CONCEPTUALISATION OF TRADITIONAL GBAGYI FEMALE FORM INTO MINIMALIST PAINTING

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AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,

ZARIA

JULY, 2017

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ZARIA, NIGERIA

JULY 2017

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis entitled **CONCEPTUALISATION OF TRADITIONAL GBAGYI FEMALE FORM INTO MINIMALIST PAINTING** has been carried out by me in the Department of Fine Arts. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this Thesis was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

NWANKWO Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy	Signature	Date

Certification

This thesis entitled **CONCETUALISATION OF TRADITIONAL GBAGYI FEMALE FORM INTO MINIMALIST PAINTING** by NWANKWO Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Painting of Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Abstract

This research Conceptualisation of Traditional Gbagyi female form into minimalist painting observes the visual cultural representation as it relates to females. This clearly shows that though artistes have done quite a number of works using traditional Gbagyi female form, they have not exhausted the creative possibilities as the source has no exploratory boundaries. Artists over the years have articulated the Traditional Gbagyi female form showing the visual elements in such a manner that left room for further expansion of the form. In this view therefore, the aim of this study is to create minimalist paintings using aesthetic elements such as lines, colours, and shapes amongst others, that lies within the traditional Gbagyi female form in chalk pastel medium. The objectives of this research are to create visual elements inherent in the traditional Gbagyi female form and its environment in painting, create conceptual paintings using the traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalism, develop minimalist conceptualised paintings using the traditional Gbagyi female form, utilize the medium of chalk pastel as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support and use reduction as a vital characteristic in minimalisation of Gbagyi female form. The Action research approach was adapted in the direction of creating over one hundred and fifty works that consists of drawings and paintings. The works were of conceptualised traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalist painting using reduction technique. The study found out that conceptual paintings could be created using traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalism. It also established that visual elements inherent in the traditional Gbagyi female form and its environment could be created in painting. The study discovered that minimalist conceptual painting could be developed using the traditional Gbagyi female form for visual aesthetics and that medium of chalk pastel could be utilised as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support. Furthermore, the study established that reduction could be used as a vital characteristic in minimalisation of traditional

Gbagyifemale form. The research recommended that researchers should extend creativity using other parts of the female form to further advance exploration in painting and that Nigerian artists/researchers should be encouraged to identify with cultures that are not from their origin while carrying out a research as this would strengthen unity amongst the Nigerian society as well as create awareness about the different ethnic groups and culture. The study also recommended that research should be carried out in the areas of literacy publications, beyond painting as a vital language. The study has contributed to knowledge as it has successfully represented the conceptualised traditional Gbagyi female forms in paintings as metaphor for knowledge.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Pictorial representation of one's culture as it relates to female figure, could be traced back as early as the pre-historic time (40,000 years back), Fuga, A. (2006), when cave dwellers expressed their minds and culture on the walls of their cave. Some of the works were rendered in silhouette form using pigments gotten from animal dung and blood, tree sap, leaves, earth (mud), amongst others. Several of the works were also engravings with patches of pigments as highlights where needed. As the generation progressed, the style and technique of the visual artists took different dimensions, with several exploratory processes by different era, to mention but a few, including impressionism, fauvism, expressionism, abstraction, and cubism. Culture in one way or the other, has also influenced the artists who have shown it in their works.

Following visual artist's exploratory advancement, more modern styles and skills like conceptualisation and minimalisation of the visual components could be deemed to have been achieved unknowingly, in the cultural representation. Sol Lewitt as cited by Alberro and Stimson (1999) believes that conceptual art is made to engage the mind of the viewer rather than his eye or emotionswhich came fully into lime light after Marcel Duchamp around the early 60"s. On another hand, minimalism, as described by Obendoorf (2009), consist of any art that is set out to expose the essence or identity of a subject through eliminating all non- essential forms, features or concepts, championed by artists like Donald Judd amongst others. In other words, this also proves at some point these two aspects of art appeared together in works of earlier artists proving that in the history of pictorial representation, creativity gradually overtook mere representation of forms. The observations from previously mentioned practices have not only shown that the

female form has been undergoing several exploratory processes from the pre-historic era, but also proven Sullivan's assertion on seeing. In Africa, visual artists especially painters from different schools, have also formed part of this exploratory team as they have not relented in stepping into the footprints of their predecessors and captured several female forms from different ethnic groups, with most visual and physical attributes as could be seen in some of their painting compositions. The likes of Jerry Buhari (b.1958), Bona Ezeudu (b.1956), Aderonke Adetunji (Unknown), Oghale Thomas (Unknown), amongst others, haveportrayed the female forms from the Gbagyi ethnic group, using several painting media, styles and techniques, emulating the previous mentioned practices as well as tagging along in trending ones. The Gbagyipeople who are regarded as one of the prominent heterogeneous societies in the Northern part of Nigeria, have developed one of the ancient and enduring cultures in Nigeria, where women carry loads on their shoulders (Chigudu, 2008). Identified with this uniqueness, they appear different from women of other cultural background within the country due to the hump formed on their shoulder where they position the loads.

Following the track record ofrepresentation of forms especially the female form, artists, especially painters as essential members of the community are equally knowledgeable in the values and the indigenous vital concepts of their societies. Several of them have in their era used different exploratory processes to mention but a few, including impressionism, fauvism, expressionism, abstraction, cubism and minimalism, to express and portray feelings in their works. In the United States of America, there were several artists whose practices and visual expressions in the 1950s fit comfortably into the above description. These artists were found and associated with an artistic-crusade known as Minimalist Art Movement. The movement consisted of visual artists namely, Frank Stella (b.1936), Robert Mangold (b.1937), Kenneth

Noland (b.1924-2010), John McCracken (b.1934-2011), Agnes Martin (b.1912-2004), Dan Flavin (b.1933-1996), Al Held (b.1928-2005), Ellsworth Kelly (b.1923-2015) amongst others, who collectively believed that a work of art should speak for itself Obendorf (2009). Minimalism in visual art, sets out to expose the essence or identity of a subject through eliminating all non-essential forms, features or concepts and is often applied locally to designate anything which is spare or stripped off its essentials. Similarly, one could also describe minimalism as a subtractive approach to art.

Conceptualism in researcher's words could mean the act of developing ideas in visual concepts. In Africa, precisely Nigeria, cultural influence has gone a long way in affecting the works of contemporary visual artists. These artists have participated in the change dynamism, thereby projecting and articulating the female form within their immediate environment of different ethnic groups, beyond their physical looks in their works. The ethnic groups represented are the Fulanis, Hausas, Ibos, Yorubas, Gbagyis amongst others. These artists deem it fit to fall back to their various societies and appreciate the different cultures which informed the basis of their individual styles and concepts. They were seen to be influenced by the culture surrounding them as they referenced and adapted these traditional cultures into their paintings. From existence, the Department of Fine Art from some Nigerian schools continues to produce visual artists who also in turn identifies with the change dynamism in representing female form. To add to the previously mentioned list are Solomon Wangboje, (b.1930-1998), Chuks Anyanwu (b.1937-1992), Kefas Danjuma (b. 1958-2016), AkinAfuwape (b. 1952), and so on. They remain constant while showing the female as a visual concept found within their immediate environment in several ways proving and confirming Sullivan's (2005) assertions that the eye was capable of capturing innocent vision that could be expressed in artistic abstraction.

In the view of these explanations, the female form remains an inspirational source that has no exploratory boundaries. This provides the researcher the opportunity toproduce and present to the audience, a set of reconstructed images to portray and explain the "BEAUTY" that lies within the traditional Gbagyi female form, by conceptualising it in minimalist painting using chalk pastel. Lorand (2000) offers beauty as a form of interpretation that integrates both quantitative and qualitative aspects of experience. The paintings in this study serve the purpose as explained by Lorand, as they capture both aspects of the experience.

1.2Statement of the Research Problem

From the researcher's observation, artists over the years have articulated the traditional Gbagyi female form showing the visual elements in such a manner that left room for further expansion of the form. Although they have been visually representing the form, they have not completely exhausted all as little has been done on conceptualising them in minimalist painting. Therefore in view of the above, the problem of this study is none conceptualisation of traditional Gbagyifemale form in minimalist painting.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to create conceptual traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalist paintings using aesthetic values such as lines, colour, shapes and dots amongst others that lies within the traditional Gbagyifemale form.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are, to

1) create conceptual paintings using traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalism;
2) create visual elements inherent in the traditional Gbagyi female form and its environment in painting;

3) develop minimalist conceptual painting using the traditional Gbagyi female form for visual aesthetics;
4) utilise the medium of chalk pastel as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support; and
5) use reduction as a vital characteristic in minimalisation of traditional Gbagyi female form.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions are,

1) how can conceptual paintings using traditional Gbagyi female form be created to achieve minimalism?

2) how can the visual elements inherent in the traditional Gbagyi female form and its environment be created in painting?

3) in what ways can minimalist concepts be developed using the traditional Gbagyi female form for visual aesthetics?

4) what are the possibilities that chalk pastel can be used as a medium to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support?

5) what vital characteristic can be used in minimalisation of traditional Gbagyi female form?

1.6 Justification of the study

This study is justified because it would express the traditional Gbagyifemale form conceptually using chalk pastel in minimalist approach.

1.7 Significance of the study

This significance of this study lies in the advancement of the visual and conceptual representation of traditional Gbagyi female form through minimalist painting.

1.8 Scope/ Delimitation of the study

The **scope** of this study consists of Traditional Gbagyi form that exist within the geographical setting of Federal Capital Territory of Abuja, Nassarawa, Niger, Kogi, Kaduna and Kwara,however the study is delimitedto the Traditional Gbagyi female form found aroundKubwaarea of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja in pastel medium.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

Considering that philosophers and scholars have delved into several explanations on minimalism and its principles ranging from VanEenoo (2011), Bachelor (1997), Strickland (2000), amongst others, the conceptual framework of this study is based on Obendorf (2009)'s idea on reduction as a vital characteristic in realising minimalism. In other words, adopting this idea also confirms the assertion of Obendorf (2009) which opines that minimalism is the designing and simplification of a work of art and it also helps to open up unlimited possibilities in representing a subject or an object. The researcher's previous manner of viewing the traditional Gbagyi female form presented the form as a mere figure that just adorns the environment of her existence, with little or fewer recognitions of the vital parts of the body that can redirect or change the viewer's perspective when conceptually explored in minimalist painting. Artists over the years have articulated the Gbagyi female form showing the visual elements in such a manner that left room for further expansion of the form.

This researcher's intention to reconstruct the form in a different exploratory manner with simplification as the key guide confirms and buttresses Obendorf's(2009) assertion on

minimalism's reduction manoeuvres. VanEenoo (2011), also in his explanation of the principles of minimalism, observes that, it is proposed as being a useful theoretical tool which supports a more differentiated understanding of reduction and thus creates a standpoint that allows the definition of simplicity in its various aspects. This helped in re-addressing conceptuality using minimalist style painting for the traditional Gbagyi female form. The conceptualism could also depend on individual experience and execution. Thevisual elements observed to be inherent in the Traditional Gbagyi female form as well as the elements from the environment where they exist are viewed beyond the natural looks. The aesthetic values that are summed up in lines, shape, and colour, amongst others are intended to be tactically used by juxtaposing and overlapping them conceptually to form meaningful compositions. Following the wholesome view of the traditional Gbagyi female form shape and the load, cones and semi-cones appear constant in both the form and the load. These elements were placed to address the mode and subject being portrayed. Fusion of the elements will enhance the mode of reduction to a minimal status to further buttress Obendorf's assertion.

Sol LeWitt in Cummings (1974), further confirms Obendorf's explanation on minimalism being one that unravels painting's unlimited possibilities with his own view of how people perceive his art, which states that "People refer to me as a Minimal artist but no one has ever defined what it means or put any limits to where it begins or ends, what it is and isn't". These observations and definitions enabled and enhanced the researcher's creative ability while applying the adopted framework to actualise and buttress the philosophers' explanations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND WORKS

2.1 Preamble

Minimalism as an artistic movement is said to have begun in the early1950s however, the focus of the review of works of paintings that are related to this research was based on works of the movement. Hence, circumstantial attentiveness was given to works that followed the principle and ideology of conceptuality and minimalism. Fundamentally, this review has helped to document and direct attention to the paintings that extend the aesthetic border, and increases the degree of physiological arousal, which would eventually incite an introspection that allows various cognitions and feelings of simplicity in the beholder's individual consciousness. To this end, some works of both European and African artists were reviewed, with the concentration of cultural influence, conceptualism and minimalism.

The reviewed works are divided into two different groups. The first group- "Related works; group 1", consists of works that portray female form and cultural influence. The second set- "Related works; group 2", comprises of works that depict conceptualism, minimalism and different types of Nigerian female forms, namely; Hausa, Fulani, Gbagyi amongst others that artists have adopted in their works. These works helped to understand the physical nature, appearance, and some characteristics of the subject matter. Secondly, it added to positively directing and perceving of the study towards achieving the aim of its study.

2.1.1 Related works; Group 1

The choice of this pattern of reviewing related work was to acquaint the reader with the track record of prehistoric representation of forms, especially the female form. They seem to progress from the sketchy portrayal with little or less pigment (from animal, plant and mud),which were

the sources of colouration as at that time, to choosing certain part as a point of focus with larger colour palette gotten out of development and discoveries. Some of the works that portray this description are reviewed below:

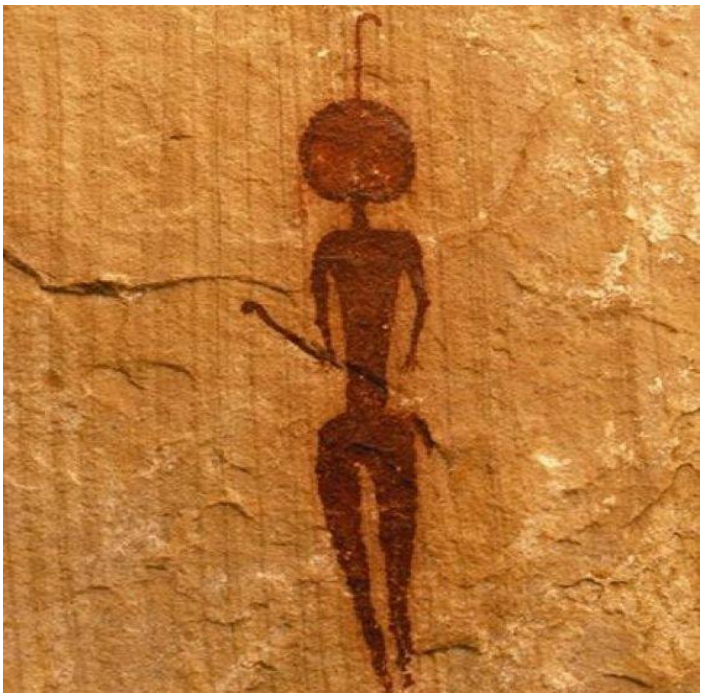


Fig.**1**
Title: Rock painting showing female figure
Date: Unknown
Medium: Unknown
Size: Unknown
Artist: Tassili n'Ajjer's rock artists
Source: www.philipscollection.org,
[Retrieved on 09/09/2015, 12.15pm]

The work above portrays a female figure, holding something like a stick in her hands, probably the stick for hunting as the cave people did engage in such during their era. There is another extension above the shape of the head, looking curved at the end of it. The colour hue is in such a way that it projects contrast between the support and the figure being rendered. The figure in silhouette, contrasts against the background which looks like a cave wall. With a slim waist and curvy outlines, the elegancy surrounding this female form, is captured and could be seen while

viewing the form wholly. This wall painting depicts how some artists portray the female form in their works. Some depict just the wholesome view of it without giving details. However, this study has represented the female form differently from the wall painting style by conceptualising the form beyond its natural looks.



Fig.**2**
Title: Rock painting showing female figures
Date: Unknown
Medium: Unknown
Size: Unknown
Artist: Tassilli n'Ajjer's rock artists
Source:http://africanrockart.org/rock-art-gallery/algeria/nggallery/page/1
[Retrieved on 05/03/2017, 9.45am]

Figure 2 is another representation of female figures. It is noted that the portrayal is in a different dimension. Out of four female forms captured in this composition, two seem to be wearing short cloths that look like a skirt, with their legs and hand showing, while the remaining two have longer cloths like flowing gown on, with just the upper part of their hand represented. The figures appear to bend forward in a position that portrays them in a swirling movement

suggesting motion in the representation. This painting is significant to this study for its reductionist approach.

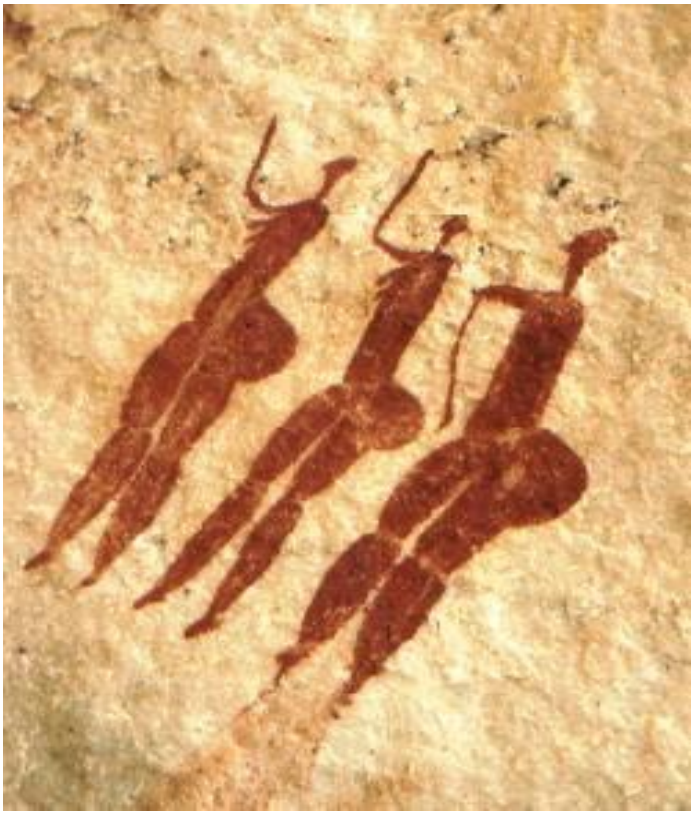


Fig. **3**
Title: Ladies
Date: Unkwown
Medium: Unknown
Size: Unknown
Artist: Unknown
Source:http://www.pinterest.com[Retrieved on March 5, 2017 at 9.15am]

The rock painting artists did not relent or shy away in representing the physical endowment of women as it is portrayed in the representation in Figure 3. Three female forms are shown with emphasis on their buttocks. Also seen in this painting, is an attempt to show a reflection of shadow cast of the figure on the right side of the composition, probably depicting the time of the day. The elongation of forms used in the work plays a significant role in this study as adapted in conceptualising the forms in different exploratory stages.

A good example that justifies the prehistoric expression of a female figure and the cultural influence is the work titled “Femme-gravure”, by the artists of Tassilli n’ Ajjer in the south east of Algeria. The work consists of a seated female figure with a fishlike form beside her (see Fig. 4).



Fig. 4
Title: Femme- gravure,
Date: 38,000 BCE
Artist: Tassili n’Ajjer’s artists
Medium: Rock painting
Size: Unknown
Source:http://www.pinterest.com/pin/335799715949764414
[Retrieved on 03/05/2017]

An example of work that portrays the first and second characteristics of art mentioned earlier is though older than the 1950’s titled “Cueva delas Moanos” (cave of the Hands), in the Santa Cruz

province, Argentina. The artist concentrated on just one part of the female form in a conceptual manner. (See Fig. 5)



Fig. 5
Title: Cueva de las Manos (Cave of the Hands)
Date: 2, 500 years
Medium: Unknown
Size: Unknown
Artist: Cave artists of Santa Cruz, Argentina
Source:news.nationalgeographic.com

The repetition of the subject matter in the painting created a pattern in the design layout thereby showing the positive strength of duplication in conceptual representation. The palm prints showed the balance between the positive and negative space within the areas of the painting.



Fig.**6**
Title: Mona Lisa
Date: 1503-1505
Medium: Oil on polar wood
Size: 76 cm x 53 cm
Artist: Leonardo da Vinci
Source:http://www.italianrenaissance.org/a-closer-look-leonardo-da-vincis-mona- lisa/ [Retrieved on 05/03/2017, 9.27am]

This painting by Leonardo da Vinci (b.1452-1519) in oil colour, exhibits the strength of the artist in capturing the realistic representation of the female figure in the composition. With the discovery of coloured pigment, artists after the rock painters (prehistoric) were not confined to just earth colours gotten from plants, earth (mud) and animals as seen in Figure 6. The seated female figure appears detailed up to the background of the composition with brighter colour hues

on her face, and darker hues to define the outline of her body. This seems to be elevating the form from the landscaped background, showing the importance of all aspects of the composition. This approach helped in understanding the realistic nature of the subject matter in this study.



Fig.**7**
Title: Woman,
Date: 1950-52
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 192.7cm x 147.3 cm
Artist: Willem De-Kooning
Source:https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/willem-de-kooning-woman-i-1950-52-2 [Retrieved on 05/03/2017, 9.14am]

Figure 7 shows a painting by Willem De-Kooning (b.1904-1997) titled "Woman". With several hues of colours, this painting depicts progression in pictorial representation in different ages and time. The painting shows a woman seated at the main point of focus. Her hands are as if they are resting on her laps but not completely defined due to the fusion of colours at that particular

section of the painting. With vigorous brush strokes of colours, the artist emphasises her breast section. The background is a practical example of the fusion of colours, which is explored in this research at some point to see the possibility of fusion using several female forms.



Fig.8
Title: Girl with a mandolin,
Date: 1910
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 100.3 cm x 76.6 cm
Artist: Pablo Picasso
Source:http://www.arthistoryarchive.com/arthistory/cubism/Pablo-Picasso html [Retrieved on 05/03/2017, 9.04am]

When it comes to breaking down of form, Pablo Picasso (b.1881-1973) is rated high with his ability in breaking down of forms without losing the essence. This painting by Pablo Picasso titled Girl with a mandolin in Figure 8, is a rendition of a young girl, holding a musical instrument in a position that looks like she is playing it. The face is looking down while focusing

on the instrument. The figure appears broken down into geometric shapes and also juxtaposed using almost a monochromatic hue of grey. This style is significant to this study as it was used in representing the traditional Gbagyi female form.



Fig.9
Title: Desire of the heart
Date: Unknown
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 46 cm x 76 cm
Artist: Henry Asencio
Source: viningsgallery.com/featured-artists/henry-asencio/original/
desires-of-the-heart.php [Retieved on 03/03/2017, 11.37am]

Modern painters are not left out in the representation of female form. Henry Asencio (b. 1972), in this painting titled Desire of the heart (Figure 9), depicts a half - dressed female with a cloth tied round the waist, seated in a position with her face downwards, and her hands locked under one of her legs. Asencio's works according to Gary of Vining gallery, California, U.S.A, is "personal investigation of femininity, spirituality and abstraction, which possess the power to transform today's ideals of contemporary sensuality and simple elegance". The work exhibits

subtle but convincing brush strokes that portray the gentility and softness in the female form. The play of light on the figure is captured using bright orange and yellow hues as creating mood and pushing aesthetics are his concern. The relevance of this work to this study is the balancing of the female form in the composition.

2.1.2 Related works; Group 2

The works reviewed under this section consists of characteristics that are peculiar to conceptualism minimalism and different types of Nigerian females. The researcher observed that there are also several works that have female behaviours as creating ideas behind their concept, the artist or curator normally explains this fact to the audience. Such works form part of this group of reviewed works. Others show total advancement as it regards depiction of the female form in modern painting.

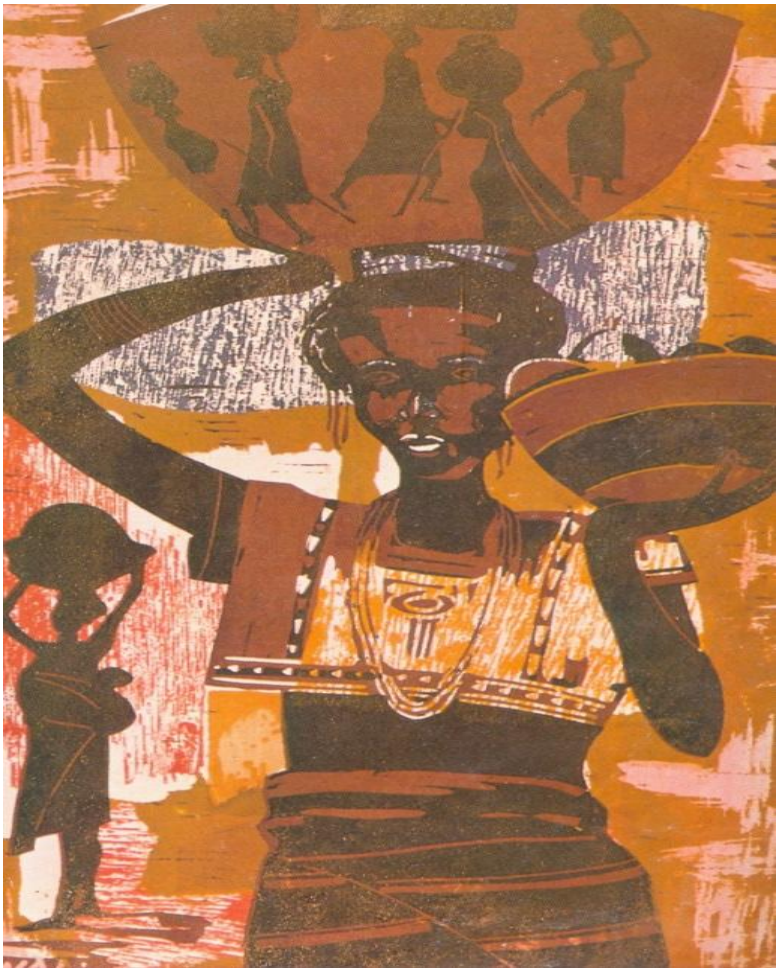


Fig.10
Title: Romance of the head load 11
Date: 1978
Medium: Serigraph
Size: 48 cm x 32 cm
Artist: Solomon Wangboje
Source:http://nathogunyale.blogspot.com.ng/2014_06_08_archive.html
[Retrieved on 03/03/2017, 12.50pm]

Solomon Wangboje' s work titled Romance of the head load *11*in Figure 10, visually engages the audience due to the manner in which he portrayed the female form in the work. Ubogu (2016) explains that the work depicts a young girl hawking fura de nono(locally fermented milk and millet), normally sold by young Hausa/Fulani girls and women of Northern Nigeria. The artist achieved superimposition of colours and images of smaller forms in the composition, rendered in

the hard-edged technique in printing. Being a female form, this work is therefore related to this study and seems to suggest that different Nigerian female forms can be explored visually in painting, thus making traditional Gbagyi female form worthy of conceptualisation.



Fig.11
Title: Ana Mmuo,
Date: 1961
Medium: Oil on board
Size: 92 cm x 121.9 cm
Artist: Uche Okeke
Source:http://africanah.org/uche-okeke/ [Retrieved on 03/03/2017, 2.57pm]

Fig. 11 shows the painting by Uche Okeke titled Ana Mmuo (1961). The painting consists of different shapes of patches of red and yellow hues. Okonkwo and Akhogba (2013) in explaining the inspiration behind Okeke's motif works, opines that he sketched this body art from women and girls, particularly, interviewing them when necessary, for the art's fecund implied and applied iconography. His mother became the primary source for his uli documentation. He learnt

from her the ability to unburden the rigidity of the wrist in order to make fast, smooth and long lines. With some of the spirit motif looking feminine, it justifies the researcher's ability to conceptualise the traditional Gbagyi female form in painting.

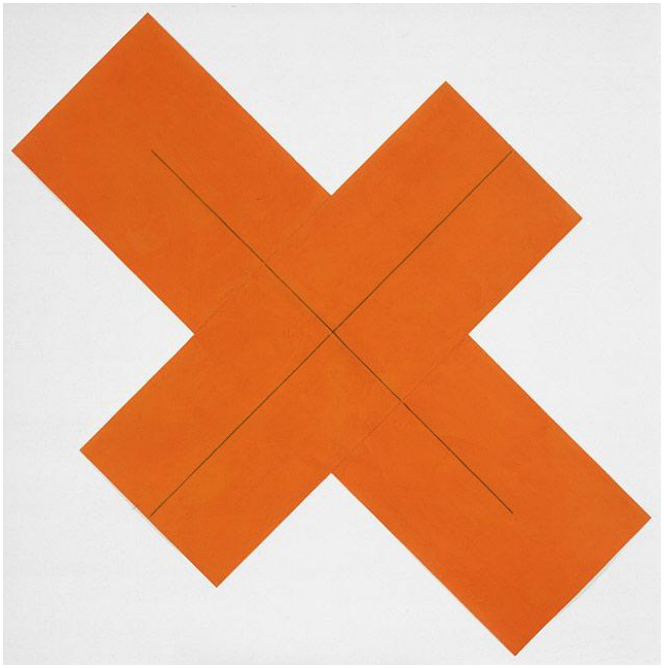


Fig. 12
Title:X within X orange
Date: 1981
Medium: Acrylic and Pencil
Size: About 157cm x 157cm
Artist: Robert Mangold
Source:www.philipscollection.org,[Retrieved on 09/09/2015, 5.15pm]

The act of reduction of elements could be seen in the painting of artists like Robert Mangold (1981) "X within X orange", an acrylic and pencil medium, portrayed with an even mass of light gray. It is a solid dimension "X" in orange colour in primary occupation. The artist also showed some level of conceptuality in the work with the concept (Fig. 12).



Fig.13
Title: Bororo Woman
Date: 1999
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 75.5 cm x 106 cm
Artist: Kefas Danjuma
Source:https://www.soas.ac.uk/gallery/nigeria/danjuma [Retrieved on 02/03/2017, 1.52pm]

Figure 13 shows a work by Kefas Danjuma titled "Bororo Woman". The female figure depicted was rendered in domineering blue hues. The darker hues are mostly around the edges of the support, while the artist pronounced the figure more with the use of highlight, which is shown in brighter hues of yellow and green around the left shoulder and the chest. With the cool colours, the painting appears to capture the time of the day. This work is relevant to the developmental stage of this study, which attempt to capture times of day as well as a different season in Abuja, Nigeria.



Fig.14
Title:Gwari Milk Maiden
Date: 2014
Medium: Acrylic on board
Size: 92 cm x 121.9 cm
Artist: Oghale Thomas
Source:www.artmajeur.com[Retrieved on 01/03/2016, 11.00am]

The researcher perceives a form rendered with a wide range of oil colours as in Fig. 14 by Oghale Thomas. The darker hues form hard edges as they are used to somehow outline the figure represented. The artist shows a kind of brick building behind the form with the interplay of colours, depicting co-existence of forms and other elements in their environment even when conceptualised. This work is significant for the idea it offers the researcher in conceptualising the traditional Gbagyi female form using pastel instead of oil. This was useful in the attempt to solve the No.4 of the objectives of the study, which captures utilising the medium of chalk pastel as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support.



Fig.**15**
Title: Fulani milksellers
Date: 1962
Medium: Oil on board
Size: 61cm x 106cm
Artist: Chuks Anyanwu
Source:www.pinterest.com [Retrieved on 31/03/2016, 2.45pm]

Chuks Anyanwu's Fulani milksellers shown in Fig 15, portrays four female figures, with loads like calabashes. The females rendered in brown, yellow and blue hues are characterised by elongated necks. The three at the back lacks facial detailing while but the female in front has an impression that gave her a facial identity as if she is the main focus. The use of lines in rendering this composition will help in developmental stages of the study to give it an outstanding identity.



Fig.16
Title: Gwari girls
Date: Unkwown
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 242 cm x 92 cm
Artist: Aderonke Adetunji
Source: www. Fineartamerica.com/gwari-aderonke-adetunji-greeting-card html [Retrieved on 05/03/2017, 1.00am]

Another expression using Gbagyi females as a point of focus is the painting titled "Gwari girls" in Figure 16 by Aderonke Adetunji, who captured the girls in an impressionistic manner, with some of them carrying calabashes on their head, while others appear to be engaging in conversation around a local village well. One of the characteristics of the women by observation is the ability to move in groups and it was captured in this painting. The artist's use of wide colour palette to depict other activities surrounding the girls like the animals, probably cows, grazing far behind them and male figures discussing close to the animals, provides a great source of inspiration in the exploratory and developmental stages of this study.



Fig.17
Title: Pounding
Date: 1983
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 79 cm x 54 cm
Artist: Jerry Buhari
Source: Buhari J (MFA Dissertation) Fine Arts Dept., A.B.U, Zaria, 1984.

Another significant painting to this study is titled "Pounding*"* by Jerry Buhari (Fig 17). The style of weave brush strokes used by the artists appears interesting to the researcher who in the developmental stages of the study was adapted to achieve the using chalk pastel technique of this study. The female figure is portrayed holding a long pestle for pounding as the title hinted. The interplay of different colours created harmony in the composition. Even though the background

appears distinct from the figure, the complimentary hues used seem to weave into one another to bind the elements in the composition.

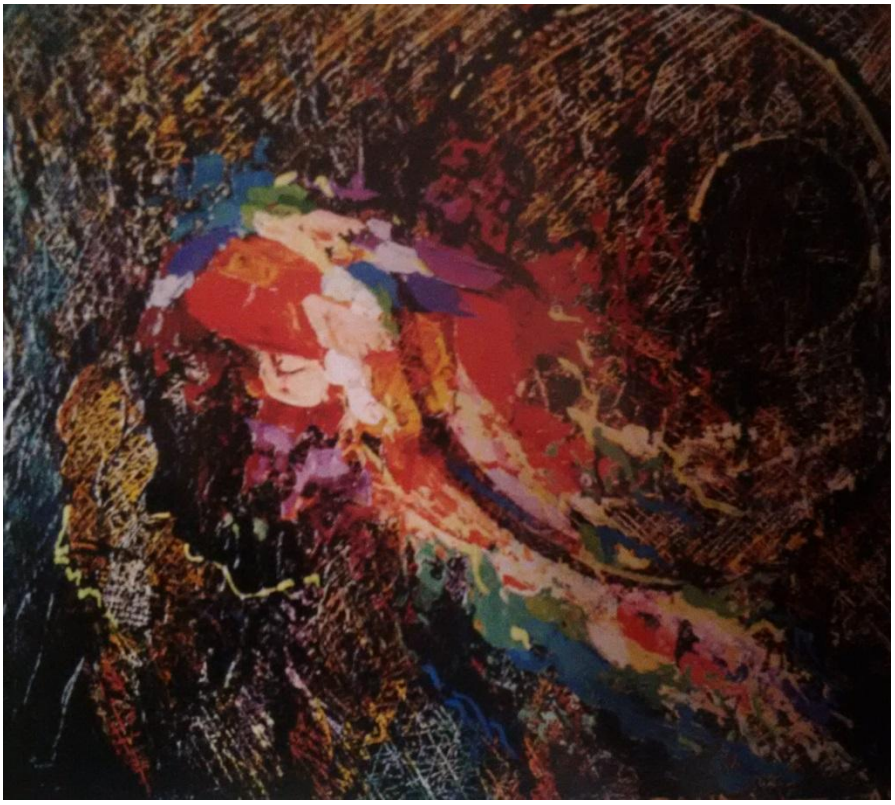


Fig.18
Title: Gwari women
Date: 2008
Medium: Oil (scratch)
Size: 56 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Bona Ezeudu
Source: The Old and New Testament, A published painting exhibition catalogue at DIDI Museum, Lagos. P. 34

Bona Ezeudu is another artist who buttresses Hodge's (2011) idea of the conceptual artist with his work titled Gwariwomen in Figure 18. Hodge posits that "conceptualist think beyond the limits of the traditional media and the present in whatever form is suitable for their idea". This painting shows the artist's ability to use oil colours in scratching method. The female figures appear highlighted from dark hues towards the left side of the support. The first on the left has

more colours scratched than the second one which appears more like a silhouette in figure 1. The patches of bright colour hues depicted may be suggestive of a scarf over the second figure's head, with a fusion of pot. The conceptuality in this painting makes it relevant to this study.

2.1.3 Cultural representations in Art

It is noted by Sullivan (2005) that seeing has always been central to the sensory – based traditions of the visual art and arguments about educational purposes. For instance, the changing notion about seeing moves from ideas about the "innocent eye" to the "trained eye" to the "knowing eye". Sullivan also explains that the notion that the eye was capable of capturing innocent visions that could be expressed in artistic abstraction took many versions, for example, childhood was a site of profound cultural symbolism as might be seen in the art of Marc Chagall; or a universal language as described by Wasilly Kandinsky; or as an ideographic form as explained by Paul Klee; or later as a liberating creative process as modeled by Jean Dubuffet.

The above explanations by Sullivan (2005) could simply mean that a similar subject or object could be interpreted in different ways by different artists. An example of a subject that could be interpreted in different ways by several artists is culture. The word culture has so many different meanings. For some, it refers to an appreciation of good literature, music, art, and food. For a biologist, it is likely to be a colony of bacteria or other microorganisms growing in a nutrient medium in a laboratory Petri dish. However, for anthropologists and other behavioral scientists, culture is the full range of learned human behavior patterns. The term was first used by Tylor (1871). Tylor said that culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, moral, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." Of course, it is not limited to men. Women possess and create it as well. Cultural representation as it relates to female form attracts the attention of the public, especially as the form arouses the

interest of the audience who struggle to interpret what is presented before it. From the prehistoric era to present contemporary time, artists around the world have continuously represented the female form in several ways, using different styles, techniques, materials and painting mediums, in order to arrest the quest concerning meaningful and thought provoking portrayal of the form.

Falola (2013) opines that culture is broad, encompassing the complexity of how the society defines itself (traditions, belief, behaviors and the likes). The author echoes UNESCO's definition of culture "as the whole complex of the distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or societal groups. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human beings, value system, traditions and beliefs".To visual artists,culture serves as a source of creative inspiration starting from their immediate environment. Knowingly or unknowingly,one constantly gets inspired to be part of the quest to exploreculture. One interesting and outstanding part of creativity remains the ability to mirror, perceive, reflect and interpret one's experience visually, thereby resulting to pictorial representation.

2.1.4 Gbagyi culture

Gbagyi people who are regarded as one of the prominent heterogeneous societies in the Northern part of Nigeria, has developed one of the ancient and enduring cultures in Nigeria, where women carry loads on their shoulders (Chigudu, 2008). Identified with this uniqueness, they appear different from women of other cultural background within the country (See Fig. 19).



Fig. 19
Title: Gbagyi Women
Source: http://jujufilms.tv. *Kwekudee*, (2013), Retrieved on /10/9/2015, 11.55am

According to Dangari (2013), Gbagyi people are the largest of the semi- independent ethnic groups of the ancient Habe (Hausa) Kingdom of Zazzau (Zaria). They are predominantly found to exist within the geographical settings of Nassarawa,Niger, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja, with major occupation of farming, pottery as well as hunting. Their female who practise the carrying of load on the shoulder, appear to be prominently hunched and yet looks endowed with curvatures and contours that retain a female essence despite the different domestic chores they undergoes. Gbagyi ethnic group in a New Nigerian newspaper publication through the National union of Gbagyi students (NUGS) on January 30, 1979, in the quest of proper identification of their ethnic group,declared that "from this day, we should be called Gbagyi instead of Gwari. A closer observation of the Gbagyifemale

reveals also the pictorial aesthetic values added by her figure to the environment of her existence hence, photographs were taken at close range and also reviewed.



Fig. 20
Young Gbagyi female
Source: Nwankwo, C. O.C. 2012

To the researcher, the Gbagyi female shown in Figure 20, displays her innocent looks while stirring into the future, probably wondering what the future holds for her in her immediate environment. From an artistic perception, deformity resulting from occupational chores could be transformed in an expression of beauty as Gbagyi woman's hump appears relevant in this stydy and to gracefully be symbolised in this work.



Fig. 21
Traditional Gbagyifemale returning home at Gwarimpa, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria
Source: Nwankwo, C. O.C. 2012

Buhari (1984) asserts, "The great activity associated with the Gwari woman seems to suggest the female form as a symbolic life centre hold". The Gwari women as explained by Buhari, are currently called the Gbagyi women following the earlier explanation of the New Nigerian newspaper publication by the National Union of Gbagyi Students (NUGS). The picture shows a traditional Gbagyi woman, dressed in traditional attire while returning home with the load resting on her shoulder. According to Dangari (2013), women carrying load on their shoulders portrays an aspect of Gbagyi culture, thus its relevance for this study.



Fig. 22
A frontal view of traditional *Gbagyi* female at Gwarimpa, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria
Source: Nwankwo, C. O.C. 2012

The researcher's interest is directed to the uniqueness of how the traditionalGbagyi woman carries the load on her shoulder. The manner at which the load balances on the shoulder appears to be a point to ponder. Figure 22 shows a closer view of the load, balancing on the shoulder which seems a bit humped. One would notice the elegance surrounding the traditional Gbagyi female, despite doing this chore, from her clothing, traditional makeup, and decorative ornaments, amongst others.

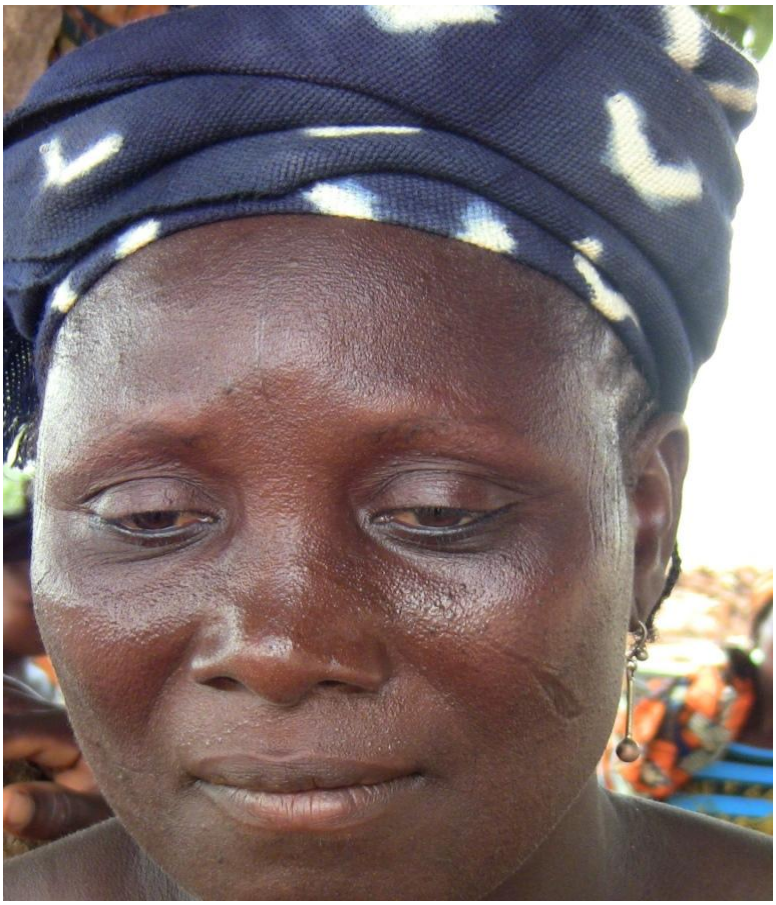


Fig. 23
A closer facial view of a traditional *Gbagyi* female face at Gwarimpa, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria
Source: Nwankwo, C. O.C. 2012

Looking at the traditional Gbagyi female as captured in Fig. 23, the basic facial structure which comprises of the complexion, scarification marks towards the right ear and beneath the right chin, amongst others makes them distinct from other Nigerian women. One will also notice the curvey flow of lines that appears if one keeps a steady focus on the face. These features with the hump on the shoulder distinguishes the traditional Gbagyi female from other women around their vicinity and makes her form more interesting and worth studying. From an artistc perception, the deformity (hump) resulting from their occupational chores could be transfomed in an expression of beauty as Ggbagyi woman have so gracefully been symbolised in this study. The researcher in

doing so had tapped into the opportunity to create a variety of aesthetically valued works where even a dot made a statement.



Fig. 24
Ajeside, Gbagyi traditional cloth
Source: Nwankwo, C. O.C. 2012

From observation, the Gbagyi people seem to attach some form of uniqueness to their ethnic group. This could be seen in their ability to differentiate things like clothing, festivals, architectural buildings amongst others. The clothing material captured in Fig. 24, according to King (2015), is known as Ajeside. He also mentioned that it is made from local cotton and traditionally woven, and dyed afterwards by special dressmakers. A closer look at it, reveals the traditional motif in white, this enhances the visual aesthetic quality of the cloth. This information

on their clothing is important as it was explored in this research in an attempt at identifying a unique representation of the traditional Gbagyifemale form.

2.2 Deductions from related literature and works

Deductions from the literature reviewed shows that the track record of representing female form by visual artists had taking several diverse turns, from the pre- historic to present day. For example, the works in Figures 1-5, are silhouette renditions of the female form by artists who had limited source of coloration. They made use of the little source available to them showed their skills in portraying their culture as it relates to female form. Figures 6-9, are typical examples of advanced representation of artists in the later generation who had access to more colouring pigments due to discoveries and development of more painting materials. They concentrated on advancing the realistic representation to breaking down of the form. More creativity emerged with more pigments in their works as they exhibited more in their expressions. Figures 19 to 24, shows pictures of traditional Gbagyifemales. These reveals the physical nature of the female for a better understanding of what evolves around her, ranging from the shapes in the different age bracket, characteristics, clothing, traditional makeup and tribal marks. These to the researcher are vital visual tools for this study.

The literature also reveals the ways that Nigerian visual artists represent the female form from different ethnic groups, namely; the Hausa, Fulani, Ibo, Bororo and Gbagyi. Works in Figures 10, and 13-19, shows how the artists have depicted these female forms, especially the traditional Gbagyifemale form using different materials, skills, styles and media to show the limitless boundaries of female form exploration as source of visual inspiration. All the works reviewed were observed to have shown the various artists perception in representing female form, thus, it

is discernable that their works are related to this study in certain respects. However, from the observations, these artists have paid little or no attention to conceptually represent he traditional Gbagyi female form using a minimalist approach in painting. Therefore, this gap in knowledge shows that traditional Gbagyi female form still offers the opportunity for visual explorations through the minimalist approach.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Practiced Based Methodology

This study adapted the Action Research Methodology which is practice based oriented. Reason and Bradbury (2006) opine that they have come to regard Action research as not so much a methodology but as an orientation towards inquiry. They also view it as indeed an orientation of inquiry that seeks to create a quality of engagement, of curiosity, of question-posing through gathering evidence and testing practices.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1992) Sullivan (2005), and Marshall (2010) believe thatPractice- Based research remains a method that is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge. Its outcome might appear in form of designs, performances, exhibitions, as it relates to visual art. This also buttresses the scope of practice-based research which is to follow a design process of moving from a problem to a solution and documentation of the process used to solve the set problem. The result could bring about new knowledge. As this method involves the practitioner engaging in the studio exploration which appears cyclic in nature, the research becomes a continuous process of enquiry into the possibility of new discoveries of the research investigation. In other words it will not be out of place to say that Practice Based research involves constant exploration in the studio which will eventually produce new knowledge and a better understanding of a subject matter.

Various artists who have successfully used this method in their research are Sani Mu'azu on *Swange Dance steps as vehicle for contemporary expression in painting*, Blaise Gundu Gbaden on *A Postmodernist Interrogation of walls of partition*, and Amos Akpara on *Perception and*

Visual Interpretation of Banana plant imagery in painting, amongst others. Thus, proven through their works that for some studio practised research, Practice Based research method is appropriate. The study adopted the process based on the theory as propounded by earlier philosophers and utilised by previous researchers to achieve its set objectives.

3.1.2 Sources of Data

It is noted by Bradbury and Reason (2006) that the primary purpose of Action research is to produce practical knowledge that is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their lives. They also explained that since it starts with everyday experience and is concerned with the development of living knowledge, in many ways the process of inquiry is as important as specific outcomes. Picture shots were taken with a digital still camera based on the researcher's observation of the Gbagyi females especially, the traditional Gbagyi women in Gwarimpa village (a Gbagyi ethnic group settlement) in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Therefore, with this knowledge, the data for this study was based on primary and secondary sources. These sources in the context of this research, therefore, are explained as primary and secondary sources below:

i.Primary sources

These includes sketches in pencil and charcoal based on qualities and characteristics inherent in traditional Gbagyi females, essentially from their movement, gesture and pose, derived from photographs taken by the researcher and personal observations.

ii. Secondary sources

These are sketches derived from magazines, writings, illustration, journals, books, exhibition catalogues, and internet.

3.1.3 Materials for each work

The following materials were sourced and used in producing the art works. They include Cardboard and Watercolor papers, Pastel papers, Drawing papers, 2b-6B Pencils, Charcoal pencils and bars, Liquid inks and Chalk pastels. Also, Mount boards, Lipton tea water, Fixative, adhesive, and "Ajeside" (Gbagyi traditional hand woven cloth).

3.1.4 Justification for choice of Material

Drawing could be regarded as a form of visual art expression that makes use of various drawing media to create a two-dimensional form. Since the works produced were all two-dimensional, the choice of chalk pastel as the drawing material enabled the linearity of the traditional Gbagyi female form to be represented in its opaque quality. The twirling movement of the curvilinear that the form possesses was easy to manipulate using the pastel medium.

3.2 Visual Process

Action research is about working towards practical outcomes, and also about creating new forms of understanding, since action without reflection and understanding is blind, just as theory without action is meaningless, (Reason and Bradbury 2006). The first step towards the realisation of the action research of this study was through personal observation of the traditional

Gbagyi females in natural environment. These observations were visually translated into sketches before chalk pastel was used as a medium of representation.

3.2.1 Visual Interpretation

In explaining data analysis, Leavy (2009) views visual art as a potential source of data or as a creative means of representation. However, the usefulness of visual arts extends into the realm of analysis and interpretation as key components of the research endeavour. In application, the researcher adopted Leavy's idea, and made sketches mostly from the experiences derived from the data collected using mostly charcoal and pencil with emphasis on the apparent shape of the traditional Gbagyi female; the visual relationship between the female form and the environment of existence. These sketches informed the artist's method of thinking and articulating visual issues before studio production of chalk pastel paintings.

The forms from the data as depicted were either portrayed as singles or combination. From the first stage of the analysis, multiple lines were explored and gradually reduced in the stages of production. This also affirms Leavy's second view on data analysis, especially the visual interpretation, as a major strength that calls attention to the interpretative phase of research. The researcher also laid emphasis on the gracefulness of the Gbagyi woman's hump as an artistic feature of exploration. The visual analysis of selected data of the traditional Gbagyifemale form therefore, is categorised into two parts. The first which took care of the exploratory stages consists of the preliminary and exploratory categories. The second part shows the developmental stages in transformation, conceptualisation, and minimalisation categories.

3.3 Reference to Established Artists Techniques

Following the reduction technique as a vital tool in achieving minimalism as explained by Obendorf (2009), Uche Okeke (1933-2015) remains one of the artists who had succeded in reducing his imagination of ideas in terms of colour usage and form to a convincing point of minimalism. His technique of reducing forms to mere symbols explains his flair for reduction in Contemporary Nigerian Arts. Sol Lewitt in Susie Hodge (2011), echo's that "ideas alone can be works of art; they are in a chain of development that may eventually find some form. All ideas need not be made physical." He further explains in Cunnings, (1974) on minimalist Art that, no one has ever been able to define where minimalism starts or ends, what it is and isn't. Okeke's work aptly fulfilled the five qualities of minimalism according to VanEenoo, which are: *minimality of means, minimality of meaning, minimality of structure, the use of patterns* and *the involvement of the recipient in the work.*

With the reduction technique, the painting of Solomon Wangboje seemed to have given credence to the view by VanEenoo (2011) of understanding the concept and principle of Minimalism as being a useful theoretical tool which "supports a more differentiated, understanding of reduction, and thus creates a standpoint that allows the definition of simplicity in its various aspects". Hence, the work satisfied the meaning of Minimalism as VanEenoo also explained that, it plays an important role in the development of communication tools. The approach supports an ideology that is not only fashionable but also inescapable in our world today. Wangboje described the act of selling "fura" by Northern Nigerian girls with a domineering female form and other activities relating to this act through superimposing of smaller simpler images on the calabash carried by the main figure.

Projecting visual elements in lines as used by Chucks Anyanwu appears to be his own style and manner of projecting reduction in his compositions. The forms, even though look semi- realistic, used lines were to remove the realistic appearance of the figures and objects in the composition. It could be tentatively concluded that the painting and its aesthetics wereshaped by a reaction against full realism.

3.4 Adapted Method

The researcher adapted Obendorf's reduction technique as seen in Okeke's minimalist technique in the conceptualisation of traditional Gbagyi female form of this study. This technique is appropriate because it gave the researcher a wider platform for exploration of the data collected as it possesses conceptuality, stylisation and minimalism which are the key components of the works in this context.

3.5 Exploratory Category

This category represented the sketches done to capture the traditional Gbagyifemale form in her immediate environment while portraying some of her daily activities. The works in this category are divided into three stages as follows:

i. Preliminary stage (1)

ii. Preliminary stage (II)

iii Exploration stage

i. Preliminary stage (1)

The sketches under this stage of the exploration consist of Gbagyi female forms within their physical environment. This was intended to capture and compliment the traditional female form with other visual elements as they co- exist. When drawing people, whatever strikes you about

them is worth drawing (Barbara Bradley, 2003). Hence, the researcher paid attention to the act of carrying the load on the shoulder by the traditional Gbagyifemale while making sketches. Several sketches were made in this stage. The sketch on Plate I is one example. The researcher captured the traditional Gbagyi female in her immediate environ with a careful observation of the act of positioning load on her shoulder, as well as other visual elements like trees, grasses, architectural forms amongst others.

Plate II, is another sketch in this stage with a depiction of some characteristics inherent in traditional Gbagyi female form as observed by the researcher. The sketches show the gesture, the group movement, and the pose from the traditional Gbagyi female form. This also portrays the unity amongst the traditional Gbagyi female form while doing their daily activities.

In the next sketch in Plate III, the focus was to represent the co- existence of the traditional Gbagyi female form and other visual elements in the same environment. The female form appeared domineering in the composition as it occupied the majority of the space in the work. The balancing of the load on the shoulder was also rendered. The positioning of the female legs depicts a kind of movement that indicates action.

Another traditional Gbagyi female form was represented in Plate IV. Portraying the same concept in Plate III, the figure was captured from the rear end, representing her back. This was to perceive the form against s strong effect of light in the day time as this broadly explored at the developmental stages of the study.

Plate V, shows another small group movement. The traditional Gbagyi female form captured in this composition, have additional forms beside them. One was shown with a baby tied on her back, depicting motherhood and surrounded by nature. Several works were done at this stage. The basic day to day activities as vital components were represented.



Plate I

Title: Preliminary sketch 1
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pencil on Paper
Size: 40 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate II

Title: Preliminary sketch 2

Date: 2012

Medium: Charcoal and Pencil on Paper

Size: 80 cm x 60 cm

Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate III
Title: Preliminary sketch 5
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pencil on Paper
Size: 40 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate: IV
Title: Preliminary sketch 8
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal on Paper
Size: 40 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate V
Title: Preliminary sketch 9
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pencil on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 40 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

ii Preliminary stage (I1)

The second stage reflects the traditional Gbagyi female form with little or less attention on the surrounding visual elements. This was the stage the researcher introduced the reduction style into the sketches. An attempt of visually representing the form in a conceptualised manner was duly explored. The visual elements experienced extraction as the grass and architectural forms were gradually eliminated. Plate VI is an example of such works.

As the researcher observed the traditional Gbagyi female form, the need to push towards identifying the aesthetic qualities that lie within the traditional Gbagyi female form was established. These appeared in form of curvilinear shapes and dots amongst others. Conceptual compositions with these qualities were basic elements for works created in this stage. Still, with the idea of group movement, the work in Plate VII, narrates the idea as six female forms are depicted. As the exploration progresses, the Gbagyi female form gained more focus and attention.

Next is the work in Plate VIII. As nature demands, in the life of traditional Gbagyi female form, there exist multiplication in the sense that they bear offspring to continue the life cycle. The female form represented here showed a protruded stomach due to pregnancy. The thicker strokes of the lines used to show the load and some part of the figure was used to balance the giving space in this composition.

The work in Plate IX shows the researcher's exploration on the fusion of both the traditional Gbagyifemale form and other visual elements like pregnancy, load and baby amongst others. The solidity was captured and enhanced using bold charcoal bars. Distortion of these lines added a

more interesting touch to the composition. This also helped the researcher in reducing the number of lines used in this representation.



Plate VI
Title: Preliminary sketch 18
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal, Pencil and coloured Pencil on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate VII
Title: Preliminary sketch 20
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate VIII
Title: Preliminary sketch 21
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pencil on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate IX
Title: Preliminary sketch 22
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

iii. Exploration Stage

Realising the fundamentals and reduction tactics in achieving minimalism, the researcher identified some of the visual aesthetic values within the traditional Gbagyi female form which are summed up in colours, shapes, dots, and lines (curvilinear) to create works. An introduction of chalk pastel into the charcoal created a fusion with great appeal. The female figure represented with load on her shoulder, was first captured in charcoal before solidifying it with orange and yellow hue of chalk pastel. Thick bold purple hue chalk pastel lines were used to show the background which also portrays depth in the work. It also enhanced the aesthetic representation of the work. Some parts if the support were left untouched to show the relationship between it and the material used. This is shown in Plate X.

Furthering the introduction of chalk pastel in the composition is captured in Plate XI. The researcher revisited the sketch in Plate VII but this time, only chalk pastel was used depicting the traditional Gbagyi female forms who seem to be facing the right-hand side of the composition. The dark blue shade chalk pastel was used to outline the forms in silhouette manner of representation. The background was left partially covered by the composition but more towards the upper left side. This, to the researcher was to contrast the form with the background. Thinner strokes of yellow, purple and a few blue pastels were used to highlight the female forms with loads on their shoulder. Elongation and semi- realism were achieved at this stage too.

The next exploratory work is in Plate XII, a depiction of three tradition Gbagyi female forms in motion caught in a moving whirlwind. The form appears fused and somehow elongated in a circular motion due to the movement of the wind. This idea prompted further explorations to

depict different times of the day and year as lives of the traditional Gbagyifemale form evolves around them in later categories. Charcoal was used to show the body of the form while the other elements were shown with yellow, orange and brown hues of chalk pastel.



Plate X
Title: Exploration 1
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pastel on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

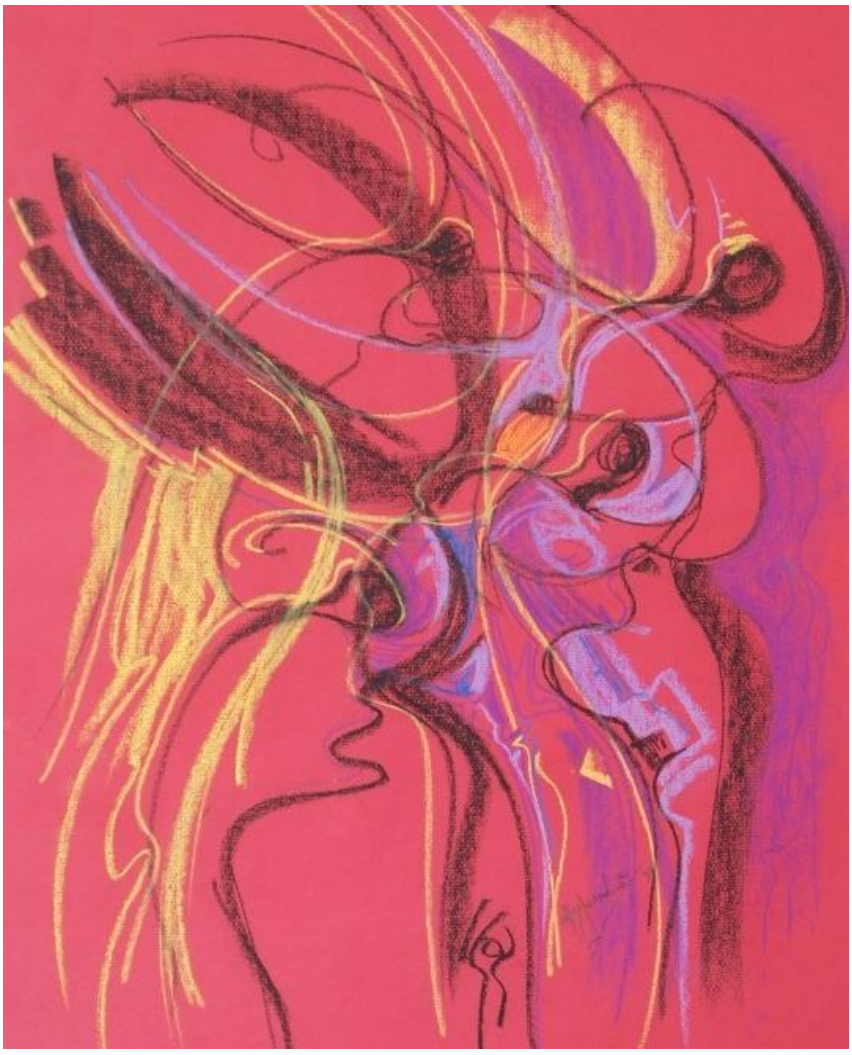


Plate XI
Title: Exploration 2
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pastel on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

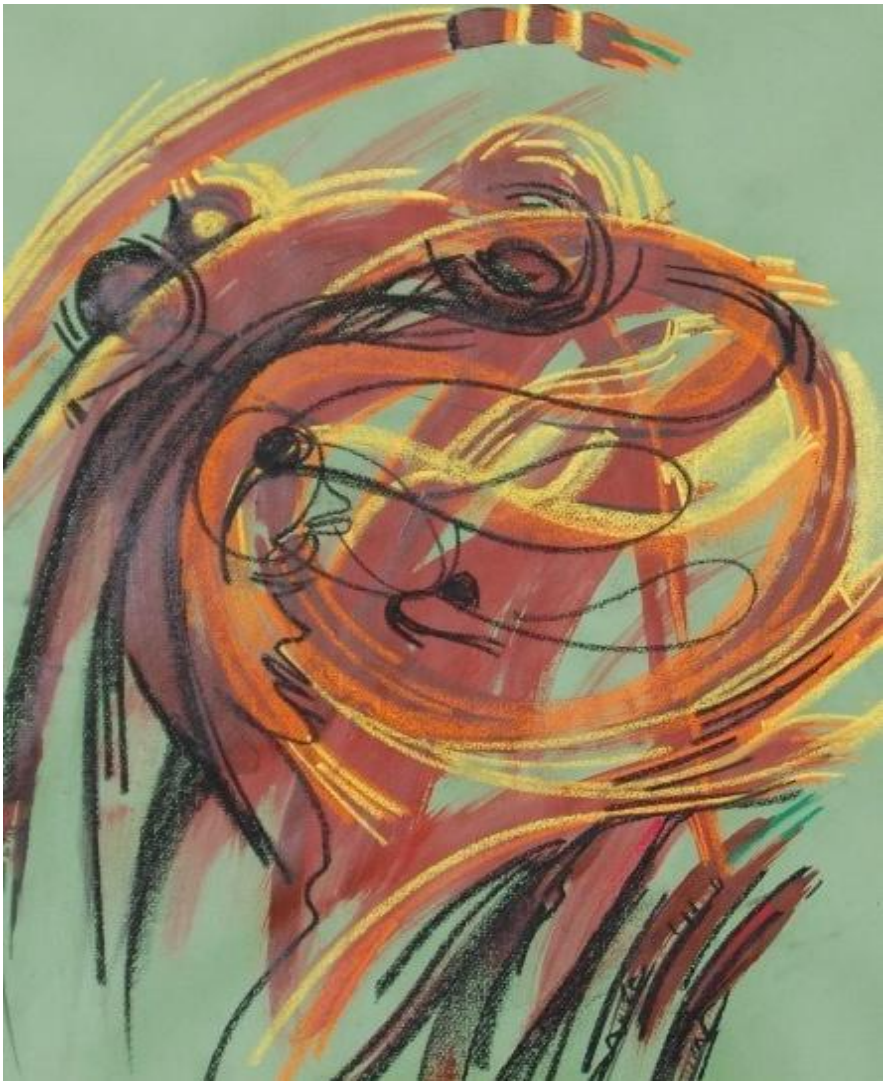


Plate XII
Title: Exploration 5
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and Pastel on Paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

3.5.1 Summary of the Exploratory Process

The researcher presented the analysis of data resulting from personal observation of the traditional Gbagyi female form in addition to the ones retrieved from other reliable sources like the magazines, the internet, books, and journals as shown in plates1-12. The data has been presented in charcoal and pencil medium as shown in the preliminary stages. Chalk pastel was introduced into the compositions at the exploratory stage, thus gradually developing into a conceptual state in an attempt to achieve the second objective of this study. This proves the possibility that further conceptuality using reduction could result to simplicity.

According to Susie Hodge (2011), "conceptual art can be anything; it is simply ways in which artists communicate ideas". In buttressing Susie's view and conceptualising the traditional Gbagyi female form, the researcher communicated this idea and improved to a higher level of understanding, the initial visual perceptive status of the form. The paintings produced attempts to present traditional Gbagyifemale form differently and advanced it from the earlier view the researcher had of the form. This has significantly changed the view held about the traditional Gbagyi female form. The study's interpretation and representation are the researcher's perception of the traditional Gbagyifemale form. The research has continually represented the form to the point that one could state that the knowledge gap had been identified and be solved through continuous conceptualisation in a reductionist technique.

Based on the exploratory process, the researcher establishes that perceiving an object or subject beyond the physical looks; could perhaps arouse the creative instinct that might have been clueless to what extent creativity might drive one. Realising the fundamentals and reduction technique in achieving minimalism, the researcher identified some of the visual aesthetic values inherent within the traditional Gbagyi female form which are summed up in colours, shapes,

lines, and dots to create works in developmental stages of the study. Reason and Bradbury (2006) observe and explain that good action research emerges over time in an evolutionary and developmental process. Also, on medium quest, it is discovered that the opaque nature of chalk pastel makes it most perfect and suitable than other media in representing the traditional Gbagyifemale form which possesses linearity as one of the aesthetic values. This appears to be noteworthy because the ability to portray the flow with curvilinear involved smooth movement of the chalk pastel and non- breaking of the researcher's free hand-flow of drawing.

Many have sprouted out of conceptualising the unknown to create new compositions that qualify the word minimalism. However, the study sees the outcome as the new beauty that emerges out of a technical understanding of the flow of exploratory form. The works produced have shown that further reduction of the visual elements could lead one to the level where a simple dot on a space can depict minimalism.

3.6 Developmental Category

The developmental category has been divided into three stages as follows:

i Transformation stage

ii Conceptualisation stage and

iii Minimalisation stage.

i Transformation stage

Discovering the visual aesthetic values of traditional Gbagyi female expands the study's opportunity to express more conceptual compositions that projects developmental progression of the study. The compositions cover social issues, different times of the day, and weather

conditions. Works in this stage buttress the explanation on conceptualism according to Hart (1998) which is of the opinion that it plays an important role in creating and reconstructing mental images. The works produced here are a set of reconstructed images to portray and explain the beauty that lie within the traditional Gbagyi female form. Elongation, distortion, stylisation, subtraction and juxtaposition were utilsed through the medium of chalk pastel.

The painting in Plate XIII has its design elements derived from the ideas generated from motherhood imagination. Motherhood being observed as part of female life is rather depicted conceptually and symbolically while being visually interpreted as a bird's nest. This nest in orange, and yellow colour is filled with an egg-like form in an orange hue. The shape of the female figure and the load she is carrying has been arranged in such a way that the load doubles as the shape of the bird's nest too. The elegancy of the female form is seen in the curvilinear structure and rendered in orange and white colour as a symbol of unity. It also outlines and unifies the whole concept. With the flow of a darker shade of brown colour, the researcher attempts to show the bonding tubelike tissue, (the umbilical cord) connecting unborn children to their mother. The researcher simply observes that, as the birds nurture and protect its eggs, so does the Traditional Gbagyi female protect the unborn offspring as captured in this concept.

Plate XIV has its concept drawn from artists' painting pallete. The researcher's imagination portrays motherhood as being relevant in the life of tradional Gbagyi female using the image of an artist's painting palette. It is assumed that motherhood is relevant to the Gbagyi ethnic group for generations for continuity, just as the artists' painting palette appears relevent to the artist for creative continuity. The work consists of brown, yellow, orange hues over a dark colour support.

Most lines were characterised with extensions at every end of it to establish originality and identity.

Still, on motherhood, the painting in Plate XV is another representation of motherhood which is just reduced to focus on the breast. Motherhood encompasses so many things in bringing up offspring. When the unborn finally comes to existence, the mother embarks on feeding him/her to sustain the new life that has become her responsibility. The breast which stores the natural milk for feeding babies was represented and rendered in blue, purple, orange and yellow hues, it was positioned towards the upper left side of the paper. The offsprings were vertically depicted with their heads attached to the nipple of the breast as if to get nourishment from the breast milk. With their body in different shades of blue, orange and yellow hues, they apper as if overlapping each other towards the right side of the support. They were also highlighted at the edges by the right hand side to depict the effect of light. The word "Gbagyi" was scribbled all over the background in a blue hue to significantly identify the painting as emulated from Okeke's symbolic expression style and also show depth in the painting.

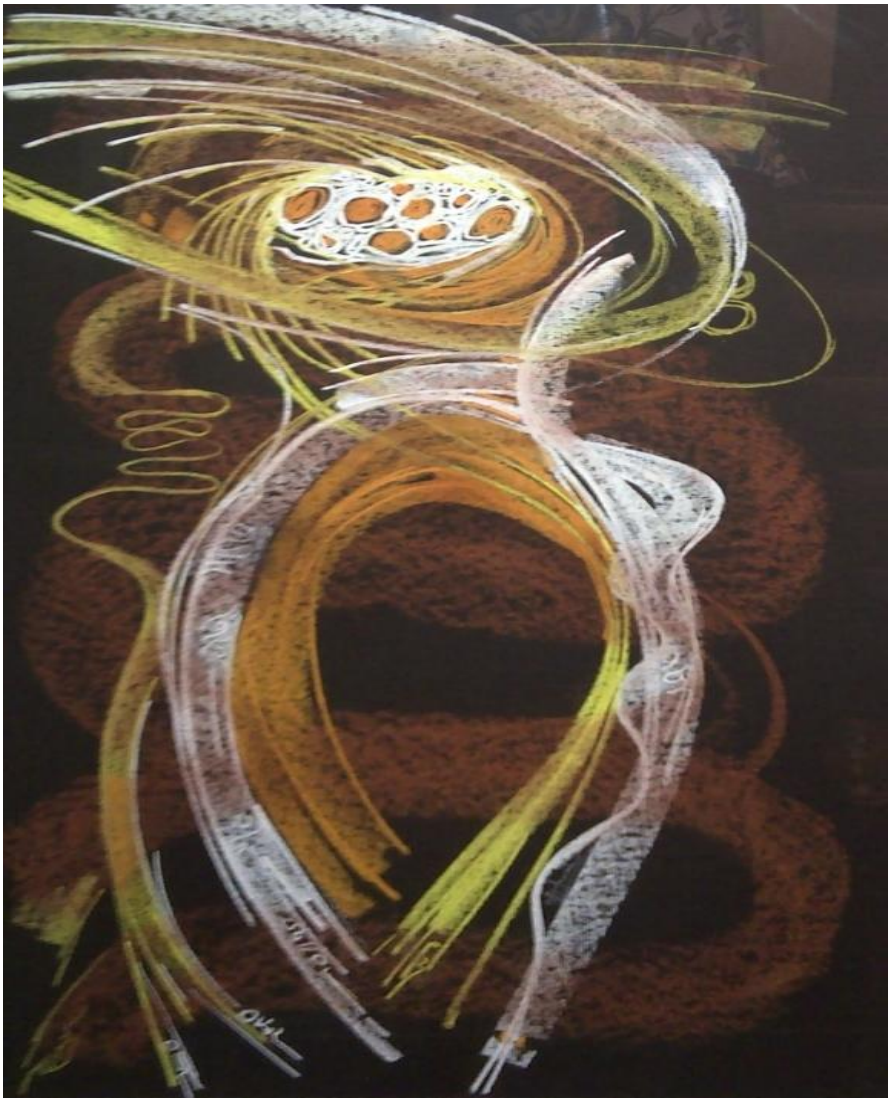


Plate XIII
Title: Transformation 16
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 50 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

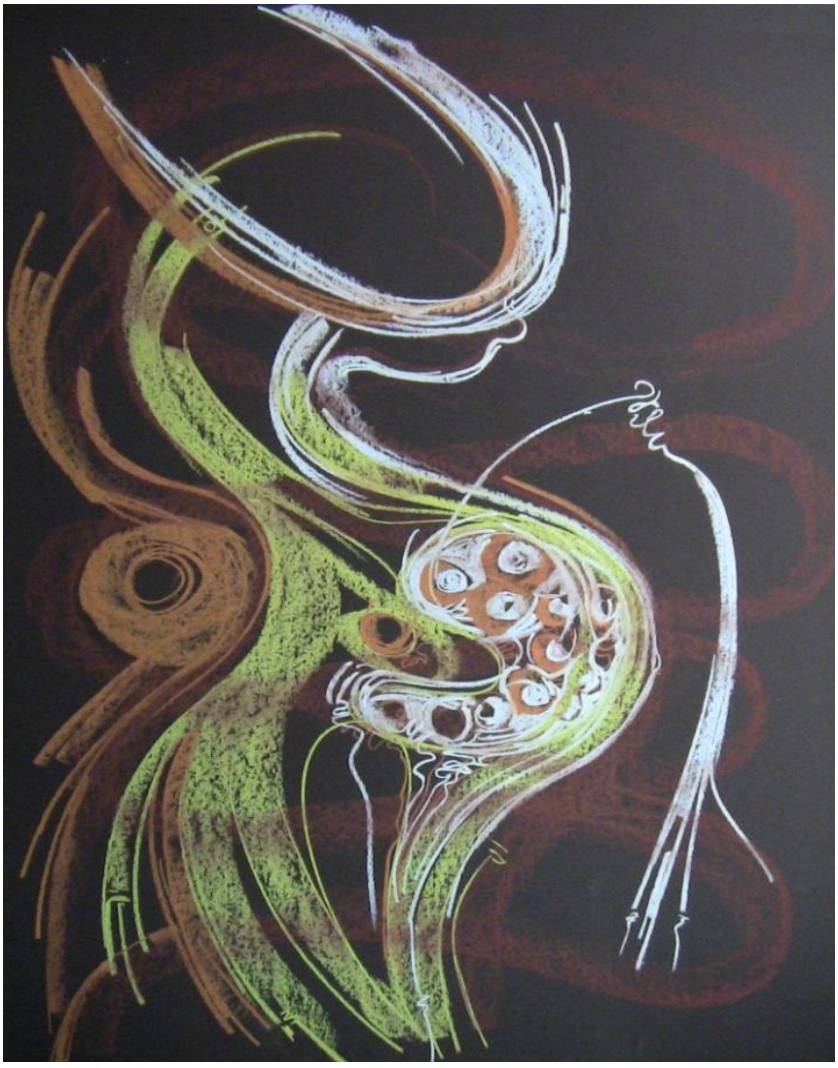


Plate XIV
Title: Transformation 17
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

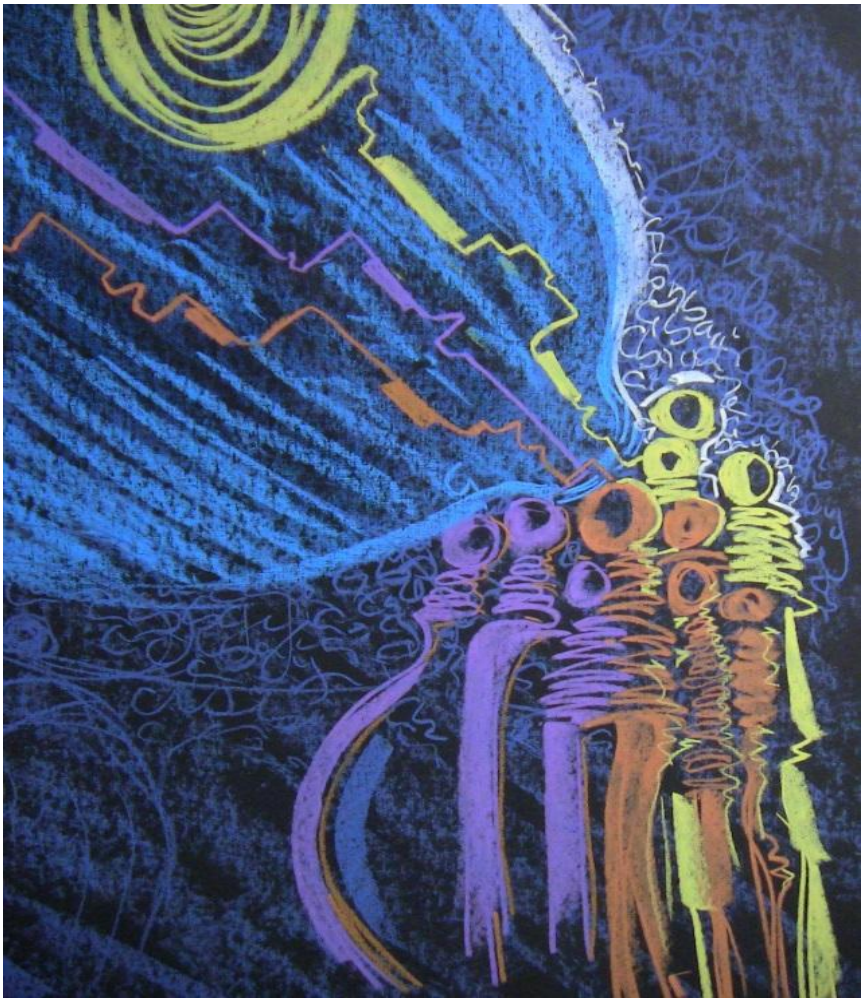


Plate XV
Title: Transformation 18
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

ii. Conceptualisation stage

The works created consist of reduced visual aesthetic elements. The painting in Plate XVI, Shows the researcher's interpretation of the harmarthan season experienced in Gwarimpa, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The concept shows the traditional *Gbagyi* female form fused into the cloudy weather. The curvilinear was used to signify the shape of the form as well as the representation of the load on her shoulder. The positioning of the visual elements, rendered in monochromatic manner with blue hues, showcases colour and form balance in the composition. The elements were also fused to achieve wholeness in the painting. The background appears bare as part of reduction technique in this stage.

The next painting in Plate XVII represents the researcher's interpretation of a dancer. The female form captured in this painting has its' visual elements drastically reduced with the features rendered in bold dark colour hue. Fewer strokes of lines on the complete bare background are the researcher's style of establishing simplicity which is one aspect of minimalism. The researcher's opinion is that sometimes in creativity, disorderliness could bring orderliness depending on how it is objectively viewed. This idea brought about using two primary colours, red and yellow to compliment the secondary colour (green), in the composition and placed in a disorderly manner. This also shows further reduction and colour tolerance in the composition. Interweaving of lines and colours were deemed necessary and used in the composition to enhance the balance of elements in the painting.



Plate XVI
Title:Gbagyi beauty 30
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



Plate XVII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 54
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

iii Minimalisation stage

As the reduction progressed into this stage, most of the works created at this stage were rendered in conceptualisation with an additional advancement to the point that a dot can make a statement.

The painting in Plate XVIII showcases a representation of two traditional Gbagyi female forms depicted using fewer lines. They appear superimposed on each other, while balancing the composition just as Wangboje demonstrated. The yellow semi-cone on the left side of the painting represents the load carried by one of the female forms, and it appears to be the lead way into the composition given the bright colour that was used to depict it. The second yellow dot which is not as bright as the earlier mentioned one and situated beneath an interwoven orange circle represents the head of one of the females with a body in purple colour. The second female was rendered in blue hue overlapping the first figure.

The researcher's interpretation of harmonising balance in a composition is shown in Plate XIX. Depicted to capture fusion in yet another symbolic representation of two traditional Gbagyi female forms. Unified and simplified in just one stoke of curvilinear in white against a dark colour bare background. The two female form portrayed appears with protruding stomach signifying pregnancy which also helped in striking balance in the painting. The extension of the white line upwards depicts the loads above their head. The contents of their load were shown in short stroke of deep red hue, highlighted with a dot of yellow colour. To the researcher, the use of white for the forms could be seen as a symbol of peace amongst the traditional Gbagyifemales as white could sometimes symbolise peace depending on who is using it and in which context.

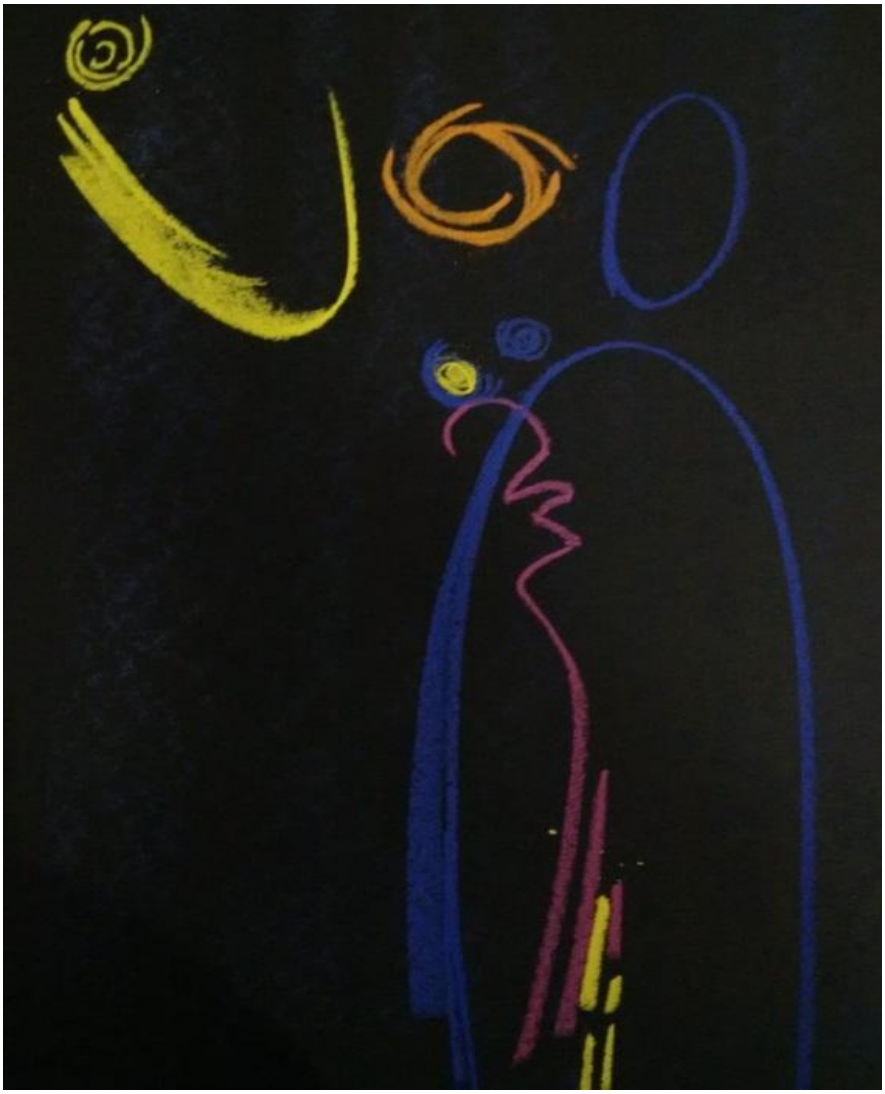


Plate XVIII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 120
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

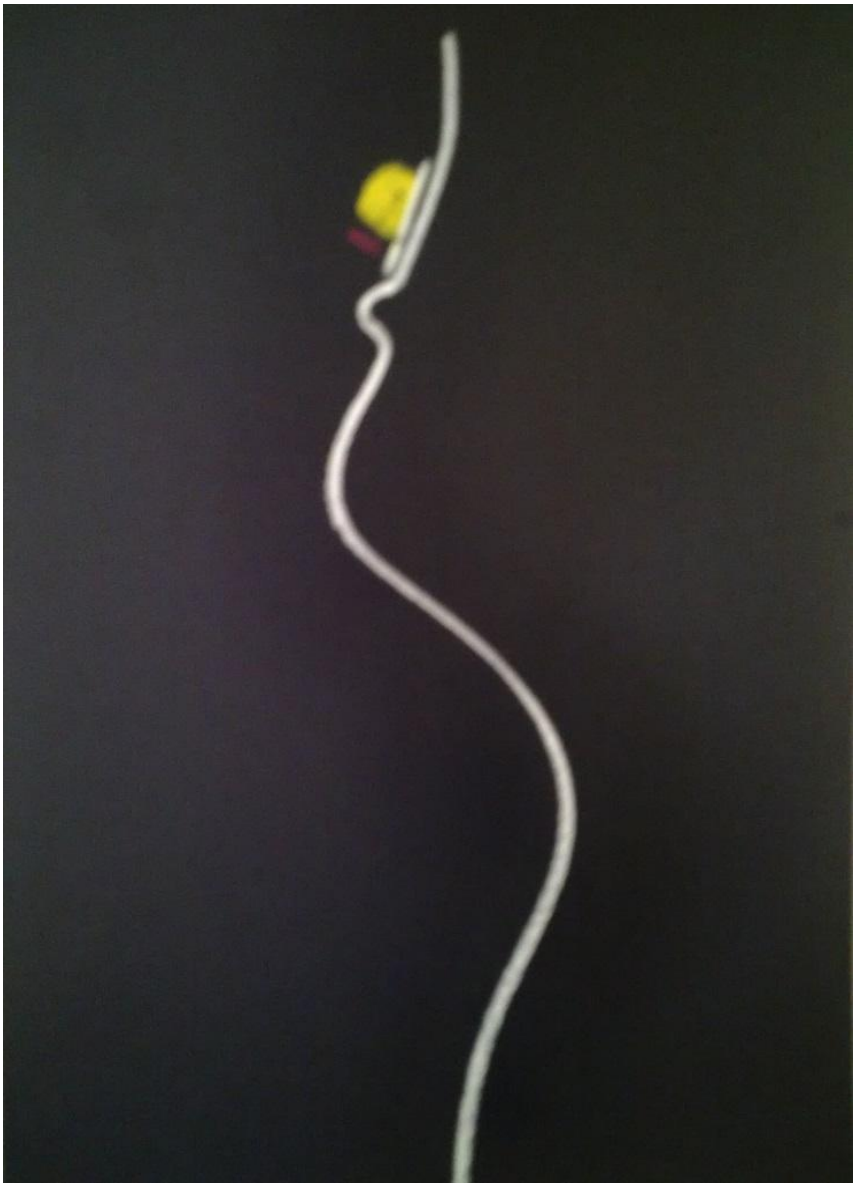


Plate XIX
Title: Gbagyi beauty 135
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF PAINTINGS PRODUCED

4.1 Analysis of Produced Paintings

The thrust of this study is to create minimalist painting through the observation of traditional Gbagyifemale form. This chapter buttresses on reduction technique as explained by Obendorf (2009) as a vital tool in achieving minimalism. He also voiced that minimalism is the designing and simplification of works of art. In this chapter, the works of art created in this study are visualised and analysed following Sullivan's (2005) view on visual ideas, that when an artist is messing around with ideas, personal vision is paramount. Also, he voiced that imaginative and inventive visualisations may emerge in many different forms and be translated as ideas, objects, images, or actions.

Furthermore, he explains that visualising ideas can be undertaken in many ways and could be in two strategies namely, conceptualising and designing. Again he is of the opinion that within a traditional framework, "concept" defines the way we represent categories of information based on our experiential and empirical understanding. Conceptualising in this sense involves grounding ways of perceiving things and setting in place structures of ideas and constructs that serve as the interpretive lens we use to make sense of the world around us.

Adhering to the explanation by Sullivan, the researcher grouped the analysis in two categories; the first group, consist of works in the exploratory category to represent Sullivan's conceptualising strategy. The analyst at this point captures the conceiving ideas into a visual state with the concentration on depicting the traditional Gbagyi female form and the co-existing visual elements in their naturalistic state. In the process, some visual elements vital to creativity were observed and extracted. These visual elements were transformed into concepts for further

exploration in the next strategy. The second category which is regarded as Sullivan's *designing* strategy comprises of works in the developmental category. Reconstructing, using the visual elements discovered during the exploratory category to further conceptualise more aesthetic ideas, was paramount for the analyst that ensued. Compositions created at this stage, possess and project aesthetic values rather than just mere realistic representation.

Sullivan in describing "Artworks" opines that "Artworks" are an important source of new knowledge, personal meaning, and cultural appreciation. Furthermore, that not only are artworks studied but the context in which they are produced and presented influences the kind of meanings made by the viewers. To support Sullivan's opinion, the researcher created artworks that reflect the importance of traditional Gbagyi female form in the society. The analysis in this chapter started from the transformation stage where only chalk pastels were used.

4.2 Transformation Stage (Plates XX-XXVII)



Plate XX
Title: Transformation 8
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The painting in Plate XX titled Transformation 8, reflects three traditionalGbagyi females forms with the load on their shoulders exhibiting the indigenous culture that remains peculiar to them. Curvilinearity in dark colour pastel was used to render the shape of the female forms represented in an overlapping manner. Perceiving the forms wholesomely, the outer shapes look like two cones joined at the tail end, forming the shape of an hourglass. Motif from the architectural form

was fused in the composition in yellow and green hues, literarily showing that the female form does not exist in isolation. The compositional balance was achieved by placing the forms bilaterally towards the left side of the composition.



Plate XXI
Title: Transformation 10
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The work with the title "Transformation 10" (Plate XXI) depicts female forms rendered using flowing dark hue, interwoven with a purple hue in thick lines against a red background. Similar to the silhouette representation by the prehistoric artists, the silhouetted female form in dark pastel appears facing down due to the load on the shoulder. This is peculiar to traditional Gbagyi female form in motion with a load on the shoulder. The hands are highlighted in yellow and blue

wavy lines. The thin diagonal lines were used to bond the visual elements of the composition as well as show the movement of the forms captured.



Plate XXII
Title: Transformation 12
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

This composition Plate XXII titled "Transformation 12", is made up of different shades of the three primary colours, namely red, blue and yellow, rendered in an interwoven manner to depict a swirly movement. In order to balance the colour scheme, an additional orange hue was used towards the right upper part of the composition. The two female forms depicted are represented

from below the shoulder upwards to the load on their shoulder. This was to buttress the focal point concentration as exhibited by previous visual artists, as depicted in (Fig. 5). Lighter yellow and blue hues are used to highlight the female form towards the right side. Different shades of colour created solidity in the appearance of the form while it also balanced the negative and positive space in the composition.



Plate XXIII
Title: Transformation 13
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The painting titled “Transformation 13”, Plate XXIII, is a representation of a group of females. It is rendered in curvy and slanted lines. The space between the female forms is of implied lines

which according to Lucy Lamp (2016) are lines we see in our mind's eye that fill in the spaces between objects. This helped to balance the space in the composition. The female form on the left side is probably that of a mother as it seems to be backing a baby on her back while carrying a load. The additional four figures appear in swirly lines of dark grey and brown hue. To the researcher, the load deserves the attention since carrying it remains what draws attention of the public to a typical traditional Gbagyifemale. They were rendered in blue and purple hues. The depiction of the outlines of the forms in the composition was done in such a way that it overlaps at some meeting points. The hump caused by carrying the load on the females' shoulder was also portrayed. Also, an attempt was made to register a sort of identity on the forms by extending the edges of most lines downward. For this painting, the researcher basically derived the idea from Wangboje' s style as seen in (Fig. 10) where he showed the skill of overlapping, with bigger forms blocking some part of the smaller forms in the composition. She also differentiated the heights of the figures as the one at the fore front of the viewer appears domineering over the rest of the compositional elements.



Plate XXIV
Title: Transformation 14
Date: 2013
Medium: Lipton tea water and pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The composition Plate XXIV titled "Transformation 14", was necessitated by conceptual drawing exploration. The researcher explored a different painting medium other than chalk pastel used in this research. The female forms are portrayed using brown coloured water derived from soaked Lipton tea bag. The use of vertical thin lines behind the two female forms represents grasses, while the positioning of the forms appears as if they are bending over. The horizontal lines beneath the figures suggest shadow cast and landscape in a peaceful arrangement. To

further solidify the composition, white chalk pastel in curvy lines was used to highlight the forms depicted to enhance the visual aesthetic appearance of the monotonous brown colour.

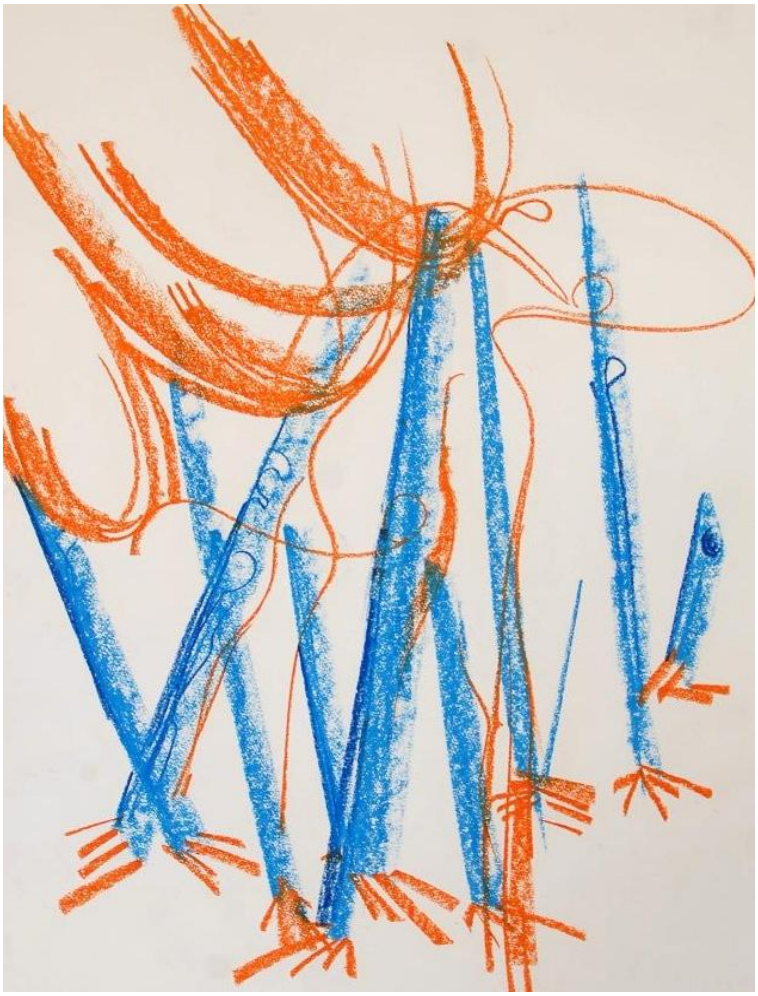


Plate XXV
Title: Transformation 20
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

One of the behavioural characteristics of traditional Gbagyi female form is the fast movement exhibited by them especially when carrying a heavy load where in motion. This is shown in the work titled "Transformation 20" (Plate XXV). The researcher made attempt to show conceptually one of the natural things observed to be of great importance to the lives of most

traditional Gbagyi female, which is (firewood). The criss-crossing of the wood shapes, show the fast movement of their legs in motion. All were portrayed in a blue hue with complementary orange hue to show the toes and the image of the load they are carrying.



Plate XXVI
Title: Transformation 25
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Using the silhouette idea, this painting titled "Transformation 25", Plate XXVI, shows another female depicted in a fusion-like concept. The image of the load which is presented as semi-cones in dark purple, blue and orange colours, were superimposed on the female form represented in a

light blue hue. The overlapping of colours created sort of depth and transparency in the composition. However, it also enhanced the visual fusion in the composition as regards colour distribution.



Plate XXVII
Title: Transformation 28
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on straw board
Size: 240 cm x 320 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Traditional Gbagyi female encounters several issues and stages in life as observed by the researcher. This was captured in the painting titled "Transformation 28"(Plate XXVII), depicted in clockwise movement, as a peculiar condition towards conceiving a child and the effect on the

traditional Gbagyi female form. These depictions convey to the viewers, the impression of one being referred to as carrying something on her shoulder, which literarily could mean that one is carrying lots of responsibility. Motherhood appears to be an example of such responsibility. It also changes the normal shape of the female form, with enlarged mammary gland, and protruding stomach amongst others. Four sheets of straw board were placed together as for this painting. Rendered using curvilinear in purple, green, orange and yellow colour hue and also in a fluidly manner. The bottom right depicts the protruding shape of the stomach in purple, green and brown hues. The flow of lines enhanced the visual aesthetic appearance of the representation. Towards the top right is representation of the female mammary glands which is used to feed the baby when eventually he/she is born, rendered in brown, orange and yellow colours. The flow of white line is used as a bonding element in the concept, interwoven all around the composition while emulating from De-Kooning's painting (Fig 9). The upper left suggests an image of the female ovary in white and the male spermatozoa in yellow colour, both surrounded with flowing hues of green colour. The four sheets of strawboard when placed side by side each other, forms a single painting composition, and when separated individually stands completelywhile telling their own story. To the researcher, this painting confirms Susan Hodges assertion that, conceptual art is simple ways in which artists communicates their ideas.

4.3 Conceptualisation Stage (Plates XXVIII-XXXII)

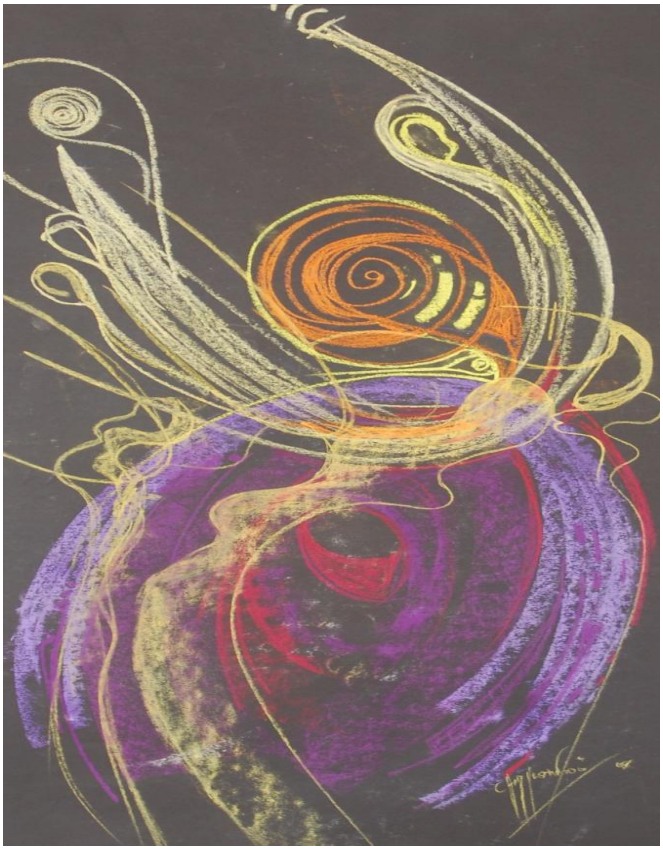


Plate XXVIII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 31
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

In analysing paintings in this stage the visual aesthetic values that were observed during the exploration stage, were utilised and reduced gradually in subsequent compositions. The visual relationship between the load and hump caused by resting of load on the shoulder was the point of focus that was expressed in the painting titled "Gbagyi beauty 31" in (Plate XXVIII). The hump on the female's shoulder was rendered using purple and red colours, while the load which is of the same shape with the hump was depicted using yellow and orange hues that overlapped into the purple to depict interwoven colour rendition.

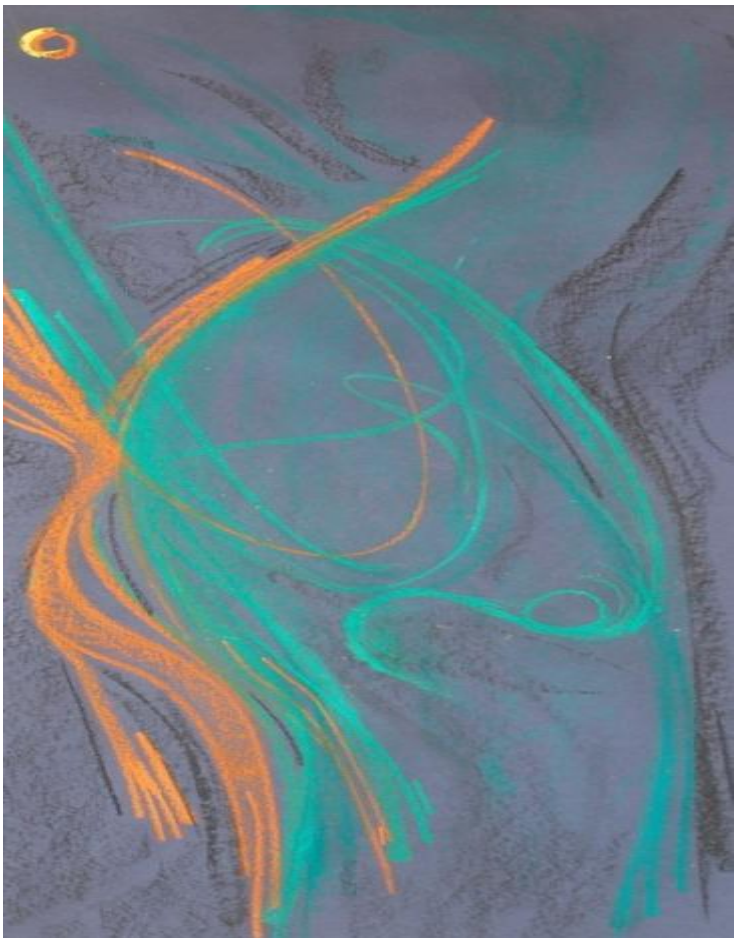


Plate XXIX
Title: Gbagyi beauty 38
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 45 cm x 90 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Another painting that shows the romance between the load and the shoulder is the work titled "Gbagyi beauty 38" (Plate XXIX). It is another of the researcher's interpretation of the romance between the load and the shoulder of traditional Gbagyi female. The female form was rendered using elongated curvilinearity in lighter shade of green colour against a dark blue colour background. An interesting thing in this painting is the portrayal of the reflection of sun set as it reflects on the left side of the female form. This gave the composition a striking source of light

towards the left-hand side. On the other hand the orange hue is seen as complimenting the blue colour background, balancing the colour arrangement and suggesting the time of the day similar to Buhari's style as shown in Figure 17.



Plate XXX
Title: Gbagyi beauty 40
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 45 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Traditional dance as observed by the researcher appears to be one of the activities enjoyed by the traditional Gbagyifemale. The elongation style of Anyanwu's "Fulani milk sellers (Fig. 15), influenced the female forms represented. The work (Plate XXX) titled "Gbagyi beauty 40", depicts four traditional Gbagyi female forms in a dancing mood rendered in dark sap green hue.

The movement of the women when viewed in the dark appears like a swirly movement of vertically elongated curvilinear. White was used as a unifying tool to enhance the forms from the background and also, depict the dramatic contrast between light and dark in the composition. Using just one colour was part of the reduction techniques adopted in rendering this work.



Plate XXXI
Title: Gbagyi beauty 48
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The painting in Plate XXXI titled "Gbagyi beauty 48", is another representation of dance movement showing only one female form. The upper part of the form was captured using thick curvy lines in blue colour and cone shape. The line extended downwards in a weaving manner to

give an impression of the waist swinging movement displayed by the traditional Gbagyi female. The lower part of the female form was depicted with wide orange and yellow lines to portray the strength in the form and the act that she exhibits. The curvy lines across the lower part of the female form, suggests the pleasure mood caused by the dance. The use of blue colour was to also depict the Gbagyi traditional cloth (Ajeside) which usually comes in blue colour with white stripe motif.



Plate XXXII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 52
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 50 cm x 65 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Susie Hodge (2011) explains that sometimes some conceptual works are often classed as minimalist due to certain similar characters that both display. An example of such character is

reduction in visual elements. The painting titled “Gbagyi beauty 52” (Plate XXXII), portrays the earlier description on visual elements reduction. The traditional motif that is observed on the calabash used by traditional Gbagyi female to carry load was used as a point of focus and the background for this painting. The circle in dark green colour has half orange and yellow interwoven semi-circles. The circular movement represents the continuous life cycle of the Gbagyi ethnic group. The transparent rendering of the green circular hues against the green background was also to depict the transparency in cultural education done by the older generation of the Gbagyi community to the younger ones. From observation, they appear not to be ashamed of doing the act of carrying load on their shoulders, neither are they shy about the hump that the load brought about in their lives.

Again looking at the green colour background, the researcher used it to project the promising future of the younger traditional Gbagyifemale. As their life cycle is a continuous one and they at some point in that cycle, encounters ups and downs, influence from other ethnic groups, as well as climate change. The orange and yellow colours represent these encounters in the life of the Gbagyi people. The conceptual representation of the female form using white, confirms Sol Lewitt in Susie Hodge’s (2011) opinion on conceptual art which states that the significant art of today stems from conceptual art. The form was portrayed using a stem of white line to support conceptuality and reductionism.

4.4 Minimalisation Stage (Plates XXXIII-XLII)

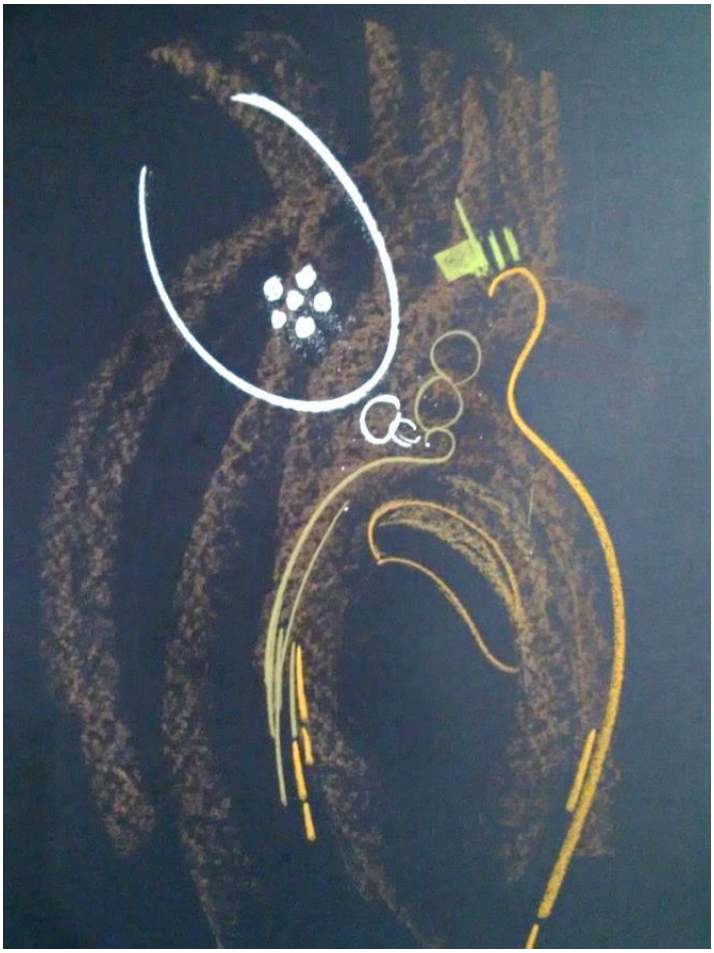


Plate XXXIII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 85
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The painting titled "Gbagyi beauty 85" (Plate XXXIII) was created to exhibit the beauty as perceived in the curvy shape of the Gbagyi female. At this point the research, the reduction of painting elements took a drastic advancement. The female form was depicted in orange and dark yellow colour with a representation of window-like feature in the centre of it, to significantly show the viewers that, there are more to the current knowledge that the paintings in this study

has advanced. The beauty that lies within traditional Gbagyi female form seems unending if critically viewed as represented by the researcher.

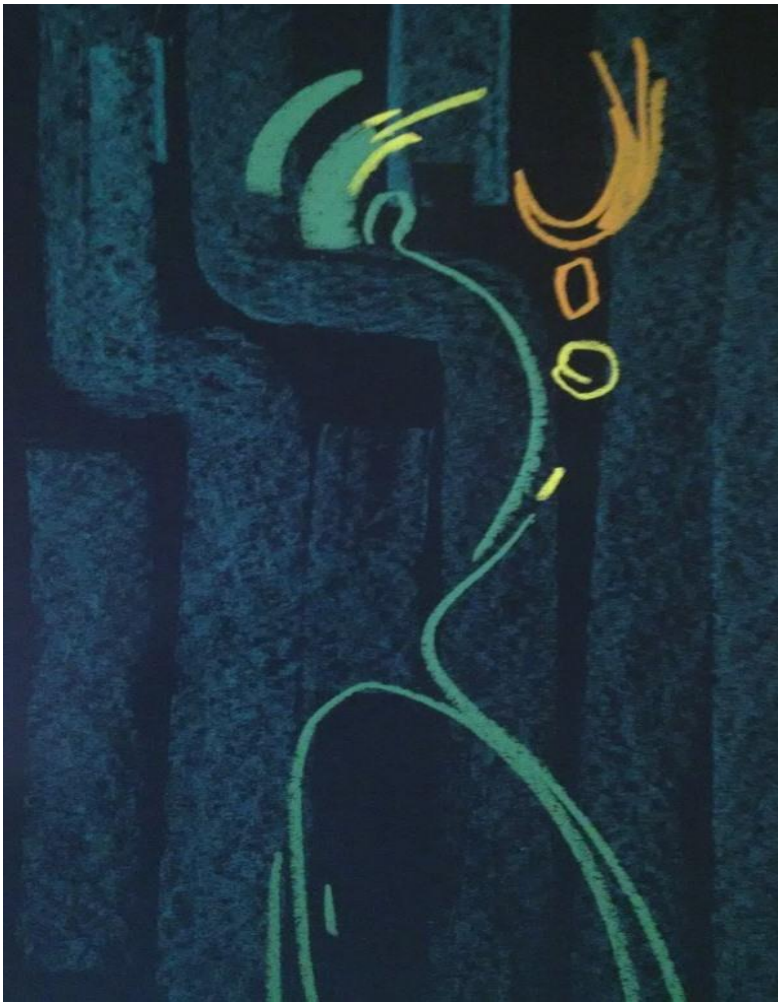


Plate XXXIV
Title: Gbagyi beauty 89
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Plate XXXIV titled "Gbagyi beauty 89" is yet another painting that shows the researcher's reduction technique. The three female forms were depicted with curvy and small circles in light green, orange and yellow colour. The figures were represented in such a way that every one of

them was rendered with a symbol-like shape. The figure represented in lighter green hue, was positioned towards the left-hand side of the composition. The remaining three had their bodies fused into the dark green colour background proving that fusion of the visual elements can lead to minimalisation.

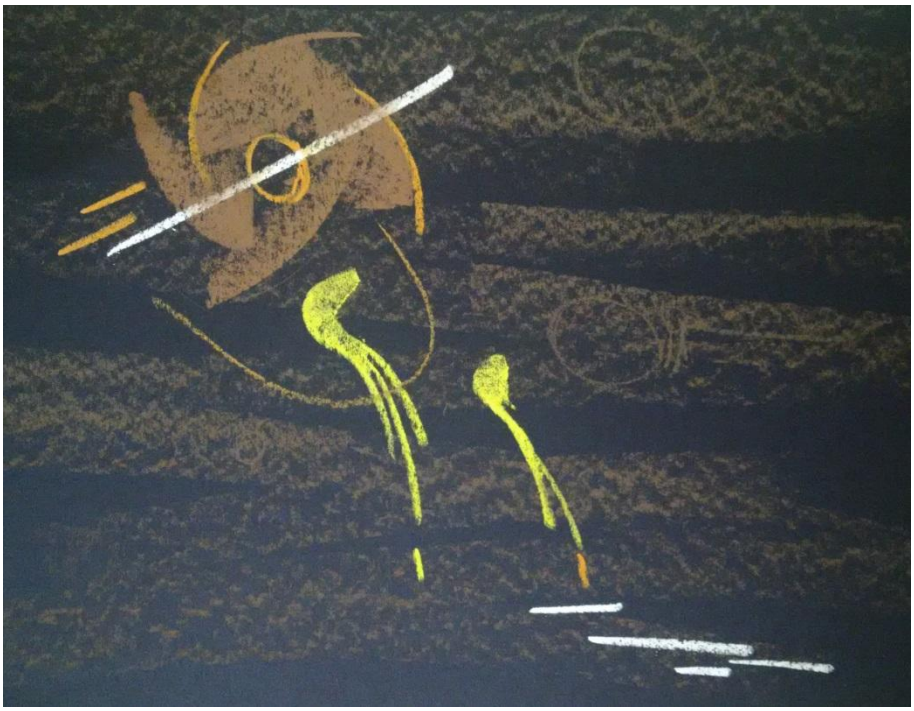


Plate XXXV
Title: Gbagyi beauty 90
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 36 cm x 24 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

This painting shown in Plate XXXV, titled "Gbagyi beauty 90" consists of two female forms depicted using short curvy lines in yellow colour, with the researcher's style of identification which is two to three extensions added to the lines downwards. An attempt was also made using horizontal lines in white to register the effect of light and the shadow created by this effect on the floor. To advance the aesthetic appearance of the composition, the semi-cone used to represent

the load on the female's shoulder overlaps each other and twisted to form a star-like form above the female form. This added visual richness to the painting.

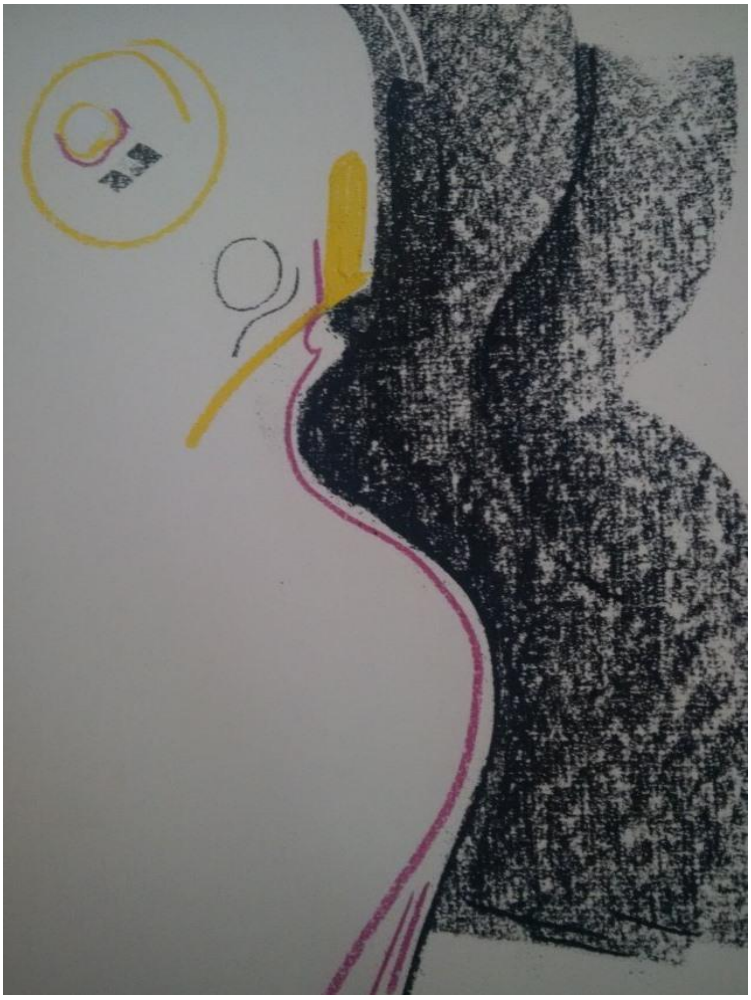


Plate XXXVI
Title: Gbagyi beauty 99
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

Viewing the traditional Gbagyi female form against the dark wall resulted in this painting in Plate XXXVI, titled "Gbagyi beauty 99", brings to mind the silhouette style of the prehistoric artists at the developmental stage of this study. The female form outline was portrayed against the wall to get that silhouette look. The researcher outlined the inner with a thin line of purple

colour, to brighten it up and elevate it from the dark wall. The image of the moon was as well superimposed on the form using symbolic expression derived from the architectural motif on the wall. The negative and positive part of the picture plane stroke a balance of equal proportion within.



Plate XXXVII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 100
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 50 cm x 65 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

In works previously analysed, fusion was one of the creative tools that the researcher observed to aid further reduction in colour and form. The painting titled "Gbagyi beauty 100" in Plate XXXVII, portrays an articulated fusion of six traditional Gbagyi female forms in blue coloured curvilinear. The choice of number is to spell the word "GBAGYI" while the fusion represents the

unity amongst Gbagyi females. The orange colour pastel paper to the researcher represents the evening time of the day. Another unifying form is the hump on their shoulder which was also fused into one in blue colour. The sunset was rendered in white pastel to give the composition a calm mood and also create space balance.



Plate XXXVIII
Title: Gbagyi beauty 127
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

The painting in Plate XXXVIII titled "Gbagyi beauty 127", shows a further reduction of the painting elements. One of the traditional female forms was depicted using sharp curvy white line. The representation of the load image was done with the same line as the female form by curving

it at the spot where the shoulder is situated. The second female figure is depicted using yellow in semi curvy lines behind the first female form. The contents of the two load images were also rendered in sharp red and orange colour. For an aesthetic purpose, two big dots in green colour were added to the composition at the lower part of the painting.

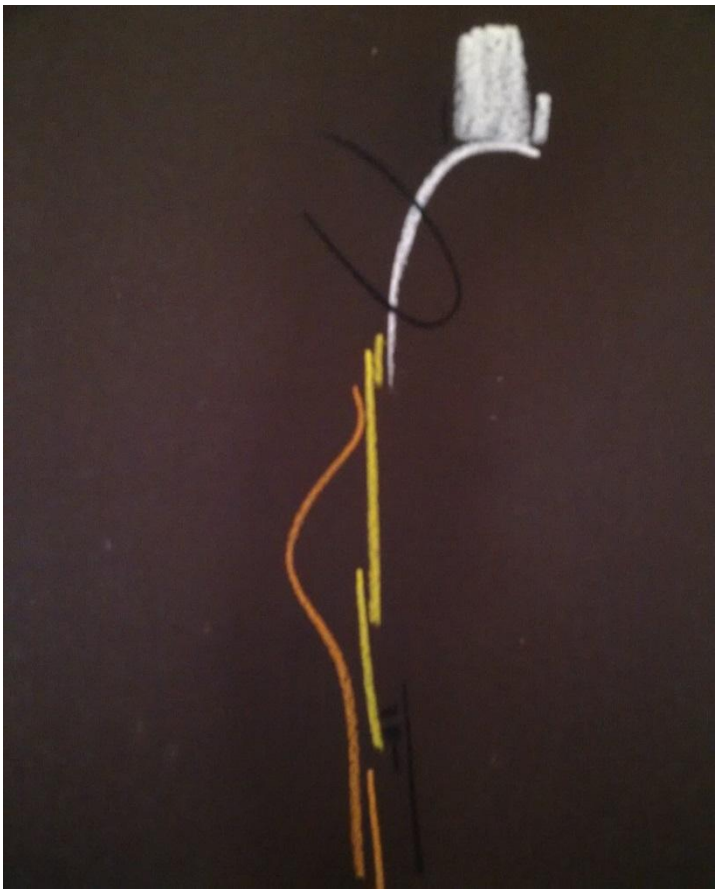


Plate XXXIX
Title: Gbagyi beauty 128
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size: 32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

In furthering the fusion of traditional Gbagyi female forms to achieve simplicity, the painting titled “Gbagyi beauty 128” in (Plate XXXIX) resulted. On a black mount board, three traditional

Gbagyi female forms were captured in orange and yellow colour. The first who seems pregnant is positioned to the left side of the composition, while the second in the middle is in yellow colour. The third figure is towards the right in white, while they all share one load image in black pastel. The composition exhibited the reductive process as encouraged by Obendorf's (2006), and simplicity as seen in Okeke's Ana Mmuo (Fig. 11).

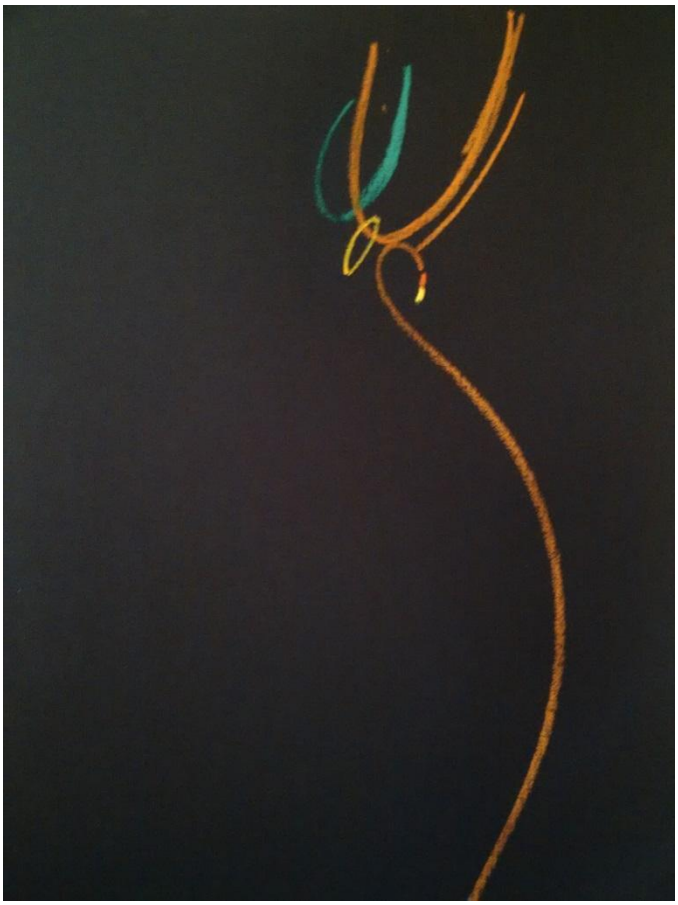


Plate XL
Title: Gbagyi beauty 134
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size: 32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

As the researcher deepens in the quest to get to a convincing point where a dot can make a statement, the painting titled "Gbagyibeauty 134", (Plate XL) was created. The visual elements

used advanced the simplicity representation of the forms. The work consists of three traditional Gbagyi female forms fused using a curvilinear in orange and green colour. The loads were regarded by the researcher as identification for the females depicted. The curvilinear shows the elegant appearance of the females in a juxtaposed and rhythmical manner which in turn showed balance in the presentation. This also provides an opportunity for one to view the painting differently depending on individual interpretation. The painting appears simple but complex mentally as well as academically loaded.

4.5 Findings

Among the findings of this study are:

That conceptual paintings could be achieved using traditional Gbagyifemale form in minimalism, thereby achieving objective 1 and answering the question 1 of the study (Plates 1-V). It also finds out that visual elements inherent in traditional Gbagyi female form and its environments could be created, taking care of objective 2 and question 2 of the study (Plates VI-XII). Furthermore, the study finds out that minimalist conceptual painting could be developed using the traditional Gbagyi female forms for aesthetic to achieve objective 3 and answering question 3 of the study (Plates XIII-XV). In achieving objective 4 and answering question 4, the study finds out that chalk pastel medium could be utilized as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support (Plates XVI-XVII).Finally, the study finds out that reduction could be used as avital characteristic in minimalisation of traditional Gbagyi female form (Plates XVIII-XIX).

The findings reveal that the traditional Gbagyi female forms have been reduced into lines, colours and shapes without recourse to factuality of forms. All the works are conceptualised

traditional Gbagyi female forms in painting. All the paintings are mere appearance of the perception of the researcher, and not the objective correctness of the Gbagyi female forms, but new appearances, which only the discerning eye can relate with to make meanings from each work of painting. The paintings are capable of provoking reactions from those who view them, and they all possess the quality of engaging the mind beyond emotions, as they are not a representation of reality, but a transcendental distortion of reality. The findings can be summed up thus; that all the paintings of this study were based on reduction, distortion, subtraction and elongation in linearity. The paintings are elegantly portrayed with aesthetic qualities.

CHAPTER FIVE

CATALOGUE OF WORKS PRODUCED

5.1 Curated Works

This chapter consists of the body of works produced in this study. It shows the researcher's angle of interpretation. It also offers the audience the opportunity to view the works not only from the researcher's point of view but as well interpret them using their own imagination and understanding. They will join the researcher and participate in interpreting the traditional Gbagyi female form differently from how its' been previously perceived. In order to aid perception, the works created are categorised into two groups as follows:

i, Exploration

ii Developmental

The Exploration encompasses both the sketches and paintings in pencil, charcoal, ink and pastel. Most sketches exhibited the traditional Gbagyi female form as an essential element within the environment of her existence. The essence of this is to perceive traditional Gbagyi female forms beyond their realistic looks, with focus on the visual elements inherent in the forms. These visual elements are summed up as lines, colours, and shapes.

Visual elements were used in the developmental stage to further advance the conceptual representation of traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalist representation.

5.2 Curatorial Statement

The study is cyclic in nature following Kemmis and McTaggart's explanation on a Practiced Based Research problem. The researcher followed the design process of moving from a problem to a solution and created works of conceptualised traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalist painting. The study captures the researcher's experience with the subject matter to buttress the statement by Susan Hodge (2011) while citing Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, that "A painter paints the appearance of things, not their objective correctness; in fact, he creates new appearances of things". The works were created from the researcher's point of view but the audience may or may not agree with the researcher's view as they can also have their own opinion on the interpretation of the works.

The categorisation of the works serves as a guide for the viewers to perceive the works presented before them bearing in mind that they possess aesthetic qualities. The researcher's idea of conceptualising the subject matter may bring new ideas to the viewers if they interpret it from the researcher's angle of perception, since conceptual art could be described as "Art that is with the tendency to provoke intensely and perhaps even extreme reactions in its audience", and also it is made to engage the mind of the viewer rather than his eye or emotions.

Furthermore, it's fundamental to register that categorizing the works offers the researcher as well as the audience the opportunity to interpret the visual representation as this opens up space for multiple interpretation and perceptions. Following one of the Leavy (2009) checklist of consideration in using visual art to solve art based research problem as it inquires; " how will art be used (eg; data collection, analysis, interpretation, representation)? The researcher articulates

that this study has followed the steps as asked above to successfully represent the experiences with the traditional Gbagyi female form, thus proving that the study has projected a different dimension of viewing and understanding of the traditional Gbagyi female form to the general audience and also achieved the objectives of the study which are to:

1) create conceptual paintings using traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalism;
2) create visual elements inherent in the traditional Gbagyi female form and its environment;
3) develop minimalist conceptual painting using the traditional Gbagyi female form for visual aesthetics;
4) utilise the medium of chalk pastel as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support; and
5) use reduction as a vital characteristic in minimalisation of Traditional Gbagyi female form.

Zeki (1999), as cited by Hyman (2010), equipped that the purpose of art, surely, is not to depict or represent reality- for that can be accomplished very easily with a camera, but to enhance, transcend, or indeed even to distort reality. Furthermore, the artist either consciously or unconsciously tries to not only capture the essence of something but also to amplify it in order to further activate the same neural mechanisms that would be activated by the original object. The researcher simply integrated Zeki's point of explanation in the works to show the essence of feminist relevance as evoked by the effect of visual aesthetic. This has helped in projecting traditional Gbagyi female forms in minimalist painting.

5.3 Portfolio



1
Title: Preliminary sketch 3
Date: 2012
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



2
Title: Gbagyi beauty 45
Date: 2013
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



3
Title: Preliminary sketch 4
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



4
Title: Preliminary sketch 6
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



5
Title: Preliminary sketch 7
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 45 cm x 32 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



6
Title: Preliminary sketch 7
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 40 cm x 65 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



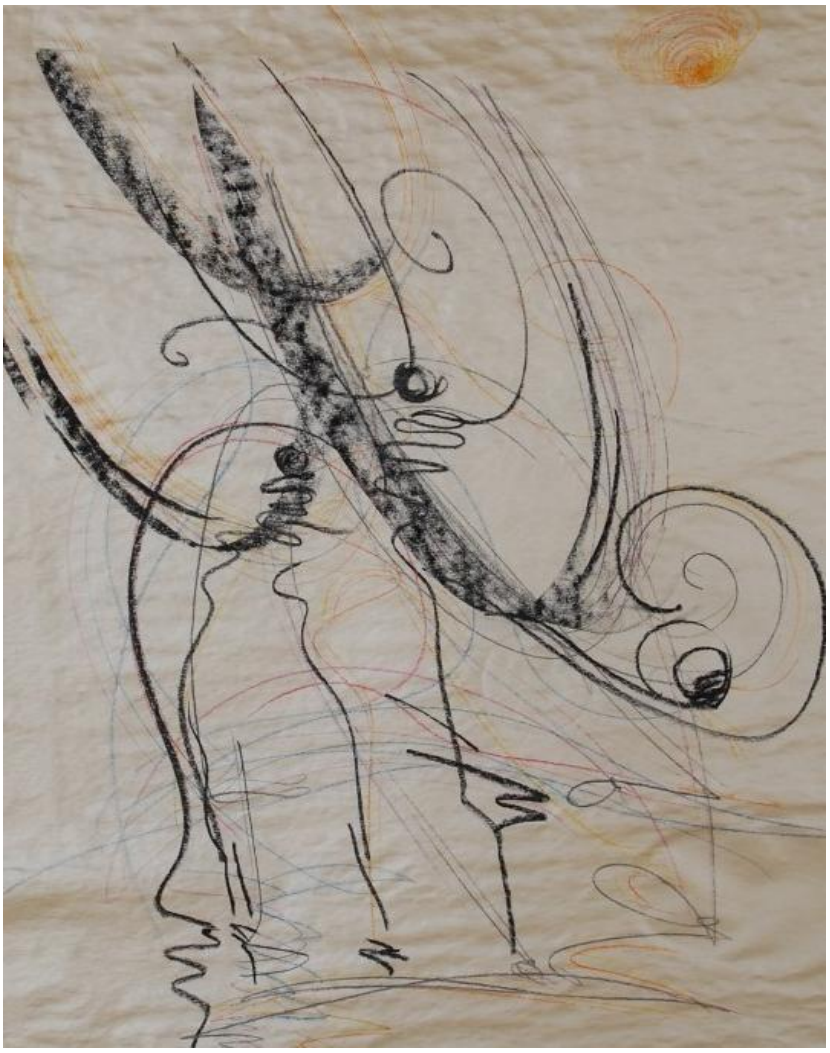
7
Title: Preliminary sketch 10
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 40 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



8
Title: Preliminary 11
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



9
Title: Preliminary sketch 12
Date: 2012
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 36 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



10
Title: Preliminary sketch 12
Date: 2012
Medium: Coloured Pencil and charcoal on textured paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



11
Title: Preliminary sketch 13
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal on paper
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



12
Title: Preliminary sketch 14
Date: 2014
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 42 cm x 58 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



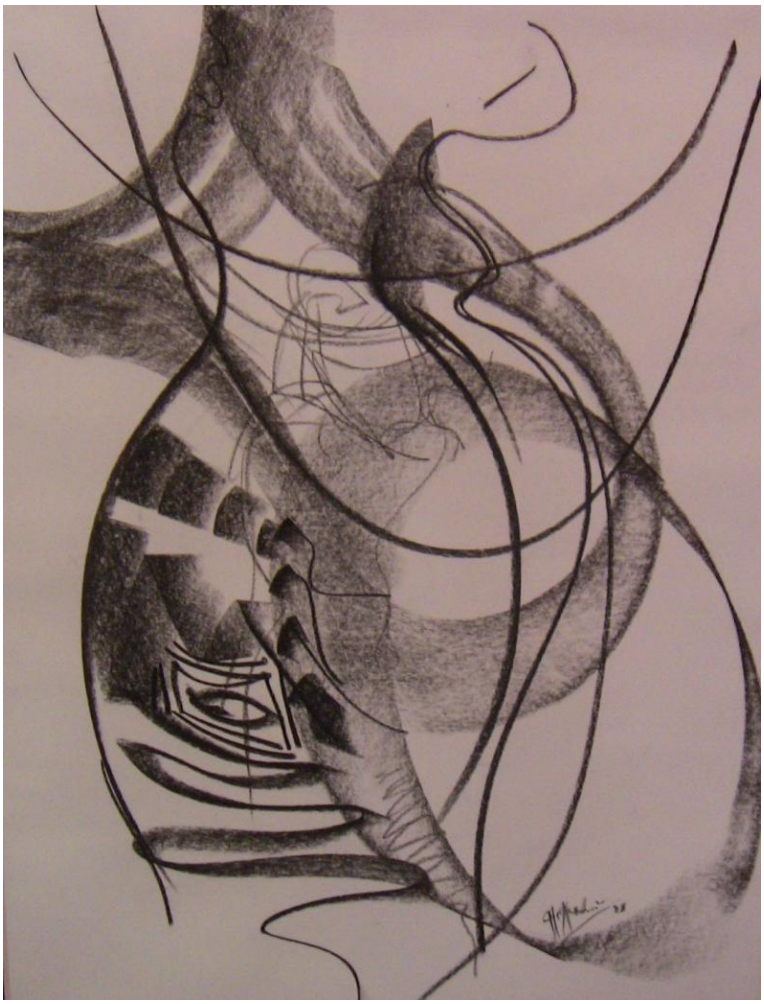
13
Title: Preliminary sketch 15
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



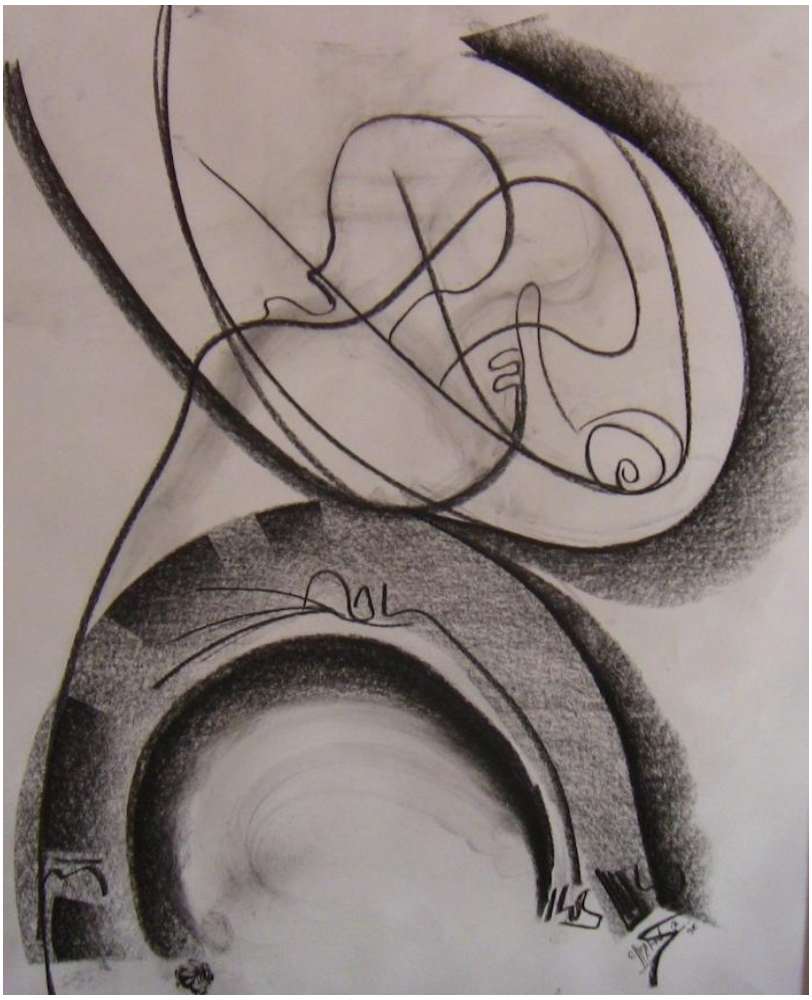
14
Title: Preliminary sketch 16
Date: 2012
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



15
Title: Preliminary sketch 18
Date: 2012
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 36 cm x 50s cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



16
Title: Preliminary sketch 19
Date: 2012
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 36 cm x 50 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



17
Title: Preliminary sketch 24
Date: 2012
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



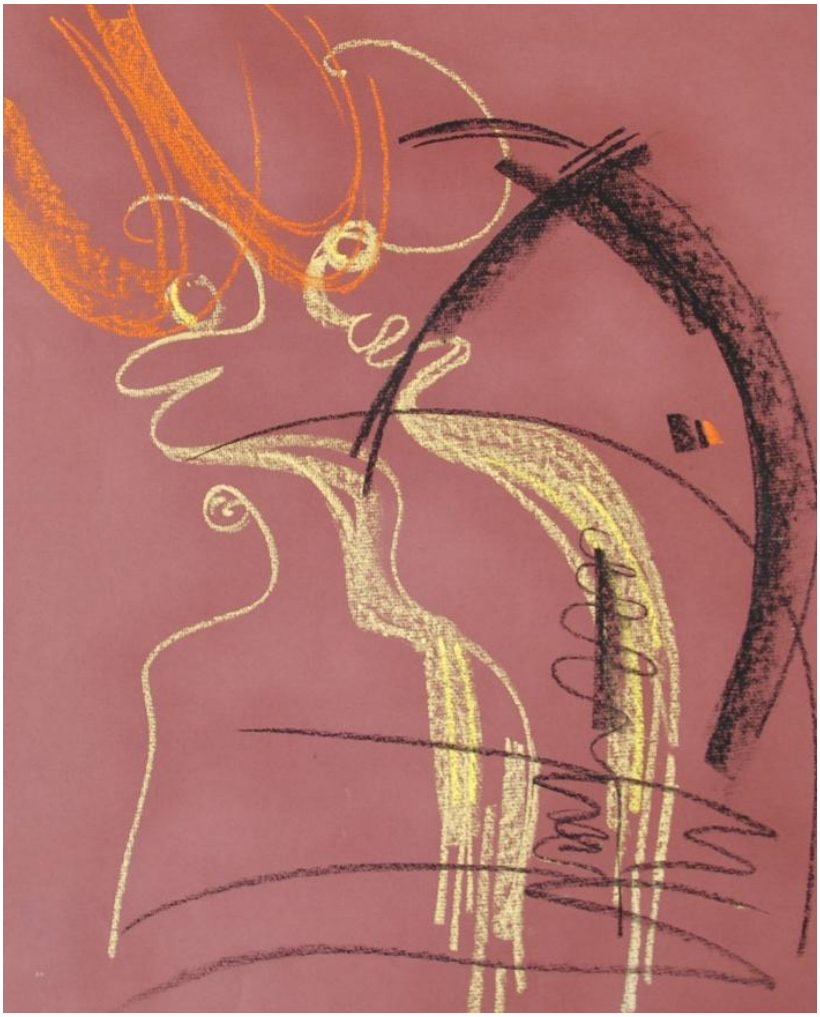
18
Title: Preliminary sketch 25
Date: 2015
Medium: Pencil and charcoal on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



19
Title: Preliminary sketch 26
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 80 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



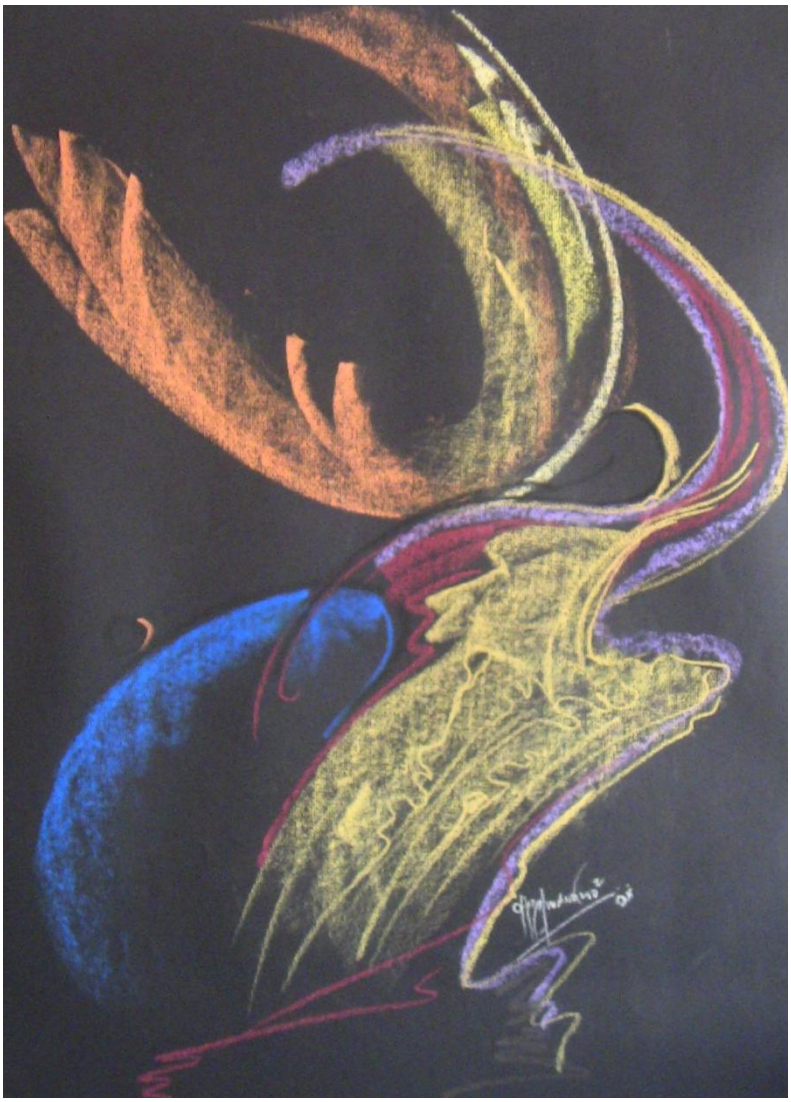
20
Title: Preliminary sketch 27
Date: 2012
Medium: Ink on paper
Size: 80 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



21
Title: Exploration 7
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



22
Title: Exploration 8
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



23
Title: Exploration 13
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



24
Title: Transformation 15
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



25
Title: Exploration 17
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on mount board
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



26
Title: Exploration 18
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



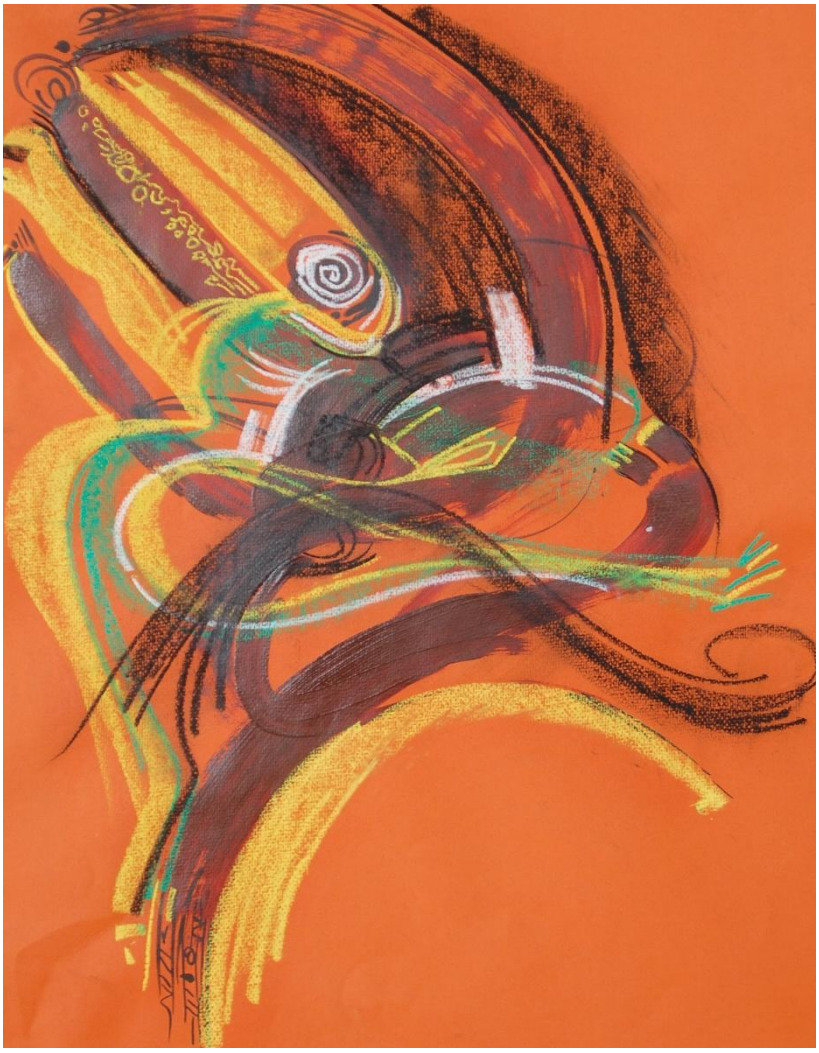
27
Title: Exploration 21
Date: 2012
Medium: Charcoal and pastel on paper
Size: 36 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



28
Title: Transformation 5
Date: 2012
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



29
Title: Transformation 7
Date: 2012
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



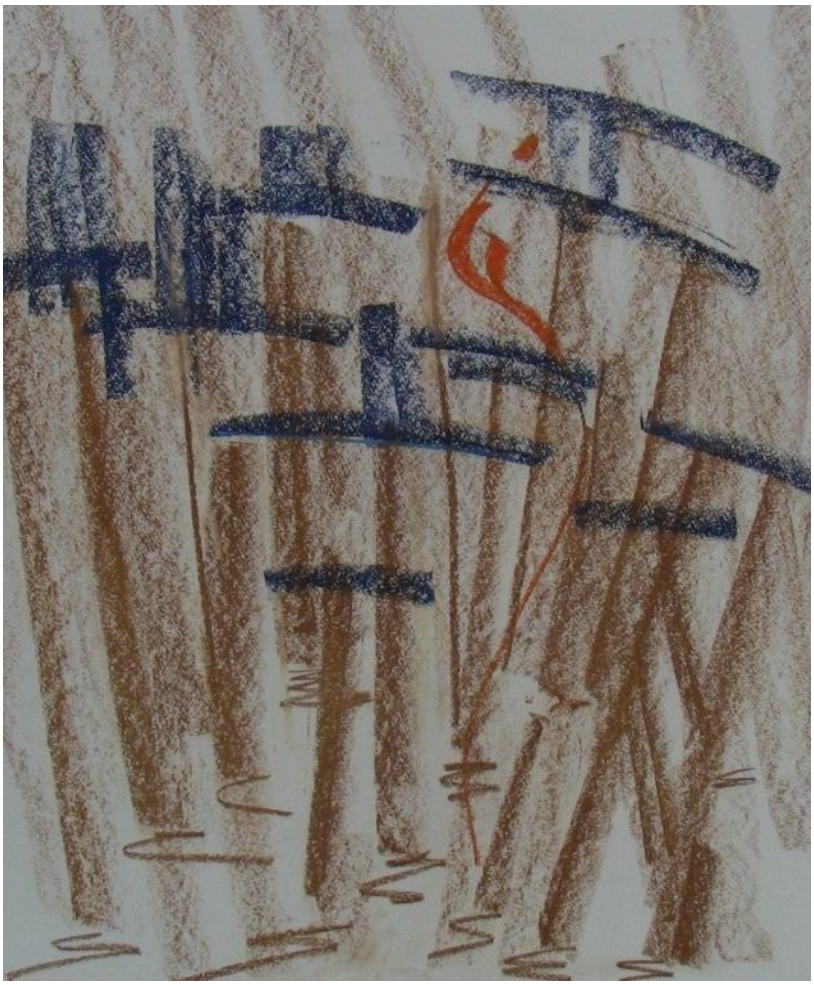
30
Title: Transformation 15
Date: 2012
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



31
Title: Transformation 24
Date: 2012
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



32
Title: Transformation 35
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



33
Title: Transformation 38
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 80 cm x 60 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



34
Title: Transformation 39
Date: 2012
Medium: Pastel on paper
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



35
Title: Gbagyi beauty 32
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



36
Title: Gbagyi beauty 35
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



37
Title: Gbagyi beauty 37
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



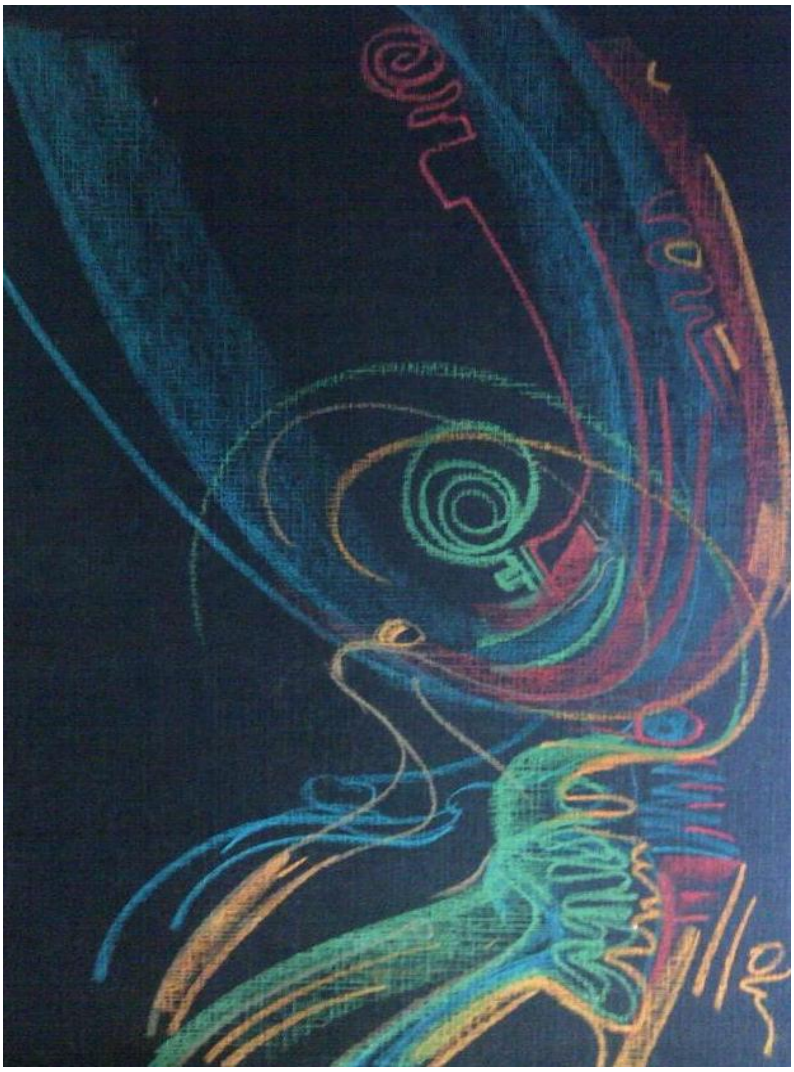
38
Title: Gbagyi beauty 41
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



39
Title: Gbagyi beauty 42
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



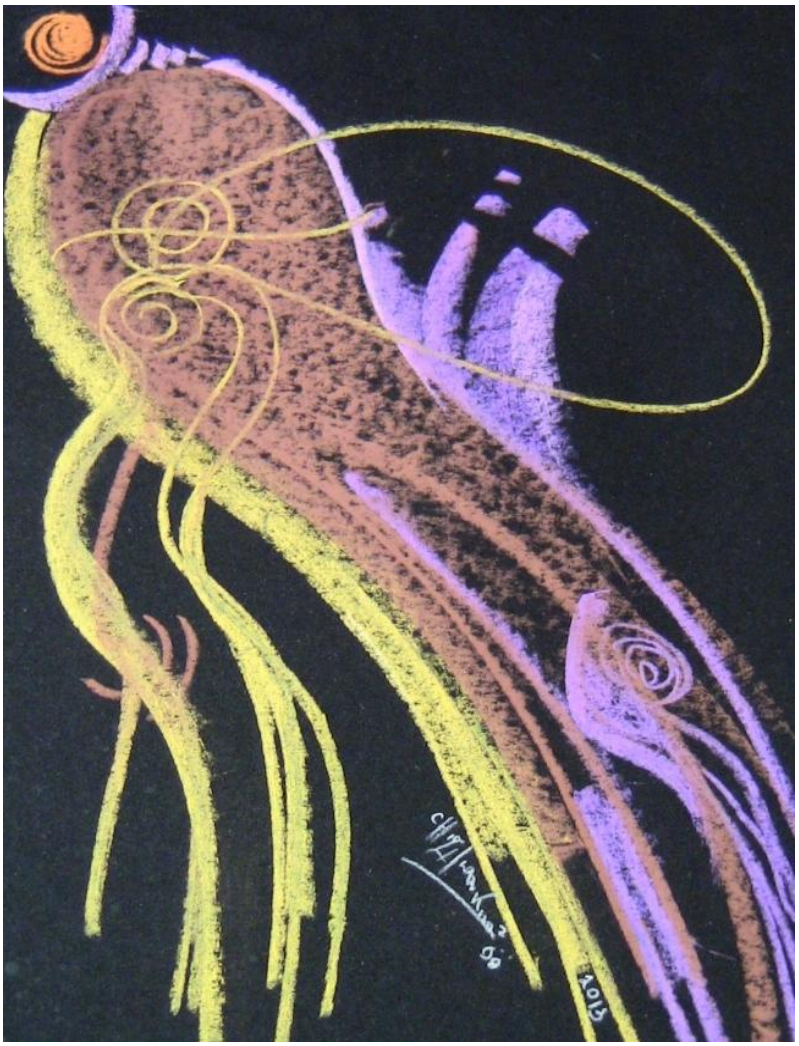
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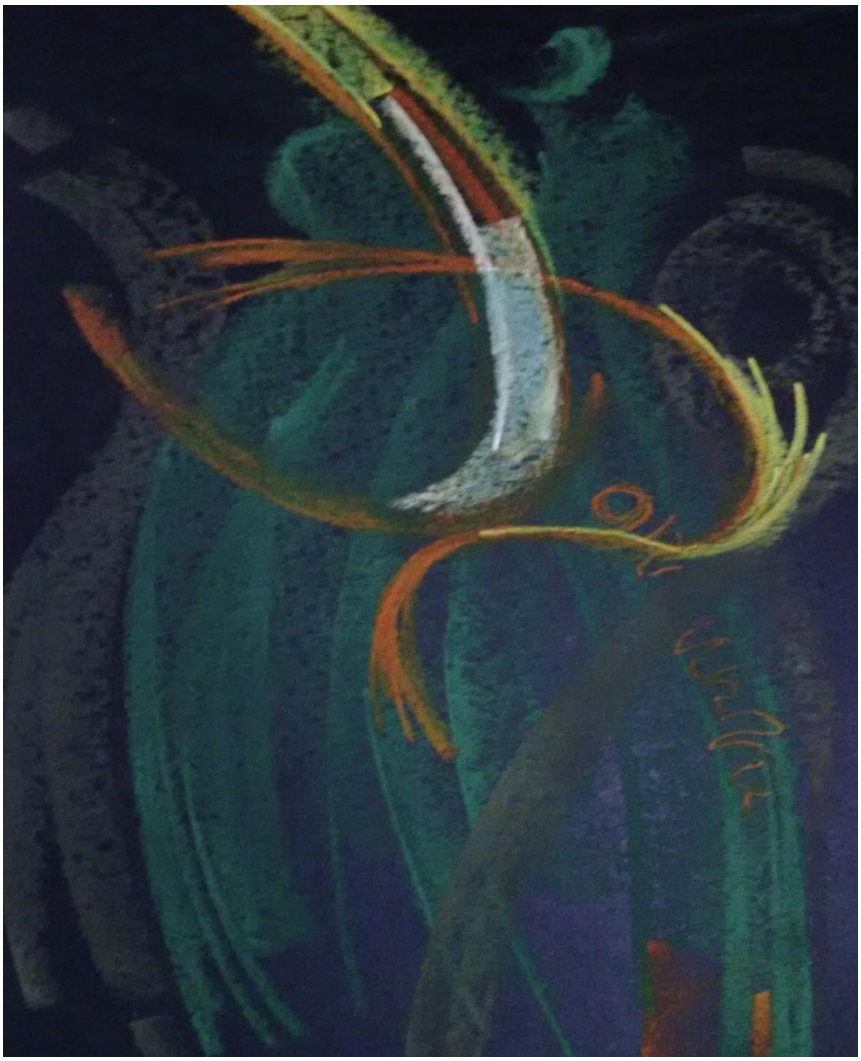
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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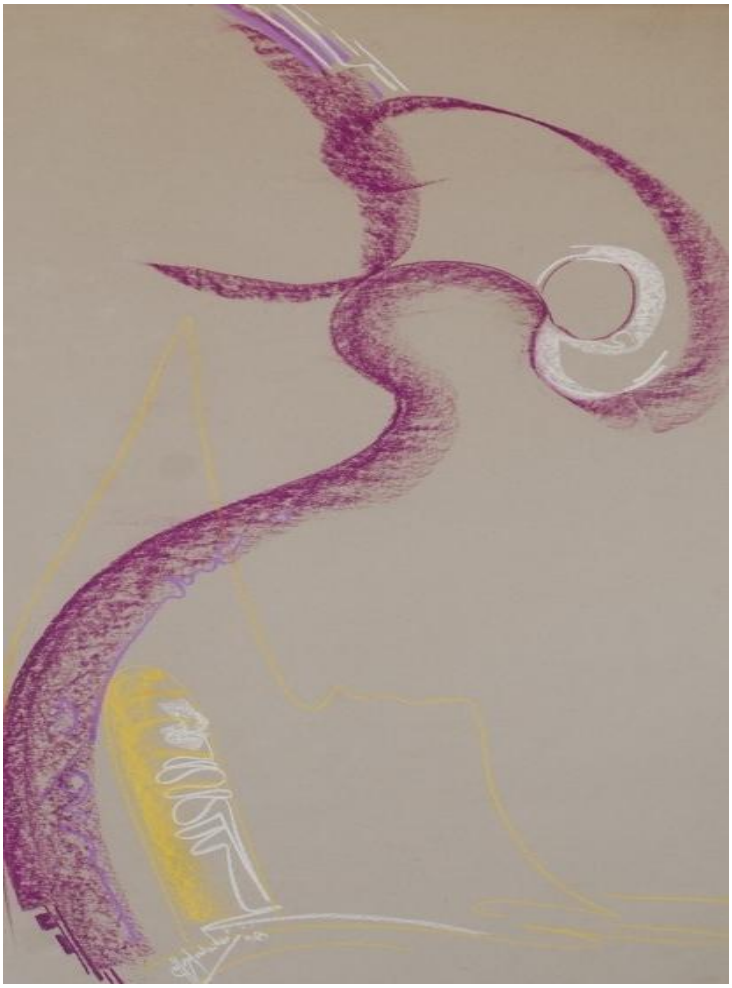
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Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
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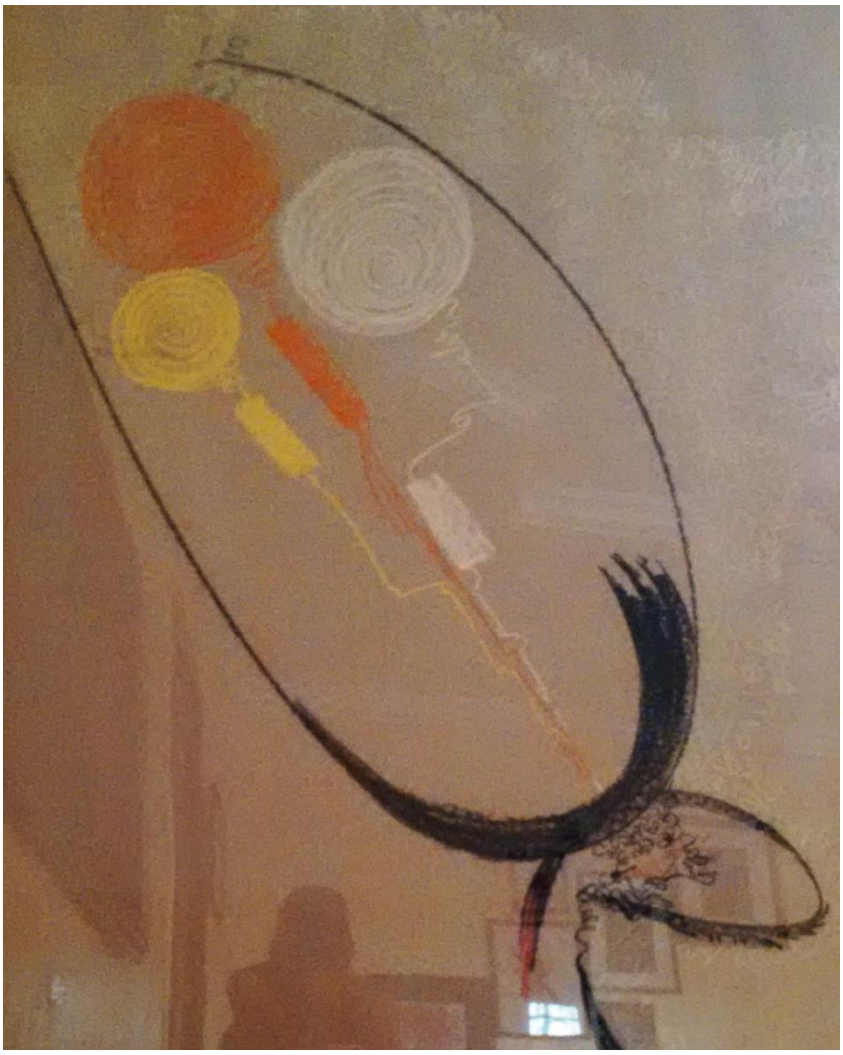
46
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 50 cm x 65 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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Medium: Pastel on mount board
Size: 24 cm x 36 cm
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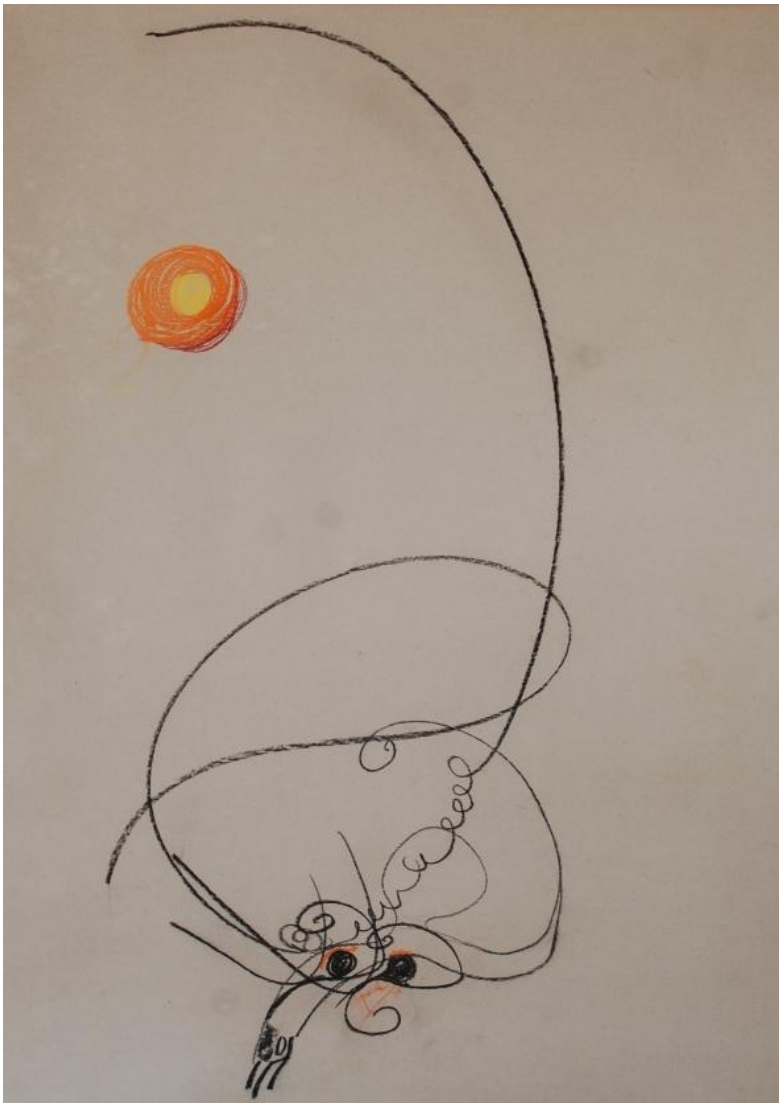
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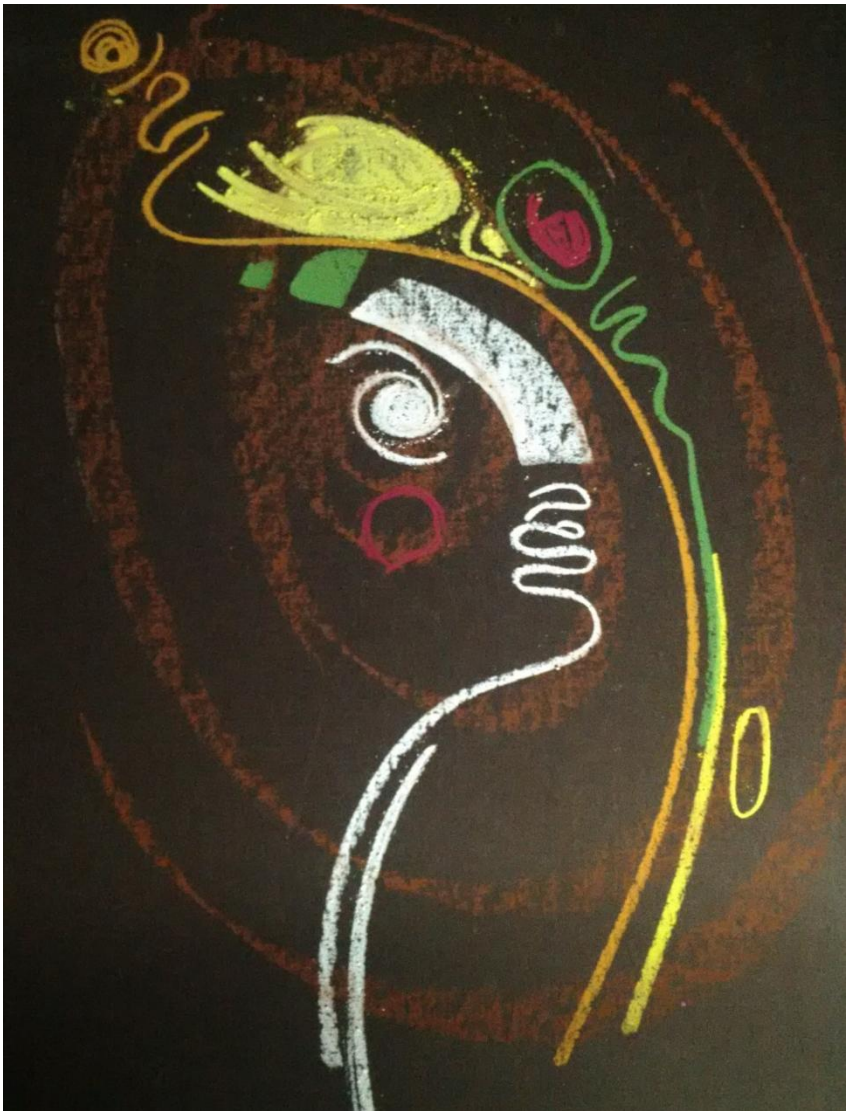
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Date: 2013
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Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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Date: 2013
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Size: 60 cm x 80 cm
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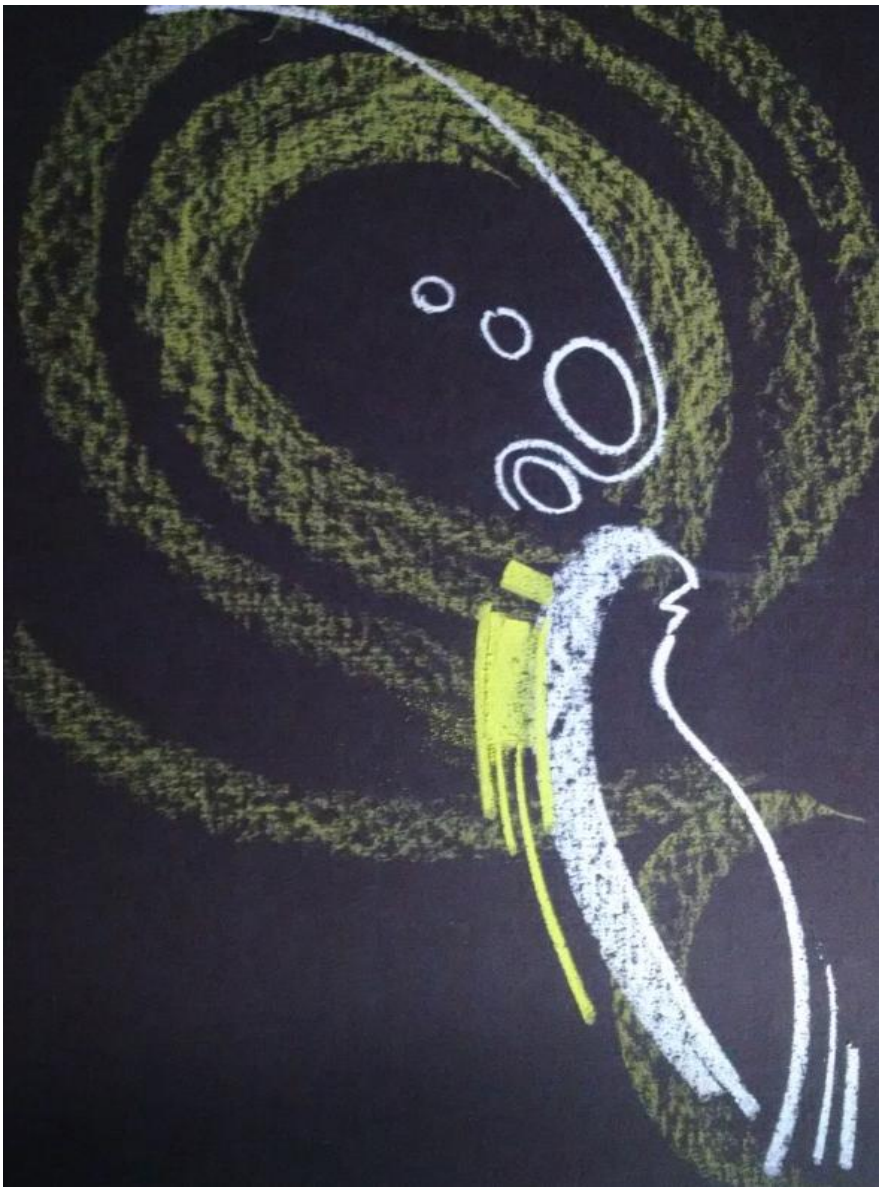
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Date: 2013
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Size: 50 cm x 80 cm
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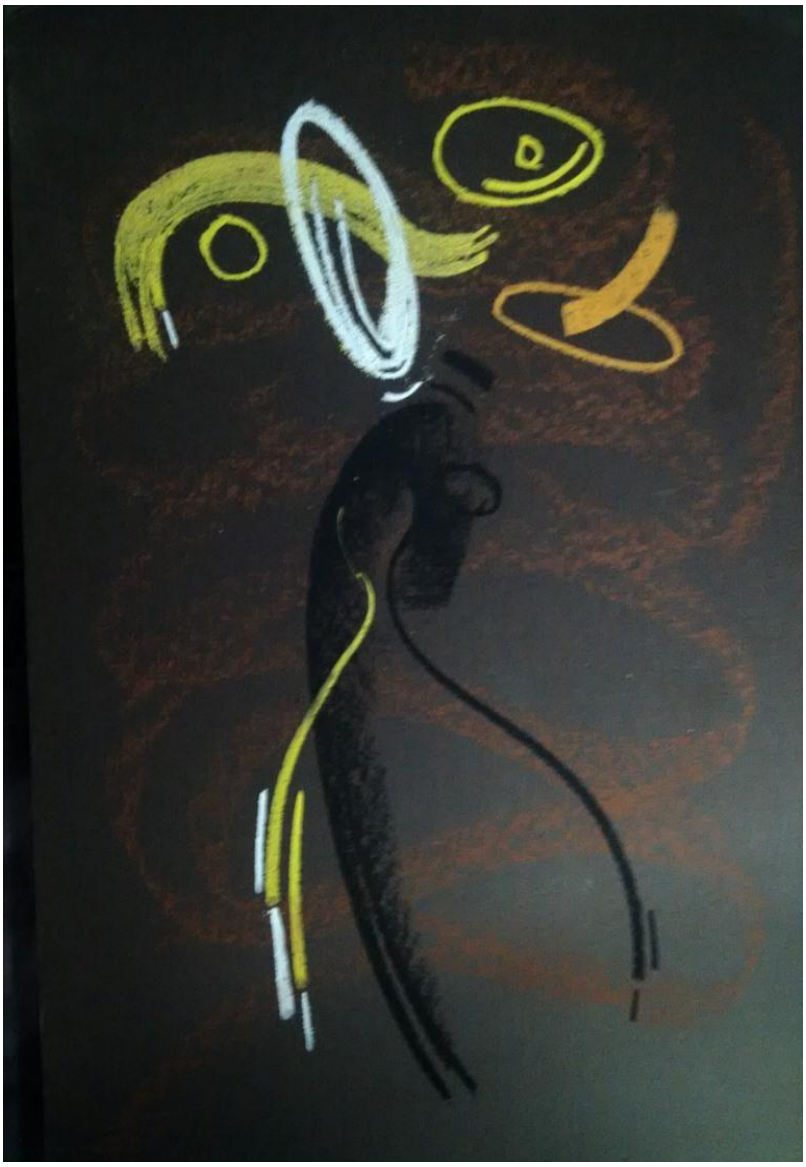
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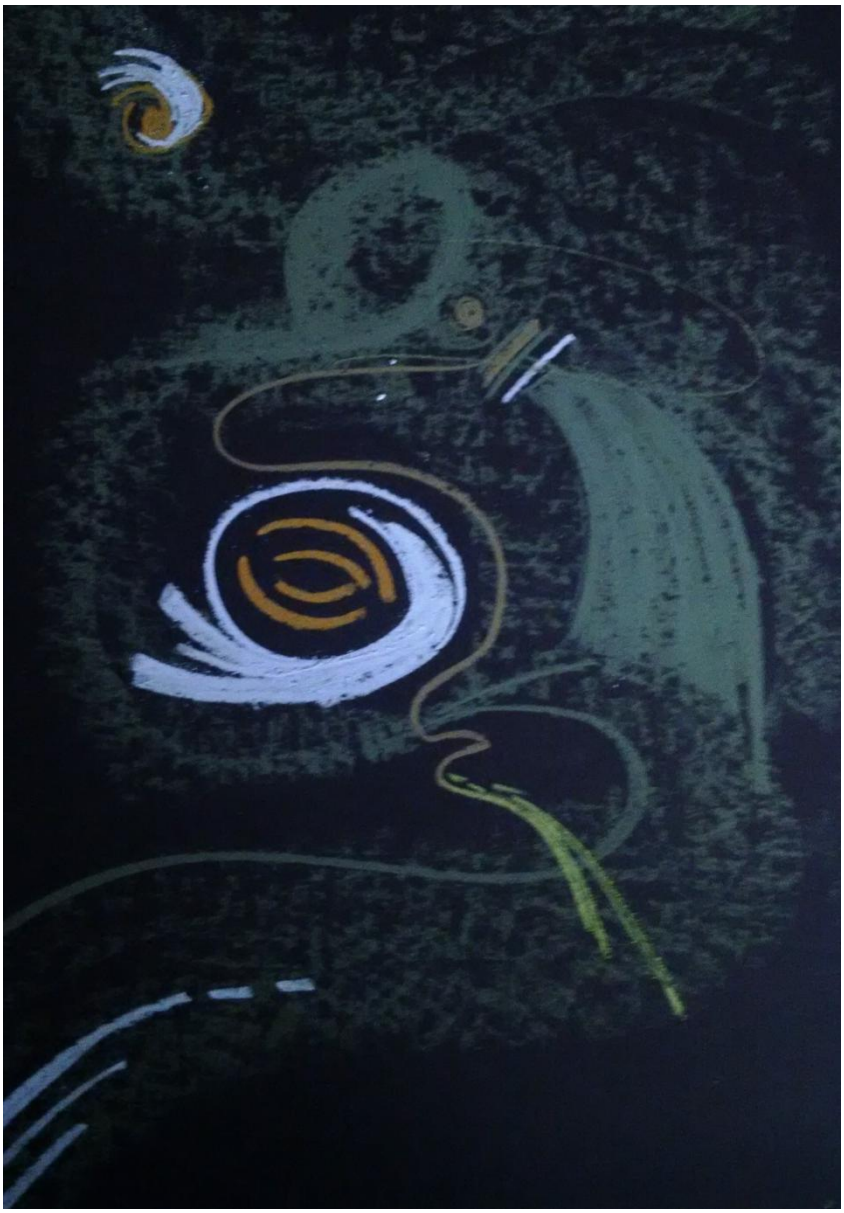
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Medium: Pastel on mountboard
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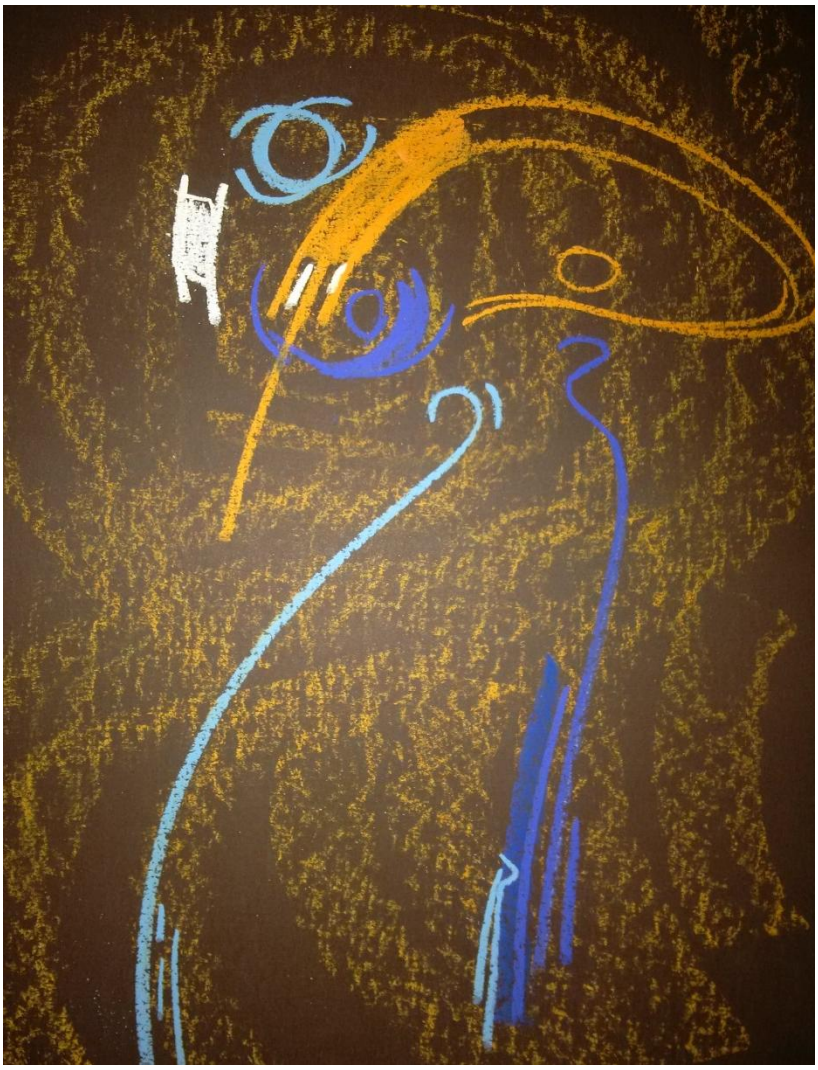
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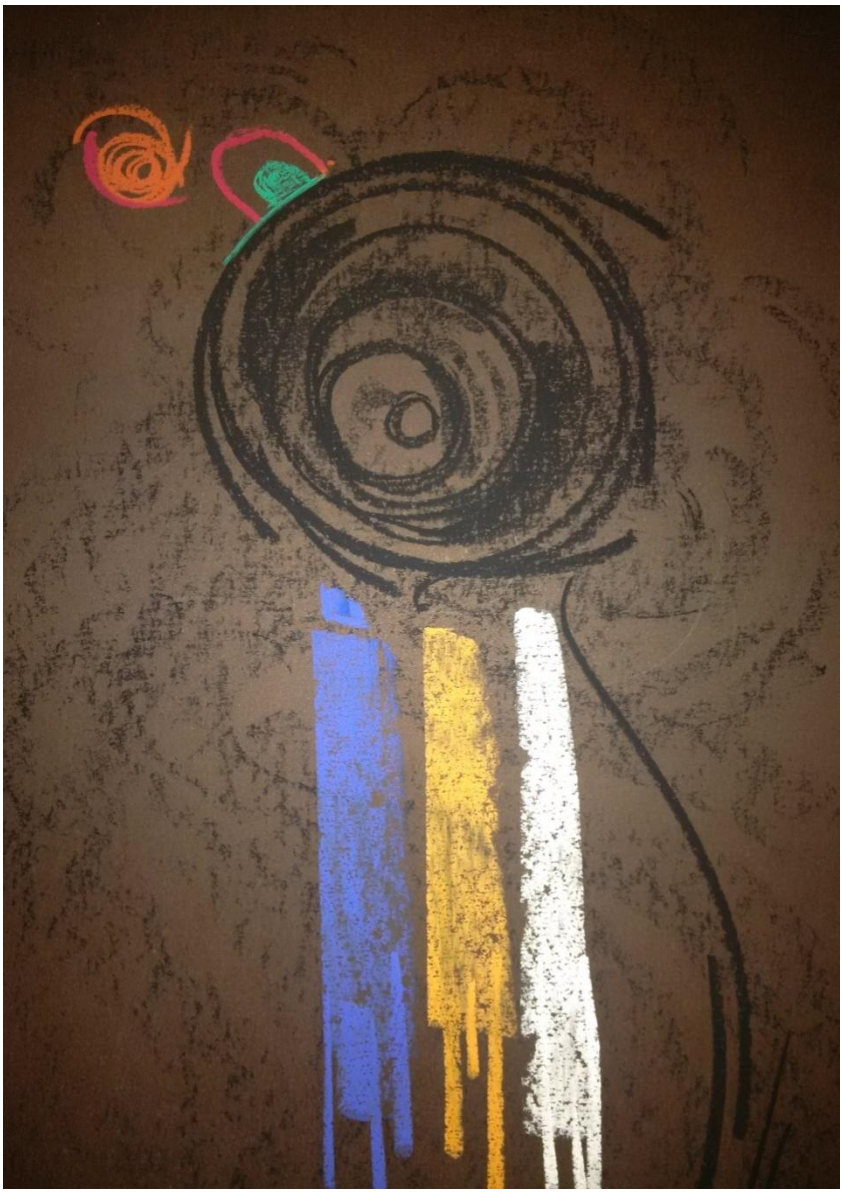
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



57
Title: Gbagyi beauty 87
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



58
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
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Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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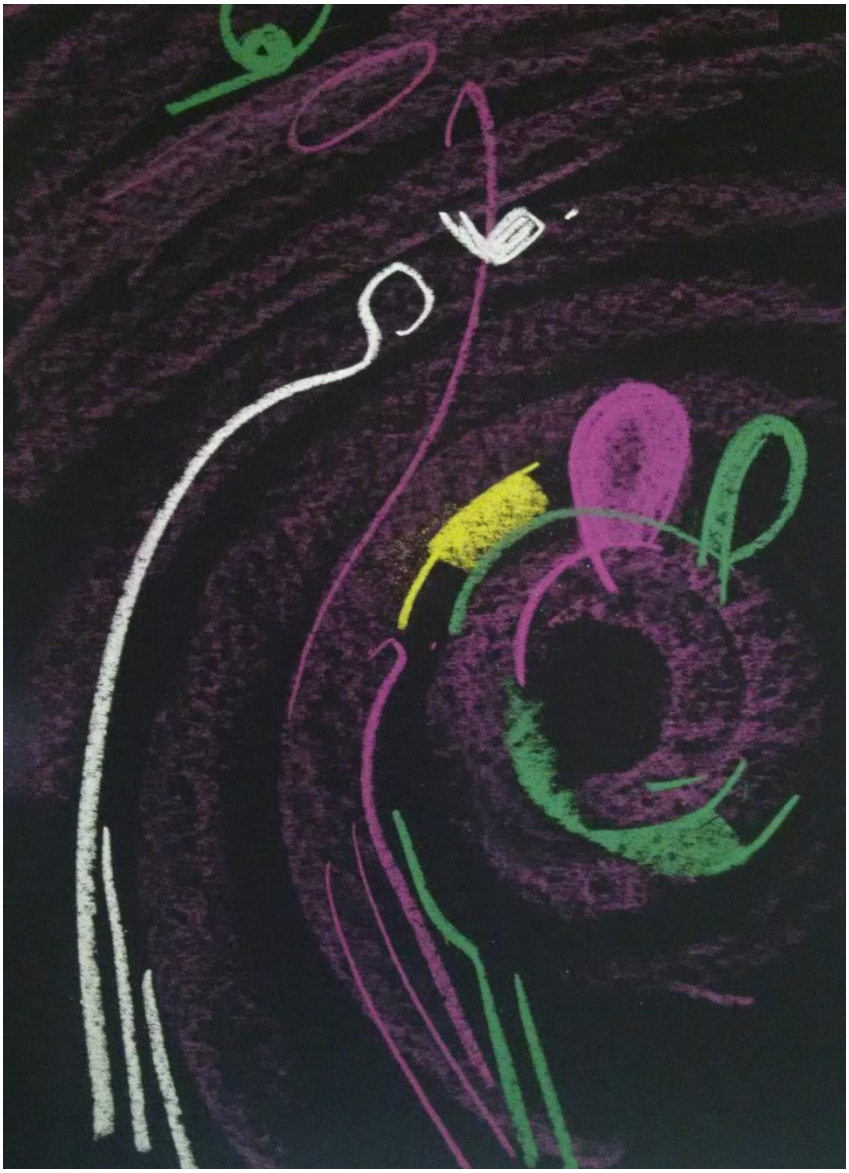
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Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



62
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



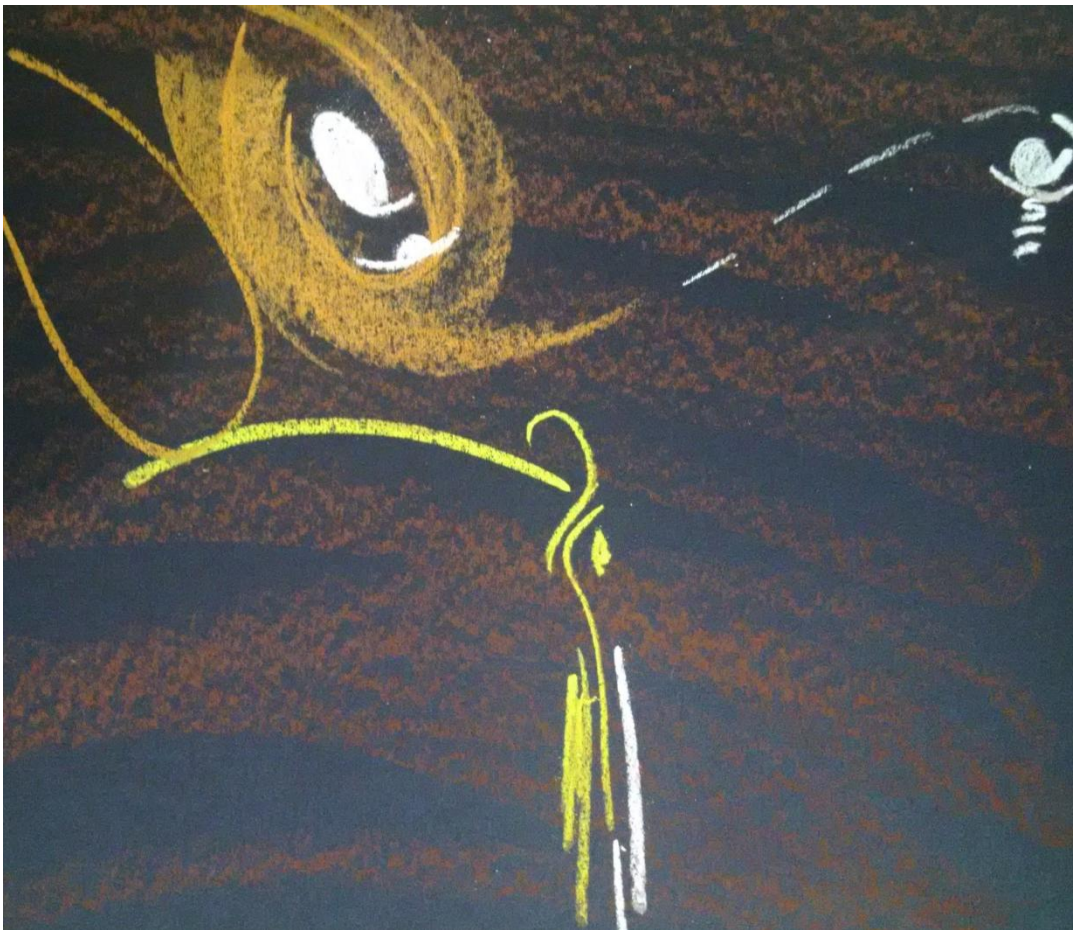
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
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Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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Date: 2013
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Size:36 cm x 24 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



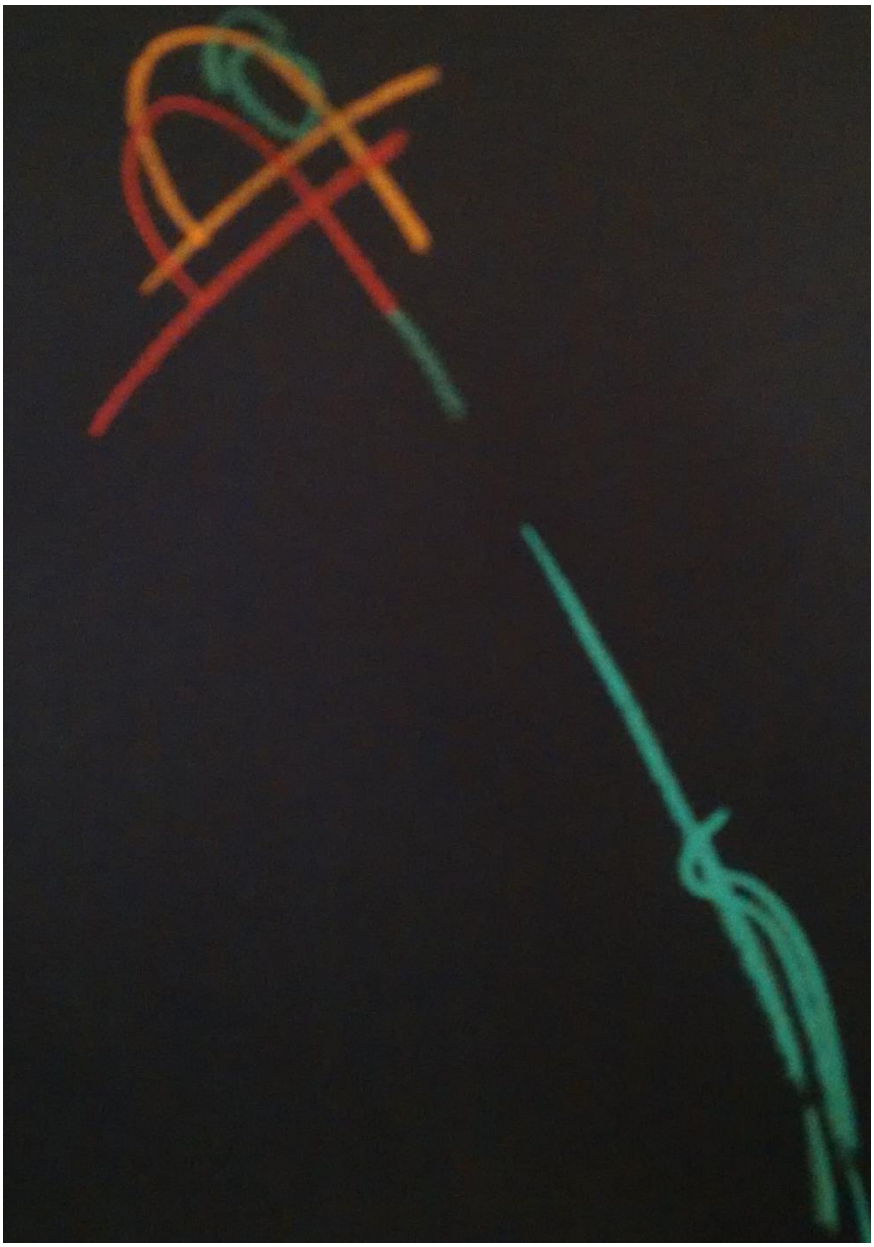
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Date: 2013
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Size:36 cm x 24 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



68
Title: Gbagyi beauty 105
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



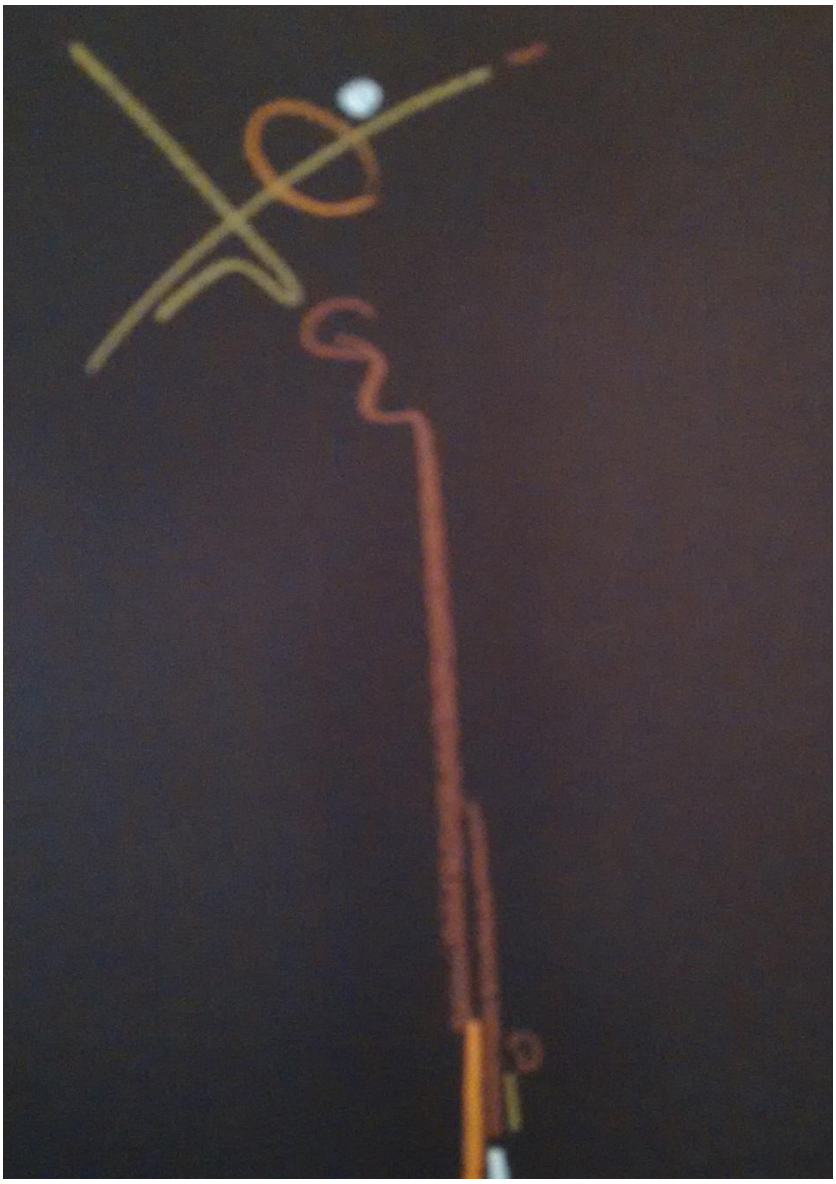
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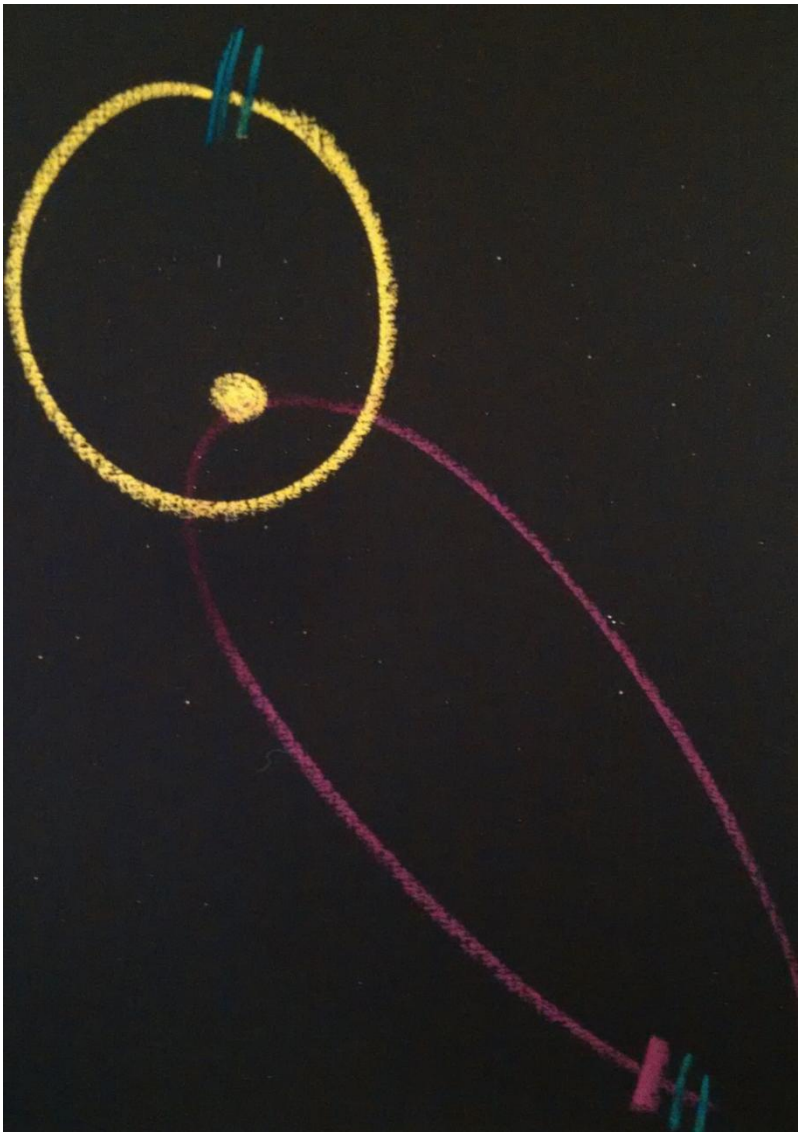
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Size:32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:32 cm x 45 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



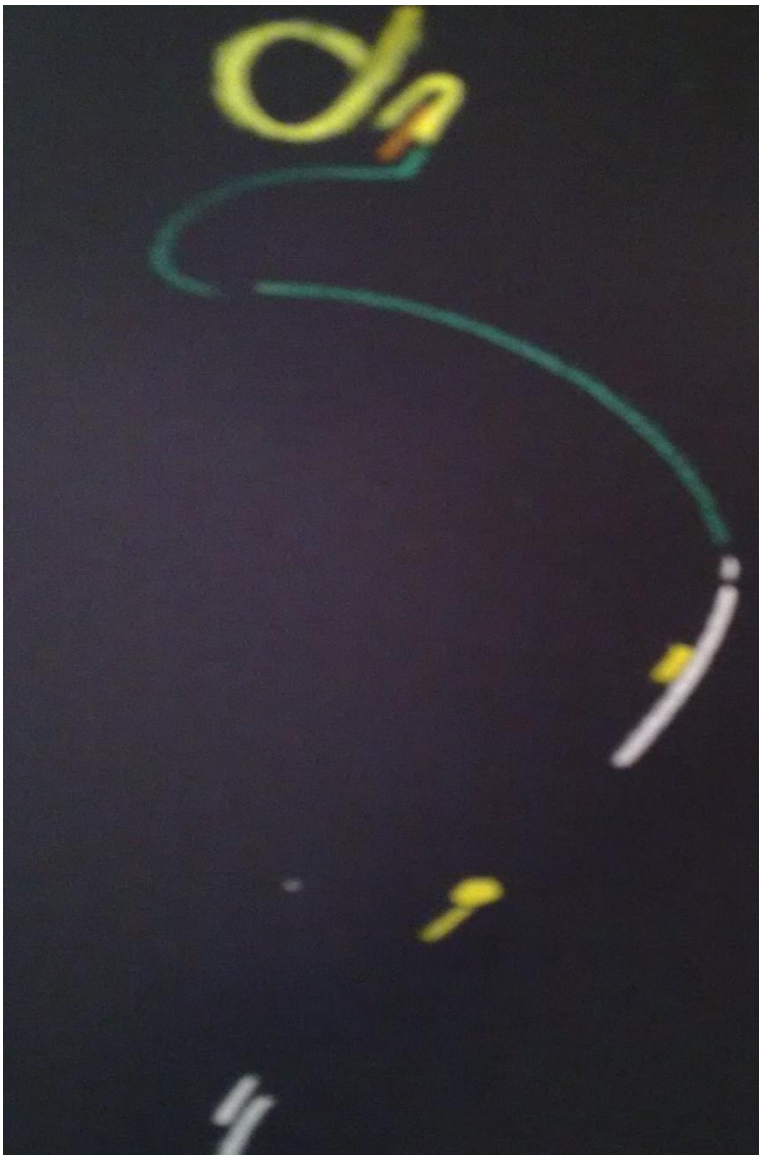
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Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



73
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



74
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Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy



75
Title: Gbagyi beauty 125
Date: 2013
Medium: Pastel on mountboard
Size:24 cm x 36 cm
Artist: Nwankwo Chidimma Ogonnaya Cindy

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This study on Conceptualising traditional Gbagyi Female Form in Minimalist Painting appears to be a practice- based research problem which required constant, continuous and exploration process to be solved. The researcher however, has considered and started by the review of related works and literature which shows that although artists have been visually representing the traditional Gbagyifemale form, they have not completely exhausted all as little has been done on conceptualising this form in a minimalist painting. The study observes that one can visually perceive, interpret and represent the Gbagyifemale form conceptually in minimalist painting by adopting the ideology of Obendorf (2009) on minimalism. This gap in knowledge offers the researcherthe opportunity to further study and explore the Gbagyi female form in minimalist painting. This led to the creation of works of art with the following objectives:

1) create conceptual paintings using traditional Gbagyi female form in minimalism;
2) create visual elements inherent in the traditional Gbagyi female form and its environment;
3) develop minimalist conceptual painting using the traditional Gbagyi female form for visual aesthetics;
4) utilise the medium of chalk pastel as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support; and
5) use reduction as a vital characteristic in minimalisation of Traditional Gbagyi female form.

Among the findings of this study are:

That,conceptual paintings could be achieved using traditional Gbagyifemale form in minimalism, thereby achieving objective 1 and answering the question 1 of the study (Plates 1-V). It also discovered that visual element inherent in traditional Gbagyi female form and its environments could be created, taking care of objective 2 and question 2 of the study (Plates VI-XII). Furthermore, the study discovered that minimalist conceptual painting could be developed using the traditional Gbagyi female forms for aesthetic to achieve objective 3 and answering question 3 of the study (Plates XIII-XV). In achieving objective 4 and answering question 4, the study revealed that chalk pastel medium could be utilised as a tool to express the traditional Gbagyi female form on pastel paper as support (Plates XVI-XVII).Finally, the study finds out that reduction could be used as avital characteristic in minimalisation of traditional Gbagyi female form (Plates XVIII-XIX).

With works that pose rhythmical, color and space balance, this study has established that depicting the traditional Gbagyifemale form in minimalist painting has not only academically added to the existing knowledge on the form but also, literarily given it a voice. The works produced are reasonable evidence of the attempt to solve the problem posed by the research in which non- exploration and representation of traditional Gbagyifemale form using pastel in minimalist approach and unusual technique of the paintings was observed.

6.2 Conclusion

Following the observation on the outcome of objectives, Minimalism stands out to encompass different attitude or skills towards art. The experiences involve distortion, elongation, duplication, subtraction and so on to achieve it successfully. To reawaken or create awareness to

vital subjects around one's immediate environment, it remains necessary to constantly make references to them through recognition and continuous experimentation. Beauty, as they say, is in the eyes of the beholder, therefore, the researcher has brought about the visual actualisation of the "Beauty" that lie within the traditional Gbagyi female form through minimalism.

Based on Sullivan (2005) submission that, imaginative and inventive visualisation may emerge in many different forms and can be translated as ideas, objects, images, or actions, the researcher had followed and created these works based on Sullivan's theory. The visual interpretations were based on personal observation of factual appearance. In doing so, rather than represent the traditional Gbagyi female form in the realistic manner, several observed visual aesthetic elements summed up in lines, shape and colour were key reconstructing elements used in creating works that confirm Obendorf's (2009) description of minimalism in visual art. These works are all conceptual, simple, abstracted and reduced to the barest minimalist characterization, revealing a great depth of visual inventiveness.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings mentioned above, this study recommends that:

1) Researchers should extend creativity using other parts of the female form to further advance exploration in painting.

2) Nigerian artists/ researchers should be encouraged to identify with cultures that are not from their origin while carrying out a research, as this would strengthen unity amongst the Nigerian society as well as create awareness about the different ethnic groups and culture.
3) Research should be carried out in the area of literacy publications, beyond painting as a visual language.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The study has:

i) been able to conceptualise the Gbagyi female form into minimalism in painting beyound realistic representation.

ii) established the feasibility of creating minimalist concept using Traditional female form in modern Nigerian painting.

iii) uncovered the unlimited possibilities that bound in painting beyond traditional boundaries.

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