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LIFE AND DETAIL ART STYLES OF THE INTELLECTUAL AFRICAN ARTISTS: AN EXAMPLE OF BIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF A POST NIGERIA INDEPENDENCE ARTISTS, TOBENNA OKWUOSA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined and discussed the neglect of detail art styles in the analysis of biographies of the intellectual African artists with particular reference to the post Nigeria independence artists that have varieties of ideals, styles, and techniques of producing arts which contribute to the present creative forms. The aim of the study is to establish the life and detail art styles of the post Nigeria independence artists with the view of providing an insightful biography of one of them for the study of others. The objective of the study is to analyze the life and styles of works of a Nigerian (African) artist in detail in a biographical study. The research design is biographical survey of qualitative research methods. It adopts the historical survey technique which relies on primary and secondary source of data collection. The study exploited the life and art styles of Tobenna Okwuosa based on his training as an artist, his creative philosophies, themes, materials of expression, ideology of art, chronology of works, his exhibitions and commissions, and contemporaries. The paper also highlighted the benefits of detail art styles to the artists. It ascertained that, documenting artists' lives and art styles has significant academic prospects for African artists. Therefore, the life and art styles of the African artists should be brought to lime-light as a way of encouraging them for further academic work. Recommendations and conclusion are proffered. The intellectuals of other fields of specialization are advised to emulate this research idea and document their hardworking scholars to encourage them for a sustainable development in Nigeria and other African nations.

Keywords: Life, Art Styles, Biographical Analysis, Post Nigeria Independence Artists, Tobenna Okwuoasa.

INTRODUCTION

The lackadaisical attitude of African art historians in analyzing the detail art styles in the biographies of the intellectual African artists with particular reference to the post Nigeria independence artists for further academic work is a vital subject matter in biographical studies, and swayed the interest of this research. Actually the documentation of those artists in their styles of art productions would have guided other researchers particularly the art history students in African art schools on how to study the detail art styles of other artists in their respective areas of specialization. It would have also shown the efforts of those artists in the growth of art in Nigeria. So also it would have provided some profound insight into the biographies of African art scholars in the reservoir of world artists. This challenge evokes the

feelings of weakness of the fine and applied arts scholars particularly the art history students in researching and writing. The problem becomes more compounding when some art historians and post graduate art history students in Nigeria at sixty two (62) cannot embark on the detail analysis of the works of the post Nigeria independence artists for the benefit of the masses.

This research therefore was inspired by the quest for Nigeria art historians and art students to study the hardworking Nigerian artists in their styles of art production. The analysis of life and art style of the post Nigeria independence artists: The examples of the art styles analysis of Tobenna Okwuosa are merged words that convey the meaning of a concept. Those words are discussed separately in conceptual clarification, and as a leading concept. It is described as the documentation of the manner of art expressions of the artists that emerged after the Nigeria independence of 1960. The paper therefore establishes the life and art styles of Tobenna Okwuosa based on his training as an artist, his creative philosophy, his materials of work, and his exhibitions and commissions as a guide to studying other artists. It also discusses the benefits of art styles to the artists. This study places emphasis on professionalism and entrepreneurship in the art productions of the African artists. It has obvious effects on the relevance of art and artist to individuals and the government. The paper concludes that the life and detail art styles of the African artists with particular to the post Nigeria independence artists should be revealed to the masses for onward use in academic work.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Life and Art Styles of the African Artists: the example of the art styles analysis of Tobenna Okwuosa is a word of four merged words and coveys the meaning of a concept. BBC English Dictionary (1992) defines life as the quality which people, animals, and plants have when they are not dead and which objects and substances do not have. Art in the same dictionary is the making of paintings, drawings and sculpture which something is done or presented which often shows the attitudes of the people involved. Life and Art Styles therefore refers to the entire characteristics of an artist including his or her manner of art expressions. Post Nigeria Independence Artists refers to the Nigerian artists that emerged after Nigeria has had her political freedom from British Colonial rule. Elenwo (2020) describes Biographical Analysis as the act of providing the detailed and accurate account of a person's life activities in whole or part through a systematic procedure of documentation based on in-depth and unstructured interview or semi-structured interview and or personal documents. Tobenna Okwuosa is the Nigerian (African) artist whose art styles are being analyzed in this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research study of the life and art styles of African artists: the example of biographical analysis of the post Nigeria independence artists, of Tobenna Okwuosa is guided by three theories, Psychoanalysis, Style-analysis, and Formalism. The theory of psychoanalysis proposes that creativity wells up from unconscious drives, and that there are differing opinions about how it occurs, but the various psychoanalytic schools of thought generally suggest that creativity is a by-product of primary processes. Arieti (1976, citing Kubie, 1958) adds that neurotic distortion can occur when the conscious mind inhibits the creative process by rigid use of symbolic functions, and that the unconscious can hinder with even more rigid anchorage in unreality. Samuels and Samuels (1976 citing Greenacre 1957) in addressing the source and motive of the creative act in psychoanalytic theory of creativity notes that; the

future artists should learn to disassociate with real objects and fall in love with the world as a whole. This happens through a heightened Sensory awareness as early as breast feeding. Arieti (1976 citing Weissman 1968) says; those capacities may be the infant learning to hallucinate the mother's breast independently of oral needs later in life. This endowment is preserved and transformed into the creative act. This theory becomes relevant to this study because it enabled the researcher to make psychological enquiry about Tobenna's artistic background from childhood experiences, and made the researcher to examine Tobenna's training, and established the history of his life and creative styles in his painting. Styles analysis which stresses on ensuring adequate investigation into any small part of evidence of work of art in order to subject it to a credible historic account, especially when the evidence characterizes relationships among works that are produced at the same time, or place, or by the same person, or group, was employed in the study. Ackerman – a style theorist notes that; styles analysis is the building of a comprehensive structure that reflects the evidence of consistent distinguishable and changeable ensemble of works of art alone. In any group of works of art there are certain characteristics that are stable. One characteristic found in one work is repeated in other products of the same artist or artists. This consistency of a number of things considered as a group perhaps is attributed to the nature of the art products in relationship to time or era, geographical distance, or other visual elements used in the work. This postulation agrees with formalism theory that; advices art historians, studio artists, and other critics to compare form and styles, that is, to understand how objects are made and their purely visual description in order to describe them very carefully. In painting for example, critics are conscious of examining the element of formal analysis such as colour, space, line, volume, mass, composition, and other perceptual aspects, which are usually stable to analyze artistic style.

In a biographical study, works of art are the primary data. Writing the history of consistency and change of works of art depends on the type of art production. Tobenna's creative paintings are ascertained to have been produced in periods, styles, philosophies, and themes. They are consistent enough to be differentiated and cannot be predicted as stories of the important events and the changes that occurred and led to their production. Therefore style analysis and theory of formalism become appropriate to be used in analyzing Tobnna's creative paintings based on their historical events and time of occurrence including the changes that occurred after each event.

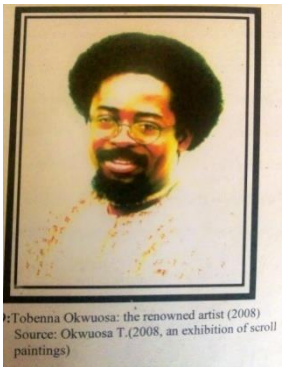


Plate 1: Tobenna Okwuosa: a renowned and prolific post Nigeria independence artist
Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, an exhibition of scroll painting)

Tobenna Okwuosa was born on the 24th of September, 1972 he hails from Oraifite in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State of Nigeria. He is the son of a retired school principal and a headmistress. He attended O' Connor Memorial Primary school Onitsha from 1976 to 1980, and Isikwe Central School Isikwe-Achi. Enugu 1980 to 1983, Dennis Memorial Grammar School (DMS) Onitsha 1983 to 1987, and Community Secondary School, Udi Enugu State 1987 to 1990. He holds B.A in sculpture (first class honours) 1996, from University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, and served Nigeria under the NYSC Scheme in Edo State from February 1998 to February 1999. He also holds MFA (Painting) 2003, from University of Benin, and Ph.D. studio art (painting) 2016 from Delta State University, Abrakar, Delta State, Nigeria respectively. He is currently a lecturer in the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Okwuosa had a three month artist in-residence programme at the Visual and Performing Arts Department, Worcester State College, now (Worcester State University), Worcester, Massachusetts, USA in 2005. He has earned other grants from institutions in the US and in Nigeria after presented a paper titled contemporary art market in Lagos; patrons, galleries, and Artists in the Worcester State College. He also had university scholarship award for the best 200 level students, Fine and Applied Arts Department, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigerian (Okwuosa, 2008).

Okwuosa's Training as an Artist

Okwuosa's artistic inclination manifested to his parents in his infant age, when he could play with lines using fingers, and charcoal to draw on the ground, walls, and other surfaces. He started his artistic training from the primary school he attended where he learnt how to make designs using pencils, biros, crayon, and other materials which earned him prizes under the tutelage of non-professional art teachers. He proceeded to secondary school and was privileged to receive art lessons from six art teachers of the two secondary schools he attended-a reason for which his artistic talent broadened. Among the art teachers of those secondary schools was the then popular Roland Ndaefo of the old Eastern Region of Nigeria who incidentally had taught the famous art lecturer professor Obiora Udechukwu of University of Nigeria Nsukka. At that stage of training, Okwuosa included Fine Arts as one of his O'level subjects. He could produce captivating art pieces using paper, starch, clay, water colour, and poster colour as major medium of expression. Between 1990 and 1992 he continued to practice art on his own but had a passion for broadening his horizons of creativity through University Education. He actually became a student of Fine and Applied Arts of University of Benin in 1992/1993 academic session, and graduated in 1996. These stages of training exposed him to the need for broadening the scope of his art (Okwuosa 2008). Today Tobenna has accomplished his goals of becoming a professional artist as he holds a Ph.D in painting.

OKWUOSA'S CREATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND MATERIALS OF EXPRESSION

Hornby (2010) defines philosophy as a set of beliefs or an attitude to life that guides somebody's behaviour, while he defines creative as the use of skill and imagination to produce something new or a work of art. Okpara (2004) explores these definitions above and evolves a definition of philosophy of arts as a concept that is based on renewal of thoughts about the changing nature of things. Elenwo (2019) describes creative philosophy as an initiative for art forms and practices that would enhance living. All these ideas above agree with Okwuosa's creative philosophy that an art is a vehicle for the renewal of thoughts and for the betterment of the future (Okwuosa 2017). Okwuosa believes that his art seeks to

recover Africa's early loss of art ideas and moral beliefs that can enable modern Africans to confront contemporary issues and lead to a new way of doing things both in the art industry, and possibly, in other areas of human endeavors.

He also believes that the philosophy of an art work "is more important than the art work itself, and even of greatest importance is the character of the artist". This set of beliefs conforms to Okwuosa's manner of creative production that is likened to a world of dynamism or shifting boundaries. He changes his art from time to time depending on the prevailing situation in Nigeria that he wishes to explore. He started subjecting his arts to philosophical concepts after his graduation from the University in 1996 as a sculptor. He did this to search for his true art identity in the art profession. He used the elements of traditional African visual culture such as African symbols, design pattern, and structure to create his art works. He based his art on the spiritual, moral, creative values and practices of traditional Igbo women in Oraifite community (Igbo) in exploring the indigenous motifs of body decoration, will painting, hair dress, songs, music and dance using oil on canvas and mixed media scroll painting as medium of expression.

These art works show a dancer, Igbo drummer, harvest, femininity, dual personality among others and have a metaphorical undertone. These works are grouped in his art style of "*abstract and semi-abstract expression"* and in his art philosophy of "*Afro-centricism"* which he describes as the recognition of African cultural practices to oppose the western cultural influences on Africans as a process of decolonization. Works made in this philosophy are within the limits of promoting Nigerian Arts that is African in its inspiration. (See plates 2,3,4). The mixed media scroll painting is a technique of painting he evolved in the search for his creative identity. He describes it as a techniques developed out of the desire for originality and to cut cost. These art works are produced on leatherette material.

Works produced in leatherette materials are thus portable. They can be rolled and re-rolled simultaneously. With this technique, he produced works that reflect his educational experience in Benin, as shown in this concept of "Negative Western Influence" and the philosophy of Afrocentricism, (See plates 5 and 6). Subsequent to these art productions are his other art products that reflects the symbols and designs, and other forms of social ornament from the Igbo Mbari architecture as shown in plate 7, 8, 9 and 10. Some of these works reflect leadership qualities acceptable by some priests as shown in plates 11, 12 and 13. Similarly, Tobenna recognizes the high level of discrimination, disunity and non-cooperation among Nigerians resulting from social balkanization. He presumes that the quickest measure of controlling the situation is through women who can advise their children on the need for global peace using "the supreme Being as the first guidance and shield", (oral communication). He also presumed that women possess special mental and spiritual powers of doing things that seem impossible. For these reasons, Okwuosa sought for restoration of peace through spirituality. He therefore used his art to show the importance of women right from the spiritual realm. He made this art in the concept of motherhood and femininity and in the philosophy of "Afrocentricism", (see plates 14, 15, and 16). All these works have metaphorical undertone, and are a fraction of his works for his first solo exhibition in 2003.
Okwuosa also formed anther opinion about using his art to preach the gospel of reunifying and recovering the balkanization we find among races, tribes, religions and in other human organizations. At this stage of his intellectual growth, he left Nigeria for the Phillip L.

Ravenhill Fellowship Programme in USA. In the US, he continued with his "scroll painting" and organized an art exhibition titled "The Igbo world". This exhibition marked his second solo exhibition. Its aim was to spread the gospel of peace in the U.S through his paintings. Fortunately, Okwuosa was exposed to many modern indigenous West African scripts such as Vai, Mende, Loma, Kpelle, Bassa, Bamum, Bete, Djuka, and others which he got from the gifts of books he received while on the program (Okwuosa 2005). According to him, these scripts were brought from the library of the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian, and Washington D.C. He studied some of the scripts and discovered new creative possibilities needed for exploring and documenting the material cultures of various African cultures.

He also studied the arts and culture of the Africa and other ancient traditions such as the language of the Vedas; *ancient holy text of Hinduism (Vedic)*. He equally understood that the character of numerous indigenous West African Scripts could serve as creative elements. On his return from the US; he produced works that reflected the intensification of his religious practice in his philosophy of Afrocentrisim, and named them "Fragmented arts". (See plates 17, 18, 19, and 20). He created these works by connecting himself to the spirit and supreme soul as shown in the work titled "Lost and found III, and another Beginning, among others.
In his continued search for the lost ideas of art and moral beliefs, he researched on indigenous beliefs systems and their truths, including modern indigenous scripts of various West African cultures, using the scroll painting technique as a medium of expression. This research enabled him to evolve another art philosophy which he refers to as "*Soul Centricism"*. He defines it as a word of three words "soul", "centric" and "ism" meaning art and life philosophy that addresses the mind and body by the practice of the culture of the soul. The soul culture recognizes all human beings as spiritual beings undergoing material experience based on shared spiritual essences, while the centrism refers to its centeredness. Soul centricism therefore addresses the artist's creative consciousness which extends to man in general. Some of his art works based on this philosophy are titled "Reincarnation" which he describes as the cyclic nature of natural events. (See plates 21, 22, 23). These art works explore such phenomena as birth, growth, death and rebirth, as events that repeat themselves in an eternal cycle.

He showcased these works in his third solo exhibition in 2008 titled "Soul centricism: *A Recovery of Ancient Universal Truths and Indigenous Scripts"* in 2008. By 2010, Okwuosa's art began to address political issues in Nigeria. He created works based on the concept of "Issues of Nigeria's oil pipeline" and in the philosophy of "Soul centricism". In these works he uses the "abstract and semi-abstract expression" technique, and seldom combines modern text (English letters) with painting to communicate the issues of Niger Delta to the public. (See plates 24, 25, 26, and 27). From 2013 to 2015 he also changed his art to reflect "modern designs of cities in Nigeria". He uses English text, symbols, forms, and structures in creation of his works. He refers to these art works as "urban spaces and the changes" and connects them to his art philosophy of Soul centricism. These works, according to him, are his own expression of modernity (new ways of doing things). (See plates 28, 29, and 30). Similarly, in 2016, he revisited political issues in Nigeria by producing a visual interpretation of the first stanza of Biafran anthem; *"A soldier in action"* (See plate 31). This work reflects his philosophy of Soul centricism.

See plates;



Plate 19: A dancer, 1997, ink on paper 13x38.5cm.
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Plate 2



Plate 3



Plate 4

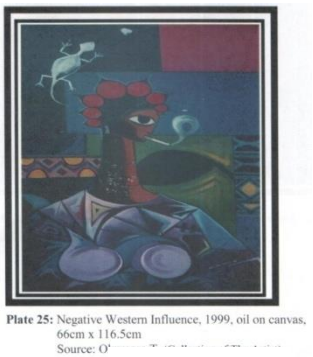


Plate 25: Negative Western Influence, 1999, oil on canvas, 66cm x 116.5cm
Source: O'

Plate 5

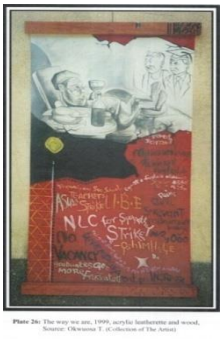


Plate 6

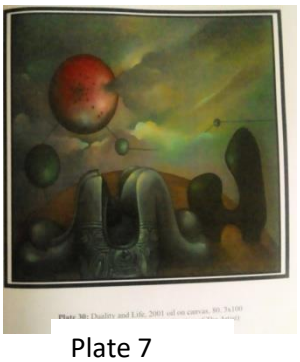


Plate 7

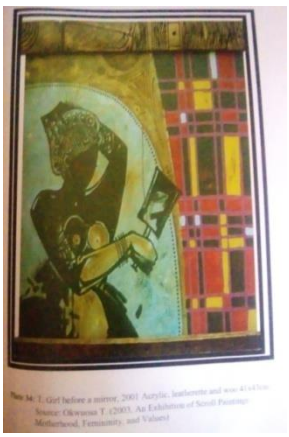


Plate 8

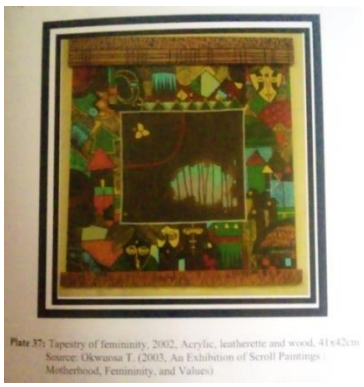


Plate 37: Tapestry of femininity, 2002, Acrylic, leatherette and wood, 41x42cm
Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)

Plate 9



Plate 10

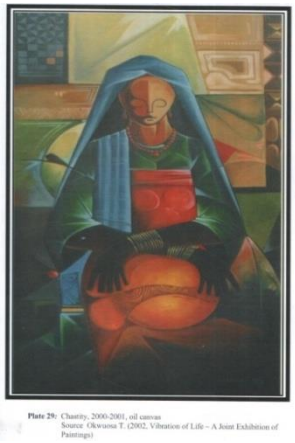


Plate 11



Plate 12



Plate 13

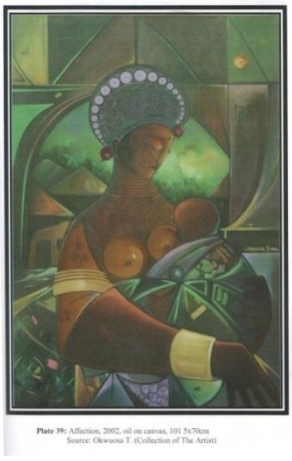


Plate 14



Plate 15

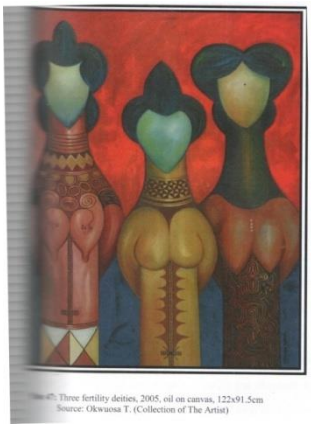


Plate 16



Plate 17



Plate 18



Plate 19

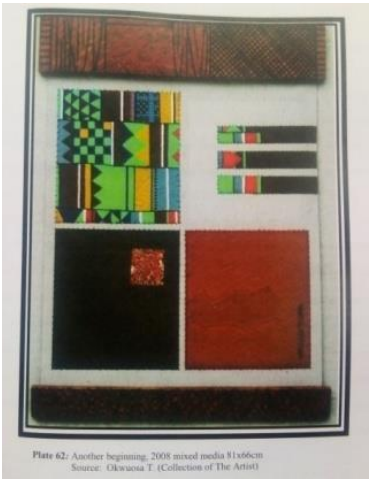


Plate 20



Plate 21



Plate 22

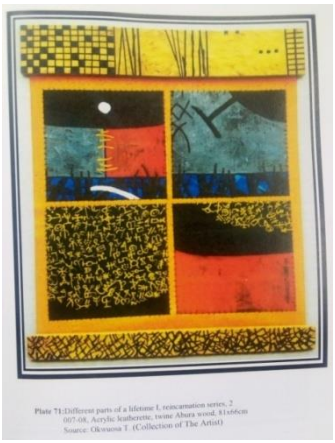


Plate 23

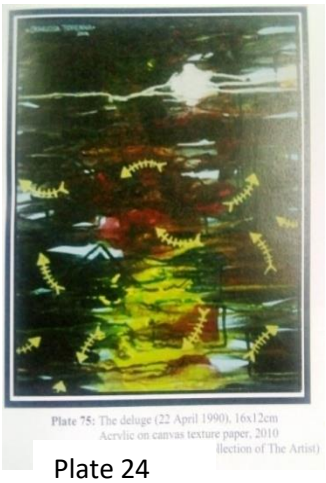


Plate 24



Plate 25

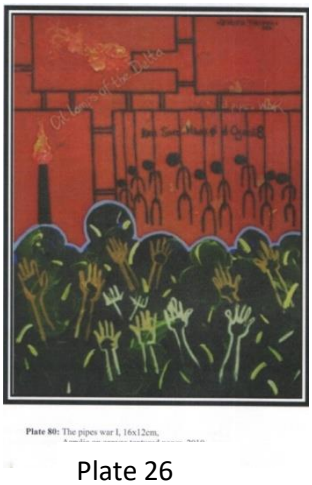


Plate 26



Plate 27



Plate 28



Plate 29



Plate 30

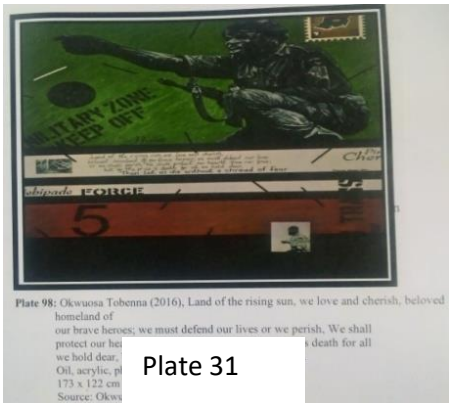


Plate 31

Okwuosa's Art Style

Okwuosa's Art Styles are in phases and have been arranged in the chronology of their productions for easy understanding. The works tend to draw attention to specific human problems based on their historical events, time of occurrence and the changes that occurred after each event. Tobenna's works are ascertained to be consistent enough to be differentiated and cannot be predicted as a story (Elenwo, 2020). The table below shows the analysis of his creative paintings in the sequence of periods, styles, philosophy, and themes that guide their production. It also shows the plates that reflect such works.

Table 1: chronology of Okwuosa's works

First Phase: 1996-2007 (Semi Abstract Period)						
S/N	PERIOUD	STYLE	PHILOSOPHY	THEME	MEDIUM	PLATES
1	1996-97	Abstract and semi-abstract period	Afrocentricism The recognition of African cultural practices in opposition to the western cultural influences on African culture as a process of decolonization. Work made within the limit of promoting Nigerian art that is African in its inspiration.	Mythology The works of art that reflect ancient figures and stories of a people's culture. The works here are based on indigenous igbo motifs of body decoration, dance, music, harvest, femininity, and folklores	Ink and oil colour.	2-4
Second Phase 1999-2005 (Scroll Painting Period)						
2	1999-2005	Scroll painting period	Afrocentricism	Negative western influences	Ink, oil colour, and mix media	5-6
3	2001-2002	Scroll painting period	Afrocentricism	Mythology leadership and femininity	Oil colour and mix media	7-9
4	2000-2002 2000-2002 (contd.)	Scroll painting	Afrocentricism Afrocentricism	Mbari symbols, design pattern, and structure.	Oil colour and mix media.	10,11, 12 and 13

5	2002-2005	Scroll painting	Afrocentricism	Mythology motherhood, femininity and values	Oil colour	14,15, 16
Third phase 2006-2015 (abstract Expressionism)						
6	2006-2008	Abstract expressionism.	afrocentricism	Fragmentation practice of bhakti yogi (spiritual law, goodwill and justice for all men)	Mixed media	17,18, 19,20
7	2008 2008 (contd.)	Abstract expressionism. Abstract expressionism	Soulcentricism art and life philosophy that addresses the mind and body by the practice of the culture of the soul.	Meta-philosophy the works of art that reflect the changes of nature, universe and human life. reincarnation	Mix media	21,22, 23
8	2010	Abstract and semi-abstract expressionism	Soulcentricism	Issues of Nigeria's oil pipelines	Oil colour.	24,25, 26,27
9	2013-2015	Abstract expressionism	Soulcentricism	Urban spaces and the changes.	Mixed media	28,29 30
Forth Phase 2016 (Realism)						
10	2016	Realism.	soulcentricism	Poetry	Mixed media	31

Okwuosa's Exhibitions/Research

Elenwo (2019) notes that Tobenna Okwuosa participated in the under-listed solo and group art exhibitions and research where he showcased his art styles to the world

2008 Soulcentricism: A Recovery of Ancient Universal Truths and Indigenous Scripts, National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria.

2005 The Igbo World, Worcester State College, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA

2003 Motherhood, Femininity and Values, Maison de France, Lagos, Nigeria.

Group Exhibition

2002 Vibrations of Life (with George Edozie), Wangboje's Art Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria.

Group Exhibition

2004 Nigerian Rhythms: Three Modern Streams (with Lawrence Ajanaku and Pius Omogbai), Frederick Scott Gallery, Sudbury, Massachusetts, USA.

Group Exhibition

1999 Dynamism (with Peter Akiniwumi, Julia Uzoma and George Edozie), National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria.

Group Exhibition

2005 Nigeria Prelude and Refrain, Fscott Gallery Sudbury, Massachusetts, USA.
2004 The Search: The First Step Maison de France, Lagos, Nigeria.
2003 5th Lagos Book and Art Festival, National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria
2000 Romance with Iliad Wangboje's Art Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria.
1997 Great Benin Centenary Exhibition, Ode to Joy Wangboje's Art Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria.
1996 Splahes and Forms University of Benin, Ekehuan Campus, Benin City, Edo, Nigeria.
1995 Student Union Week Art Exhibition, University of Benin, Ekehuan Campus, Benin City, Edo, Nigeria.

List of Exhibits

I. Revelation through the inner Eyes, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,133x75cm
II. Against all odds, Reincarnation Series, 2006-08,133x75cm
III. An orange Rectangle in a Blue world, 2008,97x92cm
IV. Different parts of a Lifetime I, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,81x66cm
V. Different parts of a Lifetime II, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,81x66cm
VI. Up in the Sky and Down Below, Reincarnation Series, 2008,103x92cm
VII. Five strips and Red Square, Reincarnation Series, 2008,97x92cm
VIII. Another Beginning I, Reincarnation Series, 2008,81x66cm
IX. Another Beginning II, Reincarnation Series, 2008 113x84cm
X. The Lord's Prayer in Bamum Script, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,120x74cm
XI. Birth, Death and Liberation I, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,81x66cm
XII. Birth, Death and Liberation II, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,81x66cm
XIII. Square in Square, 2008,81x66cm
XIV. Ancient scroll Recovered, 2007,120x84cm
XV. Forces of Defacement, 2007,120x84cm
XVI. Dancing Scripts, 2006-07, 114x84cm
XVII. Lost History, Lost Identity, 2007, 120x92cm
XVIII. Fragmented Tapestry, 2006,97x92cm
XIX. Composition with 53 fragments, Reincarnation Series, 2008,114x84cm
XX. Lost and Found I, 2006-07, 127x76cm
XXI. Lost and Found III, 2007,114X84CM
XXII. Discussion for Four, 2006,97x92cm
XXIII. One Race, One Love, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,114x84cm
XXIV. Remnants of Glorious Past, 2007,120x84cm
XXV. Scripts, Fragments and Dots I, Reincarnation Series, 2007,114x84cm
XXVI. Scripts, Fragments and Dots II, Reincarnation Series, 2007-08,114x84cm
XXVII. Mutilated History, 2006,97x92cm
XXVIII. Ocean of Scripts, 2008, 114x84cm: Acrylic, leatherette, Twine, and Abura Wood.

Okwuosa's selected articles and reviews

2008 Asoya. Sylvester "Art as his Life",
The news (Lagos), April 7, pp. 52-53
2007 Uzoukwu, Chinwendu. "Artist rooted in culture",

Daily sun (Lagos), September 1

2007 Abodunrin, Akintayo. "I celebrate African through my works", Nigerian tribune (Ibadan) January 9, p. 40

2006 Sowole, Tajudeen. "Okwuosa… a run round home" The guardian life (Lagos), August 13-19, p 26

2005 Obiosio, Enam. "We can give art greater socio-spiritual Relevance, okwuosa" business day (Lagos), August 5, p. 16B

2005 Orji, Ikechukwu, "Showcasing the Igbo world: New-age (Lagos), July 1, p.17

2005 Njoku, Benjamin. "Americans know very little about African art Culture, Tobenna Okwuosa", Sunday vanguard (Lagos), July 3 p. 39

2005 Uhakheme, Ozuola. "Okwuosa exports igbo culture to the U.S" Daily independent (Lagos) June 29, p. E7

2005 Uwaezuoke, Okechukwu. "Scroll of a culture recall" This day (Lagos), June 30, p. 39

30th September 2008. Soulcentricism: an artist's gospel of peace Nigeria tribune, p. 24

2002 the contemporary art market in Lagos, in contemporary Nigerian Art, p. 51

Okwuosa's Commissioned Works

2018 Restoration of five icons in sculptural representation: Sir Krishna, Sirmati Radharani, Jagannath, Baladeva and Subhadra, at the Hare Krishan Temple, Benin City State, Nigeria, commissioned by His Holiness Bhakti Dhira Danodara Swami.

2010 Twenty acrylic paintings that interpret Dr. Ogaga Ifowodo's poems in three publications. Mediba (2003), the Oil Lamp (2005), Homeland and other poems (2008), commissioned by Barrister Rockson Igelige

2008 An oil portrait of the then Governor of Anambra State and visitor of Anambra State University, Peter Obi, commissioned by the university, Uli campus.

2006 A portrait of Lady Ifeoma Igwilo in oil, commissioned by Prof. Sir. Benjo Igwilo

2003 A full-length; oil on canvas portrait of Mr. Jude Uzozie commissioned by him.

2000 Acrylic on canvas portrait of Mr. Obi commissioned by him.

Okwuosa's Contemporaries

Onyema	Offoedu-Okeke	Anthea	Epelle
Victor	Ehikhamenor	Damola	Adepoju
Ogbemi	Heymann	Busayo	Lawal
Joshua	Nmesirlonye	Bob-Nosa	Uwagbe
A.	Abdulkareem	John	Ogbeta
Samuel	Ajobiewe	Ebenezer	Akinola
Tayo	Olayode	George	Edozie
Segun	Aiyesan	Tobenna	Okwuosa
Fidelis	Odogwu	Gerald	Chukwuma
Uchay	Chima	Tony	Nsofor
Nyemike	Onwuka	Babalola	Lawson
Gbolahan	Ayoola	Emmanuel	Dudu
O.	Otoki	Chika	Idu
Uche	Peters	Odun	Orimolade
Oliver	Enwonwu	Peju	Alatise
Innua	Emmanuel	Joseph	Eze
Ola	Balogun	Uche	Edochie
Ibe	Ananaba	Donald	Onuoha
Diseya	Tantua	B	Olorunnisomo
Aliki	Tolu	Muyiwa	Akinwolere
Akin	Baruwa	Juliet	Ezenwa-Pearce
Richardson	Ovbeibo	Soji	Adesina
Kunle	Osundina	Norbert	Okpu

Source: Castellote Jess (ED), Contemporary Nigeria Art (2012)

The Benefits of Art Styles to an Artist

An artist style of expression is of great importance to him or her in the sense that;

1. It is the visual language of the artist for which he or she would be known nationally and internationally in terms of identification and documentation.
2. It shows the ability and effort of the artist in discovering new ways of doing things.
3. It is a tool of confidence for the artist to compete favourably with any other artist on the globe.
4. It makes for easy identification of an art work in the midst of others.
5. It serves as a trade mark or creative identity for the artist.
6. It proves that the artist is committed to the professional obligations.

It eliminates the difficulty of crediting an artist's work to another artist

Recommendations

Based on the research, the following recommendations are proffered to the government, artists, and other graduates.

1. The government should organize regular public enlightenment programme on the need to study the hardworking African artists particularly those that have European art training and skill.
2. Detail art styles should be studied as course in African art schools. This will be possible through the review of the art curriculum for tertiary schools. If this suggestion is considered and accepted, it will enable the college trained artists to evolve individual visual language that they will be associated with.
3. The government should make art exhibition a regular academic exercise to promote the sales of works, and motivate the intellectual artists to the contestation of art identify in art productions.
4. Intellectual African artists should take advantage of Tobenna's art and evolve individual art style. This will broaden the artists' popularity for easy identification and documentation.
5. Art scholars particularly the art historians and art history students should adopt this example and begin to write school projects, dissertations, thesis and books on detail art styles of the African artists particularly those of the post Nigeria independence era, in order to project them to the world reservoir of artists.
6. The non-art scholars and students should also take advantage of this paper and begin to study the hardworking scholars that have made remarkable imputes in their respective fields of specialization, for documentation and projection.

Conclusion

Showing the life and detail art styles of the intellectual African artists through the biography of a post Nigeria independence artists; Tobenna Okwuosa, is a strategy of making progress in showcasing the works of the hardworking intellectual African artists in their respective areas of specialization. It also shows the artists efforts in the growth of world arts and provides insightful biographies of African artists in the reservoir of world artists. The paper submits that the benefits of such documentation to mankind especially to the artist through book writing are enormous, for further academic work and sustainable development. This paper therefore provides some guidelines on how to study the life and detail art styles of any artists irrespective of place of origin.

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