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ULI MOTIFS: IT'S AESTHETICS ON ARCHITECTURAL WALLS

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Abstract

This paper looks into the need to give the Uli art Culture of Eastern Nigeria an artistic visual design identity based on their tradition. The exploratory design analysis which is used is based on the concepts that ideas and materials for the old and new methods of the Uti culture. It has been analyzed and synthesized into more dynamic indigenous system of visual communication in Nigeria that will enhance the general development of the society. The analyses of signs, symbols, posters and other art works were carried out based on their artistic, aesthetic and functional design mainly as it concern the Uli and Nsibidi visual method of communication design in modern time. The research harmonize the traditional and the modern method with a view to developing a new visual made communication method based on their culture and technology in recent time. The culture just like their close associates could also reduce these sign and symbols into simple code for confidentiality, security, affection and economic transitions among themselves.

Keywords: Uli motifs, culture, visual design, architectural walls

INTRODUCTION

Uli motifs or representations are an Igbo art form initially used by women to

decorate the body and architectural walls on certain occasions. It consists of a system of symbolic drawings or design in the form of animals, plants, material, objects and other abstract designs. Uli motifs are studied in order to bring it closer to the visual artist and also understanding its aesthetics preferences in Igbo culture.

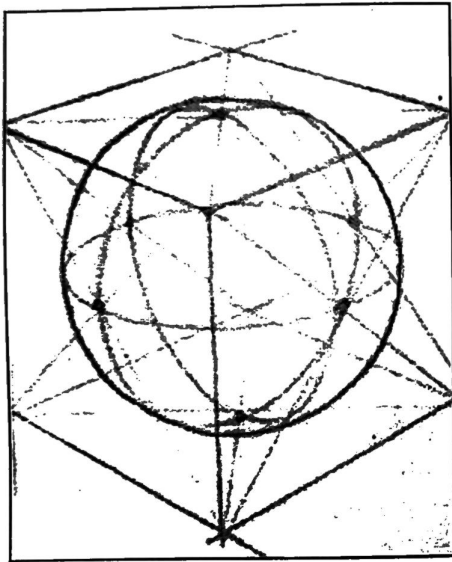
The motifs represent things of physical importance, aesthetic appeal and relevance to traditional belief, (Willis 1987). Udechukwu (1981) stated that "Uli is calligraphic in form and it is quite possible that it was linked with some kind of writing somewhere in the past: that ide (to write) appears in ide Uli (to draw with Uli) and ide ife (to write something) or ide akwukwo (to write on paper) shows their close kinship as well as the possibility of one deriving from the other. In 1992, Obiora Udechukwu, showed works of both "traditional" and modern uli women artists, in an exhibition titled Uli: Different Times, Different Hands organized at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, These creative exercises by both old and modern artists provided a new stylistic approach, that is most original and philosophical creative art

idiom in the use of Nigerian indigenous images that emerged in modern time. Willis (1987) in her work titled, *A Lexicon of Igbo Uli Motifs* asserts that, "the woman's perception of all aspects of life and nature, and most notably, ideas and objects which are held to be particularly important and representative of Igbo culture, are transmitted into visual vocabulary which provides important reference materials for designers, architects, art historians, and ethnographers alike. It is on record that over the past thirty years, there have been many studies on the form and function of Uli drawing and design as seen in specific locations: K. C. Murray's notes on Uli painting in the Bende area of Abia State, Nigeria and M.D.W. Jeffrey's note on Uli paintings and design in Awke, Anambra State have provided a significant number of motifs. Uli draws and designs as an art form, expresses the culture of Igbo people.

Architectural graphics is an abstract wall design mostly used to (enhance) enliven large public space which otherwise would be very dull. Design can involve recognizable motifs appropriate or typical to the situation under or may be completely abstract. Signs and architectural graphics should be properly use in the environment in order to educate and make people aware of their culture. Sign system or architectural graphics is very important and useful in the present changing world of things. It points the way or

directs travelers quickly and clearly, thereby playing a crucial role in accelerating and making life's what living. Colorful design elements are particularly useful in old and new buildings or projects where there is a rich mixture of shops and restaurants; in airports hospitals and public places. Sign package and construction is not only determined by the graphics element of types and style but also by the environment in which the scheme has to appear and the function the signs are expected to play. The boundary between sign and architectural graphics (wall treatments, flags and banners for example) is often subtle, at times non-existence. Some wall graphics can serve the dual function of displaying information and providing large area of color. But architectural graphics as an abstract wall design are mostly used to (enhance) enliven large public space which otherwise would be very dull. Design can involve recognizable motifs appropriate or typical to the situation under or may be completely abstract. Art in general sense is the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as graphics; painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power. Art can be defined as a diverse range of activities executed by human beings, as well as the products of these activities. Art can be of many forms as well. A visual art is the creation of images that can be seen by the eyes. The

visual art also include sculpting, painting, ceramics, graphics, photography, and other visual media. Other form of art includes music, theatre, dance, film, and other arts that require performing fall under the performing arts category. Literature and other form of interactive arts fall under broader definition of arts while fields such as interior design, architecture, industrial design of applied arts. Art can also be defined as the representation of reality, communication of emotion, expression or other qualities. Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy that explores arts and the related concepts such as interpretation and creativity.



Geometric shapes and lines

Uka, 2000

Line an element of design play important function in art production is very useful in any visual representation. Akalaka in Igbo means "the lines of the hand or palm", predetermine that a man

would be encode the choice he made at the point of reincarnation of returning to the world of the living. What is line - It is the bases of all visual formation. The designer who occupies a responsible position in the society by creating functional and beautiful things using his hands through his brain condition by his mind either by inspiration, talent or intuition of expression as a force in the realization of works of art. The designer or artist using available tools at his disposal engages in a serious business of creation. The design through his media of expression he designs/creates and convey the weight of his creative experiences, just like the architect use different lines, basic geometric shapes in the design and construction of buildings and other structures, Artist/designer is always concerned with their place and their works. Art is a historical document which mirrors and reflects the social tendencies of the time of its creation, which provides the viewer with the artistic motivation into the visual power of in expansion of and exploration into the nature of man. Art in geometric representation of idea in different types of lines circle, curves, straight and so on. Line is the bases of all formation; it can be viewed from different perspectives as a chain of spots joined together, a stroke made with a pain, narrow long mark. Line can be thick, straight, zig-zag and so on; it can be similar and contrasting. Lines are used to divide space, direct the eyes and also create form. These are major types

of lines. Actual lines, implied lines and three dimensional lines. Line is a basic element in architectural construction.

Descriptive geometry is the branch of geometry which allows the representation of three-dimensional objects in two dimensions, by using a specific set of procedures. The resulting techniques are important for engineering, architecture, design and in art. This branch of mathematics concerned with the properties and relations of points, lines, surfaces, solids, and higher dimensional analogs, the shape and relative arrangement of the parts of something, for example the "the geometry of spiders' webs" and buildings.



Uka, 2020

Dimensional Form: here the designer drawn or craft out his works in various plans of space to represent the real objects intended to produce. This type of design process can further be classified into 2D and 3D designs. 2-dimensional designs are works done on flat surface. It involves such activities

as drawing, painting on fabrics, wall paper and advertising layout: designing in two plans. 3-dimensional designs are works executed in the round. It includes such activities as sculpture, architecture, handicraft such as jewelry, pottery, leather works, clothing and machine-made objects such as chairs, automobiles, package, 3D animation and so-on, are example of 2D and 3D drawing. This is designing in three plans. All geometric aspects of the imaginary object are accounted for in true size/to-scale and shape, and can be imaged as seen from any position in space. All images are represented on a two-dimensional surface.

Descriptive geometry uses the image-creating technique of imaginary, parallel projectors emanating from an imaginary object and intersecting an imaginary plane of projection at right angles. The cumulative points of intersections create the desired image.

The research into the aesthetics of Uli motifs design on architectural walls in Nigeria is very necessary as it concerns our culture, it is important to clarify the meaning of "aesthetics" as a domain to be investigated. Uli motifs or representations is an Igbo art form initially used by women to decorate the body and walls on certain occasions, it consists of a system of symbolic drawings or design inform of animals, plants, material objects and other abstract designs. Ulimotifs are studied in order to bring it closer to the visual artist and also understanding of its

aesthetics preferences in Igbo culture. Generally speaking, aesthetics can be a set of principles that concern with the nature and appreciation of beauty, specifically, a set of principles underling the work of a particular artist or artistic movement.

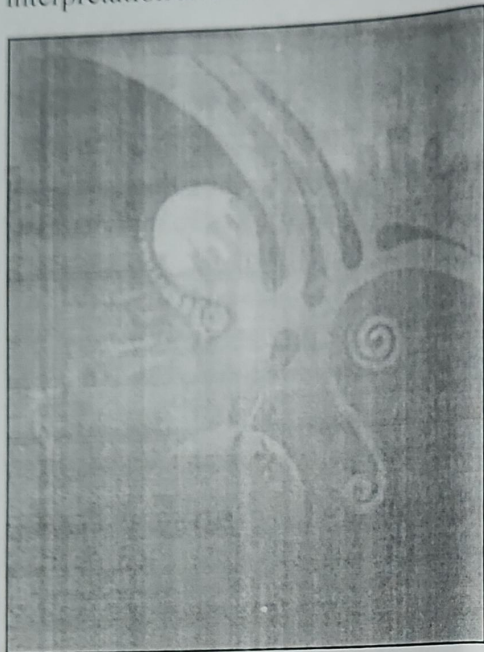
Aesthetic qualities are qualities seen by the viewer when looking at the artwork. For the artist/designer, Aesthetic qualities are when art elements and principles come together to create a certain feel, to the image such as warm color which create a sense of beauty and harmony. To demonstrate the value of learning about the cultural context of works of art, the aesthetic analysis exercise that follows will also include reviewing some of the cultural components associated work. In order to demonstrate the value of learning about the cultural context of works of art, the aesthetic analysis exercise that follows will also include reviewing some of the cultural components associated with the work.

Visual metaphors are implied as a consequence of analyzing the relationships between the formal structures and subject matter of works of art. In addition to their role as symbols, the crosses can also function as visual metaphors if the artist will take the time to analyze their form-content relationships. A metaphor is a figure of speech that transfers one thing to another through implied comparisons. It is used to infuse writing and speech with vitality, which make both more

interesting; example is when "the artist made minced meat out of his colors. When an artist start thinking beyond merely identifying a work's visual elements (the character of its lines, shapes, colors, and so on.) and the ways in which these elements are organized. It is essential to consider the proposition that works of art speak to us through both their formal organization and the signs, symbols and metaphors that can be associated with them. Works of art become most meaningful for us when they evoke thoughts and feelings."

Art is the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as graphics, painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power. Art can be defined as a diverse range of activities executed by human beings, as well as the products of these activities. Art can be of many forms as well. Avisual art is the creation of images that can be seen by the eyes and these include sculpting, painting, ceramics, graphics, photography, and other visual media. Other forms of art include music, theatre, dance, film, and other arts that require performing fall under the performing arts category. Literature and other form of interactive arts fall under broader definition of arts while fields such as interior design, architecture, industrial design and the likes fall under the category of applied arts. Art can also be defined as the representation of reality, communication of emotion, expression

or other qualities. Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy that explores arts and the related concepts such as interpretation and creativity.



Ekekwe Chukwunyere Daviud 2002
Title: Death & Resurrection Some of the mortifies are "Akakala" in Igbo means "the lines of the hand or palm", which can predetermine that, a man could or would be encoding the choice he made at the point of reincarnation of returning to the world of the living. In Igbo culture, line is the bases of all visual formation. The designer who occupies a responsible position in the society by creating functional and beautiful things using his hands through his brain condition by his mind either by inspiration, talent or intuition of expression as a force in the realization of works of art. The designer or artist using available tools at his disposal engages in a serious business

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Line can be thick, straight, zig-zag and so on; it can be similar and contrasting. Line is used to divide space, direct the eyes and also create form. These are major types of lines. Actual lines, implied lines and three dimensional lines there all so exist bother types of line in art works outside these regard of research.

CONCLUSION

Uli motifs have through this paper exposed the Igbo cultural heritage and it's aesthetics on architectural wall design in Nigeria. Art which is the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as graphics, painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power. Art is a

historical document which mirrors and reflects the social tendencies of the time of its creation it also provides the viewer with the artistic motivation into the visual communication power inheriting it. The ideas or ways of doing something new is one way of changing and developing our environment, Uli and Nsibidi artists have introduced new ways of representing their works in contemporary time. African's have embraced creativity and innovation as a way forward towards the expression of our artistic ingenuity to the whole world. Creativity and spontaneity may succeed in limiting uncertainty leading to more stable living conditions of Africans. Changes brought by creativity and spontaneity can be subsumed under the more general

frame work of a quest for order which can be assumed to lie at the heart of any kind of socialization. The symbols, signs and motifs used by Nsibidi and Uli artist are form of visual presentation and communication which in deed form part of our daily living. In the traditional setting these signs, symbols and motifs were used by our ancestors to communicate and other things. This was mainly to communicate messages, ideas and information in form that can be read or looked upon for aesthetics and other purposes. The term "visual" presentation in graphics communication is used to refer to the actual presentation of information to the public through a visual medium such as text, images, symbols, and a combination of other graphics elements via a particular media of presentation.

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