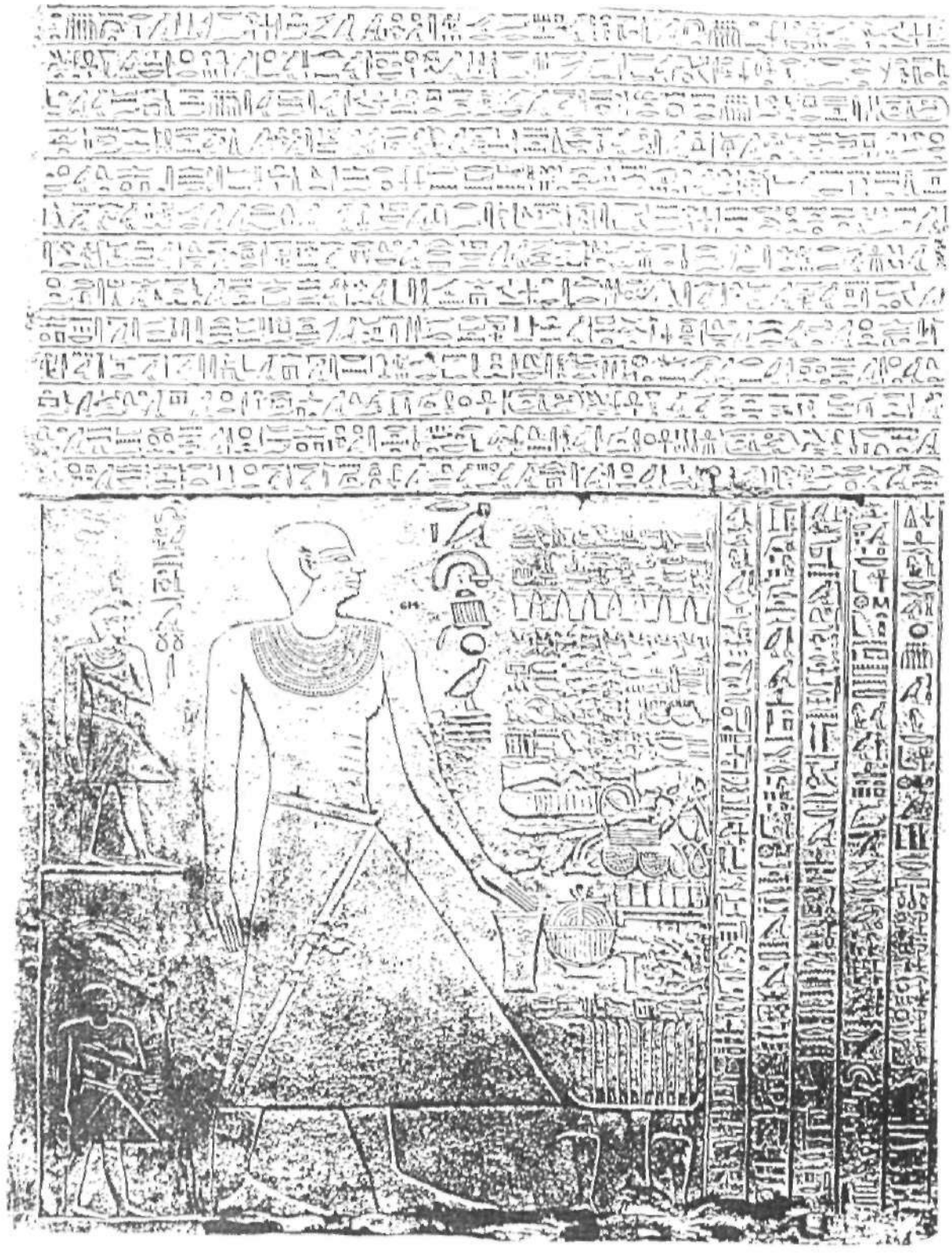


Plate i

Limestone inscription containing the biographical text of Tjetji, treasurer of the kings Inyotef II and III of the 11th Dynasty – Egypt.





Plate ii

Oro Efe masquerade in full regalia – 1970s.
Cotton cloth panels, wood superstructural mask

7. ORO EFE IN FULL DRESS



Plate iii

Cotton tunic – Northern Nigeria 1940s
89cm

ii. Colombian Textile Artist Olga de Amaral

Plate : V

Size : 3m x 2m

Year : 1971

Entitled "Coraza en des Colores", (1971) the materials used here are horse-hair and wool. The techniques involved intricate interlacings of tapestry – woven or draped vertical strips, crossing, re-crossing and mingling with each other to create three-dimensional inter-play of play and colour. Architectural elements can be clearly seen as her 'walls' divide and occupy space with sculptural and organic presence. One can also perceive from its structure a kind of huge, voluminous garment – a kind of human presence within the garment-like structure.

iii. American Textile Artist Barbara Chase-Riboud

Plate : VI

Size : 3m x 56m x 56m

Year : 1972

Plate vi, entitled "Black Column" was constructed in Bronze and synthetic – silk covered cords. In both works, one observes a wonderful contrast of hard and soft materials, which as a result of great technical mastery in the manipulation of the materials by the artist – blend very well together, giving a sense of unity in form. Her work is about interpenetration, through the handling of the two conflicting materials in the abstract sculpture. The metal has a sense of softness and fluidity, and the silk a sense of polished durability. There is a complimentary

intermingling of techniques, that of silk wrapping innumerable yards of cord and that of the lost-wax process in bronze. Both works evoke an extravagance and elegance which is also discerned in the researcher's works, which involve also a complimentary inter-play of techniques.

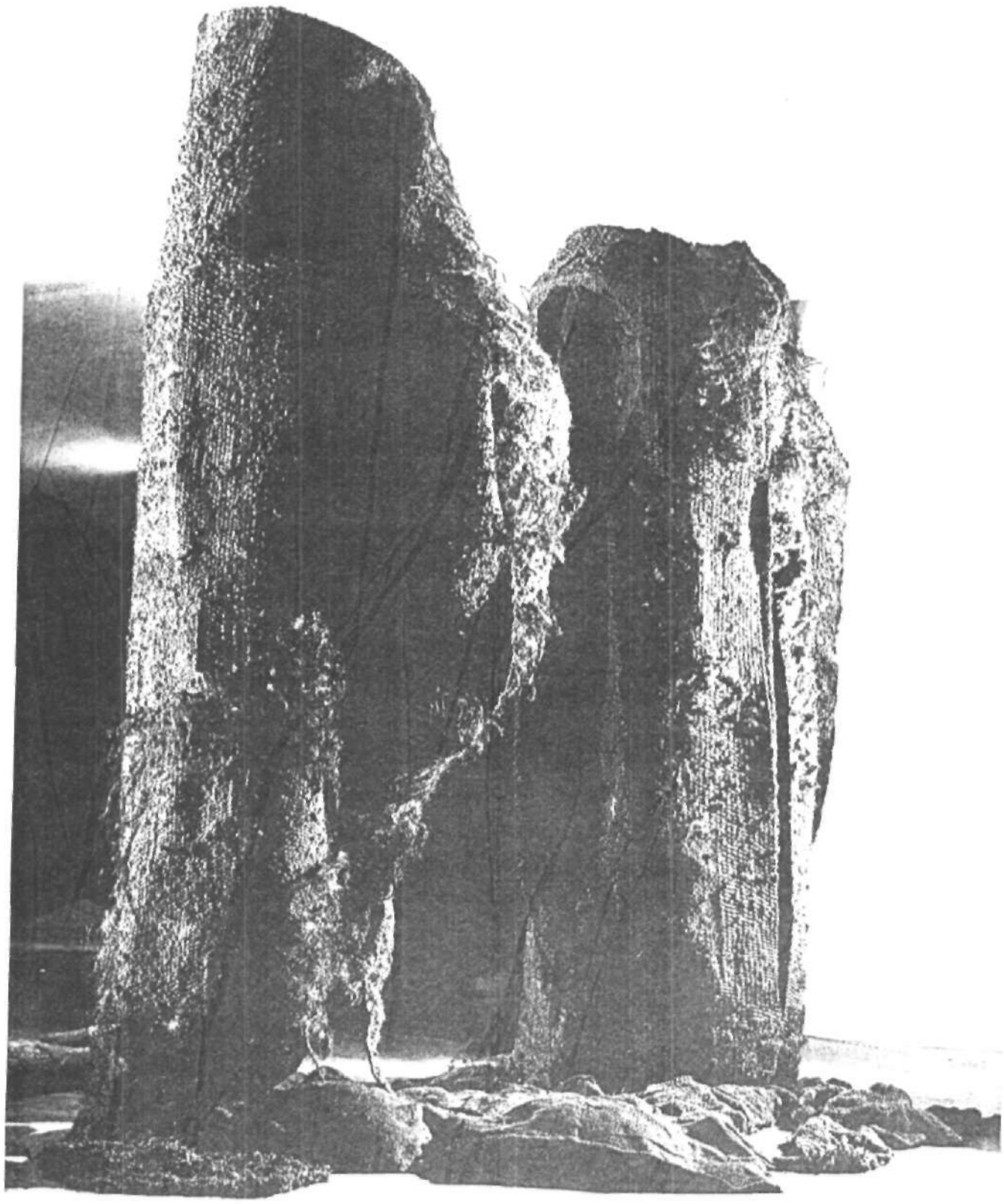


Plate iv

Title : "Abakan Black Round, Abakan Black Great"
Sisal and Wool fibres
Magdalena Abakanowicz - 1971

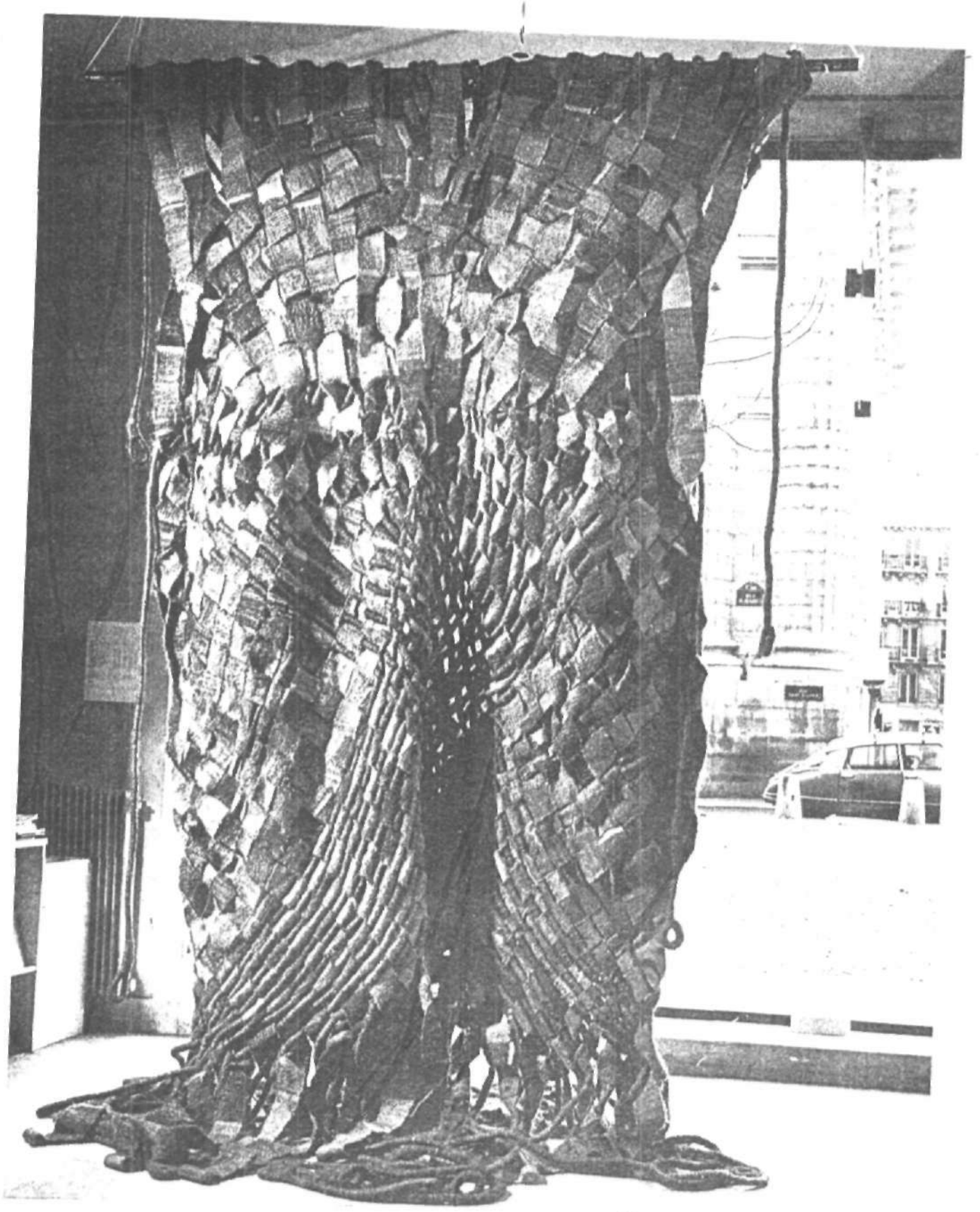


Plate V

Title : "Coraza en des Colores"
Horse hair/wool fibres
3m x 2m
Olga de Amaral - 1971

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iv. British Textile Artist Lucy Brown

Plate : VII

Title : Boned tapestry

Size : 1.6m high

Year : 1995

Here is an artist who works with garments, exploring and transforming the vocabulary of clothing to quite different effects. She looked at garments in visual terms, considering the visual potential, the power of the shapes within garments to create new imagery. Brown left traces of the garment intact-collars, buttons, labels-but cut most of the garment from the hem upwards. Using a tapestry frame, she weaves the shredding fabric into a new shape, using boning to give structure and dramatic effect. She also tightened the warp to manipulate shape. This concept is parallel to the clothing sculpture works of the researcher.

v. British Painter Ann Page

Plate : VIII

Title : "Seal"

Year : 1982

Size : 190.5cm x 190.5cm x 7.62cm

This is a work of art on a long-fibre hand-made paper. The artist dyes the paper so that in receiving its hue, it receives also the wounds of its nature; the paper shrinks, shrivels, warps, which is a vital part of the creative process. The work is as much a sculpture as a painting. Four triangular wedges of paper are "sewn" together, intending the geometric shape to carry an emblematic meaning. She then inserts a broken circle form at the centre, broken in terms of its line. This line imposes another dimension on the somewhat flat, but highly textured background, which actually casts a black shadow on the form, adding to its symbolism. The paper, like fabric is cut and stitched together resulting in an art-form, much like clothing.

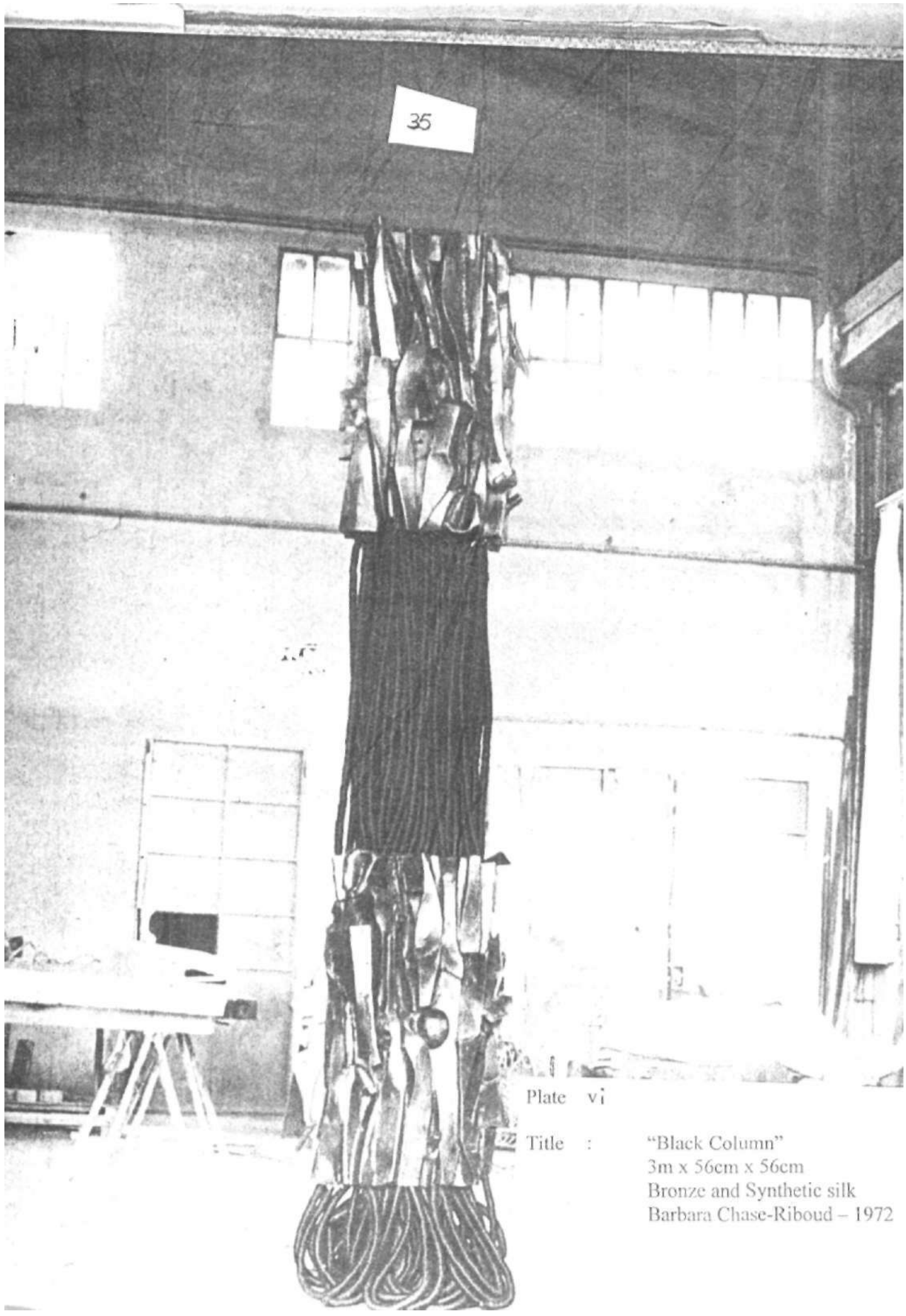


Plate vi

Title : "Black Column"
3m x 56cm x 56cm
Bronze and Synthetic silk
Barbara Chase-Riboud – 1972

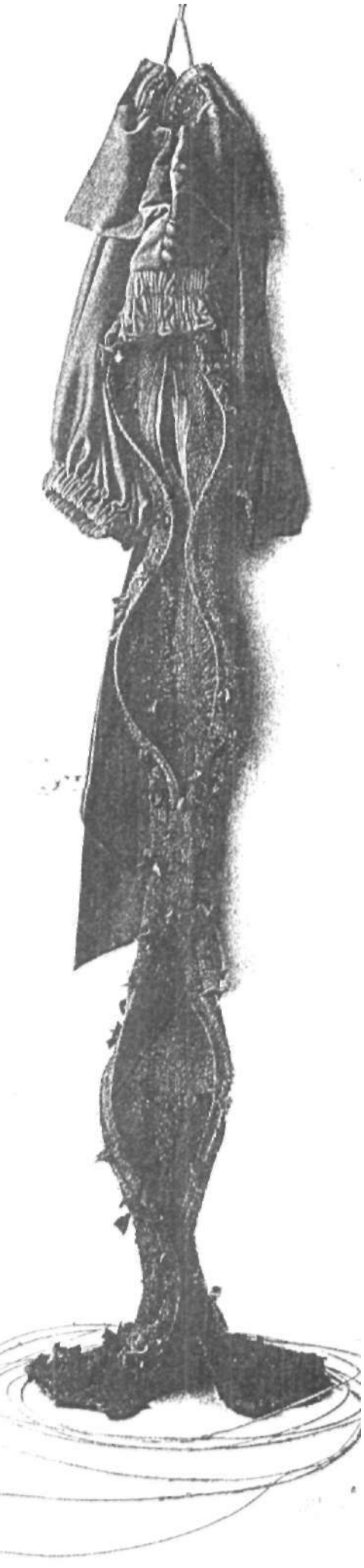


Plate vii

Title : "Boned Tapestry"
1.6m long
Plastic boning, cotton, silk, wire.
Lucy Brown - 1995

vi. Ghanaian Sculpture – El Anatsui

Plate : IX

Title : Wonder Masquerade

Year : 1990

A masterpiece which reflects the ceremonial masking cultures of Nigeria, it is a wooden equivalent to the quilted centre front paneled piece of one of the researcher's garments (see Plate I) "Anatsui uses chisels, gorges and powered saws, which he transforms into multivalent devices, to perform diverse artistic operations" – Egonwa, 1994. These tools along with a thinking mind and trained hands, multi-diversions of relief forms and textures materialize and transforms a cylindrical piece of wood to an awe-inspiring work of art. This emanate from the manipulation process parallel to that of cloth or fabric. Another aspect of this sculpted piece is its painterly elements, i.e., "in Anatsui's sculptures, there is either sculpture in painting, painting in sculpture, , painting of sculpture or sculpture of painting" - Oloidi, (1991). Both qualities compliment each other very well within his sculptures, thus, posing an apt parallelism to that of the researcher's works.

vii. Japan Artist/Designer– Issey Miyake

Plate : X

Title : "Body Works"

Year : 1980

This is an actual sculpted garment, by the celebrated artist. It is a bustier, moulded in fibre glass material – a revolution in garment construction as far as materials/fabrics are concerned. Because of the moulding process – there are no resulting seams, only an opening at the back enough for the wearer to enter the garment. It is molded to the exact size of the wearer, and has a plastic tactile quality to it. A masterpiece in clothing sculpture.

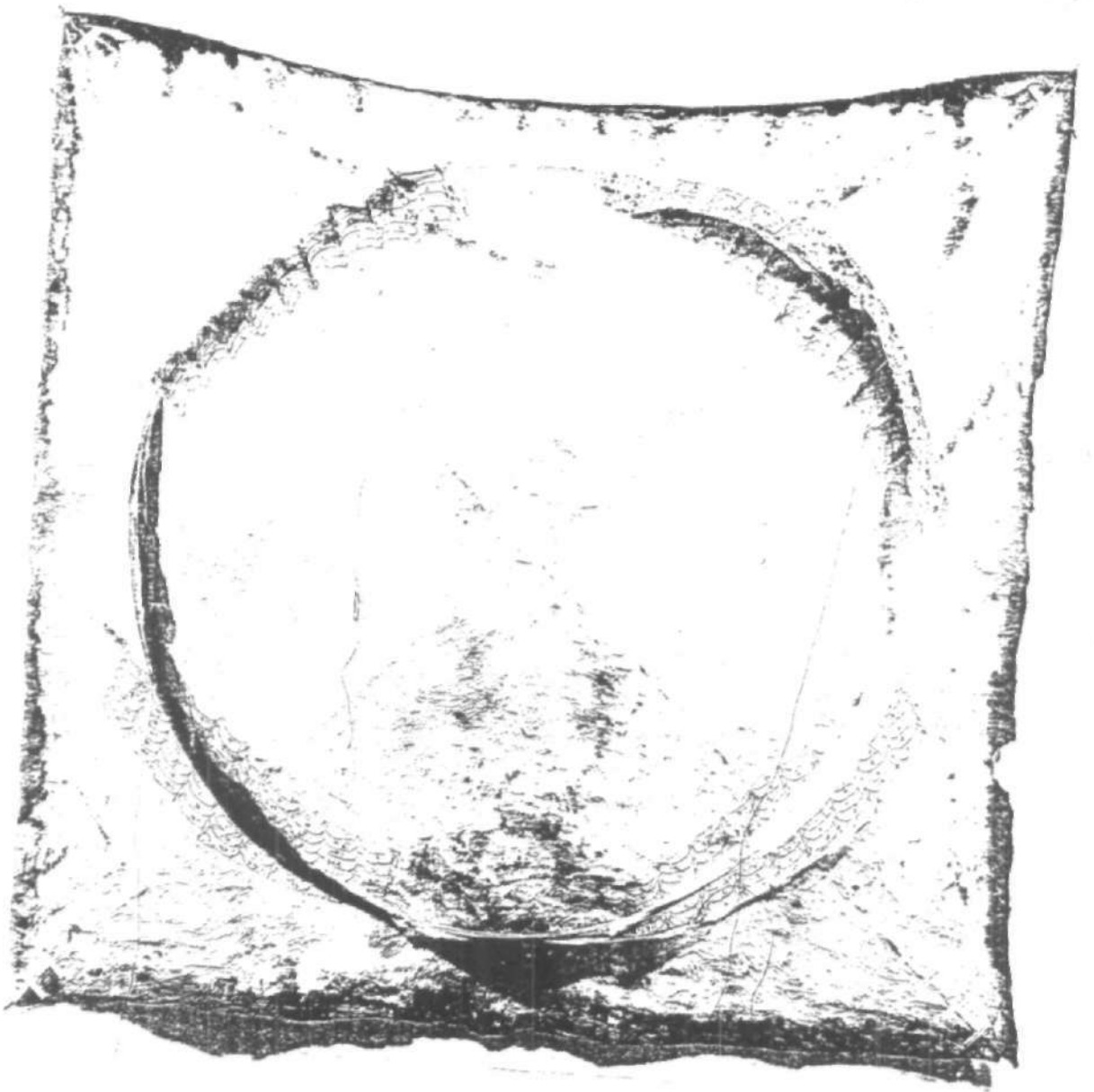


Plate viii

Title : "Seal"
190.5 x 190.5 x 7.62cm
Handmade Paper/Dyes
Ann Page - 1982

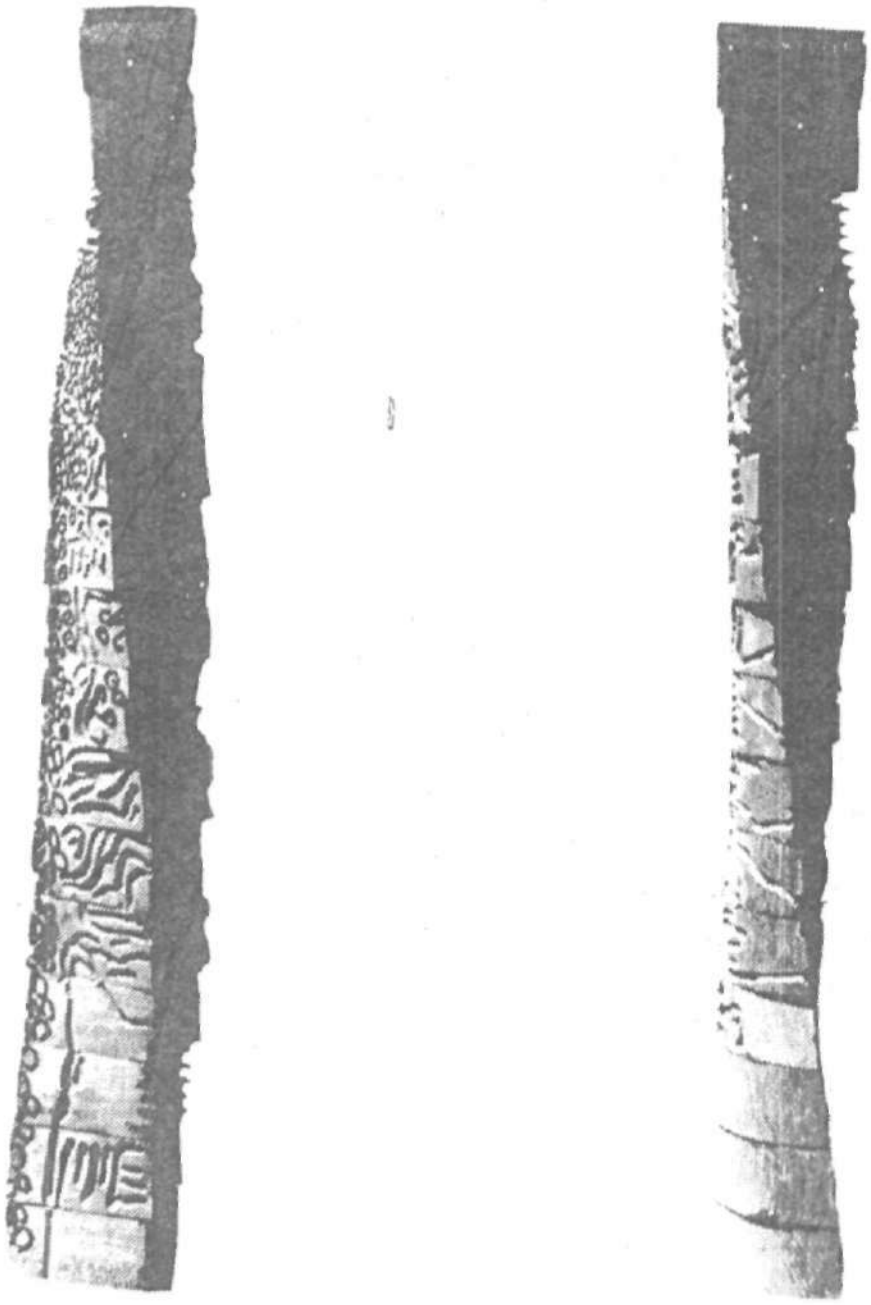


Plate ix

Title : "Wonder Masquerade"
159 x 20 x 14cm
Wood/Acrylic Paints
El Anatsui - 1990

viii. Nigerian Sculptress – Sokari Douglas-Camp

Plate : XI

Title : "Iriabo : woman in her prime". Life size.

Year : 1995

Made from metal and wood and adored in a variety of ways this life size figure represents a ceremonial dress or costume. Quoted the artist 1995: "Kalabari people are very much into wearing a lot of fabric – my aim wasn't to model the perfect nude, but to dress her. Most people in everyday life wear clothes and, if my art were going to mean anything, I felt that I was perfect in clothing my objects."

This work by this master artist illustrates a sculpted garment in wood and metal on a sculpted female form, which elaborate on the grandeur of ceremonial and everyday clothing tradition. This regal quality is also projected in the researcher's works.

ix. Nigerian Artist, Bruce Onobrakpeya

Plate : XII

Title : Urhe Vemamo (tree with fruits) Metal Foil Relief

Year : 1983

An icon in the arena of the contemporary art of Nigeria this is one of his master pieces in sculptural relief form. This is somewhat reminiscent of the quilt work of the researcher's works, on the centre front panels in some of her garments, which result in relief forms on cloth, which holds on its own as a composition. This work created in copper/metal foil shows interesting textural forms.

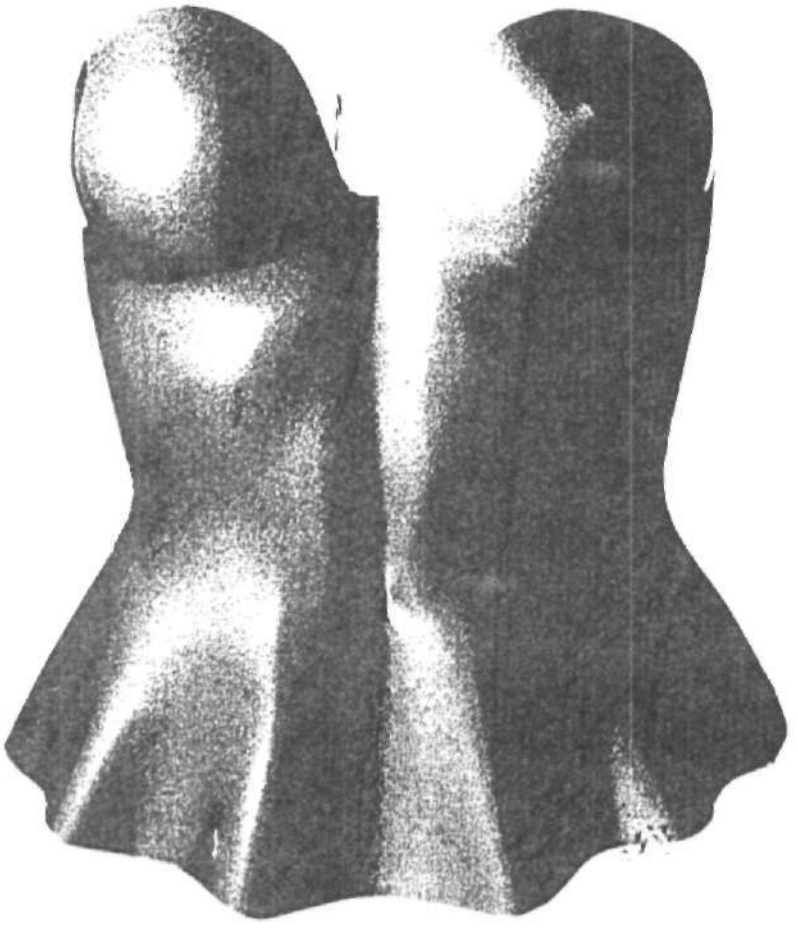


Plate x

Title : "Body Works"
24 inches long
Fibre glass bodice
Issey Miyake - 1980



Plate xi

Title : "Iriabo – Woman in her Prime"
Life size
Metal and Wood
Sokari Douglas-Camp – 1995

x. Swedish Artist Barbara Graf

Plates : XIII and XIV

Title : Jumping Out one's Skin

Size : 170x 150 cm

Year : 1996

- The anatomical garment copies the physique and reinvents it, revealing things underneath, such as the prominent vertebral column and the ribs attached to it. This doubling protects and exposes, it is a sculpture to be put on, but it can also assume the form of a plain 2 - sided picture, a skin stretched on a frame. Taken to pieces, it traces back to its origin; the cut and the cutting pattern-a never ending story about the wholesomeness of the human body –Graf 1996.Postcard catalogue.

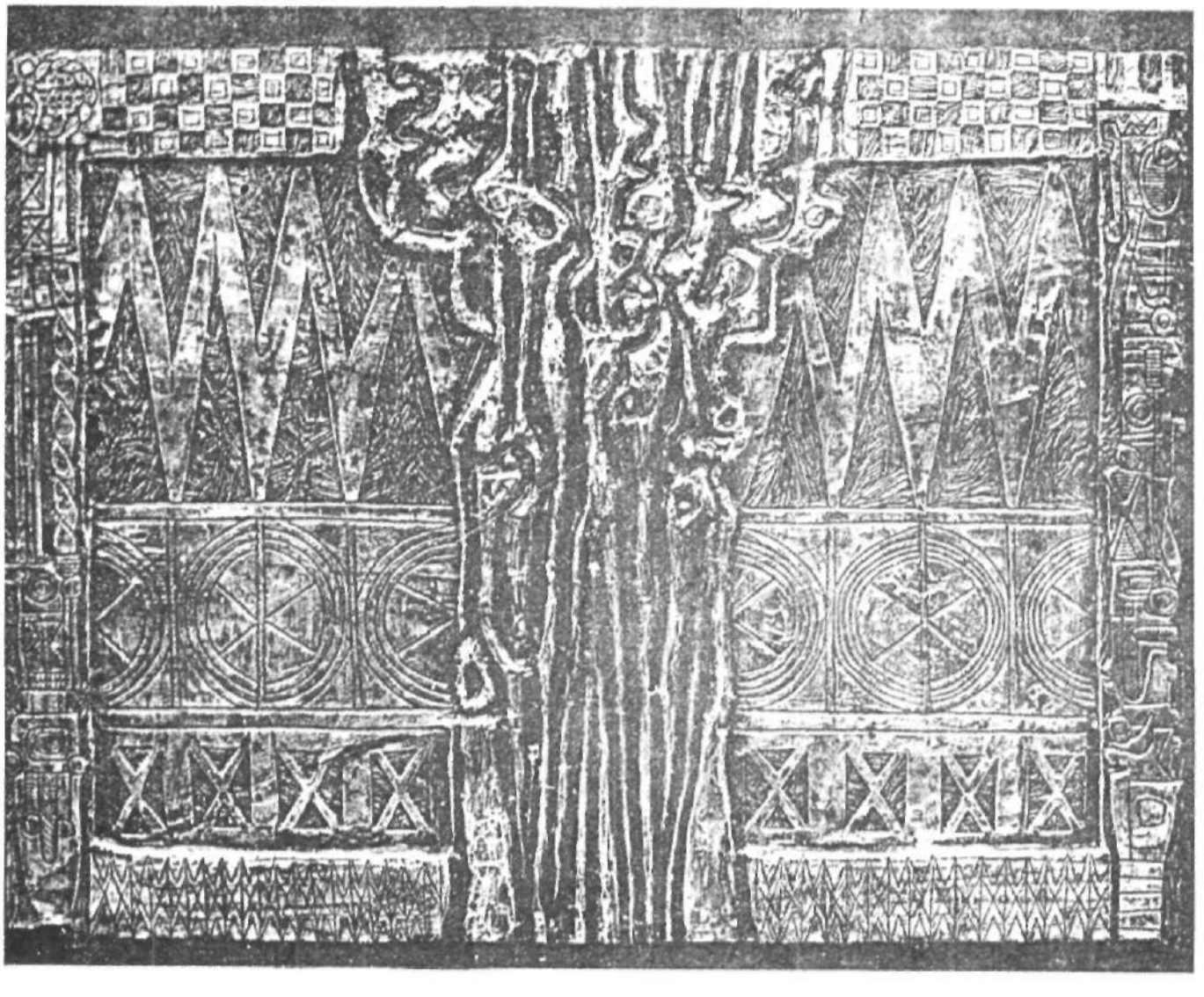
xi. Japanese Designer /Artist; Issey Miyake

Plates:XV and XVII

Title: 'Rattan Body dress' and 'Cicada Pleats' dress

Year: 1982 and 1989

Once again astounding sculptural dresses by Issey Miyake are featured. Both functional and truly original, the materials and techniques used to achieve these forms defy one's imaginations- rattan (known as cane in Nigeria),Silk and leather. One can discern dimension in the 'cicada pleat' dress achieved by highly advanced mechanized pleating method. These are the kinds of bold experimentation that the Researcher thrive on to effect varying artistic imagery in clothing, whilst being functional.



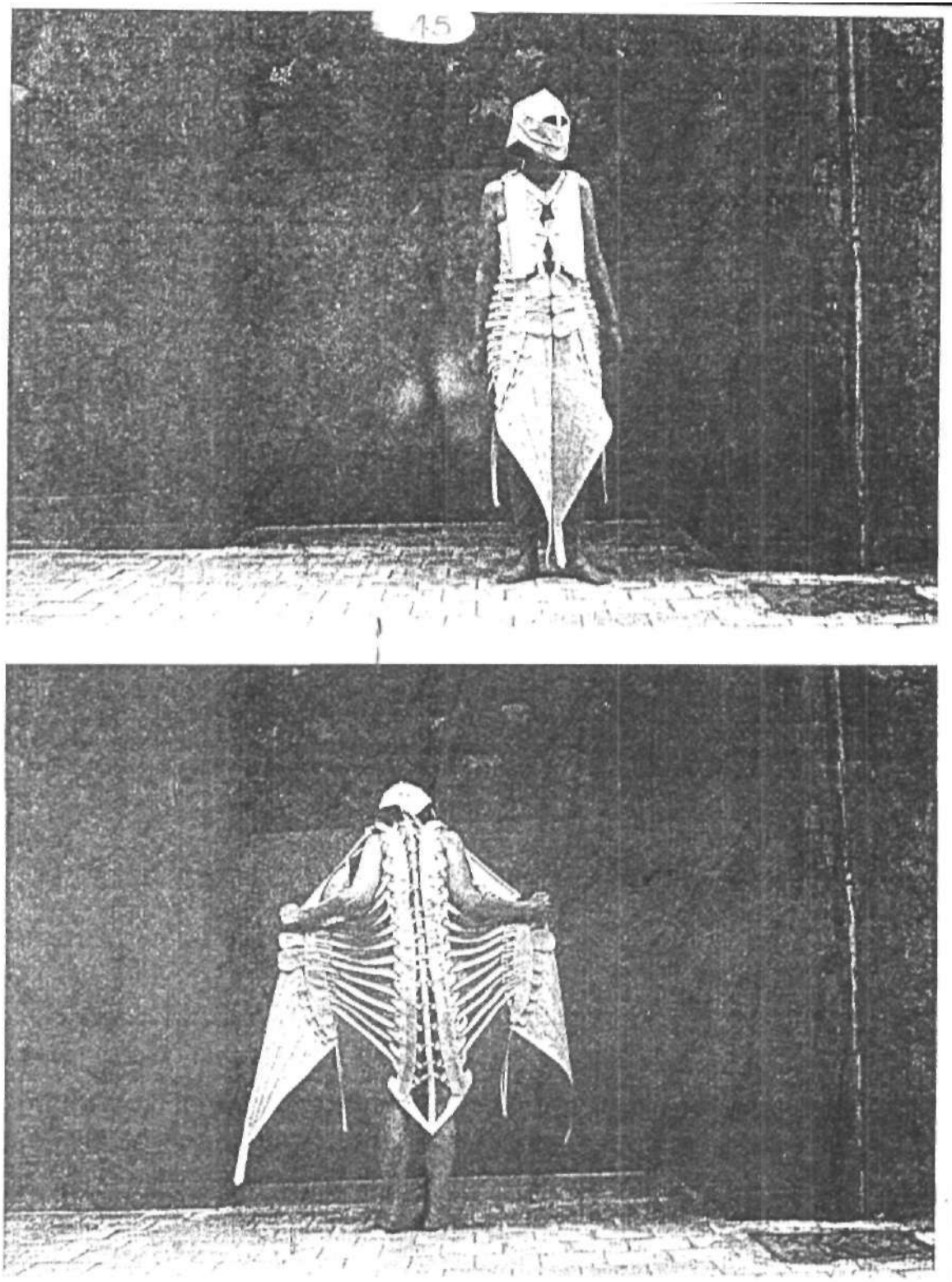
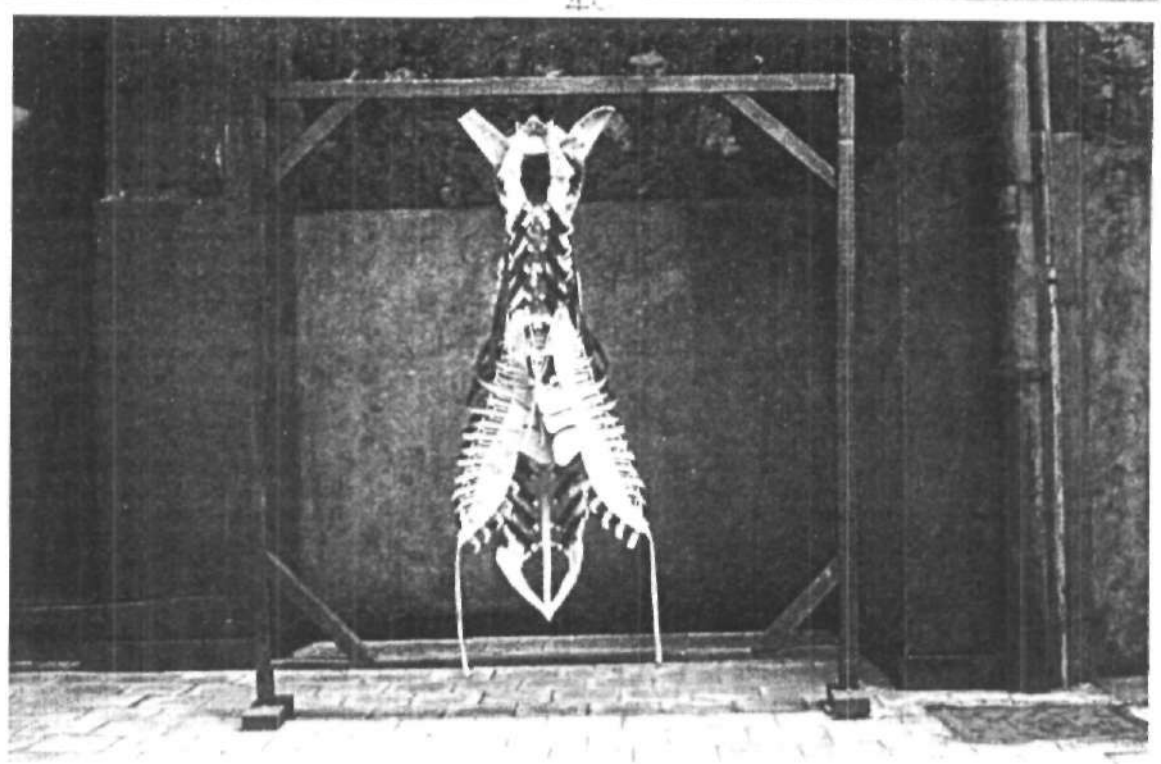


Plate xiv

Title : "Jumping out of One's Skin"
170 x 150
Cotton
Barbara Graf - 19



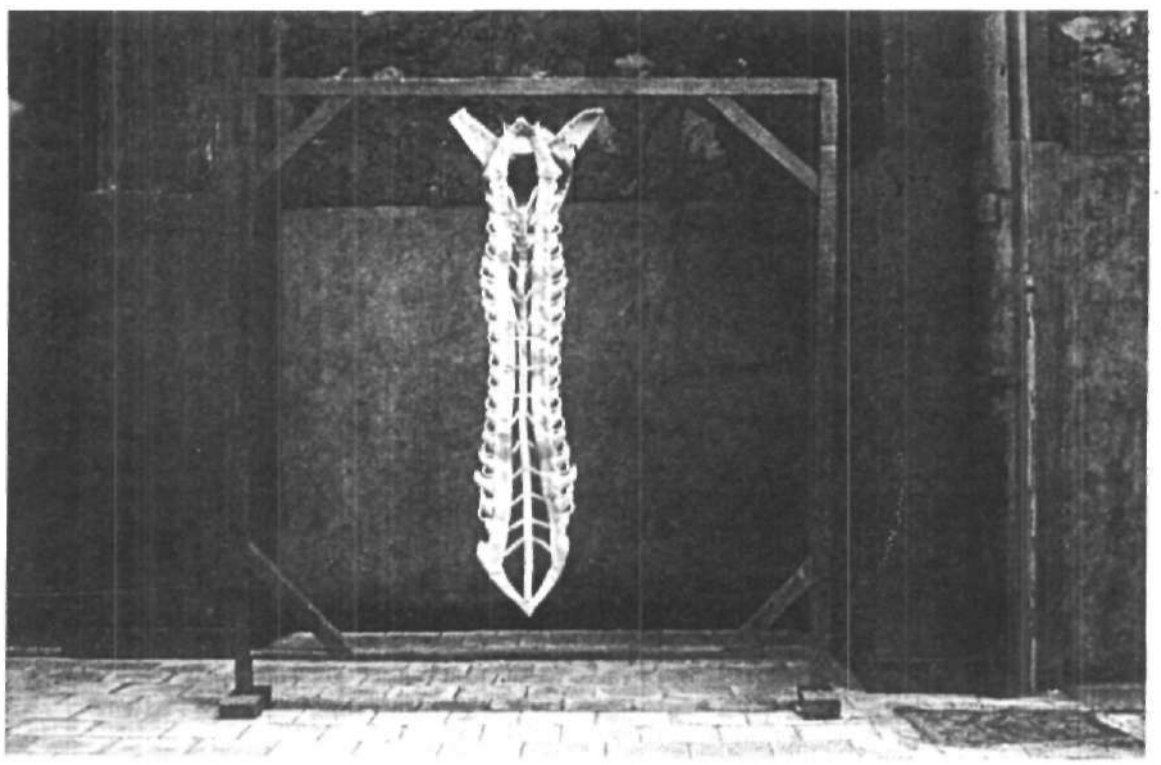


Plate xi v

Title : "Jumping out of One's Skin"
170 x 150cm
Cotton Cloth
Barbara Graf - 1996

xii. German Artist Kerstin Rossbander

Plate : XVI

Year : 1996

A spectacular achievement, which illuminates mastery in cut, and an audacious use of unlikely combined materials – metal and velvet. This is reminiscent of the work by artist Barbara Chase – Riboud (see Plate vi) where there was a marriage of bronze with synthetic silk. This dress, constructed in sheets of metal cut outs and stretch velvet is functional in the sense that it can be worn on the human form, and worn to any occasion. The artist aimed in projecting grace and elegance with the combined application of hard and soft.

2.8 SUMMARY

The topic of clothing as an art-form, which has a strong placing in the art world- is a topic of vast proportions.

Clothing art, with its technique in quilting, embroidery, innovative cutting, super-imposition of other sculptural forms, all lended to the sculptural quality of the art-form. Any medium could be sculpted to any desired effect. This all counts on the artist's enthusiasm for originality and innovation and sound technical skill.

One piece of clothing in an exhibition space of gargantuan proportions, because of its simplicity or complexity of the statement emanating from it, through its construction and colour and other essential elements, could make more of a strong impact than two paintings displayed in the same exhibition space.

The comparison is apt although, the intention is not to down play another art-form for the researcher respects all art-forms.

This chapter looked at various authors who have written scholarly works which are relevant to this project. Some topics looked at the art of textile sculptures, the ability to appreciate art in general, fashion, historical dress, painting and illustrations of other artists' views on their working processes. The technique of sewing was expended upon and the various uses of thread in relation to this project.

Chapter 3 looks at the experimentation process.

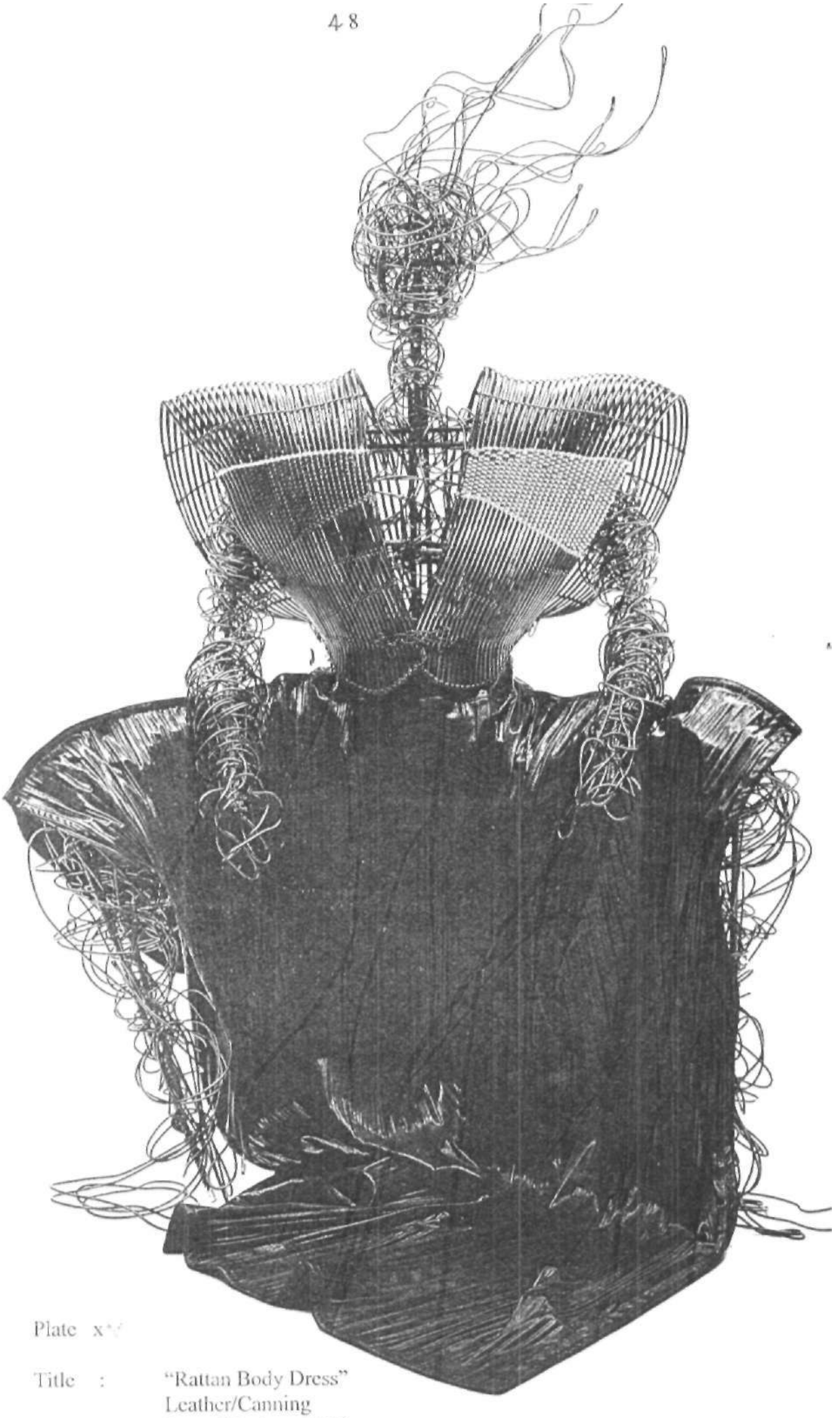


Plate x*/

Title : "Rattan Body Dress"
Leather/Canning
Issey Miyake - 1982



Plate x vi

Dress by Kerstin Rossbander – 1996
Metal/stretch velvet

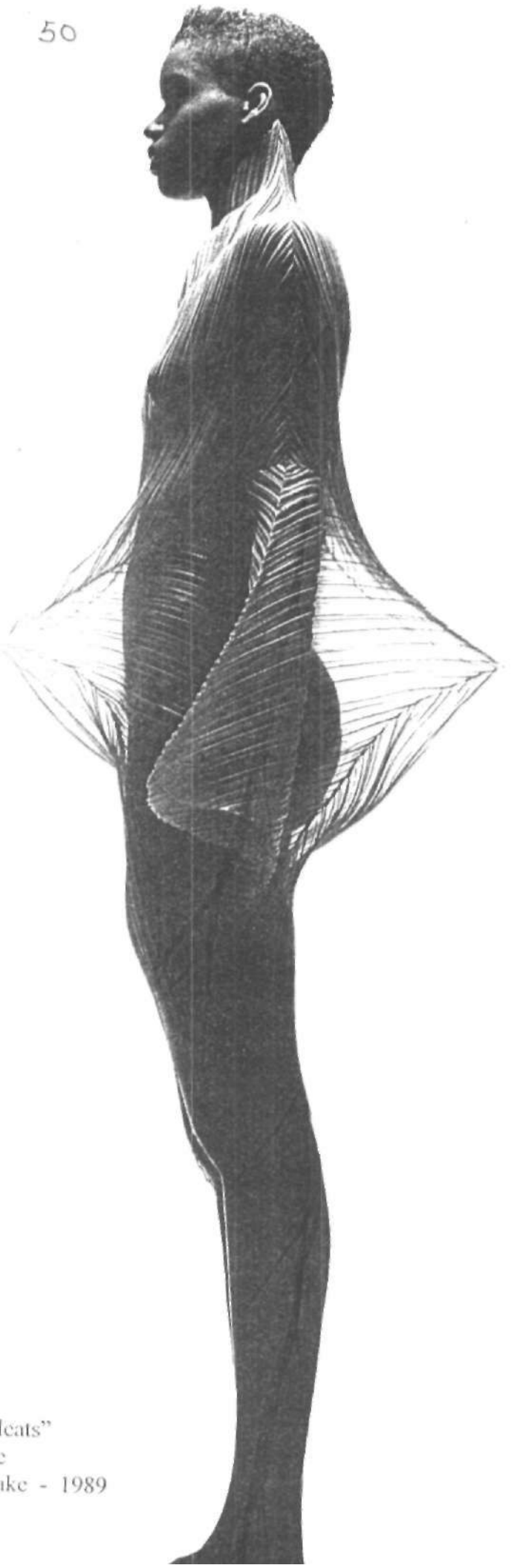


Plate xvii

Title : "Cicada Pleats"
Silk Gauze
Issey Miyake - 1989

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This study projected the researcher's works of clothing, as strong statements in its art form. The results were based on the outcome of this experimental project, using the experimental survey as the research design. The experiment as stated, was based on cut and stitch of cloth and how these evoked sculptural and painterly qualities, projecting the researcher's works as contemporary art-form. This is expanded upon, in relation to the first aim and objective to this study which is - to produce a small collection of clothing as visual art-forms as removed from "fashion", through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

The empirical approach which involved the mental conception of ideas for works served as a basis on which studio projects were developed. 'Empirical' is the term used for the experimentation process and one observed through this and the conclusions drawn. - Concise English Dictionary, (1986).

Eight garments were produced in the studio, through the basic application of 'free hand' cutting of cloth to the varied use of sewing machine stitching techniques.

In the construction of the garments, the creative process will be looked at along with application of the design elements – as far as the design of clothing is concerned.

Relevant illustrations are used for a better perspective, as well as samples of fabrics are provided.

3.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population is described as the totality of all elements, subjects or numbers that possess a specified set of one or more common characteristics. -S.A. Adetoro (1986) The subject matter here were the actual textiles used for the project.

These textiles were found at different sources where the quality differs in each location. The locations included Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano Lagos and Zaria.

The sample fabrics were the chosen few from the population itself, which are the textiles used in the project.

The sampling process was narrowed down in accordance with the projected designs, therefore certain qualities of fabrics were chosen to effect certain results within the arena of sculpture and painting. Colours were also important when choosing fabrics to effect the design or composition. The qualities used were basically cotton of varying thicknesses and weights and one polyester stretch- the only synthetic cloth used.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In the course of this research, the second aim and objective was established, which is – to establish the data collection instruments towards the production of these clothing.

Data for this study was collected through the use of 3 types of instruments since one instrument was inadequate in obtaining the information required.

Shittu, (1991) quoted Pelto (1970) as: " 'recommending the use of a variety of approaches or instruments to give greater credibility to a research result' ". The primary and secondary sources as well as studio experimentation were used as the instrument. The studio experimentation processes also reflected the third and fourth aim and objective which are – to establish the experimentation processes to be utilized in the studio and; to make these processes work within sculpture and painting.

3.2.1 PRIMARY SOURCE OF DATA

The researcher's working experience in Nigeria involved the use of local materials found in Nigeria – which included the cloths, sewing threads, appliqué materials and other miscellaneous paraphernalia.

In wanting to collect a fairly extensive variety of cloths for the studio projects, one had to do a general survey of the local markets, which included those in Zaria, Kaduna City, Kano, Ibadan and Lagos.

The fabrics eventually procured for the project included the Adire cloths from Ibadan; the Luru cloths from Kano; Nigerian wax-prints and fine cotton shedas and linens found in the markets of Zaria and Kaduna City – all of natural fibres except for the incorporation of a polyester stretch fabric in one of the garments, which was found at the Tejuoso market in Lagos.

The sewing threads used in this projects were very diverse. Appliqué materials included shells which were found in Lagos and pieces of other fabrics. Foam was used for quilting the garments. Interfacing was also used to effect stiffening where needed. Other instruments used here included most importantly the sewing machine of the "Singer" brand, and a pair of sharp scissors. Pins were needed to hold fabrics together for stitching, and the tailor's chalk to mark seams and placement points.

3.2.2 THE SECONDARY SOURCE OF DATA

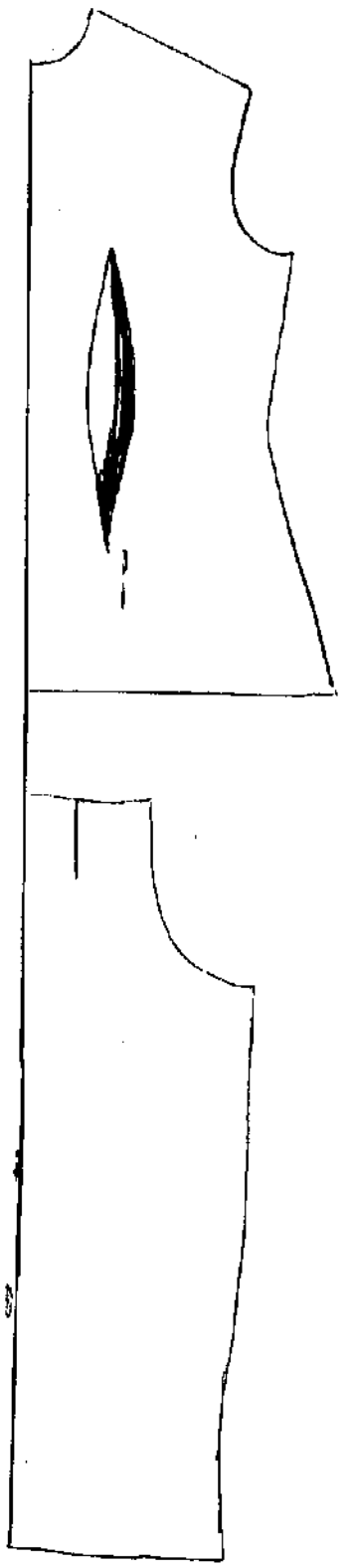
The collection of data required an exercise in collating relevant materials from previous works including drawings, fabrics sources, past pamphlets, photos, literature and other miscellaneous paraphernalia in analyzing the creative process involved in such a project.

The secondary source of data for this study included: Published studies and texts, unpublished dissertations and theses dealing with Nigerian textiles and costumes. Also books on art, fashion and textile sculptures were consulted. Books on sewing discussed various sewing techniques and how sculptural effects are made. Books on art discussed technique and mastery of skill.

Scholars such as: Lawal (1990); Eicher (1970); Waller (1974); Beckett (1988);Picton (1989); Vogel (1991); Oguntona (1986) among others, were discussed in order to provide a theoretical framework for the study.

3.3 STUDIO EXPERIMENTATION

As a data collection instrument, the studio experiments reflect the 2nd aim and objective which is to establish the data collection instruments toward the production of these clothing. Whilst the 3rd aim and objective established the experimentation processes to be utilized in the studio.



BODICE

TROUSERS

Fig.1
Flat Pattern Cutting

The 4th aim and objective which states to make these processes work within sculpture and painting, is expanded upon in the sub-grouping 3.3.1.

Artists make use of symbolic expression or design elements during the creative process. These elements of design include: line, direction, shape/form, size, texture, value, colour, unity, emphasis/focal point, balance, scale/proportion, and rhythm.

These elements were essential in the design and construction of clothing as an art form, and have found to be strong pillars of design structure.

In shaping or moulding the cloth into clothing, the very first stage entails the forming of ideas which led to the assembling of design elements into a composition of meaning. Subsequent to this was the construction process, which involved the cut of the garment – which was very significant in the final results, where stitching and sewing come in.

Most designers tend to utilize the flat pattern-cutting technique (see Fig.1) before the actual cutting of the cloth. Other techniques include the modeling or draping technique on the dress (Mannequin); the draping or wrapping of cloth/fabric directly onto the human form where the results are final for the wearer to utilize; or cutting of the fabric without the aid of flat paper patterns, i.e., direct or spontaneous cutting/free-style. Flat pattern cutting translates the proportions of the designer's working sketch into a series of pattern components which, in a finished garment, will fit the figure for which the proto-type pattern is designed. This technique mainly applies to designs which are structured or contoured to size limits for example jackets, fitted skirts, shirts, tailored suits, etc.

For the researcher, direct/spontaneous cutting was favoured and used extensively. Also known as free-hand style.

Clothing should enhance and breathe on the body – not constrict. In many instances, the researcher's clothing tended to be voluminous when worn, but projected an inner comfort. Each clothing when worn affected one's deportment, which exuded a definitive grace and dignity.
Another reason for this favoured cutting technique rested on the varied chain of innovative cutting, which can lead to a successful work of art on the human form. Consistent experimentation on the cutting of cloth, could produce exciting results tending toward sculpture (see Figs. – 2 to 9).

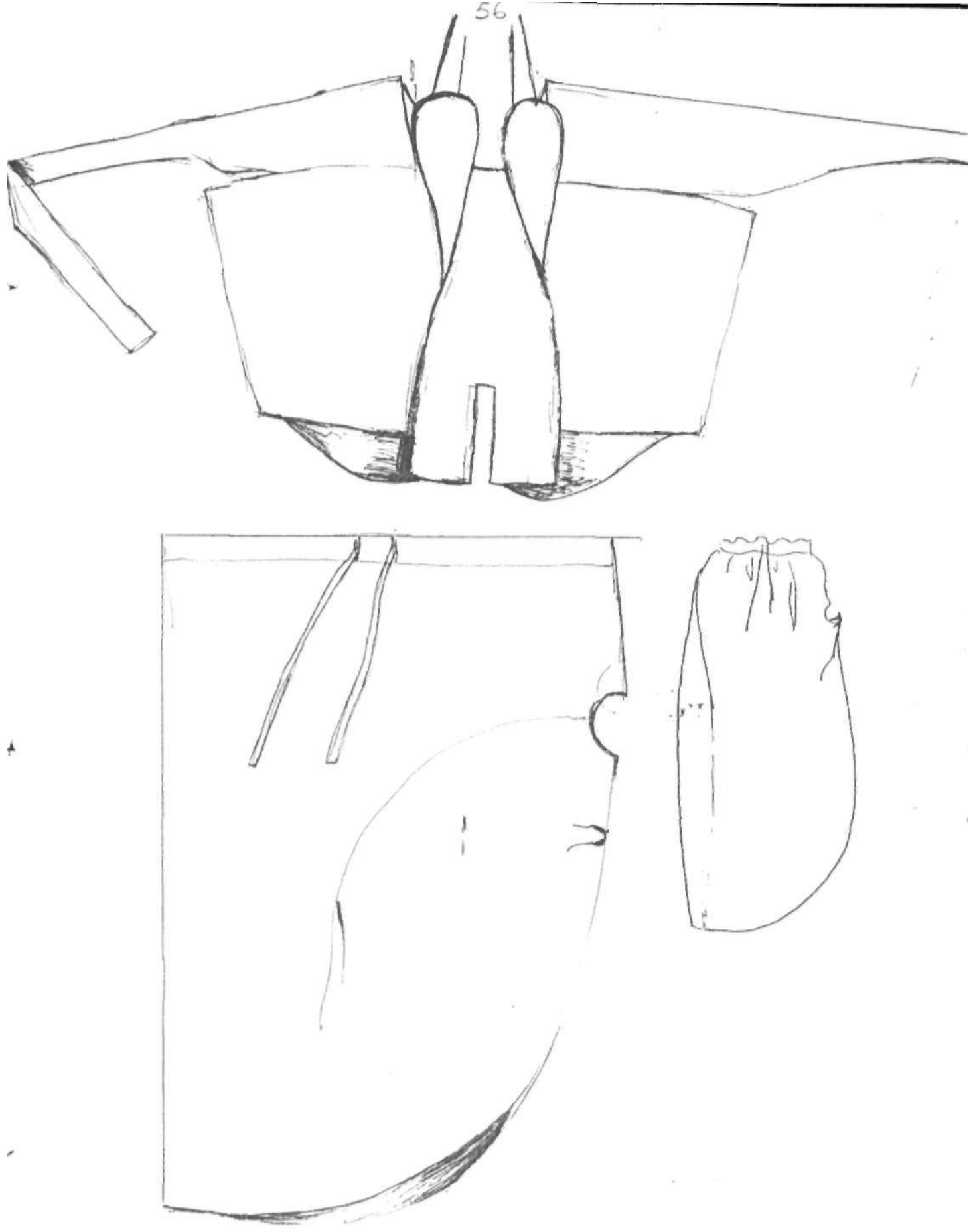


Fig. 2
Dress (Two pieces)
TOP 91CM
SKIRT 98CM

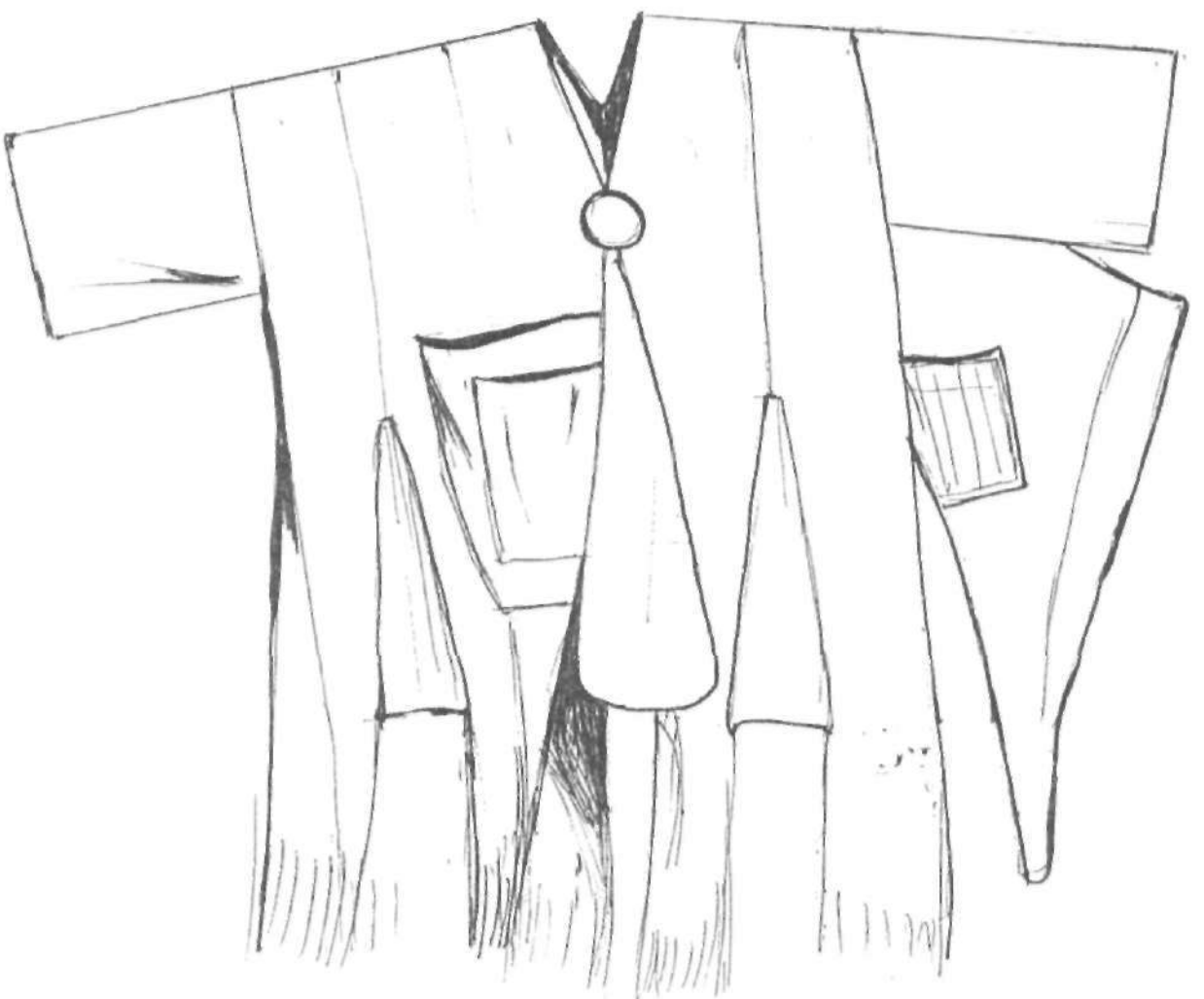


Fig.3
Male Garment
1.1metres long

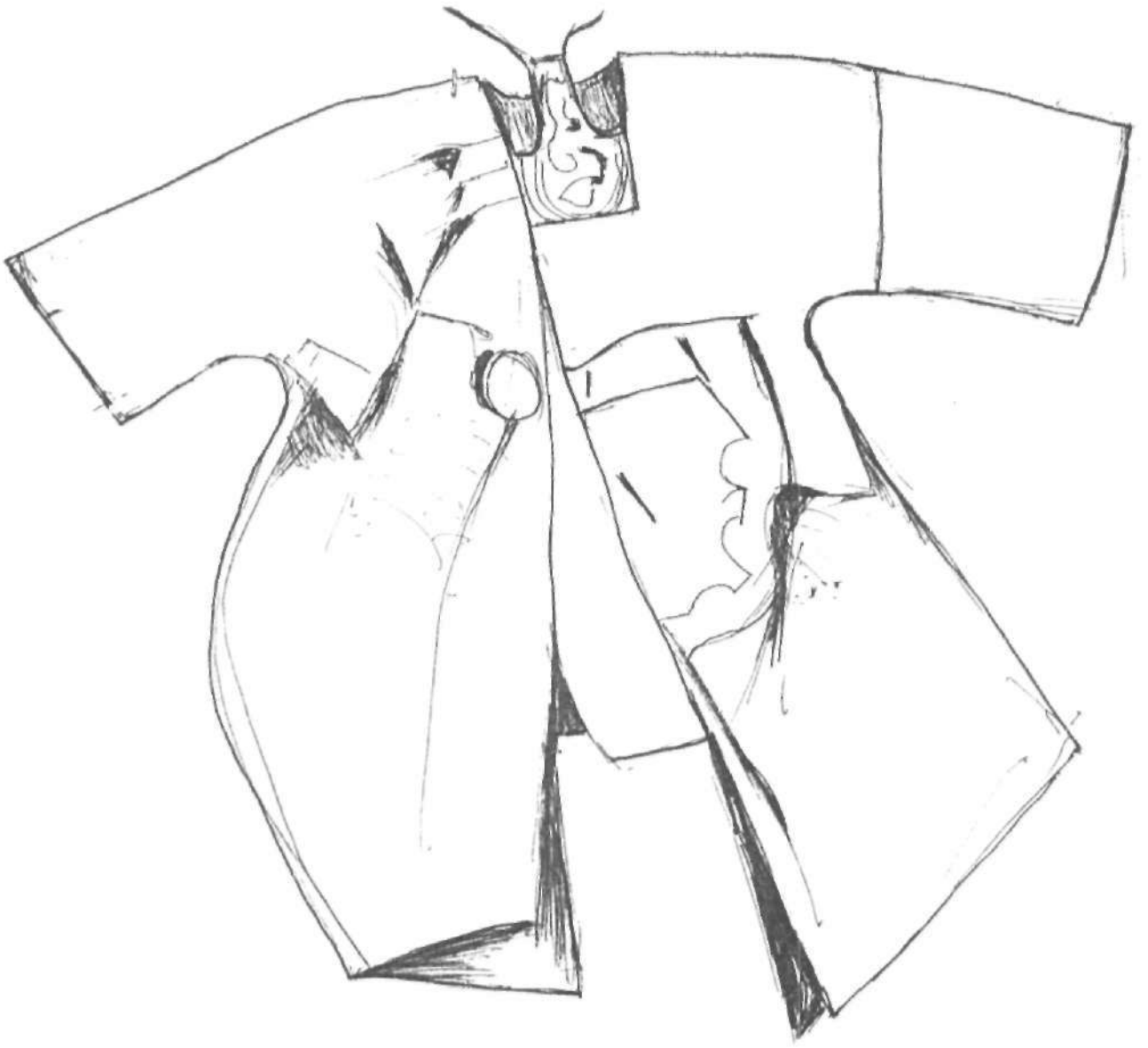


Fig.4

Dress
1.36m long

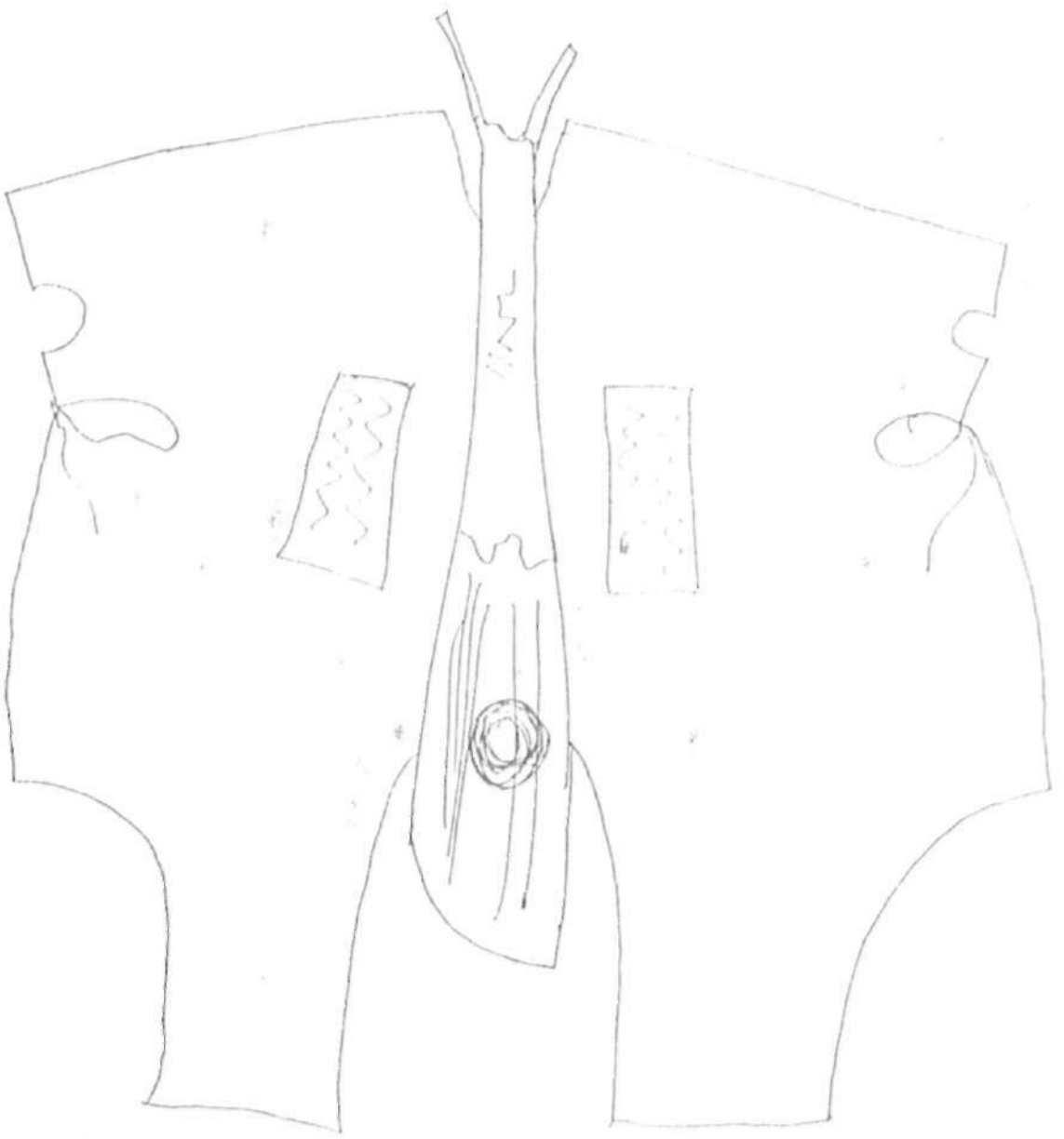


Fig.5
Dress
1.36m Long

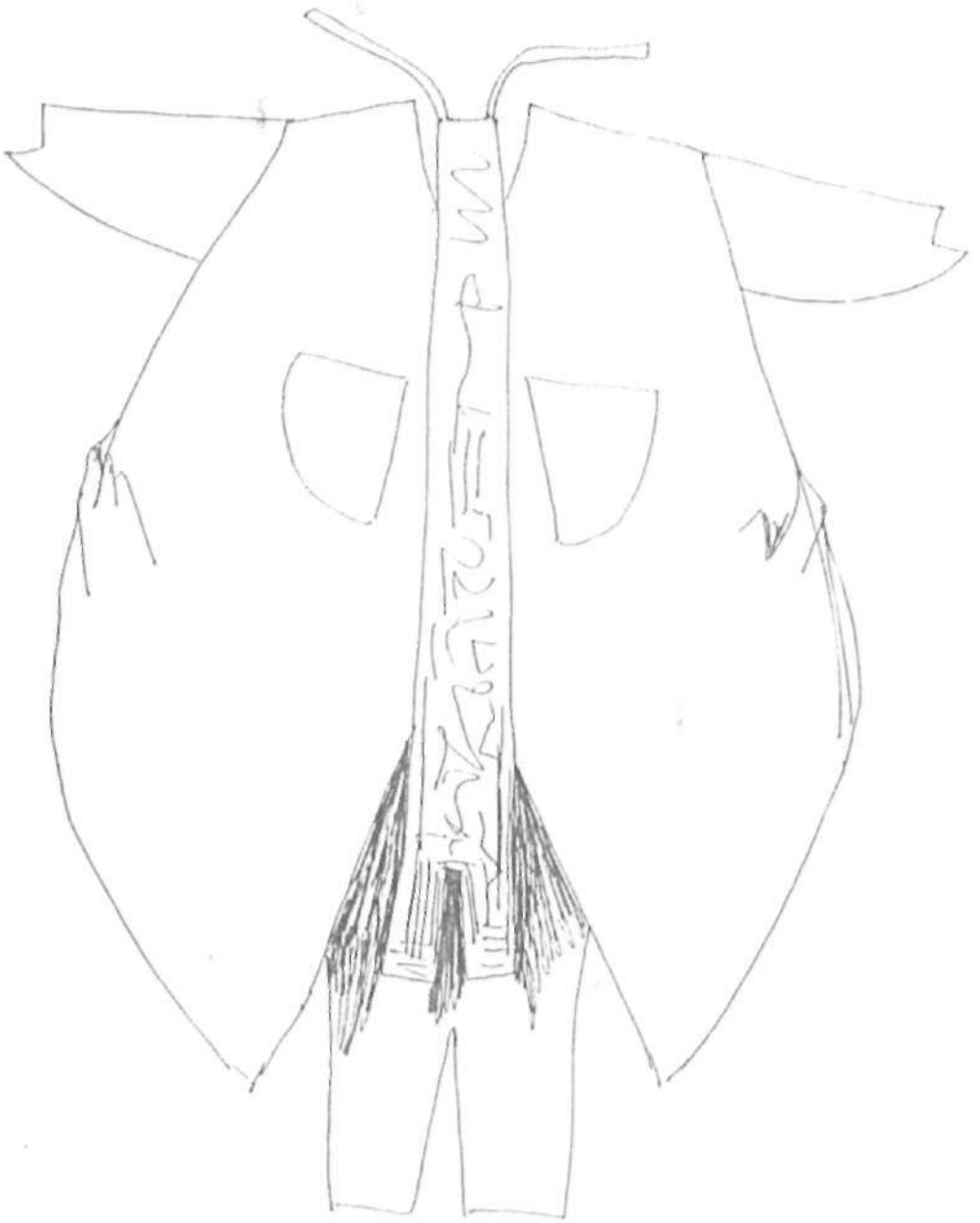


Fig.6
Dress
(1.36m Long)



Fig.7
Dress
(1.4m Long)



Fig.8
Top and Skirt
(Top – 100cm Long
Skirt – 88cm Long)

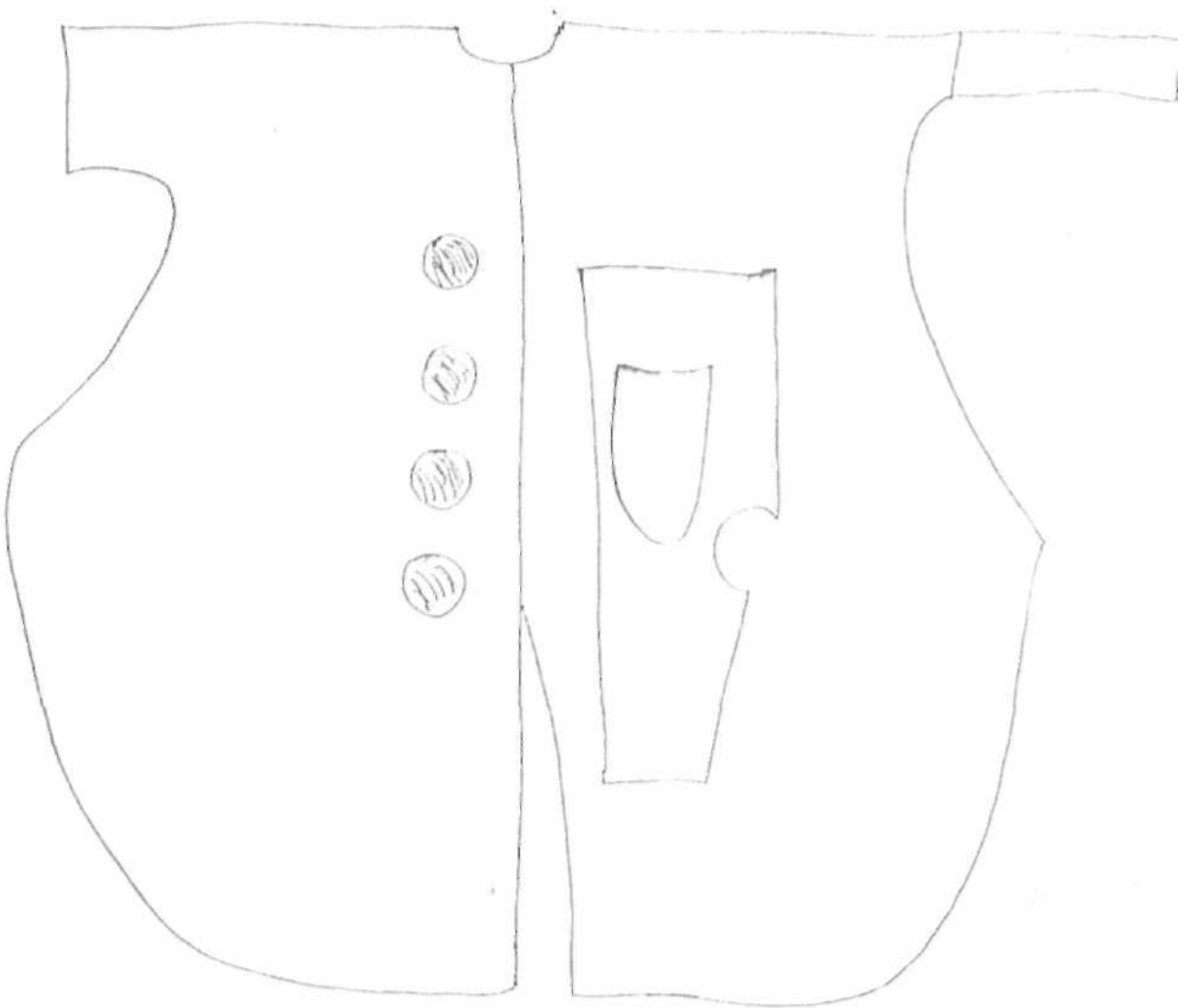


Fig.9
Dress
(1.4m Long)

These drawings illustrate, the effect of innovative cutting on cloth.

For example, Fig.2 is a drawing (pattern) of a woman's two piece garment. The top shows the basic square shape, on which other shapes were superimposed, or cut from. The centre front panel was quilted. The skirt has a semi-circular "cut out" at the side seam from which another seam was cut and sewn, curving down the centre front of the skirt. The waist is drawn by straps to the desired size, which gives the sculpted shape. Asymmetry in cut and shape is shown here.

The Fig.3 drawing also shows asymmetry in balance. It is a men's garment which projected that basic square shape, from which the design was cut. Within this garment are variety of shapes sewn together, producing a balanced in its asymmetry, and overall unity. This analysis also applied to the Fig. 4 drawn illustration of the dress, an intricate example of asymmetrical balance. In other words – one side of the garment was not heavier than the next. There must be equal weight in its asymmetry, for better mobility.

Figs-5,6 and 8 shows garments of equal proportion and were cut and built up to make different African masks, the centre front panels being the nose, the pocket represents the eyes. The form varies depending on its intended symbolic meanings.

Fig.9 illustrates a garment \dress in asymmetrical form via the varying sleeve shapes, the two unequal sides and contrast of different fabrics in weight and colour. All symbolism is discussed in Chapter 4.

Here we see that the researcher's art was immediately recognized by its constant asymmetry, and this was an important factor in the creative process from which a vast number of ideas could be developed.

3.3.1 MACHINE STITCHING

Machine stitching was applied mainly for sewing, embroidery and quilting – all of which contributed to evolving the effect of painting and sculptural qualities.

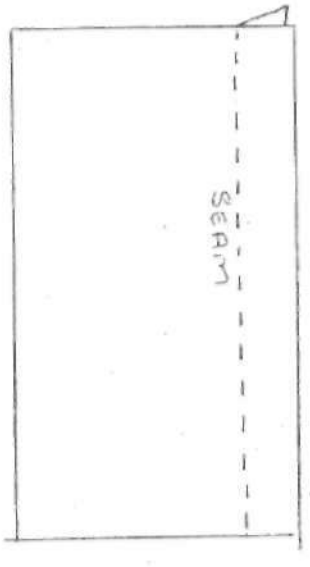


Fig.15
Example of a Seam
(5inches)

i. SEAMING

Seaming is the placing together of the cut out shapes which are then sewn up. The sewn line is the seam itself, which applies mainly to the side of the garment, the back, the sleeves, etc., It is the cut which gave the shape, which in turn produced the sculptural effects supported by the seam. See Fig.5.

ii. EMBROIDERY

Apart from performing its primary function as an embellishment on the fabric, the researcher's art made use of the technique to project a message or story in abstract form – much like a painting – sometimes aided by the appliqué method, which is the building up of other fabric pieces onto the main body of the garment – much like a collage painting, of symbolic meaning.

For example, a drawing sample from Fig. 4 dress center front panel piece, symbolized "the family" in the abstract drawing, through in machine embroidery. See Fig.11.

iii. QUILTING

Quilting involves stitching one cloth over another with some padding between them. The stitching is done either traditionally by hand or by the sewing machine, which either way gave a sculptured "relief" effect. See Fig.12.

3.4 THE PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1 THE PRIMARY DATA

The primary sources of data consists of markets at Zaria, Kaduna City, Kano, Ibadan and Lagos from which local materials used for studio experiments were procured.

3.4.2 THE SECONDARY DATA

The researcher made use of library facilities within the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria – Nigeria which included the Department of Fine Arts, the Centre for Nigerian Cultural Studies and the Kashim Ibrahim Library – in collecting relevant information on the theoretical framework of the study. The British Council Library facilities in Kaduna City was also used.

Information on contemporary arts in general were studied as well as that of African Textiles. Contemporary textile sculpture was also studied. Texts on various Nigerian masquerade costumes were also consulted.

3.4.3 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

All observations made during the study experiments was noted down. It was interesting to note the different ways that the varied cloths behaved during the manipulation processes, which helped in illuminating the affinity of sculpture and painting in clothing form, through its wearability. The fifth (5^{th}) aim and objective looked at the wearability of the garments in relation to this study. This is to develop the design as a functional (wearable)art form for the human figure.

What makes a garment or piece of clothing wearable apart from the societal implications? Basically, any clothing possesses allowances for the head, the arms, and the legs to go through; the ability of the garment (fabric) to "breath against the human body"; the arms to swing freely; the head to move unrestrained; the entire body to sit without a problem or to move about easily in the garment- all of these factors and more are fundamental to a garment's wearability.

Therefore in creating these works of art, the above points are applied in the cutting process, hence the human figure being the operational tool (see page 55).
The photographic illustrations in Chapter 4 demonstrate this fact.

Information obtained from the various sources, observations, studio experiments and photography were collated and analyzed in Chapter 4. See Fig. 13 for fabric samples.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The researcher's works reflected that same defiance which gave way to numerous experimentations which resulted in clothing akin to painting and sculpture incorporating architectural elements through its symbolism.

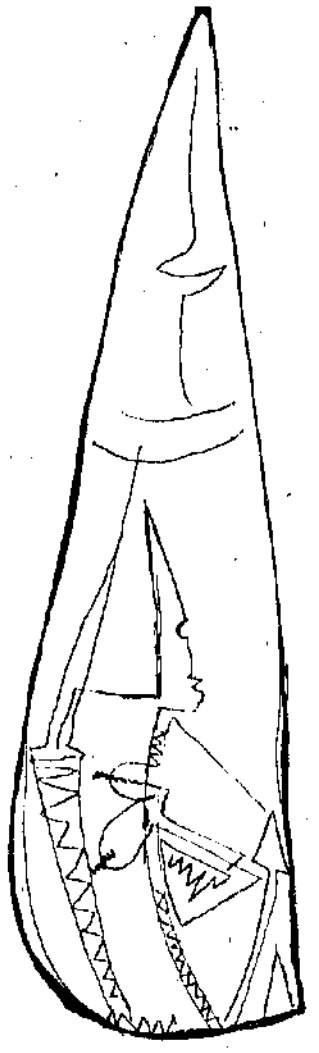


Fig.11
Machine Stitched embroidered
Centre front panel
(28 inches)



Fig. 12
Example of Machine Quilting
(Cotton Sheda/Foam)



Cotton Corduroy (red)
Hausa Luru (Cotton)



Leather/Adire Cloth
(Cotton)



Polyester Stretch/Industrial
Print



Linen/Candle Wax Print
(cotton)



Cotton Sheda



Cotton Sheda

Fig.13
Fabrics Samples

See Photos in Chapter 4



Cotton Sheda



Cotton Sheda



Cotton Corduroy (red)
Hausa Luru (Cotton)



Leather/Adire Cloth
(Cotton)



Polyester Stretch/Industrial
Print



Linen/Candle Wax Print
(cotton)



Cotton Sheda



Cotton Sheda

Fig.13
Fabrics Samples

See Photos in Chapter 4



Cotton Sheda



Cotton Sheda

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presented the results of the studio experiments which was analyzed as well as a summary of the data findings. The clothing art works produced by the researcher for this project with symbolic meanings incorporated in each garment was analyzed and a general comparison was made with other sculptor's and painters' works. During the creative or construction process – certain discoveries were made from time to time in terms of fabric behavior, color combination or other elements which contributed to innovative construction in clothing projecting an esoterism through its symbolism – a fact that prevails in all art-forms generally.

Symbols and symbolism played an important part in the researcher's works. A symbol is an object typifying or representing something by resemblance or association and these objects in this case - came in the form of motifs used in the garments through the appliqué method; embroided or superficial sewing effects; the actual dimensionality of the garment; the actual silhouette or shape of the garment. Symbolism comes in so many other different forms in clothing art – for instance the way the fabric of a garment is draped, and attached onto another part of the garment to effect dimensionality. Therefore this was a significant element in the researcher's works which was touched on, through its given titles. This symbolic aspect luminates even more when the garment is worn on the human figure, at the same time illustrating its functionality.

4.1 CATALOGUE OF STUDIO PROJECT

4.1.1 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF EXPERIMENTS

1. Plate – XVIII :Illustrates a garment made from black Cheddar cotton – a top and a skirt – with a distinct sculptural composition, through the intricate quilting method applied onto the Centre Front and Centre Back panels of the top portion, the quilted pockets at the front and the overall somewhat "beetle shaped" form of the garment. Entitled – "The night Sun: A Worldly Genre" – the researcher utilized the colour element of the overall design, which projected at the same time a kind of leather effect in the overall garment. It is a garment, which one may be inclined to wear at night, because of the extravagant nature of the garment and the fabric itself, also the colour factor – a potent black – contributed to its radiance. The Black radiates in its darkness hence its parallelism to the Sun; Black in its radiation also envelopes the universe and other worlds, the Earth and other Planets being its (black) children ever buoyant in the eternity of darkness – hence the garment's connotation 'a worldly genre'. Varying relief forms illuminate profusely here.

These tally with the following aims and objectives from no.1 to produce clothing as visual art-forms as removed from "fashion" through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

No.2 The data collection instruments, which in this case are sheda cotton fabrics and the actual garment.

No.4 To make these processes work within sculpture and painting.

No.5 To develop the design as a wearable art-form for the human figure – as illustrated in plate xviii.

2. "Long Arms : Let us Merge, Unite" – the title of the dress illustrated in Plate – XIX constructed in an industrial wax printed cotton fabric, with a polyester stretch fabric incorporated to complete the composition. The striped polyester with its heavy 'drape' quality, contrasts nicely with the softness of the cotton which plays with shapes.



Plate xviii

Title : "The Night Sun : a worldly Genre" 1995
Size : Top – 100cm long
Skirt - 88cm long
Cotton Sheda

The extra long sleeves in polyester stretch symbolize a sense of togetherness, of unity- through the idea of the long-terms, being stretchy in its nature – have the capacity in its symbolism to literally stretch far and wide to encircle and encompass a people in order to merge as one, hence unity, the foundation of any progressive movement. On the main garment itself, one can discern from the wax print certain motifs, which include hands – the finality of the "long arms" and some greenery represented which in this context, symbolize growth.

In effect, this relates to aim and objective no.1 to produce clothing as visual art-forms as removed from "fashion", no.2 to establish the data collection instruments which in this case are the cotton and polyester fabrics and the actual garment.

No. 4 To make these processes work within sculpture and painting – in this case the garment is more painterly than sculptural.

No.5 To develop the design as a wearable art-form for the human figure – as illustrated in plate xix.

3. This composition is continued with "Long Arms II: The Conference" – illustrated in Plate XX. This is a two-piece garment constructed in cotton Cheddar of a muted/ice-green hue. The centre-front and centre-back quilted panels of the top piece were designed to suggest an architectural concept, connoting a meeting or conference being held in an architectural setting, in the hope of establishing a developmental agenda. The extra long sleeves once again are symbolic of unity and progression. *Quilted relief forms and playful shapes add dimension to the form.*

This reflects the aims and objectives in no.1 - to produce clothing as viable, visual art-forms-as removed from "fashion" – through it's relationship with sculpture and painting no.2 – to establish the data collection instruments which in this case are the cotton sheda fabrics and the actual garment itself.

No. 4 To make these processes work within sculpture and painting – where in this case the garment is more sculptural.



Plate xix

Title : "Long Arms – let us merge, unite" 1995
Size : Dress 1.4m long
Wax Print cotton/polyester stretch

No.5 To develop the design as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure as illustrated in Plate xx.

4. The garment entitled: "Man Ray" was constructed in locally woven fabric from the Northern Nigerian State of Kano. The fabric known locally as "Luru", is usually woven in long five inch strips, which is sewn together along the lengths, to produce a generous width of fabric. This, the researcher used in constructing the men's garment (see Plate – XXI). The appliqué method was used here with some machine stitch embroidery. Some red cotton corduroy fabric was incorporated in the garment, i.e. the sleeves; the left side of the garment, the pockets, the centre-front and centre-back inserts – producing sculptural effects, with some asymmetry. The predominant colour of the garment is red, which in this context is symbolic of hope, of continual life in human development hence "Man Ray" – meaning the importance of the role of the male in this manifestation of hope and enlightenment for human development.

This reflects the aims and objectives in no.1 to produce clothing as viable, visual art-forms as removed from "fashion" – through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

No.2 To establish the data collection instruments which in this case are the luru cloth and red corduroy fabrics and also the garment itself.

No.4 To make these processes work within sculpture and painting – where in this case the garment is both sculptural and painterly.

No.5 To develop the design as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure, as illustrated in Plate xxi.



Plate ××

Title : "Long Arms II : The Conference" 1995
Size : Top - 91cm
Skirt - 98cm
Cotton Sheda



Plate xxi

Title : "Man Ray" 1995
Size : 1.1m long
Luru Cloth (Cotton)

5. "Purple Series – I: For the Child" Plate – XXII is a dress constructed in cotton Cheddar fabric, adapted and elevated from the traditional Nigerian Bou-Bou styled gowns. The main colour element purple symbolize a regality in mother-hood, the gown made for the newly expectant mother. The centre front triangular panel shows a machine – stitched drawing entitled: "The Family" (see Chapter three, Fig. 11). The quilted neck-piece gives a relief effect, which contribute to the sculpture make up of the garment. There is same asymmetry in cut and shape which give some three-dimensional volume to the garment. The green threading contrasts favourably with the overall purple colour of the dress illuminating its painterly element. In effect, this relates to the aims and objectives in

No.1 To produce clothing as viable, visual art-forms as removed from "fashion" through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

No.2 to establish the data collection instruments which here, are the cotton sheda fabrics and the garments itself.

No.4 to make this processes work within sculpture and painting, and here the garment is more sculptural than painterly.

No.5 To develop the design as functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure, illustrated in Plate xxii.

6. Plate – XXIII Shows a continuation of the above concept; "Purple Series II: For the Children". In muted purple tones this gown also regal in presentation, symbolizes the celebration of continued mother-hood. The centre front panel was quilted, evoking a form of relief effects that remind one of some of the early copper/metal foil relief works by the Nigerian celebrated artist – Bruce Onobrakpeya (see Plate xii). This reflects the aims and objectives in

No.1 To produce clothing as a visual art-form – as removed from "fashion" through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

No.2. To establish the data collection instruments which in this case are the cotton sheda fabrics and the garments itself.

No.4 To make these processes work within sculpture and painting – where in this case the garment is more of a sculpture piece.

No.5 To develop the design as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure as illustrated in Plate xxiii.



Plate xxii

Title : "For the Child" 1995
Size : 1.36m long
Cotton Sheda



Plate xxiii

Title : "For the Children" 1995
Size : 1.35m long
Cotton Sheda

7. Another garment that the researcher adopted from the traditional Nigerian Bou-Bou gown is the one illustrated in Plate – XXIV. Entitled : "Parallelism: that's Life", this gown is asymmetrical in its overall shape. It shows a dark/light or black/white contrast which evokes its concept of parallelism in life. In this reality, nothing takes place on earth without a corresponding reactor – a sort of dualism, hence a parallelism, which involves a daily comparison in our life's activities, but in its finality everything and everyone runs in the same direction as long as it is within the confines of this Earth. For example, prevailing now is an economic recession that is affecting the entire globe. Or a volcanic explosion in one part of the globe which results in drastic climatic changes, or even earth-quakes in another part. This is the parallelism, which even manifests in natural phenomena.

The garment itself was constructed in a cream linen fabric on the right side and a candle waxed cotton in dark brown, on the left which gives its general contrast. The large pocket on the left, with another pocket quilted in the brown wax fabric was super-imposed on it to give a relief effect. Overall, the two pockets together evoke an abstract mask effect. Brown candle waxed circle-form were appliquéd onto the cream linen, which helped to balance the garment, in terms of its composition much like in a painting. Once again, the design element of asymmetry was applied here – the sleeves of the gown on both sides are different and the overall shape of the gown on both sides is different, but a sense of balance was achieved here. This reflects the aims and objectives in

No.1 To produce clothing as a visual art-form as removed from "fashion" through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

No.2 to establish the data collection instruments which in this case are the cotton and linen fabrics and the garment itself.

No.4 To make these processes work within sculpture and painting, where the garment in both sculptural and painterly.

No.5 To develop the design as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure as illustrated in Plate xxiv.



Plate xxiv

Title : "Parallelism : That's Life" 1995
Size : 1.4m long
Linen/Cotton Wax Print





Plate XXV

Title : "Adire Fairy" 1995
Size : 1.45m long
Cotton Yoruba Cloth

8. Finally, illustrated in Plate – XXV is a gown entitled; "Adire Fairy". This gown was constructed in the Yoruba traditional resist cloth dyed in indigo – a potent blue and favourite colour of the Yorubas. This is known as "Adire Eleso", which means tying the cloth by inserting small pebbles, seed grains and tying with raffia or thread as a rope resistant to dye penetration. Then the tied cloth is dyed, resulting in small circular effects. Some fascinating effects evolved through sheer manipulation of the cloth by plaiting, ruching, folding, twisting, sewing, knotting and stitching. Also the centre front panel piece in leather is in a muted grey/purple tone with some stitching details.

This is an extremely sophisticated fabric, with highly interesting textural and tactile effects giving reliefforms – which contributed to the overall sculpture quality of the garment. A close look at this varied texture on the fabric as a result of the raffia tyings, is illustrated here. The pockets, in addition to the textural effects was also quilted – giving varied relief forms. "Adire Fairy" was used because of the enhanting and magical nature of this gown, as the cloth emanates from an ancient craft in textile art. This reflects the aims and objectives in

No.1 To produce clothing as a visual art-form as removed from "fashion", through its relationship with sculpture and painting.

No.2 To establish the data collection instruments which in this case are the cotton fabrics and leather, and the garment itself.

No.4 to make these processes work within sculpture and painting and here the garment is more of a sculptural piece.

No.5 To develop the design as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure as illustrated in Plate xxv.

4.2 CORRELATION OF LITERATURE REVIEW TO THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The literature review presented various authors who have written scholarly works which were relevant to this project. Some topics looked at the art of textile sculptures, the ability to appreciate art in general, fashion, historical dress, painting and illustrations of other artists' works and views on their working process. The technique of sewing was expanded upon and the various uses of thread in relation to this project.

Therefore the implication of the findings on the literature review is rather a continuation of what other artists have done with their works. For example in Chap.2 Swedish artist Barbara Graf presented an "anatomical garment" which copies the physique and reinvents it, and said quote "it is a sculpture to be put on, but it can also assume the form of a plain 2-sided picture, a skin stretched on a frame" – Graf (1996). Therefore the issue of "fashion" plays no role here, and this parallels the concept of clothing as wearable art by the researcher.

Also in Chapter 2, artist/designer Issey Miyake (1989) presented sculptural garments made from cane, leather and silk, experimented with techniques of highly advanced mechanized pleating to enhance sculptured effects, while the researcher used sewing techniques like quilting, appliqué and the use of innovative cut and construction techniques to achieve the desired sculptured result. Still here, the concept of clothing as wearable art is shared by this artist and the researcher.

The German Artist Kerstin Rossbander (1996) experimented with cut and an audacious use of unlikely combined materials – metal and velvet to achieve the spectacular results in her work. Her dress is sculptural, not at all a "fashion" statement, but more artistic and functional which parallels that aspect of the researcher's works and also shows that experimentation with different materials is of utmost importance.

4.3 SUMMARY

This Chapter has presented and discussed in thorough detail, each garment which resulted from the designated studio experiments.

It has also presented the findings of this study based on observations, practical experiments and the research questions.

Chapter 5 makes some recommendations and findings.

CHAPTER – FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 SUMMARY

This research was aimed at producing innovative clothing art through the use of varied techniques. The project was carried out in the studio and was geared toward projecting clothing as a viable art – form with affinity to painting and sculpture, which are the two widely highlighted forms of visual arts. The researcher considered the media of textiles and clothing as challenging platforms of highly progressive and creative processes; resulting in masterpieces of art. One can say that textiles and clothing were the "canvas" of the researcher's work with textiles already being a highly sophisticated medium from which one could utilize.

The summary of this research in relation to the aims and objectives are as follows:

i) A small collection of clothing projected as viable, visual art-forms – as removed from "fashion", through its relationship with sculpture and painting, was produced in the studio.

ii) The data collection instruments toward the production of these clothing were established, and these included the primary and secondary sources as well as the studio experimentation. The primary source established the fabrics used in this experiment which were cotton shedas, cotton huru, indigo cloths, leather, wax prints, polyester cloth, linen and cotton corduroy, found in the markets of Zaria, Kaduna City, Kano, Ibadan and Lagos.

The sewing threads were diverse in colours and appliqué materials included shells and fabrics, foam for quilting and interfacing. Other instruments included the sewing machine, a pair of sharp scissors, pins to hold fabrics for stitching, and the tailor's chalk to mark seams and placement points.

The secondary source data included published studies and texts; unpublished dissertations and theses dealing with Nigerian Textiles and Costumes; books on art, fashion and textile sculptures; books on sewing techniques.

The studio experimentation processes included the free-hand style cutting of cloth for sculptural shapes toward the construction of the garment. Machine stitched embroidery, quilting, seaming and appliqué were also the other techniques applied, to effect sculpture and painting.

iii. The experimentation processes utilized in the studio were established, as aforementioned.

iv. These processes worked within sculpture and painting through the cutting and various sewing technique used. See no.(ii) the studio experimentation processes.

v. The design was developed as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure, through the aforementioned varying cutting and sewing techniques.

At the end of the study, eight garment were constructed and involved the use of innovative technique and imagination, through mainly machine sewing.

The study dealt with both male and female garments or clothing art, with the use of a varied range of fabrics from Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna and Kano. The technique of free – hand cutting was applied as the garments were not structured or close – fitting. Varied techniques of appliqué, quilting, embroidery and innovative cutting – were used, which produced the resulting effects of multi – dimension in volume, sculptural and relief forms, and painting effects through stitch, projecting symbolic meanings.

5.2 Findings - In Relation to the Aims and Objectives of the Study

i. A small collection of clothing projected as viable, visual art-forms - as removed from "fashion" through its relationship with sculpture and painting, was produced in the studio. This project was successful in that painterly and sculptural qualities of the clothing art

produced were illustrated in chap.4. Each garment showed its own "personality" through the textural qualities of the fabrics used, the normal body movement of the human figure in the garment - which "frames" the painting and the application of various sewing techniques that produced various painterly and sculptural effects.

ii. The date collection instruments toward the production of these clothing were established and these included the primary and secondary as well as the studio experimentation. The primary source was the fabrics used and these varied in thickness, texture, colours - elements which affect the "fall" or drape of the garment and contributed to the sculptural and painterly effects through its manipulation. The very nature of the fabric or cloth formed the nucleus of the composition.

The sewing threads with their diverse colours became the actual "paints" or "drawing inks" on the cloth and the desired effects were produced. Quilting the cloth with foam tended towards an effective sculptural medium.

The secondary source of data is the actual literature procured for this study. The literature review was formulated to buttress the concept of the project which was to project clothing in this experimental research as wearable art-form whether it is sculpture or painting, but not "fashion" in this project.

The studio experiments in the creative process allowed freedom in playing with ideas through the cutting process to the construction of the garments.

The techniques applied to effect sculpture and painting was successful and made use of symbolic expression and certain design elements during creative process. These included form, size, texture, colour, volume, balance and rhythm.

iii) The design was developed as a functional (wearable) art-form for the human figure. It was found that the human figure completed the painting - the garment itself, therefore the human form being the frame, or the human form adding another dimension to the sculpture piece - the garment.

5.3 Implication Of The Findings On The Research

EDUCATIONAL

i) The importance here is that these findings will encourage students to research more on the subject of textiles which encompasses a broad spectrum of man-made and synthetic cloths, and how this can be applied to clothing. One can experiment toward inventing a new textile and re-inventing the rules of garment making, through the research into up-to date literature on textile and clothing.

ARTISTIC

ii) These looks at the application of sculpture and painting to clothing. Clothing itself is one of the oldest art-forms and in modern day, it is being reinterpreted on a daily basis. The researcher used the concept of clothing as wearable art, because clothing is art and emphasized the sculptural and painterly qualities of it. One can go further and use the ancient technique of weaving to produce 3-dimentional sculpture in the form of clothing, which may not necessarily be functioned in terms of wearability, but more of an artistic statement. Therefore one can weave copper wire, twine, cotton yarn, synthetic yarn, hair and wood into works of art in the form of clothing.

CULTURAL

iii) The researcher works are emphatically influenced by African culture through dance, costume, traditional art. The African boubou was the foundation from which many ideas were built, but the garment remained African. In other words, the significance here is that the modern artistry in the researchers' works helps to preserve traditional culture. One can go further and use other aspects of culture including music, food, folklore, songs, traditional painting, or one can branch out and gather inspiration directly from the environment for example - insects, birds, shells, trees, plants and other creatures.

5.4 PROBLEMS

To form a garment into art form in its own right is time consuming, therefore this entailed the consistent manipulations of fabric in the creative process, toward producing sculptural and painterly effects.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Projecting clothing as wearable art is something not so new in Nigeria, but it is new in the sense that modern wear is usually taken for granted as "fashion" and it stops there only. The concept of clothing worn as art form as being "not so new" in Nigeria, pertains to the historical aspects of ceremonial costuming in many parts of the country. "Costuming" is an intricate and highly innovative art – form in Nigeria – which hardly needs an introduction.

One needed only to contemplate the costuming of Emir of Kano or any of the Northern Emirates, " with their intricately embroidered Alkyaba of silk or the traditional rulers of Benin with their ceremonial regalia of heavily beaded covered mesh shirt, and metres of stiff white fabric for wrapping the lower body" – de Negri, (1976). Also the costuming of the spiritual masquerades of the Yoruba South – all are highly symbolic through the intricacies of their construction and resulting imagery.

These are integral to the researcher's works, these elements of African tradition inter – woven in the processe of experimentation.

It is necessary to note that the researcher's works of clothing as wearable art must not be looked at as mere costumes – not to create that inaccessibility through an invisible demarcation – but as works of refreshing innovative and organic qualities to be worn within the society on a normal daily basis.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study looked at clothing projected as an innovative and viable wearable art – form, through the exploration of varying techniques which produced results akin to that of sculpture and painting within the visual arts. In Nigeria, since there is not much done in this light as far as contemporary clothing is concerned, the researcher recommends that:

ARTISTIC

i. Nigeria textile/fashion students and practicing artists in the field should experiment more on the dynamics of innovative cutting and manipulation of cloth, utilizing the varied techniques as regards to sewing and weaving to achieve the awe – inspiring results. One should also embrace aspects of one's African culture for continued inspiration.

ii. Nigeria students of fashion and practicing artists should not limit themselves to a monotony in fabrics. One should experiment to the fullest on a wide spectrum of locally produced fabrics, for the making of clothing as well as cloths from other African countries.

EDUCATIONAL

iii. Within the textile art departments of Nigerian Universities, students and lecturers should not focus on just straight forward weaving, tie-dye and batik technique. Textile/fabrics are highly sophisticated dynamic material. There is no limit to what textiles can be made from or what material can be used as cloth. These can include plastic, wood, glass, fibre glass materials. This should, be used as experimental platforms on which to produce exciting fabrics, incorporating the traditional techniques of tie and die, and batik methods.

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