STUDIO PRODUCTION OF SCULPTURE: ADOPTING FIBER GLASS MATERIALS AND COARSE SACK FABRICS

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ABSTRACT

Sculpture is seen as the act of forming figures and objects in relief, solid or in the round, started from the early man that suddenly developed the need to improve upon his skills and to subject the disorganized character of nature into a certain level of control and creativity. Thus, as the quest of man's knowledge and experiences broadened, the need for man to experiment with different materials arose because of the use of conventional materials. Sculptors tend to be less adventurous. Which gave rise to the exploration of sack fabric and resin chemical which is aimed at creating textural effect to produce outdoor sculpture. This paper adopts exploration of sack fabrics and fibre-glass for the production of outdoor sculpture, which was designed to achieve surface quality effect on sculpture to depict exotic and giant sculpture without much material. To achieve a major objective, library and field studies were carried out, and studio exploration of the surface quality effect was concluded with success. Conclusions and Recommendations were made. This has introduced new media in sculpture through the synergy of fiber glass and coarse sack. New media for sculpture production is achieved, which will make sculpture lighter in weight as well as reduce duration of production.

Keywords: Studio Production, Sculpture, Fiber Glass Materials, Coarse Sack Fabrics.

Introduction

The art of sculpture dates back to the origin of man which synchronizes with the primitive experiences of the pre-historic man. Therefore, sculpture which is seen as the art of forming figures and objects in relief, solid or in the round started from the early man who suddenly developed the need to improve upon his skills and to subject the disorganized character of nature into a certain level of control and creativity. This idea was achieved by carving out or making figures of animals

on the walls of the caves and stones with sticks and fingers. As the quest of man's knowledge and experiences broadened, the need for man to experiment with different materials arose. Artists, both contemporary and traditional confirm the notion that there exist a relationship between them and their environment. Moffat (2007) stated that "the cave art of all social groups consist of five principal motifs: human figures, animals, tools and weapons, rudimentary local maps and symbols or ideograms". Furthermore, Adams (2007) was of the view that "the upper Paleolithic man produced a wide range of small sculptures made from clay, bones, ivory and stone which depicts humans, animals and a combination of the two". Nowadays, sculpture production has different media and techniques ranging from metal construction, casting, wood and direct cement modeling etc. overtime, various artists have used different media in sculpture to express or creativity. Some artists prefer metal, some prefer wood and others may prefer direct cement modeling. Depending on the type of sculpture, the medium that the sculpture is made from determined the general working characteristics of the material for purposes of durability and sustainability. However, other sculptural media provide sculpture as a means to an end. The sculpture is usually patinated at the end which usually incurs additional expenses. Furthermore, sculptors are often faced with the problem of patinating sculptural works as a means of achieving a perfect finishing to the sculptural work. This mindset of wanting to patinate sculpture has been noted to be the reason for poor finishing of the sculptural pieces.

For the purpose of this research; The proposed media are Sack Fabric, calcium and resin chemicals in the production of outdoor sculptures, which is an attempt by the researcher to expand the material culture for sculpture production and add to the variety of possibilities in media and material exploration. Nevertheless, materials like, calcium and resin are a commonly used media in sculpture but the researcher is motivated to use this combination of Sack Fabric, calcium and

resin chemicals as proposed with the intention to explore the aesthetic qualities innate in Sack Fabric, calcium and resin combination as a finishing as well reduce the cost of producing sculptural pieces.

Conceptual Clarification

In life, one important aspect which gives pleasure to the mind and also satisfies one's sense of beauty is art. Art is viewed as a means of communication. It is also a way of organizing experiences, which makes feelings and thoughts visible. Thus, art makes life experiences tangible and serves as a means through which identity is constructed. Art making, in both process and product, is a way to organize and concretize experiences, and can be seen as a means of constructing identity (Akureyi, 2013). Accordingly, Art is seen as a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, auditory or performing artworks, as such, expressing the author's imaginative, conceptual idea, or technical skill, intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power. However, in spite of all the unique qualities innate in art, research has proven that the atmospheric condition of an interesting aspect of art, "Sculpture" is beclouded with so many challenges.

Sculpture is an art that consist of forming representations of objects in the round or relief. Forming representations is a phase that includes the construction as well as fabrication, which is also an aspect of sculpture. This process of fabrication and construction can be further achieved by chiseling stone, wood carving, clay modeling, metal casting or similar processes etc. Sculpture is the art of making three or two dimensional representative or abstract forms, especially by carving stone or wood or by cast metal or plaster. As such, the art of sculpture is dated back to the origin of man that synchronized with the primitive experiences of the pre-historic man. Moore (1976), states that the art of sculpture create solid objects that take up real space, he went further to state

that “sculpture has real mass-that is to say, solid forms and 3 dimensional shapes that have weight and project themselves into space. Sculpture also shape space itself. The empty spaces between the masses create voids that are an essential part of the experience of sculpture”.

Sculpture which is seen as the art of forming figures and objects in relief, solid or in the round started from the early man that eventually has the desire to improve upon his skills and also the subject the disorganized character of nature into a certain level of control and creativity. As a result, the idea was achieved by carving out or making figures of animal on the wall of the caves and stones with sticks and figures. As the thought of man to broaden his knowledge and experiences, the need arose for him to experiment with different materials such as alabaster and limestone. Accordingly, Barton (2002:29) states that life size and even larger statues which are carved in slate alabaster, and also limestone, were as regular and simple in shape as the tombs themselves. As a result, artist, both contemporary and traditional confirm the action that there exists a relationship between them and their environment.

Statement of Problem

The mixed media studio exploration of sack fabric, calcium and resin chemicals for sculpture production, is quite a new approach in sculpture, designed to achieve natural drapery and also to make the sculpture light in weight. As such, over the years, sculptors have had difficulty exhibiting gigantic works as a result of heavy weight of the sculpture, as a result limits variation and also creativity in the aesthetics of sculptural works. Hence, sculptors are seen to be less adventurous due to the fact that they are known to have explored mostly conventional media, especially at this austere time (Ganagana, 1986). Currently the economic down turn of the country has created a whole lot of issues, with regards to the production sector of the economy, which has motivated creative minds to undergo critical research to determine the possibility of looking inwards.

Sculpture as A Medium of Visual Presentation

Sculpture is the act of forming image with solid or plastic materials through modelling, carving, welding construction and casting (Omuaru, 2002). Omuaru adds that sculpture is a medium of information, education as well as entertaining a cross section of audience. Therefore, the artist conceives his ideas and draws inspirations from nature, spiritual realms and the mundane life to create in order to serve some purpose. Ochigbo (2002) also states that sculpture is the art of creating in three dimensional and also relief form. Ogumor (2007) explains that sculpture is an art of forming figures and objects in relief, solid or in the nation round.

Understandably, sculpture can be viewed as a medium of representing objects or images using different techniques or methods. The images or objects are usually being represented using carving and modeling techniques with different materials like clay, wood, fiber glass among others. As it relates to this study, sack fabric, calcium and resin chemicals were used to portray diplomacy figures that were produced for this study. The essence is to explore other mediums and not just dwelling in the day to day approach of calcium and resin chemicals.

Research Design

This study adopted creative studio experimental approach, utilizing field trip to gather data to enable the researcher make designs and sketches for the studio work. The studio approach involved modeling with clay, taking mold, charging with resin chemicals and also adapting sack fabric to create draperies; thus, an innovative approach in sculpting.

Presentation of Studio Production

The aim of the research is to document the diplomatic activities of the government in the Niger Delta, through the production of fiberglass sculpture.

Visual Documentation

On the field, sketches, drawing and also photographs were taken to enable the researcher to make final sketches approved by the supervisor (see drawings).



Figure 1:
Title: Dispute Resolution (1)
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Year: 2022
Medium: Black Biro
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra



Figure 2:
Title: Dispute Resolution (2)
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Year: 2022
Medium: Black Biro
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra

Material and Tools Gathering

Major parts of the material gathered for the sculpture production were sourced from the market, while others were improvised. The materials involved are clay, binding wire, metal, rods, chicken mesh, corks (floaters) resin, catalyst, accelerator, calcium and sack bag fabric, needle and thread, pvc pipes, cocks and rope. The listed materials were creatively manipulated to produce sculptures depicting settlement.

Production of Marquette and Sculpture

The sculptures were produced in the studio; as such the studio environment was made possible to carry out the sculpture production. To compliment this, the materials involved were bought, while others were improvised. As a sample, the Marquette was produced; it was reviewed and approved by the supervisor. Afterwards, the armature was done. It is the skeletal framework of the sculpture, tands.



Plate 1:
Title: Marquette
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Size: 14 inches
Year: 2022
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra



Plate 2:
Title: Marquette
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Size: 14 inches
Year: 2022
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra

There after clay was used to model the sculptures. The process of the sculpture was modeled half-way, basically in nude form, this was in order to apply the draperies on the naked cast work using the sack fabrics. The modeling was done, taking into consideration the poses of the sculptures,. Which are two men shaking hands, a man libating, a man holding the men shaking hands as a form of encouragement and a drummer. Also modeled were guns, cannon, cutlass axe and the envisioned fabric.

Furthermore, mold was then taken by adding SIM and also smearing, oil (palm oil) on the clay, after which cement, sand and water was mixed to coat the clay work. De-molding and charging the pieces was done after 2 weeks with resin solution, mat and calcium, when the cement was set and fully cured, coupling took place. Each part of the figures was assembled and glued together, there after the whole figures were coupled.



Plate 3:
Title: Dispute Resolution (1)
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Size: 14 inches
Year: 2023
Medium: Mix Media
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra



Plate 4:
Title: Dispute Resolution (1)
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Size: 14 inches
Year: 2022
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra

The most innovative and major aspect of the work on the sculpture was the manipulation of the sack fabric for the production of the costume and draperies. More so, this was done with caution and trial by errors. However, the process was successful, though with some challenges, with regards to material wastages at the initial stage. The sack bag was cut as the tailors do in their trade and also sewed with machine and needle in most cases. Each cut fabric was attached to the naked sculpture with the resin solution and mat as adhesive.

The various parts of the fabric were applied, forming the costume and resin solution was used to coat the fabric as many times as possible to form fiber-glass when it dries up. Before the application of the resin solution, the draperies were formed by the sculptor by the use of the hands. Thus, the sculpture was therefore formed, and finishing was done by filling, filing, sanding and staining.

The pedestal is a base or the platform where the sculptures, figures are mounted. The pedestal was produced with blocks and cement cornices, which was built, installed and dressed by the researcher, as such, the studio production was successful. The sculptures are mounted in the fine and Applied Arts sculpture garden of Ignatius Ajuru university of Education.

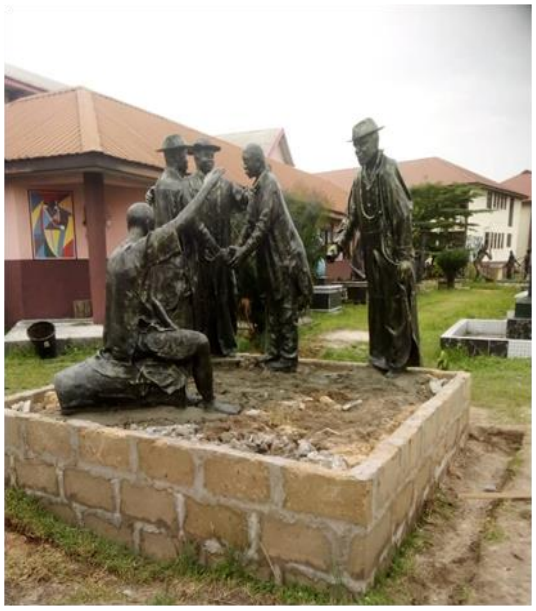


Plate 5:
Title: Dispute Resolution 3
(Mounted on Pedestal)
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Size: 14 inches
Year: 2022
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra



Plate 6:
Title: Dispute Resolution 4
(Mounted on Pedestal)
Artist: Ganagana Oyindoubra
Size: 14 inches
Year: 2022
Photographer: Ganagana Oyindoubra

Analyses of Sculpture

The composition of the sculptures represents natives from the Central Niger Delta extraction here exhibited in this art form. The sculptures portrays men interacting, libating and drumming to showcase a diplomatic settlement of crises, as such, weapons are seen heaped by the corner. The sculptures are about 7ft in height including the drummer in its sitting position. The figures are adorned with the typical dress pattern of the Niger Delta people. The two figures shaking hands

comprises of an Ijaw man wearing the popular male shirt of the Niger Delta people called Etibo with a trouser beneath.

The Etibo is patterned from the Portuguese type which was introduced to the Africans by the white European traders in the 17th century. He is holding a walking stick with his left hand while his gaze is fully on the man he is having a hand shake with. The head is adorned with a bowler hat, which is almost worn by every Ijaw man to compliment he outfits of Etibo with wrapper or trouser as the case may be. But in this case, a trouser is worn. On the other hand, the second man that is having a hand shake is a younger man to his counterpart, as such he used both hand to shake, and also bow a little, this act symbolizes respect for elders and those in authority. The figure represents and Izon man from the Niger Delta region and Bayelsa in particular. He is dressed with elaborate etibo and trousers to match. On the etibo dress with studs that arranged from the neck region of the dress to the stomach region. The studs are typically symbols of the Ijaw male dressing. Also to compliment the dressing are coflins which are used in place of buttons on the sleeves of the etibo dress. One major phenomenon that makes the Ijaw man's dressing complete is his hat. Hence, the sculptures are all wearing different patterns of hats. The third figure depicts a man that can be likened to a paramount ruler or a titled man. This is because of the dress style which covers the whole body except the head and flows down to almost the ground reveling the shoes. The dress has long slits up to the point of the waist region, and it reveals the trouser that is worn beneath.

Accordingly, the Kalabari's call the attire Alapu Doni, meaning it is meant for titled men or chiefs, but it could be worn by anyone for the purpose of an occasion. The dress is fashioned after the Europeans traders in the 17th century. The sculpture also wears a bowler hat on the head, beads on the necks while his hands are holding the men having a handshake on their shoulders. This is a sign of support and encouragement to go on with the part of truce. Furthermore, Libation is a way

of pouring liquid such as gin or wine as a sacrifice to the gods of the land or an act or instance of drinking, often ceremoniously to celebrate an event. Hence, another statue is posed with a don wearing beads on the wrist and neck, a bowler hat is also worn on the head. The figure is holding bottle of drink and a glass cup for the purpose of pouring libation to the gods for the event of the peace they are experiencing at the moment, that the gods should accept their plight and concretize their agreement. The fifth figure which is a drummer is full of excitement; this can be seen by the way he is beating the drum enthusiastically. His left hand is tapping the drum that he is seated on, while his right hand is lifted up very high to enable him give a loud sound to commemorate the occasion which has taken them so much to get to the point of settlement.

The drummer is his excitement removed his Pam sandals and kept by his side. He is dressed with the popular Etibo in short sleeves and a wrapper that is drawn up and folds at the knee, this is to enable him seat comfortably on the drum for performance. He wears a smile on his face while his gaze is on the men shaking hands. In totality, the sculptures portrays a scenario of a peace accord that has been reached by rival waring factions of a community in the Central Niger Delta, and they are been settled by dignitaries from the region, thus the figures represents different male dress style in the Niger Delta region. Notably among the sculptures are the heaps of weapons packed by the side. The weapon comprises different assault machine gun rifles double barrel, cannon, cutlass and axe.

Discussion of Findings

This studio research is one of the many hence, some of the findings are summarized as follows:
The production of sculpture adopting fiber glass and coarse fabrics materials was successful, though with minimal challenges. Some of the challenges are associated with. The exploration of

the sculptural material and process was successful. The anticipated challenges, warranted the need to attempt other materials, such as sack fabric in order to minimize the use of resin chemical solution was successful.

1. The utilization of sack fabric and resin solution in addition to calcium was also successful, especially in rendering the formation of draperies on the sculpture.
2. The new medium is also time saving, whereas the process of conversion of armature to clay work, mold taking, charging would last for weeks and most, the resin and fabric combination takes a period of days.
3. Also, another advantage of the use of the newly applied media is the reduction of weight. A sculpture of 8^{th} (eight feet) can be carried by two Persons, whereas, with the conventional media, this is not possible.

Conclusion

Sculpture media is found all over our environment which have been neglected by sculptor who have been addicted to the use of conventional media. The field of visual art is geared towards representation of forms in two- or three-dimensional format and has long been outstanding among other field of human endeavour. The facts about the visual arts which is seen to be the physical representation of events in scenes as it appears in two – dimensional or three-dimensional arts, as well as a means of preserving our culture is not new. As such, the studio engagement explored new ideas to enhance arts practice. Thus, the utilization of sack fabric, resin chemicals and also calcium was found to be useful, especially in rendering the formation of draperies, time saving by way of reducing the processes of convention of armature to clay work, mold taking and charging that would have lasted for weeks and months, but the fabric and resin combination takes only a

couple of days. The newly researched and applied media also helped in reduction of the weight of the sculpture, where two people can conveniently lift it, whereas it was near impossible with the traditional media. Therefore, taking a back at the production of sculpture with resin combinations with sack bag fabric, some solutions to ease the heavy and over dependence on manufactured material is hereby practicalized.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations:

1. The exploration of sack bag fabric with resin chemicals and calcium should be encouraged.

2. More research on the implementation of peace in the Niger Delta should be carried out for their preservation, as the youths are becoming distant from them.

3. Students of the arts, especially those of the sculpture option, should utilize this material and technique explored in the studio – which is sack fabric, calcium and resin chemicals.

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