

Art Theory of Criticism and the Humanistic Analysis of Artistic Creation

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Abstract

This work studies the criticism and the belief in the promotion of human interest, intellect and the skill of artistic creation. Within the humanities five (5) critical analysis of textile arts from humane artistic creation were identified (criticism) from different artists. Criticism or the analysis of the pattern (motif) of the works were outlined, starting from the artists as the producers of the works to the final description of the productions (analysis). This also discusses that the works of the artists can be analysed and the process of an art piece that involves what, who, when, why and how is called historiography. Which is the techniques for writing art history. Therefore this study critically aims at the studies of an art work which involves the idea, the function, colour impression, the value, the effect accompanied with the event, the material, the artist, the place, the reason, the time and the originality with the authentication of the arts pieces. And also it provides explanations about the humanities in respect of art criticism, reason for art criticism and the work of an art critic for the general consumption of the humanities, which is the purpose of this study.

Introduction

Art history is simply the history behind every art form or every art experiences. The word history is an event that surround something. However an art historian is that artist that develop the power of critical analysis about an art form (art piece) which is produced by an artist. Art history is also the information in search for art, in other word, the search for art creativity is the information for art. Most information for art work carries time, space, movement, idea and duration of the art works. The position of the art piece can tell the story of the people in the past, present and future.

Art history deals with form and images as they are recovered in the past, present and future. Art form (piece) which is the concern of the art historian is a statement made by the artist in a visual form. The art piece is the concern of the art historian and art critic. Though the society or the public may read the art form on their own understanding, but may not be the correct interpretation of the artist or art critic. The art historian has to equip himself at all times to have the ability to express himself to the society, so that he will be taken serious and respected, Egonwa (2011). However the process of art discourse that involves what, who, when, why and how in art is called historiography, which is the technique for writing art history, and it involves interrogative statement such as:

- What is the event of the art work?
Describes the picture (action) within the creative art works.
- Of what is the art work made?
Tells the material used for the art work.
- Who made the art work?
Tells the artist.
- Where was the art work made?
Tells the place or area the art work was produced.
- Why was the art work made?
Explain the reason for the art piece.
- How was the art works created?
Explain the productive process of the art work.
- Is the art work unique or does it look like other things that has been seen before? Tells the originality and the authentication of the art piece.

In a language of communication, an art piece is a visual text, you can interpret an art work as a visual art form as they are documentation of history. Art forms require an intelligence explanation (judgement). The

ability to decode an art piece depends on the intelligence of the artist, John (1997). The critical study of an art work involve the following.

- The idea of the art work.
- Analysis of the art work.
- The function of the art work.
- The observation of the art work.
- The assessment of the art work.
- The colour impression of the art work.
- The value of the art work.
- The expression of the art work.
- The effect of the art work.

This also explains the fact that critical studies in the contemporary art assessment is the analysis of the art work beyond the surface level, which involves thinking and evaluation. The work needs calculation which involves hand or skill manipulation. As a valid artist the mind is the main idea in most cases, until an artist works with his/her cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain, a valid art works have not been created. The knowledge of art criticism can therefore be acquired by an artist, so that the rightful information can be passed onto art piece for proper criticism.

Critical analysis studies is a form of a sequential logical evaluation. Analysis has to do with an investigation appraised. The critical studies in contemporary art work is the same as critical studies in the write up of the art piece, which involves the language of the assessment. The idea about the art work and the language of the art work are the criticism or the judgement being passed onto the works under art production, which also embraces styles, techniques and medium of the art piece accompanied with the meaning at the end of the evaluation, and this gives proper assessment to an art piece.

Analysis is not always in isolation, it is done against previous standards. Knowledge about art is a previous knowledge about art work and it determines the idea you have about arts. An artist is that person who has an idea of what to be created by involving the three basic domain of cognitive domain, affective domain and psychomotive domain

in the process of creating work as mentioned earlier. An art critic works on the production of the artist to analyze his observation.

- **An Art Critic**

Nobody cannot just be an art critic. An art historian and critic, who have studied in the area of art with the sense of critical power to analyse the value, estimate and criticise the work of an art piece, who is able to give effect of the works, the colour impression of the art idea, critical study of the art work, analysis of the art work, function of the art work and the general over seen of the art production. Any artist that makes himself qualified in the above field of description, must be versatile in all area of Fine and Applied Arts. He can be an artist, art historian, art educationist, architect, a journalist, an art administrator, archaeologist, anthropologist, a professional art critic and a philosopher, Cacil (1972).

- **Meaning of Art Criticism**

Art criticism is not faults finding, it is the finding of the standard and sub standard of art form. Criticism is a reaction and also power of ability to evaluate an art work. Art criticism makes up both the art piece and the critic to be upright. A good critic is one who is not bias and can see not only with the eyes but very essentially with the mind. Everybody sees, an artist sees differently but art critic sees discriminately, the art critic passes judgement on the work of an art piece (form) to evaluate the state of the art form, whether good or bad, big or small, and whether the art piece carries the characteristic of what is expected of an art piece, Egonwa (2011).

- **Reasons for Art Criticism**

The following are the reasons for art criticism.

- To promote standard of an art form (art piece).
- To develop the process of creative art observation in accurate.
- To develop idea and sense of objectivity.
- To develop sense of commitment.
- To help promote ideology in arts.

- To make an art for humanism in artistic creation which is the purpose of this study.
- To develop a sense of taste, for an art collector.
- To help develop critical judgment not only to the art piece but to other area of art.
- To promote or give maturity to art criticism and art creation.
- To be a bridge between artist and a critic.
- To be a bridge between the artist and the collector.
- To be a bridge between the artist and the public.
- To develop accurate observation.
- To give opponent maturity to display criticism on art piece.

The history of art, is a unique discipline as it primarily places great important on the work of the individual artist. The value of individual artist rests on the evidence of her prodigy. The factor of prodigy is evidence of enough works that qualifies an individual to be studied from the perspective of style. While styles is identifiable mark or imprints that is associated with an individuals. Technique is the application of style that is not common to other artist's collection, Edo (2018).

Art criticism has four or more main mode:

- i. Interlise mode
- ii. Gestural mode
- iii. Verbal mode
- iv. Written or literature mode of style

Interlise mode: This type of mode does not portray the critic to air out his/her observation from what he/she has observed, and so the critic keeps his opinion within himself.

Gestural mode: With this method of criticism, the critic displays his observation by gestural aptitude by nodding of head, or approval from the state of his face. This mode portrays the result of the critic to the public.

Verbal mode: This verbal mode is just the opposite of the interluse mode, thereby the critic addresses the art piece based on what he has observed, with comment such as oh no, this work is too big, Ah the colour is alright, the arrangement is too cumbersome etc. In this phase the critic verbalises his opinion and idea on the assessment of his observation. In so doing this mode easily exposes the result of the observation to the public.

Written or literature mode: The critic of this method writes all his opinion, observation and comments base on his observation through the assessment of the art piece or art work without the knowledge of the public. He writes and keeps to himself. However, apart from the above there are humarize and pictural mode of criticism. The humarize style presents a very humour behaviour, which can enable the public to read the content of the message. Pictural mode is the exemplary of cartoon.

However, the Nigeria art form is a synthesis of the indigenious and western art tradition (Godwin Iriwierhi, 2007). Since history is the study of the record of past and present activities and events be keeping retrieval manner for future generations, the visual arts involves the creation of tangible objects which we can be seen, felt and touched. It is subdivided into fine arts and applied arts. Fine arts is concerned with appeals to man's sense of beauty and higher emotion. They are basically meant for decoration. These include drawing, painting and sculpture. Applied arts: is for the making of objects to serve a particular purpose or to perform a certain function. It is utilitarian and of commercial value though they are beautiful and well skilled oriented. These include textiles, graphics, ceramics, metal designs and architecture.

The other part of this paper discusses five textile processes (production). Moreover textiles involve the broad field of the art of making and designing of the clothes that is worn.

Below are critical analyses of textile arts from human artistic creation:

- Aye Dada – (Good futune) Artist Isaac Ojo Fajana
- Akpoti Oloro – (Seat of wealth) Artist Adegun Olalekan

- Ma shi she pu pa – (I will work harder) Artist Datapwa kathrine Ezekiel
- Shi ko fun arae – (Self employed, help yourself) Artist Datapwa Ezekiel
- Ishe Oluwa – (God’s work) Artist Datapwa Kathrine Ezekiel



**Plate 1: Isaac Ojo Fajana, *Aye Dada*, pen and ink on tie-dye, 144cm x 36cm, 2014, (Artist’s collection),
Photo Credit: Edo Patience.**

Ojo creative work in (Plate 1) titled: *Aye Dada* (Good Future) with green and purple colours, he applied and display his idea of forms and Stylistic. The background and the pattern are treated together. The colours are in green and purple on the pattern which is also the background of the work. The green and the purple motif have some treatment of bolder dot as a textural touch within the work.



**Plate 2: Adegun Olalekan, Akpoti Oloro, wax resist, 144cm x 36cm, 2014 (Artist's collection),
Photo Credit: Edo Patience.**

Adegun Olalekan uses the adire wax resist method and adopts the adire commemorative patterns for which he seems to have had a peculiar interest. Adegun uses brown and yellow colours that are common in day to day wears and his compositions like those of his tutor are typified by several patterns of Olokun series of the mythical designs in Ibadan Dun of the traditional symbolic designs which is in Akete design; in blade edged in (Plate 2) titled: *Akpoti Oloro* (seat of wealth) with brown and yellow colours, the work carries vertical and horizontal artistic form and a few of linear complicative textural work at the upper edge, and that makes the work a unique one.



Plate 3: Datapwa Kathrine Ezekiel, *Ma shi she pu pa*, tie-dye resist, 144cm x 36cm, 2014 (Artist's collection), Photo Credit: Edo Patience.

Datapwa Kathrine Ezekiel is a wonder artist who inherited the experience she is now adopting from her cultural background at her own business centre as self-employed business. She developed the idea of using rope to block certain areas of the fabric, (her works) which is popular among the Yoruba's productions. In Plate 3 her work titled: *Ma Shi She pu pa* (I will work harder) the designed motif are purely abstract in yellow and purple colours that she got from her cultural background. Accompanied with the circular design or form at the two sides of the work, with a half drop at the upper and the lower portion of the work. In the preparations of her dyes-liquor, she uses alum and lime instead of the conventional industrial castic soda, hydrosuphite and dye fix for dyeing, which are common with informal method of production. Hence the production is original.



Plate 4: Datapwa Kathrine Ezekiel, shi ko fun arae, tie-dye resist, 144cm x 36cm, 2014, (Artist's collection), Photo Credit: Edo Patience.

Datapwa Kathrine's manipulations tendency is entirely opposite to the Yoruba overriding stylization and abstraction. (Plate 4) titled: *Shi Ko fun ara e e* (Help yourself) of Datapwa Kathrine is of yellow and indigo blue colour, her Favorite colour, (indigo blue), has a portion of abstracted yellow in design at the opposite side and indigo blue colour at the background of the work. Contrary to the informal method, Datapwa Kathrine Ezekiel applied bee wax and candle wax so that there will be no crackles in the course of her wax productions. And that arrest accidental crackles in the work, which makes it a solid production.



**Plate 5: Datapwa Kathrine Ezekiel, *Ishe Oluwa*, tie-dye resist, 144cm x 36cm, 2015, (Artist's collection),
Photo Credit: Edo Patience.**

Another of her work that indicates stability in both style and technique is in (Plate 5) titled: *Ishe Oluwa* (God's work) is in brown and Yellow colour an idea from the convectional method in term of colour. The design is also derived from a series of circles which is also conspicuous, the pattern in the works is solid and original. Datapwa Kathrine displayed a technical prolific arrangement in the picking and tieing of the work with a good resemblance to those of the western fabric. This is an evident of her consistent depiction of abstractic forms and usage of her medium to arrive at her method. She admits that she adopted the abstractic form from her mentor, in the course of her informal training.

Summary and Recommendation

Art history deals with form and images as they are recovered in the past, present and future. Art form which is the concern of the art historian, is a statement made by the artist in a visual form. This also explains the fact that critical studies in the contemporary art assessment is the analysis of

the work at the surface thinking and evaluation. Anybody cannot just be an art critic. An art historian and critic, who have studied in the art area with the sense of critical power to analyse the value, estimate and criticise the work of an art piece, who is able to give effect of the work, the colour impression of the art idea, critical study of the art work, analysis of the art work, function of the art work and the general assessment of the art production.

It is a vital information that criticism should be meaningful and not watch hunting, that is why art criticism is not faults finding, it is the finding of the standard of substandard of art form. Criticism is a reaction and also power of ability to evaluate an art work. Art criticism makes up both the art piece and the critic to be upright. A good critic is one who is not bias and can see not only with the eyes but very essentially with the mind. Everybody sees, an artist sees differently but art critic sees discriminately, the art critic passes judgement on the work of an art piece to evaluate the state of the art form.

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