

A Metaphorical Exploration of Forms in Sculpture Using 'Readymade Food Vessels'

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Abstract

The study explores metaphorical exploration of form in sculpture using recycled 'readymade food vessels' found in the environment in order to revisit the essence of sight and idea in sculpture. It interrogates how verbal metaphor used in Nigeria to discuss living condition can transform from sense speech to visual metaphorical forms in the three dimensional in order to provoke thought in the viewer. In the art studio the artist/researcher explores generative metaphorical sculptures from the verbal metaphors that are linked to living condition in Nigeria. The methodology adopted for the study is art based research, and intuitive an aspect of qualitative research paradigm. Data was collected from primary and secondary sources through observation, generative metaphor, and reflexive in action, photograph, internet and exploration of experimental objects. For this study the artist/researcher used materials such as; plastic containers, cup, plates, buckets and bowl which to explore the metaphors. The artist/researcher through exploration, hope to know if metaphorical sculptures created from verbal metaphors can embody idea and sight as non-discursive form or visual thinking. In the studio the artist/researcher explores eighteen metaphorical sculptures with one site specific sculpture installation. For this paper only four of the works are discussed among the series of body of works explored. This study after identifying the verbal metaphors that were explored to create sculptures concludes that verbal metaphors can rematerialize in the three dimensional to give insight to living condition in Nigeria.

Keywords: Metaphor, living condition, readymade food vessels, installation.

1. Introduction

Metaphor is a non-material means that is used for communication of events, dates, records and to drive home a point. Among the Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria, it serves as a way of expression and thought. Egudu (1972) holds that, apart from its aesthetic attributes, in the case of Igbo culture, proverbs remain the ready tools for thinking, communication and way of life. In the Igbo ethnic group of Nigeria, metaphor aids proverb to embellish speech with artistic beauty, which ordinarily it may not have. It challenges, persuades, and attracts the listener to the conversation. In Western world, a metaphor is a figure of speech that is used in English language, to clearly express imagery in words. Sullivan (2010) supports that visual metaphor involves creating an image, which suggests a resemblance of one thing to something else so as to think that, they are the same as another.

Metaphor has been explored in visual and auditory art, to portray thoughts and imagery in perceptual form. Artists engage metaphor to present issues of cognition, aesthetic and to give insight to the viewer in non-verbal communication. Mossberg (2014) explains that the artist uses metaphor, symbolism, and allegory to create visual metaphor, which portrays emotion, experience, and idea, instead of words. This means that, metaphor opened some possibilities for the artist to create form from formless aspect of human expression and experience.

Carrol (2001) explains that, art works are metaphor and that there are some visual images, which function in the same way, that verbal metaphor do and whose point, is identified by the viewer, in roughly the same way that, the point of verbal metaphor is identified by the reader or listener. Since Carrol claims that some art works, are considered as metaphoric, because they communicate in same way as verbal metaphor. It means that, it is not most exploration of form, in any medium which results into sculpture that is metaphorical. Robert (2004) and Brown in Robert (2004), support that, metaphors are statements, that operate in larger contexts, as analogy where two things, are compared to each other. They maintained, that visual metaphor, interprets how virtual space, is organized as a means of sharing cultural and social knowledge. It entails that metaphor, portrays thought, it makes the mind to think about culture and space, in conceptual or aesthetic form. Goodman (1976) affirms that "Strangely, though, with progressive loss of its virility as figure of speech, a metaphor becomes not less but more like literal truth". In extension to this study it means that metaphor, when used visually sees one thing, as another, instead of

saying it is like something else, and uses sculptures, rather than words, to compare things in order to engage the viewer.

The creative use of metaphor may have given birth to a way of thinking about art as visual representation of ideas. Mossberg (2014) further says that in the 19th century, Klint, Redon, Puvis de Chavannes or Edward Munich, Frida Kahlo, Rene Magritte and Salvador Dali, built their career and reputation on the use of metaphor and allegory. Some great artists such as Picasso and Duchamp explored metaphorical forms by assemblage and appropriation of objects. Frank (2006), affirmed by Adams (2007) and Rathus (2010) posits that Picasso experimented with assemblage and that he created “The Bull Head” from found objects using bicycle wheel’s seat and set of hand bar. While Duchamp mounted a bicycle wheel on a stool and declared it art ‘Readymade’ (Lazzari and Schlesier, 2008). The creative use of visual metaphor by artists motivates the artist/researcher to think of living condition in Nigeria as metaphor that may be explored in sculpture using ‘readymade food vessels’.

Since the introduction of modern sculpture in the 19th century, exploration of form in sculpture, to create a unique and personal expression, for aesthetic appreciation, has been an issue. Over the centuries, the practice changed to reflect sculptures, which significantly showed that ideas are more important than form, object and aesthetic. A longstanding view of what constituted an art form transformed into reformulated ideas of art, which changed sculpture practice. Today the dichotomy between exploration of form in sculpture for aesthetic perception and conceptual art, are issues that exist for the Nigerian contemporary sculptor. Some Nigerian contemporary sculptors have explored forms and ideas, respectively without deriving it from verbal metaphors that discuss living condition.

In 1999 some contemporary artists in China used a particular metaphor “Food for Thought” for installation art to portray ideas and materiality without emphasising the exploration of form in sculpture as a problem. In this context, there should be an expansive view of metaphorical exploration of forms in sculpture; that goes beyond limiting it to idea or form alone. There is need for the inclusion of form to create aesthetic quality in idea emphasised sculpture. It is significant since verbal language is inadequate for expression of life of feeling which all human beings share. In Nigeria with a population of 160 million the challenge of their living condition, may not be adequately expressed by verbal metaphor only. As a consequence the concept can be explored metaphorically in sculpture, using ‘readymade food vessels’.

Based on the above issues, the problem of this study is the exploration of metaphorical sculptures that present living condition in Nigeria using ‘readymade food vessels’. The artist/researcher specifically focuses on use of those metaphors that discuss living conditions in Nigeria to producing metaphorical sculptures with ‘readymade food vessels’. The researcher explores narrative sculptures that emphasise idea and form. The artist/researcher uses food vessel as multimedia that integrates visual balance, and data in making meaning of living condition in Nigeria. The artist/researcher creates new metaphorical forms in sculpture derived from exploration of living condition in Nigeria.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

There is an artist and three philosophers that their ideas and theories on art, form, thought, emotion and value of what should be considered as art, constitutes the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study. The artist is Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), while the philosophers are Susanne Katherine Langer (1895-1985) Rudolf Arnheim (1904-2007) and Gombrich (1909-2001). The concept that idea is important than the form realized from it is attributed to Marcel Duchamp, for his creating the concept through the readymade art. Sigmon (2009) states that Duchamp considers ordinary industry manufactured objects that, can be transformed into art through the decision of the artist as readymade. He suggested that appearances of everyday things constitute reality, not some higher spiritual code, supposedly hidden inside them. The artist/researcher adopts Duchamp’s idea, to explore metaphorical form in sculpture in order to create meaning outside the physical object. Since Duchamp protested against the institution of art and creation of object for aesthetic perception using skill. The artist/researcher adds to Duchamp’s idea to include aesthetics by creating metaphorical form, realized through process and technique of assemblage, using ‘readymade food vessels.’

The theory of phenomenological description of feeling and form by Langer (1895-1985) focussed on how concrete art forms exemplify forms of feeling and the work they do, in such a way we understand them in terms of symbolic form, she thinks that every entity has form. Langer in Innis (2009) explains that wherever there is form, there is meaning. In furtherance she maintained that visual form is potential symbolic structures, which give us insight to objects. While objects are themselves forms that can be used as symbolic structures. Langer’s

phenomenological theory that, perception and pattern-forming were cognate, was applied by the artist/researcher to find meaning deliberately, in order that the metaphorical sculptures created will have some intellectual dimension, when perceived by the viewer. Langer maintained that the finding of meaning, is the work of abstraction, which recognizes form that is exemplified. Through this theory of feelings and symbolic form, the artist/researcher considers how theory and practice construct meaning from transfer of metaphor to metaphorical form, within the context of sculpture.

Arnheim (1997) theory on intelligence of visual perception, questioned how there can be intelligence in perception? This he argued thus;

My contention is that the cognitive operations called thinking, are not the privilege of mental processes above and beyond perception, but the essential ingredients of perception itself. I am referring to such operations as active exploration, selection, grasping of essentials, simplification, correction, comparison, problem solving, as well as combing, separating, putting in context.

This study adopts this theory to bring idea and form together in sculpture, because some qualities of visual thinking, as they relate to intelligence and perception that he mentioned, are issues that this artist/researcher applies to explore metaphorical forms in sculpture. This theory enables the artist/researcher, to have a meaningful knowledge of verbal metaphor, recognising them in that sense help the artist/researcher to explore, in an aesthetic way, metaphorical sculptures that discuss living condition in Nigeria. The theory of visual metaphor of value, in which artistic experiences presents to the human mind, the highest values, including moral values, is discussed by Gombrich (1971) where he explained that, the possibility of metaphor, springs from the infinite elasticity of the human mind; it testifies to its capacity to perceive and assimilate new experiences as modifications of earlier ones, of finding equivalences in the most desperate phenomenon and substituting one for another. He maintained that without this constant process of substitution, neither language nor art, nor indeed civilized life would be possible. It is against this background that this artist /researcher, considers how visual quality may be experienced as equivalent or substitution of living condition in sculpture.

Metaphor of daily speech borrowing from Gombrich and the other theories mentioned, provides the bases for this metaphorical exploration of sculptures using 'readymade food vessels'. Arnheim (1997) disagrees on the limitations of research work that uses only theoretical framework of cognitive domain in psychology. He reiterates that visual thinking results into the creation of different experiences in cognition which involves sight and thought. It entails that the meaning of what one perceives is different from what is read or heard. Thus, to think involves visual thinking and it applies in this study. In this instance verbal metaphor is different from visual one. In this study there is need for them to come together as one in order to make meaning that embodies cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. In effect meaning making entails a collaborative activity of all the domains of human reasoning coming together in unity.

Nwadike (2011) posits that there is much evidence all over the world, of language problems-social problems, ranging from neighbouring tolerance to rigid isolation some reaching levels of political divisiveness and bitterness up to the point of brutal suppression of the speakers. Does this cause any wonder that thinking in language in the creation of new knowledge has some limitations? No the use of one aspect of expression such as verbal metaphor to formulate and convey ideas poses problems in communication of knowledge. To this effect there is need for this artist/researcher to reconsider exploration of visual metaphor in sculpture that integrates idea and form to give an analogy of living condition in Nigeria. What I found especially interesting in metaphor is that it is no longer considered a topic relegated to literature classes (Toulmin, in Robert 2004). Thus, metaphor is used in other disciplines to compare things and to create new knowledge that is visible. The exploration of metaphor provides for imaginative cognition that is the basis for this study to create sculptures which portray meaning making and involve intellect. This is because the mind's construction of knowledge may be a complex processes to be understood by one domain only. Arnheim (1997) clarifies that "intelligence of perception the cognition called thinking is not the privilege of mental processes above and beyond perception but essential perception itself". In furtherance he explains that images are directly perceived as well as generated to involve qualities, objects and events which are stored in the memory as visual concepts. Agreeing with Arnheim metaphor should not provide information that is descriptive only.

For the purpose of visual thinking it metaphor can transform into other aspect of creating knowledge such that, it can be interpreted in different ways as visual text in sculpture. Bowers and Flinders in Robert (2004) also state that an understanding of metaphor is essential, for teachers because they provide the

scheme, or cognition models that are the basis of thought. To this effect it means that exploration of visual metaphor in sculptures that this study is exploring is necessary because it gives insight that has visual thinking in relation to the elements and principles of art. It structurally organises ideas, form and events in meaningful perspective in sculpture which gives insight to living condition in Nigeria. Willis in Inglis and Hughson (2005) explains that “verbal language certainly plays privileged part in everyday meaning, but not always as the main, certainly never the only, carrier of meaning, so agents self-reports are necessary to, but not adequate as, full account”. He is of the view that the full account must recreate the tension created when language, aesthetic and everyday are understood as compressed together in same life space. In this respect he affirmed that the coming together of idea and form serve as conflict resolution to the tension that one aspect of expression may create when used as the only means to give insight to knowledge. Carrol (2001) opines that visual metaphors can also be deployed in such a way that they call attention to non-visual thematic properties of things. A visual metaphor is a device for encouraging insights, a tool to think with. He further says that visual metaphor prompts insights rather than stating insights in language. Dewey in Pring (2007) also states that the recognition of art in ordinary experience provides connection to organise experiences in a particular way which creates anticipation for further meaning making of experience in different way.

On this premise, in this study, visual metaphor in sculptures explored from verbal metaphor serves as a tool to think or prompt insight to living condition in Nigeria. If that were so it means that meaning derived from verbal metaphor in the content and context of sculpture is valid means for giving insight to new knowledge. Thus verbal metaphor explored, to become visual metaphor may prompt insight in non-discursive form without narrating it in any language that may hinder communications. In the context of this study, verbal metaphors that discuss living condition in Nigeria are within the context of culture. It has become a subject to present living condition in Nigeria as visual metaphor of artistic value.

3. Methodology

The focus of this study is to explore metaphorical sculptures, using ‘readymade food vessels’. It necessitates the need to engage an established methodology, which is used in art research. Knowles and Cole (2008) state that “The many fusion of arts and qualitative inquiry are changing the face of social science research, opening possibilities for alternative perspective, modes, media and genres through which to understand and present human condition”. This study tries to understand the research problem through different research processes, and their methodological involvement, based on art practice as research and intuitive methodologies which in qualitative research paradigm are plausible or subjective. The methodologies does not involve scientific generalisation it focuses on the specificity to construct new knowledge that gives insight to an inquiry.

3.1 Data Collection

In collection of data for the purpose of this study the following sources of information are considered; primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include direct observation of living condition in Nigeria while the secondary sources include published Newspapers, Magazines, photographs and internet downloads that portray living condition in Nigeria.

3.2 Materials:

The materials for this study are discarded plastic ‘readymade food vessels’ such as plates, cups, water and oil containers that are gathered from the cabbage dumps. The materials are used here in this study because they have link to everyday life in Nigeria, Plate I.



Plate I, materials; bowls, bottles, plates, kettle, and water containers.

3. Processes of visualising the verbal metaphors

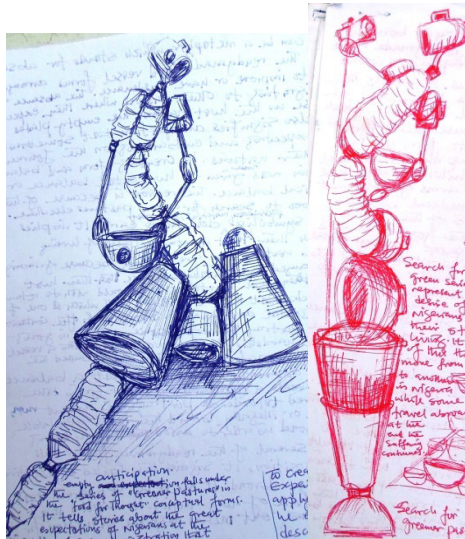
The data collected from verbal metaphor are transformed in the studio into visual metaphorical forms in sculpture. The artist/researcher engaged observation, reflection in action, visualisation, experimental object, and generative metaphor in exploration of metaphorical sculptures.

3.1 Observation

In the exploration of metaphorical sculpture within the studio practice, analytical observation of forms based on living condition becomes a core skill and an important method for transforming data collected into visual metaphor in order to understand living condition in Nigeria. According to Gray and Malins (2004) observation is a classic method in science, social science, art and design for acquiring analytical data. It helps this study to transform ideas of verbal metaphors that discuss living condition in Nigeria into visual metaphorical sculptures.

3.2 Visualisation

Visualization entails the use of visual thinking it was first used by Leonardo de Vinci, while Arnhiem Rudolf suggested its use in conducting research. Art work embodies questions, ideas, images, that become the vehicle to explore new interpretative possibilities of creating new insights and knowledge to learn and understand the world (Gray and Malins, 2004, Sullivan 2010). In visualising this study in order to locate it within research terrain, it first begins with conceptual drawings, of verbal metaphors that discuss living condition in Nigeria as an expressive starting point. To clarify the assumption by the artist/researcher, that verbal metaphor can transform into a non-discursive form in sculptures. The verbal metaphors are understood through subjective and analytical drawings that are guided by reflection in action Plate II, III, IV, V.



Plate, II



Plate, III

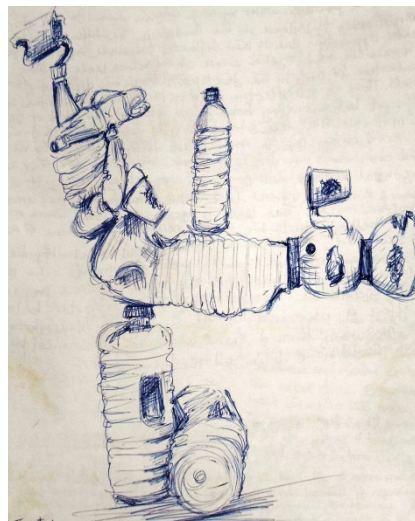


Plate IV



Plate V

4. Exploration of idea and form

For easy understanding of data collected and for purpose of clarity, based on intuitive methodology conceptualism, assemblage is used. Four visual cycles are created to transfer metaphor which is cognitive and discursive into metaphorical sculptures which are non-discursive forms or affective. To achieve this entails exploring interactive metaphorical sculptures around verbal metaphor as non-discursive form in three dimensional. From this point on ward each of the four circles unfolds into conceptual metaphorical sculptures. In this study the transformation of invisible verbal metaphor to visible metaphorical sculptures agrees to Carter's(2004) view that a class of formless matter could be reclassified, its creative contribution to material thinking established within the unity of human sphere, that is different from the control of galleries, institutions and critics, it closes distinction between 'artist' and 'writer'. In using conceptualism and assemblage technique the artist/researcher explores form, content, and context of data collected from verbal metaphor in order to generate new insight. The artist/researcher applies Gombrich (1971) idea of transference and substitution to explore living condition in order to make the experience real and intelligible. Reflective was engaged to transfer living condition that is imaginative into external through the following visual cycles.

4.1 First Visual Cycle

The first cycle explores living condition in Nigeria based on Youth unemployment. The intension of the artist/researcher is to investigate how practice may utilize the verbal metaphor 'Jet Age' to create metaphorical sculpture that portrays the frustration which Nigerian youths face because of unemployment. The issue of unemployment have caused some of them to engage in drug trafficking in order to survive. The work 'Jet Age' was created from the cylindrical geometrical forms of already existing materials. The materials used are empty water buckets, plates, hot water flask and bowl. The materials were cleaned up, juxtaposed, glued burned and tied together with copper wire in order to manipulate them to assume the form, content and context of the metaphor. The forms are thrown in different directions which unified into vertical and horizontal balance to create motion. The work has become the metaphorical sculpture of jet age.

The work portrays that the issue of unemployment which has caused most Nigerian youths into forced migration to travel to Europe and other counties in order to survive. The frustrations caused by unemployment which have forced the youth to take the risk to migrate to other nations in order to achieve better living condition are portrayed by the empty containers. Their youthful exuberance is linked to the force of a jet engine and is depicted by the vertical and horizontal balance. The metaphorical sculpture merges thought and sight to create new knowledge about the metaphor jet age.



Plate VI, Jet Age, Artist, Eze Ngene, oil bottle, plates, jug, bucket, food flask, 57cm x 65cm, 2013.

4.2 Second Visual Cycle

This cycle investigates the subject of forced prostitution and women tracking in Nigeria which is caused because of poor living condition in Nigeria. This study explores its implication based on the metaphor women trafficking. The forms of the sculpture have resemblance to the former metaphorical sculpture discussed. This is because same material forms used, in the creation of sculpture in the previous cycles are engaged. The difference is in content and context of the work. In exploring this work the empty plates, water bottle, water containers and a bucket creates new knowledge. The materials were assembled by tying them together with copper wire they were subjected to burning to portray the reality of the suffering that women undergo during trafficking. The work results into vertical and horizontal balance that compliments the sculpture into harmonious forms.



Plate VII Women Trafficking, Artist Eze Ngene, cups, spoon ladles, buckets, plates oil and water containers, 99cm x 22cm, 2014

In content and contest the work presents the failed expectations and disappointments, of some Nigerian female migrants in their host nations. The sculpture is a visual metaphor of the abuses and stigma that some Nigerian female migrants, experience in their being forced into prostitution in their host nations. The burnt holes on the head, and the upper most section of the work, portrays the psychological traumas and confusion that, the migrant Nigerian women experience in their host nation. The empty plate, suspended on the right hand, reveals the lost hope, to achieve better life by the migrants. The sculpture has shown that the hunger living condition can become a visible experience. It is a reflection of the emotional state of life during and after the introduction of austerity measures, in Nigeria during the 1980s and 1990s till date. The artist/researcher agrees with Arnold and Iverson (2003) that “art will thus at times, become a metaphor for subjective-object relation-the structure of signs and meaning, within a work of art playing out these instabilities and contradictions”. In this instance the creation of the sculpture ‘Women Trafficking’ using ‘readymade food vessels’ have provided a response that illustrate object-subject interactions between sculpture and living condition in Nigeria.

4.3 Third Visual Cycle

This cycle investigates living condition based on the issues of water. The artist/researcher explores this through serial body of metaphorical sculpture. Some works in this series are ‘Guinea Worm, Pipe Borne Water. Their forms are simple and appear as still life representation or collage. The common materials used for the serial body of works are Plastic water bottles, buckets, and kettle, and pipe. The techniques used are conceptualism and assemblage that apply tying and gluing together of parts. In this series there is repetition of materials but invariably with some changes that are interpreted differently in the series. ‘Pipe Borne water’ is a composite metaphor. Its form appears as a still life composition, in content it depicts the unavailability of clean water, for drinking in Nigeria. The broken materials that constitute the work, reveal what Nigerians pass through, to have clean water to drink. The ‘Pipe Borne Water’ is metaphor of the various damaged underground pipes, that should have been supplying water to the citizens, had it been that, they are in good conditions.



Plate IX, Artist Eze Ngene Guinea worm, plates, kettle, cups, plastic bottles, 78cm x 80cm, 2014.



Plate X, Pipe Borne Water, Artist Eze Ngene, pipe, kettles, buckets, oil and water containers, 122cm x82cm, 2014.

The damaged containers in their different shapes and conditions are visual metaphor of Nigeria, as people that are frustrated and defeated by their plight of not having clean water for drinking. In content and context the works create meaning based on human experience. While the 'Guinea Worm' create in this study depicts waterborne disease that is gotten from drinking unclean water in Nigeria. The two sculptures provide opportunities for contemplations on inequity in the provision of clean water in Nigeria. In this way the sculptures have shown that it is possible to create sculptures that are inspired by verbal metaphors. The works moved beyond the verbal metaphors and become representations of living condition in Nigeria, that have physical presence that the viewer can interact with, and thereby make meaning of verbal metaphor in a new context.

4.4 Fourth visual cycle

The cycle explores the metaphor black gold that is used to refer to the crude oil resources in Nigeria. One of the qualities of Gold is that it is precious metal which glisters, in Nigeria its economic value has become of crude oil that its revenue is important to national development. The fourth cycle uses conceptual and assemblage techniques to explore the metaphorical sculpture 'Black Gold' to illustrate that the metaphor black gold when explored can possess intellectual and perceptual involvement. The reason is to express an idea that verbal metaphor which is discursive may transform from mind or imagination and situate out in the space where it can be perceive. The materials used are oil containers of various sizes; the form of the 'Black Gold' when assembled appears as cargoes of crude oil that are meant to export to other nations in order to earn foreign exchange for the country.



Plate XI, Black Gold, Artist Eze Ngene, oil containers, installation, 2014.

In content the sculpture presents that crude oil 'Black Gold' is always being exported to earn foreign exchange, yet the living condition in Nigeria is poor, the insight is portrayed by the open mouths of the empty containers. The 'Black Gold' also portrays the wide gap between the rich and poor which is revealed by the big containers on the top of the sculpture installation that are suppressing the greater numbers of the ones below that represent the poor Nigerian citizens.

The metaphorical sculptures created from verbal metaphors that discuss living condition in Nigeria have succeeded in achieving the integration of idea and sight in this study. The artist/researcher builds on Gombrich (1971) theory of transference and substitution to associate verbal metaphor to metaphorical sculptures in order to create new knowledge that gives insight to living condition in Nigeria. To associate verbal metaphor to metaphorical sculptures created in this study the artist/researcher also builds on Duchamp's idea of declaration of ready-mades as art to declare the sculptures that are created as visual metaphors. The metaphorical sculptures may provoke thought by embodying idea and sight, the approach agrees with Arnheim (1997) where he states that perceiving and thinking, is invisibly related and they perform similar function which aids creativity. The artist/researcher thinks that idea 'mind' has to coexist with sense 'sight,' in order to bring into reality the concept of living condition in Nigeria. Although that the artist/researcher uses arts-based and intuitive research methodologies the exploration of verbal metaphors within the cycles of this research also borrowed from empirical method that involves a matter of trial and error. This is because in spite of the initial sketches made from observation and visualisation, unexpected ideas and forms presented themselves for consideration during the processes of exploring the research problem within the studio context. Reflection in action was used to question the new challenges that cause changes in the transformation of verbal metaphor into visual metaphorical sculptures. The arts-based and intuitive methodology used so far in this research has concentrated upon practice and theory, searching, as much as possible, instances in Nigerian life where verbal metaphor are used which it revealed as visual metaphorical sculpture forms.

5. Conclusion

Metaphor compares two things that are different as if they are one in similarities or resemblance. It is used for sharing cultural knowledge and social experiences. Artists have used it as an analogy and symbolism to create visual metaphor. Since the introduction of modern sculpture, exploration of forms in sculpture, to create a unique, original personal experience for aesthetic perception and idea has been an issue. Modernism and Postmodernist sculptors explored form and idea in sculpture without specifically situating it to metaphor.

The problem of this study therefore investigates verbal metaphor transforming into metaphorical sculptures as an issue that can embody idea and form in order to present living condition in Nigeria. The artist/researcher constructs conceptual and theoretical framework based on the idea of Marcel Duchamp, and theories of Arnheim Rudolf, Langer Susanne Katherine, and Gombrich E.H. that borders on form, experience, feelings, intellect, metaphor and value. The study was placed within contextual review it enabled the artist/researcher to recognise gap in knowledge and to understand the issues surrounding the transformation of verbal metaphor used to discuss living condition in Nigeria.

The artist/researcher uses art practice based and Intuitive research methodology that involves four cycles to conduct the research. Eighteen metaphorical forms in sculpture are explored and it was discovered that there is possibilities for idea and form to be embodied in visual metaphor which presents living condition in Nigeria. The discussion of the study, is based on the sculptures which are created. The sculptures are original and are within the confinement of making meaning, from verbal metaphor that discusses living condition in Nigeria. The study has provided insight into the artist/researcher's meaning making processes, from verbal metaphor becoming visual thinking. In furtherance the artist/researcher has giving insight on how to perceive verbal metaphor can be perceived, in another perspective, that is in non-textural form. The artist/researcher also constructs new knowledge through the sculptures which provide avenue for meaning to be created visually, as dialogue, within the processes of making art. The sculptures have become, the visual text that the viewer can dialogue with instead of verbal metaphor. The artist/researcher therefore, in transforming verbal metaphor into non-textural form using 'readymade food vessels' created a context which questioned living condition in Nigeria.

The study therefore, concludes that the exploration of sculptures from verbal metaphor using 'readymade food vessels' is possible and the works created visual metaphor, that convey in installation arts some aspects of living condition in Nigeria. In the process of transforming the verbal metaphors to metaphorical sculptures it was discovered that they are not only means to construct knowledge as visual metaphor they possess idea and form. The works explored within the context of living condition reveal that in spite of the abundance of crude oil that generates revenue that Nigeria has poor living condition that subjects her citizens to hardship.

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