

**PAPER SCULPTURE: INTERPRETATION OF SELECTED EWE PROVERBS
AND APPALLATIONS IN SOFT SCULPTURE**

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the award of MFA degree in Sculpture and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person or material which had been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement had been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

This study concerned itself with mass and weight. Though the works were huge, their weight did not correspond to their sizes and this could be largely attributed to the material that was used. The objectives of the project were met as several themes of life have been the wellspring for the sculptures that had been produced. In the end, this document has given a comprehensive report of the project. The production of these works was based on the basic traditional method of sculpting that is modelling, though there was a bit of assemblage and construction. The themes have been based on some Ewe proverbs whose meanings are considered difficult so as to make them easily understood. The sculptures produced are representational rather than illustrative, therefore, they evoke the thoughts of the observer but they do not necessarily tell the observer what they are. Every sculpture produced could be said to be a mask. Therefore until it has been unmasked, its discernment will be relative. The study revealed that the size of a sculpture is not synonymous to its weight. Again, the weight could also not be determined by the look or the textures on the sculptures. This is evident in the fact that the sculptures that have been produced in this project are huge and enormous but are also, portable because they are not heavy.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my mother – Madam Flora Nyuilava Sapeh

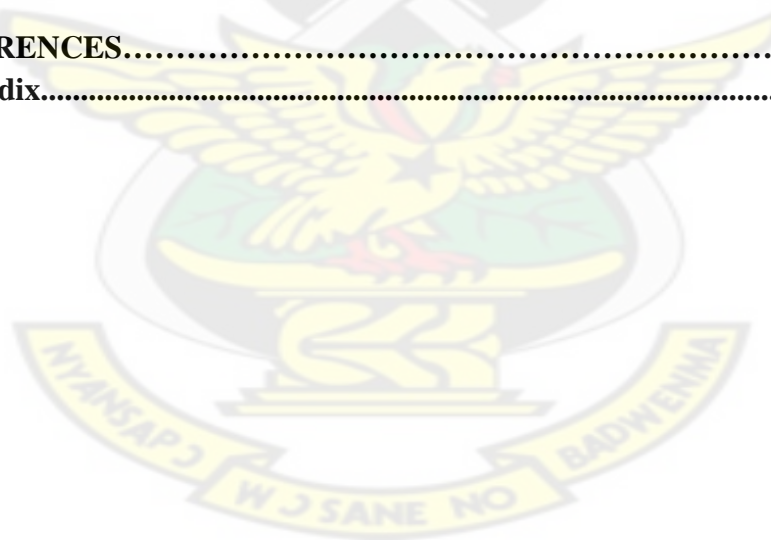
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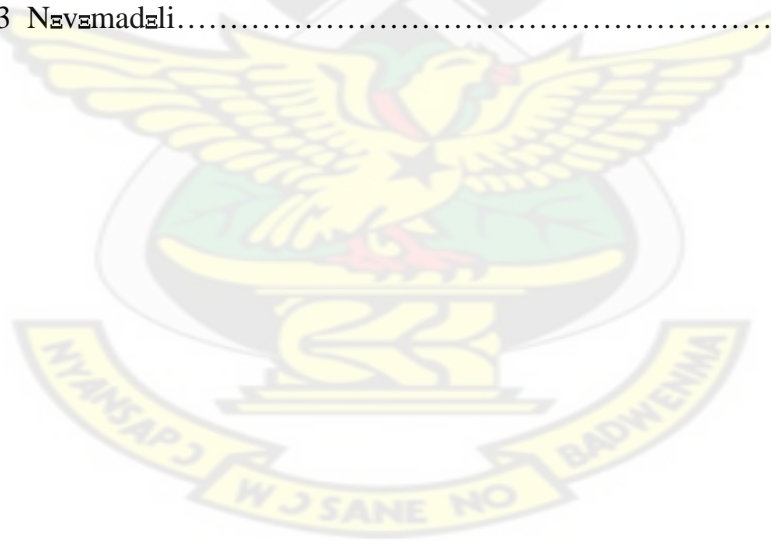
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Metal wire mesh has been used extensively for demarcation, caging and reinforcement, in the building industry and as a transitory material in sculpture. It mostly ends up in concrete which renders the final work very heavy to convey. Attempts to use wire mesh for sculpture have been made, but it seems there is little or no regards to the mass and weight of the objects that are made. There is the need to deconstruct the idea of supremacy and durability in determining the material for art, and reconstruct ephemera and impermanence which are sometimes the subject of post modernist artistic discourse. New and innovative ways of manipulating materials and media are essential to today's sculpture, especially when domains like mass and weight are in the frontline.

On the other hand, artists have several roles in the society. For instance, the Ghanaian society sees the artist in so many ways. In some instances, they are revered or feared. However, their role in agriculture, religion, education and other everyday activities of the indigenous Ghanaian could not be undermined. Adu-Gyamfi (2002), citing Christopher Okigbo, asserts that the artist's vocation is a priestly office charged with maintaining the culture of his/her society as a whole. Whilst the artist is playing his role, such legacies such as proverbs and appellations become some of the important tools that

are employed. Nevertheless, some of these proverbs and appellations are so difficult to comprehend mostly because of their oratorical mode of delivery. In the context of this study, appellations and proverbs are tantamount to mass and weight because, just as mass and weight are inevitable to sculpture, typical Ghanaian cultural values could not do away with appellations and proverbs.

It may sound metaphorical to claim that mass and weight are one just as appellations and proverbs. But this study is concerned with providing evidence and backing to whatever claims that will be established. In the end, every proverb or every appellation that is so difficult to comprehend should be understood with such an ease similar to the ease with which a sculpture should be carried. Though, the project is not aimed at making symbols or illustrations, the sculptures that will be produced are expected to create strong mental images on the minds of the audience. In the process, the link between the proverb or the appellation and the sculpture should be firmly established. The use of wire mesh will fit into the objectives of the project regarding its light weight.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Sculptors mostly work in materials that have mass and weight. This, therefore, makes it difficult to convey heavy volumes of finished works. With the introduction of new materials such as plastics, wire mesh and so on; it is possible to reduce weight generally associated with sculpture works.

1.3 Objectives

- 1 To conduct experimental studies with wire mesh wrapped with paper, painted and sprayed.
- 2 To make impressions of some Ewe proverbs and appellations in sculpture with emphasis on mass and weight.
- 3 To write an illustrated report on the subject.

1.4 Justification of Objectives

- 1 Conducting experimental studies will help to know how versatile wire mesh is.
- 2 Making impressions of some Ewe proverbs and appellations in sculpture will provide expressions that may make them simple to understand and the objects easy to carry
- 3 The report will serve as a document for other artists, teachers, students, researchers, etc.,

1.5 Delimitation

The project will be executed using metal rods and variety of wire mesh wrapped in news print paper, painted and sprayed, based on some Ewe proverbs and appellations

1.6 Methodology

Experimental, descriptive and analytical research methods.

1.7 Facilities Available

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, (KNUST) main library,
Kumasi

College of art library, KNUST, Kumasi

The digital studio, college of art, KNUST, Kumasi

Secretarial services, KNUST.

1.8 Organization of the Rest of the Text

Chapter Two: will review literature related to the study. This will be followed by Chapter Three which describes all the materials and the experimental works leading to this project. Chapter Four deals with the methodology and the analysis and the discussion (appreciation) of the works produced. Chapter Five is on the conclusions, summary and various recommendations. This is followed by references to books, periodicals, and pamphlets that were used to get the necessary information. The next chapter is the review of related literature.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 History of Wire Sculpture

Alexander Calder the great innovator, who introduced contemporary wire sculpture to the world, stands paramount. Calder first began to take an interest in circus in 1923, when he was undertaking cartoons for the “Natural Police Gazette” His circus was an early work in wire used to make moving circus performers; this jelled into an animated representation. Detail of his installation is shown in plate 1 below.



Plate 1. Alexander Calder's Circus, 1926-31, detail of installation. Picture courtesy roland-collection.com

One of his wire constructions is “The Hostess”- Plate 2.

“The hostess” is another wire sculpture produced by Calder in 1928. This is shown in plate 2.



Plate 2: The Hostess. 1928. Steel wire, picture courtesy moma.org

The only thing shared in common by the researcher and Calder is handling the material for the first time. Their approach and purpose differ. Whilst Calder produces figures

used for animations, the researcher expresses himself with the material based on the influence of proverbs and appellations in consonance with perceptual view of weight in proverbs and appellations.

Another artist - Sharmen Liao, born in Taiwan, inspired by the timeless elegance of vintage mesh bags from the 1920's, began knitting simple wire into complex, beautiful jewelry bags, and sculptures. Liao designs the bags as functional objects made to become heirlooms, but believes that, like the vintage bags she almost admires "pass the test of art; they are beautiful in their own right as sculpture pieces, beyond the tyranny of function". For Liao, wire holds the essence of knitting [Surface Design, summer 2005].

"Wire uncoils in continuous, linear fashion which she can shape and weave and control. Also, its glittering patinas and colours and metallic properties are endlessly attractive". Using coloured or silver-plated copper wire, Liao handlooms the mesh on a knitting machine, then manipulates it to mimic the appearance of fabric. Each tag is lined with coloured silk, and the silk beneath the wire mesh creates a subtle interplay of shifting colours and textures.

In view, Liao took her inspiration from vintage bags and was lured into aesthetics and function. It could be justified that her works were "art for art sake". However, it has been contradicted that the works "pass the test of art..., beyond the tyranny of function".

The researcher is lured with mass and weight as a problem associated with proverbs and appellations in Ewe, in relation to Sculpture.

Eleven (2005) states that Blanka Sperkova has gained international recognition for her wire jewelry and sculptures of heads, torsos, hands, legs and animal figures. She devised a unique method of figure knitting wire, which she has used extensively since the mid - 1970's. For Sperkova "working with wire is pleasant and calming. It has a sharp memory and makes a mesh that is unlike that of fiber". For her jewelry Sperkova usually uses silver-plated or copper wire, often incorporating things like crystal, stones, shells, feathers etc for her sculptures. She also uses Zinc beekeepers wire in many of her works. Being sleek or wittily playful, her jewelry is always sophisticated. From her early figurative sculptures, Sperkova turned to making more and more abstract forms. Organic shapes, however, seem to force themselves on her. Sperkova sees her sculptures as matrix, flattening them to make black and white prints, animating them in her movies, or manipulating them to create shadows "that become a more experienced element than the object itself". "Skunk Collar" is one of Sperkova's popular organic sculptures, plate 3.



Plate 3: Skunk collar by Sperkova, picture courtesy eleveneleven. 50webs

Krumm (2003) ascertains that crocheting has been a part of Tracy Krumm's life since childhood. She graduated from college and returned to crocheting because she believes that crocheting calms her down. She asserts that there were so many ways to work, so many media and things to do, that she had to make a choice. The simplicity and practicality of that gesture allied her with both a generation of feminists interested in

“women’s work” such as, post-minimalist use of materials, and the reactivation of craft and meaning into sculpture. In Tracy’s *Balanced* (2003) two diaphanous nets of wire, full of found metal objects, are placed on and across the floor. The solid metal support seems as if it should hold much heavier material, and we see the artists customary use of justa-position. Krumm contrasts textile arts and industrial materials, light open segments with solid used iron, frilly edges with sharp-toothed gears. In Krumm’s pieces, such as *Balanced* and *Yoke/Folded* (2003) the artist has begun to move away from the explorations of volume bounded by the porous nets into consideration of weight and play between two and three-dimensionality. In *Yoke/Folded* the twisted wires hang like a blanket on a rack. (Plate 4). This evoking of images and associations with traditional textiles pull the viewer into undetermined narratives.



Plate 4: “Yoke/Folded” by Tracy Krumm. Picture courtesy bmoca.org



Plate 5: “Balanced”, crocheted and fabricated metal, found objects 121 x 114 x 82 inches, Tracy Krumm ,2003. Picture courtesy bmoca.org

Inspired by the act of using wire for sculpture, Elizabeth Berrien invented her own innovative approach to wire sculpture and achieved museum quality standards - style of weaving, interlacing, twisting and interlocking strands of wire to form sculptures. While her expertise is especially sharp with animals and humans, she adds the same energy to inanimate objects, from architectural elements to spacecraft (Wirelady, 2002). Bluepeg plate 6 is one of her works. If what the finished product looks like has great impact, then

finishing wire mesh sculpture in wrapped paper looks heavy in appearance; just like the use of any traditional or indigenous materials, but in weight it is light.



Plate: 6 “Bluepeg” by Elizabeth Berrien, courtesy wire-magic.co.uk

Karen Searle, an artist from St Paul, Minnesota, uses steel wire to create life size images of women’s garment and accessories. In her installation in 2005, she stated that her works are inspired by women’s lives, women’s histories, and women’s bodies. Karen uses tools and materials of domesticity-threads, crochet hooks, knitting needles-to assert the validity of “women’s work” as well as the feminine view. Her sense of humour enters into the creation process and becomes integral to any of the pieces. “The body as

vessel today” is one of the themes she keeps on revisiting in her sculptural explorations. For Karen, forms are constructed as though making the drawings in space: stitch by stitch an organic cellular structure accrues. In the *Essence* installation, the 3-dimensional mesh – like ‘drawings’ and their shadows reflect a human presence. (Plate 7)

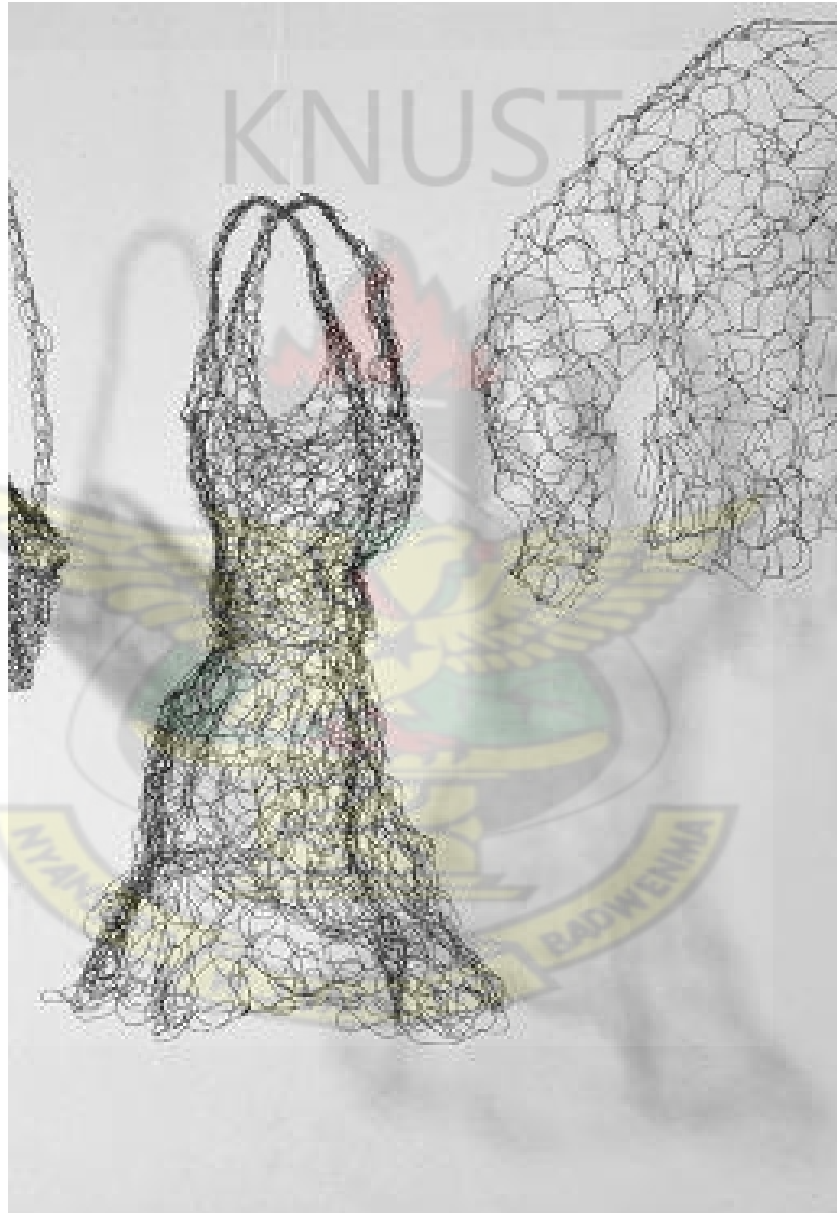


Plate: 7 “Essence Installation” by Karen Searle courtesy mnartists.org

Sculptures created of wire and fabric by Reine Mia Brill of New York city, project a kind of childlike vulnerability that makes them both humorous and endearing (plates 8 and 9). In the artist's own words; "each creature has its own story to tell".



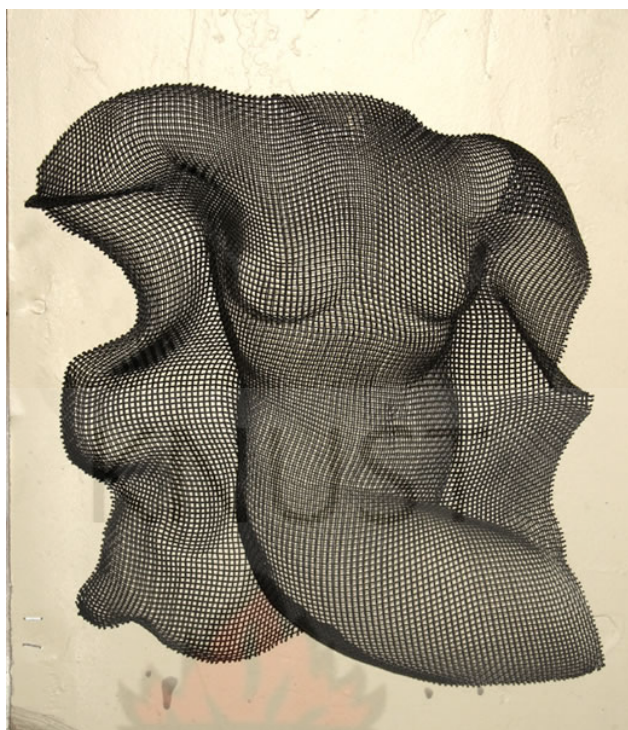
Plate 8: "Happy Birthday" by Reine Mia courtesy roadsidescholar.com



Plate 9: "Surprise Poland" by Reine Mia courtesy roadsidescholar.com

Layers of patterned wire materials are first knit off two very antiquated knitting machines .Metal armatures are constructed to convey a posturing as well as offer gravitational support. Nylon fabric serves as the first layer of skin over the armatures onto which all these layers of knitted wire fabric are sewn. Each wire stitch is meticulously laced into the wire fabric-layer by layer-over faces, horns and even the crevices of toes until the essence of each work breathes life'

Boyer (1985) being fond of salvage materials began to play with leftover scraps of mesh. At first, small and rather timid, it began to attract attention, resulting in his first exhibition in 1989 of ¾ life size figures on “Art on the mountain” in Wilmington Vermont. Being attracted to human forms, Eric began to sculpt figures (Plates 10-11).His works share the beauty of the figure and the emotional vocabulary it speaks, a victim of western thought and its classical mind/ body duality. Viewers are moved by beauty of the physical body and struck by its expressive power, while appreciating the innovative and unique visual characteristics of the mesh.



**Plate 10: “Small Seated Female” by Eric Boyer, brass mesh sculpture
courtesy edchasefineart.com**



**Plate 11: “Cryptos” by Eric Boyer, brass mesh sculpture courtesy
edchasefineart.com**

Amponsah (2006) state that “Nikki uses wire mesh as the primary material in his sculpture. Its inherent grid form is the starting point. Nikki uses cardboard and paint in conjunction with the wire mesh to create architectural forms. (Plates 12-13). It is intriguing because the works look both fragile and strong. It creates a feeling of inside / outside; appearances/transparent; open/close.”



Plate 12: “Manhattan Revisited” 2003 Wire mesh, cardboard, wood, acrylic paint, wire 12” x 9” x 8” courtesy nikkischrager.com



Plate 13: Juddian Stack, 2003 70" x 7½" x 7¼" Wire mesh, paper, paint, wire, courtesy nikkischrager.com

Randy Cooper's shadow sculptures are hand formed wire mesh. His wire sculptures are best presented on pedestal, about a foot or two away from the wall. (Plate 14-15) A strong single print of the light directed to the sculpture will cast shadow on the wall.

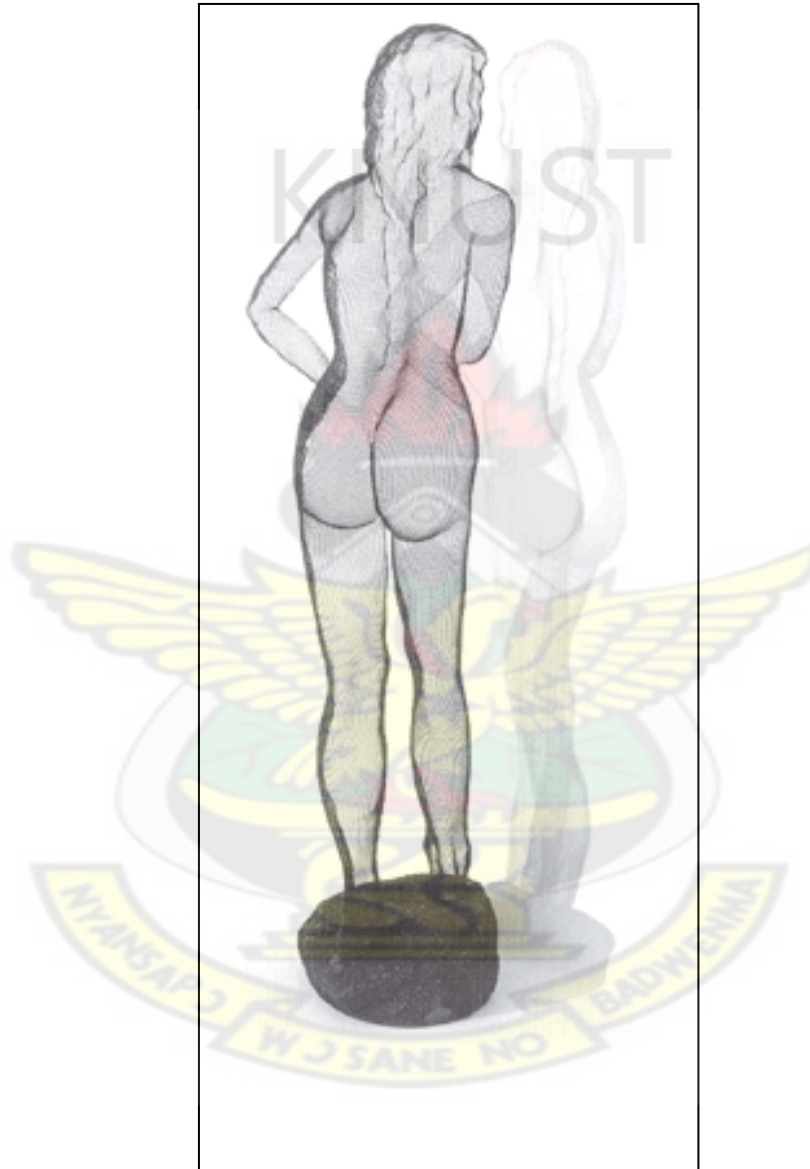


Plate 14: “Shira” by Randy Cooper courtesy jeanstephengalleries.com



Plate 15: “Kent 98” by Randy Cooper courtesy jeanstephengalleries.com

Other artists have combined wire mesh with other materials to create sculptures. Martin Puryear’s *Seer*, (1984) (plate 16) is an example. It consists of a closed volume at the top and an open volume at the bottom. The horn-shaped top piece is powerful and imposing, while the open construction at the bottom invites us to enter and visually explore the structure. Here the contrast between open and close volumes adds both power and mystery to the piece.



Plate: 16 “Seer” by Martin Puryear courtesy guggenheimcollection.org

The proportion of open space, relative to solid substance is critical. The space in Alice Aycock's (plate 17) is defined by a filigree of delicate lines and planes. Inspired by the double helix structure illustrations showing people entering paradise through a spinning hole in the sky, the sculptor has combined a linear structure with series of circular planes. The resulting sculpture as playful as a roller coaster.



Plate: 17 “Tree of life fantasy”, Alice Aycock courtesy kattenbroek.com

Every material has unique physical properties as well as psychological association. Mirrors are fragile, and have reflective surfaces used for observation of the self and others. Bronze is malleable when heated and solid when cool, but it corrode slowly. However, it can be coloured gold, green or copper-red, depending on the patina used.

Depending on the weave and thread weight, silk can provide a simmering translucent veil or a solid roughly.

The understanding of a material's characteristics is an essential aspect of all three dimensional work. In Maren Hassinger's "Trees" the contradiction between the forms of the trees and the wire rope from which they were made provokes the question as to whether it is a mechanical or a natural object. Maren's use of galvanized wire rope to represent twelve trees in a row shows the possibility of using an inorganic material for organic forms. Livia Rolandini, a wire mesh sculptor, is also noted for using wire mesh to create organic forms mounted indoors and outdoors respectively (plate 18).



Plate 18: Livia Rolandini, untitled, courtesy liviaolandini.com

Janet Goldner's interest in transparency shows in her steel works. She combines steel with wire mesh to create sculptures that are soldered and welded. In her work titled *Culture 2*. The book is layered steel, collaged, constructed from scrap steel which incorporates both images and text; multiple pages which are pieced and pierced by imagery and text, resulting in varying degrees of transparency through steel.

On the other hand, the researcher equally portrayed the supremacy and complexity of proverbs and appellations by wrapping the wire which is the supreme material with paper. The easy discernment of proverbs and appellations which is the driving force for this project is derived when the observer carries the finished sculpture work produced with reverence to its mass and weight.



Plate 19: “Culture” 2 by Janet Goldner

Other works by Janet are a 4 feet 5 pages hinged steel book which is titled “Can we Heal?” (plate 20.)“Can we heal from the wounds of our tortured history? Lithuanians, Russians, Poles, Germans, Jews and everyone.



Plate 20: “Can we heal” by Janet Goldener

Eric Aniagyei lives in Ghana, West Africa and uses 26 gauge enamelled copper wire, the type used for rewinding works and his themes are mostly on African people. Each human figure shown in (Table 1), measures 18 inches (approx 45 cm) high. They depict traditional Ghanaian drummers. The one in the broad-rimmed hat is wearing a smock called BATAKARI, a traditional attire from the north of Ghana. The sandal is called AHENEMA (which means prince or princess)



Table 1: Traditional Ghanaian figures

Some of his works simply represent his passion and beliefs. Below are examples of his works titled “Horses” and “Cupid”.



	
Horses	Cupid

Table 2: “Horses” and “Cupid”

2.2 TYPES OF WIRE MESH

Wire sculpture can be made from a single strand, many strands, or even wire mesh. There are various manufactured wire meshes on the market with different designs and unique features that can be useful for creating sculptures but used also in our environment in the building industry. These already manufactured meshes have their inherent qualities which can enable the sculptor to achieve the goal of mass and weight.



Plate 21: Barbed wire



Plate 22: Chain link fencing

Barbed wire (plate 21), mainly used for security fencing, is a continual strand of two galvanized wire twisted with knots at equal intervals. The chain link (plate 22) is mainly used to demarcate the perimeter of estate land, etc. It can also be used in environmental pen guards such as doors,

windows etc.

Expanded wire, mainly applied as platforms and stair tread on vessels, bridges etc. Expanded wire mesh is also used as light reinforcement in concrete pouring. They are mostly used in homes as burglar proofing and safety guards. The hexagonal-shaped wire (plate 23) mesh and welded mesh are used for fencing crop, poultry and rabbit farms. They are also used in lake and river fishing as well as in smoking fish.



Plate 23: Hexagonal wire

Crimped mesh normally used for pens and cages can be used as reinforcement with plaster or cement in walls and ceiling.

2.3 Wrapping as a Technique In Sculpture

About Jeanne –Claude and Christo, both were born in 1935. “Many artists, over time, have worked on a grand scale, but none has done so as consistently and as spectacularly as Christo and Jeanne – Claude. Their body of work consists of “project” most of which have been colossal. Often they wrap things - large things –like giant gift package.

They have wrapped a whole section of the Australian coast, cliff and all, in plastic sheeting. They have wrapped a historic bridge in Paris with 10 acres of silky champagne-coloured fabric. In 1995 they wrapped the Reichstag, the German parliament building in Berlin, with more than a million square feet of shiny aluminum –hued cloth. (no passer by could possibly miss this “project” or ignore them.) Christo began wrapping small objects such as chairs and tables, a stack of barrels and other paraphernalia, plus rolls of industrial paper. In 1972 he strung a 4 ton orange nylon curtain between two mountains in Colorado and called it “Valley Curtain”.



Plate 24: valley Curtain, Rifle, Colorado



Plate 25: “Running Fence”, Sonoma and Marin Counties, California, 1970-72, photo: Wolfgang Volz courtesy



Plate 26: “Wrapped Reichstag”, 1970-72, photo: Wolfgang Volz courtesy



Plate 27: “Wrapped Reichstag”, Berlin 1971-95, Germany

Two projects in particular transferred Christo and Jaume –Claude into media celebrities. The first was “Running Fence”, in the mid- 1970s which set up a white nylon barrier 24 ½ miles long over the hills of northern California. The other was “Surrounded Island”, in the early 1980s for which eleven little islands in Florida’s Biscayne Bay were circled with pink poly propylene cloth.

Their earlier projects had been said to be remarkable, daring, and extravagant – but these two were described as lovely. Even others who have objected to such manipulations of the landscape came to admire them. People had to admire quickly, though Christo and Jeanne Claude’s structure are meant to stand physically for only a few days or weeks.

After predetermined periods, workers remove them, leaving no clue. The project lives on afterwards in the sketches and photographs and recounting of their history. Some observers have criticized the artists for the transitory nature of their works but Christo has already replied, “I am an artist, and I have courage ... Do you know that I don’t have any artworks that exist? They all go away when they’re finished. Only the sketches are left, giving my works an almost legendary character. I think it takes much greater courage to create things to be gone than to create things that will remain”. The works were conceptual.

2.4 Proverbs And Appellations

There are several definitions for proverbs. A short statement of wisdom or advice, which has passed into general use; a crystalised summary of popular wisdom; a short, pithy, popular saying, long in use, embodying some familiar truth, or useful thought in expressive and often picturesque language; a popular short wise saying, with words of advice or warning; and finally, a wise saying or oracular utterance requiring interpretation (Agbo, 2006). Despite the various definitions, there are some common issues they all seek to address. Not many words are used, they are popular and they are words of wisdom.

According to Fasiku (2006), proverbs serve as charters of social and ethical norms in human interactions, extol what the society considers to be virtues, and condemn anti-social patterns of behaviour. Though the Ghanaian sensibility, culture, and worldview, as well as the rhythms, structures, and techniques of oral traditions may be projected in some sort, this study is more geared towards expressing personal feelings about some selected Ewe proverbs and appellations hitherto unrealized 3-Dimensionally.

Proverbs and appellations are some typical examples of literary or oral traditions that have been created and nurtured by the Ewes of Ghana. The study involves relating their mode of existence, their distinctive styles of presentation and their significance to mass and weight in sculpture.

2.5 What Is Mass and Weight

Abbey and Essiah, (1995) state that “mass of an object is a measure of the object’s inertia”. In other words, the mass depends on the reluctance of the object to move”

It is convincing here that an object becomes lighter when in motion irrespective of its mass. Sculpture works look heavy and weigh heavily because of the substance they are made with. On the other hand, the weight of an object is a measure of the force of gravity on that object. This value can vary over the surface of the earth and the value can reduce when the substance is taken to the moon by a calculated factor of six.

Tall and giant sculpture works weigh heavier than short ones. Their centre of gravity is higher than shorter works produced. This poses a problem of conveyance hence this project. Henry Moore is one of the famous sculptors who are concerned with weight. His forms are generally pierced or contain hollow spaces to reduce weight though his materials heavy. Below are some of his figures.



Plate 27: "Standing Figure", Henry Moore, Toronto, courtesy.bluffton.edu,



Plate 28: "lgmoore, basingstoke.me." Henry Moore, UK, courtesy. basingstoke.me

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Tools, Materials and Equipment

The following tools, materials and equipment were essential for producing the sculptures.

3.1.1 Tools

Assorted pliers

Pliers are hand tools with two hinged arms ending in jaws that are closed by hand pressure to grip an object tightly. The various pliers used were hog ring pliers and needle-nose pliers as shown in plates 29 and 30 respectively.



Plate 29 Hog ring pliers.



Plate 30 Needle-nose pliers.

A pair of Shears

A pair of shears is a tool, like a large pair of scissors, used for cutting. With regards to its strengths, it was largely employed to cut wire mesh. This is shown in plate 31 below.



Plate 31 A pair of shears.

Assorted hammers

Hammers are hand tools usually consisting of a shaft with a metal head at right angles to it; they are used mainly for driving in nails and beating metal. However, the latter use was a prominent operation in the project. The types of hammers were predominantly mallet and club hammers.



Plate 32 Mallet.



Plate 33 Club hammer.

Assorted paintbrushes

Paintbrushes are implements consisting of bristles, hair, or wire set into a handle, used for applying paint onto a surface. Brushes comprising both sable and bristles of various sizes were used for this work.

Marker

A marker (Plate 34) is a felt-tip pen that makes marks or indications on various surfaces. Regarding this work, they were used for drawing on the wire mesh before cutting the mesh into pieces.



Plate 44: Felt-tip marker.

Heavy Gloves

Heavy gloves (Plate 35) provided a protective covering for the hands.



Plate 35: Heavy gloves.

3.1.2 Materials

The following were the relevant substances that this work could not have been done without.

Assorted Iron Rods

The iron rods were used in the construction of armature. There were $\frac{3}{4}$ inch rods as well as $\frac{1}{2}$ inch rods.



Plate 36 Iron rod.

Aluminium Screen or Mesh

Aluminium screen or mesh formed the major material for this project. It was used as part of the armature to help model the sculptures. Plate 37 shows wire mesh.



Plate 37: Wire mesh.

Aluminium Wire

This wire was employed to tie the mesh firmly together by winding tightly and repeatedly around in the process of modelling. Plate 38 shows a coil of aluminum wire



Plate 38: Aluminum wire.

Masking Tape

Masking tape (Plate 39) – though quite an easy-to-remove adhesive tape, was used to fix the paper firmly onto the wire mesh and to enable an accommodating surface for the paint.



Plate 39: Masking tape.

Newsprint

Newsprint is a relatively cheap and low-quality paper made from recycled materials or wood pulp. The wire mesh sculptures have been wrapped in newsprint – plate 40. An extensive literature on paper is provided in 3.2.



Plate 40: Newsprint.

Acrylic paints

Acrylic paints of various colours were used as a means of finishing that reinforces the claims this work portrays. Plate 41 shows some paints.



Plate 41: Paints.

Electrode

The electrodes were used during the welding process. As metallic as they are, they conduct electricity and are coated with flux. In the process, they are connected to a source of electric current and the metal to be welded is connected to the other end of the same source of current. Plate 42 shows electrodes.



Plate 42: Electrodes.

3.1.3 Equipment

Not many types of equipment were used though. Most significantly, the welding machine was the only heavy duty employed and it is shown below in plate 43.



Plate 43: Welding Machine.

3.2 Paper

Paper is all around us and the demand for paper is increasing. With hundreds of final uses, paper satisfies many important human needs - paper is a part of everyday life.

3.2.1 What is paper?

The word 'paper' derives from the word 'papyrus' and is a substance composed of fibres interlaced into a compact web, which can then be macerated into pulp, dried and pressed. Today, paper includes a wide range of products with very different applications:

communication, cultural, educational, artistic, hygienic, sanitary, as well as for storage and transportation of all kinds of goods. It's almost impossible to imagine life without paper. (Confederation of Paper Industries, 2008)

3.2.2 Uses of paper

Paper is incredibly useful in all aspects of human endeavours. It could be rendered in various forms to satisfy man's needs in diverse ways. Paper may be impregnated, enameled, metalized, made to look like parchment, waterproofed, waxed, glazed, sensitized, bent, turned, folded, twisted, crumpled, cut, torn, dissolved, macerated, moulded or embossed. It may be coloured, coated and printed. It can be marked and then the mark erased. It can be laminated with itself or with fabric, plastic or metal. It can be opaque, translucent or transparent. It may be made to burn or be made fire-resistant. It may be used as a carrier, a barrier or a filter. It may be made tough enough to withstand acid or soft enough for a baby's skin. It can be read from, laid on or worn as a garment. It may disintegrate or it may be reused, but it is, overall, biodegradable and comes from an infinitely renewable resource. Some typical uses of paper are mentioned below.

- **Agriculture**

Sacks, seed packets.

- **Building**

Wallpaper, damp-proof courses, roofing, flooring, flame resistant papers, plasterboard, decorative laminates for furniture.

- **Business**

Computer tapes, print-out sheets, advertisements, circulars, catalogues, filing systems, sales and service manuals, brochures, shop-till paper.

- **Money, Finance and Security**

Money, insurance forms, cheque books, travellers' cheques, postal orders, cash bags, papers that contain special markings which are only visible when subjected to ultra-violet light.

- **Office paper**

Photocopying paper, graph papers, paper twine and string, blotting paper, carbonless paper, box files, folders.

- **Cars**

Fascia boards, door and roof liners, filters, the Highway Code.

- **Communication**

Writing, typing, printing, envelopes, publishing, accounts, receipts, stamps, newspapers, magazines, greeting cards, calendars, diaries, telephone directories.

- **Domestic Products**

Wrapping and boxes for cleaning materials, domestic tissues, paper plates and cups, kitchen towels, table napkins, lampshades.

- **Education**

Books, exercise books, instruction books, maps, wall-charts, report cards.

- **Entertainment and Sport**

Menu cards, paper hats, crackers, fireworks, programmes, playing cards, board games, kites, model aircraft, football coupons, race cards.

- **Food Packaging**

Wrapping for bread, flour, tea, sugar, butter, margarine, sweets, deep frozen food etc., milk cartons, egg boxes, foil wrappings, tea bags, sausage skins.

- **Identification**

Gummed labels, identity cards, tamper-proof labels for supermarkets.

- **Industry**

Presentation, wrapping, packaging and protection for all manufactured goods, transfer sheets for decorating chinaware.

- **Electrical**

Special insulating boards, electrolytic condenser paper, wrapping and identification for electrical cables, printed circuits, battery separators.

- **Filtration**

Filters for water air, coffee, medicine, beer, oil and for mechanical uses.

- **Impregnated Papers**

Polishing, waxing, cleaning.

- **Protective Papers**

Grease proof and corrosion-resistant products, sleeves for compact discs.

- **Medical**

Packaging to keep instruments and equipment sterilised, bandages, plasters, clothing for nurses, face masks, surgeons' caps, disposable bed pans, sheets, pillowcases.

- **Personal**

Facial and toilet tissue, towels, sanitary products, tableware, sheets, disposable nappies, confetti, carrier bags, gift wrapping.

- **Photographic**

Films, photographs, enlargements, mounts, lens cleaners.

- **Record keeping and other documentation**

Legal documents, birth, marriage and death certificates, wills, history, scientific data.

- **Travel**

Tickets, passports, maps, charts, luggage labels, timetables, fibre for suitcases.



Plate 44: Packs made of paper, courtesy paper.org.

3.2.2 History of paper

Paper has a long history, beginning with the ancient Egyptians and continuing to the present day. For thousands of years, hand-made methods dominated and then, during the 19th century, paper production became industrialised. Originally intended purely for writing and printing purposes, a wide variety of paper grades and uses are now available to the consumer.

A courtier named Ts'ai-Lun, from Lei-yang in China, was the inventor of paper (not papyrus) circa 105 A.D. However, the word paper is derived from the name of the reedy plant papyrus, which grows abundantly along the Nile River in Egypt. Paper is made of pulped cellulose fibres like wood, cotton or flax. Papyrus is made from the sliced

sections of the flower stem of the papyrus plant, pressed together and dried. (Bellis, 2008)

The new Millennium will be dominated by the tremendous progress that has been made in computer science, thus triggering a complete change in our commercial and private communication and information behaviour. Does this mean that the paper era will come to an end? The answer is most definitely "No".

Clearly there will be a huge amount of data being generated electronically, but the issue is how to preserve it. The difficulties of data storage over a long period of time are well known (for example, the durability of disks; frequent changes of hard and software, electronic breakdowns etc.). Once again, paper offers the most convenient and durable storage option. The advance in technology will affect only the printing of items like short-lived handbooks and encyclopaedias.

Reading a book will remain a great pleasure into the future and paper, as a ubiquitous material with its many uses, will continue to play an influential role. Many artists will continue to express themselves by using this most versatile material.

In the context of this project, paper is used to wrap the wire mesh to serve as a new technique of finishing sculpture to reduce weight. The main type of paper for this purpose is newsprint.

3.2.4 Newsprint

Paper mainly used for printing newspapers. It is made largely from mechanical pulp and or waste paper, with or without a small amount of filler. Weights usually range from 40 to 52g/m² but can be as high as 65g/m². Newsprint is machine-finished or slightly calendared, white or slightly coloured, and is used in reels for letterpress, offset or flexo printing.

3.2.5 Pulp

Nearly all paper and board are made of wood pulp, either new or recycled. Today, pulpwood usually uses the parts of the tree that are left after wood has been used for other commercial purposes.



Plate 45: Picture of pulp. Courtesy paper.org

3.3 Experiments

3.3.1 Experiment one: Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps)



Plate 46: Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps),

106cm x 62cm x 61cm

*Fia du-nu-mana-ame, gla wòtsɛ bla kpɛ – A chief
who does not invite others to eat when he is eating,
ties his fence with his own jaw.*

This is attributed to the fact that he has not been kind to others. Kindness in most cases is reciprocal. No one knows when he will be in need of others' assistance. Being it in big position or at the helm of affairs, we must learn not to be power drunk. Neither should one allow himself to be controlled by his laurels. Subsequently, "Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps)" has been made to express this proverb as an "in-the-round" sculpture.

"Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps)" shown in plate 45, measures about 106cm x 62cm x 61cm, and has been rendered in-the-round with the following as its subject matter: a square base, a cylindrical container – (hollow), a representation of bone and a human head. The cylindrical shape rests on the square base which serves as a pedestal. Whereas, the bone rests at the base of the cylinder, the head is fixed against the rim inside the hollow cylinder. The work is textured and finished in black and gray.

The square pedestal is associated with masculine symbol, thus, it stands for the bravery and the chief's authority while the cylindrical container represents a fence. The head that is fixed on the rim of the hollow cylinder is that of the greedy chief and the bone beneath the cylinder depicts the death of the greedy chief. The chief failed to be kind to his

people so he builds his fence with his own jaw, in the end, he dies miserably. This work simply asserts the fact that if people in authority fail to be kind to their subordinates, they will die like the greedy chief this work depicts.

3.3.2 Experiment Two: Reconciliation (mutuality)



Plate 47: Reconciliation (mutuality), 98 x 62 x 116cm

*Ame eve metsia bome o – (two people should
not be fools).*

If two people have a dispute and cannot resolve it through mutual understanding and compromise then, according to this proverb, they are fools. At least, if one is not wise enough to bring about a settlement of the dispute, the other should do it. That is why the proverb is saying two people in dispute cannot be foolish enough not to seek reconciliation. The proverb can be used as a way of saying, learn to resolve your differences through compromise and mutual understanding. “Reconciliation (mutuality)” shown in plate 47, has therefore been made to synchronize with the meaning of this proverb.

“Reconciliation (mutuality)” has been rendered in-the-round. It measures 98cm x 62cm x 116cm. Its contents are a cylindrical base that forms the pedestal, three cylinders that stand upright on the base and two heads that are fixed on the middle cylinder. The cylinder in the middle is the biggest of the three. The work has been rendered with chicken wire mesh wrapped in paper. It is textured yet, it is finished in black and gray.

The cylinders side by side the middle cylinder represent two people at loggerheads, placed side by side. The middle and bigger cylinder is the bone of contention here, it is the thing that separates them. But these two people cannot be at logger heads forever

because two people cannot be fools, there must be mutual reconciliation, which is why they stand on a common pedestal. At least, there is hope for reconciliation.

3.3.3 Experiment Three: Agamagbale (circumspection)



Plate 48: Agamagbale (circumspection) 298 x 62 x 64cm

Xexeame nye agamagbale, de wotrana hesia yi. {The world is like a chameleon skin, it changes everytime}.

‘World’ in the proverb refers to ‘life’ and ‘chameleon skin also refers to changes, times and circumstances. Life is therefore compared to the way the colour of the chameleon changes. It means that times and situations of people in life are not permanent and so one must be prepared for the unexpected to happen anytime. The proverb teaches people to behave with circumspection, since one’s fortunes change with changing times.

In “Agamagbale” there are four hemispherical or crescent shaped-objects fixed onto a horizontal pole and erected on a cuboid pedestal. The concave looking crescents have been inversely arranged reinforcing the notion that life could not be predicted. Moreover, finishing the work in black and white speaks volumes about the impetus with which life keeps evolving. You never know what to expect in between times.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAIN PROJECT

4.1 Idea Development

The source of inspiration for this work is Ewe proverbs. The Ewe tradition abounds in so many wise-sayings which have not been utilized in their visual contexts. These proverbs have been a great influence on the forms of sculptures created in this project. After carefully analyzing a particular proverb, suitable sketches were made considering its content and meaning. Plate 49 shows some of the preliminary sketches. More pictures of the idea developments could be seen in the appendix.

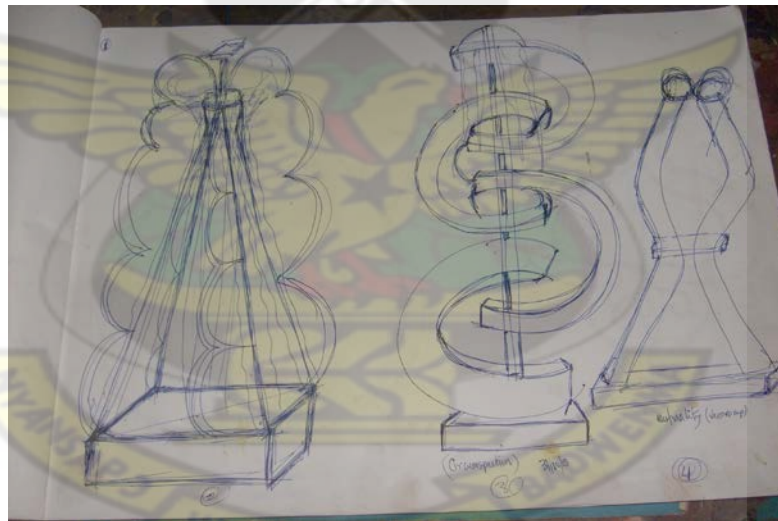


Plate 49 Preliminary sketches

4.2 Execution

Two basic forms of sculpture were used to represent the various ideas 3-dimensionally. These were “relief sculpture” and, “in-the-round sculpture”. Both forms of sculpture

employed the use of armatures as the skeletal framework. In the process of the construction, modelling, creasing, pinching, threading or sewing, glueing ,wrapping and painting were involved.

4.2.1 Armature Construction

Against the background that a weak or insufficient armature can ruin an otherwise beautiful sculpture, a little more time was needed to get the foundation of the sculptures right; to pull off rather robust armatures to do the trick in the quest for realizing the objectives of this project.

Iron rods were measured and cut according to the design, for the construction. Along the way, some of the rods were bent rather than cut. The pieces were then welded to form the skeletons for the various forms to be sculpted. Plate 49 shows the welding process.



Plate 50: The Welding Process

In as much as the design is important, attention was paid to safety as well. In this wise, safety goggles were worn as protection for the eyes.

4.2.2 Modelling

Forming sculpture by modelling as a technique, there is always addition of the material until the sculpture is completely formed. Having determined the approximate sizes of the designs, it was only prudent that enough wire mesh was unrolled to make the design twice - front and back. The operation involved folding the mesh double and cutting the front and back sides of the piece at the same time. Before cutting, drawing the design on the mesh with a marker was essential in reducing waste of the material which was quite

expensive on the market. Wearing heavy gloves, the researcher cut out the designs to shape with heavy-duty shears.

Along the way, there was the need to thread or sew some parts after it had been rolled into the desired shapes – conical, spherical or cylindrical, to hold the ends firmly. Plates 51 and 52 below show the sewing process and some cylindrical shaped mesh with tucks. The sewing was made with either binding wire or rubber.



Plates 51 and 52: sewing (long shot 'a' and close short 'b')



Plate 53: cylindrical shaped mesh with tucks.

The process also involved forming the desired shapes around a model. Gourds were particularly useful in this process. Some of the shapes formed out of the gourds are shown below in plate 54.



Plate 54: shapes formed around gourds

Interestingly, the process did not only involve modelling. There was a bit of assemblage, when the various shapes were collected and fixed together to form one sculpture.

4.2.3 Wrapping and Painting

The objectives of this project could not be duly achieved without wrapping. Although the sculpture had been formed, covering up the wire mesh was paramount for the purposes of this work. Therefore, pieces of newsprint were folded, wound and fixed with masking tape around the surfaces of the mesh.



Plate 55: Wrapping

By way of finishing, acrylic paint was used to paint over the surfaces which were later covered with paper and masking tape. Assorted brushes were employed because several colours were involved and once pure colours were targeted, using a single brush would defeat the aim.



a



b

**Plate 56: Painting ‘a’ “azuma” and ‘b’
xedome**

4.3 Analysis and Discussion

4.3.1 Atamagui (The Snuff Box)



Plate 57: Atamagui (The Snuff Box), 110 x 74 x 35cm

*Atamagui be amesi nyo na ame la, de woxláa efe
ta de ati. – [The snuff box says that it is the head
of the benefactor that is knocked against a tree].*

Philosophy

Usually, those who take snuff, keep it in a small container made of wood, metal plastics or glass containers. Whenever they are going to take snuff, they hit the snuff box against any hard object nearby, (this may be a tree) to make the snuff easy to come out. This teaches the lesson that sometimes kindness to others is rewarded with ingratitude, and so it can be said to a person who has had that experience to encourage him not to stop being merciful. This resounding proverb has been the fountainhead for “Atamagui (The Snuff Box)”

“Atamagui (The Snuff Box)” shown in plate 57 above, is an in-the-round sculpture which contains a subject matter that synchronizes with the Ewe proverb that has influenced its construction. It is made up of gourds and a tree trunk which is mounted on a circular pedestal. However, the tree trunk has been rendered to show a growing creeping plant coiled round it thereby, creating some dimples around the trunk. It is 110cm high and has a diameter of 74cm. The materials for the work are, chicken mesh, news-print, masking tape and paint for it’s finishing. Besides its tactile texture, it is finished in antique gold.

The gourd represents the container in which snuff is stored but the tree trunk is the hard object on which the snuff box is hit against to ease the flow of the snuff. The benefactor who is also the snuff box hangs on the tree precariously, depicting the pain involved in doing good. However, the benefactor – the snuff box, is not deterred because of the support it receives from the circular pedestal. God's perfect nature is expressed by the circular pedestal. The benefactor will continue to do good.

4.3 Da ku de dzi (The dead snake)



Plate 58: Da ku de dzi (The dead snake) 233cm x 52cm x 73cm

Da ku de dzi metsia dzi o. (A snake that dies on a tree never remains there).

Philosophy

The proverb teaches that every wrong act shall receive its due reward and this is as sure as a dead snake always falls down. It is with this idea that this work has been made.

“Da ku de dzi (The dead snake)”- plate 58, measures about 233cm x 52cm x 73cm. The subject matter is four threadlike objects that look like snakes and a rectangular pedestal. The snakes are interlaced on a rod which supports them. It is a textured in-the-round sculpture rendered in wire mesh, wrapped in paper and finished in black paint.

Regardless of the white patches found in the work, the effect of the white is virtually subdued by the imposing nature of the black. In the Ewe tradition, black has always been associated with evil. That is why the snakes have been portrayed as such. These seemingly evil objects will surely come down one day, once they have been depicted with their heads pointing downwards- dead and decaying. The white burnt patches show that they are decaying. In the same way, every wrong deed will be rewarded accordingly just like the way the dead snake will surely fall.

4.5 Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama (bowing in affluence)



Plate 59: Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama (bowing in affluence)
190x98x40cm

Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama
(bowing in affluence) – (the needle said that it is
among bales of cloth but it is naked).

Philosophy

This proverb can be used as an expression of disappointment, for example, by parents who have well-to-do children but are themselves poor. It is also used to state the fact that an individual may live in the midst of plenty but will still be in need because he fails to make use of his opportunities. Benefit from the opportunities around you. This is the proverb that has influenced this sculpture – “Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama”(Plate 59)

The subject matter for this sculpture is a beggar with big open hands; there are some objects around the beggar believed to be gold bars and some natural resources. The beggar rests on a pedestal that looks like the Africa map. It is made of wire mesh and wrapped in paper. The work is finished in a way that the material is seen in the sculpture itself.

The work depicts a beggar, which epitomizes the attitude of African countries who, despite all the rich resources, continue to solicit for funds from other nations, especially the developed ones. The pose of the figure – reclining, suggests how pitiful and backward the donors see the African. In this work, the observer is considered a part of the work. The role of the observer is that of the donor. The attitude of the observer is synonymous with the attitude of the foreigners that Africans look up to. The essence of

the exposure of the sculpting material – paper, reinforces the fact that Africa abounds in resources. The beggar has been made with little or no regards to the canons of art, especially proportion. It is purely representational. The long arms suggest how desperate the African is, like Oliver Twist, the African is always asking for more.

4.6 Azumagedege (Perseverance)



Plate 60: Azumagedege, 290x164cm

*“Azumagedege, fia kule afe wo kje yi agble, wodo agble
ko wobe agblenɛ ha ku. Nyonupligidi wodi eza wogbe
za. Vuga ade mu. Nu me wɛna nutsu wo faa avi o.*

*Negbe huu ko woado, vɛvɛnɛtɛ dzu novia le dalime
dzaa. Togodo metsia agbo o.”*

Traditionally, chiefs are given secret burials due to some rituals which are performed before their burial. As such, they are either buried at royal cemeteries or where there is none, they are buried in their rooms. In some typical Ghanaian villages, they are sent to the bush or forest far away from town.

Within the relief is a representation of nine different figures in different scenarios. The word “Azumagedege” in Ewe sounds like a drum that is being beaten. The echo of the sound is envisaged by the researcher as an interlaced rope or web. The tone projected is similarly given a visual description as a giant. This is represented by projecting the figure from the top to the bottom left corner of the picture plane.

It has been portrayed that the chief died, the dead body was being carried by the three figures to the farm or bush for the burial. Very unfortunately when they got to the burial place; (a hamlet in the bush), all the inhabitants had died. The only female amongst them disappeared all of a sudden.

In the mind of the carriers, , “a big three has fallen”. This is represented by a log-like structure at the foot of Azumah. What next? Man is destined to be brave. You cannot cry

or weep, since the purpose must be fulfilled. The trauma made one of them to bend his head down in tears.

This is the head of a ram. It is surrounded and pressed by contours, symbolizing fence. This is to say that in life we are prone to problems but amidst all problems, we must persevere.

4.7 Zikpi nyo wu dzre (Tolerance)



Plate 61: Zikpi nyo wu dzre (Tolerance), 240x62x64cm

Zikpi nyo wu dzre – (silence is better than quarrelling)

Philosophy

Silence here means tolerance, unresponsiveness to provocation. It takes two to quarrel and so the best way to avoid quarrelling is to refuse to react to aggressive provocations. This is one of the ways to resolve disagreement.

The sculpture representation of this proverb measures: 240x62x64cm. In the work, there are two heads and four legs which have been portrayed in pairs. The legs meet at the heels of the feet thereby creating a dimple. The feet interlock the mouth of the head preventing it from making further utterances. The suspension of the head looks funny. The pressure on the lips forces it to be protruding. Both heads are tilted, towards different directions showing the aggressive nature of the quarrel. The legs have developed folds; they are also tilted indicating the amount of energy being exerted on the lips to keep them shut. The work is shown in plate 61.

7.8 Xe domεme mefaa kεvi o. (Vigilance)



Plate 62: Xe domεme mefaa kεvi o. (Vigilance), 245x62x64cm

Xe domɛme mefaa kɛvi o. (the bird whose neck is caught in a trap does not complain of pain in the neck)..

Philosophy

The proverb is a way of saying that you deserve troubles that you bring upon yourself. Be prepared to bear the consequences of your actions. In the expression of this proverb, there is a pyramidal tower, with four different hooks at the pinnacle. Ropes made from strips of wire mesh, wrapped with masking tape have been tied onto the pinnacle and woven into a net. The net has fourteen different sizes of circular dents. Traped in the nets are four cylindrical shapes with rounded tips and pointed mouths in resemblance to birds

The tower has four apartments. Two of the parts are wrapped and painted and sprayed. The other two are left open thereby creating a passage. The inner portions have been brushed in black hue. The net has also been painted slightly in black to harmonize with the tower. The artist's visual representation of this proverb shows that he might be a fisherman, a hunter or he hails from a community where such activities are practised. Plate 62 is a picture of the work.

4.9 Nəvəmadəli (Contentment)



Plate 63: Nəvəmadəli, 164x60x58cm

*Nɛvɛmadɛli: Ame adeke mekpɛna tameklodada be
yedada o. aleke nɛwo le ha eyae dzi wo.*

Philosophy

Nɛvɛ, in Ewe simply means bad mother. In appellation, it has been substantiated that if you have a bad mother, you can never exchange her with any one whose mother is good. For instance, if your mother is poor can you exchange her with someone whose mother is rich? What about if your mother is blind, lame, or even a witch? The name teaches how to be content with what we have and stay focused. This name augments the saying “independence with poverty is better than servitude in tranquility”.

The art work has two semi-abstract human figures: a child and mother. The child has two arms but the lady has one. Their heads are covered with a triangular-shaped form resembling an academic gown. The gown is painted black as the colour of most gowns that are used in the universities.

The lady’s single arm might be a deformity or an artistic statement by the artist that he/she has been brought up by a single parent – the mother. The child’s arm is raised by the mother. The act of raising the arm, coupled with the covering of the academic gown indicates that the mother wanted the child to attain higher academic heights. When the

child gets there, he will not enjoy the benefits of his success alone since “the superfluity of the man is the beard”. This adage is demonstrated in the work as the child shares his achievements with the mother by sharing the academic gown. The white and black and splash of antique gold symbolize: black – upon the toils, white – victory has come, antique gold –wealth or riches will crown their struggles. The work together measures 164x60x58cm as shown in Plate 63 above, shows the work.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The art of sculpture indeed is quite broad and limitless in creativity. The subject seems to change with time. Over the years, sculpture has seen many changes in so many areas including material, techniques and/ or methods. Though this study has been rendered in a material which could be regarded as not a mainstream material, the concerns of the study have placed very little consideration on the material aspect of the study.

However, the discourse has been generally centred on a couple of common features of the art – mass and weight. Interestingly, in the process, wire mesh wrapped in paper became a good example for this exercise. However, the project generally centered on the impressions some particular Ewe proverbs and appellations have on the researcher. Frankly, the sculptures have been inspired by some popular Ewe proverbs which hitherto have not been represented in sculpture. Those proverbs too have meanings which seem difficult to understand. Perhaps, they are as heavy as cement sculptures or stone carvings.

Depicting them in art, it is expected that the proverbs become a bit lighter to be understood. That is where sculpture works in wire mesh and paper that did the trick. The sculptures appear so huge and heavy but their weights are not tantamount to their sizes. In the same vein, the proverbs sound so heavy but when you lift the sculpture that has been made to represent the particular proverb, it then becomes easy to comprehend.

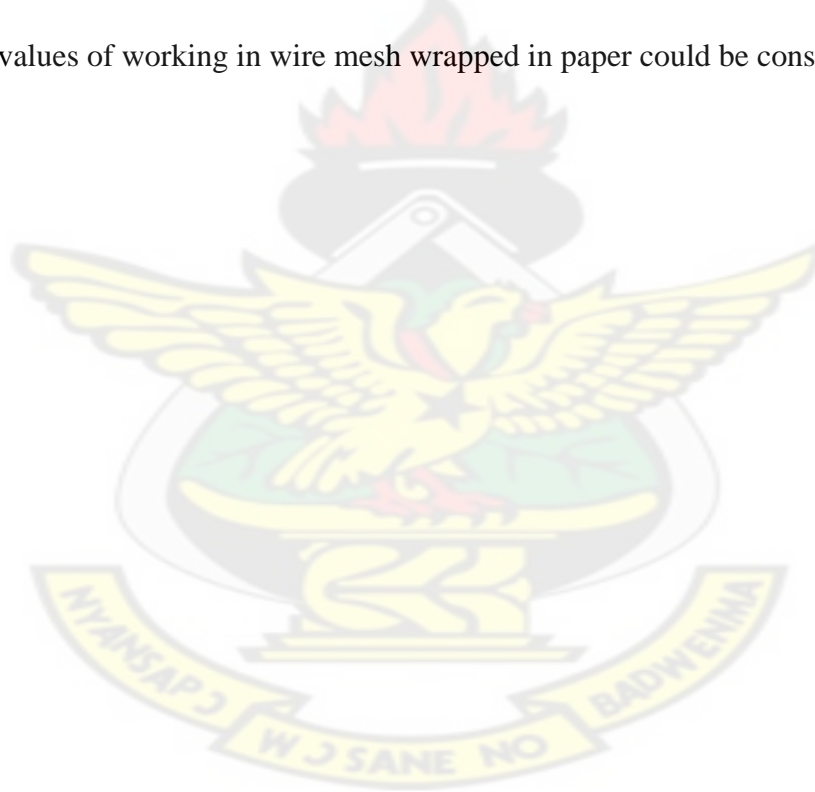
5.2 CONCLUSIONS

In order that the objectives of this study are met, about 10 heroic sculptures have been rendered both in relief and in-the-round to serve as the concrete backing to the claims of the study. Each work is also inspired by themes of life especially Ewe proverbs. A comprehensive literature has been provided in addition to a step by step guide to producing such sculptures. These have been prominent among the contents of the thesis. There have also been analysis and discussions of each sculpture that has been made. In the end, the summary and recommendations conclude the thesis.

One very important achievement of this study is that wire mesh and paper could be used to reduce the weight of a sculpture when the sculptor desires to produce huge works which could be easily carried around. Therefore, one can say that, the size of a sculpture does not necessarily correspond to its weight. The determiner is the material that was used. Wire mesh is a good material for making huge sculptures lighter.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Student sculptors should pay attention to the materials they choose for their works especially when mass and weight are concerned. They may use wire mesh as alternative to clay or wood.
2. Research should be encouraged within the department to unveil new materials that may render sculptures lighter regardless of their size.
3. This study should not end here, but should be explored further. The aesthetic values of working in wire mesh wrapped in paper could be considered.



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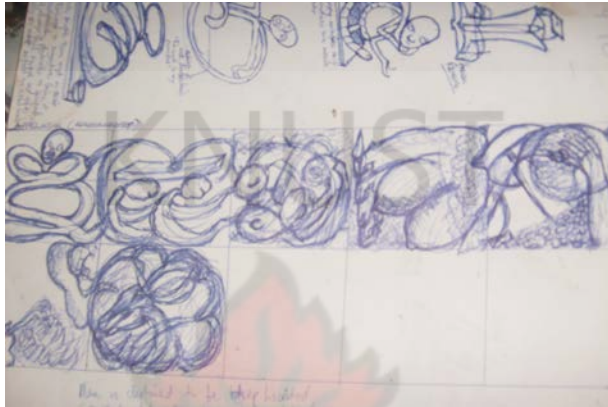
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APPENDIX

Some Preliminary Sketches for The Idea Development

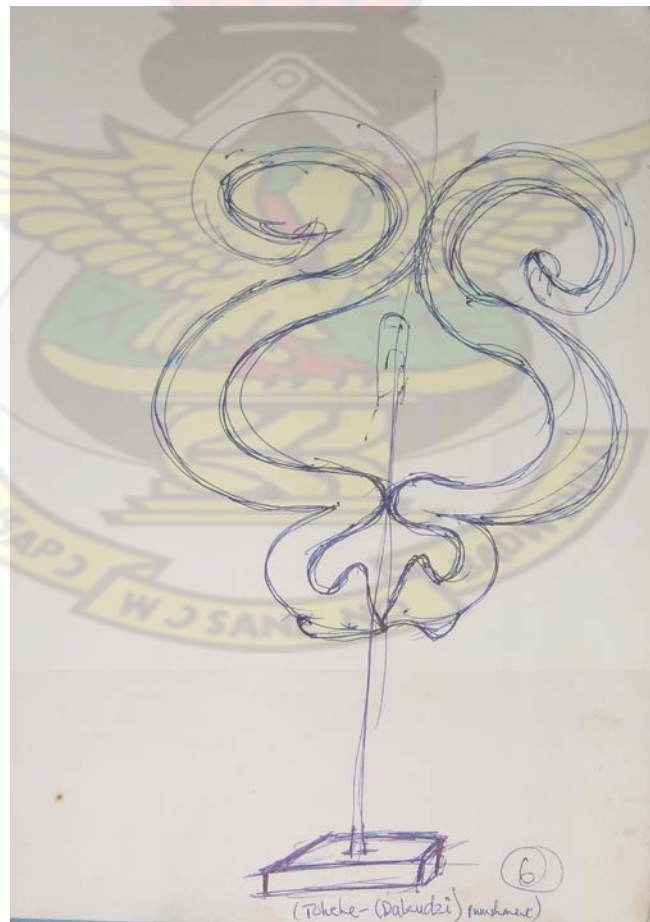
Azumagedege (Perseverance)



Nevemadeli (Contentment)



Da ku de dzi (The dead **snake**)



**PAPER SCULPTURE: INTERPRETATION OF SELECTED EWE PROVERBS
AND APPALLATIONS IN SOFT SCULPTURE**

By

Vincent Kwaku Norvor
B.Ed (Hons.) Sculpture

A Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ART (MFA) SCULPTURE
Faculty of Art, College of Art and Social Sciences

© May 2008, *Department of Painting and Sculpture*

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the award of MFA degree in Sculpture and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person or material which had been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement had been made in the text.

VINCENT KWAKU NORVOR

.....

.....

(PG9126206)

Signature

Date

(Candidate)

Certified by:

JONAS. S. K. AGBO

(Supervisor)

.....

.....

Signature

Date

GODFRED Y. ANNUM

(Head of Department)

.....

.....

Signature

Date

ABSTRACT

This study concerned itself with mass and weight. Though the works were huge, their weight did not correspond to their sizes and this could be largely attributed to the material that was used. The objectives of the project were met as several themes of life have been the wellspring for the sculptures that had been produced. In the end, this document has given a comprehensive report of the project. The production of these works was based on the basic traditional method of sculpting that is modelling, though there was a bit of assemblage and construction. The themes have been based on some Ewe proverbs whose meanings are considered difficult so as to make them easily understood. The sculptures produced are representational rather than illustrative, therefore, they evoke the thoughts of the observer but they do not necessarily tell the observer what they are. Every sculpture produced could be said to be a mask. Therefore until it has been unmasked, its discernment will be relative. The study revealed that the size of a sculpture is not synonymous to its weight. Again, the weight could also not be determined by the look or the textures on the sculptures. This is evident in the fact that the sculptures that have been produced in this project are huge and enormous but are also, portable because they are not heavy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my mother – Madam Flora Nyuilava Sapeh

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Metal wire mesh has been used extensively for demarcation, caging and reinforcement, in the building industry and as a transitory material in sculpture. It mostly ends up in concrete which renders the final work very heavy to convey. Attempts to use wire mesh for sculpture have been made, but it seems there is little or no regards to the mass and weight of the objects that are made. There is the need to deconstruct the idea of supremacy and durability in determining the material for art, and reconstruct ephemera and impermanence which are sometimes the subject of post modernist artistic discourse. New and innovative ways of manipulating materials and media are essential to today's sculpture, especially when domains like mass and weight are in the frontline.

On the other hand, artists have several roles in the society. For instance, the Ghanaian society sees the artist in so many ways. In some instances, they are revered or feared. However, their role in agriculture, religion, education and other everyday activities of the indigenous Ghanaian could not be undermined. Adu-Gyamfi (2002), citing Christopher Okigbo, asserts that the artist's vocation is a priestly office charged with maintaining the culture of his/her society as a whole. Whilst the artist is playing his role, such legacies such as proverbs and appellations become some of the important tools that

are employed. Nevertheless, some of these proverbs and appellations are so difficult to comprehend mostly because of their oratorical mode of delivery. In the context of this study, appellations and proverbs are tantamount to mass and weight because, just as mass and weight are inevitable to sculpture, typical Ghanaian cultural values could not do away with appellations and proverbs.

It may sound metaphorical to claim that mass and weight are one just as appellations and proverbs. But this study is concerned with providing evidence and backing to whatever claims that will be established. In the end, every proverb or every appellation that is so difficult to comprehend should be understood with such an ease similar to the ease with which a sculpture should be carried. Though, the project is not aimed at making symbols or illustrations, the sculptures that will be produced are expected to create strong mental images on the minds of the audience. In the process, the link between the proverb or the appellation and the sculpture should be firmly established. The use of wire mesh will fit into the objectives of the project regarding its light weight.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Sculptors mostly work in materials that have mass and weight. This, therefore, makes it difficult to convey heavy volumes of finished works. With the introduction of new materials such as plastics, wire mesh and so on; it is possible to reduce weight generally associated with sculpture works.

1.3 Objectives

- 1 To conduct experimental studies with wire mesh wrapped with paper, painted and sprayed.
- 2 To make impressions of some Ewe proverbs and appellations in sculpture with emphasis on mass and weight.
- 3 To write an illustrated report on the subject.

1.4 Justification of Objectives

- 1 Conducting experimental studies will help to know how versatile wire mesh is.
- 2 Making impressions of some Ewe proverbs and appellations in sculpture will provide expressions that may make them simple to understand and the objects easy to carry
- 3 The report will serve as a document for other artists, teachers, students, researchers, etc.,

1.5 Delimitation

The project will be executed using metal rods and variety of wire mesh wrapped in news print paper, painted and sprayed, based on some Ewe proverbs and appellations

1.6 Methodology

Experimental, descriptive and analytical research methods.

1.7 Facilities Available

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, (KNUST) main library,
Kumasi

College of art library, KNUST, Kumasi

The digital studio, college of art, KNUST, Kumasi

Secretarial services, KNUST.

1.8 Organization of the Rest of the Text

Chapter Two: will review literature related to the study. This will be followed by Chapter Three which describes all the materials and the experimental works leading to this project. Chapter Four deals with the methodology and the analysis and the discussion (appreciation) of the works produced. Chapter Five is on the conclusions, summary and various recommendations. This is followed by references to books, periodicals, and pamphlets that were used to get the necessary information. The next chapter is the review of related literature.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 History of Wire Sculpture

Alexander Calder the great innovator, who introduced contemporary wire sculpture to the world, stands paramount. Calder first began to take an interest in circus in 1923, when he was undertaking cartoons for the “Natural Police Gazette” His circus was an early work in wire used to make moving circus performers; this jelled into an animated representation. Detail of his installation is shown in plate 1 below.



Plate 1. Alexander Calder's Circus, 1926-31, detail of installation. Picture courtesy roland-collection.com

One of his wire constructions is “The Hostess” - Plate 2.

“The hostess” is another wire sculpture produced by Calder in 1928. This is shown in plate 2.



Plate 2: The Hostess. 1928. Steel wire, picture courtesy moma.org

The only thing shared in common by the researcher and Calder is handling the material for the first time. Their approach and purpose differ. Whilst Calder produces figures

used for animations, the researcher expresses himself with the material based on the influence of proverbs and appellations in consonance with perceptual view of weight in proverbs and appellations.

Another artist - Sharmen Liao, born in Taiwan, inspired by the timeless elegance of vintage mesh bags from the 1920's, began knitting simple wire into complex, beautiful jewelry bags, and sculptures. Liao designs the bags as functional objects made to become heirlooms, but believes that, like the vintage bags she almost admires "pass the test of art; they are beautiful in their own right as sculpture pieces, beyond the tyranny of function". For Liao, wire holds the essence of knitting [Surface Design, summer 2005].

"Wire uncoils in continuous, linear fashion which she can shape and weave and control. Also, its glittering patinas and colours and metallic properties are endlessly attractive". Using coloured or silver-plated copper wire, Liao handlooms the mesh on a knitting machine, then manipulates it to mimic the appearance of fabric. Each tag is lined with coloured silk, and the silk beneath the wire mesh creates a subtle interplay of shifting colours and textures.

In view, Liao took her inspiration from vintage bags and was lured into aesthetics and function. It could be justified that her works were "art for art sake". However, it has been contradicted that the works "pass the test of art..., beyond the tyranny of function".

The researcher is lured with mass and weight as a problem associated with proverbs and appellations in Ewe, in relation to Sculpture.

Eleven (2005) states that Blanka Sperkova has gained international recognition for her wire jewelry and sculptures of heads, torsos, hands, legs and animal figures. She devised a unique method of figure knitting wire, which she has used extensively since the mid - 1970's. For Sperkova "working with wire is pleasant and calming. It has a sharp memory and makes a mesh that is unlike that of fiber". For her jewelry Sperkova usually uses silver-plated or copper wire, often incorporating things like crystal, stones, shells, feathers etc for her sculptures. She also uses Zinc beekeepers wire in many of her works. Being sleek or wittily playful, her jewelry is always sophisticated. From her early figurative sculptures, Sperkova turned to making more and more abstract forms. Organic shapes, however, seem to force themselves on her. Sperkova sees her sculptures as matrix, flattening them to make black and white prints, animating them in her movies, or manipulating them to create shadows "that become a more experienced element than the object itself". "Skunk Collar" is one of Sperkova's popular organic sculptures, plate 3.



Plate 3: Skunk collar by Sperkova, picture courtesy eleveneleven. 50webs

Krumm (2003) ascertains that crocheting has been a part of Tracy Krumm's life since childhood. She graduated from college and returned to crocheting because she believes that crocheting calms her down. She asserts that there were so many ways to work, so many media and things to do, that she had to make a choice. The simplicity and practicality of that gesture allied her with both a generation of feminists interested in

“women’s work” such as, post-minimalist use of materials, and the reactivation of craft and meaning into sculpture. In Tracy’s *Balanced* (2003) two diaphanous nets of wire, full of found metal objects, are placed on and across the floor. The solid metal support seems as if it should hold much heavier material, and we see the artists customary use of justa-position. Krumm contrasts textile arts and industrial materials, light open segments with solid used iron, frilly edges with sharp-toothed gears. In Krumm’s pieces, such as *Balanced* and *Yoke/Folded* (2003) the artist has begun to move away from the explorations of volume bounded by the porous nets into consideration of weight and play between two and three-dimensionality. In *Yoke/Folded* the twisted wires hang like a blanket on a rack. (Plate 4). This evoking of images and associations with traditional textiles pull the viewer into undetermined narratives.



**Plate 4: “Yoke/Folded” by Tracy Krumm. Picture
courtesy bmoca.org**



Plate 5: “Balanced”, crocheted and fabricated metal, found objects 121 x 114 x 82 inches, Tracy Krumm ,2003. Picture courtesy bmoca.org

Inspired by the act of using wire for sculpture, Elizabeth Berrien invented her own innovative approach to wire sculpture and achieved museum quality standards - style of weaving, interlacing, twisting and interlocking strands of wire to form sculptures. While her expertise is especially sharp with animals and humans, she adds the same energy to inanimate objects, from architectural elements to spacecraft (Wirelady, 2002). Bluepeg plate 6 is one of her works. If what the finished product looks like has great impact, then

finishing wire mesh sculpture in wrapped paper looks heavy in appearance; just like the use of any traditional or indigenous materials, but in weight it is light.

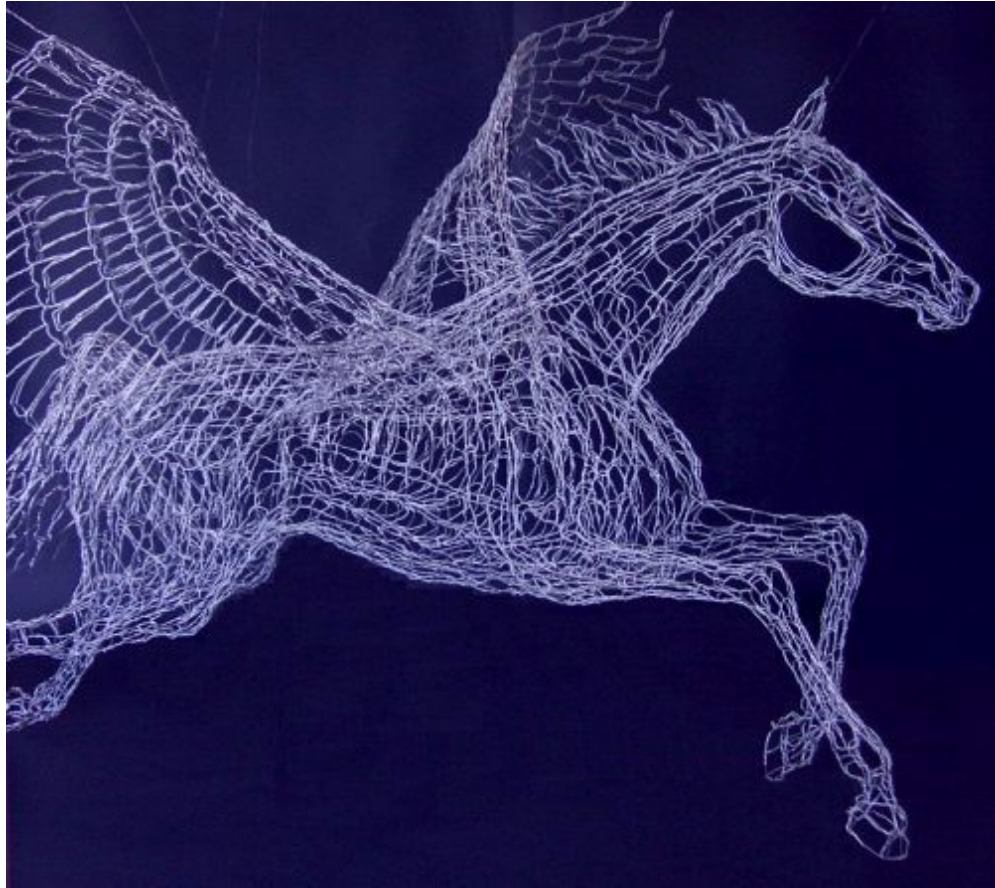


Plate: 6 “Bluepeg” by Elizabeth Berrien, courtesy wire-magic.co.uk

Karen Searle, an artist from St Paul, Minnesota, uses steel wire to create life size images of women’s garment and accessories. In her installation in 2005, she stated that her works are inspired by women’s lives, women’s histories, and women’s bodies. Karen uses tools and materials of domesticity-threads, crochet hooks, knitting needles-to assert the validity of “women’s work” as well as the feminine view. Her sense of humour enters into the creation process and becomes integral to any of the pieces. “The body as

vessel today” is one of the themes she keeps on revisiting in her sculptural explorations. For Karen, forms are constructed as though making the drawings in space: stitch by stitch an organic cellular structure accrues. In the *Essence* installation, the 3-dimensional mesh – like ‘drawings’ and their shadows reflect a human presence. (Plate 7)

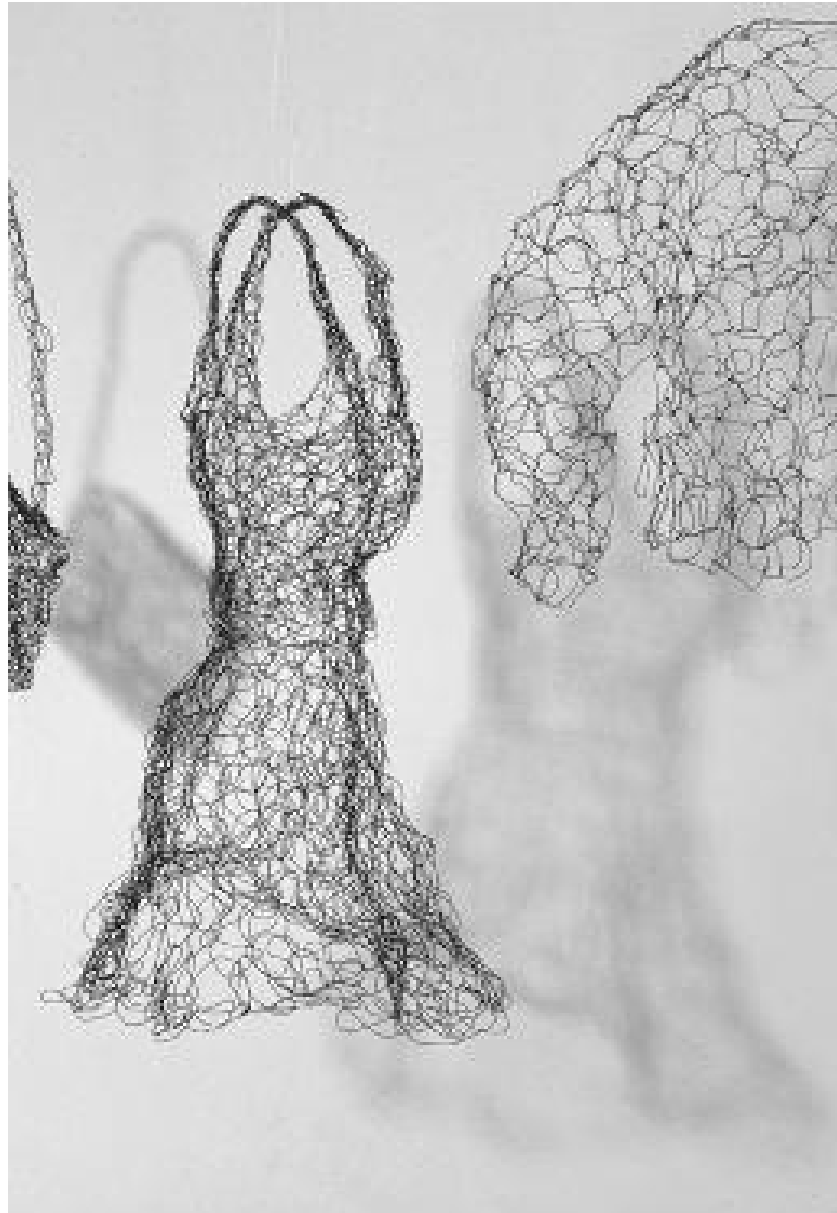


Plate: 7 “Essence Installation” by Karen Searle courtesy mnartists.org

Sculptures created of wire and fabric by Reine Mia Brill of New York city, project a kind of childlike vulnerability that makes them both humorous and endearing (plates 8 and 9). In the artist's own words; "each creature has its own story to tell".



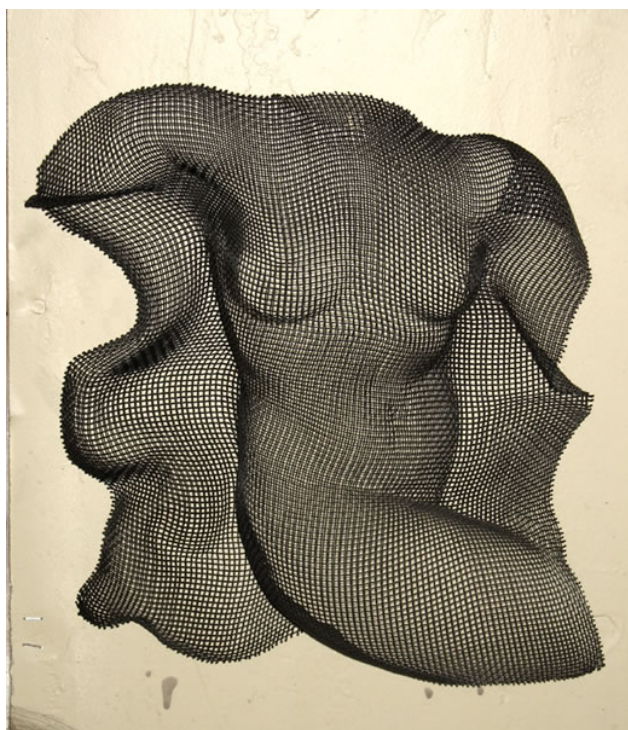
Plate 8: "Happy Birthday" by Reina Mia courtesy roadsidescholar.com



Plate 9: "Surprise Poland" by Reina Mia courtesy roadsidescholar.com

Layers of patterned wire materials are first knit off two very antiquated knitting machines. Metal armatures are constructed to convey a posturing as well as offer gravitational support. Nylon fabric serves as the first layer of skin over the armatures onto which all these layers of knitted wire fabric are sewn. Each wire stitch is meticulously laced into the wire fabric-layer by layer-over faces, horns and even the crevices of toes until the essence of each work breathes life'

Boyer (1985) being fond of salvage materials began to play with leftover scraps of mesh. At first, small and rather timid, it began to attract attention, resulting in his first exhibition in 1989 of ¾ life size figures on "Art on the mountain" in Wilmington Vermont. Being attracted to human forms, Eric began to sculpt figures (Plates 10-11). His works share the beauty of the figure and the emotional vocabulary it speaks, a victim of western thought and its classical mind/ body duality. Viewers are moved by beauty of the physical body and struck by its expressive power, while appreciating the innovative and unique visual characteristics of the mesh.



**Plate 10: "Small Seated Female" by Eric Boyer, brass mesh sculpture
courtesy edchassenfineart.com**



**Plate 11: "Cryptos" by Eric Boyer, brass mesh sculpture courtesy
edchassenfineart.com**

Amponsah (2006) state that “Nikki uses wire mesh as the primary material in his sculpture. Its inherent grid form is the starting point. Nikki uses cardboard and paint in conjunction with the wire mesh to create architectural forms. (Plates 12-13). It is intriguing because the works look both fragile and strong. It creates a feeling of inside / outside; appearances/transparent; open/close.”

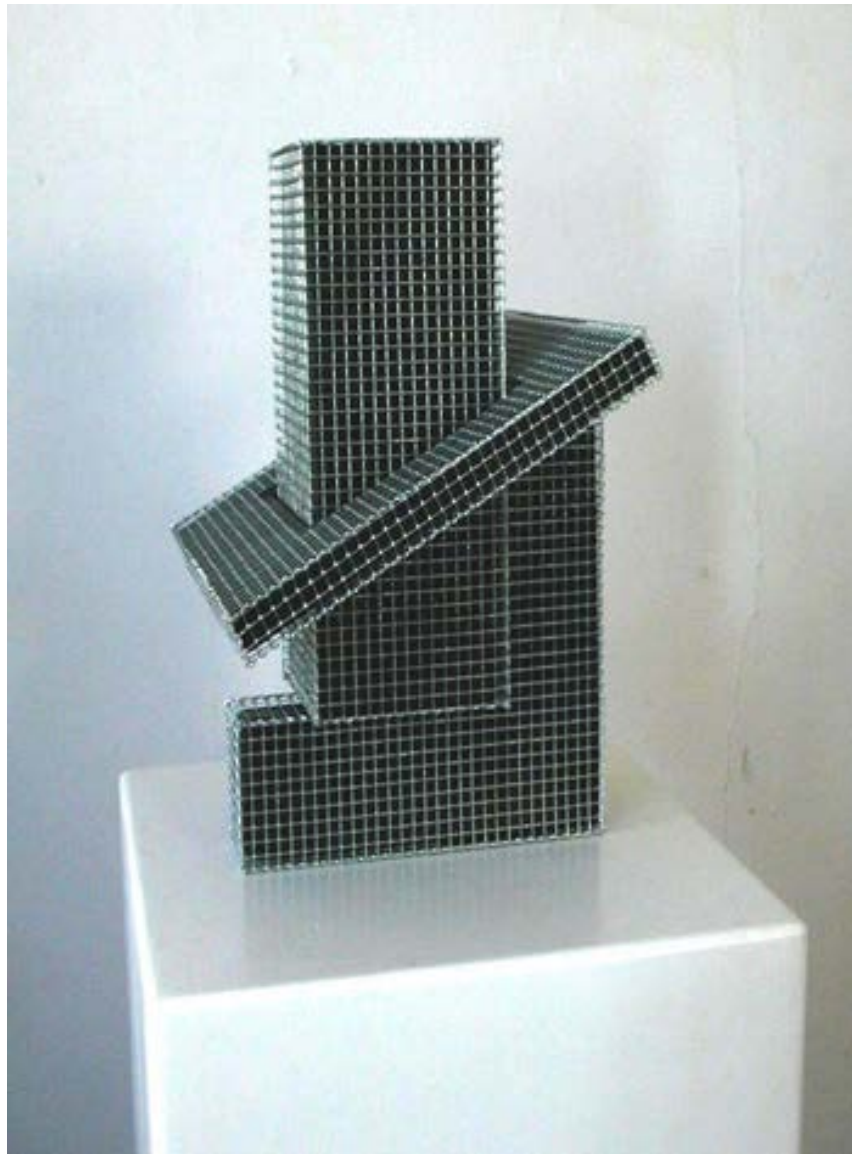
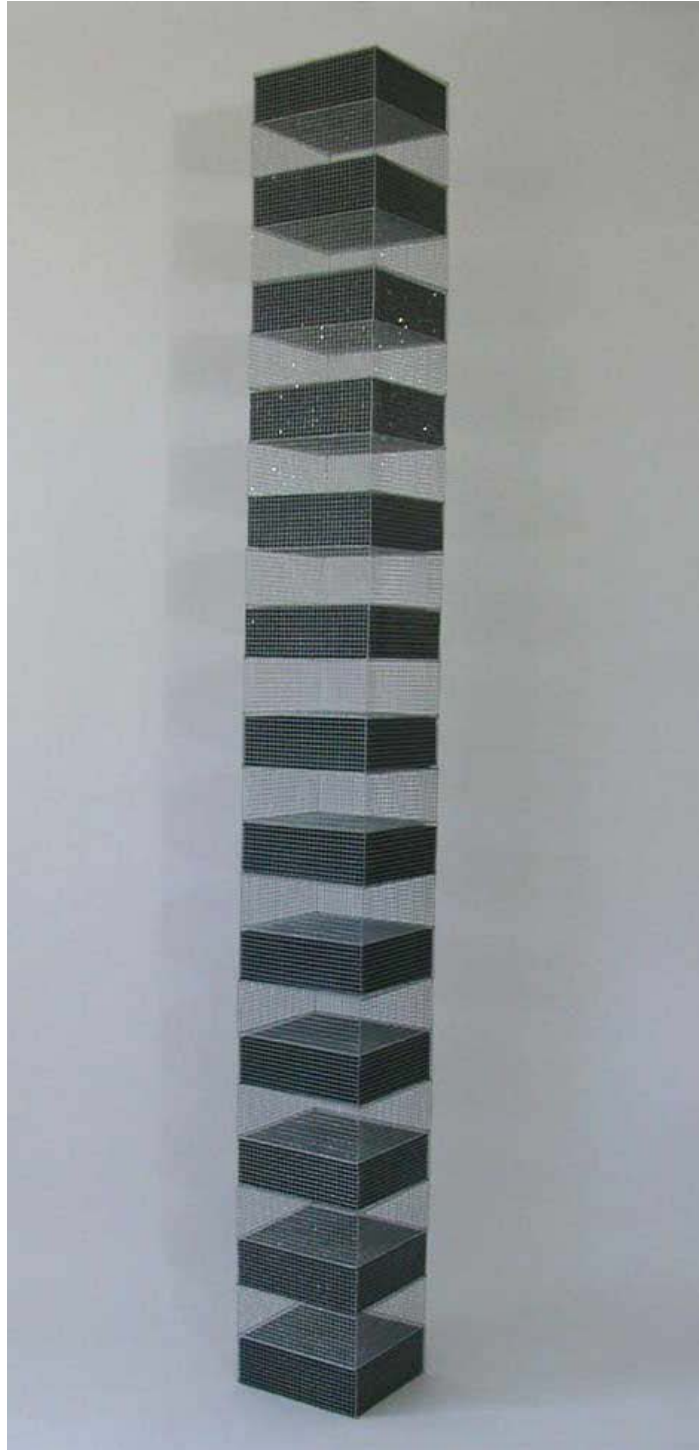


Plate 12: “Manhattan Revisited” 2003 Wire mesh, cardboard, wood, acrylic paint, wire 12” x 9” x 8” courtesy nikkischrager.com



**Plate 13: Juddian Stack, 2003 70" x 7½" x 7¼" Wire mesh, paper, paint, wire, courtesy
nikkischrager.com**

Randy Cooper's shadow sculptures are hand formed wire mesh. His wire sculptures are best presented on pedestal, about a foot or two away from the wall. (Plate 14-15) A strong single print of the light directed to the sculpture will cast shadow on the wall.



Plate 14: "Shira" by Randy Cooper courtesy jeanstephengalleries.com



Plate 15: “Kent 98” by Randy Cooper courtesy jeanstephengalleries.com

Other artists have combined wire mesh with other materials to create sculptures. Martin Puryear’s *Seer*, (1984) (plate 16) is an example. It consists of a closed volume at the top and an open volume at the bottom. The horn-shaped top piece is powerful and imposing, while the open construction at the bottom invites us to enter and visually explore the structure. Here the contrast between open and close volumes adds both power and mystery to the piece.



Plate: 16 “Seer” by Martin Puryear courtesy guggenheimcollection.org

The proportion of open space, relative to solid substance is critical. The space in Alice Aycock's (plate 17) is defined by a filigree of delicate lines and planes. Inspired by the double helix structure illustrations showing people entering paradise through a spinning hole in the sky, the sculptor has combined a linear structure with series of circular planes. The resulting sculpture as playful as a roller coaster.



Plate: 17 “Tree of life fantasy”, Alice Aycock courtesy kattenbroek.com

Every material has unique physical properties as well as psychological association. Mirrors are fragile, and have reflective surfaces used for observation of the self and others. Bronze is malleable when heated and solid when cool, but it corrode slowly. However, it can be coloured gold, green or copper-red, depending on the patina used.

Depending on the weave and thread weight, silk can provide a simmering translucent veil or a solid roughly.

The understanding of a material's characteristics is an essential aspect of all three dimensional work. In Maren Hassinger's "Trees" the contradiction between the forms of the trees and the wire rope from which they were made provokes the question as to whether it is a mechanical or a natural object. Maren's use of galvanized wire rope to represent twelve trees in a row shows the possibility of using an inorganic material for organic forms. Livia Rolandini, a wire mesh sculptor, is also noted for using wire mesh to create organic forms mounted indoors and outdoors respectively (plate 18).



Plate 18: Livia Rolandini, untitled, courtesy liviaolandini.com

Janet Goldner's interest in transparency shows in her steel works. She combines steel with wire mesh to create sculptures that are soldered and welded. In her work titled *Culture 2*. The book is layered steel, collaged, constructed from scrap steel which incorporates both images and text; multiple pages which are pieced and pierced by imagery and text, resulting in varying degrees of transparency through steel.

On the other hand, the researcher equally portrayed the supremacy and complexity of proverbs and appellations by wrapping the wire which is the supreme material with paper. The easy discernment of proverbs and appellations which is the driving force for this project is derived when the observer carries the finished sculpture work produced with reverence to its mass and weight.



Plate 19: "Culture" 2 by Janet Goldner

Other works by Janet are a 4 feet 5 pages hinged steel book which is titled “Can we Heal?” (plate 20.)“Can we heal from the wounds of our tortured history? Lithuanians, Russians, Poles, Germans, Jews and everyone.



Plate 20: “Can we heal” by Janet Goldener

Eric Aniagyei lives in Ghana, West Africa and uses 26 gauge enamelled copper wire, the type used for rewinding works and his themes are mostly on African people. Each human figure shown in (Table 1), measures 18 inches (approx 45 cm) high. They depict traditional Ghanaian drummers. The one in the broad-rimmed hat is wearing a smock called BATAKARI, a traditional attire from the north of Ghana. The sandal is called AHENEMA (which means prince or princess)



Table 1: Traditional Ghanaian figures

Some of his works simply represent his passion and beliefs. Below are examples of his works titled “Horses” and “Cupid”.

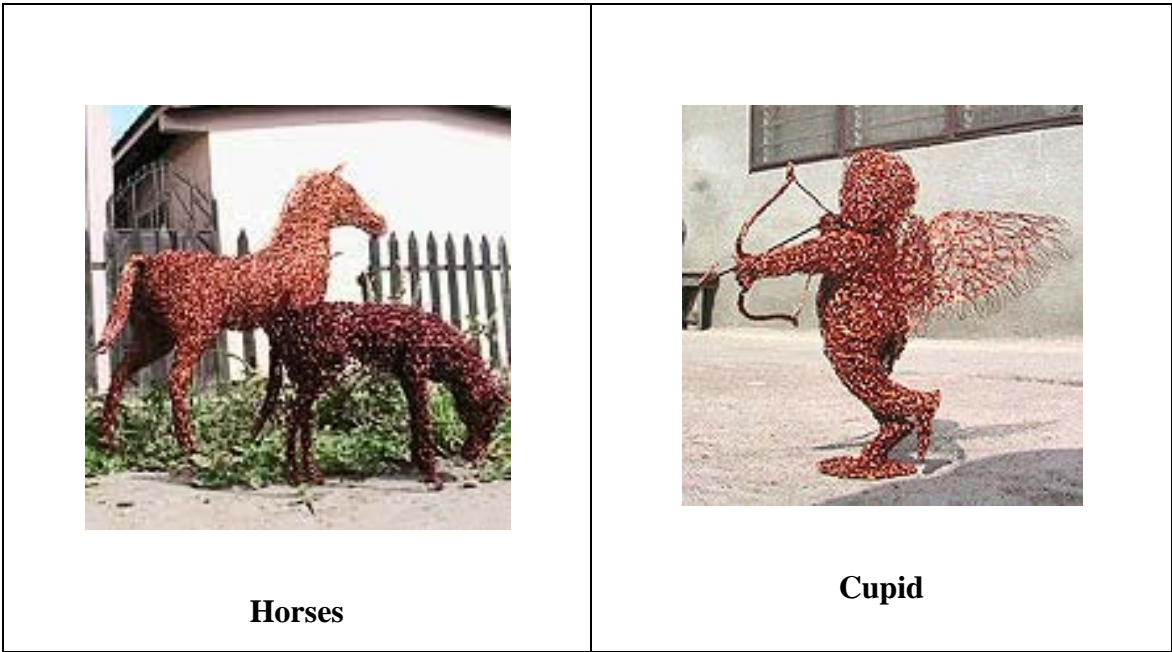


Table 2: “Horses” and “Cupid”

2.2 TYPES OF WIRE MESH

Wire sculpture can be made from a single strand, many strands, or even wire mesh. There are various manufactured wire meshes on the market with different designs and unique features that can be useful for creating sculptures but used also in our environment in the building industry. These already manufactured meshes have their inherent qualities which can enable the sculptor to achieve the goal of mass and weight.

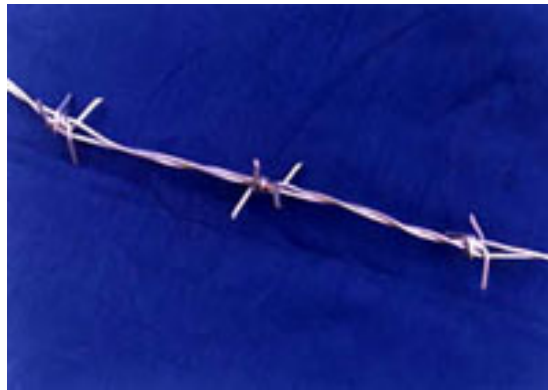


Plate 21: Barbed wire

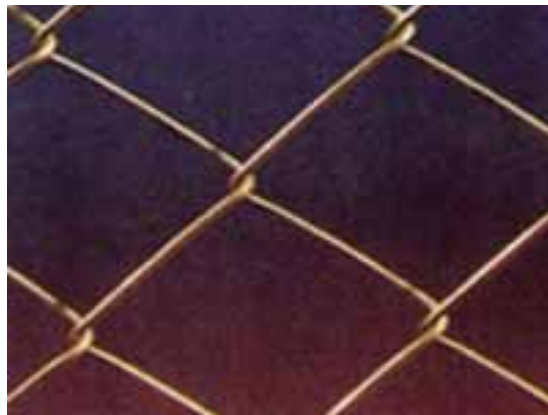


Plate 22: Chain link fencing

Barbed wire (plate 21), mainly used for security fencing, is a continual strand of two galvanized wire twisted with knots at equal intervals. The chain link (plate 22) is mainly used to demarcate the perimeter of estate land, etc. It can also be used in environmental pen guards such as doors,

windows etc.

Expanded wire, mainly applied as platforms and stair tread on vessels, bridges etc. Expanded wire mesh is also used as light reinforcement in concrete pouring. They are mostly used in homes as burglar proofing and safety guards. The hexagonal-shaped wire (plate 23) mesh and welded mesh are used for fencing crop, poultry and rabbit farms. They are also used in lake and river fishing as well as in smoking fish.

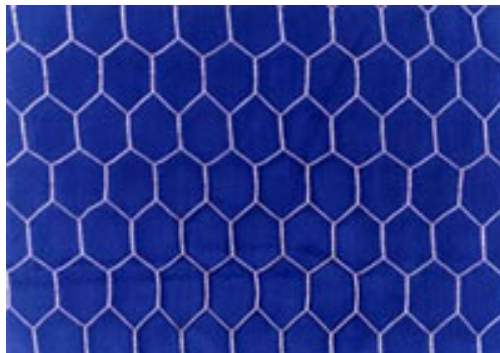


Plate 23: Hexagonal wire

Crimped mesh normally used for pens and cages can be used as reinforcement with plaster or cement in walls and ceiling.

2.3 Wrapping as a Technique In Sculpture

About Jeanne –Claude and Christo, both were born in 1935. “Many artists, over time, have worked on a grand scale, but none has done so as consistently and as spectacularly as Christo and Jeanne – Claude. Their body of work consists of “project” most of which have been colossal. Often they wrap things - large things –like giant gift package.

They have wrapped a whole section of the Australian coast, cliff and all, in plastic sheeting. They have wrapped a historic bridge in Paris with 10 acres of silky champagne-coloured fabric. In 1995 they wrapped the Reichstag, the German parliament building in Berlin, with more than a million square feet of shiny aluminum –hued cloth. (no passer by could possibly miss this “project” or ignore them.) Christo began wrapping small objects such as chairs and tables, a stack of barrels and other paraphernalia, plus rolls of industrial paper. In 1972 he strung a 4 ton orange nylon curtain between two mountains in Colorado and called it “Valley Curtain”.



Plate 24: valley Curtain, Rifle, Colorado



Plate 25: “Running Fence”, Sonoma and Marin Counties, California, 1970-72, photo: Wolfgang Volz courtesy



Plate 26: “Wrapped Reichstag”, 1970-72, photo: Wolfgang Volz courtesy



Plate 27: “Wrapped Reichstag”, Berlin 1971-95, Germany

Two projects in particular transferred Christo and Jaume –Claude into media celebrities. The first was “Running Fence”, in the mid- 1970s which set up a white nylon barrier 24 ½ miles long over the hills of northern California. The other was “Surrounded Island”, in the early 1980s for which eleven little islands in Florida’s Biscane Bay were circled with pink poly propylene cloth.

Their earlier projects had been said to be remarkable, daring, and extravagant – but these two were described as lovely. Even others who have objected to such manipulations of the landscape came to admire them. People had to admire quickly, though Christo and Jeanne Claude’s structure are meant to stand physically for only a few days or weeks.

After predetermined periods, workers remove them, leaving no clue. The project lives on afterwards in the sketches and photographs and recounting of their history. Some observers have criticized the artists for the transitory nature of their works but Christo has already replied, “I am an artist, and I have courage ... Do you know that I don’t have any artworks that exist? They all go away when they’re finished. Only the sketches are left, giving my works an almost legendary character. I think it takes much greater courage to create things to be gone than to create things that will remain”. The works were conceptual.

2.4 Proverbs And Appellations

There are several definitions for proverbs. A short statement of wisdom or advice, which has passed into general use; a crystalised summary of popular wisdom; a short, pithy, popular saying, long in use, embodying some familiar truth, or useful thought in expressive and often picturesque language; a popular short wise saying, with words of advice or warning; and finally, a wise saying or oracular utterance requiring interpretation (Agbo, 2006). Despite the various definitions, there are some common issues they all seek to address. Not many words are used, they are popular and they are words of wisdom.

According to Fasiku (2006), proverbs serve as charters of social and ethical norms in human interactions, extol what the society considers to be virtues, and condemn anti-social patterns of behaviour. Though the Ghanaian sensibility, culture, and worldview, as well as the rhythms, structures, and techniques of oral traditions may be projected in some sort, this study is more geared towards expressing personal feelings about some selected Ewe proverbs and appellations hitherto unrealized 3-Dimensionally.

Proverbs and appellations are some typical examples of literary or oral traditions that have been created and nurtured by the Ewes of Ghana. The study involves relating their mode of existence, their distinctive styles of presentation and their significance to mass and weight in sculpture.

2.5 What Is Mass and Weight

Abbey and Essiah, (1995) state that “mass of an object is a measure of the object’s inertia”. In other words, the mass depends on the reluctance of the object to move”

It is convincing here that an object becomes lighter when in motion irrespective of its mass. Sculpture works look heavy and weigh heavily because of the substance they are made with. On the other hand, the weight of an object is a measure of the force of gravity on that object. This value can vary over the surface of the earth and the value can reduce when the substance is taken to the moon by a calculated factor of six.

Tall and giant sculpture works weigh heavier than short ones. Their centre of gravity is higher than shorter works produced. This poses a problem of conveyance hence this project. Henry Moore is one of the famous sculptors who are concerned with weight. His forms are generally pierced or contain hollow spaces to reduce weight though his materials heavy. Below are some of his figures.



Plate 27: “Standing Figure”, Henry Moore, Toronto, courtesy.bluffton.edu,

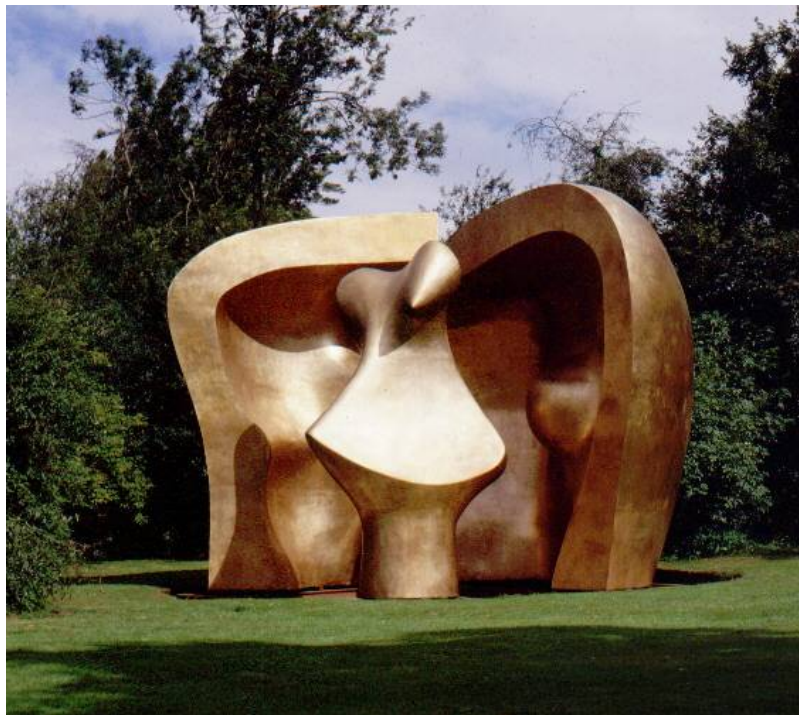


Plate 28: “Large Reclining Figure”, Henry Moore, UK, courtesy. basingstoke.me

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Tools, Materials and Equipment

The following tools, materials and equipment were essential for producing the sculptures.

3.1.1 Tools

Assorted pliers

Pliers are hand tools with two hinged arms ending in jaws that are closed by hand pressure to grip an object tightly. The various pliers used were hog ring pliers and needle-nose pliers as shown in plates 29 and 30 respectively.



Plate 29 Hog ring pliers.



Plate 30 Needle-nose pliers.

A pair of Shears

A pair of shears is a tool, like a large pair of scissors, used for cutting. With regards to its strengths, it was largely employed to cut wire mesh. This is shown in plate 31 below.



Plate 31 A pair of shears.

Assorted hammers

Hammers are hand tools usually consisting of a shaft with a metal head at right angles to it; they are used mainly for driving in nails and beating metal. However, the latter use was a prominent operation in the project. The types of hammers were predominantly mallet and club hammers.



Plate 32 Mallet.



Plate 33 Club hammer.

Assorted paintbrushes

Paintbrushes are implements consisting of bristles, hair, or wire set into a handle, used for applying paint onto a surface. Brushes comprising both sable and bristles of various sizes were used for this work.

Marker

A marker (Plate 34) is a felt-tip pen that makes marks or indications on various surfaces. Regarding this work, they were used for drawing on the wire mesh before cutting the mesh into pieces.



Plate 44: Felt-tip marker.

Heavy Gloves

Heavy gloves (Plate 35) provided a protective covering for the hands.



Plate 35: Heavy gloves.

3.1.2 Materials

The following were the relevant substances that this work could not have been done without.

Assorted Iron Rods

The iron rods were used in the construction of armature. There were $\frac{3}{4}$ inch rods as well as $\frac{1}{2}$ inch rods.

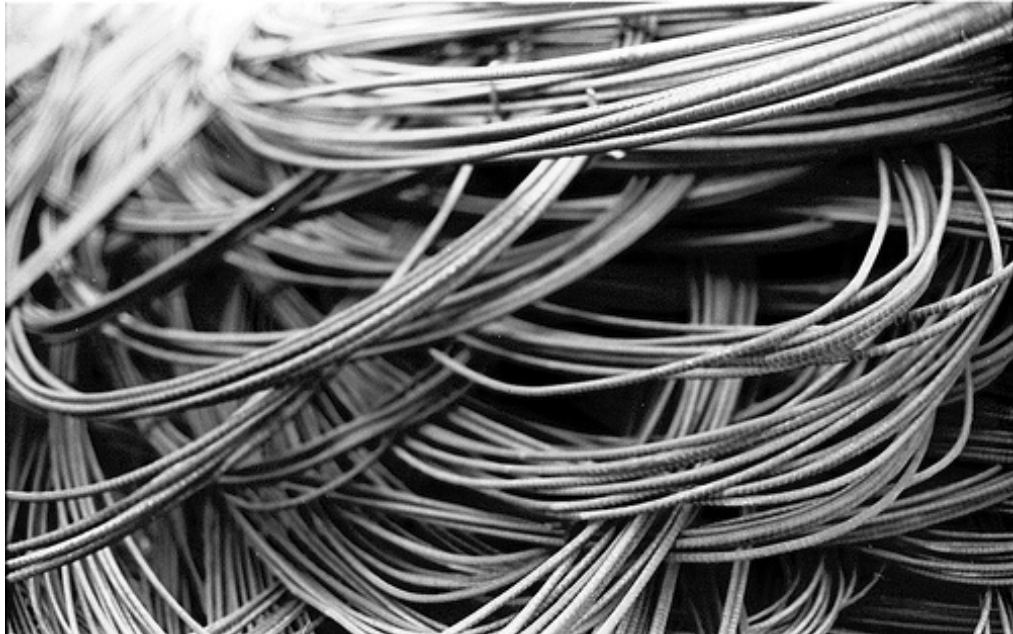


Plate 36 Iron rod.

Aluminium Screen or Mesh

Aluminium screen or mesh formed the major material for this project. It was used as part of the armature to help model the sculptures. Plate 37 shows wire mesh.



Plate 37: Wire mesh.

Aluminium Wire

This wire was employed to tie the mesh firmly together by winding tightly and repeatedly around in the process of modelling. Plate 38 shows a coil of aluminum wire



Plate 38: Aluminum wire.

Masking Tape

Masking tape (Plate 39) – though quite an easy-to-remove adhesive tape, was used to fix the paper firmly onto the wire mesh and to enable an accommodating surface for the paint.

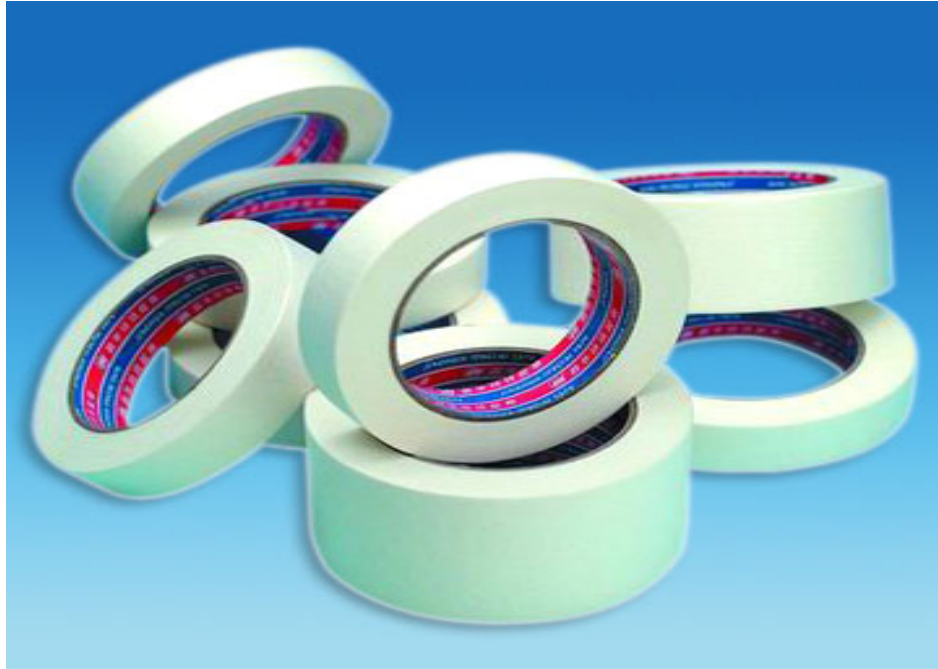


Plate 39: Masking tape.

Newsprint

Newsprint is a relatively cheap and low-quality paper made from recycled materials or wood pulp. The wire mesh sculptures have been wrapped in newsprint – plate 40. An extensive literature on paper is provided in 3.2.



Plate 40: Newsprint.

Acrylic paints

Acrylic paints of various colours were used as a means of finishing that reinforces the claims this work portrays. Plate 41 shows some paints.



Plate 41: Paints.

Electrode

The electrodes were used during the welding process. As metallic as they are, they conduct electricity and are coated with flux. In the process, they are connected to a source of electric current and the metal to be welded is connected to the other end of the same source of current. Plate 42 shows electrodes.



Plate 42: Electrodes.

3.1.3 Equipment

Not many types of equipment were used though. Most significantly, the welding machine was the only heavy duty employed and it is shown below in plate 43.



Plate 43: Welding Machine.

3.2 Paper

Paper is all around us and the demand for paper is increasing. With hundreds of final uses, paper satisfies many important human needs - paper is a part of everyday life.

3.2.1 What is paper?

The word 'paper' derives from the word 'papyrus' and is a substance composed of fibres interlaced into a compact web, which can then be macerated into pulp, dried and pressed. Today, paper includes a wide range of products with very different applications:

communication, cultural, educational, artistic, hygienic, sanitary, as well as for storage and transportation of all kinds of goods. It's almost impossible to imagine life without paper. (Confederation of Paper Industries, 2008)

3.2.2 Uses of paper

Paper is incredibly useful in all aspects of human endeavours. It could be rendered in various forms to satisfy man's needs in diverse ways. Paper may be impregnated, enameled, metalized, made to look like parchment, waterproofed, waxed, glazed, sensitized, bent, turned, folded, twisted, crumpled, cut, torn, dissolved, macerated, moulded or embossed. It may be coloured, coated and printed. It can be marked and then the mark erased. It can be laminated with itself or with fabric, plastic or metal. It can be opaque, translucent or transparent. It may be made to burn or be made fire-resistant. It may be used as a carrier, a barrier or a filter. It may be made tough enough to withstand acid or soft enough for a baby's skin. It can be read from, laid on or worn as a garment. It may disintegrate or it may be reused, but it is, overall, biodegradable and comes from an infinitely renewable resource. Some typical uses of paper are mentioned below.

- **Agriculture**

Sacks, seed packets.

- **Building**

Wallpaper, damp-proof courses, roofing, flooring, flame resistant papers, plasterboard, decorative laminates for furniture.

- **Business**

Computer tapes, print-out sheets, advertisements, circulars, catalogues, filing systems, sales and service manuals, brochures, shop-till paper.

- **Money, Finance and Security**

Money, insurance forms, cheque books, travellers' cheques, postal orders, cash bags, papers that contain special markings which are only visible when subjected to ultra-violet light.

- **Office paper**

Photocopying paper, graph papers, paper twine and string, blotting paper, carbonless paper, box files, folders.

- **Cars**

Fascia boards, door and roof liners, filters, the Highway Code.

- **Communication**

Writing, typing, printing, envelopes, publishing, accounts, receipts, stamps, newspapers, magazines, greeting cards, calendars, diaries, telephone directories.

- **Domestic Products**

Wrapping and boxes for cleaning materials, domestic tissues, paper plates and cups, kitchen towels, table napkins, lampshades.

- **Education**

Books, exercise books, instruction books, maps, wall-charts, report cards.

- **Entertainment and Sport**

Menu cards, paper hats, crackers, fireworks, programmes, playing cards, board games, kites, model aircraft, football coupons, race cards.

- **Food Packaging**

Wrapping for bread, flour, tea, sugar, butter, margarine, sweets, deep frozen food etc., milk cartons, egg boxes, foil wrappings, tea bags, sausage skins.

- **Identification**

Gummed labels, identity cards, tamper-proof labels for supermarkets.

- **Industry**

Presentation, wrapping, packaging and protection for all manufactured goods, transfer sheets for decorating chinaware.

- **Electrical**

Special insulating boards, electrolytic condenser paper, wrapping and identification for electrical cables, printed circuits, battery separators.

- **Filtration**

Filters for water air, coffee, medicine, beer, oil and for mechanical uses.

- **Impregnated Papers**

Polishing, waxing, cleaning.

- **Protective Papers**

Grease proof and corrosion-resistant products, sleeves for compact discs.

- **Medical**

Packaging to keep instruments and equipment sterilised, bandages, plasters, clothing for nurses, face masks, surgeons' caps, disposable bed pans, sheets, pillowcases.

- **Personal**

Facial and toilet tissue, towels, sanitary products, tableware, sheets, disposable nappies, confetti, carrier bags, gift wrapping.

- **Photographic**

Films, photographs, enlargements, mounts, lens cleaners.

- **Record keeping and other documentation**

Legal documents, birth, marriage and death certificates, wills, history, scientific data.

- **Travel**

Tickets, passports, maps, charts, luggage labels, timetables, fibre for suitcases.



Plate 44: Packs made of paper, courtesy paper.org.

3.2.2 History of paper

Paper has a long history, beginning with the ancient Egyptians and continuing to the present day. For thousands of years, hand-made methods dominated and then, during the 19th century, paper production became industrialised. Originally intended purely for writing and printing purposes, a wide variety of paper grades and uses are now available to the consumer.

A courtier named Ts'ai-Lun, from Lei-yang in China, was the inventor of paper (not papyrus) circa 105 A.D. However, the word paper is derived from the name of the reedy plant papyrus, which grows abundantly along the Nile River in Egypt. Paper is made of pulped cellulose fibres like wood, cotton or flax. Papyrus is made from the sliced

sections of the flower stem of the papyrus plant, pressed together and dried. (Bellis, 2008)

The new Millennium will be dominated by the tremendous progress that has been made in computer science, thus triggering a complete change in our commercial and private communication and information behaviour. Does this mean that the paper era will come to an end? The answer is most definitely "No".

Clearly there will be a huge amount of data being generated electronically, but the issue is how to preserve it. The difficulties of data storage over a long period of time are well known (for example, the durability of disks; frequent changes of hard and software, electronic breakdowns etc.). Once again, paper offers the most convenient and durable storage option. The advance in technology will affect only the printing of items like short-lived handbooks and encyclopaedias.

Reading a book will remain a great pleasure into the future and paper, as a ubiquitous material with its many uses, will continue to play an influential role. Many artists will continue to express themselves by using this most versatile material.

In the context of this project, paper is used to wrap the wire mesh to serve as a new technique of finishing sculpture to reduce weight. The main type of paper for this purpose is newsprint.

3.2.4 Newsprint

Paper mainly used for printing newspapers. It is made largely from mechanical pulp and or waste paper, with or without a small amount of filler. Weights usually range from 40 to 52g/m² but can be as high as 65g/m². Newsprint is machine-finished or slightly calendared, white or slightly coloured, and is used in reels for letterpress, offset or flexo printing.

3.2.5 Pulp

Nearly all paper and board are made of wood pulp, either new or recycled. Today, pulpwood usually uses the parts of the tree that are left after wood has been used for other commercial purposes.



Plate 45: Picture of pulp. Courtesy paper.org

3.3 Experiments

3.3.1 Experiment one: Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps)



Plate 46: Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps),

106cm x 62cm x 61cm

*Fia du-nu-mana-ame, gla wòtsɛ bla kpɛ – A chief
who does not invite others to eat when he is eating,
ties his fence with his own jaw.*

This is attributed to the fact that he has not been kind to others. Kindness in most cases is reciprocal. No one knows when he will be in need of others' assistance. Being it in big position or at the helm of affairs, we must learn not to be power drunk. Neither should one allow himself to be controlled by his laurels. Subsequently, "Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps)" has been made to express this proverb as an "in-the-round" sculpture.

"Fia Du-Nu-Mana-Ame (The chief who never helps)" shown in plate 45, measures about 106cm x 62cm x 61cm, and has been rendered in-the-round with the following as its subject matter: a square base, a cylindrical container – (hollow), a representation of bone and a human head. The cylindrical shape rests on the square base which serves as a pedestal. Whereas, the bone rests at the base of the cylinder, the head is fixed against the rim inside the hollow cylinder. The work is textured and finished in black and gray.

The square pedestal is associated with masculine symbol, thus, it stands for the bravery and the chief's authority while the cylindrical container represents a fence. The head that is fixed on the rim of the hollow cylinder is that of the greedy chief and the bone beneath the cylinder depicts the death of the greedy chief. The chief failed to be kind to his

people so he builds his fence with his own jaw, in the end, he dies miserably. This work simply asserts the fact that if people in authority fail to be kind to their subordinates, they will die like the greedy chief this work depicts.

3.3.2 Experiment Two: Reconciliation (mutuality)



Plate 47: Reconciliation (mutuality), 98 x 62 x 116cm

*Ame eve metsia bome o – (two people should
not be fools).*

If two people have a dispute and cannot resolve it through mutual understanding and compromise then, according to this proverb, they are fools. At least, if one is not wise enough to bring about a settlement of the dispute, the other should do it. That is why the proverb is saying two people in dispute cannot be foolish enough not to seek reconciliation. The proverb can be used as a way of saying, learn to resolve your differences through compromise and mutual understanding. “Reconciliation (mutuality)” shown in plate 47, has therefore been made to synchronize with the meaning of this proverb.

“Reconciliation (mutuality)” has been rendered in-the-round. It measures 98cm x 62cm 116cm. Its contents are a cylindrical base that forms the pedestal, three cylinders that stand upright on the base and two heads that are fixed on the middle cylinder. The cylinder in the middle is the biggest of the three. The work has been rendered with chicken wire mesh wrapped in paper. It is textured yet, it is finished in black and gray.

The cylinders side by side the middle cylinder represent two people at loggerheads, placed side by side. The middle and bigger cylinder is the bone of contention here, it is the thing that separates them. But these two people cannot be at logger heads forever

because two people cannot be fools, there must be mutual reconciliation, which is why they stand on a common pedestal. At least, there is hope for reconciliation.

3.3.3 Experiment Three: Agamagbale (circumspection)



Plate 48: Agamagbale (circumspection) 298 x 62 x 64cm

Xexeame nye agamagbale, de wotrana hesia yi. {The world is like a chameleon skin, it changes everytime}.

‘World’ in the proverb refers to ‘life’ and ‘chameleon skin also refers to changes, times and circumstances. Life is therefore compared to the way the colour of the chameleon changes. It means that times and situations of people in life are not permanent and so one must be prepared for the unexpected to happen anytime. The proverb teaches people to behave with circumspection, since one’s fortunes change with changing times.

In “Agamagbale” there are four hemispherical or crescent shaped-objects fixed onto a horizontal pole and erected on a cuboid pedestal. The concave looking crescents have been inversely arranged reinforcing the notion that life could not be predicted. Moreover, finishing the work in black and white speaks volumes about the impetus with which life keeps evolving. You never know what to expect in between times.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAIN PROJECT

4.1 Idea Development

The source of inspiration for this work is Ewe proverbs. The Ewe tradition abounds in so many wise-sayings which have not been utilized in their visual contexts. These proverbs have been a great influence on the forms of sculptures created in this project. After carefully analyzing a particular proverb, suitable sketches were made considering its content and meaning. Plate 49 shows some of the preliminary sketches. More pictures of the idea developments could be seen in the appendix.

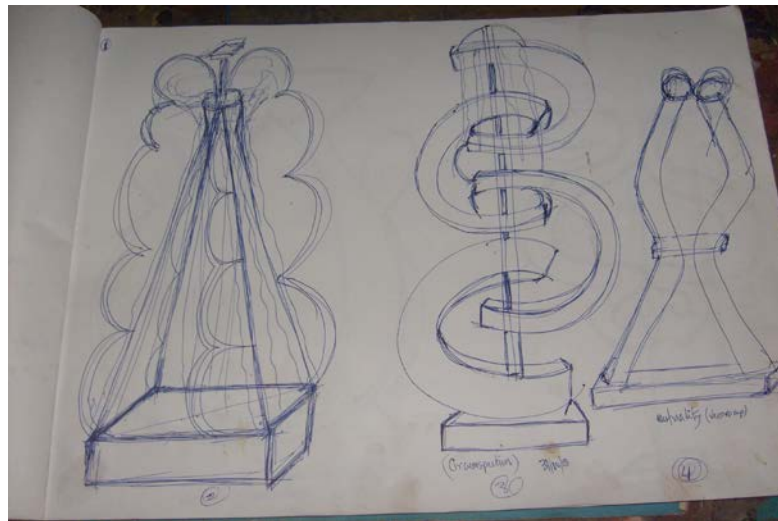


Plate 49 Preliminary sketches

4.2 Execution

Two basic forms of sculpture were used to represent the various ideas 3-dimensionally. These were “relief sculpture” and, “in-the-round sculpture”. Both forms of sculpture

employed the use of armatures as the skeletal framework. In the process of the construction, modelling, creasing, pinching, threading or sewing, glueing ,wrapping and painting were involved.

4.2.1 Armature Construction

Against the background that a weak or insufficient armature can ruin an otherwise beautiful sculpture, a little more time was needed to get the foundation of the sculptures right; to pull off rather robust armatures to do the trick in the quest for realizing the objectives of this project.

Iron rods were measured and cut according to the design, for the construction. Along the way, some of the rods were bent rather than cut. The pieces were then welded to form the skeletons for the various forms to be sculpted. Plate 49 shows the welding process.



Plate 50: The Welding Process

In as much as the design is important, attention was paid to safety as well. In this wise, safety goggles were worn as protection for the eyes.

4.2.2 Modelling

Forming sculpture by modelling as a technique, there is always addition of the material until the sculpture is completely formed. Having determined the approximate sizes of the designs, it was only prudent that enough wire mesh was unrolled to make the design twice - front and back. The operation involved folding the mesh double and cutting the front and back sides of the piece at the same time. Before cutting, drawing the design on the mesh with a marker was essential in reducing waste of the material which was quite

expensive on the market. Wearing heavy gloves, the researcher cut out the designs to shape with heavy-duty shears.

Along the way, there was the need to thread or sew some parts after it had been rolled into the desired shapes – conical, spherical or cylindrical, to hold the ends firmly. Plates 51 and 52 below show the sewing process and some cylindrical shaped mesh with tucks. The sewing was made with either binding wire or rubber.



Plates 51 and 52: sewing (long shot ‘a’ and close short ‘b’)



Plate 53: cylindrical shaped mesh with tucks.

The process also involved forming the desired shapes around a model. Gourds were particularly useful in this process. Some of the shapes formed out of the gourds are shown below in plate 54.



Plate 54: shapes formed around gourds

Interestingly, the process did not only involve modelling. There was a bit of assemblage, when the various shapes were collected and fixed together to form one sculpture.

4.2.3 Wrapping and Painting

The objectives of this project could not be duly achieved without wrapping. Although the sculpture had been formed, covering up the wire mesh was paramount for the purposes of this work. Therefore, pieces of newsprint were folded, wound and fixed with masking tape around the surfaces of the mesh.



Plate 55: Wrapping

By way of finishing, acrylic paint was used to paint over the surfaces which were later covered with paper and masking tape. Assorted brushes were employed because several colours were involved and once pure colours were targeted, using a single brush would defeat the aim.



**Plate 56: Painting ‘a’ “azuma” and ‘b’
xedome**

4.3 Analysis and Discussion

4.3.1 Atamagui (The Snuff Box)



Plate 57: Atamagui (The Snuff Box), 110 x74 x 35cm

*Atamagui be amesi nyo na ame la, de woxlâa efe
ta de ati. – [The snuff box says that it is the head
of the benefactor that is knocked against a tree].*

Philosophy

Usually, those who take snuff, keep it in a small container made of wood, metal plastics or glass containers. Whenever they are going to take snuff, they hit the snuff box against any hard object nearby, (this may be a tree) to make the snuff easy to come out. This teaches the lesson that sometimes kindness to others is rewarded with ingratitude, and so it can be said to a person who has had that experience to encourage him not to stop being merciful. This resounding proverb has been the fountainhead for “Atamagui (The Snuff Box)”

“Atamagui (The Snuff Box)” shown in plate 57 above, is an in-the-round sculpture which contains a subject matter that synchronizes with the Ewe proverb that has influenced its construction. It is made up of gourds and a tree trunk which is mounted on a circular pedestal. However, the tree trunk has been rendered to show a growing creeping plant coiled round it thereby, creating some dimples around the trunk. It is 110cm high and has a diameter of 74cm. The materials for the work are, chicken mesh, news-print, masking tape and paint for it’s finishing. Besides its tactile texture, it is finished in antique gold.

The gourd represents the container in which snuff is stored but the tree trunk is the hard object on which the snuff box is hit against to ease the flow of the snuff. The benefactor who is also the snuff box hangs on the tree precariously, depicting the pain involved in doing good. However, the benefactor – the snuff box, is not deterred because of the support it receives from the circular pedestal. God's perfect nature is expressed by the circular pedestal. The benefactor will continue to do good.

4.3 Da ku de dzi (The dead snake)



Plate 58: Da ku de dzi (The dead snake) 233cm x 52cm x 73cm

Da ku de dzi metsia dzi o. (A snake that dies on a tree never remains there).

Philosophy

The proverb teaches that every wrong act shall receive its due reward and this is as sure as a dead snake always falls down. It is with this idea that this work has been made.

“Da ku de dzi (The dead snake)”- plate 58, measures about 233cm x 52cm x 73cm. The subject matter is four threadlike objects that look like snakes and a rectangular pedestal. The snakes are interlaced on a rod which supports them. It is a textured in-the-round sculpture rendered in wire mesh, wrapped in paper and finished in black paint.

Regardless of the white patches found in the work, the effect of the white is virtually subdued by the imposing nature of the black. In the Ewe tradition, black has always been associated with evil. That is why the snakes have been portrayed as such. These seemingly evil objects will surely come down one day, once they have been depicted with their heads pointing downwards- dead and decaying. The white burnt patches show that they are decaying. In the same way, every wrong deed will be rewarded accordingly just like the way the dead snake will surely fall.

4.5 Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama (bowing in affluence)



Plate 59: Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama (bowing in affluence)
190x98x40cm

Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama
(bowing in affluence) – (the needle said that it is
among bales of cloth but it is naked).

Philosophy

This proverb can be used as an expression of disappointment, for example, by parents who have well-to-do children but are themselves poor. It is also used to state the fact that an individual may live in the midst of plenty but will still be in need because he fails to make use of his opportunities. Benefit from the opportunities around you. This is the proverb that has influenced this sculpture – “Abui be yele avɛkpowo dome gake yele amama”(Plate 59)

The subject matter for this sculpture is a beggar with big open hands; there are some objects around the beggar believed to be gold bars and some natural resources. The beggar rests on a pedestal that looks like the Africa map. It is made of wire mesh and wrapped in paper. The work is finished in a way that the material is seen in the sculpture itself.

The work depicts a beggar, which epitomizes the attitude of African countries who, despite all the rich resources, continue to solicit for funds from other nations, especially the developed ones. The pose of the figure – reclining, suggests how pitiful and backward the donors see the African. In this work, the observer is considered a part of the work. The role of the observer is that of the donor. The attitude of the observer is synonymous with the attitude of the foreigners that Africans look up to. The essence of

the exposure of the sculpting material – paper, reinforces the fact that Africa abounds in resources. The beggar has been made with little or no regards to the canons of art, especially proportion. It is purely representational. The long arms suggest how desperate the African is, like Oliver Twist, the African is always asking for more.

4.6 Azumagedege (Perseverance)



Plate 60: Azumagedege, 290x164cm

*“Azumagedege, fia kule afe wo kje yi agble, wodo agble
ko wobe agblenɛ ha ku. Nyonupligidi wodi eza wogbe
za. Vuga ade mu. Nu me wɛna nutsu wo faa avi o.*

*Negbe huu ko woado, vevɛɛɛɛɛɛ dzu novia le dalime
dzaa. Togodo metsia agbo o.”*

Traditionally, chiefs are given secret burials due to some rituals which are performed before their burial. As such, they are either buried at royal cemeteries or where there is none, they are buried in their rooms. In some typical Ghanaian villages, they are sent to the bush or forest far away from town.

Within the relief is a representation of nine different figures in different scenarios. The word “Azumagedege” in Ewe sounds like a drum that is being beaten. The echo of the sound is envisaged by the researcher as an interlaced rope or web. The tone projected is similarly given a visual description as a giant. This is represented by projecting the figure from the top to the bottom left corner of the picture plane.

It has been portrayed that the chief died, the dead body was being carried by the three figures to the farm or bush for the burial. Very unfortunately when they got to the burial place; (a hamlet in the bush), all the inhabitants had died. The only female amongst them disappeared all of a sudden.

In the mind of the carriers, , “a big three has fallen”. This is represented by a log-like structure at the foot of Azumah. What next? Man is destined to be brave. You cannot cry

or weep, since the purpose must be fulfilled. The trauma made one of them to bend his head down in tears.

This is the head of a ram. It is surrounded and pressed by contours, symbolizing fence. This is to say that in life we are prone to problems but amidst all problems, we must persevere.

4.7 Zikpi nyo wu dzre (Tolerance)



Plate 61: Zikpi nyo wu dzre (Tolerance), 240x62x64cm

*Zikpi nyo wu dzre – (silence is better than
quarrelling)*

Philosophy

Silence here means tolerance, unresponsiveness to provocation. It takes two to quarrel and so the best way to avoid quarrelling is to refuse to react to aggressive provocations. This is one of the ways to resolve disagreement.

The sculpture representation of this proverb measures: 240x62x64cm. In the work, there are two heads and four legs which have been portrayed in pairs. The legs meet at the heels of the feet thereby creating a dimple. The feet interlock the mouth of the head preventing it from making further utterances. The suspension of the head looks funny. The pressure on the lips forces it to be protruding. Both heads are tilted, towards different directions showing the aggressive nature of the quarrel. The legs have developed folds; they are also tilted indicating the amount of energy being exerted on the lips to keep them shut. The work is shown in plate 61.

7.8 Xe domεme mefaa kεvi o. (Vigilance)



Plate 62: Xe domεme mefaa kεvi o. (Vigilance), 245x62x64cm

Xe domɛme mefaa kɛvi o. (the bird whose neck is caught in a trap does not complain of pain in the neck)..

Philosophy

The proverb is a way of saying that you deserve troubles that you bring upon yourself. Be prepared to bear the consequences of your actions. In the expression of this proverb, there is a pyramidal tower, with four different hooks at the pinnacle. Ropes made from strips of wire mesh, wrapped with masking tape have been tied onto the pinnacle and woven into a net. The net has fourteen different sizes of circular dents. Traped in the nets are four cylindrical shapes with rounded tips and pointed mouths in resemblance to birds

The tower has four apartments. Two of the parts are wrapped and painted and sprayed. The other two are left open thereby creating a passage. The inner portions have been brushed in black hue. The net has also been painted slightly in black to harmonize with the tower. The artist's visual representation of this proverb shows that he might be a fisherman, a hunter or he hails from a community where such activities are practised. Plate 62 is a picture of the work.

4.9 Nəvəmadəli (Contentment)



Plate 63: Nəvəmadəli, 164x60x58cm

*Nɛvɛmadɛli: Ame adeke mekpɛna tameklodada be
yedada o. aleke nɛwo le ha eyae dzi wo.*

Philosophy

Nɛvɛ, in Ewe simply means bad mother. In appellation, it has been substantiated that if you have a bad mother, you can never exchange her with any one whose mother is good. For instance, if your mother is poor can you exchange her with someone whose mother is rich? What about if your mother is blind, lame, or even a witch? The name teaches how to be content with what we have and stay focused. This name augments the saying “independence with poverty is better than servitude in tranquility”.

The art work has two semi-abstract human figures: a child and mother. The child has two arms but the lady has one. Their heads are covered with a triangular-shaped form resembling an academic gown. The gown is painted black as the colour of most gowns that are used in the universities.

The lady’s single arm might be a deformity or an artistic statement by the artist that he/she has been brought up by a single parent – the mother. The child’s arm is raised by the mother. The act of raising the arm, coupled with the covering of the academic gown indicates that the mother wanted the child to attain higher academic heights. When the

child gets there, he will not enjoy the benefits of his success alone since “the superfluity of the man is the beard”. This adage is demonstrated in the work as the child shares his achievements with the mother by sharing the academic gown. The white and black and splash of antique gold symbolize: black – upon the toils, white – victory has come, antique gold –wealth or riches will crown their struggles. The work together measures 164x60x58cm as shown in Plate 63 above, shows the work.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The art of sculpture indeed is quite broad and limitless in creativity. The subject seems to change with time. Over the years, sculpture has seen many changes in so many areas including material, techniques and/ or methods. Though this study has been rendered in a material which could be regarded as not a mainstream material, the concerns of the study have placed very little consideration on the material aspect of the study.

However, the discourse has been generally centred on a couple of common features of the art – mass and weight. Interestingly, in the process, wire mesh wrapped in paper became a good example for this exercise. However, the project generally centered on the impressions some particular Ewe proverbs and appellations have on the researcher. Frankly, the sculptures have been inspired by some popular Ewe proverbs which hitherto have not been represented in sculpture. Those proverbs too have meanings which seem difficult to understand. Perhaps, they are as heavy as cement sculptures or stone carvings.

Depicting them in art, it is expected that the proverbs become a bit lighter to be understood. That is where sculpture works in wire mesh and paper that did the trick. The sculptures appear so huge and heavy but their weights are not tantamount to their sizes. In the same vein, the proverbs sound so heavy but when you lift the sculpture that has been made to represent the particular proverb, it then becomes easy to comprehend.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

In order that the objectives of this study are met, about 10 heroic sculptures have been rendered both in relief and in-the-round to serve as the concrete backing to the claims of the study. Each work is also inspired by themes of life especially Ewe proverbs. A comprehensive literature has been provided in addition to a step by step guide to producing such sculptures. These have been prominent among the contents of the thesis. There have also been analysis and discussions of each sculpture that has been made. In the end, the summary and recommendations conclude the thesis.

One very important achievement of this study is that wire mesh and paper could be used to reduce the weight of a sculpture when the sculptor desires to produce huge works which could be easily carried around. Therefore, one can say that, the size of a sculpture does not necessarily correspond to its weight. The determiner is the material that was used. Wire mesh is a good material for making huge sculptures lighter.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Student sculptors should pay attention to the materials they choose for their works especially when mass and weight are concerned. They may use wire mesh as alternative to clay or wood.
2. Research should be encouraged within the department to unveil new materials that may render sculptures lighter regardless of their size.
3. This study should not end here, but should be explored further. The aesthetic values of working in wire mesh wrapped in paper could be considered.

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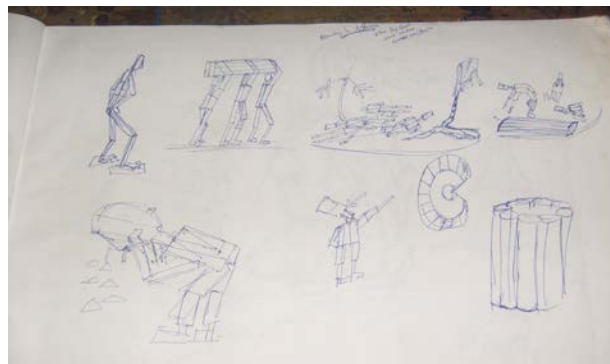
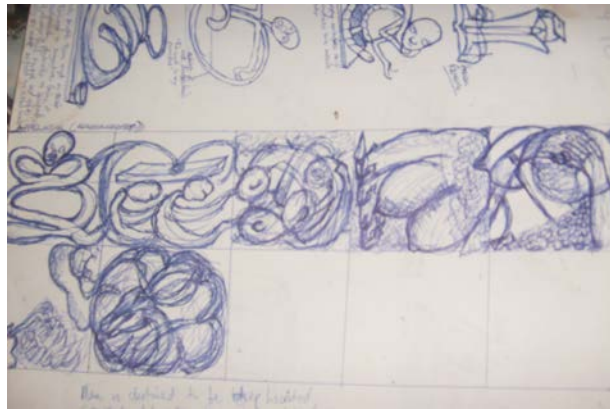
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APPENDIX

Some Preliminary Sketches for The Idea Development

Azumagedege (Perseverance)



Nevemadeli (Contentment)



Da ku de dzi (The dead **snake**)

