

Abstract

This paper is on media and artistic expression in painting on canvas by adding extra supports of wood to give a new look to painting i.e. breaking boundaries. Painting has gone beyond creative design, crafts and making images on just plain canvas. It has advanced to use of other painting supports. The postmodernism art practice is often about taking discarded elements in one's environment, and reordering these to create works of arts. Artists across the globe and throughout the ages have combined and used various supports in executing paintings. Artists most often paint on canvas, but wood has always been a favorite support; the surface to which the paint adheres. All kinds of things according to Lazzari and Schlesier (2008) and Buser (2006) like stones, clay, plaster, wood panel, paper, fabric and even found objects can be used as supports for painting. Reyner (nd) spell-out that the choice can vary according to the idea or subject matter that the artists wish to express in their art works. The art works produced are like relief paintings.

Keywords: Painting, Supports, Crafts, Postmodernism, Media, Expression, Relief

Introduction

Sailzyk (1987), notes that canvas is perceived by many people to be best support for painting, but wood could be only as support and surface to work or paint upon. Wood or canvas can be a difficult choice for some artists. These two are the most commonly used materials, but there are even more choices such as plastic, metal, glass, ceramic, paper, vinyl and cardboard. This paper has focuses on attempts to use wood as support to painting i.e. breaking boundaries. Painting has gone beyond creative design, crafts and making images on just plain canvas. It has advanced in the USE OF addition of other painting supports.

The postmodernist art practice is often about taking discordant elements from one's environment, and reordering these to create works with profound messages. Artists across the globe and throughout the ages have combined and used various supports in executing paintings. Artists most often paint on canvas, but wood has always been a favorite alternative; the surface to which the paint adheres. All kinds of things according to Lazzari and Schlesier (2008) and Buser (2006) like stones, clay, plaster, wood panel, paper, fabric and even found objects can be used as supports for painting. Reyner (nd) spell-out that choices can vary according to the idea or subject matter that artists wish to express in their art works. They further stated that, some of the oldest surviving paintings were made on clay vessels. The art works produced look like relief paintings. Today artists have the free mind to use any support and media they chooses to create their paintings. The aim of this study is to produce works of art made from wood as a medium for artistic expression while the objectives are to create paintings inspired by wood, to combine both canvas and wood in painting and to study the durability of wood as a support in painting.

Wood, according to Tsoumis (2014), is a hard tough substance that forms the trunks of tree and that has been used for thousands of years as a fuel and as a material of construction. Available literature show that wood products usually contain considerable moisture after their production and drying is essential to prepare them for further use. Proper drying reduces the dimensional changes due to shrinkage and swelling; protects wood from microorganism, reduces weight and transportation cost. Wood finishing and preservation methods increase its strength. Drying of wood reduceS the moisture content of the wood to the lowest value permitted by weather conditions in the shortest time without producing defects. The level of moisture reducing attainable depends on temperature and relative humidity. Regulation on conditions is usually automatic, and drying is accomplished by the use of drying schedules that have been derived experimentally for various species and thickness of the wood. Wood can be protected from the action of destruction agents such as fungi, insects, and marine organism by impregnation with toxic chemicals. Preservatives used against such organisms are of three groups; oils, oil soluble chemicals, and water-soluble chemicals.

Methodology

The methodology used in this study includes; the research design, data collection procedure, processes of wood preparation and materials used.

A. Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was studio-based as all the artworks were executed in the studio. Marshall (2010) posits that studio-based research is rich with possibilities for contributing to body of knowledge concerning creative processes primarily because of its core the making discipline.

B. Data Collection Procedure

The artist visited the timber shade where he got acquainted with two different types of wood namely; the hard and the soft wood. The artist got samples of off cuts from both the hard and soft wood where he realized that exploring with the soft wood as a support in painting will be suitable.

C. Processes of Wood Preparation and Materials

The basic steps in processing the wood were;

Step 1: Identification

The artist first of all identified the type of wood he wanted to explore with and he choose to work with Malina was ??? because of the tender nature and how soft was the wood. Large quantities of this wood were purchased.

Step 2: Smoothening and Cutting.

When the wood was purchased, it was taken to smoothening with the plane electrical machine to remove the rough surfaces off to enable the free flow of brush strokes and then cut into 1½ inches and some of it 2 inches each with the aid of an electrical cutting machine to get the required sizes.

Step 3: Sand Paper

With the aid of an electrical angle-grinding machine, the artist was able to use sand paper to make sure that wood was completely smoothened for confirmation of the smoothness.

Step 4: Chemical Application and Drying Process

At most cases, not all the wood purchased will completely dry. What the artists did was to apply wood preservative chemicals to prevent fungi and wood insect in destroying the wood. Wood preservative products are those products that claim to control wood degradation problems due to fungi rot or decay or wood destroying insects as mentioned above. When the chemicals are applied the wood is now allowed to go through a sun-drying process in an open air.

Step 5: Construction

Frames of various sizes based on what that artists wishes and the idea of what comes out of his mind are now created at this stage. It is the decision of the artist to have a combination of canvas and wood together if he wishes to. It is also important to note that, this is where creativity comes into play while this process in going on.

Step 6: Painting

Painting is the application of pigments on a surface to serve as a support. Lazzari and Schlesier (2008) again noted that supports can range from natural surfaces such as rock, wall, types of paper, parchment, or wood, or any surface that can hold wet or dry media or can be incised. Mittler (2000) revealed that, several kinds of paint can be used to achieve different results. The artists at this stage is free to explore with different colour application unto the supports.

D. Discussions and Results

In the course of this study, seventy-four (74) paintings were created but for the purpose of this paper, only seven (7) paintings were selected and analyzed. The paintings were executed using wood as a support for artistic expression. A wide range of colours were used in terms of different media such as acrylics paints, Winsor and Newton oil colours as well as car auto-based paints. The artworks created were purely non- representational. The study was able to create paintings using wood as a support in painting, combine both canvas and wood simultaneously in painting and was also able to assess the durability of wood as an alternate support for painting.

Analysis of Art Works

Creativity can be seen as the ability to generate new thoughts and to expression unlike any other. It is seen as a basic element in many human endeavors, such as arts, music and the literature etc.Lazzari and Schlesier (2008) believe that creativity is the quality that allows us to originate something or to cause objects to come into being.

Figures i to vii are created using off cuts from timber. The paintings are executed in relief forms with the themes inspired from the socio-political affairs of the Nigerian society. An example of such is the painting titled *The King and His Subjects* (figure i) which depicts a typical lifestyle that exists in a royal palace setting where the King is seated with his subjects. This painting is measured 220cm in height and 87cm in width. Another painting is titled *Second Tenure I* (figure ii) which is made up of a

constructed frame and the off cuts of long wood. Pasted upon are shoes of different sizes some of which are in two pairs while others have their other pair missing. This simply interprets that, the two pairs of shoes represent individuals who have gone for positions in the society twice i.e. first and second tenures while the single pair represents just a single tenure. Complimenting this piece of art work is the painting title *Continuity I* (figure iii) of governance in the society.

The painting titled *Reflections II*, measuring 212cm x 80cm in size, is figure IV and represents a societal mirror of self-assessment, having gone through a long serving tenure of leadership. What have you to present as an achievement or contribution to the society? Another piece of works executed are titled *Hope I* and *Hope II* (figure v and figure vi) interpret the unavailability of some basic amenities that include good water supply, good road, electricity, good health to mention but a few that are hoped to come to pass. Hope in the society is always seen as a non-probability fact.

The painting titled *Destiny I* is executed in wood, bamboo, enamel on canvas measuring 200cm x 72cm is represented philosophically as a predetermined course of events considered to be beyond human control or a belief that is determined by a combination of human intelligence and divine will. In this painting, the bamboo cuts adhered to the canvas across each other sprinkled with brilliant orange represents the predetermined course of human events and divine will.

The paintings in figures i - vii are richly executed with a mixed-media technique involving acrylics and enamel paints. The colours appear on work of art to be brilliantly executed. Colours like yellow, orange, lemon yellow, brown, purple and pink are represented in their various shades, tonation and gradations. Materials used also include; bamboos of various width were cut in rings to enhance the aesthetics (figure v, vi and vii).



Figure I, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav Title: "King and His Subjects", Medium: Mixed-Media on Wood, Size: 220cm x 87cm, Year: 2016



Figure ii, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav, Title: "Second Tenure I", Medium: Mixed-Media on Wood, Size: 186cm x 104cm, Year: 2016



Figure iii, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav, Title: “Continuity I”, Medium: Mixed-Media on Wood, Size: 204cm x 65cm, Year: 2016



Figure iv, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav, Title: "Reflection II", Medium: Mixed-Media on Wood, Size: 212cm x 80cm, Year: 2016

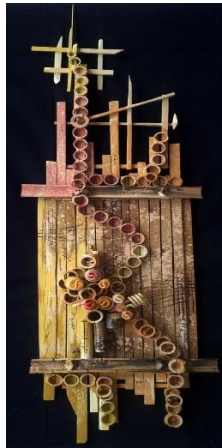


Figure v, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav, Title: “Hope I”, Medium: Mixed-Media on Wood, Size: 230cm x 74cm, Year: 2016



Figure vi, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav, Title: “Hope II”, Medium: Mixed-Media on Wood, Size: 201cm x 72cm, Year: 2016



Figure vii, Artists: Joshua Aondona Avav, Title: "Destiny I", Medium: Wood, Bamboo, Enamel on Canvas, Size: 200cm x 72cm, Year: 2016

Conclusion

In the course of this study, it was realized that wood has the ability to be used as additional support in painting by artists. If it is not properly handled most especially when it is undergoing the drying and preservation processes wood will not be useable. Challenges encountered during the execution of the works of art include the followings; shrinkage and bending of the wood after the work frames are constructed, application of paints on the surfaces of the wood in the case of some undried part and infected part of the wood by insects most especially when the work is completed. Wet wood as the case may be when used at that stage, appears to make the work heavy but after sometime dries up and becomes lighter. Media and expression are the two major key things that are to be considered when creating any work of art. Paints like car auto based paints and acrylics were properly utilized. These media adhered to the surfaces and they all achieved their brilliancy.

Findings

The following findings were:

- i. Design element like line and its dynamics was created from the paintings above (see figures i – vii). The likes of horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curved and straight lines were created and painted.
- ii. Forms could be created eventually creating aesthetic designs worthy of public view and appreciation.
- iii. Wood can also be an additional support for canvas for painting expression.
- iv. Durability in wood could be trusted if properly treated from destruction by insects.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study provided knowledge of creating with another adequate and alternate support for painting.

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