‘STATIC MOTION’: AN EXPLORATION OF STILT DANCE POSTURES IN MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

BY

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BY

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ZARIA, NIGERIA.

DECEMER, 2015

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this Thesis entitled “Static Motion”: An Exploration of Stilt Dance Postures in Mixed Media Sculpture” has been carried out by me in the Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello university, Zaria. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and the list of references provided. No part of this thesis was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Abdul Lasisi Lamidi _____ _____

Signature Date

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled "STATIC MOTION": AN EXPLORATION OF STILT DANCE POSTURES IN MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE" by Abdul Lasisi Lamidi meets the regulations governing the award of the Doctor of Philosophy in Sculpture of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

To the blessed memory of Gani Odutokun (1948-1995)

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It is not the intelligence of a man that makes ways for him, neither his wisdom, but God that empowers a man to achieve possibilities in life. I return all the glory to God for the marvelous things He have done in my life. With humility and gratitude, I sincerely thank my supervisory committee, which began under the chairmanship of Professor Tonie Okpe and the Late Professor (1962-2014), as a member and continued under Dr. Muyideen Adio Jaji, supported by Professor Emmy Unuja Idegu and Associate Professor (Mrs.) Rose Anyaka Nkom. I thank you immensely for your efforts in this accomplishment. I will also, want to thank the former Head of Department of Fine Arts, Dr. Kefas Danjuma, the former Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Design, Professor Jacob Jari, as well as, Professor Jerry Buhari who believed that I could be taught art, and this study has proven him right. Thank you for having faith in me. Professor Bashir Kolawole Olorukooba and Professor Ahmed Rufai Saliu, I sincerely appreciate your contributions toward the PhD in sculpture and painting. The Head of Sculpture Section, Dr. Emmanuel Wesley Okachi, and the Postgraduate Coordinator, Dr. Philip Gushem, you are appreciated for your efforts and support in moving the two Sections and the Department forward.

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ABSTARCT

This study was inspired by the Angere stilt dance postures in creating sculptures. Stilt dance is known as *Angere* in the Yoruba speaking states in Nigeria. The problem of the study was the exploration of the stilt dance postures in mixed media sculpture. The study is significant as the *Angere* is losing touch of its traditional socio-cultural attributes to acculturation, hence, the need for the study. Five objectives were stipulated in this research which are not limited to the following, to visually document the stilt dance form for appraisal, develop the aesthetics of the stilt dance forms using mixed media in sculpture and explore "static motion" derived from the posture of the *Angere* stilt dancer to achieve possibilities of the sculptures using the stilt dance forms. The theoretical framework was situated on Langer's aesthetic theory- Virtual Powers. The theory pursues the deeper understanding of what dancing is, what it expresses. According to Langer "a dance gesture is not gesticulation; gesture in art is something imagined apart from the situation or mentality in which it was first rooted. (Langer in Innis, 2009). Therefore, dance is articulated in this exploration as an imaginary symbol of postural possibilities in creating firstly, sketches conceived from the observation of the stilt dance, which are then executed in mixed media. Thirteen artists are reviewed that explored dance as thematic expressions in sculpture. These artists include the following, Olu Amoda, Eze Ngene, Adeola Balogun, Penny Hardy, Jerry Daniel, Edger Degas and Fredinand Cecnio. Multiple qualitative methodologies were employed, namely observational, action research and studio exploration. Meanwhile, the studio exploration adopts Sullivan's framework which premised on ideas/interrogation, sketches/ drawings, exploration/visual practice: catalogue, exhibition and dissertation. The analysis of the studio works combined numerous approaches: formalist criticism, philosophical perception and conceptual analysis among others. Thirty sculptures were executed relating to the five objectives proffered, while, the artist's curatorial statement positioned the stilt dance postures within the concept of 'static motion'. This is implied when visual illusion is created in the viewer; as if the still sculpture is falling as positioned on the base or without a lower supporting element but upper support like in puppetry. The findings of this study point to the possibility of visually documenting the stilt dance forms through the sketches, drawings, photography and all the sculptures generated in the studio exploration. The study has been able to develop the aesthetics of the stilt dance forms using paper, ropes and fabric off-cuts. Works in this series are Elegance I-III and Cultural Performance I-VI, and also visual motion has been created in the still sculptures through the adequate positioning of the element of art. Free-Flow I and II captured this essence. In conclusion, as a contribution to this study a visual concept of visual motion has been hatched in this study that is conceptualized as 'static motion'. This is implied when a still sculpture is positioned in an angle as though it is falling, yet held with a fish line at the upper part of the sculpture or mounted on a base.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background to the Study

Nigeria is an amalgamation of a large number of traditional cultures resulting from "over one hundred different spoken languages that give some indication of the cultural diversity of the country". Traditional Nigerian dance consists of religious ritual and ceremony in which a priest or priestess is the leading dancer, using dance and symbolic gestures to lead initiates in dance designed to conciliate the supernatural powers, solicit divine protection, or give thanks to the guardian spirits of the community and masquerades are features of such dances (Haper, 2014). According to Ododo (2015), Masquerade essentially connotes disguise and impersonation through the use of mask. In Africa, masquerade performance combines flamboyant and expressive use of costume, drumming, chants, songs, acrobatic displays, dance and mime into some amount of performance that emphasizes a keen sense of creativity which brings to fore masquerade as an art.

Okoye in Ododo (2015) illustrates this with an example of the Igbo masquerade art; which is a performance in its own right and qualifies as an art form. The author further opines that masquerade art is an important cultural event in Africa, because of its ancestral manifestations: "it is perceived as an entity that embodies the spirit of the ancestors". The Yoruba, for instance consider the ancestors as: "departed spirit of the forebears". For the Igbo, Osadebe in Ododo (2015), states that "the ancestors were the all important link between the material and the spiritual worlds, while serving as the source for obtaining other worldly knowledge by the Igbo". In this regard, the *Egungun* ancestral masqueraders of the Yoruba land come out in a wide variety of loosely flowing cloth or palm-leaf costumes, often with carved head pieces. "The heavier the mask the less freedom for dance, for example, *Epa* masqueraders of the Ekiti-Yoruba

carry carved helmet masks with elaborate superstructures whose weight allows only the type of movement fitting the stately processional dances that confirm the masquerader's role of ritual leadership". The simple cloth costumes of ancestral "*Egungun Elewe* of the *Igbomina*-Yoruba also allowed for a dance acrobatic skill and the light raffia Igbo masks of the Edo people enable their heads to move in a dance of whirling turns. Secular masqueraders like the stilt dancers who perform mainly as entertainers have materialized from the ritual societies". The *Egungun* performer of the Oyo-Yoruba, Nigeria, for example, performs at *Egungu* ancestral festivals, but often travelling within the neighbouring towns to entertain audiences in exchange for money (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014).

The *Egungun*, according to Drewal and Pemberton in Adolphsen (2012) is a synthesis and assorted mode of ritual performance dedicated to the ancestors worship. "*Egungun*is said to date back to the 14th Century B.C when Sango, Alafin (king) of the Oyo Empire, introduced a form of ancestor worship known as *Egungun*, meaning" (masquerade). However, over the Course of their long history, these ritual practices diffused through the other sub groups that made up the Yoruba people. The *Egungun* is performed throughout Yoruba land which spans parts of the states of Nigeria, Benin, and Togo. Traditional dance or dancing generally can be termed folk dance, or sometimes even ceremonial dance. This according to Manning (2014) is also termed 'Traditional Dance' when the emphasis is on the cultural roots of the dance. A traditional dance like the *Angere* (stilt dance) therefore, has arisen from a people's cultural traditions.

Asante (2010), reports that stilt dances are performed on wooden base that elevate the dancer high into the air. They are Dancers strapped with wooded poles onto their feet and lower legs, and they have the ability to dance and even jump on the stilts,

delighting and engaging their audience. Stilt dancers, like so many traditional dancers in West-Africa, are often masked dancers. The dance may be embodying a spirit or deity that needs to be masked for the occasion. During these times, the identity of the dancer is presumed unknown. *Chakaba* from Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, and Ivory Coast use stilts that vary in height from 500cm to 1000cm tall and the stilts of the *Chakaba* according to Asante are covered with the same African print materials that are worn on the body of the dancers. They also wear a headdress with fringes on the side, and some may wear a skirt made of fibre from palm or raffia leaves. In Benin Republic, the Yoruba people do a stilt dance called *Okparou* and the *Fon* people perform Zangbeto".

The *Zangbeto* performers come out at night supposedly to watch over the town. Villagers are aware of the stilt dancer but dare not come out at night lest they interfere with the security of the community that the *Zangbeto* has been entrusted to protect. "Another stilt dance is called *Guegblin,* whose acrobatic dance is set to the music of triple-headed *Sangba* drums". A cluster of animal skin and feather reach out from his headdress, which has red fringe on the sides. The face of the mask is black and features a corded black tassel hanging in the nose area and carries a black whisk in each hand (Asante, 2010).

One of the significant aspects of the stilt dance to be considered apart from being a solo dancer is that the performer sometimes may appear in form of masquerade. This is explained by Afrostyle magazine (2010) that "Masquerades are generally seen as the human repositories of the ancestral spirits and gods of the West African cosmology". They represent the divine, as well as their performance of song, ritual dance, and dramatization of spiritual or ethnic issues. The stilt dancer as a masquerade performs many roles in life, mirroring the myriad influence of the spirits on the living. These masquerades might sometimes be called upon to implement any task civic or

personal, from honouring the dead to paying obeisance to gods in a thanksgiving ceremony for a good crop harvest. However, such practices are varying from one society to the other in Africa. The stilt dancer assumes a lot of significance in this dynamic possibility according to Leavy (2009), where the invisible and visible become associates.

Dance in this study is approached from the perspective of the visual exploration of postures in stilt dance forms where movement expresses emotion. This perhaps, could collectively be seen as the performative art of dance. The study by Akinsipe (1992) revealed that, "the emergence of cultural dances in Nigeria in the 1960s introduced a new dimension to the practice of dance" Akinsipe further observes that dances that have existed in an ethnic group for ages are seen as purely religious activities and performed probably, only at night or at a specific place a village square, Community gathering or king's palace. In this contemporary time, dances have begun to appear on the stage, on television, in Carnivals and during holiday and festive periods purely for entertainment. "However, the neo-traditional dance generally has its own advantages amongst which are the prominence it brought to several of those ethnic dances and at the same time allows for alterations and adjustments and innovative explorative enactment of these dances". Akinsipe (1992), notes that it is quite unfortunate that the traditional dances were not documented in written form. This may possibly be because the traditional practitioners were not literate, and unwilling to document the dance forms. However, most traditional customs lay emphasis on oral tradition. The depressing part of the matter is that a legacy might be lost without realizing it as elders, repositories of such oral traditions, eventually die off without it been passed on to the younger generation.

Meanwhile, one must appreciate, though scanty; the documentation of our traditional dancers done by the Westerners, even though not in-depth compared to recent documents done by indigenous writers. The contemporary stilt dancer as a performer is one of such indications of the performative nature of the contemporary art of the socio-cultural practices of dance as entertainment. The stilt dancer possibly may not perform the rituals that are expected in the traditional religious backdrop of appraising the ancestors before enacting his performance. The main aim most times is to earn him some money by using the street as his stage or theatre and the passer-by as his audience. Meanwhile, as the stilt dancer performs his act on the street, the visual artist on his own part is also developing some ideas and concepts which he mentally documents as inspiration for visual explorations of the postures enacted in mixed media sculpture.

In this quest, therefore, the elegance and energy of the stilt dancer become a viable and robust source of inspiration for visual artists generally to transform into sculptures. First, the stilt could be represented in several other materials apart from the bamboo, and second, the costume or attire of the stilt dancer could also be created in diverse ways. The multi-dimensional nature of sculptural exploration today empowers the sculptor to use varied material at his disposal, while generating other sculptural ideas that will help highlight personal creative thoughts. It is in this regards that the researcher is fascinated with stilt dance. Thus, the attempt to explore it in three-dimensional mixed media sculpture is the task at hand. There are many ethnic groups and different types of dances and dancers in Nigeria and globally, but in articulating concepts around one's geographical ambiance, the researcher selects from a myriads of the cultural dances in Nigeria. Thus, The Yoruba stilts dancer is selected.

Stilt dance in the Yoruba speaking areas of West Africa according to Oyefoju (2010), is called *Angere*. His explanation of the *Angere* performance from that of Haper's explanation on page 1that,

> 'Angere' is derived from the delicate stilt- stick which performer use at festival stands. The masquerade usually dresses like a man or woma (sic) with legs tied with bamboo stick on which the masquerade stands; when dancing or during entertainment. This festival is celebrated to entertain people and also to show gratitude to the illustrious sons for their efforts at ensuring the development of the community.

Angere is one among the dances known in Nigeria in the Yoruba states, which include, Ogun, Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti, Kwara and some parts of Edo state. The Yoruba people occupy the southwestern part of Nigeria, and account for about 20% of the population of the country.

The Yoruba are populated by religious groups of Christians, Muslims and Traditional African Religion adherents. They have a rich cultural background; with different forms of dance, arts, music, dressing and philosophy. They have a general language called "Yoruba" (Yooba) which is the form taught in schools. (Tigweb, 2012). However, the *Angere* among the Yoruba is perhaps becoming subjugated from the spiritual embodiment to entertainment as children and adult alike would sometimes be seen on stilts in the streets dancing and entertaining for alms. This is as a result of modernism; which has affected the cultural and traditional belief system of most African societies. Theatre and circus performances all over the world are now known also to reenact stilt dancing for entertainment as part of their repertoire.

Several visual artists have in one way or the other explored dance as thematic expressions. However, the execution of elongated sculptures has long captivated sculptors, since the period of Swiss artist; Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966) For instance; the beauty of simple elongated representational form is seen to be portrayed by some of

his bronze sculptures. Example is a painted bronze sculptures titled, *Three Men Walking II* (Plate I). Bonnefoy (2006) notes that Giacometti once said that he was sculpting not the human figure, but 'the shadow it cast'. Taking an example from Giacometti's statement, what might be insignificant to a sculptor could be the vital features needed for success by another sculptor, hence; concepts and characteristics of each sculpture vary from one to another. However, Fosu (1986), describes *Anyanwu*, (Plate II) also an elongated bronze sculpture executed by Ben Enwonwu located at the National Museum, Lagos as an aesthetics tribute to linear balance and grace… In this representational form; realism is seen to have gracefully lost its human features into an abstract curvilinear shape that immediately invokes a sense of mysticism. Indeed, the impeccable curvilinear movement of the dancing figure is highly decorated, with accentuated symmetric motifs as found in traditional Igbo costumes and *Uli* decoration.



Plate I: Alberto Giacometti, Walking Man, (1 of a series of 6), 1960Bronze, 180.5 x 27 x 97 cm. Collection of Fondation Giacometti, Paris (Inv. Nr. 1994-0186)

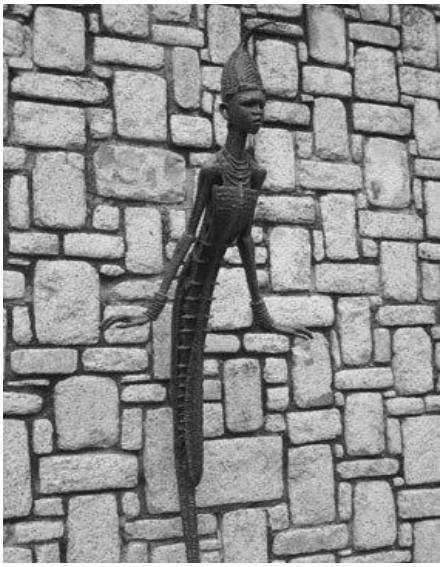


Plate II: Ben Enwonwu Anyanwu, bronze, located at the National Museum, Lagos. http://www.independent.com/news/2009/feb/28/ogbechie-enwonwu

Expounding further on elongated sculptures Grabski (2008), states that the Senegalese sculptor, Ndary Lo, in Plate III, captured a multiple figure-elongated exploration in mixed media sculpture Installation, which won the Dak'art Biennale's Grand Prix in 1998. These sculptures bear resemblance to the stilt dancer in terms of the elongated features without directly being influenced by it. He might probably be only interested in the elongated forms which are common features in some of his other sculptures. However, in the Sculpture Garden of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, is a concrete "Stilt dancer", undated but executed probably in the late 1960s owing to the technique of execution which is reminiscence to the works of the pioneering sculpture students of the Zaria Art School.

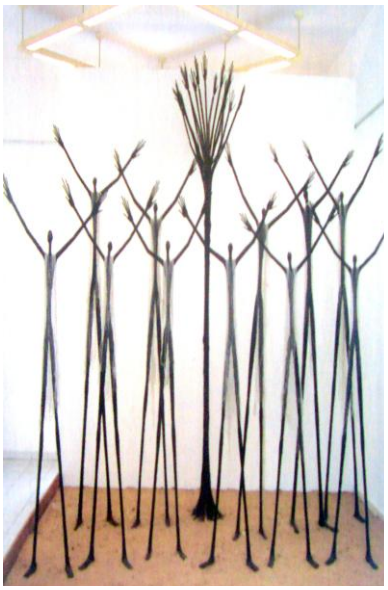


Plate III: Ndary Lo, Mixed media sculpture Installation, Dak'art Biennale's grand prix in 1998.



Plate IV, Stilt Dancer, 1976, Mac Ab el Diakparomre, Artist, 250cm high, sculpture Garden, Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

It is a double figure composition of a stilt dancer and his assistant who is squatting and supporting the stilt dancer that is about to stand upright. The regalia of the dancer look like that of the Yoruba Angere stilt dancer. To Yerima (2006), there are two

kinds of masquerade dancers; the one that performs mainly as a masquerade which is rooted in the religious traditional culture of the Yoruba. (This masquerade appraises the gods and is regarded as human possessors of the spirit) and the socio-cultural stilt dancer that performs solely for entertainment.

Olu Amoda, in 1999 also executed mild steel and stainless steel sculpture titled "Stilt Dancers" (Plate V), a three figure composition, the one on the left seems more prominent with his two hands stretched backwards as if leaping towards the other two figures. The other two stilt dancers on the right seem to look intertwined within the same axis of the dance. These stylized figures composition are fluidly executed with one and an half inches thick scrapes of mild steel, while the stilts are also executed with two inches round pipes of stainless steel. The juxtaposition of the stilts are dramatically positioned in an outline of triangular shapes. With these examples, it is noted by this study that some sculptors have explored sculptures that are elongated human forms, but bear resemblance to the stilt dancer in terms of the long slim features of the sculptures without being directly influenced by it. Haven highlighted some figurative elongated and stilt dance sculptures, it is pertinent to relate to the stilt dance forms bearing in mind that dance generally has a reoccurring theme in the researcher's exploration.

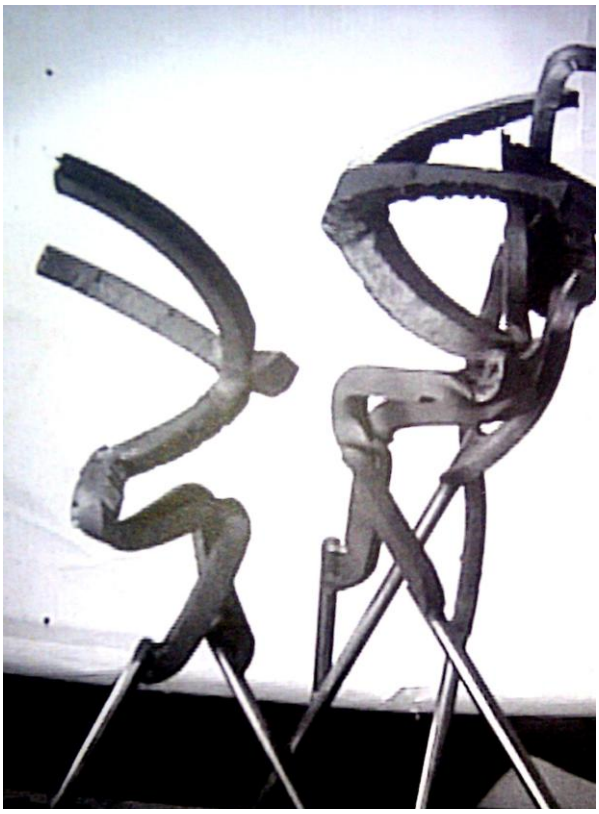


Plate V, Olu Amoda, Stilt Dancers, 1999, Mild steel and Stainless steel, 134x100x170cm, catalogue of an exhibition titled Objects of Art, Didi Museum

Another motivation to this study is the characteristics of postures in the stilt dance forms, particularly is the way; the upper part of the body seems to respond to the rhythm of a virtually imaginative music. The specific gestures derived from the various parts of the body will the researcher capture suggestively static motion of the postures of the various movements made by the stilt dancer to create pleasant kinesthetic movements. The inspiration for this study therefore, originates from previous studies on the dynamics of line, movement and rhythm. These three elements connote a close affinity to dance. When these elements are explored in visual expressions using linear-spatial welded mild steel in sculpture; they suggest vitality of continuous movement, elegance of form and grace. (Lamidi, 2010)

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Stilt dance in the Yoruba societies such as the *Angere* is losing touch with its traditional socio- cultural significance. This research stems from the conviction that the stilt dance, which is becoming extinct in the traditional Yoruba societies, could be documented visually in sculpture for future references. Contemporary Nigerian sculptors that have worked in figurative dance forms, using the direct metal approach, have over the years adhered to the use of metals- like machine parts, metal sheets, steel rods of different sizes, round and square pipes of assorted sizes, which are all traditional welded sculpture materials. Combinations of heterogeneous non-traditional welded sculpture materials in the execution of representational metal sculpture are available also for sculpture production, to which the study is not aware of the replete reliance on 'static motion' have not been depicted but appear not to have been explored by sculptors. Therefore, the research problem is the postural exploration of the *Angere* dance form to depict 'static motion', relying on various postures of the dancer in mixed media welded sculpture.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this research is the creation of mixed media sculpture, while the objectives are to:

I. Visually document the stilt dance forms for appraisal.
II. Derive inspiration from stilt dance characteristics for sculpture creation.
III. Develop the aesthetics of stilt dance forms using mixed media in sculpture.
IV. Explore the possibilities of mounting some of the stilt dance sculptures without any lower supporting element.
V. Explore "static motion" from the postural possibilities of the sculptures using the stilt dance form.

1.4 Research questions

Based on the objectives of the study, research questions were presented to interrogate the study further. The following are the questions:

I. What are the possibilities that the stilt dance form can be visually documented for appraisal?

II. In what ways can inspiration be derived from the characteristics of stilts dance form for sculpture creation?

III. In what ways can the aesthetics of stilt dance form be developed using mixed media?

IV. What possibilities exist for the stilts dance forms without any lower supporting element?

V. How can 'static motion' be explored from the possibilities of postures of the stilt dance form?

1.5 Justification of the Study

This study on figurative stilts dance forms is justified because the *Angere* dance is losing its traditional socio-cultural prominence due to acculturation. This can be documented visually in sculptural forms to depict suggested motion derived from the nuances typical of the postures assumed by the *Angere* stilt dancer. In this age of recycling of waste materials for economic growth and sustainability, the use of found objects will result into waste to wealth in the Nigerian economy, considering that the use of mixed media in figurative welded sculpture is not a common technique in contemporary Nigeria art scene.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the studio work will situate a better understanding of the aesthetic qualities of stilt dance in mixed media sculpture. It will further highlight newer possibilities in sculptures that are suitable for indoor displays. It is worthy to note that the findings of this study will open a new approach to the utilization of improvised materials for creative expressions.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study focused on three-dimensional figurative expressions of male and female forms derived from the Yoruba *Angere* stilt dance postures in Southwestern Nigeria. This study will execute sculptures using heterogeneous materials.

1.8 Limitation of the study

All the works created are meant to be displayed indoors, owing to the materials used that might not withstand the weather because of their perishable nature.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was anchored on *"Langer's Aesthetic Theory: Virtual Powers:* and her instructions for perceiving is deepened and extended by her discussion of the art of dancing. She asks what dancing is-"what it expresses, what it creates, and how it is related to the other arts, to the artists, and to the actual world" From the side of the observer the gesture is "seen and understood as vital movement" or rolling around" For Langer, "A dance gesture is not gesticulation. Gesture in art is something imagined apart from the situation or mentality in which it was first rooted*"*. "In this way a gesture becomes a "free symbolic form, which may be or incorporated in other virtual gestures, to express other physical and mental tension" What preside over the dance according to Langer, "as it does forms of art symbols, are

“imagined feeling” not real emotional conditions”. She constantly insisted that the dance gesture is not real gesture, but implied gesture. “It is actual movement, but virtual self-expression. This she calls “gestic forms” but actual forces emanate and shape a whole world of dynamic forms by their magnet-like, psycho-physical actions” Dance is made into a work of art through the “translation of kinesthetic experience into visual and audible elements…

Langer purposefully insists that the “primary illusion” of any art form “is something created, and created at the first touch” while in the case of dance, “a motion is transformed into gesture. Considering the position of Langer, in the stilt dance form, motion is transformed into postural symbols. However, posture is captured in sculptural enactment inform of still images.

The gestural representation of motion is more elusive than the tangibility of the “felt form” that Langer called “felt power” which is the real form expressed by the sculptor in bringing to the fore of the characteristics of the stilt dance form. The stilt dance is translated into kinesthetic experience that conveys “felt energies” and the felt power take on the postural symbolic images of the sculpture represented. All Dance forms are rooted in the artist’s imagination which is a symbol of cultural embodiment of a conveyed energy exploited by the dance postures to create kinetic energy in virtual space (Langer in Innis, 2009).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews general literature on dance and focuses on different types of stilt dance. It also looked at the aesthetics of dance as it relates to the socio-religious setting in traditional African background and globally. More so, the review establishes what inspires some sculptor's dance explorations. This is in relation to their themes and also how some other artists have interpreted the material essence in their sculptures using mixed media. The review further highlights artists who have worked in related areas. Thus, thirteen artists were reviewed in this study; putting into consideration the sculptors who have explored dance in sculpture using any media, for example, Edgar Degas, Sterett-Gittings Kelsey, Jerry Daniel, Penny Hardy, Fredinand Cecnio, Olu Amoda, Adeola Balogun and Eze Ngene. These sculptors have executed dance sculpture using media like bronze and mild steel. Other artists who explored mixed media, such as recycled waste materials and found objects, that did not explore dance forms include, Deborah Butterfield, Gene Galazan, Leo Sewell, Johan Jonsson and Mark Jerkins.

Therefore, the review considers the following headings: General Concept on Stilt Dance, The Concept of 'Static Motion', A Theatrical interplay of Performance Art and Dance Sculptures, The Aesthetics of Dance, Functions of Dance, Dance as an Inspiration for Sculpture Exploration, The Exploration of Mixed Media in Sculptures, The Socio-Cultural Perspective of Dance and Composition.

2.2 General concept on stilt Dance

Archeological vestiges and texts show that stilt walking was practiced in ancient Greece as far back as the 6th century. However, stilts that were invented centuries ago were not for designed play, but for walking and for transportation. On the use of stilts; Hirsch, (2012) further avers that, in the waste land of Gascony, stilt walking were formally a means of locomotion adapted to the nature of the country. The waste lands were then great level plains covered with stunted bushes and dry heath. There were no good roads of any kind, and the population, relied upon sheep rearing for a living. The shepherds devised and adopted stilts, to allow them move around under the bad permeability of the soil, which are transformed into marshes after the slightest fall of rain. Stilts are poles, posts or pillar used to allow a person or structure to stand at a distance above the ground. Walking stilts are poles equipped with step for the feet to stand on, or straps to attach to the legs, for the purpose of walking while elevated above a normal height. Buildings are also constructed on stilt to protect from flood damage. All over the world especially in the creeks, the coastal areas, riverbanks, and islands, whole settlements are built, using stilt (Hirsch, 2012). A good example of a stilt settlement in a suburban area is Makoko, located in Lagos -Nigeria, where all of the houses are on stilt.

Also, fruit farmers who prune and harvest their peach, plum, and apricot trees commonly use Aluminum stilts in California. Stilts have also been used for the washing of large windows, the repairing of roofs and the installation or painting of high ceilings in cities like New York, Japan and California. However, there are different types of stilts as stated by Hirsch (2012), which are, as follows;

I. Hand-held Stilts are in two types: string and pole, hand-held stilts are not tied or stripped to the body of the wearer. Hand-held pole stilts are made of two long poles, each with a foot support. The person on the stilt holds on to the footplates.

II. Peg Stilts are also called Chinese stilts, and are the most common stilts used by professional performers. These stilts strap on at the foot, ankle, and knee, which gives the walker a great versatility. The lightweight stilts make it easy for the wearer to walk quickly; turn suddenly, and possible jump rope or dance. The walker must keep moving at all times to keep himself from falling over.

III. Drywall Stilts make it possible to stand still or walk. The name is derived from drywall construction, but painters, actors, and magicians also use them. Drywall stilts are heavier than peg stilts and are made for slower but safer walking and working, as they are the safest of all the known stilts.

IV. Spring Stilts are spring-loaded stilts that allow the user to run, jump and perform various acrobatics. The use of spring stilt fibreglass leaf strings were introduced in 2004 under the trademark "Poweriser" marketed for recreational and extra sports usage. Another name for it is "Power bocking"

The stilts are made according to their functionality. For example, the spring stilts are specifically made for performers, especially for recreation, sport and acrobatic performers. In African societies, the craftsmen or the wearers in specification to the type of dance to be performed mostly construct stilts locally. However, most of the stilts made in Africa are used for dancing, especially at traditional ceremonies and festivals.

In a different light, Polk (2006) defines "dance as the art form in which human movement becomes the medium for sensing, understanding, and communicating ideas, feelings, and experiences". Dance provides a way of learning- one that develops communication abilities, problem solving techniques, and creative and critical thinking skills along with kinesthetic abilities." Dance has its own content, vocabulary, skills, and techniques, which must be understood and applied to be proficient in the art. For dance to be meaningful to the artist, the attribute of dance has to be well thought-out. Perpich Centre for Arts (2012), reports that the elements of dance are the foundational

concepts and vocabulary for developing movement skills, as well as understanding dance as an art form. All these elements are simultaneously presented in a dance or even in a short movement phase. These elements are action, space, time and energy. According to Polk (2006), Dance, generally is a series of slow or fast steps of body movements that follow the rhythm of a set of music.

Dance as an art form; is a creative alteration of body posture that embodies a rapid flow or fast rhythmic gestures that inform an expression, a social interaction that is presented in a spiritual appraisal or entertainment. Dance is movement to the beat expressed in sounds that has enchanted effect on an individual. Dance takes the participant to a stupor, ecstasy, and in a group dance; the dancer experiences a drive of unity in free formations of people. Dancing as music played with the body; it's the most ancient way of communication, even animal dance. It puts participants onto the same wave unified by the thread of music beat. In this way, it has tremendous impact on participants bringing them together into social unity. Dancing is highly spiritual; and in "dancing comes experience and amazing, absolute sense of freedom.

More so, dance allow people to discover, explore and develop their natural instincts for movement, enabling those that engage in it to develop not only their motor skills but also their mental and emotional personalities. Kirk in Polk (2006) states, that "dancing is when spirit dances" … "dancing is achieving a state of trance through movements". Kirk as a dance teacher defines dance as a "play with rhythms." Feeling rhythms in the body to him is the ultimate pleasure of dance. These rhythms come like a trance and are not related to anything in the area of consciousness but abstract. To further elaborate on the content and the characteristics of dance. Education and Community (2012) also opines that the vocabulary of elements of dance involved space, time and dynamics. These elements are used and manipulated to craft movement that

reflects the dancer's selected intent for their core composition. Shape is an aspect of the space; shape assumes the strongest visual component in dance. Shape refers to individual body shapes. Time, is how fast or slow (tempo); even or uneven (beat); and long or short (duration) the movement is, while, dynamics is release of energy/ weight or force asserted in a dance. Viewing dance as it relates to African societies; dance serves a complex diversity of social purposes; the dancers usually reflect the communal values and social relationships of the people.

Furthermore, dance is appreciated in social occasions. Both are simultaneously enjoyed as an activity in its own right; that is entertaining and giving pleasure as an expression of communal life. African Oral History according to Lynne (2012) reveals that dance has long been an important medium of African communication in contrast with modern life in Europe and Anglo-America where behavior is individualistic and segmented. Dance in several traditional African societies was communal and general as part of a significant occasion in an individual's life cycle. These occasions generally fell within the authority of indigenous religions characterized by magic and ritual used to communicate with the supernatural and disseminate messages from the gods and spirits.

Today, due to the rise of nationalism, and the post-independence, according to Lynne (2012), African traditional dance that performed religious and socio-economic functions has lost its key position in several African societies and this also includes the stilts dance. Discussing on the forces of change in traditional African societies, Lynne further observes that indigenous dance is part of *magical-religious ritual* of Africa societies, where dance tends to be preserved. In addition, she notes that dance has been battered by the forces of change launched by European occupation. These include Christianity, Western education, improved communication and transportation systems

and new urban Centre. However, the stilts dancer allows for vast potentials and dynamics of exploration in sculpture, which is attributed to the physical and elegant nature of the dancer. Another way to look at the exploration of the stilts dance postures is in the inspiring sculptural character it has. This helps give the dancer the features of a dramatic sculptural exploration in form of performance of the *Keylemanjahro Moko Jumbies.* The lurid nature of the costume or attire of the dancer also offers the aesthetics required for the mixed media approach in sculpture. Stilts dancer as observed is an embodiment of traditional spiritual essence in several African societies.

Within the context of social related forms, Euba (1982) states that, it is typical; especially of African Culture for example, that religion, art, music, dance, and drama are best fused, to maintain their inescapable repetition of constancy and harmony rarely encountered elsewhere in the world. yet, in this inextricable link, dance art is usually very prominent, it represents a significant aspect of ways in which people individually and collectively express themselves, it has a strong importance as a socio – cultural phenomenon in its aesthetics and meaning. The expression of dance in sculpture has been a dynamic exploration changing from one social context to another. From one African society to another, dance form has become an important thematic culture of representation all round the world, but interpreted in divergent ways by sculptors.

2.3 The concept of "Static Motion"

In terms of arresting motion, a static art, figurative or abstract sculpture may suggest movement, but it is not prompted by movement, the experiment of the Bauhaus in Weimar and Dessau- Germany according to Huyghe (1994), was of great importance to the concept of movement in sculpture. Alexander Calder (1898-1976) invented mobile sculpture; he introduced an infinite variety of combinations of form. With less fantasy, Jean Peyrissac (1895-1974) also began using iron, wood, and rope for his

plastic machine and constructions in space. He employed metal in his *static equilibrium series* and also his *dance sculpture* of 1960.

Another exploration in sculpture is the *spatiodynamics* (sculpture having colour and movement in space) of Nicolas Schoff, (1912-1992) in which he produced works in metal that were inspired by constructivism and *Neo-plasticism.* He introduced a motor, a projector and a sound recording in to a mobile sculpture. He was able to achieve a synthesis of painting, sculpture, cinema, and music. There have been several attempts by sculptors to create motion in sculpture using propelling machines and other components that could mechanically be parts of power sculptures that are called kinetic sculptures. However, other sculptors have also explored movement without necessarily using wind energy or motorized object to create visual motion. Static motion is a concept adopted in this study to express implied motion or a rhythmic movement in dance postures using the principles of sculptural composition. However, to create visually implied motion in sculpture, the positioning of these sculptural elements must be adequately considered. In another perspective, the positioning of the figures in a *staggering balance composition* will create an illusion of motion. The compositional elements especially line, rhythm and shape are vital visual conveyor of movement, which in a sense; will create an implied motion in any visual expression.



Plate VI: Umberto Boccioni, Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, 1913, cast in 1931, Bronze, 11.1cm high. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1990.38.3

The gesture and poses of the human body in a work of art make forceful linear road ways for our eye to follow". However, the way the eyes, are often at work with the brain, the brain attempts to simplify many irregular forms and disjointed shapes and treat them as a line that moves in one direction. This principle was developed as part of Gestalt psychology in the early 20th Century. The German word Gestalt means 'forms' pattern, or shape. In Gestalt psychology people are much likely to see complete and unified patterns, such as single lines, rather than the fragments and parts. This will make a broken circle to be seen as a circle before it will be perceived as a series of disconnected arcs. The way patterns are positioned will add a dramatic touch to a sculpture and at the same time, suggest a visual feeling of motion. (Buser, 2006)



Plate VII: Marcel Duchamp, Nude Descending a Staircase NO. 2 (1912) Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia

There is a sense in which, the static sculpture would force the viewer to move around the sculpture, by appreciating it from different perspectives, and this conveys to the sculptor that the elements of sculptural composition have been utilized adequately. The bronze sculpture by Umberto Boccioni (Plate VII) titled *Unique Form of Continuity in Space,* exemplifies the movement of form in space and the integration of all material bodies in space. Umberto Boccioni illustrated this idea of implied motion, speed, power, and aggression of the Futurist artist of 1910. The sculpture is filled with lines of force that express dynamic motion, a key characteristic of Futurism. In another light, Adams (2007) also sees *Unique Form of Continuity in Space* as a "vision that corresponds to Bioccioni's aim of transforming shapes into motion.

Marcel Duchamp exemplified this characteristic of implied motion in his painting, (Plate II) titled, *Nude Descending a Staircase NO.2* (1912). In this painting, the image has a kinetic quality of speed and movement. According to Huyghe (1994), "the multiplicity of the image indicates a dramatic movement suggestive of a series of animated object in motion, in which he captures a static representation of movement". The rapidly descending figures in the *Nude Descending a Staircase NO. 2* are beyond an organization of abstract lines and shape but also a long figure set in a common enough environments. Duchamp deliberately attempts to suggest elements of subject-action, mood, and personality-into cubist expressionism. Arnason (1978), Adams (2007), and Lazzari and Schieser (2008) are of the notion that Boccioni's sculpture attempted to capture the dynamism of motion and speed, which probably is the first attempt in 20th century to express implied motion in a three-dimensional sculpture.

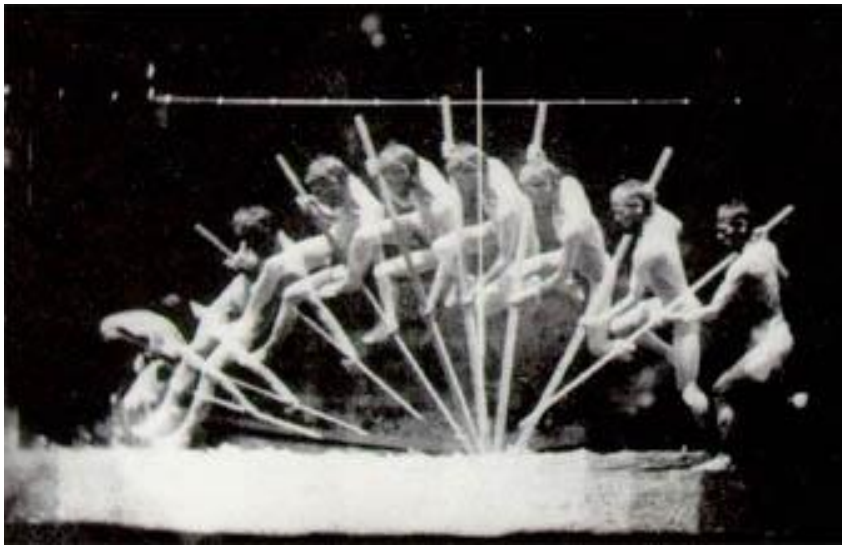


Plate VIII, Thomas Eakins titled "Man Pole Vaulting" 1884-1885
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Thomas_Eakins_Man_Pole-Vaulting.jpg

They are clear differences between motion that is implied and illusion of motion, implied motion is seen as a motion that has already occurred. However, illusion is created in the process of its occurrence rather than having occurred. Rathis (2010) is

of the opinion that some work of art contains the illusion of motion. Rathis further observes that the experiments of early photographers provide a good illustration of the figure in motion through the method of rapid multiple exposures. The painting of Thomas Eakins titled “Man Pole Vaulting” (Plate VIII) illustrated a photo sequences to study the movement of the human body.

2.4 A Theatrical interplay of performance art and dance sculptures

“Static Motion” as kinesthetic form, explores sculpture and performance art as a synergy anchored on choreography and display of “still images” in a theatrical creative representation. This is occasioned by time, space and audience perception. According to Okpe (2003) the development of concepts, themes, movements and context in contemporary art has permitted sculptors to engage in installation and temporary sculpture to frequently locate themselves within a creative pursuit so as to locate subject-content, context and form in a performance perspectives and by so doing, tries to “selectively borrow” from theatre art and the concept of performance paradigm in contemporary societies. This is however extended to studio practice in which artists have started to establish a position on postmodernist’s concept adapted as an academic pedagogy. In presenting sculpture as a performative expression in a synthesis that is located in a theatrical perspective, the audience/ viewer serves as a collaborator that plays a major role in bringing to the fore an understanding which arises from the content and context presented by the sculptor, however this is exemplified by installation art.

This is further corroborated in Duniya (2000) that the human memory is seen as being a unique organism, which has the capacity not only to recall things, but also to utilize what it recalls in the past, apply and recreate it, in such a way that it becomes a part of the present. So, viewers could compose and recreate what has been stored in

their memories and then unveiled via visual perception in enjoying whatever the art object is. However, an individual that views the dance forms could also mentally compose a desired music that suits his/her personal enjoyment or sensibility in entertaining himself/herself. This brings to the fore symbiosis of visual and performance art as an instrument for entertainment.

While, Wolf in Duniya (2000) sees art, either performance or visual, as a skill, technique or manipulation which is organized and culturally transmitted, also a means by which a creative artist through his or her work is united with a receptive audience. Therefore, in the arts, visual and performance, audience perception and communication are vital ingredients in the totality of appreciating a given work. This study avers that, dance sculptures tell stories, while performance art in the other hand is demonstrative, narrative and vocally presented. Visual arts rely on the manipulative skills of the artist to convey ideas, emotions and perception. This enables the viewer/audience to feel, perceive and experience similar emotional attachment to the work as the artists who creates the form. Similarly, the performer explores ideas and presents these ideas sequentially. The presentation is usually in a manner that audience participation is guaranteed by keeping them in suspense, thrilling them and equally leading them to a realization of the intrigues. From the ongoing, sculpture and performance art are similar and could be in a close synergy. For example, the practice of sculpture making or doing in the studio if recorded could be presented as performance art. In another instance, the creative arrangement of mounting sculptures in or out of the gallery space could be also presented as installation, visual, or performance art when it involves the audience.

According to Okpe (2003) "the many relationships that define sculpture and performance art, helps to accentuate both the form and performativity as both object and function" like in the *Angere* stilt dance form which are sculptures presented as

postural composition situated as conceptual visual kinesthetic. Okpe presents art in the insight of conveying meaning through the "content" and "context" of perception of the audience stimulated by visual motion. DeLahunta (2002) and Langer in Innis (2009), clearly philosophize the concept of *virtual reality* in sculpture and performance art. Contextualization of art work/ form is an image of the artist's imagination created as a symbolic *virtual motif* or *virtual reality*. Performance according to DeLahunta engages actively with open forms of audience participation and visual interaction in sculptural perception. The "virtual reality" "performance work" invites the audience/viewer/user to participate or interact with an art work that involves being able to navigate freely within a three-dimensional environment created by the artist or computer software. However, sculpture, when viewed in the context of performance art becomes a creative performative symbols presented by the sculptor for the benefit of a clearer understanding and perception of the audience/viewer.

Dance as image becomes an arrangement of objects set to rhythm and pattern, which makes it, becomes dance. The expression of sculpture making to express rhythmic composition is further highlighted using costumes as a concept of aesthetics appreciation in dance sculptures. One of the basic aesthetic of dance could be experienced in the regalia or costume worn by the dancer. According to Yerima (2006), "each dance has its own specific costumes, which add value to the character of the dancer". These characteristics, when explored either in sculpture or performance art causes reactions which could be visual, kinesthetic, aural, emotional, mental and so many other features (Langer in Innis, 2009).

2.5 The aesthetics of dance

The fundamental motive of dance is the expression and communication of emotion. People and even certain higher animals often dance as a way of releasing powerful feelings, such as sudden accesses of higher spirits, joy, impatience, or anger (Mackrell, 2013). These motives according to Mackrell; can be seen not only in the spontaneous skipping, stamping, and jumping movements often performed in moments of intense emotion, but also in more formalized movement of set dance, such as tribal war dance where their dance helps to generate emotion as well as release them. "People also dance for the pleasure of experiencing the body and the surrounding environment in new and special ways". Dance as a performance art involves movement being taken to an intense body movement, for example, the arms being flung or stretched out, the head lifted back, and the body arched or twisted. Dance performance tends to be organized into a spatial or rhythmic pattern, tracing lines or circle on the ground, movements follow a certain order of steps, or conforming to a pattern of regular accents or stresses.

These characteristics may produce a state of mind and body that is very different from that of everyday experience. Performance dance may require unaccustomed or accustomed patterns of muscular exertion and relation as well as a usually intense or sustained expenditure of energy. However, Mackrell (2013) states that, Dance creates a different perception of time and space for the dancer: time is marked by the rhythmic ordering of movement and by the duration of the dance, and space is organized around the paths along which the dance travels or around the outline made by the body. In fact, dance can create a completely self- contained world for dancer, in which they are capable of physical effort, prowess, and endurance far beyond their normal ability.

This transcendence of the everyday may also be experienced by the spectators of a performer. They may be drawn into the rhythms and patterns created by the dancer's movements; they may begin to share in the emotions being expressed through them. They may also experience kinesthetically, something similar to the physical sensations of the dancer. Kinesthesia, or the awareness of the body through sensations in the joints, muscles, and tendons, rather than through visual perception, not only defines the dancer's experience of his own body movement but also the way in which dance exerts its power over the spectators, who not only see it but also feel an echo of the dancer's movements and rhythm in their own nerve endings.

2.6 Functions of Dance

According to Ambrosio (2003), dance serves many purposes in culture for all people today. Dance as a performative expression serves as entertainment, education, therapy, and worship. Artistic expression is pleasantly prevalent in culture generally as seen today in every society. One of the oldest artistic expressions that have absorbed every culture is dance. "Dance can also be social and competitive, an employment, or an educator, one of the significance of dance has to do with its means and results of its expression." Ambrosio further avers that,

> Dance is an exposure of the human body in its most naked form, whether one is raising their hands or performing in any kind of dance. Movement in dance allows the human body to be exposed to the world, communicating in every aspect, whether it is the art form or the daily movement. Recreationally, dance serves many purposes in society. It provides many ways for people to emerge themselves in dance unprofessionally, whether it is alone or not. When dance is used as a means of exercise, one is developing its motor skills and a better awareness of the body.

Dance serves a recreational purpose when people come together in dance at whatever celebration. However, viewing dance from one African society to another, dance form

has become an important thematic culture of representation all round the world, but interpreted in divergent ways by artists.

2.7 Dances as an Inspiration for Sculpture Exploration.

This section discusses the works of artists that have been inspired by dance as a theme in their studio exploration either as an abstract figurative form or as a realistic representation. The works do not necessary reflect the concept of the stilt dance but dance as a theme. Edger Degas dance forms display an individual subtle variations in composition or in the dynamics of movement or of muscular tensions within the body. For many of his sculptures, the artist found a ready source of inspiration in the ballet dancers especially of the Paris Opera. It is not surprising that most sculptors in the account of their studio practice must have explored one way or the other the beauty of dance form. Degas is not an exception, including other artists like Pablo Picasso, Sterett-Gettings, and Cacnio. Vincent (2004) and Failing (2011), report that Degas "was never interested in creating public monuments, but, with one exception, neither did he display his sculpture publicly" the exception was his sculpture titled *The Fourteen – Year-Old Dancer* (1879-80) (Plate IX).

This sculpture as noted by Vincent was modelled in wax, wearing a real bodice, stockings, shoes, tulle skirt, and horsehair wig with a satin ribbon. The work combined some unconventional sculpture materials of that time, which made most of his contemporaries marveled at his creativity. The astonishing strength of the artist to bring to existence the naturalist nature of the female form is akin to his paintings and drawings.

2.7.1 Edgar Degas (1834-1917).



Plate IX: Edgar Degas, The Fourteen-Year- Old Dancer, 1879-80, wax, cast in 1920 in Bronze, Height: 108.8cm, http://www/.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsb/hd_dgsb.htm



Plate X: Edgar Degas, Spanish Dancer, 1884, wax, cast in 1920 in bronze, 43.2 x 22.2 x 15.2cm, http://www/.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dgsb/hd_dgsb.htm

Conversely, looking at dance as it relates to individual locale or cultural background this study observed that, Degas has explored a kind of dance form related to his Western perspective, even though artists could get inspiration from any geographical location. An example is on Plate IX titled, The Fourteen-Year- Old Dancer cast in 1920 in Bronze, but, what is common among artists is that most artists will prefer to have first-hand contact with their subject matter. In this light, the ballet dancers have provided the platform of exploration for Degas. The beauty of the elongated legs of the stilt dances form has inspired this study. What are similar in the work of Degas and this research are basically postures and the use of mixed media.

The approach to Degas' dance forms is a naturalistic representation of the dance, while the *Angere* is conceptualized also using mixed media approach.

Another of his work titled *Spanish Dancer*, (Plate X) also inspired by the ballet dancer modeled also in wax. The sculpture displays a simple elegant posture with a little twist to the right while the left hand rises above her head. The left hand is in front bending towards her body, while the right leg; with a gentle twist stretches with a rhythmic movement, giving a feeling of implied motion. The grace and feeling that accompany Degas dance forms are simply overwhelming, coupled with the style of execution akin to the textural effect created in August Rodin sculptures.

2.7.2 Sterett-Gittings Kelsey (b.1941)

The transformation from Kelsey's clay original according to Sternau in Polich (2010), into bronze is a long and expensive process. A new ceramic mold is handmade for each sculpture. This mold is used only once then it is destroyed in the casting process. Kelsey Classical ballet dance sculpture embodies the gestural movement reminiscence of the master of dance form, Edgar Degas. The textural surface of the sculpture shows her potency of modeling without over caressing the surface of the work. It is not uncommon as stated earlier that among artists dance provides an astonishing source of inspiration, and each artist will usually explore any dance that suits him/her; considering the materials of execution. Ballet dance generally has become re-occurring theme of study for many western artists as it is noted by this study. Dance sculpture is the first true 'master of movement" since the death of Edgar Degas in 1917. For, Kelsey she captures the dynamic still image of the female *ballet dancer* so independent of each other (Plates XI and XII).





Plates XI and XII: Steretting-Gittings Kelsey, Classical Ballet Dance, , Attitude-Croisse-of-Richard Polich:Bronze.http://www.artparks.co.uk/artpark_sculpture.php?sculpture=2563&sculptor=sterett-gittings_kelsey

These sculptures are created to feel an individual air of spirit, implied movements, and an imagined soul. …to capture the essence of dance in bronze has become a purpose in her life. “Sculpture in the hands of a master, should speak directly to the Soul of Man” she will say. The sculptures are quite similar to the works of Degas been representational sculpture that also explore Ballet dance without the use of mixed media. The stilt dance exploration differ in execution because the studio work are based on direct approach using mixed media in welded sculpture, which emphasis on postural possibilities.

2.7.3 Jerry Daniel (b.1947)



Plate XIII: Jerry Daniel - LaVillita Dancers II. http://www.sculptureranch.com/Dancers,-fog-w.jpgwww.jdaniel.com www.jdaniel.com



Plate XIV: Dancers,-fog-w http://www.sculptureranch.com/Dancers,-fog-w.jpgwww.jdaniel.com

Dance has been a major focus of his work and it goes through various metamorphoses of styles. In *LaVillita Dancers II* (Plate XIII) and *and fog-w,* (Plate XIV). He reduces the human form into simplest recognizable sculpture to portray the joy and celebration of life through dancing themes. The negative spaces the figures created and their harmony with each other are an important part of the total form. The simplicity of calligraphy in space is poetry of expression in his dance sculptures. Jerry Daniel‘s sculptures shows the dynamism of dance form using 1” and 1.5” thick welded steel plate. He employed line, space and interaction. The figures assume plants-like structures growing in a green area embellished within the environment.

According to Daniel (2010), the sculptor has been exploring the idea of reducing the human figure to basic calligraphic brush strokes in space to communicate joy, exuberance, movement and rhythm in space. Simplicity is the first form in nature and the last in art. The simplicity of a calligraphic brushstroke executed three-dimensionally in space, is for him, the Haiku poetry of sculpture. Meanwhile, rather than the space compressing figures of Giacometti he wants his forms to expand space and work in visual harmony with both nature and architecture. Daniel in his own words states that " My favorite description of my art is a quote I've taken from Henri Matisse: "I've always tried to hide my efforts and wished my works to have the light joyousness of springtime which never let anyone suspect the labor it has cost me." The first thing that strikes one in looking at Daniel's sculpture is the simplicity of the forms which is relatively similar in the way the stilt dance forms have been also simplified with less details especially in Elegance I-III and in Dance of Life I-II. Although, Daniel's work explores the use of steel as a medium of expression, the stilt dance used multiple materials.

2.7.4 Penny Hardy





Plates XV and XVI: Torsion, 2010, Penny Hard, Aluminum wire and epoxy resin, Height: 70cm, penny.hardy@btinternet.com

Penny Hardy's sculptures express organic forms as tensile elements and are inspired by the expressive and dynamic forms of contemporary dancers. They are made using a soft aluminum wire to create the fluid frame, which is then strengthened and enhanced using resin filler. By using these flexible sinuous materials, the dancer's raw and exposed movement is conveyed. By leaving out a lot of mass within the sculpture and exposing wires outside of the main form, a vision of movement is created - where the limb may have been or the extremes of a dancer's movement contained within that

pose. She refers to these dance forms as ‘Torsion’ to describe the twisting action of the body as it moves through the dance (Hardy, 2010) Looking at Hardy’s sculptures in term of the textural quality, one will wonder if ballet dance had motivated her sculptures considering the vigor, strength, twist and the aggregation of *Torsion*.

This sculpture deviates from the graceful movement of the ballet dancer. However, even within the muscular nature of her form, the interaction of line, mass and negative spaces are dramatic; giving the work a well-balanced composition. After much contemplation on hardy’s sculptures in relationship to the ballet dance, this sculpture titled *Moon dance* can be seen to bear semblance to ballet dancers. The double figure composition; clearly is a suggesting of the ballet dancers, with both forms holding each other’s hand while, the female figure slanting backwards with the right leg stretched upward. One intriguing aspect of her work is in the mounting of the sculpture on the pedestal; the stylized legs are most often pointed and mounted on the pointed legs. (Plate XV and XVI). In the review of the related works, this sculpture seems to be the closest in form to the stilt dance forms in terms of the elongated legs of the dancer. The slimness of the characteristics of the figure itself could be taken to be one of the explorations in this research.

2.7.5 Adeola Balogun (b. 1966)

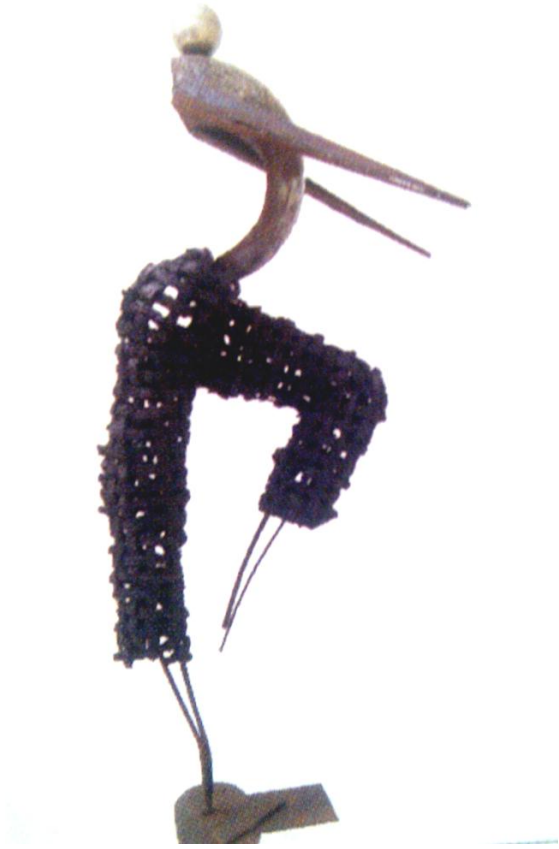


Plate XVII: The Endless Gyration I, Adeola Balogun, 2012, shredded Tyres and Mild Steel, 126x65x45cm,.
Adeola Balogun's Soundspiration in an Exhibition of Sculptures, Omenka Gallery, Ikoyi, Lagos



Plate XVIII: The Endless Gyration II, 2012, Shredded Tyres and Mild Steel, 148x55x38cm.
Adeola Balogun's Soundspiration in an Exhibition of Sculptures, Omenka Gallery, Ikoyi, Lagos

Balogun was born in 1966 in Ogun state, Nigeria and is a graduate and lecturer in Sculpture at the Yaba College of Technology. In his last sole exhibition in 2013 titled *Sound Spiration* he skillfully manipulated wide variety of materials and objects, which included rubber tires. In his sculptures of dancers titled Endless Gyration I and II, composition of a male and female figure executed in 2012. The *Endless Gyration I* (Plate XVII), is a male representational form with a frontal trust; standing on one leg.

The torso is constructed solely with sheet metal and a ball-like brass representing the head. The trouser is made with basket-like weaving of shredded tyres, and a pair of 12mm mild steel rod is used to making the legs.

Endless Gyration II (Plate XVIII), is a female Dancing figure composed within a circular rhythmic movement. Both of the hands of the sculpture are stretched backwards, while the head that is constructed also with a brass-like ball pushes frontward, like a dash at the beginning of a track race. The artist has been able to creatively interwoven the shredded tyre to form the skirt of the sculpture. The torso is constructed with the same sheet metal used for the male figure, which is basically solid without exposing any space. The shredded tyre as a textural form helps to give a contrasting visual expression between the torso and the skirt of the dancing figure, whereas are executed with sheet metal boxed in a triangle shape, which tappers towards the foot that is standing on the toes. According to Enwonwu (2013), Balogun's sculptures are vaguely reminiscent of an internally celebrated Beninois artist called Romuald Hazoume, whose work revolves around recurring themes of slavery and a critique of contemporary African society.

The artists both used the same material of shredded tires and musical themes. Balogun's attention to exploration of metal, wires and particularly tires are borne out of his interest in re-purposing items and objects that have lost their primary usefulness-items considered as waste. The composition made by Balogun can be seen to bear similarity in some of the sculptures in this exploration. Specifically, is the manner of postural composition of *Endless Gyration I and II,* which looks like Cultural Performers (Plate XCVI-CI).Sculptors generally share similar compositional traits in composition, but the choice of materials will depend largely on the desire of the artists and the nature of the exploration. For example, Balogun preferred shredded tires, sheet metal and mild

steel in the two works he has created, while the *Angere* Dance form explored the use of fabric, metallic found objects and mild steel rods. Most mixed media artists' choice varied materials for individual personal artistic expressions considering the story behind the subject, or thematic consideration.

2.7.6 Ferdinand Cacnio (b.1960)



Plate XIX: Sculpture of Choreography Ferdinand Cacnio, http://thewebmagazine.blogspot.com/2010/03/ferdinand-r-cacnio.html



Plate XX: Sculpture of Choreography Ferdinand Cacnio, http://thewebmagazine.blogspot.com/2010/03/ferdinand-r-cacnio.html

The sculptures of Ferdinand are the representation of women's world, their postural stylistic expressions in dance and his sculptures also gives a vivid illustration of their fashion personality. In recent years, Guillermo (2008) observes, that Ferdinand R. Cacnio has made a position for himself as the sculptor of the dance. This is in itself a

remarkable achievement since he had his first one-man show in sculpture at the Avellana Gallery in Pasay only in 2005. According to Guillermo (2008), Cacnio subject of dancers for his series of sculptures came naturally to the artist. He himself was an accomplished figure on the dance floor from amateur to professional, and in all kinds of dances from classical to pop. "Through dance, he thus acquired a mastery of the body and its movements; he came to know by instinct the perfect coordination of the limbs following scientific and artistic principles". The dynamism of the body stem from its central axis on which all flexible movements are made include twisting, doubling, stretching, reaching, aspiring – proceeds.

The dancer thus overcomes all alienation with the body that most people suffer from, an estrangement and awkwardness that arises from ingrained and conservative traditions of physical modesty. However, in the dance, body movements are set to musical rhythm as they expand, covering an ever-widening area, or return to the original nucleus from which they came.

The Dancers and the Dance amply showed his mastery of the female figure in movement. His subject of young girls (Plate XIX and XX) constituted a wide variety of sculptures of Choreographers, *as* well as modern dancers and ballerinas. Shedding inhibitions aside, they wear skimpy clothing and dance with abandon, shaking a full head of shoulder-length cork-screw curls. In these works, figures in motion are carried further to achieve a near inexhaustible repertoire of movements and interactions. They do not belong to narrative genre, which usually follows a linear movement and familiar anatomical and stereotypical stances. The movements of his dancers are more measured and elegant, combining grace and classical conceit in their poses. Again, the long, slender limbs execute circles in the air, and the shaped torsos conceal and reveal.

Like a piece of calligraphy, as well as choreography, they spring forward and charge the air with crackling electricity as their arms and legs command the space around them. Their costumes, are thin and wavelike but solid, and are of different hues, in superbly sleek red, and blue or green, adding an extra life to their movements.

The art of Cacnio essentially consists in transposing metal into human figures in movement and he is able to bridge the process. In this research, the human figure also plays an important role in the studio expressions, while the female forms are also captured using mixed media. The human figure is a subject of sculptural expression, which is known to have started even before the advent of the Renaissance Art of the early fifteen century and still a strong object of exploration in the twentieth century. The significant aspect of postural possibilities that are viable in this study and the works of Ferdinand cannot be ignored, especially for their dynamic postures on one leg. These sculptures are basically table top pieces, while the stilt dance forms though indoor sculptures but are mostly life sculptures except some of the preliminary studies in metallic found objects. Like in Series One titled *Ijoya* and Series Two titled *Couple Dance*.

A distinct characteristic of his work is that; while he does weld some parts, usually showing as rough seams in other artists work, he prefers to conceal the welded seams by carefully going over them with a meticulous polishing technique until they are entirely smooth and invisible, thus giving greater fluidity to the illusion of movement. Thus, his sculpture involves close manual work, as in the molding of the physical structure and its details, along with the "crumpling" of fabric-like costumes to gain greater sensitivity and expressiveness. (The Web Magazine, 2010) What is similar to this study in terms of workability is in the construction of the physical structure. This

study uses fabric to make the dress or skirt of the female figure, while Ferdinand uses sheet metal to carefully work his sculptures.

2.7.7 Olu Amuda (b. 1958)



Plate XXI: Olu Amoda, 10 Dance Steps I, 2005, Rigid Tubes, catalogue of an exhibition titled Objects of Art, Didi Museum.



Plate XXII: Olu Amoda, 10 Dance Steps II, 2005 Rigid Tubes, catalogue of an exhibition titled Objects of Art, Didi Museum.

The dance sculpture of Olu Amoda titled *10 Dance Steps (*2005) are his interpretation of a contemporary dance, they are not an attempt to recapture in any specific dance steps but to explore the material characteristic of the rigid tubes. The dancers were inspired, as he narrated; by a dance troupe he called *Mud and Chalk Baked Dancers*. In these ten series of dancers, he executed double and multiple figure compositions (two figures – four figures) in which he explored the versatility of the rigid tubes in portraying the opulent dynamic dance steps, which are his usual reaction to the material essence of metal (Amoda, 2005).

The choice of the rigid tubes he pointed out was his interpretation of the Niger Delta crisis, which is deep-rooted in oil prospect of and exploration, the tubes are like oil pipeline that navigate the stretch of the Niger Delta. The oil ordinarily, because of the location would have been seen has a thing of joy in the environment especially, to the youth, but ironically it has brought more horror than expected. According to the sculptor "my tube men are the oil spirits dancing to the rhythm of the machine drilling into lands and rivers that were once the peoples' source of living, some of the movements enacted suggested joy, sorrow or dirge, emancipations, Galala (Kere-kure), plotting and so on."

These tubes even though rigid, Amoda was able to manipulate them into shapes that suggested feminine forms because of the rounded nature of the tubes, and in the other hand, it could be viewed as puppets owing to their schematics nature and lack of details that suggested either a male or female figure. *The 10 Dance Steps* (Plate XXI and XXII), are the sculptor's revolt against the oppression of Nigerians, especially the Niger Delta people that have oil refinery at the back yard but could not enjoy the benefits. Amoda states that the finishing of the works is symbolic as explained by the artist "the finishing of these sculptures were earth finished, this is achieved by first annealing the tubes to almost red hot and subject them to sudden cooling in muddy water." The dancers he avers "need not to be clad with fashion accessories their nakedness is symbolic, the lands and rivers that holds promise to the generation unborn is now empty."

2.7.8 Eze Egene (b.1965)



Plate XXIII, Eze Egene, Abiadike I, 1994, Height: 84cm, mild steel, An unpublished M.F.A Thesis), Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University. Zaria



Plate XXIV, Eze Egene, Abiadike II, 1994, Height: 50cm, mild steel, An unpublished M.F.A Thesis), Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University. Zaria

Eze explored textural possibilities in welded sculpture in which molten metal beads produced by the metal puddles serves as the surface of the sculptures. In his sculpture titled, *Abiadike I and II*, He executed these two metal sculpture using mild steel and flat bars. The inspiration according to the artist came from the importance the Ibos attach to honour and valour. this honour is mostly associated to every African society The *Abiadike I* (Plate XXIII), is a double figure composition, one of the figures is a drummer while the other takes up the dance in a communicative mood to the beat of

the drummer. However, in *Abiadike II* (Plate XXIV), the dancers are positioned in deep performance pose full of in a deep agility and strength. This type of dance is usually performed in a ceremonial occasion, like the coming of age ritual dance of teenagers in some part of African Societies (Eze, 1994). Series Two titled Couple Dance are also double figure compositions like the Eze's sculptures *titles Abiadike I and II*. These sculptures are more representational compared to Couple dance that are more stylized in their features while using metallic found objects. Eze sculptures are constructed with basically mild steel rods.

2.8 The Exploration of Mixed Media in Sculpture

This aspect of the review is premised on artists that have used mixed media in sculpture, some of these artists explored varied media like; wood, metal, paper and generally discarded waste materials.

2.8.1 Deborah Butterfield (b. 1949)



Plate XXV: Deborah Butterfield. "Palma," Wood, 2010
http://www.equitrekking.com/articles/entry/visiting_deborah_butterfields_horses

Deborah Butterfield assembles the original model by fastening logs, branches, sticks, and boards on to an armature that gives the basic posture of a particular horse she intends to cast into bronze. The pieces are photographed from all sides and angles, particularly the areas where individual pieces are joined. These photographs are used to reconstruct the various elements after casting. Taking the natural wood and covering it with ceramic-shell molding material, which is capable of picking up exact detail, make a bronze casting of a wood. The wood is completely burned away during the firing, once the entire sculpture is in bronze.

This approach is another technical way to explore the characteristic nature of found-objects when translated into other materials like bronze. The horses as simplified, as they look and still show the strength of the objects used for the modelling, in form of armature, before it is finally cast in to its final material. Her choice of materials is significant, Becherer in Braschayko (2012), explains that she is an "environmentalist", and she began sculpting horses in the 1970s using earth materials such as wood, mud, sticks and branches. Later, she moved to items "scavenged from modern industrial society," The review is necessitated by Butterfield's choice of material which is synonymous to this study in the context of experimenting with broad selected heterogeneous materials. However, artists are mostly in search for materials that suit their creative propensity and it is always the same drive in most sculptors that uses mixed media.

Butterfield's sculpture technique involves a "very traditional process," and it transforms the media she uses. She manipulates the materials for her found metal pieces, completing the head and neck last as the form manifests. She describes the construction process as a lot of fun. She compares it to building a fort as a child from whatever resources are at hand, as just an urge to build things that some people have.

As she builds, the personality of the horse emerges. Pieces in the style of *Cabin Creek* are constructed first with wood that is wired together. Gantries, which look like swing sets with chains, support the piece. Then, each piece is numbered, molded and cast individually, translating them into bronze. Then the bronze pieces are welded together to form the individual horse. Butterfield uses a patina process to make the bronze appear like driftwood. (Becherer in Braschayko, 2012). Her work shows maturity in thinking about the form, understanding the creature, and knowing what materials to manipulate and change. She brings these two worlds — the creature and the knowledge of the materials — together with greater refinement



Plate XXVI: Deborah Butterfield. Horse, Wood, 2010.
http://www.equitrekking.com/articles/entry/visiting_deborah_butterfields_horses

Butterfield's works are not portraits or likenesses, but they are based on individual horses. Dramatic, not static, they evoke the horse not only physically but also portraying the essence of the creature. Plate XXV titled *Palma* and Plate XXVI, *Horse* is illustrative of two of her horses. Wood executed in 2010. The similarity in the use of

materials is in the execution of the sculpture titled “Masquerade Dance”. This work is executed with steel rods and wood. The legs are executed with wood and steel rod that stands at about six feet tall.

2.8.2 Gene Galazan (b. 1942)



Plate XXVII: Gene Galazan, Horse, Found-objects, 2009
http://prescottareadailyphoto.blogspot.com/2009/03/scrap-metal-horse.html

Gene Galazan’s favorite subject matter has been, *Horses* using found objects he collects from the scrap yard around his environment. He combined metal scrapes; tree branches; rope and any other material that will help add aesthetics quality to his work. The horses are created in a variety of poses, some walking, some standing or grazing, while others are made to lie down or in a resting position. His horses share the same interplay of juxtaposed form. Some of these horses, if not all have a touch of paint on them, whether they were deliberately painted or the metal scrap were found that way, one cannot say, but it added a beautifying effect to the horses. His works are abstract and figurative in nature, (Plate XXVII). The sculpture of Galazan are the closest to the

stilt dance postures in the use of materials, some of the materials used are ropes, scrap metal, steel rods and some found objects scavenged around the street.

2.8.3 Leo Sewell (b.1967)



Plate XXVIII: Leo Sewell, 2009, Dachshund, 14''x 8'' x 16''Mixed media/Found-Objects, http://today.uconn.edu/blog/2012/04/benton-museum-e



Plate XXIX: Leo Sewell, 2009, Duck, 16'' x 8 x 16''Mixed media/Found-Objects, http://today.uconn.edu/blog/2012/04/benton-museum-e

Leo Sewell‘s sculptures titled Dachshund and Duck (Plate XXVIII and XXIX), both executed in 2009 are mixed media sculpture. He employed the use of a wooden armature in which he carefully screwed these objects. His approach to work is so meticulous that, you can identify most of the objects used. The sculpture are both luridly represented, which is an added effect to most of his sculptures. The screwing of these objects are mechanical in approach, even though it is an assemblage, it ought to have this sculpture touch that seems lacking. The major challenge in this type of mixed media sculpture is collecting these discarded objects before even, thinking about the production of the works. One could say that Leo Sewell’s inspiration mostly comes from the kind of objects that are available for his creative tendency.

According to Foran (2012) “upon closer inspection of his work, the way the artist integrates eclectic items chosen for their color, shape, texture, and durability and turns them into a meaningful whole captures the imagination in a “how did he think of that” moment.” Foran, further notes that each piece Sewell collects is made from items he has collected from dumps, yard sales, and flea markets. He moved to Philadelphia; where he further developed his passion for turning recycled materials into artwork, and went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in business and a master’s degree in Art History from the University of Delaware. Animal figures are prominent in Sewell’s artwork, and he often uses objects of sentimental value when creating commissioned works. The same material Sewell used is the materials used in the production of the stilt dance postures, which is also considered as mixed media. Although, Sewell’s sculptures are mostly animal forms compared to this study that explores figurative forms, there is similarity in the use of materials.

2.8.4 Jonan Jonsson, (b.1966)



Plate XXX: Johan Jonsson, Line-up V, 22x65x17 cm 2012, (t-shirt, linseed oil, nails, folding rule, paint, sheet-metal, weld) http://byjohan.se/pictures/new-sculptures/Gathering-close.jpg

Jonan Jonsson sculptures are produced using mixed media in which he combines metal, wood, fabrics, tar, leather, wire, welding filler, and silicone. However, the main materials are usually metal and unconventional sculpture objects/materials used in agriculture. Modern trends of sculpture have given materiality in sculptures a broader narration of exploring, termed unconventional that is now accepted as conventional sculpture. Welded sculpture now should also be seen in a different light, for example, the works of Jonan were made without welding.



Plate XXXI: Johan Jonsson, Gathering-close, 2012,
http://byjohan.se/pictures/new- sculptures/Gathering-close.jpg

If at all there are any parts that are welded it would have been basically the framework, which serves as support for the standing figures. Also, the other components of mixed media also must have superseded the welded parts. The substance of Johan Jonsson's mixed media sculptures, however, lies in the combination of these rural materials/items and urban ones like plastic, rubber, silicone, parts of dolls and toys. His art is basically a process, which often results in humans, figures, postures and poses. The Line-up V (Plate XXX) is a multiple figure composition of fifteen figures of male, female and children queuing up for "something". In an African context, Jonan's composition could be said to represent beggars' lining- up for food. The figures' clothes and the arrangement of the figures, coupled with two of them holding sticks could, in African circumstances be suggestive of blind beggars with their aids.

2.8.5 Mark Jerkins, (b. 1970)



Plate XXXII: Mark Jerkins, Press Freedom, Street installation, 2010, Life size, http://www.xmarkjenkinsx.com/outside.html

Mark Jerkins is known for his street installations. He uses "the street as a stage" where passersby interact with the work and dramatically becomes part of the work. In harmony with the current trends in contemporary sculptural expression, the sculpture of Mark Jerkins titled "Press Freedom" (Plate XXXII) comes to mind. This installation art is executed with newsprint, which symbolically suggests the freedom of expression using the context of news media. What a perfect way to reach the public without saying a word, for the text on the sculpture will have said it all. The concept of sculpture lasting forever is somehow jettisoned by the temporary nature of the newsprint. The mobility of the sculpture is another aspect in which Jerkin has excelled, for the work

can be displayed indoors and outdoors as a temporary or permanent exhibition. Jenkins' practice of street art is to use the "street as a stage" where passersby become actors. Many of his installations have resulted in intervention by the authorities that he also regards as actors. Most of his early outdoor works were non-commissioned.

Jenkins (2010) states that, there is opposition, and risk, but he thinks that one should just show that street art is the sort of frontier where the leading edge really does have to chew through the ice. And it's good for people to remember public space is a battleground, with the government, advertisers and artists all mixing and mashing, and even now the strange cross-pollination taking place as street artists sometimes become brands, and brands camouflaging as street art creating complex hybrids or impersonators. Jenkins thinks of an understanding and the strangeness of the playing field where you'll realize that painting street artists, writers, as the bad guys is a shallow view. Jenkins interrogates activities in the street, while position his sculpture at strategic places to make public statement about the ill of the society as format formally meant for journalistic expression. Again, one could view Jenkins work from another perspective, which is a combination of figurative installation art with an aspect of performance art. This is where the passersby interrogate the work in a performative act, because some of the people stay to view the sculpture and in a way their interest is dramatically acted upon.

2.9 The Socio-Cultural Perspective of Dance

Dance has always been an essential element of life in African society, bringing together communities and helping individuals to understand their roles in relation to the community. Dance in social ceremonies and rites of passage according to Doople, (1992) have helped keep the spirit of the community alive, contributing to a sense of

security, safety and continuity. As the shape of communities has changed with the passage of time, with alterations in the political climate, and with the application of economic factors, some specifics in the role of dance have also adapted and changed, but today, African dance still remains a significant supporting element in the spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing of African society. Traditional African dance is an essential element of Africa's cultural heritage, providing a vital expression of the region's philosophy, and the living memory of its cultural wealth and its evolution over the centuries.

An example of an African dance is the traditional stilt dancers in Togo, (Plate XXVII) eloquence than word and more richness than writing and because it expresses the most profound experiences of human beings, dance is a complete and self-sufficient language. It is the expression of life and of its permanent emotions of joy, love, sadness, hope, and without emotion there is no African Dance. African dances are as varied and changing as the communities that create them. Although many types of African dance incorporate energetic movement, there are also others that are more simplified but graceful.

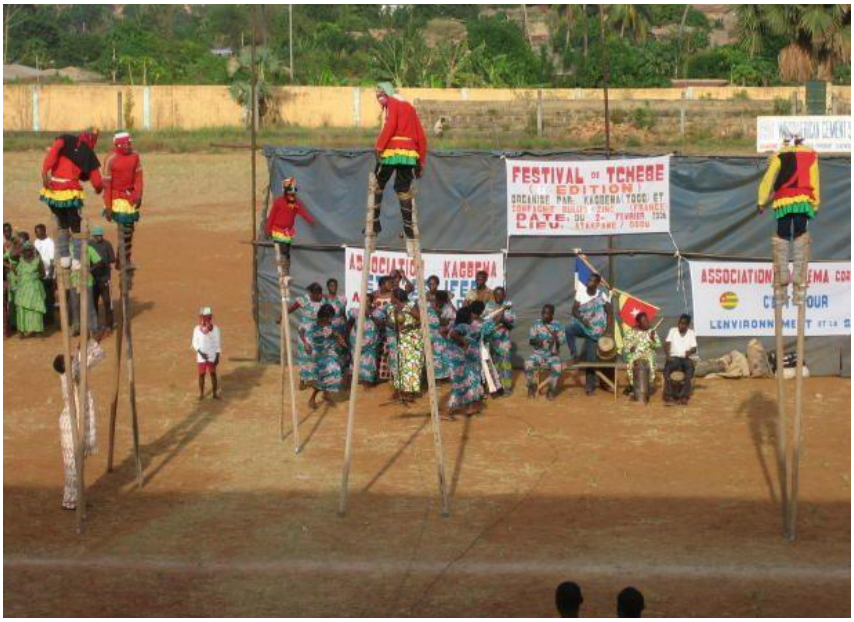


Plate XXXIII: Traditional Stilt Dancers in Togo- New World Encyclopedia.htm

African dances vary widely, ranging from region to ethnic community. In addition; there are numerous dances within each given community. Traditional African dance according to Dooplé (1992) has more power than gesture, more at the same time; there is a great deal of similarity in the role dance plays in each African community. African communities traditionally use dance for a variety of social purposes. Dance plays a role in religious rituals; they mark rites of passage, including initiations to adulthood and weddings; they form a part of communal ceremonies, including harvest celebrations, funerals, and coronations; and they offer entertainment and recreation in the forms of masquerades, acrobatic dances, and social club dances.



Plate XXXIV: Members of a Rwanda Dance Troupe Perform at the Mountain Gorillas, Nest Loge- New World Encyclopedia.htm, 2014

Asante (2010), opines that the foundation of dance in Africa is myth. Myth is the basis of celebrations in Africa because it gives the ceremony or event its purpose. Many myths are based on the idea of "creation of story" the myth relates to how something was produced or originated. Myth she says for the Dagon people, the Tyiwara is "a mythical creation-half antelope, half man- is believed to have come down to earth to teach the Dogon people how to cultivate the earth". There is a dance to commemorate the Tyiwara, and this is an example of how mythology is manipulated in a dance. Dance in Africa begins with the concept of dance itself. Dance entails so much than what is normally associated with it in Western culture. In Africa, dance is part of a process that is unending and connected in such a way that it is inseparable from other phenomena in the society.

Berliner in Asante (2010) states that, "ritual dance enforces and affirms the belief system of the society. As such, they are usually religious in nature and are designated for specific occasions that expedite and facilitate the most powerful expression of any given society, that is, ancestral reverence". They serve the community as a visual, kinetic, spiritual, and dynamic manifestation of the cosmology of the people.

According to Aristotle in Encyclopedia Britannica (2010), "Dance is an expressive impulse, which is channeled by skillful performers into something intensive that may enchant spectators. These two concepts of art of dance have a powerful impulse and has a skillful choreographed art practiced by connecting ideas running through any consideration of subject". Furthermore, Aristotle stresses the significance of choreography and remarked that the art of choreography was probably unknown to the earlier ages of humanity. "Savage man, wandering in forests, devouring the quivering flesh of his spoils, would not have known anything of those rhythmic

postures which reflect sweet and caressing sensations entirely alien to his moods". The nearest Approach to such must have been leaps and bounds, the incoherent gestures, by which he expressed the joys and furies of his brutal life.

The 20th Century dance critic, John Martins stressed the role of dance as "a physical expression of inner emotion". At the root of all these varied manifestations of "dancing…lies the common impulse to resort to movements to externalized states which we cannot externalize by rational means. This he calls *basic dance*, while addressing the universal definition of dance as an art form or activity that utilizes the body and range of movement, which the body is capable of, unlike the movements performed in everyday living (Martins, Encyclopedia Britannica. *Encyclopedia* Britannica, 2010). African dance is different in various ways but the major difference between African dance and dances from the other parts of the world is called *Polycentric*. "This means that, the dancer's body is not treated as a one single centre, or segmented area of movement, with each area being able to move to different rhythms". It is known that in most parts of the world, the dancer's body moves as a whole throughout the dance.

In African dance, the different segments of the body of the dancer create movements that move in conjunction with one another. Ethnic dance vary from one society to the other in Africa, but few components are the same. Traditional dance becomes interesting by virtue of the high spirited enthusiasms that goes into it, the music, is accompanied by lots of singing, clapping and hollering. The steps are often simple and rhythmic, involving turns, hops and stomps. The choreographing is usually quite basic and repetitive. It is extremely enjoyable to dancers and audience, resonating with an unmatchable spirit of excitement and vibrancy (African Tribal Dance, 2010).

African tradition emphasizes dance, for movement is regarded as an important mode of communication. For this reason, "the dance utilizes symbolic gestures, mimes, props, masks, costumes, body painting, and other visual devices". The basic movements may be simple, emphasizing the upper body, torso, or feet, or they may be complex, involving coordination of different body parts and intricate actions such as fast rotation, ripples of the body, and contraction and release, as well as variations in dynamics, levels, and use of space. The dances maybe open to all, or it may be an activity in which one, two, three, four, five or six persons. (regardless of their sex) take turns in the dancing ring. Team dances also happen.



Plate XXXV: Dogon Stilt Dancers in Action, Mali, 2010, New World Encyclopedia.htm

This takes a different formation like linear, circular, serpentine, or column of two or more rows. African Tribal Dance, (2010), African traditional dance in its simplicity, allows for the expression of feelings, thought, emotion, pain, encouraging each other and triumph. Dancing is not about the dancer, but the story being told by the dance. The entire body is engaged, pelvic, arms, feet, chest and shoulders at multiple rhythms. (African People & Culture, (2011)) According to Hanley, in Asante (2010),

“dance is a fundamental element of human behaviour and has evolved over the years form primitive movement of the earliest civilizations to traditional ethnic styles, to the classical ballet and modern dance genre today”. The joy derived from participating in dance and the physical activity required provides the opportunity for the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle in the world today. The richness of cultural traditions observed in the ethnic, or folk dance genre offers the participant, as well as the spectators,’ insight into the expression of emotions.

On the use of dance to facilitate all phenomena in most African societies, Asante (2010), avers that all commemoration and events are demented in the dance, birth, deaths, wedding, coronations, and rites of passages are just some of the occasions for which dance is performed. Other events are the seasonal, harvest times, fertility rites, and healing circles. The kinds of dance vary but generally fall under the following categories: stilt dances, (Plate XXXV) mask dances, military| war, and martial art dances; social and ceremonial dances, harvest; healing dances, religious and spiritual dances; national and ethnic-identity dances. Some of the categories overlap and are not mutually exclusive. Asante, further opine that, Stilt dances are performed throughout Africa, a dancer balances on a long wooden stilts that vary in height. The stilt are covered with the same fabrics of the dancer costume to give the illusion that the dancer has extremely long legs; the dancer performers various acrobatic feasts, such as jumping rope.

Stilts dancers are often seen as the protectors of a village, as their height appearance lends itself to being the village guardian Mask dances performed throughout Africa, are used in a variety of ways, including warding off evil spirit; story telling; suggesting Supernatural or mystical powers; spreading good feelings, honouring African deities, and/ or embodying animal, human, or spiritual figures.

2.10 Stilt Dance/Walker Stories around the World

William in Hirsch (2010) reports on students aged (15-18) at Accra High School in Accra, Ghana walking on stilts. William summits that stilt walking are traditional displays as a form of entertainment in Ghana by the people of Winneba. Research on the mathematics involved in stilt walking responses from an interview he conducted during the holidays have shown that experience is an important factor in maintaining balance on the stilt. As such all those who used to walk on the stilt gained their experience from childhood. It started as a recreation and as they practiced they gained their experience. William further states that it was also revealed that certain factors needed to be considered before selecting a stilt to walk on. Such factors include the weight of the stilt walker, the length, diameter and weight of the stilt. Also, for one to walk with the stilt he needs to raise the legs a few times in order to transmit the load of the stilt onto his thigh muscle.



Plate XXXVI: Ghanaian Stilt Dancers: http://www.um.edu.ar/orillas/galeria/ghana-d.htm

It does not only consume much energy but it also requires concentration to be able to stand on it. Actually one needs to concentrate and meditate a few days ahead of time. According to William in Hirsch (2012), *Dantai* is the wood used (because it can bend like that of the cane) however any other wood can be used. "The male *Dantai* is stronger than the female, so the male is mostly preferred. What is interesting about *Dantai* is that it can bend like cane without breaking". It's only when it is too dry that it breaks or when it is stretched beyond its elastic limit. The wood, after it has been cut it needs to be seasoned to make it a bit light, so that it can be used however, care must be taken not to make it too dry. A special Carpenter is employed to work on the foot lap. Foot lap is the base on which stilt walkers place their foot before it is tied with a rope. On the average, the length of the wood should be 280cm, and diameter of either 6cm or 5cm. This is so because the wood has top face and bottom face; the top face is tapered to the base hence the difference in the diameter. The height of the person who stands on the stilt is very important such that when the person is tall he needs to use a shorter stilt. However, on the average one needs to be about 106cm tall. Again, on the average the weight of the stilt walker should be 66kg and that of the stilt 75kg.The tensile strength of the stilt using the averages should be 233.5cm.

This will however depend on the weight of the person and cross sectional area of the stilt chosen. "The tensile strength is inversely proportional to the cross sectional area so that the smaller the cross sectional area the greater the tensile strength. Again, the force that is expected to exert on the stilt should be 66.0 N on the average". It is also observed that at the point of equilibrium and the gravitational potential energy is a constant. However, the kinetic energy is not constant for as soon it becomes constant, the person will fall. In spite of these, the sum of the kinetic energy and the gravitational force acting at a point in time should be a constant. There are various costumes used;

what is in this project is a male dressed like a woman. When the stilt is too long, its centre of gravity reduces and as such, care must be taken to avoid falling by cutting the stilt to the required dimension. It is alleged that some of them fall on slippery grounds as such some of the stilt walkers are learning to balance on slippery grounds. "The following specifications can be of use as others think of using plastic instead of wood. In that case, the volume should be about 0.79m3 and weight about 75kg".

William in Hirsch (2012) further, elaborates that the masks are a very spiritual item of the village--no important decision in the village is made without first conferring with the mask (obviously someone is behind the mask…but the mask has its own persona--the person is just the vehicle). The Grand Mask according to William was quite a big one and had not been out in public for the past fifty years. The wearer of the masks not only wore the mask but also huge grass skirts--many times they had a staff in each hand to support them. The masks were garish and usually painted red, white or black. Furthermore William states that some villages have troupe of dancers and singers who usually are made up of a few acrobatic groups of men and girls of 3 to 5 years old. The men throw the girls around as if they were batons, yet that was not their only hazard beyond being dropped.

The girls were being flung around while long knives were waved around just intentionally missing the girls, these acrobatic groups are well known in the area and when a girl joins the group she leaves her family till she is old, then she returns to her family again. Their legs are tied to the 240cm to 600cm high stilts and then tight pants are worn over legs and stilts making them look like they have very long legs. They wear a black stocking mask over their faces and usually bright colors to help them stand out--as if being about 180cm in the air did not have them stand out in the crowd. The amazing thing was that they could do amazing maneuvers on the stilts--very graceful

and dramatic. They would twirl around on one stilt with the other flung out straight behind them! The crowd would roar with approval.

In local Atakpame folklore (Plate XXXVI) Wayne in Hirsch, (2012) recount that long ago, a hunter went into the bush to hunt, only to find one-arm, one-legged magical creatures jumping and dancing on stilts. He threw some burning embers into the air to draw their attention, but they fled in fear without their stilts. He brought the stilts to the voodoo spiritual leader to have him explain their mysterious powers. After that experience, he made some similar stilts and tried them himself. From that beginning, stilts have become part of the local culture. They are traditionally used now for various joyous occasions, like the end of the harvest. The idea of dancing or walking on stilts has a long history in the evolution of mankind.

One of the famous stories about stilt comes from the Les Landes. According to Hirsch (2012), on the seacoast of southern France lays a soggy region called Les Landes, changing seasonally from salt marsh to damp plain, much of it is neither land nor water. For centuries people found their own strange way to live with wetness. They relied on stilts to walk and braced up on stilts, while the shepherds tended their flocks. The mail carrier made his rounds, stumping on his stilts from dawn to sundown. Stilt walking housewives, chatting in the market in their black clothes, were said to resemble large ravens perched on dead branches. As for the children of Les Landes, they did their chores, went to school, carried on their play and sports--all on stilts. Hirsch further expounds that there were days when the stilts hardly ever seemed to touch the ground. This has made many to hold that they are the most skillful stilt walkers in the world. He further stresses that, a young baker of Les Landes named Silvain Dornon even strode his way into fame. In the spring of 1891 Silvain set out on an odd journey.

Towering on his stilts, he began walking eastward across France and beyond. He was an astonishing sight as he stalked through the villages, over the mountains, and across the farmlands of country after country. Silvain moved rapidly, taking great strides. He was out to make a record that no one has equaled to this day. The young baker ended his stilt walking tour in Moscow fifty-eight days later, having covered a distance of more than two thousand miles!



Plate XXXVII: MokoJumbies,
http://usslave.blogspot.com/2011/04/moko-jumbies.html

There are islands off Asia where, because of the ocean tides, the houses are built high above the ground. Some of these islanders have found a way to visit from one house to another without endlessly climbing ladders. They move among these stilt houses on stilts of their own!Many stories have come down to us about battles won and lost because of stilts. One such tale recounts how invading soldiers on stilts crossed a wide moat and stormed a British castle. In the fruit orchards of California they have a saying, "One pair of stilts is worth a dozen ladders."That’s why growers of peaches,

plums, and apricots commonly use stilts. On aluminum stilts, these fruit farmers can prune and harvest their trees in the most- handy manner. Often, these are triple stilts, each one made of three aluminum poles joined together like a three-legged stool. Two long poles are strapped to the sides of the leg just below the knee. The third piece is shorter and extends from the underside of the footrest to the ground. When the farmer mounts his walking ladders, every part of the tree is within his reach (Hirsch, 2012).

The *"moko"*or*mocker* (Plate XXXVII),"was the spiritual guardian of their villages, tall enough to reach the evil spirits, and drive them off, by mocking them with supernatural, magical powers". It's believed that another job of the African *mokojumbie* was to frighten children into adulthood – so maybe Willard had good reason to be scared as a kid *Mokojumbie*, Stilt dancing is mesmerizing. Rhythmic sounds of African drums evoke the spirits, while masked stilts dancers in colourful costumes appear from nowhere – gliding, almost floating in thin air."This current generation of stilts dancers has taken the art form to a level never seen before, skillfully combining dancing and acrobatics with complex synchronized choreography,"

The Caribbean *mokojumbies* combined influences from different religions of Africa, Europe and their new environment, "says the stilts dancing historian, pointing out that in the mid-1800s the traditional costume in the U.S. Virgin Islands was a European woman's dress, adorned with African motifs, and petticoats underneath."It wasn't until the 1960s, after too many curious people kept trying to look up under the dress and upsetting the precarious balance of the stilts that dancer's pants became part of the modern costume. Whether in pants or a dress, *mokojumbie* stilts dancing are just as hard as it looks."It's very physical and very taxing to your muscles and your bones," says John, who has been performing the gliding, almost slow-motion movements on metres-high stilts for 34 years now". According to Ogden in Hirsch (2012), his friend

from “Trinidad tells a story of very tall, festively costumed stilt walkers in the Marde Gras parades, there where over 50,000 masqueraders parading through the streets”.

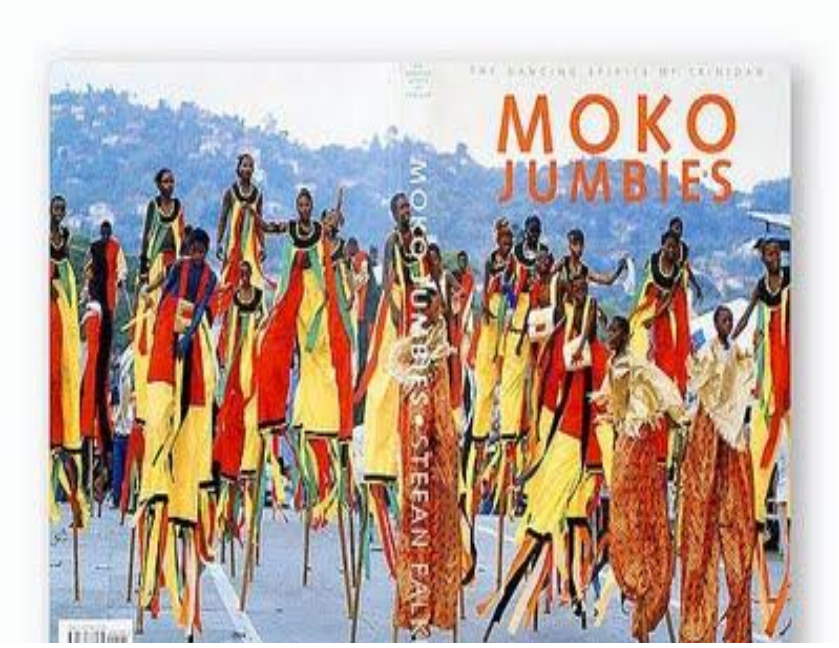


Plate XXXVIII: MokoJumbies,
http://www.moko+jumbies+cover+sleeveaa.jpg.2014

In Trinidad and the Virgin Islands, the stilt walkers are called *MokoJumbie*, (Plate XXXVII and XXXVIII), (pronounced *MokuJamby*), meaning something like, "Giant Spooks" - related to Voodoo's "Mumbo Jumbo". Naughty children are told, If you don't behave, the *MokaJumbie* will get you!" His *MokoJumbie* stilts walker dances in the sand to entertain guests and chase away evil spirits at Hurchell Greenaway's Harbormaster Beach Club Barbecue on Protestant Cay in Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The name means "dancing spirit", and these 120cm-high stilt walkers appear at street festivals and at Carnival celebrations in the Caribbean, and during religious ceremonies in West Africa. Wearing special costumes and masks, which add to their mystery and make the *MokoJumbie*is to be both feared and revered.

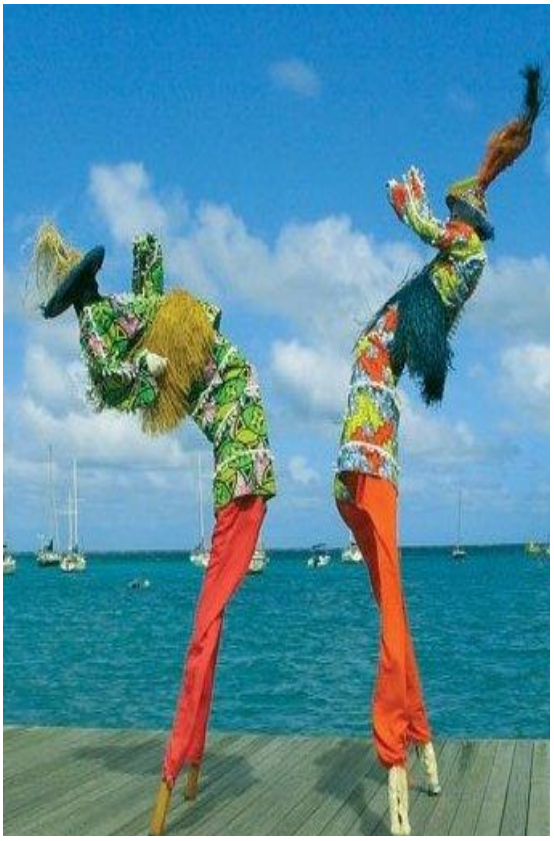


Plate XXXIX: MokoJumbie Stilt dancers, http://.www.stiltman.com/htm/stilt_stories.html

Because of their great height they are seen as all-powerful figures accompanied by joyous music and feelings of awe. *Mocko Jumbie* by the way, is a West Indian word for "make believe" (Ogden in Hirsch, 2012).

Dance, generally has been explored from time immemorial by visual artists around the world. Dance as a thematic expression are mostly prominent in the works of the fifteen century Italian Renaissance masters and the Classical to the Greeks and Romans periods. However, African visual artists generally have begun to look into the possibilities of exploring traditional cultural dances in sculpture. This is paramount because; in this contemporary period, most artists have started to conceptualized most of the traditional dances into purely stylistic or abstracted expressions which are devoid of figurative forms. Meanwhile, there are other visual artists that are making sculptures

that are representative of traditional dances in realism and sometimes they idealized their dance concept using indigenous dance form akin to their individual geographical ambiance. Ballet dance is known globally, so why not *Atilogwu* Dance of the Igbo, *Swange* of the Tiv, *Bata* Dance of the Yoruba, or any of the numerous dances in Nigeria?

Some literature and related works have been reviewed in this study. However, some of the works presented in the review are works that were inspired by stilt dance, dance as a concept of exploration and the use of mixed media in sculpture. The stilt dance performers according to the existing literature can be found in almost every culture in Africa and mostly places where tree grows. In the contemporary time, stilt dance has become a means of entertainment and even the stilt dance that is rooted in the religious backdrop; seems not to be in existence anymore. The review have been able to indentify some artists like Olu Amoda and some other artists that have explored stilt dance using steel and other materials.

However, what is significant in this study compared to the other explorations in the related works reviewed is in the choice of the stilt dance forms for postural possibilities using mixed media in the contemporary Nigerian Art scene. This research has shown that there are scanty materials on *Angere* in Nigeria. Again, it seems sculptors have not really looked into the exploration of this masquerade. For, example, in the Nigeria contemporary art practice most artists do not consider the viability of mixed media in the execution of figurative dance forms. What is obtainable generally is the use of pure metallic found objects. Few consider the use of only sheet metal and using colour as the other media in mixed media figurative sculptures. Dance, generally has been explored in different perspectives using varied thematic expressions in African and globally, hence dance has a thematic expression is not a new concept in sculpture.

But, what could be relatively new in this study is the use of mixed media in the way it has been used in exploring figurative stilt dance forms in sculpture.

In conclusion, to harness these varied perspectives on the reviewed works, an overview approach will help situates an understanding of the motivation of individual sculptor in exploring dance form. Most of the artists if not all explored dance closest to their individual geographical setting. For example, most of the Western artists sculpted the same thematic expression of the ballet dancer. Starting from the most popular dance sculptor, Edgar degas to some of the contemporary sculptor like Ferdinand Cacnio. Again, looking at the style of execution, the older artists like Degas and Gittings Kelsey executed their works in a realistic manner using the modelling approach of representation. The younger artists considered the contemporary mode of expression, so preferred stylizing their works, example are Jerry Daniel, Olu Amuda, Adeola Balogun, and Penny Harder. All these artists reviewed executed dance akin to their traditional location. The only artist that produce stilt dance form is Olu Amuda, a Nigerian executed Stilt Dancer in metal. Others produced sculpture of dancer which does not necessary capture any particular dance culture and few explored the ballet dance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research procedures and methods of the studio exploration in conducting this research on postures in Stilt dance forms. Adetoro (1997) assert that, in order to gain control of a research, the investigation must examine various similar procedures and techniques used in some previous studies. Osuala (2005) also defines research, as a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data while; Babalola (2010) describes research as intricate, tedious, and a consistent search for the truth. This includes how the researcher's objectives are achieved, and how the problems encountered are resolved.

However, Allison in Gray and Malins (1993), and Smith and Dean, (2010) define "research as accessible, systematic inquiry, and "intentional, procedural; explicit and publicly accountable". This research therefore, adopts the studio-Based methodology; this is in line with the position of Sullivan (2010), and Egonwa (2012) who observe that, research in the visual art thrives better as an opened exploration, in which, the outcome is the art product. He further emphasizes the importance of a discursive text that justifies the visual exploration. Continuing, Egonwa states that in the 21st Century, the visual art must now be studied as a reflection of culture and as something that has cultural efficacy, reproduction and mutation of culture. The studio practice research which is an aspect of qualitative methodology. According to Osaula (2007), Qualitative research method is a form of investigation that should be based on a recognition of the importance of the subjective experimental "life world" of human beings. Such reflection is the province of phenomenology. "The phenomenological

field of educational action embraces a host of personal meanings that are derived from the context of direct experiencing". Perception and interpretation of "reality" are linked with these meaning structures. "Thus, the "reality" of a given educational setting may be seen not as a fixed and stable entity, but as a type of variable that might be discerned only through an analysis of those multiple forms of understanding".

Qualitative methodologies in this exploration will provide avenues that can lead to the discovery of new knowledge in the execution of stilt dance forms. The task of the qualitative methodologist is to capture what people say and do so as a product of understanding events from the viewpoints of the participants. In the investigative field, it has been emphasized that much of the rationale for the qualitative approach rests within the criterion of meaning. Eisner in Osaula (2007) opines that this emerging research is being considerably relevant, since there can be 'little' meaning, impact or quality in an event isolated from the context in which it is found. Eisner in Osaula; further explains that, essentially;

> Qualitative methods of inquiry are concerned with processes rather than consequences, with organic wholeness rather than independent variables and with meaning rather than behavioral statistics. Interest is directed towards context-bound conclusions that could potentially point the way to new meaning and understanding, like policies or educational decisions, rather than towards 'scientific' generalizations that may be of little use.

A qualitative research method is beneficial to this study that explores the sculptural characteristics of postures in stilts dance forms because, qualitative reports are not presented as statistic summations but rather in a more descriptive and narrative style". Several inter-related methods are used in qualitative inquiry and social research, such as action and ethnography research.

3.2 Design Procedure

The emergence of the study on 'Design Methods' in the 1960s grew out of the perceived need to exercise more control over the process of exploration in the studio. This was in direct response to a worldwide dissatisfaction and the lack of understanding of the traditional processes employed by designers and visual art practitioners. There has been more enlightenment regarding the studies in the visual arts generally concerning design procedure. Perhaps, more researchers are now getting to address key notes issues on practice-based / practice-led methodologies for a more cogent and coherent research (Gray and Malins, 1993).

According to Gray and Malins (1993), "practitioners in Fine Arts and designers should be based on reflection on practice. Within this general procedure lies a personal idea, intimately linked with the artist's particular intentions and individual's working process". In professional terms, the artist may develop a manifesto or more modestly, a personal statement as a result of the flexibility of the research environment. However, Gray and Malins note that project in practice-based research should follow procedure that is comparative with the characteristics structure of the studio practice. For a systematic inquiry in the studio, it is vital for the researcher to develop a framework that allows a personal, yet systematic procedure. William (2006) also elucidates that; "research design provides the glue that holds the research project together" this is used to structure the study and shows how all of the parts work together.

Therefore, the research design adopted for this study exists within a broad multifaceted method of qualitative research which adopts studio-practice, observation, explorative, and action research paradigms. According to Okpoko and Eze (2014),

“Qualitative research is the collection and analysis of virtually any information that is not numerical in nature. This is to seek an in-depth and insightful understanding of the subjects or the social phenomenon being studied.

The design procedure for this study starts from the collection of relevant data on stilt dance. These data include journals, books, magazines, text, still photographs, downloaded videos and images from Internet. All the stated data are carefully studied and utilized for effective exploration of the studio work, starting from the development of sketches/drawings for the 3-dimensional studio exploration. However, the study looked at broad perspectives of stilt dance, which are, *Angere*, (Nigeria) *MokoJumbies,* (African and Western) *Dogon* stilts dance, (Mali) *Atakpame* stilt dance (Togo) and *Winneba* stilt dance (Ghana).

3.3 Reference to Established Artists/Methodology

Since research encourages several methodologies including Action research, by its definition and context suits this exploration. With the definition given by Kemmis (1988), Elliot in Blauxter, Hughes and Tight (1998), action research is a “form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken in educational situations in order to improve an individual educational practice. Action research is the study of social situations with a view of improving the quality of action within it”. It aims to feed practical judgment in concrete situations, and validity of the study ’theories’ or hypotheses it generates depend not so much on ‘scientific ‘text or truth, as on their usefulness in helping people to act more intelligently and skillfully. In action research ‘theories’ are not validated independently and then applied to practice.

Action research is experimental in approach, which offers a research design which links this exploration process closely to its context and is predicated upon the

idea of a study having a practical purpose in view leading to new understanding and knowledge. It has encouraged the ideas of the research process as spiral activity, going through repeated cycles. The researcher at the end of the studio works usually takes some time off to reflect on what has been done in the studio. This sometimes results to changing ideas or reenacting a progressive concept. It could also involve an extensive component fieldwork, which is substituted as workshop or studio in practice-led research (Elliot in Blauxter, *et al*,1998)

The main pioneer of action research according to Elliot in Blauxter *et al* (1998), Kurt Lewis associated the ides of action research with the ideas of doing experiments in the field rather than laboratory. He opines that "an action research experiment required not only theory but it must express theory in such a way that the results of the experiment can be fed directly back to the theory". He further states that most proponents of action research argue that "theory alone has little power to create change and that there is the need for a more complex interplay between theory and practice".

3.2.1 The Visual Arts

To appreciate how artistic knowledge or experience can inform educational research Leavy (2009), posits that "artistic ways of knowing and making meaning contribute to qualitative research, and creative expression requires an understanding of making the process of creating meaningful forms". Similarly, other writers have explored the link between qualitative research and artistic experience. For instance, according to Knowles et al in Leavy (2009), they employed the concept of researcher as artist and artist as researcher. That is, these authors affirm the potential of artistic

forms of research representation. By doing so, they create a context in which other artists-researchers can articulate the meaning of their own experiences.

Within the naturalistic paradigm of qualitative research, according to Lincoln and Guba in Leavy (2009) "a researcher's sensitivity, empathy with others, and tolerance for ambiguity play an important part in the process and outcome of research" Also Hunt in Leavy (2009) avers that, a researcher's intentions, perceptions, and actions must be included in the research process because they are the 'most powerful" and sensitive means for recording and interpreting her research. In the practice-led research, the researcher seeks to understand something about the universe, about self, materials, and new ways of making artistic expressions. Engaging with materials, thoughts, and feelings, the artists participate in thoughtful search. This artistic search requires attention to details, a sense of relatedness among all parts within a whole, and tolerance from unexpected limitations and unforeseen tension. According to Jongeward in Leavy (2009),

> Creative process, in all its particularities and contexts, emerges from logic between the person creating and what is being created and an artist develops and refines affective, intuitive, aesthetic, and relational ways of knowing. Knowledge is internalized through experience of engaging in creative process, which is a key value that the researcher has brought into the studio practice.

On the interconnectivity of artist and researcher in the studio, Sullivan (2005) stresses that, the critical and creative investigations that occurs in studios, galleries, on the Internet, in community spaces, and in other places where artists work, are forms of research ground in art practice. He believes that rather than adopting research methods from the social sciences, practice-led research goals can be achieved by following different yet complementary paths. What is similar is the consistency and systematic approach, yet in a way that privileges the role imagination and intellect plays in constructing knowledge that is not only new, but has the capacity to

transform human understanding". However, the flexibility of the approach to studio practice has given this study the freedom to explore the aesthetics of the stilts dance form, which will, however allow for a deeper understanding of the use of mixed media in sculpture.

The artist, according to Sullivan (2005) is the "key figure in the creation of new knowledge that has the potential to change the way we see and think" In this sense, he adds that "the studio experience is a form of intellectual and imaginative inquiry and is sufficiently robust to yield knowledge and understanding that will be grounded and socially and culturally relevant". Therefore, research in the visual arts interrogates processes and products of artistic knowing. The studio becomes a vital place for problem finding and problem solving; material exploration and giving monolithic yet create concrete ideas of personal, social and cultural meaning to form.

3.2.2 Research Instruments:

Observational method is employed, while the means of obtaining information are Camera for still images/photographs and video clips, sketches, drawings, Internet, and direct observation.

3.2.3 Sources of Ideas

In articulating a direction for the studio exploration, some steps were undertaken to direct and guide the developmental stages of exploration. The research was studio oriented and so a conceptual approach was considered, starting from the mental development of ideas anchored on *Langer's Aesthetics Theory: virtual Powers.* This progresses into sketches for the studio research. An *Angere* Dance performance was enacted on 16th August 2014 in Ogun State, and on 4th September, 2014 in front of the Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, (Plates

XXXIV and XXXV). This waste observed and gathered data, the data collected includes still images and video clips.

Furthermore, books and magazines on stilt dance are sourced from Kashim Ibrahim Library, Theatre and Performing Art library, and Department of Fine Arts library, all in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Internet materials were also collected which were not limited to, images and videos of the stilt dance. This further advanced to watching the videos and making observations, for articulating postural possibilities. Sketches started from the formulation of ideas for single figure compositions and progressed into making sketches for multiple figure compositions using both the male and female forms. Attention was essentially on the characteristics of the postures of the stilt dance.



Plate XL, *Angere*- Performed in the Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. 4th September, 2014. Photograph: Lasisi Lamidi



Plate XLI: *Angere*- Performed in the Department of Fine Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. 4th September, 2014. Photograph: Lasisi Lamidi

3.2.4 Procedure

The exploration was basically studio oriented and so a conceptual approach was considered, starting from the intellectual formation of ideas; which led to the evolving of sketches for the studio experiments. Firstly, references were gathered from the Internet. These include, images of stilts dancers/stilt walkers, downloaded videos of stilt dancers, watching and observing the dance postures in the videos on stilt dance for inspiration. Sketches were developed using the above-mentioned sources. The sketches started from formulation of ideas for a single figure composition and progressed into sketches for multiple figure compositions using both the male and female forms. Attention was essentially focused on the characteristics of the postures of the stilt dance. In putting into consideration the principle of sculptural composition especially, balance, and movement. Another consideration was to also situate the stilt dance in a particular cultural character bearing in mind the significant of its content and context. After the two- dimensional sketches were executed, the researcher set out for the studio exploration in three-dimensional form.

3.2.4. 1 General Procedure for Studio Explorations

3.2.4. 2 ***Observation*****:** This involved an in-depth mental articulation of ideas on the compositional understanding of the *Angere* forms which are later transformed into sketches and drawings. Observation according Gray and Malin (2004), is a classical method in art and design for acquiring analytical data.

3.2.4. 3 ***Photography*****:** Photographs in studio oriented research according to Labija (2003), help to communicate accurate retentive images and also serves as references that guides the study… photographs refresh the

memory of the researcher on the subject matter. In this light, digital camera plays an important role in taking still images, which provides varied perspectives of viewing the stilt dance, (Plates XL and XLI). These researchers have successfully used photography in their studies, Iroka (2014), Sani (2014), Gushem (2011) Danjuma (2010).



Plate XLII: *Angere* on the street in Ikorodu , Lagos, 2014, Ikorodu, Lagos State, Nigeria, Photography: Oladesu Johnson



Plates: XLIII: *Angere* on the bus in Ikorodu , Lagos, 2014, Ikorodu, Lagos State, Nigeria, Photography: Oladesu Johnson

3.2.4. 4 *Drawings*:

Drawing as a medium of expression in this study plays a dual role, as a reflective tool in articulating thoughts at arriving at the studio explorations and doubles as an independent works on its merit. Drawing as a thought process offers an intimate and open field for imaginative elaboration, in which concepts and ideas can

emerge and change with relative ease. Goodman (2013), reports that the beauty of drawing to sculpture is that, form adds a dimension that eludes two-dimensional visualization… "Conversely, drawing is an abstract visual means to probe the infinite possibilities of form`` Goodman went further to observe that drawing becomes a mode of thought, while sculpture provides the evidence of form. Drawing in any media should be seen as a "foundational tool for invention, it is the thought process, while sculpture is the material realization".

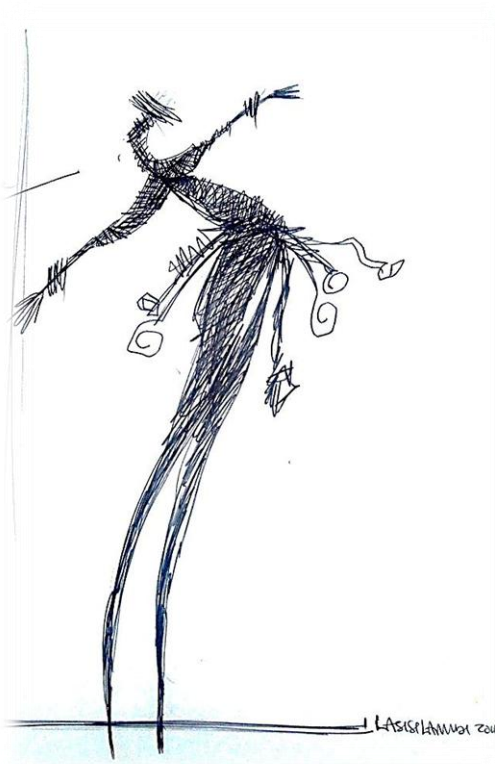


Fig1: Preliminary Drawing, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 2: Preliminary Drawing, 2011, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

The studio exploration was purposely biased in the use of found objects that were sourced around Zaria metropolis. For, example, to gather materials, the researcher had to visit several junkyards in Samaru and Sabon- Gari, in Zaria, Kaduna State. Some of the materials had to be sourced by scavenging unwanted objects like

the empty milk cans, discarded tomato cans and machine parts in mechanic workshops, while some of these objects have to be bought, like the ball bearings, washers and some of the bicycle parts.

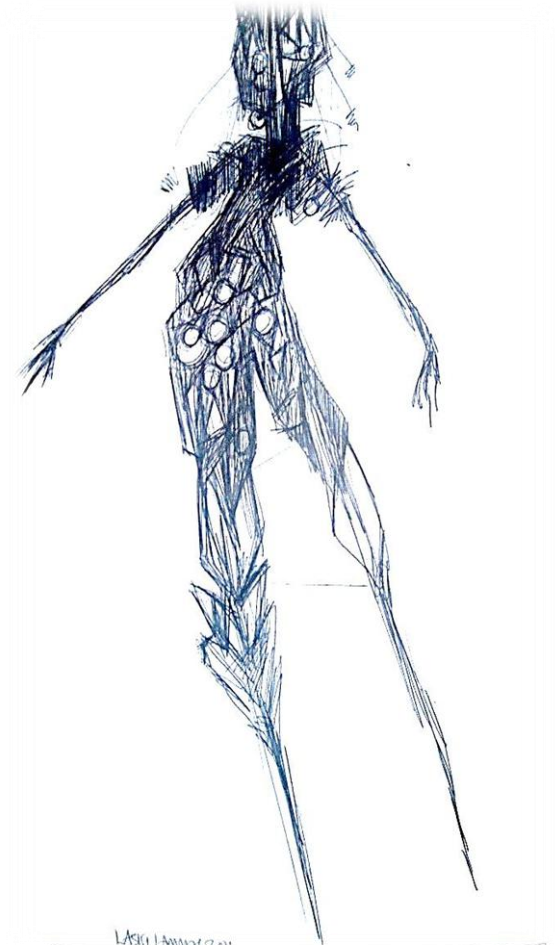


Fig 3: Preliminary Drawing, 2011, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

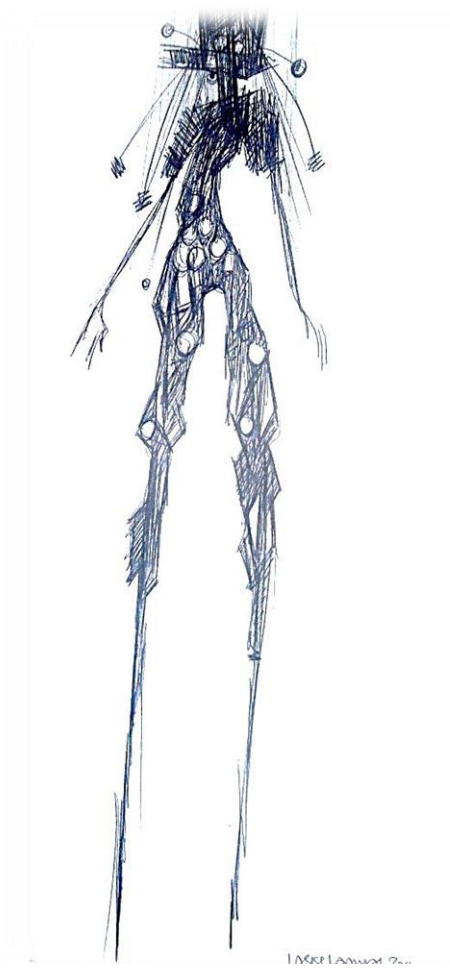


Fig 4: Preliminary Drawing, 2011, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

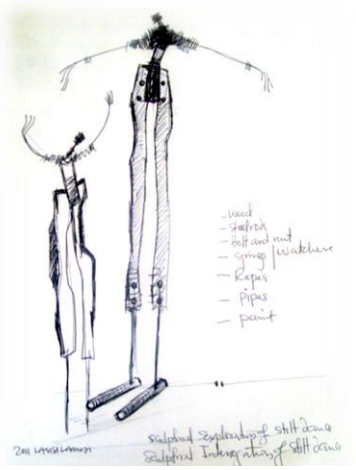


Fig 5: Preliminary sketch, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on Paper



Fig 6: Preliminary sketch, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on Paper



Fig 7: Preliminary Drawing, 2011, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

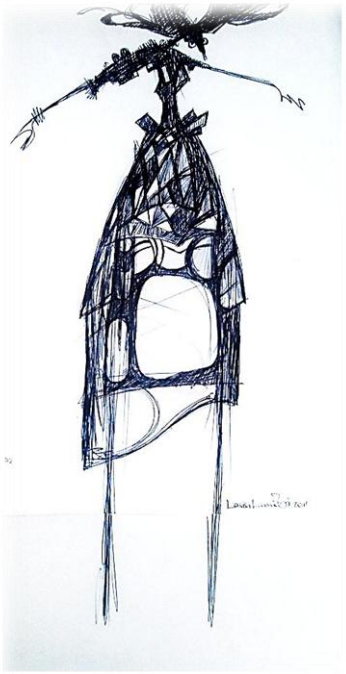


Fig 8: Preliminary Drawing, 2011, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 9: Fig Preliminary Drawing, 2012, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

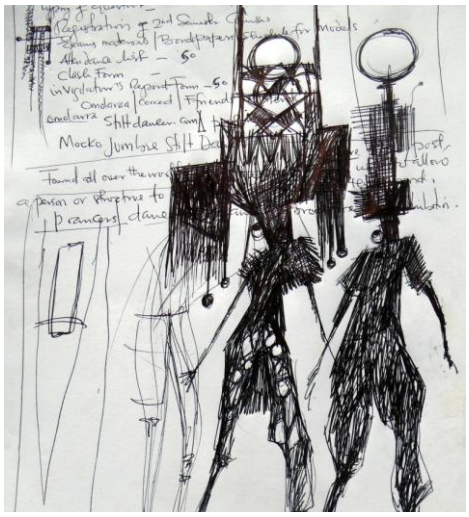


Fig 10: Preliminary Drawing, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on A4 Paper



Fig 11: Preliminary sketch, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

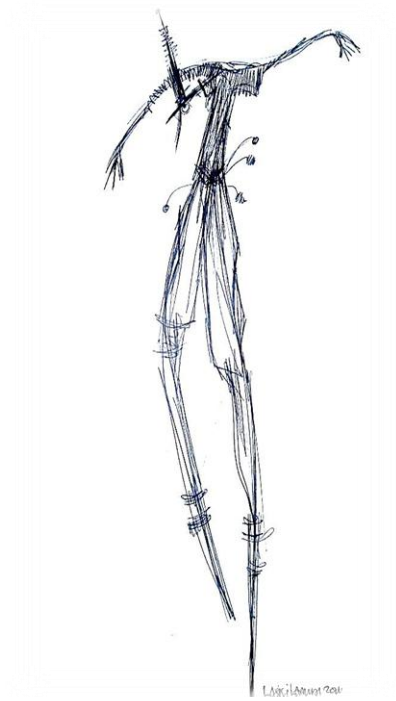


Fig 12: Preliminary sketch, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 13: Preliminary sketch, 2011, 21x30 cm, Pen on paper

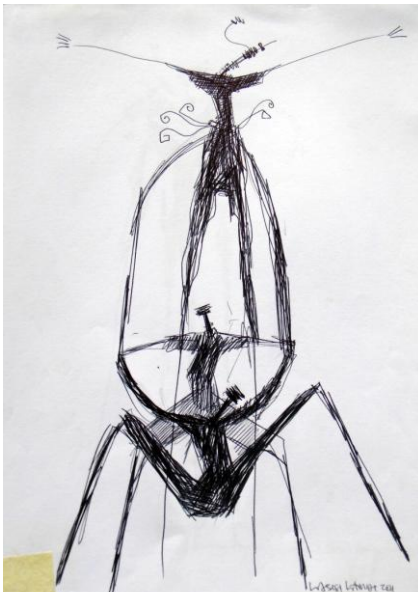


Fig 14: Preliminary sketch, 2011, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 15: Preliminary Drawing, 2012, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 16: Preliminary Drawing, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 17: Drawing, 2010, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 18: Drawing, 2012, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 19: Preliminary Drawing, 2012, 21x30cm, Pen on paper



Fig 20: Preliminary Drawing, 2012, 21x30cm, Pen on paper

3.2.4. 5 *Materials*:

An assortment of found objects fit for mixed-media were gathered which include, 10mm and 12mm mild steel rods, round and square pipes of different sizes, bolt and nuts, found objects like, empty milk cans, washers, ball bearings, bicycle parts, motor cycle parts, general machine parts, lid of cream, old news papers, discarded fabrics, canvas, White glue, brushes for finishing and applying white glue, matt black paint, different acrylic colours, powdered terra- cotta and sieved sand for textural surface effects, filler rods, electrodes for welding and firewood.



Plate XLIV: Metal Scrapes I



Plate XLV: Metal Scrapes II



Plate XLIV: Metal Scrapes III



Plate XLV: Assorted Springs IV



Plate XLVI: Fabric Off-Cuts



Plate XLVII: Ropes and Filler rods



Plate XLVIII: Empty Cans of Tomatoes



Plate XLIX: Empty Cans of Insecticides

3.2.4.6 *Studio Exploration: Welding*

Hadley, Jamie and Rock (2000), describe arc welding as type of welding that uses a welding power supply to create an electrical arc between an electrode and the base material to melt at the welding point. Plowman (2003) also defined welding as "the technique of fusing together two pieces of metal by the application of heat" She states that the blacksmith does this by heating his metal in forge fire, placing two pieces of metal, one on the top of the other and hammering them together. But so many other welding techniques in the 21st century have out dated conventional welding techniques, and the most popular are the oxyacetylene and electric arc welding.

These two techniques produce more heat than the forge, while the heat can be localized and the process carried out on any part of a large work that cannot be placed in a fire. An arc welder was employed in the execution of the studio works, because it

is the only welding technique that the researcher can use among the other welding machine methods.

The found objects were sorted out according to their kinds for easy usage in the studio. The conceptual ideas in sketches always preceded the execution of the three-dimensional forms. An armature was constructed first which took the desired posture of the figure, then, other parts were welded on the set structure. The aim of the skeletal support using steel rod mostly is to enable some of the light found objects to be joined together. At this stage; the combinations of the various found objects have to be creatively manipulated to give the desired effect. As the studio exploration progressed, observations were made which required reflecting and going back to the desk to make notes. This was where the cyclical nature of action research came into the studio methodology.





Plate L and Plate LI: The researcher working in the studio

***3.2.4. 7 Cladding*:**

This is a process of wrapping either canvas onto the open spaces or on the sculpture using white glue or stitching with thread and needle.

3.2.4. 8 Priming:

White glue was applied on the clad canvas severally to cover the pores on canvas and to achieve permanency. The primed surfaces were left to dry for at least twenty four hours after which other materials were applied.

3.2.4. 9 Finishing:

Different surfaces were explored using matt black paint, acrylic of different hues of monochromatic and polychromatic applications were exploited depending of the desired effect.

3.2.4.10 Explorative Stages

The explorative stages were classified into series in which two to five works were created, interrogating the five objectives of the study.

3.3.1 Series One: Ijoya I-IV:

Ijoya series are the first set of sculptures executed with complete metal found objects that combined motorcycle's shock absorbers, springs, bicycles parts, pipes and mild steel rods. The idea of these explorations was to produce postures of stilt dance forms from their simplistic elements while addressing postural possibilities. A basic research question was interrogated: which is, what are the possibilities that the stilt dance form can be visually documented for appraisal? This assumption was interpreted in exploring the series titled *Ijoya*; I-IV (Plates LII-LV). However, the sculptures created are elegant, incorporating movement by positioning the sculpture on one or on two legs.



Plates: LII, LIII, and LIV Ijoya, I, II and III, 2010, Found Objects and Mild Steel, A- 98cm, B-100cm, C- 112cm high

The simplistic approach of executing these sculptures allows for less detail. The head of the figures were depicted either with a motor cycle piston, which is round, a slim rod representing the neck, a round small bowl, or 10mm steel rod used to represent the neck of the sculpture. The bodies of the dancers were executed with motor cycle silencer, round pipe and flattened square pipe, while, the legs were created with either round pipe, silencer of motor cycle, or found-object. In *Ijoya iii***,** fork of a bicycle was used to represent the legs and 10mm mild steel rod was welded at the end of the bicycle fork. In *Ijoya IV*, the same bicycle parts were used but rope was twisted around the legs of the sculpture to create an impression of shackles.



Plate: LV, Ijoya IV, 2010, Found Objects, Mild Steel and Rope, 165cm high



Plate: LVI, LVII, Ijoya IV, 2010, Found Objects, Mild Steel and Rope, 165cm high

3.3.2 Series Two: Couple Dance I-IV and Ceremonial Dance

Couple's Dance in the series; are double figure compositions using materials that were metallic in nature. These were steel rods, silencer of a motorbike, bicycles parts, pipes, pistons, springs, ball bearings and washers. Executing these sculptures became a major challenge on how to systematically translate the sketches into three-dimensional forms. After sorting the intended materials to be used, the researcher reflected back to the drawings for a direction of departure. This is evidenced in action research cyclical nature of reflection and recession away from the practical work to consider other parameters before going back to the studio and vice versa. Four

compositions were executed to explore simple double figure compositions, putting into consideration movement and positioning of the arms and legs for stability in capturing the effects of implied motion.



Plate LVIII: Couple Dance I, 2010, Found Objects and Steel 82cm high



Plate LIX: Couple Dance II, 2010, Found Objects and Steel 84cm high



Plate LX: Couple Dance III, 2010, Found Objects and Steel, 68cm high

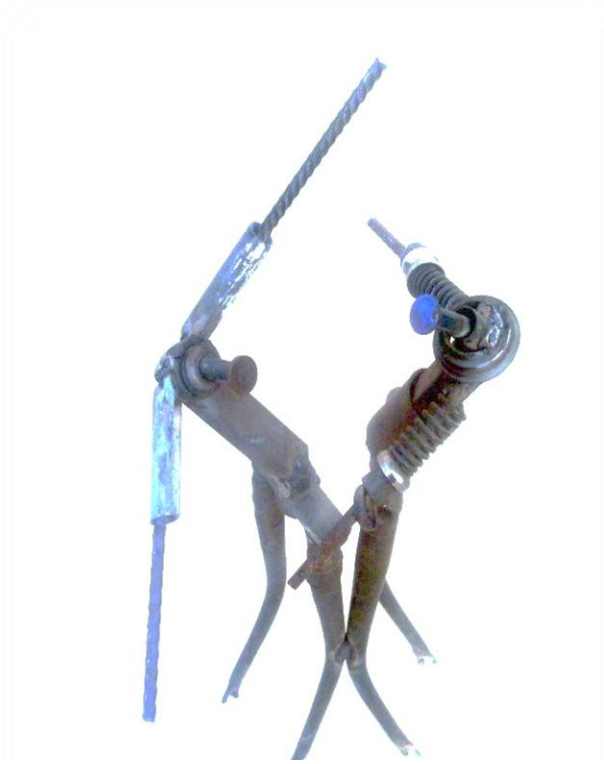


Plate LXI: Couple Dance IV, 2010, Found Objects and Steel, 62 cm high

The second male figure was executed with virtually the same materials except the heads that are different; car pistons were used, while a metal attached to a rubber was used for the female figure executed in this series includes, *Couple Dance I, II, III and IV.* (Plates, LVIII-LXI).These sculptures are simple compositions that exploit the use of found objects which required minimal construction like, the *Ijoya series.* In this series, space was capitalized in suggesting the interplay between the stretched hands and the legs of the sculptures in creating movement and rhythm within the dynamics of balance and postures of the freestanding figures.

The adequate use of dance elements, especially space and movement in the composition positioned the sculpture within the mood of various dance characters.

Couple Dance II and *IV* show a more aggressive movement with the arms, body and legs stretched out. The arrangement of the figures in a downward position expresses the Yoruba dance in which dancers usually bend downwards to the beat of the drum. The double figure compositions executed were responses to the research question that interrogates ways in which freestanding sculpture compositions could be positioned without a base or pedestal.



Plate LXII: Ceremonial Dance: 2010, Found Objects and Steel, 62cm high



Plate LXIII: Ceremonial Dance: 2010, Another View, Found Objects and Steel, 62cm high

A single sculpture was executed in this stage of exploration titled *Ceremonial Dance*, (Plates, LXII and LXIII). The motivation for this sculpture was born from the curiosity to explore a three-figure composition. This was one of the most challenging aspects of the stilts dance exploration, in which several attempts were made before arriving at this last composition. The problem was mainly how to position the three figures to respond to the dramatic dexterity of movement envisioned in sketches before the executing the real sculpture.

This pointed out that sketches are just basically a pointer towards achieving a vague idea of a composition. However, after many attempts at juxtaposing the composition to suit a desired arrangement in a basic trial and error approach, this last composition was sustained, like the double figure compositions, explored metallic found objects, which includes, pistons, springs, washers, steel rods, car silencer, round pipe, bicycle front fork and filling disks. *Ceremonial Dance* explored three figure compositions of dancers holding hands in a circular dance formation, the positioning of the heads of the figures suggest a rhythmic movement in response to the circular patterning of most African cultural dance. This composition also captured the essences of positioning sculpture without a base, for the number of figures within the composition made it possible for the balance, unlike the single figure composition that requires a pedestal. The surface of the sculpture was wire brushed to remove dirt and reduced some of the rough part, and finally; varnish was applied to reveal the metallic qualities of the found objects.

3.3.3 Series Three: High Praise and Masquerade Dance

In these two works; wood, mild steel and found objects were used. Emphasis was placed on the adequate use of the wood. The wood was to accentuate the traditional use of wood or bamboo as an essential component of the stilt dance generally in Africa. Considering the challenges of using wood and metal in an exploration like this, from a broad perspectives of personal experience in the studio, the basic challenge in executing this kind of mixed media sculpture usually is the joining of heterogeneous materials, like plastic, steel, wood and some other materials that adhesive cannot properly bind together. However, bolts and nuts were used after drilling the woods at points that had contact with the framework of mild steel rods and the bolts were welded for permanence.



Plate LXIV: High Praise: Wood, 2011, Found Objects and Steel, Height-103cm-high



Plate LXV: Masquerade Dance: 2011, Wood, Found Objects and Steel, 154cm high

These explorations were based on the production of female figure and adapting a less detailed approach of execution. The stilt dance elongated legs were derivative of the stilt dance in executing the works. However, emphasis was on simplification of the features especially the heads of the female forms in which, a semi-circular found objects were utilized. Four sculptures were executed in this series, with 10mm and 12mm mild steel rods. The researcher at this point interrogates how a simple elegant female form could make possibly a dramatic sculptural statement using simple postures, perhaps, the possibility of catching a spill second camera shot. It was however possible to capture that sequence like a filmstrip and then transformed into a performative enactment of performance of stilts sculptural forms.

3.3.4 Series Four: Cultural Performers I-VI



Plate LXVI: Cultural Performer I, 2011-2012, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas 130cm high

At this stage, the study explored varied ways in the execution of the stilts dance form using a simple approach. Consideration was on postures, movement and the possibilities of balancing the sculptures. This series of studio works executed started by constructing a basic skeletal framework that served as support for the stilts dance forms. This same approach was used for all the works in the series. However, the exploration was interested mainly on the postures and movement, which were either positioned on one foot or both. The 10mm or 12mm mild steel rods were used for the legs to allow spring like movement or vibration, which when touched vibrates. Thus; motion was created in the sculpture. The other components or found objects that gave the sculptures their cultural or traditional essence were in the use of washers, tins, Some other rounded objects placed on the arms, necks and legs of the sculptures served as bangles, shackles and necklaces.



Plate: LXVII, Cultural Performer II, 2011-2012, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 132cm



Plate LXVIII: Cultural Performer III, 2011-2012, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 138cm high



Plate LXIX, Cultural Performer IV, 2011-2012, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 115cm high



Plate LXX: Cultural Performer V, 2011-2012, Mild Steel, 140cm high

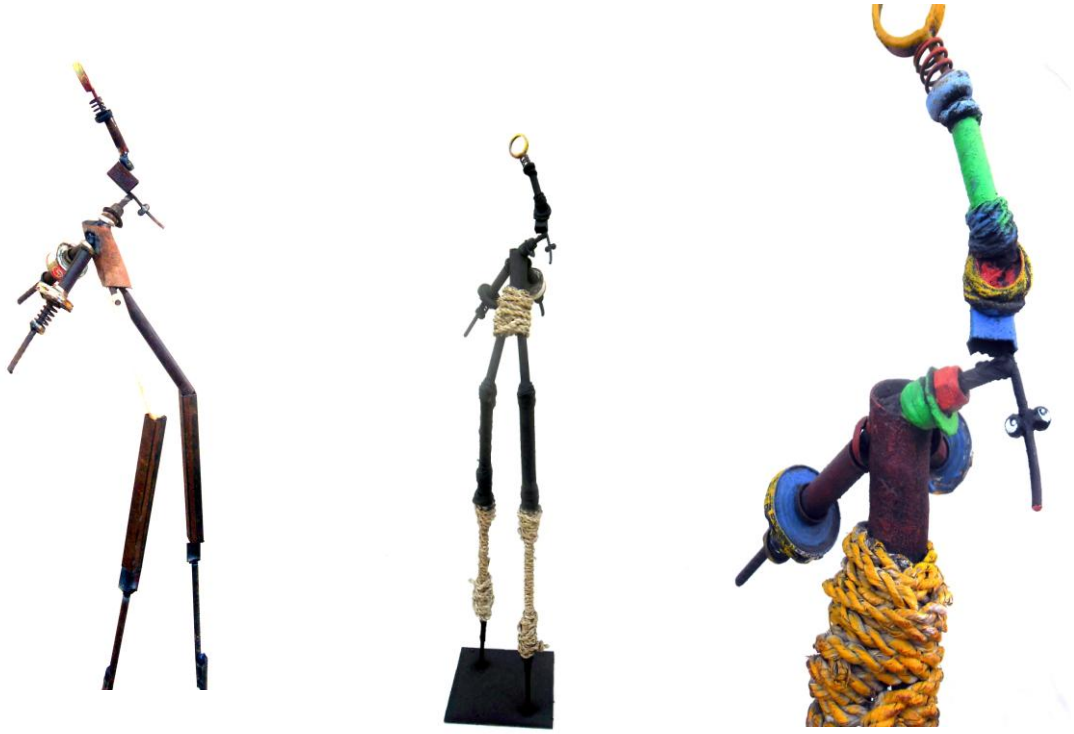


Plate LXXI: Cultural Performer VI, 2011-2012, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 117cm high

3.3.5 Series Five: Initiation Dance I-III

These explorations were based on the production of female figures and adapting a less detailed approach of execution. The stilt dance elongated legs were derivative of the stilt dance in executing the works. However, emphasis was on simplification of the features especially the heads of the female forms in which semi-circular found objects were utilized. Three sculptures were executed in this series using found objects and steel rods like 10mm and 12mm mild steel rod. The study at this point interrogate how a simple elegant female form could make possibly a dramatic sculptural statement using simple postures, perhaps, the possibility of catching a split second camera shot. It was however possible to capture that sequence like a filmstrip and then be transformed into a performative enactment of performance of stilts sculptural forms.



Plate LXXII: Initiation Dance I, 2013-2014, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 154cm high

The approaches to executing these works were basically the same. After the skeletal framework was made in metal, canvas was used to clad the metal covering the open spaces on the bodies of the sculptures. The cladding formed the dress of the female figures, achieving a soft dress like feel on the sculptures as if they were sewn on them. The canvas was soaked into a liquid diluted with white glue to achieve permanence. The sculptures were left to dry for twenty four hours, after which different surface finishes were achieved. *Initiation I,* (Plate LXXII), was finished differently from the two others. Sieved smooth sand, white glue, matt black and little water were mixed together. This effect of surface finishing was considered for textural effect on the sculpture. The use of sand was to create a textural effect on the sculpture. The finishing paint also filled the little spaces left on the sculpture caused

by welding owing to the light materials used, like pipe. The sculpture after applying the paint looks grayish black and dull as desired. *Initiation II and III* (LXXIII and LXXIV), were finished differently but with the same method of surface finishing, but in this light, fire clay (Terra- Cotta) was ground into powder and then mixed with white glue, red acrylic paint and little water. This mixture was then used for the surface finishing.



Plate LXXIII: Initiation Dance II, 2013-2014, Mild Steel, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 150cm high



Plate LXXIV: Initiation Dance III, 2013-2014, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 172cm high

3.3.6 Series Six: Elegance I-III

In this series, the same technique of construction was made for the frame work, while the same approach of cladding the metal with canvas was used as described in *Initiation Dance* series. *Elegance I and II* (Plates LXXV and LXXVI), are both female figures executed in derivative of the slim characteristics of the stilt dancer. Typical elongated simple forms were executed with a combination of mild steel rods, found objects like empty milk cans, washers, ball bearing, motor vehicle springs, pipes and canvas for the cladding on metal. These two female forms were finished using a mixture of matt black, glue and sand for textural effect. After the cladding with canvas, blue, yellow, red, gold, green, and black acrylic colours were applied for highlighting effect especially on the bangles and necklaces.

Elegance III (Plate LXXVII), is a male figurative sculpture executed as simple as the other two in this series but could be taken as a female form because of the colourful torso. The bangles also could suggest a female, except for the trousers which distinguished the form from the other two sculptures in this series.



Plate LXXV: Elegance I, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 198cm high



Plate LXXVI: Elegance II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 184cm high



Plate: LXXVII: Elegance III, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 200 cm high

3.3.7 Series Seven: Dance of Life I and II



Plate LXXVIII: Dance of Life I, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 214cm high

Dance of Life are two in the series, *Dance of Life I*(Plate LXXVIII), is a male figure while, *Dance of Life II* (Plate LXXIX),is a female figure; executed in the same manner of constructing a framework of the desired figure. The metal was then clad with canvas for further finishing with acrylic paint. The found objects used can be identified like empty milk can, strings, squashed cans, washers, while a twisted quarter mils steel rods was used like an antenna on the head suggesting a feather or a decorative object. *Dance of Life II* explores a female figure in gorgeous attire, clad in yellow dress with printed Africa motifs. The head gear was made with the head of a big hoe that was painted brownish. The back of the work reveals the technical approach to the execution of the work. The cladding of the metal on canvas was different from the others. In this method of cladding, needle and thread were used to stitch the canvas on to the metal unlike the approach of using white glue. Yellow acrylic was used on the skirt, while blue acrylic on the blouse and then yellow, green, blue were used on the bangles. The eyes were made with ball bearings painted to suggest a painterly impression of eyes.



Plate: LXXIX: Dance of Life II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 220 cm high









Plate: LXXX: Dance of Life II, Detailed, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas, 220 cm high

3.3.8 Series Eight: Ijopo I, II, and Odeya

In *Ijopo I and II*, (Plates LXXXI and LXXXII), a different finishing method was used after the typical cladding of canvas on the metal. In this series, instead of painting the dresses of the sculptures off-cut of fabric were used. The fabrics were further cut into small sizes of on larger than 3cmx3cm and pasted with white glue onto the desired parts to form the skit of the female sculpture and the trouser of the male sculpture. *Odeya* (Plate LXXXIII), was finished using colourful off-cut papers used in the same manner with the fabric and the papers were also pasted with white glue.



Plate: LXXXI: Ijopo I, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mils steel, Canvas, and Off-cut Fabrics, 210cm high



Plate LXXXII: Ijopo II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas, and Off-cut Fabrics, 228cm high



Plate LXXXIII: Odeya, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas, and Paper, 220 cm high

3.3.9 Series Nine: Masquerade Dance I and II

In the execution of *Masquerade Dance I*,(Plate LXXXIV), found objects, wood, mild steel rods, and ropes were used. The rope was clad round the 1cmx1cm square pipe that was used to construct the head. About 50cm long wood were used in making the legs of the male figure. These pieces of wood were drilled; bolts passed through them and welded onto the 12cm mild steel rods which formed the legs of the Angere stilt dancer. Rope was wrapped around the 12mm mild steel rods and matt black paint was used on some parts of the wood to give an effect of burnt area. *Masquerade Dance II* is (Plate LXXXV), executed using found objects, mild steel rods, and empty cans of milk, washer and canvas. Cans of different sizes were used to represent shackles of the legs, while the sculpture stand with the aid of 2cm round pipe which formed the feet and served as the base of the free standing sculpture.



Plate LXXXIV: Masquerade Dance I, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Wood, Rope and Acrylic Paint, 230cm high



Plate LXXXV: Masquerade Dance I, Detailed, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Wood, Rope and Acrylic Paint, 230cm high



Plate LXXXVI: Masquerade Dance II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas and Acrylic Paint 249 cm high



Plate: LXXXVII Masquerade Dance II, Detailed, 2014-2015, Details showing the cans used in the execution, 249 cm high

3.3.10 Series Ten: Free-Flow I and II



Plate LXXXVIII: Free Flow I, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel and Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 250cm high

Free-Flow I and II (Plates, XXXVIII and XXXIX), explored the dynamism of balance in free standing compositions devoid of a base or pedestal as support. These two sculptures were also executed in the same traditional construction of using metal structure which forms the body of the figures. The process advanced to the cladding of the welded composition with canvas using white glue. This follows the same method of applying white glue on the canvas which was allowed to dry for at least twenty four hours before the finishing with blue acrylic paint.

Free-Flow II followed the same traditional process of welding. The upper part of the figure was executed with found objects, mild steel rods and pieces of square pipe, while the legs were constructed with square pipe and mild steel rod. The upper part of the body was left bear exposing the metal while the legs are clad with fabric and rope. White glue was also applied to bind the fabric and rope to the welded metal structure and the sculpture was finished with acrylic paint.



Plate LXXXIX: Free Flow II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild Steel, Rope, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 184cm high 238cm high



Plate XC: Free Flow II, Detailed I, Found Objects, Mild Steel, Rope, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 184cm high 238cm high



Plate XCI: Free Flow II, Detailed II, Found Objects, Mild Steel, Rope, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 184cm high 238cm high

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

4.1 Description and analysing of works produced

The analysis of the studio exploration utilized multiple approaches in conveying varied perspectives of meanings to the sculptures executed. The formalist school of thought emphasises the use of the principles and elements of design in analysing visual forms (Greenberg in Lazzari and Schlesier, 2008). Another school of thought generally holds that sociological and philosophical perceptions could also be considered in analysing any given phenomenon (Adogbo, 2009). In this regard, this study situates its discussion and interpretation of concept on the sociological and philosophical perception of the *Angere* forms.

This has been categorised into two main components, the content and context of the studio exploration in which the study considers the denotative and connotative meanings of the stilt dance forms.The denotative meaning of an image refers to its literal, descriptive meanings– the apparent truth, evidence, or objective reality that the image documents or denotes. Connotative meanings refer to the cultural and historical context of a specific image, as well as to the social conventions, codes, and meanings that have been attached to or associated with that image in a particular context (Knowles and Cole, 2008).

It should however, be noted that the classical sculptures unlike the modern and contemporary sculptural expressions considered the supremacy of the human body as the most beautiful form of expression. This position is stressed by (Parker, 2003) that sculptors are more advantageous than other artists, because the basic subject, "which is the human, is the most beautiful thing in the world. In two ways the body is supremely beautiful: as an expression of minds and as an embodiment of sensuous

charm". In the mind, the form of body becomes personified: their purpose, emotion, and thought have taken shape and reveals a manifestation. One wonders, therefore, why some sculptors have always thought their work as simply one of mere imitation of nature? The divine, yet, in sculpture, as in other visual art expressions, as an imitative process is never monotonous, but selective and inventive. This positions the sculptural postural exploration of the stilt dance not to be slavish to mere copying of the human form, but conceptualizing it. And at the same time, relying on found objects has a transcendent idea beyond imitating nature.

In the 20th and the 21st Centuries however, the spatial and linear elements of sculpture are considered, while conceptual art emphasizes idea over the material. According to Parker (2003),"two basic things that have not changed are the use of the principles and elements of sculptural composition in sculpture". One aspect to be considered is the apparent beauty of line of repose. Line of energy and conflict is one of the strongest qualities in visual art. More so, there is an organic unity of lines in sculpture and these lines go beyond the surface lines, but also the lines accentuated by the planes in which, the figure lies, the lines of pose and attitude. This expresses the desired sculptural characteristics of postures in the execution of the stilt dance forms. One significant element of dance is rhythm, the harmonious, balanced movement of line. This expresses movement in dance form by the creative use of characteristics of lines.

In analyzing the content of a work of art, aesthetics has to be put into consideration. Willis (2005), "talks about the reformulation and transcendence of established categories of understanding aesthetics". He argues that although there are evident differences in how Art History, Philosophy, Sociology and Visual Arts conceptualize aesthetic matters. This places the creative desire squarely on the

material and the aesthetic forms with the reception or consumption of art wholly determined by the symbolic production of creative works. Cultures as viewed by Willis (2005) "are intertwined with and produce everyday forms of aesthetics experience, only a small part of which is precipitated textually, only a small part of which survive as or are composed into texts" Willis further states that "…only a small part of which is preserved and consecrated as art". The real aesthetics is brought to life in the tangible visual form created by artists". Still, on everyday aesthetics, Inglis in Hughson (2004), also submitted that artists must be alive to the presence of live aesthetics in everyday life. "In actual practice and practical experiences of everyday aesthetics, the society becomes a steady state for conscious experience of the always ready, singular category of mystically endowed cultural community". One of these cultural communities is the product of the *Angere* dance, which aesthetics characterized the study. Some of these experiences are what the artists' records mentally and brings to life consciously or subconsciously in their works. This study is one of such that is inspired by the cultural aesthetics drawing from those of the stilt dance.

On the viewpoint of Philosophy of Fine Arts, Hegel in Ross (2004), submits that the "content of art is the idea, while its form is the configuration of sensuous material". However, art has to harmonize the two sides and synthesized them into a free reconciled totality. Context demands derivation from the content of art, meanwhile, the content of art should not be seen as anything abstract in itself, but concrete. Though not concrete, in the sense in which the sensuous is concrete when contrasted textually and intellectually with everyday experiences, these are taken to be simple and abstract. Hegel in Ross (2004), believes that, "art begins with the idea, the first form of art is therefore; a mere search for portrayal than a capacity for true

presentation; the idea has not found the form even in itself and therefore remains struggling and striving after it".

The studio exploration in this study is appreciated as a process, which precedes the physical material, and these points to the contemporary trends of studio exploration. This trend is apparent in art as an intellectual inquiry and reflection rather than beauty and aesthetic pleasure. However, some of these ideas are interconnected and sometimes; are all combined in visual expressions. Most of the visual arts creation often starts with the ideas, but in some cases, the materiality of expression drive the study. Again, Kosuth (2007) notes that, "The actual work of art is positioned on the ideas. Conceptual art sees the idea as the most significant aspect of a work of art. Therefore, art is de-materialized; art is prior to its materialization and rooted in the agency of the artist underlining de-materiality and or re–interpretation of reality in representational forms". While, the term representation comes with ranges of meanings and interpretations; in literary theory, representation is commonly defined in these three ways; to look like or resemble, stand in for something or someone and present a second time to re-present (O'Shaughnessy and Stadler, 2005).

Representation according to Mitchell (2005), is the use of signs that stand in for and take the place of something else. "It is through representation that people organize the world and reality through the act of naming its elements". Signs are arranged in order to form semantic constructions and express emotions. Vukcevich (2002) stresses this further that representation connotes things that *stand for* or *take the place of something* else. Consequently, in ancient times, representation has played a central role in understanding literature, aesthetics, and semiotics. Aristotle for instance, considered each mode of representation, verbal, visual or musical, as being to human beings.

Therefore, what distinguishes humans from other animals is their ability to create and manipulate signs. Mitchell (2005) states that "Aristotle deemed mimesis as natural to man, therefore considered representation as necessary for people's learning and being in the world". Plato, in contrasts, looked upon representation with more caution. He recognized that "literature is a representation of life, yet also believes that representations create words of illusion leading one away from the *real thing"*. Mitchell (2005) opines that "the means of literary representation is language". An important part of representation is the relationship between what the material is and what it represents.

The questions arising from these are, "A stone may represent a man but how?" one apprehends reality only through representations of reality, through texts, discourse, images: there is no such thing as direct or unmediated access to reality". But because one can see reality only through representation, it does not follow that one does not see reality at all. The stilt dance forms connote a symbolic representation of dual entities, the stilt dancer as an entertainer and that which embodies a spirit, (masquerade) for masquerades are seen as spirits in the religious traditional context. This is also dependent on who is interpreting the concept. In all African traditions according to Okoye in Ododo (2015), masquerades are

> Perceived as supernatural beings that are guests of the living from the extra ordinary universe, they discourage the perception of them as representations by actors wearing costumes and masks; rather, the costumed actors are regulated as the spirits themselves, respected by the community appropriately as befit their spiritual characters. Masquerades are perceived as incarnated to the general conflation of the ancestral spirit world. They manifest as guests to their living communities within which they must be treated with esteem, respect and other reverent attitudes.

However, the only Igbo reverence for their ancestors as an essential and supernatural extension of the living human community ensures that this sanctified attitude carries over to the masquerade. Thus, they are credited with supernatural powers and

insights. On the other hand, Okoye in Ododo (2015) recognises that there are some performances in character without masks that are still perceived as masquerades in Nigeria. Husaini in Ododo (2015) queried the application of the word masquerade "since not all masqueraders use masks". It is quite revealing that masquerade can be conceived without a mask; a fundamental feature of the masquerade art. Examples of unmasked masquerades abounds, *Jenju* of Abeokuta is a mystifying masquerade that comes out at night without a mask; this masquerade comes out at night every three years for spiritual cleansing. *Okelekele* masquerade of *Ekinrinade* in Kogi State, *Malemuku* masquerade of Oyo town, *Atupa of Ilora*, both of Oyo State; and *Akereburu* of Owu in Osun States, are all masquerades without mask. In Igbo land, *Ayaka*, a night masquerade does not don a mask or wear regular costumes to disguise the performer. The mysticism that surrounds the masquerading art reinforces the image of the masquerade characters without masks.

Banham, Hill and Woodyard in Ododo (2015) offer a clarification by maintaining that masquerade refers both to a performance given by masked characters and to the masked performer and find it convenient to use it to denote the performance, and used "masker" to refer to the performer, while mask refers specially to the face-covering. Masquerade therefore, can be conceptualized as a performance reality that integrates all the mechanics of performance including the performers. It is this artistic symmetry that informs the directory of our review and appreciation of masquerade aesthetics. In Africa, most important masquerades are the embodied spirits of the human performers through whom the spirits access the human world.

They derive their strength from supernatural ordinance and the sacredness that surround the mask, the masker and the masquerade. The masquerade, as an entity, is a visual mediation between the mundane world and the ancestral world, which

legitimizes fleeting boundary-crossing between normally distinct categories entity and the acceptance of the audience of that reality. The appropriate responses, is to concretize the performance structure and the aesthetic priorities of the masquerade art.

To Dryer in O'Shaughnessy (2005) "throughout the history of human culture, people have become dissatisfied with language's ability to express reality and as a result, have developed new modes of representation". It is necessary to construct new ways of seeing reality, as people only known reality through representation. From this arise the contrasting and alternative theories and representational modes of abstraction, realism, and modernism, to mention a few. What is the interconnectivity of representational art with the theory of mimesis? While for Aristotle in Burnyeat (1998) "Mimesis in its simplest context means imitation or representation in Greek. Both Aristotle and Plato recognized mimesis as an important nest of art and aesthetics". Plato gave it a negative assessment based on his realism of ideas, while Aristotle gave it a more favourable and comprehensive analysis within the context of diverse art forms. Burnyeat (1998), notes that Aristotle recognized

> Imitation as the essential component in human growth, education, and various artistic artworks, for example, Aristotle argued contrary to Plato, that the arts have a certain healing power because they are imaginative, and that the healing (Catharsis) of tragedy is generated only because they are imitation and detached from reality.Mimesis as a concept of representation or imitation has a relative substantial role, although not as a singular category but rather as an open concept used to describe many different activities and phenomena.

Halliwell (2002) distinguishes five groups of phenomena in relation with which the notion of mimesis was used: First visual art resemblance (including figurative works of art); second, behavioural emulation, third, imitation, fourth, impersonation, including dramatic enactment; vocal or musical production of significant or expressive structures of sound, fifth, metaphysical conformity. An example is in the Pythagorean belief, reported by Aristotle, that the material world is a mimesis of the

immaterial domain world of numbers. Moreover, the exact meaning of the notion of mimesis also depends on the field and context of use.

Benjamin (1999), and Bracken (2002), wrote about the perceptual preconditions of mimesis. They both consider hidden correspondences in nature, which are partly conceived by human and partly unconcealed, as a cause that motivates and awakens the mimesis capacities in humans. The performative dimension of mimesis is also emphasized after recognizing the possibilities concealed in an object and the means of expression offered by the specific branch of art. The artist has the opportunity and freedom, he or she maximizes the artistic potentials of right creative choices.

4.2 The sociological contextualizing of stilt dance forms

In considering the context in which a work of art can be termed representational or mimetic, this study considered the sociological adaptabilities of stilt and dance in Africa. It should be noted that walking on stilt has been part of human kind's existence, religious rituals, customs, and even agricultural practices. Stilt walking or stilt dancing exist possiblyin every culture as shown by most literatures in this study. This is also supported by Braverman (2006) who states that "stilt walking and stilt dancing exist in nearly every culture on the planet where trees grow". However, many of these rich traditions he observes are in danger of disappearing as people move away from villages into urban areas. The functions of stilt varied from one society to the other, but why man first decided to create and walk on stilts is unknown in many cultures, even though some other reasons for using stilt are stated in the literature review. Probably, there is human desire to reach greater

heights and to communicate to the Supreme Being up that made man to stand tall on stilts.

Dance in Africa has a long history, Quane and Glanz (2010) "briefly estimate that there are between one thousand and two thousand five hundred languages in Africa; thus, the dance also vary and are equally as numerous". Though each ethnic group has its own story and differences in dance style, central to the dances of Africa are a connection to the land through oral traditions, memory and epic.

Considering the historical significance of African dance, Asante (2010) states that, any examination of African dance must consider the role it plays in African society. Traditionally, African dance expresses the livelihood of the community, depicting activities such as hunting, farming, cooking and fishing. They also played an integral part in ceremonies and celebrations such as birth, initiation and weddings. While, the composition of Africa dance connects movement, music, artifacts and function, it also conveys the values and beliefs of the community that created it. The gestures of the hips, shoulders, legs, hands, and head teach codes of conduct and transmit traditional values.

For Innis (2009), the combination of design with pictorial elements allows for a complex tension to exist at the heart of visual art that makes art never a mere copying of direct visual impressions. Langer in Innis (2009) sees visual art as "symbolizing from the outset, "a process of formulation, shaping, defining of "the impressions themselves according to the principles of expressiveness". If the objects in themselves become "motifs" as Langer avers, the stilt dance forms becomes a symbol of representation of an abstract interpretation of the sculptor's imagination in a given virtual kinetic space. The stilt dancer stretches into the sky occupying an infinite space around it, dominating everything in the surrounding environment as

symbol of felt power. Innis, further avers that Langer defines "Virtual space as the space in which symbolic form exist and all forms created as a sculptural forms emanates from the mind in an abstract motif".

The *Angere* dance forms take the position of Langer as "Living forms" which she says are products of all good art. Such forms as explained by Langer as a form living in the same way as a border or a spiral is intrinsically "growing" That is, it expresses like-feeling, growth, movement, emotion, and everything that characterizes vital existence. Sculptural forms according to Langer are a powerful abstraction from actual objects and the three-dimensional space which we construe by means of them, through touch and sight. It makes its own construction in tree-dimensions, namely the semblance of kinetic space, just as one's own body is the centre of a kinetic volume. Sculpture is literally the image of kinetic volume in sensory space.

This study interrogates the sculptural characteristics of stilt dance forms using mixed media, while welding is seen as a major component of the studio work. The studio works began with articulating a frame work for exploration premises on drawing and sketches of the *Angere* (Stilt dance). Dance as art forms seem multifaceted and broad in concept which has however narrowed the exploration to focus on the postures of the stilt dance forms. To analysis dance as a visual form seem more revealing than the performative concept of dance that emphasis movement and in turn evokes emotive feeling in the dancers and the viewers.

Laban Movement Analysis (2013) initiated a method and language of analyzing dance termed *Laban Movement Analysis* (LMN). This is for describing, visualizing, interpreting and documenting all varieties of human movement in dance. This type of movement study which originated from the work of Rudolf Laban was developed and extended by Lisa Ullmann, IrmgardBartenief, Warren Lamb and many

others. It uses a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating contributions from anatomy, Kinesiology, psychology, Labonatation and many other fields, which may possibly include visual arts.

This movement analysis is used as a tool by dancers, actors, musicians, athletes, physical and occupational therapist, psychotherapy, peace studies, anthropology, health and wellness and is one of the mostly widely used systems of human movement analysis. Laban Movement Analysis is divided into these categories:

Body - (Total-body connectivity), Effort-(Energetic dynamics), Shape, Space-(space harmony). The effort factor elements are: Space -Direct or indirect Weight - Strong / light Time - Sudden/ quick or sustain, Flow 2- Bound / free. Laban named the combination of the first three categories (Space, Weight, and Time) the effort Action/ or Action Drive. These combinations are descriptively named Float, Punch (Thrust), Glide, Slash, Dab, Wring, Flick and Press. These terminologists could help generally in analyzing dance in any given study on human movement in dance. Much of the movement in the stilt exploration deals more with the upper body of the dance forms for some of the figures are standing on their two legs especially the last series of studio exploration.

4.3 Description and analysis of works produced

4.3.1 Series one: Ijoya I-IV

Ijoya in Yoruba language literary means “dancing time”. These sculptures were executed at the explorative stage of the studio work. These can be seen as the ‘pilot’ study which served as a pedestal to all the other studio explorations. The sculptures were created using found metal objects and combination of motorcycle shock absorbers, springs, bicycle parts, pipes and mild steel rods. A simple approach

of execution was employed using characteristics linear nature of the metal to convey meaning in the creation of the dance postures. In *Ijoya I,* (Plate XCIII) the legs of the dancer was created with motorcycle silencer, while round pipe was used to form part of the shoulders of the dancer. These works could be appreciated either as a male or as a female figure; this is because of the simplistic nature of the sculptures which bear no details to suggest either it is a male or a female figure. Varieties of postures were produced and are all mounted on their individual base for stability. However, the idea of weather the sculpture looks like a male or female form also depends on an individual perception or interpretation. Again, it should be noted that the preliminary explorations were to ascertain that the consequent explorations were made possible by exploring different approaches in the studio work.

Ijoya II, (Plate XCIV) is a sculpture that explores diagonal compositions, and in doing this, the sculpture was made to slant diagonally. This concept is technically adapted in the study to position the sculptures in a way that could evoke visual motion by a diagonal directional thrust. The sculpture was positioned to slant as though falling; yet it was balanced on a rigid base. The diagonal lines created dynamic directional movement making the sculpture to be aesthetically dramatic when viewed.

In *Ijoya III* (Plate XCV), the sculpture was executed with round pipes, which form the torso of the work. Bicycle fork was used to represent the trouser of the figure and two pieces of 10mm steel rods were used to suggest the legs of the dancing figure. The hands of the figure are stretched upwards direction; while the neck is bent downwards with a big necklace. Even thought, the base of the form makes the lower part of the legs to look rigid owing to lack of adequate space. This was to allow the legs of the sculpture to be free from the base which could create a better visual movement.

The last work in this series is *Ijoya IV* (Plate XCVI).This exploration looks at the possibility of executing a sculpture that was directly inspired by the *Angere* form. After the other three sculptures were executed in this series, the idea of creating a work inspired by the stilt dance form in the diagonal was initiated to capture the intended static motion of the research. *Ijoya IV* is another simple elegant sculpture and is the tallest among the sculptures in this series. This work, like the others was executed with purely metallic found objects. Like, empty milk cans, ball bearings and 10mm and 12mm steel rods. Bicycle fork was also used for the legs; but in this case, a rope was used to wrap some parts of the legs. This is to depict the traditional use of rope as material used in strapping the stilt to the legs of the dancer. The sculpture was mounted on a base which did not really allow for a dynamic movement because the legs were welded directly onto the base. However, this gave the sculpture that rigid look. These explorations captured the first objective of the study which considers the documentation of the *Angere* dance form in sculpture.

4.3.2 Series Two: Couple Dance I-IV

These sculptures present another objective of the study that focuses on how the dance forms could be positioned standing without lower supporting element. In these explorations, what kept the sculptures stable are the ways in which the two figures were positioned; they stand freely on their two legs supported by each other's bodies. The idea is to weld the sculpture together in a way that they will support each other. The interaction of space and the rhythm of the composition in articulation with the slanting movement of in the body of the sculptures, and the dexterous use of the found objects are vivid attributes that enabled the researcher in creating dynamic compositions.

All the sculptures in this series were made to appear similar in composition with little variety only in the positioning of the hands and legs of the forms. Again, all the sculptures were created with the same type of found objects like, bicycle fork and nubs, nuts, washers, ball bearings, generator pistons, and pieces of one inch round pipe. For example, in *Couples Dance II*, (Plate XCVIII), the legs of the sculptures were created with the bicycle forks which are welded to a slim round pipe that forms the torso. The two dancers are welded together at the waist, and part of the legs that have contact and all the works in this series stand without any lower supporting elements.

4.3.3 Series Three: High Praise and Masquerade Dance

At this stage of the studio exploration; wood was introduced as part of the materials. The wood was to portray the traditional materials use mostly in African for the stilt. Usually, the dancers strapped two wooded poles onto their legs that elevate them above normal height while dancing. However, the pieces of wood were combined with found objects, pipe and pieces of 10mm and 12mm mild steel rods in the execution of the works. For example, in the execution of *High Praise* (Plate CII), the head was represented with small ball bearing welded onto a quarter mild steel rod that formed the neck of the sculpture. The torso was constructed with 2cm round pipe that were cut into 4inches. The long legs were made of woods that were drilled in which bolts and nuts were passed through them, and welded onto the 12mm steel rods that stand for the legs of the sculpture. The raised hands suggest a mood of praise, which has preoccupied the attitudes of most Nigerians. In Nigerian today, it has become a common mentality for most people to use the name of God in vain

especially in business transactions and this act is only to prove that, they are not only lying but also doing this for fraudulent reasons.

An average Nigerian believes strongly in swearing by God's name just for both wrong and right reasons. This is exemplified by some Nigerian politicians that do not see anything bad in oath taking using the Bible or the Quran. Yet, after the swearing in; they are still involved in the misappropriation of public funds. However, the positive part of some of the Nigerian's prayerful attitude could also be attributed to the peace that is relatively recorded in some parts of the country as 'Boko Haram' activites continue to claim thousands of lives. Another prayer characteristic of some Nigerians is also exhibited in the number of churches and mosques that are built yearly. Sundays are when people generally hear echoes of worship songs and preaching all around the neighbourhood while, in the same vein, Fridays is also evident of the noise pollution characteristic of the times of worship as depicted in the sculpture titled *High Praise* that describes the call for prayer.

Masquerade Dance, (Plate CXX was executed with combination of wood, found objects and steel rods like in *High Praise*. The torso of the work was created with 2mm round pipe. While the shoulder bears two pieces of wood that was drilled before attaching bolts and nuts. Two pieces of 10mm steel rods extend down and were welded to the bolts and nuts which stand for the legs. The hands were executed with two pieces of 25cm long quarter rods while; filler rods were used to construct the hands and fingers of the sculpture.

4.3.4 Series Four: Cultural Performer I-VI

This series look at other possibilities in the studio exploration. It also, postulates reflective approaches in the direction of making dynamic postural compositions and dexterous use of mixed media in the practical work. Consideration

was specifically based on the aesthetic quality of the mixed media in the production of the stilt dance postures, which is the third objective of the study. The sculptures were executed using the same approach, but what was different however, are the characteristics of the individual work that was presented using varied postural compositions. The costumes of the *cultural Performers* (Plates CIII-CVIII) were the basic elements that gave the forms their traditional aesthetic qualities and outlook. So many tiny found objects, like different sizes of washers, ropes, tins, strings, bicycle hubs were used with other materials like, fabrics and pieces of square and round pipes. These works are the most colourful series in all the studio explorations. However, in all the sculptures; varied polychromatic interplay of colours were used which brighten the outlook of the features and also gave lives to the sculptures.

Also, in this series; variety of postural possibilities has been created, bringing to the exhibition the interplay of sculpture and performance art. The explorations will also demonstrate theatrical display of figurative still dancers assembled for interactive display of still performance art. This will possibly be achieved in the exhibition; because the display will have its role to play in the theatrical reenactment of the sculptures. Also, different public reactions are expected, which will hopefully open up discussion and appraisal of the sculptures.

4.3.5 Series Five: Initiation Dance I-III

In this series; the characteristic of the stilt dance forms were explored using the female figures. *Initiation Dance I-III* sculpture pieces were executed with metal found objects such as assorted washers, springs and small pieces of metal. The basic features that look like the stilt dance forms are only in the elongated legs of the sculptures. In the traditional cultural context, the sculptures portray the *coming of age* of the girls in the Igbo traditional set up as *initiation Dance*. This is the initiation of

girls into *womanhood* or from teenagers into adulthood which, usually comes up within a festival; depending on the culture and society. The occasion usually is heralded with dancing and singing by the age group of the initiators in the community. These sculptures captured a reenactment of still performance art in the dance postures.

Initiation Dance I, (Plate CIX) was presented in a subtle dance posture with the hands stylistically positioned backwards. Generally, *Initiation II,* (Plate CX) was created in the same manner as the first sculpture titled *Initiation I,* but with postural differences. One of the most interesting features of this figure is the way the wrapper was executed as if it was modeled with clay. The modeling effect was achieved by using fabric and the application of glue to hold the fabric in place, while the skeletal framework in metal gives the support.

The third sculpture is titled *Initiation Dance III,* (Plate CXI) this was also produced using the same technique like the other two sculptures. The textural finishing in brown on the body of the female form gives this out look of natural earth colour. The hands of the dancer were executed in an upward movement with an elegant and gentle twist of the waist; making the sculpture assumes a natural feminine form. However, the bangles on the arm were made of springs, washers and bicycle hubs and a big ring of round found object on the neck that serves as necklace. A diagonal directional movement peculiar to the general concept of 'static motion' was applied here; the frontal positioning of the sculpture gave the desirable visual illusion of movement in the sculpture.

4.3.6 Series Six: Elegance I-III

In these works, the aesthetic characteristics of mixed media were considered, which was anchored on one of the objectives. *Elegance I,* (Plate CXI) is a female

figure of a dancer executed as simple as the other two sculptures in the series. This sculpture is an elongated figure that stands firmly on a square base. The torso was executed in a frontal position that created a forward thrust movement, while the neck was made to bend to the right. The position of the torso allows the body to be bent backwards, without any special attention to deliberately twist the body of the sculpture to convey movement. What gives the elegant movement to the figure was the gracious elongated lower part of the body that conveys an image of the graceful famine appearance. The backward placements of the torso, the positioning of the head and the elongated legs were what gave simplicity to the dancer.

The polychromatic acrylic finishing applied on the sculpture gave those lurid bright effects, with colours; like blue, yellow, green, and golden brown that were used in highlighting the bangles and part of the shoulder of the sculpture. *Elegance II*, (Plate CXII) is another female figure that is more spectacular than *Elegance I.* The overall features show the grace that characterized the dance postures, especially the feeling which a female dance could trigger. The yellow and pinkish head gear, which looks like a royal staff, the different sizes of the bangles painted yellow and red and the necklaces are all aesthetically adding to the mixed media qualities of the sculpture.

Elegance III (Plate CXIII), is the only male figure in this series. The figure looks like a typical contemporary *Angere* dancer that performance solely for entertainment, which is one of the most striking sculptures in the Series. The sculpture symbolizes a slim elongated male form full of action in the outlook. The 'gesticulated' expression of the hands suggests a rhythmic directional movement. The eyes unknowingly follow the flow of the right hand as if it is pointing to an incident in that direction. The sculpture is striking in appearance in the sense that, if the sculpture is viewed at a glance, it will show an illusionistic gestural movement as if the figure is

actually in motion. Again, this concept of ‘static motion was captured in this sculpture. The small size of the torso also accentuates the elongated features of the *Angere* dancer.

The slim attributes of the sculpture further creates an interesting movement that connects the torso and the lower part of the body of the sculpture. However, this rhythmic movement continues to the knee and goes down to the feet of the sculpture. Creating an overall relationship between the torso and the lower part of the body, this creates holistic body movement in the dancer sculpture. Also, the sculpture captured those thespians’ characteristics of theatre performer, especially in the rendition of the attire worn. The figure was adorned with colourful bangles of yellow, green and little touch of red dangling from the shoulders of the figure. The sculpture stands on two legs which were represented with 2mm and 30cm long pipes. The sculpture generally was finished in dark reddish acrylic colour.

4.3.7 Series Seven: Dance of Life I and II

Dance of life, (Plate CXV), is a majestically composed male figure dancing with both of the hands stretched sideward in a conceited manner. The sculpture represents the *Angere* masquerade with a touch of a mystic appearance in the use of maroon and a little bit of a touch of black finishing. The Interplay of twisted quarter rods on the head created an antenna that looks like a feather. However, in the traditional settings, the masquerade is seen to dominants the people around it with its height. Also, the mythic attributes that surround the masquerader brings fear and trembling into the minds of human being, since they are viewed as spirits.

In this contemporary period, many people still attribute that spiritual embodiment to the masquerade. *Dance of life* as masquerade is a human that represents spirit in the mind of the people. The body of *Dance of Life* was created

with a well manipulated fabric wrapped around the skeletal frame work made with metal. The draperies were well modeled giving a true to life feeling of the attire of the dancer. The outstretched hands sideways created an impression of flexibility and elegance of movement in the figure. The legs stand on its two feet which was created with two pieces of round pipes which is about 30cm in length. The round pipes formed the lower supporting elements that created a dynamic composition of a standing figure in an action. In a performative perspective the talking drum will normally praise the masquerade with the beat of the drum.

The *Dance of Life* symbolized a masquerade that dominates every living thing in the environment with its height, looking down at others like his subjects, full of pride and enthusiasm. However, as a spirit, the masquerade dances majestically with an overwhelming posture like an object to be feared, adorned and a mysterious being in the eyes of the beholders. presently, all these has charged , the contemporary stilt dancer does not appear like masquerade but presents himself as solely an object of entertainment. In the colour application, a subtle approach of surface finishing was applied with little highlight of yellow on the bangles, light blue on the feather-like filament on the head. The radish mystic colour effect creates a traditional aura which connects the masquerade to the 'spirit' world. *Dance of life I,* as a theme connotes one of those impossibilities that a masquerade cannot appraise the gods without a dance. Religions all over the world acknowledge the power of dance in the worship of the Supreme Beings.

Dance of Life II, (Plate CXVI) explores a female dancer clad in traditional gorgeous attire adorned with traditional African motifs. The head gear was represented with a big hoe that was welded onto a cylindrical pipe. This was painted with a brownish colour, while the contrasted effect of yellow against the black motifs

was effectively used on the sculpture. Also, the traces of other colours like blue, red and green can be seen on the arm of the sculpture. Hence, the use of mixed media metallic objects creates an intriguing interplay between the space, form and the tactile surface embellishment on the figurative form.

4.3.8 Series Eight: Ijopo I and II, Odeya

Ijopo in the Yoruba language literally is translated as “too much dance”. In the exploration of *Ijopo I and II,* (Plates CXVII and CXVIII) instead of the usually acrylic colour finishing, a combination of fabric off-cuts and acrylic colours were utilized. These off-cuts were gathered from tailors around Samaru in Zaria, according to the researcher’s choice of colours and desirable patterns. The fabrics were further cut into smaller pieces of 3cmx3cm or less depending on desire of usage. This process was comprehensively explained in chapter three, however; overlapping effect was created with the fabric-off cuts on the clad surfaces on the sculpture in a collage approach. Also, the collage effect was created on the skirt of the female dancer using assorted blue colours.

In *Ijoya II,* (Plate CXVIII), different flowery fabrics were used mainly on the trouser of the male figure. *Ijoya II*, appeared to be more striking in terms of execution, the use of assorted red fabrics create different effects on the general viewpoint of the sculpture. *Odeya* (Plate CXIX) is a female form that was worked out in the same direction like the other two sculptures. But in this exploration, off-cuts of calendar were used. The papers were cut into small pieces of 3cmx3cm and 4cmx4cm, while the same collage method of pasting was employed. The papers were pasted using glue on the clad canvas according to the artist’s desire considering varied patterns for decorative effects.

4.3.9 Series Nine: Masquerade Dance I and II

Masquerade Dance I and II (Plates CXX and CXXI), explore *Angere* dance as rooted in the traditional set up. Even though, these sculptures were presented as unmasked, it could also be view as masquerade considering a personal insight of interpretation. The characteristics features employed in the execution of the work and the objects used like wood and rope gave the sculpture its traditional local touch within the ambits of African masquerades. The long legs of the dancer positions the form as *Angere*, but weather the face is covered on not it does not reduce the masquerade essence of the sculpture. However, the two ball bearing used to express the eyes could be interpreted as mask.

The theory of propounded by Ododo (2015) coined *Fackuerade,* a masking absence and Ancestral presence is "embedded in duality and double essence of the *Ebira*. According to this theory, the *Ebira* cosmic view asserted that "God created things in pair '*Eku'rahu'* has the dual propensity to transmit metaphysical reality into the meta-critical reality without a mask in the presence of seen/visible and unseen/invisible audience" Although this is viewed from performance art perspective, yet it could be applied to other discipline of research, in this essence, Masquerade could be viewed as an unmasked performer. These questions the "facekuradic theory" as it relates to masked masquerading. Before the coinage of the word "masquerade" what was masquerade called generally in different African traditional culture? It is clear, that every ethnic group has its own language and names that masquerades were called. For example, the general name for masquerade in Yoruba is *Egungu,* in Igala it is called *Egwu*, Nsukka calls it *Omabe*, *Okeleke* in *Ekinrinnade* in kogi and *Akereburu* in Owu in Osun state. Therefore, either masked or not, masquerade is just humans interpretation. Another perspective to look at the duality of representation is the

Yoruba traditional concept of the *ibeji* (twin). This concept also believes that God created things in pairs, and that is what brought about identical Twin.

The elongated figure stands with the combination of wood and metal that was creatively manipulated. The woods were drilled at the upper and lower parts, and bolts and nuts were passed through the holes and welded to the 12mm steel rods. Rope was wrapped around the 12mm mild steel rods, leaving some few inches away from the feet. The surface of the sculpture was finished with burnt effects which appear on some part of the sculpture, followed by little touch of black acrylic colour.

4.3.10 Series Ten: Free-Flow I and II

The last Series interrogate the possibilities of how *static motion* could be explored from the postural possibilities of the sculpture using the stilt dance form. *Free-Flow I* (Plate CXXIV), is a female figure captured in a dramatic postural composition with a hat –like head gear. The sculpture stands freely without a lower supporting element but technically devised an upper support, which is a fish line. The fish line was attached to the back of the sculpture around the neck and then tied to an upper nail point on the wall. *Free-Flow II* (Plate CXXVI), is a male dancer engulfed in an acrobatic display. The torso was made to slop backwards with the two hands stretched out sideways. This work when compared to *Free-Flow I* show more visual motion and dynamic use of lines, space and dexterity of the use of mixed media.

The use of rope around the waist and the legs allowed for the natural effects of the stilt. *Static motion* was captured in positioning the dancer without a lower supporting element. This was the same method used in the other sculpture that utilized a fish line to fix the sculpture on an upper support. The mounting of the sculpture could be said will be more appreciated in the way the sculpture was placed diagonally in a frontal thrust movement. After mounting the sculpture, what strikes one would be

the invisibility of the fish line when seen at first glance, the fish line that was used as a support will take a while for the viewer to see and understand how the sculpture was mounted. This in itself creates that mythic impression as if the sculpture is standing without any support.

CHAPTER FIVE

CATALOGUE

5.1 Cataloguing of Studio Exploration

This chapter has described and analysed all the works produced in the studio exploration. The works discussed concepts and ideas on how the stilt dance have been an inspiration to the study and have been interpreted in the study. Considering the concept of *static motion* and postural possibilities using mixed media in welded sculpture, all the works were created in ten series. The first series explored the first objective of the study and further went ahead to capture all the other four objectives in other series of the studio works.

The catalogue of the studio exploration presents all the works executed in the study, while some of the drawings and sketches were presented in the methodology in Chapter Three of the thesis as preliminary studies. All the drawings and sketches produced are too numerous to fit into this portfolio. Therefore, a holistic and explicit selection was made and will be presented during the final exhibition which is a strong component of the research. The works in this catalogue have been grouped into systematic sequence of execution, starting from series one to ten. The title (if any) was given otherwise; it was presented as part of a series. In addition, dimensions in height were provided with the year of execution. Thirty works were executed in this study which are contained in the catalogue and will be presented in the exhibition as a performative reenactment of figurative sculptural representations derivative from the *Angere* dance form. Some of the works captured the stilt dance forms as inspiration to create other dance sculptures that might not necessarily resemble the stilt dance form. Whereas some of the works express visual motion and others capture essence of the use of mixed media approach to sculpture, but are also stilt dancers.



Plate XCII: Ijoya I, 2010, Repeated, Found Objects, stainless steel and steel rod, 98cm high



Plate XCIII: Ijoya II, 2010, Repeated Found Objects and steel rod, 100cm high



Plate: XCIV, Ijoya III, 2010, Repeated, Found Objects and steel rod, 128cm high



Plate XCV: Ijoya IV, 2010, Repeated, Found Objects and steel rod, 112cm high

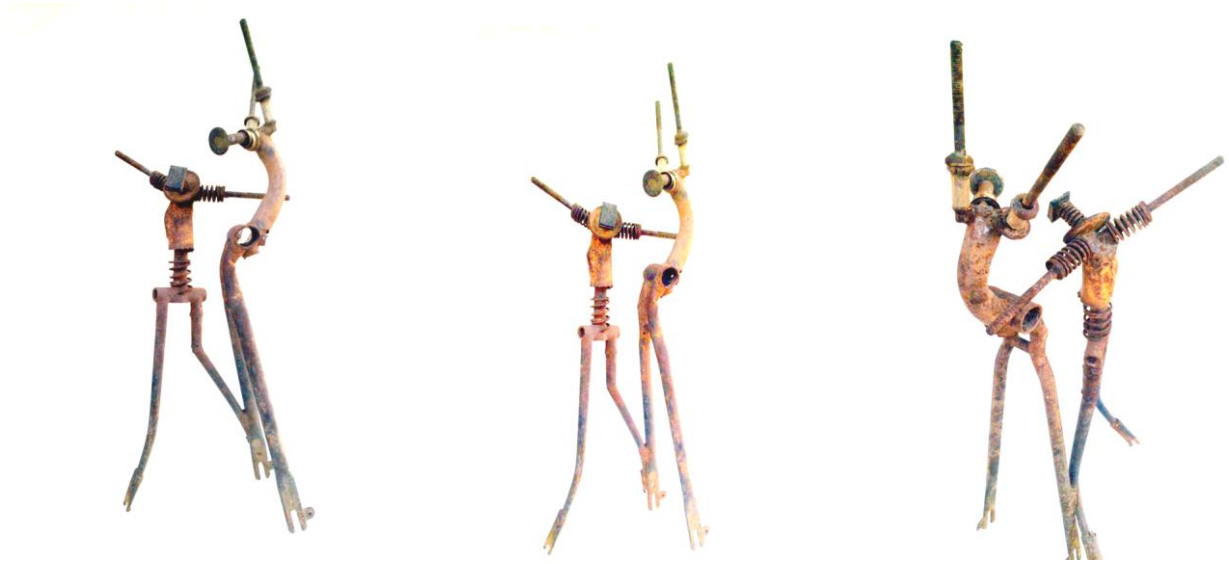


Plate XCVI: Couple Dance I, 2010, Repeated, Found Objects, 82cm



Plate XCVII: Couple Dance II: 2010, Repeated, Found Objects, 84cm high



Plate XCVIII: Couple Dance III: 2011, Found Objects, 68 cm high



Plate XCIX: Couple Dance IV: 2010, Repeated, Found Objects, 62cm high



Plate C: Ceremonial Dance: 2011, Repeated, Found Objects, 62cm high



Plate CI: High Praise, 2011, Found Objects, steel rod and wood, 103cm high



Plate CII: Cultural Performer I: 2011-2012, Found Objects, steel, Canvas and Acrylic, 130cm high



Plate CIII: Cultural Performer I: 2011-2012, Found Objects, steel rod, Fabric and Acrylic, 168 cm high



Plate CIV: Cultural Performer III: 2011-2012, Found Objects, steel, Canvas, Rope and Acrylic, 138cm high



Plate CV: Cultural Performer IV: 2011-2012, Found Objects, steel, Rope, and Acrylic, 115cm high



Plate CVI: Cultural Performer V: 2011-2012, Found Objects, steel, Rope, Canvas and Acrylic, 115cm high



Plate CVII: Cultural Performer VI: 2011-2012, Found Objects, steel rod, Fabric and Acrylic, 130cm high



Plate CVIII: Initiation Dance I: 2013-2014, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Fabric and colour, 142cm high

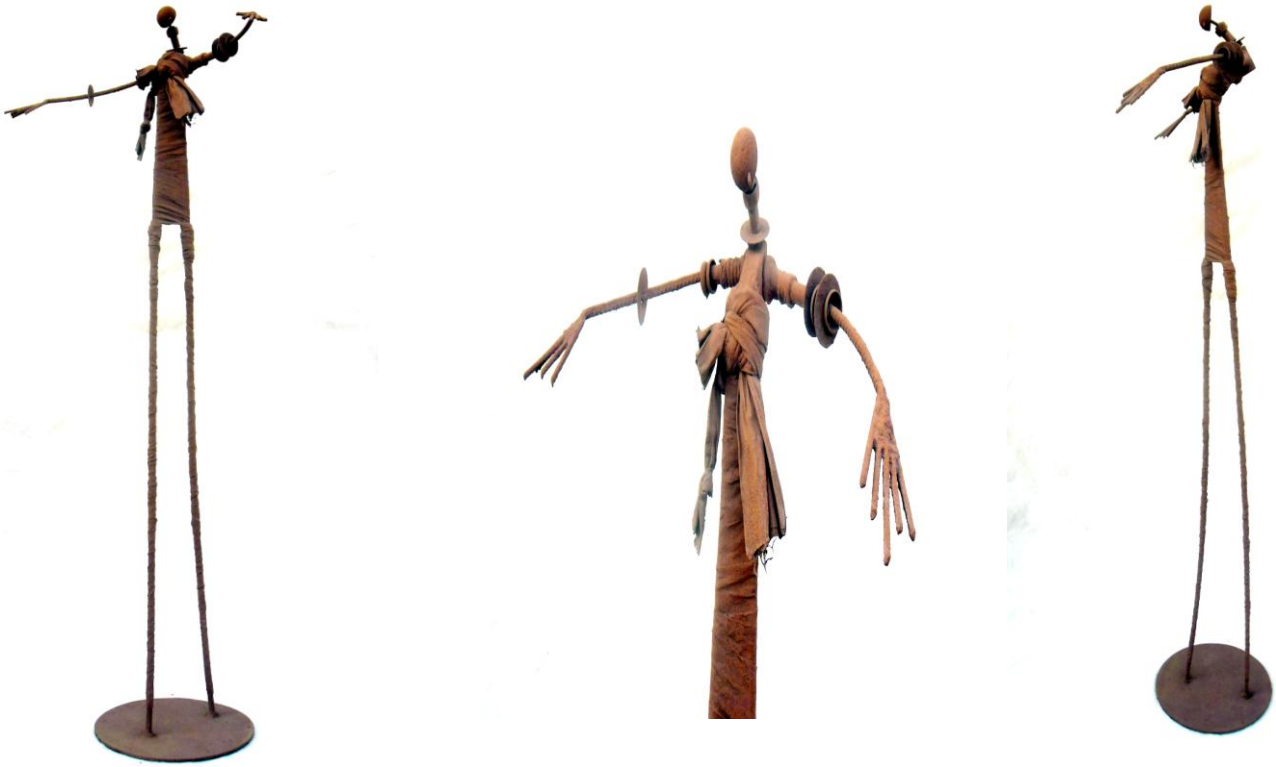


Plate: CIX: Initiation Dance II: 2013-2014, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Fabric and earth colour, 140 cm high



Plate CX: Initiation Dance III: 2013-2014, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Fabric and earth colour, 170cm high



Plate CXI: Elegance I: 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas and Acrylic, 198cm high



Plate CXII: Elegance II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, Mild steel, Canvas and Acrylic Paint, 184cm high

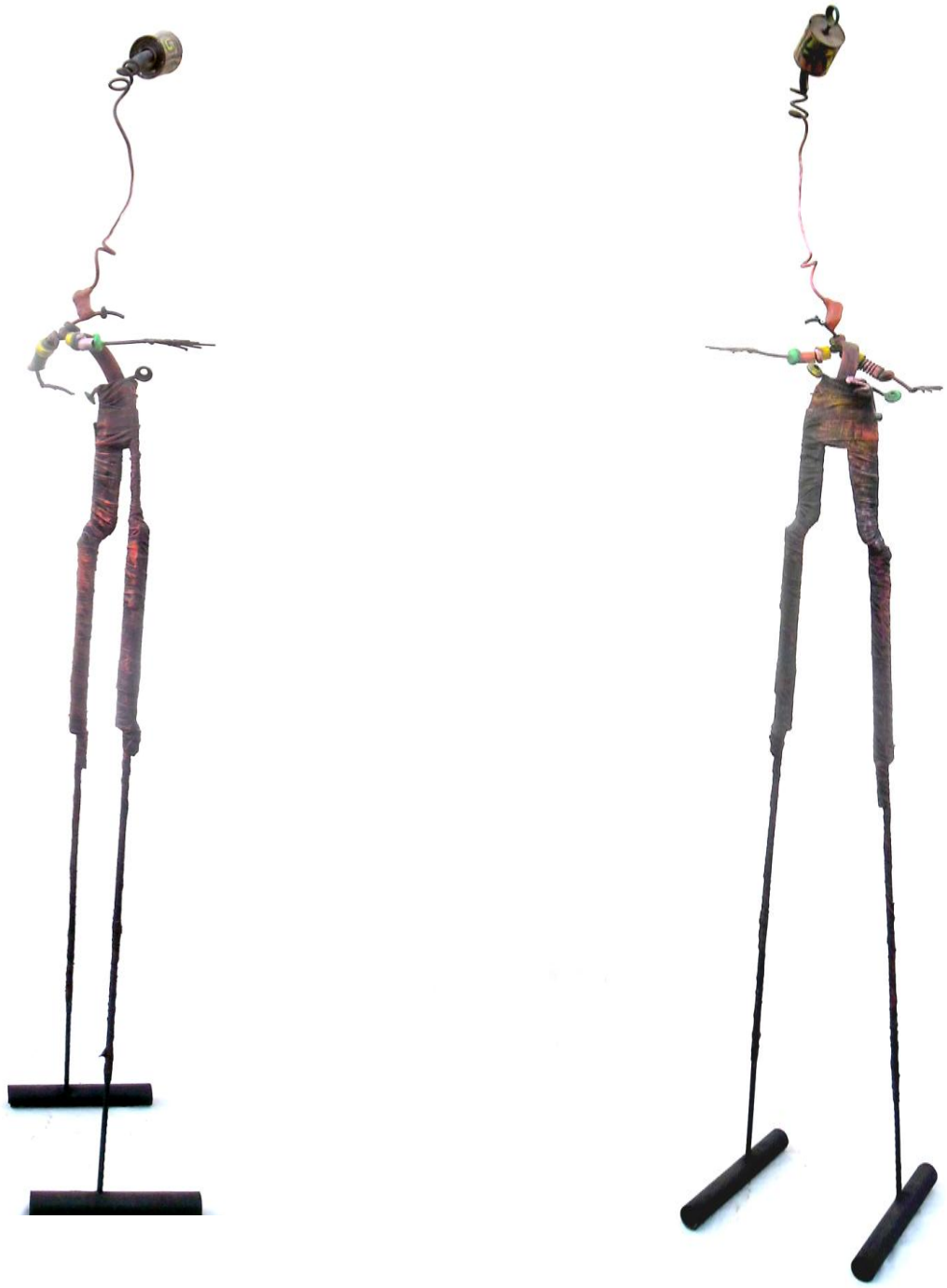


Plate CXIII: Elegance III: 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas and Acrylic, 146cm high



Plate CXIV: Dance of Life I : 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas and Acrylic, 214cm high



Plate CXV: Dance of Life II : 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas, Rope and Acrylic, 220 cm high



Plate CXVI: Ijopo I : 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas, Fabric off-cuts and Acrylic, 198cm high



Plate CXVII: Ijopo II: 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Fabric off –cuts and Acrylic, 228cm high
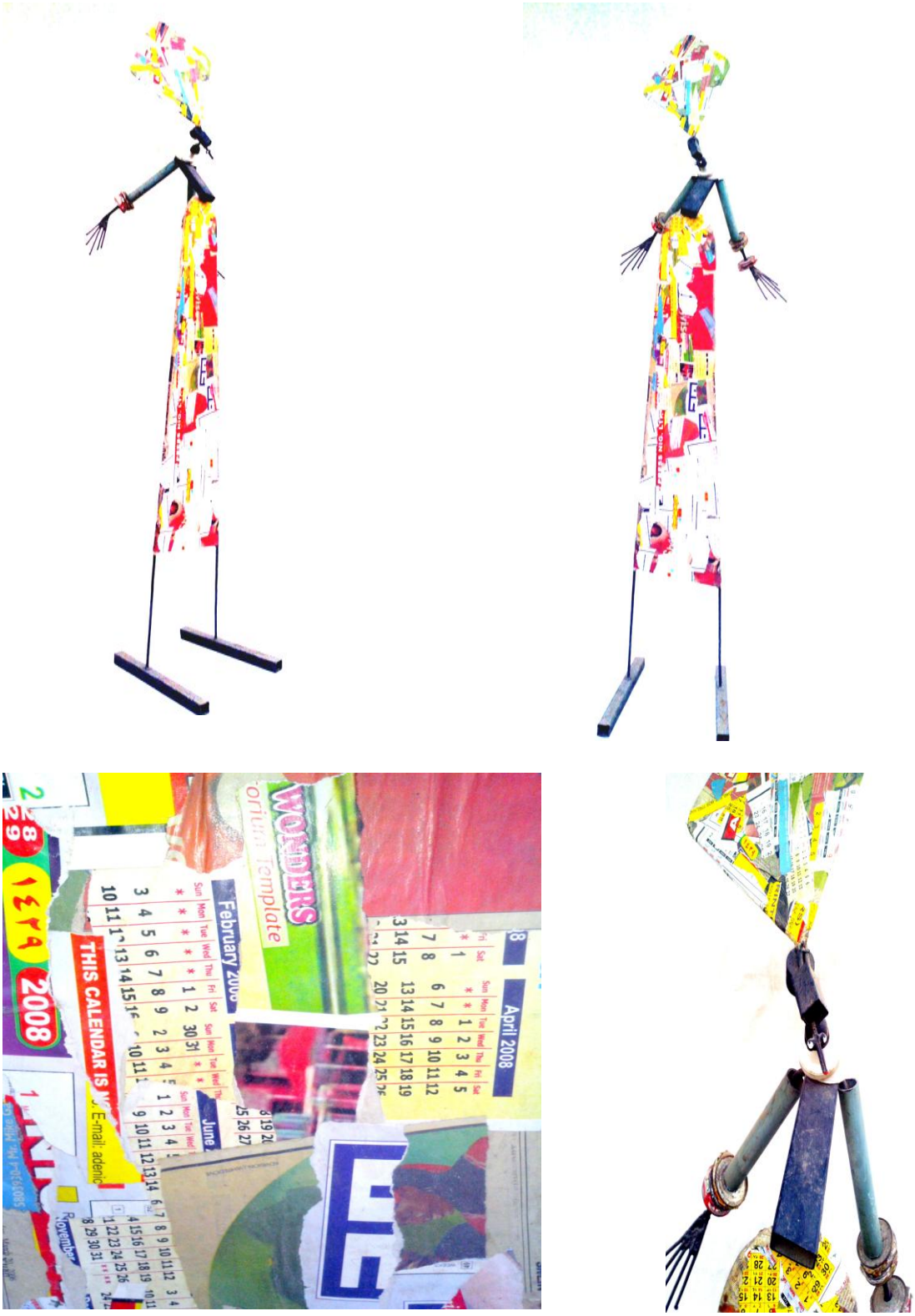


Plate CXVIII: Odeya: 2011-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Canvas, Acrylic and coloured paper, 220cm high



Plate CXIX: Masquerade Dance I, 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas, Rope, Wood and Acrylic, 220 cm high



Plate CXX: Masquerade Dance II, 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Canvas and Acrylic, 249cm high



Plate CXXI: Masquerade Dance II, detailed, 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Canvas and Acrylic, 249cm high



Plate CXXII: Free-Flow I, 2014-2015, Repeated, Detailed Found Objects, steel rod, Canvas and Acrylic, 250 cm high



Plate CXXIII: Free-Flow I, 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel rod, Canvas and Acrylic, 250 cm high



Plate: CXXIV, Free-Flow II, 2014-2015, Repeated, Found Objects, steel, Canvas, Rope and Acrylic, 238 cm high



Plate: CXXV, Free-Flow II, 2014-2015, Found Objects, steel, Canvas, Rope and Acrylic, 238 cm high

5.2 Artist's Curatorial Statement

Sculptural explorations have expanded in scope over the last century from the production of representational objects in the traditional mode of expression, to the inclusion of performance art, installation art, and video art to socially engaged art practice. There have also been changes in the nomenclature of artistic terminologies that emphasise the role of visual culture as a forceful drive of expression in this contemporary time. Again, there has been re-definition of sculptural expression. However, this points to the challenges encountered in the traditional ways in which sculpture is understood which leads to the idea of materiality in sculpture idiom of expression.

"Static Motion" as a concept in this study was derived from dance movement, and the possibilities of positioning figurative sculptures in dynamic postural compositions. Although, the study's strength of departure was inclined to welding, due to other materials used, like fabrics, ropes, wood, and paper, the approach to the execution of the studio explorations cannot be seen fully as welding but rather termed mixed media in sculpture. Stilt dance as a thematic expression provides the basis and the freedom to explore the beauty of mixed media and form through the process of making, combining varied materials in the execution of the studio works.

In the course of the research, a personal vocabulary of exploration through the materiality, texture and surface of the stilt dance forms plays a vital role. Furthermore, the artist cannot ignore the intimacy associated with innate experiences encountered during the studio work. These experiences emanate from the physical act, the spiritual, as well as a continual interrogation of process, form and materiality. In addition, the execution of the stilt dance forms has in a way exposed the researcher's

internal world, his affinity for one of the Nigerian cultural heritage (dance) and its relationship with nature of materials structures that abound in everyday experiences.

In the words of Bruner (1984) "whether 'natural' or 'design', the environment demands to be seen. We are born into a world of visual images projected onto our retinas, clamor for the attention of our perceptual processes. Even before we can think, we can see". Therefore, our daily experiences in life are usually portrayed consciously or unconsciously in our artistic expressions. "For nature becomes the mimetic mirror, for it manifests the three-dimensional plasticity of images within a given situation". This point to the world as element in which artist generally borrow forms from, for everything or anything an artist will create or have created exists in the world.

The studio work involves a reflective interaction between these variables: the traditional Yoruba "Angere" (Stilt dance), and the researcher's knowledge of materials which he brings to fore in the studio explorations. The sculptor in this regards; must also share his practical experiences and persuade others to see what he sees in his works. This will consequently resulted into exhibiting the works and provide the necessary text to back up the studio work for a better understanding of static motion.

In relating to some of these theorists, the studio artists have benefitted in visualizing concepts that are sociologically driven and have helped many researchers to look into a broader perspectives in their studies. Visual arts inquiry will be seen to be located mostly within the field of practice. Deriving ideas from the educationalists mentioned, what is helpful according to Sullivan (2005) is the concept of theorizing art practice as transformative research. Sullivan proposed a framework for theorizing

visual art practice within three traditional paradigms of inquiry: interpretive, empiricist and critical. He argues that the explanatory and transformative theories of human learning can be found in the educational experience of the art-making studio. Sullivan in reiterating the position of Dewey; claims that the aesthetic experience, art practice, can lead to new knowledge.

The stages of explorations and development of the studio works are all experiences that cumulate into knowledge. Movement becomes the central mode of dancing, although it may seem obvious to state that movement is what makes dance a unique art form. The dancer in trying to learn a particular dance pattern must follow some choreographic steps, so the sculptor must as well make some choreographic studies in terms of drawings; this is to get his ideas well-structured before the studio work.

The potential of dance for research according to Knowles and Cole (2008) lies not in the act of choreography. The fact is that dancers represent choreographers' ideas to the choreographer, but it is the choreographer who composes either creating movement to be performed or shaping movement that is elicited from dancers. The line between the dancer and the choreographer is somehow blurred. As the dancers move, they bring new ideas to the choreographer and, making real the choreographer's movements that were previously in emerge the mind or worked out on the choreographer's body, originally, conceptually possible. Through this actualization does knowledge emerges; form and knowledge are inseparable. The sculptor in this context takes the position of the choreographer while, manipulating space, time and movement within the context of the dance form being conceptualized.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

This study explored sculptural characteristics of postures in stilt dance forms using mixed media. Chapter one provides the background to the research study, which gives insight into the use of stilt in some African societies. It also offered information on different types of stilt and dances in traditional African societies. The statement of the research problem is the exploration of the *Angere* dance forms using mixed media in sculpture. *Angere* is among one of the dances in the Yoruba states. The study is justified to the effect that static motion is seldom explored in sculpture derived from performativity inspired the motion that characterise Angere stilt dance.

The findings of the studio work will open a new frontier in the approach to the use of mixed media in sculpture. The theoretical framework focuses on Langer's Aesthetics Theory: Virtual Powers: she states that, a dance gesture is not gesticulation. Gesture in art is something imagined and intuitively explored from the situation or mentality in which it was first rooted. This framework is adopted for articulating the stilt dance forms in the execution of sculptures based on imagined postures derived from the observation of the *Angere* forms; which has been consciously or subconsciously assimilated mentally.

The literature review covered the works of artists that have explored dance in terms of form and those that generally have worked in mixed media sculptures. The texts reviewed were given in the following subheadings: the Theatrical interplay of performance Art and Dance Sculpture, The Aesthetics of Dance and The Socio-Cultural perspective of dance among others. Some of the artists reviewed include,

Edgar Degad, SterettGittings Kelsey, Jerry Daniel, Olu Amoda, Eze Ngene and Adeola Balogun amongst others.

The research methodology adopted is premised on qualitative research methods which includes studio- exploration and Action research, while outlining the stages of studio exploration; beginning from observation. The initial observations were basically on the study of images and video clips of the stilt dancers and the development of drawings and sketches for the execution of the studio work. The first step of the research involved welding and this resulted in the construction of the skeletal framework; before the use of mixed media and cladding of the steel rods with canvas. The explorations are in ten stages which do not really follow the developmental stages of execution but are grouped into "Series of exploration". This is in line with the pursuit of the five objectives of the study. The discussion centered on the content and context of the stilt dance forms which were premised on the idea held by Ross (2004), which submits that the "content of art is the idea, while its form is the configuration of sensuous material". The study further presented the catalogue of the works produced and the curatorial statement. Thirty works were executed in the studio exploration and the study was accomplished with the summary and conclusion of the study.

6.2 General Findings

I. The studio works carried out as a derivatives of the stilt dance sculptures in the process of this study will broaden the scope of studio practice in the outlook of the practice-led doctoral research in Fine Arts; in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and other Nigerian universities.

II. The study will unveil an additional knowledge in the synergy of theory and practice, as regards the stilt dance forms that would possibly motivate academics, professional artists, and students of art.

III. The literature compiled on stilt dance sculptures in the study will add enormously to the already existing literatures which this study observes to be scanty in Nigeria.

IV. The studio-practice methodology used in this research has exposed another possible means of turning out large body of drawings and sketches which are conceptual in approach. These drawings and sketches should be seen beyond preliminary concepts in articulation of studio work but as autonomous creative works generated by secondary sources.

V. The stilt dance exploration has presented a concept of a theatrical interplay of dance sculptures and performance art. This will promote the synergy of performing art and Fine Arts in an interdisciplinary approach to research, which is now encouraged globally.

VI. The study brings to the fore the synergy of sculpture and painting in the development of personal modes of expression in contemporary Nigerian art, using welded mixed media approaches.

VII. Visual transportation of the *Angere* dance form as a global phenomenon: to transport the stilt dance form is made easier because, instead of moving

the real stilt dancers from one place to the other, this could now be done simply be transporting the stilt sculptures visually from one location to the other.

6.3 Findings based on the objectives

I. The visual documentations done in the process of the research includes drawings, sketches, and photographs taken on the street of Ikorodu in Lagos, the enacted *Angere* performances in Otta-Ifo in Ogun State on the 16th August, and on the 4th September, 2014 in Zaria respectively. All the sculptures executed are also visual representations of the stilt dance forms. Hence, all these will all add to the existing photographs and drawings on *Angere* which are available for artists, Art Historians, students of sculpture, and researchers who will have the opportunity to use these materials.

II. This study has been able to derive sculptural characteristics from the stilt dance postures in making sculptures using different postural compositions. This was realized by elongating; specifically the legs of the sculptures, while the trunks were made smaller so that the height can be accentuated. From the sculptures produced it is evident that inspiration can be derived from stilt dance characteristics for the execution of sculptures.

III. The research observes that the use of mixed media in sculpture reveals the appealing elements in mixed media in the execution of the works. Since the exploration depended on the *Angere* form; traditional African fabrics off-cut, locally woven ropes and wood were used in the creation of some

of the works. These works were exemplified with Series Four, titled, Cultural Performance, (Plates, CIII-CVIII)

IV. One of the challenges in the study was to make sculpture devoid of its lower attaching element. The second series of exploration are presented without any lower attachment; which makes them free standing without base. Both double and three-figure compositions are achieved in line with the objectives in Series Two of the studio work, titled; *Couple Dance I-IV*,(Plates, XCVII-C). Furthermore, "Series Ten" entitled *Free-Flow I and II* (Plates, CXXIV and CXXVI), substantiate this essence in capturing a single figure that could stand without a lower attaching element or pedestal. These sculptures are presented and positioned as if they are falling but are held by attaching a fish line at the back of the sculpture, as used for puppets and then tied to an upper supporting element. This could be either on the ceiling or the wall of the exhibition space.

V. Visual motion has been created in illusionistic expressions through the positioning of the stilt dance forms in a "staggering balance". This term is used to suggest a still action captured in a falling position, yet standing with a support on the base. Meanwhile, the sculptures stand on their two legs in three-dimensional basic postures. This is to make the eyes follow the direction of the implied motion created as if the sculptures were actually moving. Series Five titled; *Initiation Dance, I and II* (Plates, CIX and CX) and "Series Ten" *Free-Flow I and II* (Plates, CXXIV and CXXVI) captures this essence. This is the power of implied motion created

in the manipulation of the content adequately to express the concept of "Static Motion".

6.4 Conclusion

This study observes that the *Angere* in the traditional Nigerian Yoruba societies of the Southwest is eroding from the traditional religious backdrop to modernism. The traditional stilt dance has existed in ethnic groups for centuries in purely religious settings. They are mostly performed at night or at a specific period of the year or at certain festivals, but are now seen on the streets performing and seeking for alms. The literature in this study has shown that the emergence of the cultural dances in Nigeria in the 1960s brought about a new dimension to the practice of dance. This has created and situated many alterations and innovations to suit the modern day demand for artistic expressions.

The *Angere* embodies two distinctive disparities, the traditional stilt dancer that performs as a masquerade and the one that performs purely as an entertainer. The masquerade stilt dancer as a matter of ethics will perform some rituals in appeasing the gods for a successful outing, which is the basic norm demanded by the cult before the performance. This also depends on the occasion of the outing. Modernity has made it possible for flexibility and changes in the ways the Yoruba societies perceived masquerade now.

It is interesting to note, that the stilt dancers that perform mostly on the streets in this contemporary period will sometimes be seen eating, drinking beer, making phone calls and even talking to people while entertaining at a ceremonies. One of such stories that was told; is of this modern day called masquerader that got knock

down by a car, people gathered and felt they should take him to the shrine. But, how possible can a car knock a spirit down and, they thought the masquerade should be taken to the shine for super natural treatment. To most of the people's amazement, the masquerader lamented he should be taken to the hospital. What wonder, a masquerade could even speak "pigeon English". He was asked why he should be taken to the hospital, he responded, "nothing dey shrine". This is one of many stories that abound about how African traditional masquerades have been eroded to pure entertainment.

Dance in Africa reflects the societal norm and attitude; it transmits the people's beliefs and ways of life which is in harmony with their occupation and daily activities. But, things are rapidly changing and most of these traditional identified cultures are dying due to acculturation. In this regard, dances which are an expression of the traditional ways of life are changing rapidly in the same context to the point of extinction which has been the consequence of Western civilization, and this has changed the African and indeed the Nigerian geographical space.

This made Ogolo (2005) to point out that "This as a matter of urgency; needs therefore for the varied dance forms and style of Nigerian traditional performers to be recorded (Documented) and preserved". This will maintain Nigerian cultural identity of the people and such as this academic research. This argument will take us to The Nigerian Cultural Policy of 1988 recommendation. It states that, The State shall preserve and present Nigerian music, dance and drama in film, video, and audio tapes, slides and written form, and so on. The Policy has positioned this study on a positive platform as a means of preserving the *Angere* dance form of the southwestern Yoruba of Nigeria (Ugolo, 2005).

It is significant to note that there are scanty literatures on the *Angere* as rooted in the traditional set up. The basis for this is that the traditional practitioners are mostly illiterates and do not believe in literary documentation but favour oral tradition. This study has provided an additional literature to the existing one and also in the visual documentation of stilt dance. The stilt dance exploration has opened up the need to preserve and document its form for posterity. Indeed, the characteristic of the stilt dance form offers possibilities in the creation of the sculptures. The costume of the stilt dance form brought about aesthetical materiality in the execution of the stilt dance postures in the studio exploration. In this study, it is revealed that *materials* and *elements* are two substances that underlined the philosophy of execution of the creation of the sculptures.

Building on the theory of Langer on *materials* and *elements*, the material usage in mixed media allowed for the creation of kinetic volume, for which she sees colours in a picture as elements, which are determined by their environment. These colours like the use of other materials in executing the sculpture, (for instance fabrics, rope, mild steel rods and pigments) are determined also by their environment which is the entity of the sculptural form. All these materials become elements; when used in a work of art, which in their contents convey massages of tension, emotion and or distributes weight or balance and also generates virtual volume.

Langer further avers that visual artists worked with both materials and elements and it is his or her mastery of both that gives rise to the effectiveness of the created semblance. This work has been able to identify the significance of both the materials usage and the elements in interrogating the materiality of the stilt dance forms. In interrogating the aesthetics of the stilt dance, *materials* and *elements* are engaged in harmonious juxtaposition of virtual spaces. These aesthetics components

are mere motifs that are organizing devices that give the imagination a start, and so "motivate" the work. The aesthetics that are transformed into motifs are basic structure of the stilt dance form encountered at the very first time recorded in the mind of the artist which is revealed in three-dimensional form as a symbol of representation.

The exploration of these motifs which are the stilt dance forms allowed a new effort and effect to spring into being, something different. The creation of *symbolic image* is a process of formulation, shaping, defining of the motifs created in the mind of the artist which is expressed in three-dimensional virtual space as sculptural forms. Langer sees the created space as virtual space which is entirely self-contained and independent and this space she calls "primary illusion".

In executing some of the sculptures without any lower attaching element for support, this illuminates another objective of the studio exploration. In doing so, multiple figure composition is explored in creating the sculptures, in which pure metallic found objects are executed. Motor cycles' shock absorbers, springs of different sizes, bicycles parts, pipes and mild steel rods were transformed as *materials* and *elements* of creation. Postures are transformed into kinetic *virtual spaces* considering the rhythmic organization of the motifs. The use of simple lines in creating balance and the dynamic use of "staggering composition" gives the sculptures their free standing virtual space. *Cultural performers* I-VI (Plates, XCVI-CI) are examples of works in this series.

Another trust of the study is the concept of "Static Motion" in which the concept of "primary illusion" comes into play. Dance *gestures* (postures) are not gesticulations. Gesture in art she states is an illusion of a given form, which is more of

"an abstracted image in the mind of the artist". Generating ideas emanates from the mind of the artist in which a feeling of "power" is created but not a physical power in an objectivist sense, but evolves a *felt energy*. These "power" and "felt energies" are what propelled the dance, as it does other forms of art symbol. This is describes as imagined feeling, not real emotional conditions.

The static sculpture is not static in the sense that the postures created are real but the gesture presented is not real gestures, but virtual gesture created in the mind of the sculptor. 'It is an actual movement, but virtual self-expression, this Langer terms 'gestic forms', but actual gesture, naturalistically and purposively understood. Dance creates a "true artistic" illusion, a realm of 'power' where in purely imaginary beings from which the vital force emanates shape a whole world of dynamic forms by physical action translated into sculptures.

6.5 Recommendations

I. Visual artists should delve into the possibilities of exploring Nigerian indigenous dances in sculpture as a way of documenting its rich traditional heritage. Some of these dances like the *Bata dance of the Yoruba* can be explored in sculpture.

II. Scholars through a post-doctoral engagement should interrogate the study in extending the theatrical sculptural expression and possibly explore the synergy of sculpture and painting as derivative of the stilt dance forms; which have expansive perspectives of exploration.

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