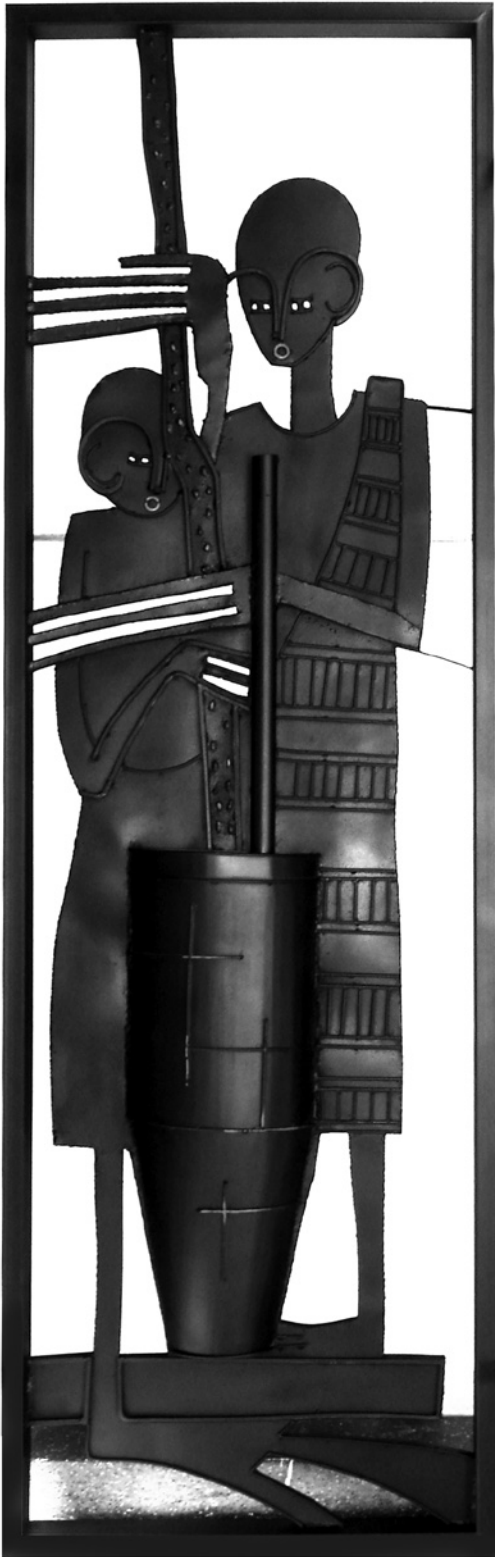


Meaning-Making in Visual Culture:  
The Case of Integrating Ganda Indigenous Knowledge  
with Contemporary Art Practice in Uganda



# Meaning- Making in Visual Culture

The Case of Integrating Ganda Indigenous Knowledge  
with Contemporary Art Practice in Uganda

**Kabiito Richard**

Tutor:  
Professor Helena Sederholm  
Dr. Kyeyune George (PhD)

Aalto University  
School of Art and Design  
Art Department

## *Dedication*

Wherever you are, I know you know, and proud of my life  
that you decided, with utmost joy and dignity, to uphold.  
You remain my inspiration, my strength, and my model.  
Maria Lwiza Nakalema, rest in peace.

Aalto University  
Publication Series of the School of Art and Design A 95  
[www.taik.fi/bookshop](http://www.taik.fi/bookshop)

© Richard Kabiito  
Graphic design: Arja Karhumaa

ISBN 978-952-60-0001-5  
ISSN 0782-1832  
Printed at WS Bookwell Ltd.  
Jyväskylä 2010

# Contents

Acknowledgement	10
Abstract	12
Preface	14
<b>1 / Introduction</b>	<b>20</b>
Preamble	20
<b>PROVISIONAL ASSUMPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATION</b>	<b>21</b>
Research questions	23
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>24</b>
Phenomenological method	24
Artist as both inside and outside	35
Investigating the narrative	40
<b>2 / Indigenous knowledge, tradition, and meaning</b>	<b>44</b>
Preamble	44
Indigenous Knowledge	44
Tradition	47
Meaning	53
Narrative tradition and meaning	58
Narrative theory	62
Metaphors and idioms	66
<b>ART AND MEANING</b>	<b>76</b>
Tradition	76
<b>3 / Artistic Traditions and Narrative in Buganda</b>	<b>76</b>
Meaning	79
Ganda art practice	81
<b>NARRATIVE TRADITIONS</b>	<b>88</b>
Preamble	88
Separating myth and history	88
Genesis of stories	91
Evolution of Ganda folklore	93
Distinctions between idioms, proverbs, and stories	95

4 / Narrative Application	100
Preamble	100
<b>PERSUASION</b>	100
Role of characters and personification	101
Idioms and imagery	105
<b>AFFECT AND ORGANIZATION</b>	109
Musicality as interlude	110
Prolepsis and primes	113
Filmic dependencies as a case scenario	114
5 / Post-Independence Art in Buganda	119
Preamble	119
<b>FOUNDATIONS OF ART IN BUGANDA</b>	119
A living legacy	119
<b>THE PLIGHT OF ART IN UGANDA TODAY</b>	121
Creativity and originality	121
Effects of the dichotomy	125
Title against content	131
Sharing ideas	134
Relevance and interpretation	137
6 / Remix Aesthetics	139
Preamble	139
<b>ART AND THE ARTIST</b>	140
Practising remix	140
Balaalo	144
Mulere	152
Greetings from Uganda <i>Unconscious Imperative</i>	155
<b>NAGGALABI</b>	162
7 / Prologue	162
<b>AFRICAN HOUSE</b>	165
<b>BUGOLOOBI PROJECT</b>	167
Search for meaning	170
Mood and emotion	175
Familiarity and specificity	178
Expression and experience	179
Myths and reality	181
Auxiliary narrative	182
<b>OPEN-ENDED TEXTS</b>	187
Karimojong	187

8 / Interlude	187
Headgear	190
<b>YEAR II PROJECT</b>	192
Dominant attraction, autonomy, and decision-making	194
Metaphor	196
Scene	199
Lead-on	199
Repetition and intensity	200
Objective transformation	202
Patch-ups	204
<b>TYPES OF REPRESENTATION</b>	208
The verdict	209
<b>THE WAKALIGA EPISODE</b>	212
Intimacy of stories	212
9 / Epilogue	212
Remote ordering and goal-directed actions	214
Evolution of Stories	216
Traditional referent and familiarity	219
Imagery and imagining	222
<b>MAKERERE EPISODE</b>	225
Character	225
Traditional referent and the action token	229
Visual adaptation and inquiry	232
Wonder and other emotions	237
The Breakthrough	239
10 / Conclusions	243
Summary	243
Conclusions	246
Ability to see what we see	249
<b>REFERENCES</b>	252
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	263
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	265
A Story about the Wild Nuts (Nkoliimbo)	265
Kato Kimera comes to rule Buganda	266
Kintu the Legend	266

# Acknowledgement

To begin with, I seize upon the chance to acknowledge Professor Pirkko Pohjakallio-Koskinen who was instrumental in my decision to pursue a doctoral degree at the University of Art and Design Helsinki (TaiK). It is because of her that I am a proud student of TaiK and thus I wish to thank her and recognize her contribution. Immeasurably too, I wish to thank my supervisor Professor Helena Sederholm for shaping and overseeing this research process. Professor Juha Varto was, and still is, a role model in everything I have vied for in this study and I wish to thank you for your wisdom, optimism, and strength you gave me when I seemed to despair. Doctor George Kyeyune could not have been any more important to me than the explicit discussion and open but constructive criticisms we had during my artistic project in Uganda. On this note also, I would like to thank Professor Ilpo Koskinen from the School of Design who was instrumental in my attendance of the Summer School of Design that took place in Suomenlinna, 2006. It was instrumental in revitalizing my conviction to pursue narrative as a basic concept of art practice. Especially so, I would like to thank Maria Hellström who introduced the functionality of narrative discourse. Birigitta Höijer, your contribution cannot be overlooked at the slightest opportunity for you gave me the light: I had no idea about the deeper structure of narrative functionality, but with your willingness to share, I was able to obtain the required literature that later became a cornerstone in my research. Kim Schroeder from Rochdale University who coordinated the Doctoral Conference for Multidisciplinary Research in Koge, Denmark that later became a significant contribution to my own study. In addition, I wish to thank Associate Professor Philip Kwesiga who assisted me in developing my research proposal. Dr. Kizito Maria Kasule you have been a friend and a mentor and your contribution to my research proposal development was immense.

My heartfelt gratitude also goes to all persons who participated in this study. I wish to thank the group of students I worked with in the African House Project and the Year II Project. Michael Barigye my dear cousin was also involved in the Mugalaasi Project. Members of the Wakaliga group thank you for the tireless efforts you exhibited in executing the artistic project. Lastly, many thanks go to Mrs. Mukasa Josephine who, in her prerogative, availed funds for travel and settling-in when I had just started this course. Your financial and moral support was crucial in my stay in Helsinki. In addition, I would like to thank the MTSIFA Finance Committee for the support you offered me when you realized it was necessary that I pursue further studies. I wish also to thank the Directorate of Human Resources' Makerere University that provided funds for my second trip to Helsinki. Staff of the bursar's who worked tirelessly to make sure that I had my finances in time your contribution cannot be over looked. School of Graduate Studies, Makerere University and SidaSarec Research Grant I wish to recognize your support towards my research activities: it would have been unexplainable if I had not dwelt on your support and funding. Not to forget the most important part of the study: Margaret Babirye who tirelessly typed my research findings and literature of 'a thousand' pages I could not imagine the pressure I put you under, but it was certainly crucial. Finally, academic support cannot suffice on its own: I wish to thank my friends Pito, Joseph, Paddy and Sammy for making my life more lively and adaptable to the strenuous whims of the academia. My family: Louise, Milcah, and Rose I love you with all my heart. My siblings J.B, Andrew, Fred, Anna, and Michael you have always offered me support whenever I needed it to keep going. Everyone who contributed directly or indirectly to this study you are worth the mention. Thank you very much and may God bless you all.

## ABSTRACT

It is apparent that in Buganda, art produced in the studio is detached from its community. This realization undermines the basic tenets of the indigenous systems of knowledge generation, acquisition, and practical usability, which enabled Ganda society to enjoy the benefits accrued from its cultural constellations. Any culture comprises unique and specific sets of beliefs, values, and norms that distinguish it from other cultures, and within these a priori institutions, individuals and groups adroitly realize their own physiological, psychological, and social needs. One of the requirements that humans rely on to cater for their needs, is art, which is fundamental at all levels of human development. Roger Fry, (cited in, Howells, 2003) notes that people have two kinds of life: “the actual and the imaginative, and the work of art was ‘intimately connected’ with the second” (p. 35). The Baganda in order to satisfy this set of human requirements developed an art form, which was mainly instrumental in satisfying functional needs as well as spiritual concerns. The Baganda, out of dire need to fit into the social and psychological worlds, established strategic systems of bodily practice and oral culture that they used for pedagogy, communication and propagation of knowledge structures across generations. Having survived since the 14<sup>th</sup> century when Kato Kintu reportedly first came to Buganda, these strategies could not last long especially when the Ganda people adapted to new ideologies that missionaries, Arab and Indian traders, and explorers brought to Buganda.<sup>1</sup> Roscoe (1921) writes: “...the beautiful bark-cloth dress of the women has also given place to tawdry blouses and skirts introduced by Indian traders....” (pp. 100-101). Further, “Arab traders taught the locals to read Swahili in Arabic characters; “Before this, no Muganda knew any system of transmitting his thoughts to writing or of making any permanent records...” (Roscoe, pp. 100-101). Father Lourdel through Mackay persuaded the king to sanction the worship of pictures: “Hence arose the enthusiasm of the Baganda for medals, scapulars, and other images distributed by missionaries” (Lugira, 1970, p. 155-157).<sup>2</sup> This enthusiasm arose as a result of the king’s as “master and center of everything in Buganda” was in favor of the pictures. By so doing, many of the local systems of perpetuating life within communities gradually slid into oblivion, giving way to alien tenets that *accelerated* local histories.<sup>3</sup> Communities became increasingly detached from their indigenous ways of life and among those values that suffered the alien invasion was art. This study therefore, attempts to rediscover some of the effective tools that the Baganda used to maintain all faculties of their society functionally together. This study proposes Oral Culture as a tool necessary

1 Ssekamwa (1995, p. 9) insists that Kato Kintu first came to Buganda around the year 1314 from Mountain Masaba, in Bugishu, present day Eastern Uganda.

2 These included crucifixes, pictures of the Sacred Heart, Our Lady, St. James, and others, mostly imported from Europe, held the devotion and admiration of the Baganda (Lugira, 1970, p. 157).

3 ‘Accelerated History’ overwrites indigenous histories: “We barely have time to reach maturity before our past has become history; our individual histories belong to history writ large. History is on our heels, following us like our shadows, like death,” (Augé, 1995, pp. 26-28).

to redefine the links between art and its community. It further proposes Remix as a means of reemphasizing the oral. The overall purpose in this study is to describe the ways in which narrative and remix aesthetics could aid in the constitution of meaning in plastic arts, which would in turn continue indigenous knowledge. I will argue that since narrative is an effective communicative tool, then it would be vital in forging a relevant and understandable visual culture to its community. In support, I will also argue that since Ganda material culture is familiar and locally accessible, then it will be influential in constituting visualization of narrative representations specific and thus adapted to their own locales.

Although I do not level any claim against significantly changing something, in my study, people’s perceptions find renewed hope: the frames that once made gates turned out fully pledged and autonomous artworks; the doors mutated into narratives; and cloth became drapery—no longer off cuts. Tradition is dismantled and waist beads worn as necklaces. Questions flare. Ganda artifact is used in new situations but still in its old casing: this attracts attention of the passersby, while stories mutate into tangible ‘things’—for those who never had a chance of ‘seeing’ them. Reflection becomes part of process: Kato Kintu reflects history while Kintu maintains legend; Kaleeba emphasizes tradition while Matyansi Butyampa and Sewandeku focus on reality. Many reflections from various viewpoints that I cannot conclusively recount in this short text, form part of the transformation experienced in artistic research most of the time missed by ‘scientific’ methods. In general, the artistic project breaks with tradition and plies its own route. I received comments of uniqueness and novelty as a result.<sup>4</sup>

4 The implication is that the artwork or the artistic process reflected a change in people’s view of what should be and what is possible to be. To demonstrate this effect, the explanations given about the work do not depend on what I anticipated to achieve, but rather what I learn from the artwork itself. As I work, I have a project of searching for meaning through narrative texts. I proceed through the artistic process as I keep on discovering new phenomena and at the end, I begin to search for the qualities that make the artworks stories and how we achieve such feeling. Hence, my assessment of the artwork in the epilogue is comparable to that of an outsider: the difference was that I had learnt about certain narrative mannerisms that I had no idea whether I had achieved them. At the end, I started to search for them and share them with the public. As such, even my own analysis is subject to contempt and even criticism, however, in such an event, the artwork stands liable for misinforming me.

# Preface

In July 2004, I embarked on constructing a series of copperplate artworks as part of the interior décor for Ivys Hotel Kampala in which I sought to integrate aestheticism and functionality.<sup>5</sup> The artwork would be most conspicuous during the daytime and more functional at night when the subtle red light pierced through the patterned openings of the dome-shaped lamp holders.<sup>6</sup> Ivys Hotel Kampala being located in Buganda, I thought of an idea that would introduce locality within the design and the artwork to make it well adapted to the community. I sought to align such a thought with Vakeva's (1990) realization that the meaning of objects is a result of their use through anticipated utility, derived from their context of use of which they are a part. I opted for a narrative about the coronation of the King of Buganda at Naggalabi because it was a common event within the community. This suits the notion that social conditions and their possibilities form a concrete language as public discourse and makes use of the vernaculars within its circulatory space (Warner, 2002). In contradiction, when constructing Naggalabi, I relied on unfamiliar and unconventional (as I came to realize) methods of representation within the Ganda community and consequently it did not attract as much attention as I had anticipated. Indeed, in every individual, we do not feel pleasure equally, as suggested by Hume in his article 'Of the standard taste' (cited in, Korsmeyer, 1998) although structurally, we expect the mind to derive pleasure from some objects a notion to which *Naggalabi* does not conform.<sup>7</sup> Incidentally, I discovered a mental reconnection of the various episodes to one another when installing Naggalabi that compelled me to investigate this *phenomenon* further; this connectedness implied that stories contained a special 'thing' I was yet to establish.<sup>8</sup>

5 Here in this research I refer to this undertaking as the Mugalaasi Project.

6 I assumed that by so doing, I would not only transform the bare pillars, but to also make, the same space usable during day and night. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) note "Pictorial structures do not simply reproduce the structures of 'reality.' On the contrary, they produce images of reality which are bound up with the interest of the social institutions within which the pictures are produced, circulated and read" (p. 45).

7 The idea that my artwork had not attracted much attention from the public lingered on though, even if I thought that being a unique form of art, many people would associate with it. More still, this confirmed my conviction that a gap between the community and contemporary art in Buganda was not a mystery, prompting an insight into some of the possible causes of this disconnection.

8 The mental reconnection imposed a virtual continuity and eventually dependency, due to the man-

I instead searched for an inner knowing of subjective mechanisms in comprehending visual images since communication made a great difference in connecting the other with the self according to my conviction. Particular mechanisms of communication on the other hand, would provide me with an intimate knowing of how we interact with artistic material. In turn, I would aptly explain the discrepancy between art and community today especially in Buganda where art, despite its previous role in shaping its own society, had assumed peripheral significance. Notwithstanding, as Anderson (1997) describes it, tradition values and propagates continuity as an integrationally inherited pattern.<sup>9</sup> Convinced that one of the reasons arts suffered a blow in contemporary society centered on *meaning*, I identified *Phenomenology* as a method that allowed an open investigation into psychological issues by purely relying on interpretation of observed, heard, or experienced phenomena.<sup>10</sup> There is also the dilemma that the aesthetics of embodied sensual satisfaction renounced by Kant reinforced the division of art and life (Shusterman, 1998). With this realization, the reconnection that I seek is achievable, first, if we know what people expect, and second, how they make use of what they expect. Without considering what the others' expectation comprises, we ebb considerably from putative canons of society.<sup>11</sup>

Although Bell (1989) believes that 'significant form' is the only quality that evokes our aesthetic emotions, and thus the only means by which we recognize a work of art, this is not true with the Baganda. Instead, they produced and consumed art from dire need and indeed its artistry emanated from delight, decency, functionality, and excellence, not in the achievements beyond the art object (Lugira, 1970).<sup>12</sup> Collective living and communication come from patterns provided by tradition, and thus, the ways in which one thinks, depend on the culture in which one is immersed (Anderson, 1997). Society, as it stands now, faces gross distortions in many ways and thus, reverting to old ways is practically impossible. However, we can reuse the past as a gateway to what society requires and the relation this engenders. Much of the art produced in Uganda today, and Buganda particularly, reflects societal values. Art in the galleries does not address societal issues at close range; it does so from a point of view disconnected from the people. Modernists considered art as an apparition or pure appearance judged by beauty and not utility (Bauman, 1999). Unfortunately, society in Buganda today thrives on modernism's principles of exclusivity. Artists produce art not for themselves alone, but for the others too; that is, my method of work should reflect the values that accommodate the other if I have to reconnect with society.

ner in which I had designed the artwork for one to lead to the other in a sequential manner.

9 See, From Calliope's sisters, in Hutchens & Suggs, p. 66.

10 My own experience, combined with the others' experience, in the case of this research, would concretely propose the kind of art we should produce that is meaningful to the larger community.

11 Additionally, I inevitably needed an artistic production for societal, artistic, and subjective goals. I vehemently seek to differ with Bell's view that we have no right or necessity to pry behind the maker of an object in pure aesthetics but only consider our emotion and its object (op cit, p. 11).

12 To deny them these privileges abrogates their right (as disenfranchisement) to, especially, delight and utility that significantly contributed to their livelihoods.



Artistically, working with art to reveal issues affecting society draws art even closer to the communities from which it comes. On many occasions, artists, especially in my own community, use art for commentary, not as a transformative or investigative tool. Art, thus, only reflects rather than investigates underlying factors that influence such societal dynamics. Instead, I have addressed the issue of art as an investigative tool to understand society. I attempted, during the process of art making, to understand how we make use of the messages, for example, grounded in images. By the mere fact that we occupy different physical and psychological points in space and time, we are bound to perceive a different aspect of reality from our neighbor (Saint-Martin, 1987). Nonetheless, as an individual and community member, my method of understanding an image does not differ significantly from how others make sense of the same image. Through a reflective, reflexive, and phenomenal disposition, I come to terms of self-understanding and my relation to others as an artist.

In the midst of self-understanding, I reflect on the factors that affect my community members and me as an individual in order to draw a general picture. My lack of understanding of ways that art functions in society, especially as an investigative tool required an artistic approach to this study. Studying other individuals' artwork as a basis of self-realization did not appear to transform me as an individual, and my experience thus, in this study drew a comparative line between what I am able to know as an agent in the process of art making and what others know. Saarnivaara (2003) also knows that the ability to understand others is born out of the ability to understand oneself. Mirroring Saarnivaara, Bruner (1986) suggests that our sensitivity to narrative is a major link between our own sense of self and our sense of others in the social world. In conclusion, given the nature of the problem, I set out to investigate, only rigorous and practical tools would provide a backdrop to a meaningful end. Goldie (2009) suggests that our lives are inescapably narrative in structure and as such bear close similarities to literary narrative. In effect, the lived narratives of which we are the authors highlight the nature of exploration we face in this research. Before, getting to the details of the study, there is one important note to make.

#### *Layout*

This publication comprises ten chapters inherently linked to each other. Chapter one (1), the introduction, outlines the justification of this study opening up the door into further reading of the text. Under this headline too, research questions appear, preceded by the overall goal of the study. Two questions seeking personal understanding of the role of narrative and remix aesthetics in constituting meaning making in visual culture arise, while a third question seeks synthesis of the two constructs. Further, the chapter introduces Interpretative Phenomenology Analysis as forming the backbone of the study both in data collection and analysis of findings. The reasons for its adoption are its sensitivity to hermeneutic methods driven by sense-making in lived experience and providing a way to applying the

method of 'appearing' as a key concept in collecting data. As a supportive method, artistic research gains its way into the study as a way of creating conducive situations for data collection, and thus, extensively discussed in this section.

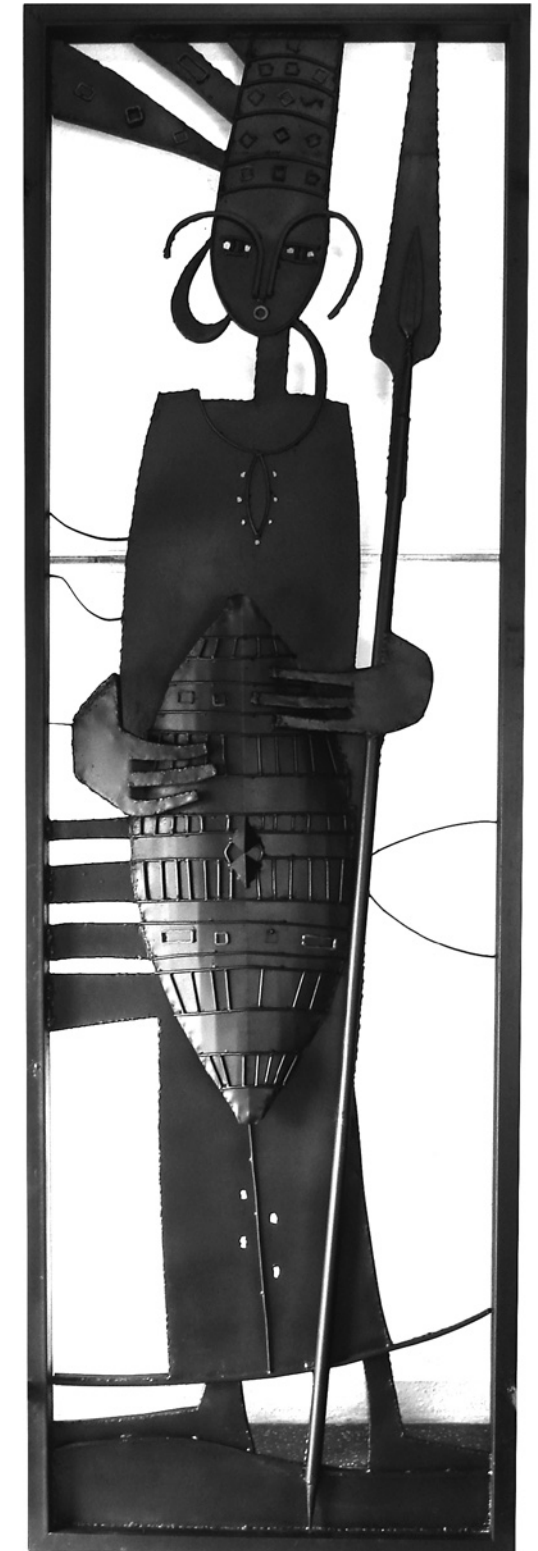
Chapter two (2) introduces theoretical dialogue in line with the methods used in data collection. Key constructs of the study namely, indigenous knowledge, tradition, meaning, and narrative receive attention in this section. The study links the key concepts of tradition and meaning to narrative theory. Metaphors and idioms as emergent constructs form the backbone of narrative input in meaning making as per the proceedings of the study. In chapter three (3), the reader meets artistic traditions in Buganda. This region being the central concern of the study, understanding of its artistic traditions would substantially contribute to the relevance and applicability of the findings. This chapter recounts, in part, art practice in Buganda, narrative traditions, the distinctions between idioms, proverbs, and stories as emergent constituents of narrative structure. Chapter four (4) bears close relations with chapter 3 in that it is a direct descendant of the later. It presents application of narrative within Ganda society by discussing, in detail, idioms and imagery, affect and organization, musicality and primes, and filmic dependencies. Much of narrative theorizing takes place at this stage in the process of data analysis.

Chapter five (5) takes on a different trend, sort of detached from the other chapters, but inherently connected to them. It presents the contemporaneous situation in on the Ugandan art scene in regard to production and utility or appreciation so to say. In its detailed probe, it considers history of contemporary Ugandan art, the plight of art in Uganda, while creativity and originality emerge as contentious issues in art production today. The chapter discusses the effects of dissecting art into realism/abstract and the implication of this dichotomy on the Ugandan populace in general. This chapter, thus, contextualizes the study scope and provides it with a historical background. Chapter six (6) bears close association with chapter 5 as it still veers into what artists on ground, apart from the researcher, are doing. It features several practicing artists discussing their work methods and scopes by probing their views on what reasons and goals artists should produce art. Specifically, three artworks produced in line with the interests of the research, particularly remix aesthetics feature in this section, backed up by several scenarios that explain the researcher's experience of episodes of meaning making in the context of Buganda and Uganda.

The *prologue* comprises chapter seven (7) signaling the first major art productions directly tied to the research. An artwork comprising of five copper plate panels comes as the first presentation that instigates the exploration of narrative structure. A study involving students from Uganda, Finland, and USA follows, closely ascended by a project executed in Bugolobi, a Kampala suburb. Other subjects that feature include the search for meaning, mood and emotion, familiarity and specificity, myths, and auxiliary narrative among others. Mainly, the artwork discussed in this chapter acted as pilot studies or precursors to the major artistic

project, although they yielded significant results that later formed part of the data. Closely related, is the *interlude*, chapter eight (8), reliving a time period when the researcher concentrated on prompted art productions by co-opted participants. During this period too, many of the interviews take place and visits to galleries ensued. The year II project comes under the spotlight for discussion, comparative drawings about Karimojong dress, appearance of the dominant attraction (saliency) as a subtheme, metaphor, scene, repetition and intensity form the discussed topics. This chapter also relays various types of visual representation evidenced in the research process.

Containing the major artistic production is chapter nine (9) codenamed the *epilogue*. This section represents the climax of the research, split into two episodes: the Makerere and Wakaliga episodes respectively. Several themes emerge strongly in this set of data including traditional referent, dominant attraction, and unconscious imperative. These feature alongside subthemes that include emotion, imagery, leveling, visual adaptation, and intimacy of stories. The researcher expounds his experience of both as an artist and abstractionist. There is too, mention of the dynamic picture, an idea solely encountered during art making. The final chapter ten (10) presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. A summary of findings is part of this chapter and concluding remarks. It features too, an interview conducted during an exhibition by students in secondary school working with local accessible materials, but in a way unique to them exhibiting artists' ability to see what they see.



# 1 / Introduction

## Preamble

In this study, I define contemporary art as *plastic* art produced in Uganda during the post-independence era to the present day that includes painting and sculpture as classical art forms revered in the Western ideology of academic art. On the other hand, *visual culture* designates a pedagogic project that “opens the field of visual studies to include vernacular images, mass media, and traditional art images” (Tavin, 2000, p. 188). On its part, *meaning-making* (making meaning) will refer to the practice of engaging with visual culture in regard to deciphering the underlying meaning therein contained whereas, sense-making (making sense of) will indulge with the attempt at gaining personal understanding of an experience with a given phenomenon. *Practice* designates thus, our indulgence in both ideology and production of such art forms and the value attached to them by the producer and his/her audience.<sup>1</sup> I presume that when things are accessible, they become familiar; on the other hand, local things tend to become specific to their locales.<sup>2</sup> I present primary arguments that include the significance of narrative, remix aesthetics, and the idea of integrating the two systems of knowledge—from Western fine art academies, and Buganda pre-West invasion history into contemporary art practice. Choosing a method is one of the important and defining moments of any research project that seeks to yield dependable and commendable results. Two strategies characterized the research process: the *phenomenological* method formed the backbone of the study supported by the *artistic research* methods. The artistic method, in alliance with phenomenology, involved my participation and that of others in generating vital information by producing artwork, carrying out self-studies and assessments. Since the researcher is targeting the understanding of visual representation both in construction and reading, then it was imperative that he got involved in the process for a personal understanding. I discuss in detail

<sup>1</sup> Howells (2003) defines Ideology as simply the study of ideas, thoughts, and systems of beliefs, which tends to focus on “the way these ideas thoughts and beliefs influence the way we organize and lead our lives, especially at a social and political level” (p. 71).

<sup>2</sup> Stereotypes, bias, and social expectations too, create identity. Locality and personal are within overlapping webs of political, environmental, legal, and social issues—isolationism is rare.

issues of method by outlining the processes undertaken in the research and reviews of literature about phenomenology and artistic research methods in the remainder of the chapter.

Before delving into the detail of the research process, it is useful to present briefly the findings of the study. The research discovered a relationship between meaning-making and a preferred condition that availed itself whenever one engaged in the act of understanding an element of visual culture. The study further discovered that several conditions led to this phenomenon especially when the process of art making included narrative forms and remix aesthetics as tools for creating meaning. On its part, narrative form contrived a condition construed as an ‘enduring emotion’ mentioned by one of the participants. This condition linked directly with the ‘Unconscious Imperative’ leading to its interpretation by the recurrent condition as a tradition functioning below the threshold of consciousness. In the case of narrative, metaphor and idioms were crucial in contriving this condition. Remix, by critiquing existing traditions, provided evidence of the condition of recurrence that made it virtually impossible to separate tradition, as an epistemological norm, from the process of meaning-making. This led to the finding that the process of meaning-making heavily relied on tradition as a tool for interpreting visual culture. This was so because several participants expected to see some things as making part of their experience of understanding an element of visual culture. Further, participant picked more interest in experiencing the elements of visual culture that were more meaningful to them. This understanding came because of having something they already knew in the context of the visual cultural element.

## PROVISIONAL ASSUMPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATION

When people realized that ‘modern art’ was not a universal language, and instead only catered to a few, drastic and pragmatic changes took place to ensure that society was not detached from art (Jenks, 1996). Gauguin (cited in, Chipp, 1968) in a letter to J. F. Willumsen provides evidence of the detachment that ensued at the time: “In art one is concerned with the condition of the spirit for three quarters of the time; one must therefore care for oneself if he wishes to make something great and lasting” (pp. 60-65). Hutchens and Suggs (1997) reflect this notion: “Modern art, especially post-world war II art, had significantly separated art from the masses” (p. 9). This realization gradually bore the fruits of postmodernism as a condition that would counter the art of the non-living: art is a condition of life and therefore we cannot detach ourselves from it. Hannula (1998) commends postmodernism opening up “many different and many other ways to express ourselves, to find a voice through culture, through a civic corpus, through politics and discourse” (p. 15). Art being an integral unit within our biological, psychological and social needs, should be accessible, not an up-market rarity. Spirkin’s *Dialectical Materialism* (1983) considers an undisputable function of art as grounded in its

profoundly communicative ethos.<sup>3</sup> Society forms art, and likewise, art can help to form society. Contemporary art in Buganda today seems to have lost its roots of complementing and supplementing society's needs as art assumed the status of a commodity only understandable to the artist and those for whom s/he produces, namely, the expatriate community and art collectors.

*If narrative is a communicative tool in everyday speech, then we should integrate it into art production to enhance communication in visual images.* Stories were, and still are one of the oldest tools of communication that have stood against time narrated verbally or visually. In Buganda, the base of this research, stories bore part of the social, cultural and psychological life, evident today among the rural communities that still practice communal and traditional ways of life.<sup>4</sup> Documentation of the stories, coupled with other factors, eroded the traditional ways of accessing them. The lifelikeness of these narratives makes them believable, associable and understandable, which create dependency. This justifies the study considering that stories from Buganda constitute a solid history, which forms a credible foundation for academic consideration.

*When we juxtapose stories with locally available material elements in art making, not only do we attain holistic meaning and enhance visual readability: we continue indigenous knowledge in both material and immaterial terms.* The Baganda, to create understandability and dependencies in their narratives, they created a mix of real and non-real things.<sup>5</sup> Such articles became part of the Ganda way of life and hence significant entities, which led to their presence in associated stories.<sup>6</sup> As Korsmeyer (1998) notes, people always harbor specific meaning and understanding of articles within their own environments, and only ask questions when one uses such articles unconventionally. We also realize that there are many articles of daily use built within Ganda stories to make them more practical, plausible, and specific to the Ganda community. Justifiably, in instances where oral tradition is a means of communication and preservation of cultures, we need a material form of continuing such knowledge because materiality embodies meaning that is abstract and elusive. This is in agreement with Bush's (1990) historical account:

3 Through it, people communicate to one another their feelings, their most intimate and infinitely varied and poignant thoughts Spirkin explains.

4 Elders and village children congregate and share stories where each member is obliged to tell a story in turns as well as listen to the others. Adults still tell stories to the young, to a small extent, as an alternative way of instilling traditional values and as entertainment. Parents seize upon such sessions to pass on information to their children; likewise, the children find it an opportunity to interact with their elders. Apart from interaction, children also learn new things from some of the stories which go on to guide their individual lives.

5 The non-real things kept the mind wondering while the real things kept it in balance. Hence, when they talk about Gulu, in the 'Kintu' myth, they also include real things such as Musoke, grain, chicken and plantain as familiar things that make the story real and keep the mind in balance.

6 Incidentally, Ganda material culture is wide and very close to its community because of its utilitarian nature.

[Hum]ankind delighted in the incorporation of human and animal forms in the objects of daily use, and that a shared system of such animated forms re-affirmed an understanding of the users' place in Nature's scheme and the role of these objects in the rituals and routines of a natural life. The useful objects communicated shared beliefs, values, and interest. (p. c.3)

*Reusing accessible and specific material cultural entities in art production accelerates meaning making in visual images and thus propagates indigenous knowledge.*<sup>7</sup> Rutherford (2005) holds that the degree of integration of the entity representation determines familiarity. Videlicet, items, which feel more familiar, facilitate subsequent processing of the same or similar items with deeper integration. A combination of the material and immaterial improves visual reading in such a way that the mind drifts from ethereal categories of perception to more corporeal categories that are easily accessible by our senses.

### Research questions

The study focused on how people experienced and constructed meaning in the plastic arts within predominantly traditional communities. Specifically, I focused on narrative as a meaning-making tool in human understanding. This is because, through an in-depth reading of personal and social settings, activation of oneself through memories identification and recognition, audiences get involved in narration. Working within personal dilemma of contradictory identity, narrative mediates between the individual and cultural identity when the outer and inner reality meet (Hoijer, 1998). The nature by which audiences get involved in narrative was crucial for this research. Thus, focus on understanding the structure of narrative was imperative in this study. Further, material culture, as an already known and physically accessible element, enables meaning-making by local or indigenous members of the Ganda community. Indeed, one of the principles that help us recognize shapes and give them their semantic dimension is familiarity of something we already know (Zimmer & Zimmer, 1978).

A distinction between the indigenous way of understanding and a 'world view' of essences was necessary to draw comparisons and focus on the generalities or differences. These would provide a general framework for approaching visual or plastic arts within a predominantly traditionalized society. It is crucial to understand the mechanisms of narrative in order to understand how such phenomenon creates meaning and the kind of meaning it presents. Through theoretical understanding of how we arrive at meaning and make use of it, the study embarked on

7 When objects are local in a community, they are accessible in material and abstract thought. Usually, familiar objects are meaningful although such objects attain their familiarity partly because they frequently occur in standard orientations (Best, 1986). Because they are familiar, we tend to associate with them and attain specific attributes that become common or conventional. "A number of other studies have keyed into the power of familiarity to raise preference, revealing that repeated exposure to an object will result in a more positive attitude towards it, even without integrated awareness," indicated Barry (1997, p. 27).

a larger ideal of a search to continuing such indigenous knowledge beyond being only meaningful; it would also continue in space and time: it would reveal itself in new or alternative ways in conformity to difference and generality. To achieve this goal, the study explored ‘remix aesthetics’ as a strategy that enabled locally grounded visual qualities to appear as art productions during the research. Engraining local visual qualities within works of art, in turn, continues indigenous knowledge systems. Further, the dictates of remix allow reuse of texts whether or not they belonged to the user without significantly altering their immediate state.<sup>8</sup> De Baere (1999) is convinced that “[a]rtists can appropriate any moment of resonance as their own, including those which are traditionally considered only an echo of what tradition and the market expect artists to produce” (p. 118).

The overall goal of the study is to establish how narrative and remix aesthetics could both improve visual reading and continue indigenous knowledge in specific locales. It does so by gaining personal understanding of *how* an individual or a group of people makes sense of artistic images produced with stories and material culture within a specific locale. To achieve this goal, the study poses three questions:

- How do individuals construct meaning in visual images (plastic arts) and how does narrative as a temporal construct contribute to such a process?
- How does remix aesthetics, as a spatial construct, contribute to meaning-making in an indigenous community?
- Does the synthesis of narrative and remix aesthetics improve visual readings and continue indigenous knowledge in a predominantly traditional society? In addition, how does the artist as both a local and familiar thing influence such a process?

## METHODOLOGY

### Phenomenological method

In the Mugalaasi Project, I dealt with several exhibits including *Naggalabi* as part of the interior décor. Significantly, one image that showed a woman sensuously leaning against a wall and skimpily draped drew mixed reactions, yet another image depicting a nude woman splashing water on her body from a horse pipe (see figure 1) attracted less attention. I hanged the artworks in a place having dual roles of a bar and restaurant; the sensuous image excited night revelers particularly men after consuming alcohol.

Conversely, the artwork drew little admiration from restaurant users because of its ‘pornographic’ content, especially so that they always came during daytime

<sup>8</sup> ‘Immediate state’ here refers to the condition in which an object manifests before transforming it into a new or alternative entity such as altering its visual qualities (that include color, texture, shape, and form) for a desired effect outside its normal context of meaning or use.



Figure 1. Picture of a woman splashing water on her body. Photo: Kabiito Richard, 2005.

and sometimes with young children.<sup>9</sup> This led to questions in my mind: why did *Naggalabi* fail to attract as much attention yet I personally valued it so highly from an artistic point of view? Was it informative enough to the public or only served the artist’s role of self-fulfillment and self-realization? If so, was the information at epistemological level or merely ‘use’ object imposed on the public as an art form? In answering these questions, it was inevitable that I required a personal understanding of the indifference *Naggalabi* received from the public. Similar to Plotkin’s (2008) suggestion, like a child, I allowed myself to become a naturalist, something I found easy by letting myself become curious. This

research considered the process of meaning-making as critically personal rendering the study of experience vital.

Phenomenology studies human experience and the way in which people perceive things as they appear in consciousness (Langdrige, 2007); discovering the meaning of life experiences (Byrne, 2001); understanding of how others view the world (Trochim, 2006); enlargement and deepening of immediate experience (Speigleberg, 1994). The focus thus, is on “people’s perceptions of the world ... their perceptions of the ‘things in their appearing’” (Langdrige, p. 10). In collecting data for this study, I focus on understanding my experience of meaning-making in visual culture. The central thesis in this is that I do not probe other participants’ experience of meaning-making; rather, their meaning-making becomes my experience of them making meaning in artistic images. There are two levels of me in the study: (1) the researcher who attempts to make sense of (2) me trying to make sense of meaning-making. This aimed at entering a life-world “to better understand and describe it, while still maintaining a critical (hermeneutic) distance to enable reflection on the experience” (Langdrige, p. 79).<sup>10</sup> I adopted the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as a method for data analysis sharing

<sup>9</sup> Although it was not part of this study, it seemed to me that there was a correlation between alcohol consumption (that increased during in the night) and admiration of the nude images. Secondly, I painted the pictures using ultra violet paint, which of course glowed under ultra violet light. This made the pictures more conspicuous at night than in the day. In my opinion, it was only sensuous and not pornographic. Due to public outcry, management removed it and never replaced it anyway. Nevertheless, the sense of decency and privacy in Ganda culture abhors exposure of the female body to the extent of this artwork, and in this context, it is pornographic.

<sup>10</sup> “The idea of ‘life world’ is that we exist in a day-to-day world that is filled with complex meanings which form the backdrop of our everyday actions and interactions,” explains Finlay (2008).

the view that “human beings are sense-making creatures, and therefore the account which participants provide will reflect their attempt to make sense of their experience” (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 3).<sup>11</sup>

#### Method

The researcher created, by making art, situations that would contrive sense-making. “The primary aim is to examine ‘the thing itself’ as it appears to show itself to us. So the phenomenon appears, but the phenomenologist can facilitate this, and then help to make sense of that appearing,” contends Smith et al (2009, pp. 24-25). This is where artistic research intersects with the phenomenology. By creating artistic probes, phenomena of meaning-making appear to me and others involved in the process of artistic consumption. As a producer, who also involves others in the artistic process, I make choices that are inherently sense-making in construct and such choices may be purposive or could as well just ‘appear’ as meaning-making units. This was much of the case in art making where the study took on a life of its own. Secondly, Heidegger (cited in, Smith et al) thinks, “Whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will be founded essentially upon the ... fore-conception” (pp. 24-25). This observation leads to the realization that when encountering a text, I do not necessarily know which part of my fore-structure is relevant. However, by engaging with a text, I may get in a position to know better what my preconceptions were.<sup>12</sup>

In this phenomenological study, I relied on Heidegger’s notion of ‘appearing.’ Smith et al (2009) consider Heidegger’s view of phenomenology as “concerned in part with examining something, which may be latent, or disguised, as it emerges into light” (p. 24). However, “it is also interested in examining the manifest thing as it appears at the surface because this is integrally connected with the deeper latent form—which is both a part of, and apart from”<sup>13</sup> (Smith et al, p. 24). In my artistic and conversational probes, I pay particular attention to what *appears* to me as a sense-making unit during the reading of visual images. Two underlying con-

11 “IPA aims to allow the researcher to develop an analytic interpretation of participant’s accounts which should be prompted by, and clearly grounded in, but may also go beyond, the participant’s own sense-making and conceptualization,” observers Smith et al (2009, p. 183).

12 “The fore-structures” according to Smith et al (2009), “seem to be always there, and it is in danger of presenting an obstacle to interpretation. In Interpretation, priority should be given to the new object, rather than to one’s preconceptions. ...here the suggestion seems to be that one makes sense of these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves” (p. 25).

13 Smith et al insist that appearance has a dual quality for Heidegger—things have certain visible meanings for us (which may or may not be deceptive), but can also have concealed or hidden meanings (those that are apart from it). For example, at one level, the song in ‘Kaleeba’ (see chapter 4) is not about meaning at all, yet one could consider it a meaning-making unit; it is the departure point into our making sense of the image. Therefore, the apparent content suggests the phenomenological importance of the song; then again, its latent force appears or emerges during the process of analysis. Several other appearances come to the fore during the dream about the earring, the Louie’s story of ‘Baby koko’ (see scenario2), Freddie’s ‘Lukomera’ (see chapter 7), and even Ssekamwa’s analysis of tropes (see chapter 3). Further, the song in ‘Kaleeba’ acts as a ‘part’ to the ‘whole’ of the case study. The song in the story is powerful by itself, yet its meaning becomes stronger when one recognizes it as contributing to the whole—the understanding of recurrence as contributing to meaning-making.

cepts premised as *accessibility* and *specificity* is the basis for integrating indigenous knowledge as material for enhancing meaning-making.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, I have not tested these two concepts as such, and these grounds, they qualify for providing phenomenological data. In the study too, I used material gathered to dialogue with a strong theoretical framework to guide and support my findings. This provided a theoretical background for my phenomenological data. I adapted the texts to Dale’s (1996) theory of meaning as representations of condition C\* discussed in chapter two. This is because tradition, in relation to Drou’s (2006a) ‘traditional referent’ emerged as a super-ordinate theme in meaning-making. Specifically, recurrence was a basic component of tradition, which strongly features in and underlies the proposition that things meaning what they do *whenever* condition C\* presents itself, whereby, ‘whenever’ as a state, represents a repetitive pattern.

In trying to conform to Dale’s proposal of meaning, the study adopted an exploration into condition C\*, which it names as providing a recurrent condition that forms ground for an expression to mean what it does on each iterated appearance. To conduct this exploration, the study chose narrative supported by remix aesthetics as means of providing grounds for a recurrent condition leading to a meaningful expression. In particular, the study would focus on idioms metaphorically expressed to provide tools of ascertaining the factors leading to the recurrence. Kant’s metaphor theory as explained by Gibbons (2008) provided a theoretical framework, while the Relevance Theory advanced by Pietarinen (2005) suggested ways of creating favorable contexts for a recurrence of the condition under investigation. In the field, the researcher considered the historical background of storytelling and art production and consumption in Buganda, whereas, at the same time considering the situation of contemporary art in Uganda today.

The concept of meaning promoted in this study thrives on social interaction between an individual and other individuals. In order to contextualize meaning with its proper significance to the individual or self, I placed myself in a social world where my lived experience is, in part, with other beings—what Heidegger has referred to as being-in-the-world-with. “For Heidegger, we are inescapably social beings, always in relation with the other, always being-with,” posits Langdrige (2007, p. 32). Dale’s (1996) theory of meaning contains a central premise grounded in the social where the study realizes its significance. The notion of ‘traditional referent’ as an emergent super-ordinate theme highlights close ties with tradition and meaning, both grounded in the social world, but also only understandable

14 I premised this in turn, on the possibility that one could be conversant, knowledgeable, and close to locally available, thus accessible things. Such possibility—although not guaranteed—would seem to create a situation of familiarity with specific objects of interest to given locales. Although I anticipated that familiarity with expressional objects would increase readability in visual culture, I had no expectations of how such objects would influence meaning-making. I was ready to learn from the process of art making, the things that I always took for granted, namely tradition, that emerged as vital in the process of meaning-making. In line with this, I drew inspiration from my earlier study that only emphasized the expressive qualities endowed with Ganda material culture. My thinking lay in the prospect that I would further develop the idea of working with locally available and familiar objects and material to enhance visual reading. On the other hand, I had identified storytelling as a valuable tool in communication and as such, its qualities would serve well in a project of understanding the experience of meaning-making.

through experiencing them with social beings. Heidegger's concept of phenomenology, Dale's idea of meaning, Drout's (2006a) theory of tradition, and Gibbons' (2008) interpretation of Kant's theory of metaphor fall within a *social context* that comprises this study.

During the process of data collection, specifically art making, conversations, and watching TV narrative, I was always inside and outside of my experience of making sense of myself and others' sensibility of meaning-making during the consumption of visual culture. On other occasions though, I am both in and out at the same time.<sup>15</sup> Jumping out of the experience occasionally allowed me to reflect on such an experience and also to record and analyze its properties. In assessing the experience, I gain out of others who try to make sense of visual artistic productions—in other words who consume visual culture—I form a general notion of the factors that influence my own experience and that of others during meaning-making. During my assessment, I pay particular attention to detail of both formal interviews and impromptu statements made in conversations or comments made about my artistic productions during and after their completion. This sensitivity to detail forms a hermeneutic circle which stipulates, according to Smith et al (2009), having a general overview of the outcome, but also paying attention to detail at individual level.<sup>16</sup>

I had a general theme in mind, during art making, by being attentive to the presence of a story [structure] and meaning-making. This also extended to other forms of data collection. Many of the art works in the study though, got titles after the production process ended. This was in attempt to escape from the world and 'engross' myself within the experience itself, which Pietersen (2002) calls 'ob-tuse immersion.' Nevertheless, my knowledge of the world maintained allegiance to the major themes in line with Heidegger's views on *bracketing*.<sup>17</sup> Orleans (2008) considers bracketing as a *technique* relying on theoretical discourse and digging into foundations of knowledge people always take for granted. Smith et al (2009) think that Heidegger's complex and dynamic notion of *fore-understanding* "helps us to see a more enlivened form of bracketing as both a cyclical process and as something which can only be partially achieved" (p. 25). Maintaining my knowledge of the world would allow me in a way to experience my sense of meaning-making. 'Reflection' was much evident in the process of naming, artistic production and analysis of the exhibits. Most of the time, issues of contemplation, choice, judgment, and decision-making formed part of my reflective experiences. I looked out for clues. I created links between pictorial elements and events outside the picture as part of my own knowledge from history or lived experience.

15 Sometimes I undergo an experience with no notion of being a researcher and I only reflect upon it after I regain my conscience and position as researcher. On other occasions, like formal interviews, I am aware as I undergo the experience that I am a researcher too.

16 "Idiography does not eschew generalizations, but rather prescribes a different way of establishing those generalizations" (Harré, 1979, cited in, Smith et al, p. 29).

17 Langdridge (2007) refers to bracketing as *epoché*. "The epoché," he writes, "is a Greek word used by Husserl (1931, 1967) to mean the process by which we attempt to abstain from our presuppositions, those preconceived ideas we might have about things we are investigating" (p. 17).

Worthy of notice too is the idiographic consistency and adherence to phenomenological methods. Although I work with theories of metaphor, narrative, meaning, and tradition as substantive literature, these are derivatives of my personal engagement with the experience of meaning-making. Langdridge (2009) cautions: "It is important to stay close to the data and meaning that emerges there, rather than to constrain the meaning by engagement with any particular theoretical perspective" (p. 90). This is also evident in my always-phenomenal application of metaphoric expression during art production discovered later on while trying to make sense of my experience of meaning-making in artistic productions. It is due to personal insight, contemplation, judgment, and choice of articles as units of expression that form metaphors and idioms before and during the analytic phase. Further, my analysis of the artwork after its making is consistent with the inductive technique of interpretative phenomenology: Rather than impose external sources onto it, the artwork provides me with material to explore and interpret the meaning of my experience. In so doing, my study remains grounded in a phenomenological paradigm due to its sensitivity to idiographic material grounded in the 'thing itself.'

#### Sample

As a key participant, I relied on self-assessment, diary notes, and reflection to make sense of my meaning-making as I produced and engaged in appreciating my own artistic productions and those made by others. This provided detailed idiographic data, for example, the *scenarios* that we encounter during data analysis, formed specific units of experience. Further, I relied on *co-opted* participants as secondary sources for additional information including three *focus groups* and assorted but *purposively* chosen samples.<sup>18</sup> I interviewed twenty (20) individuals during the course of the study, one individual from each of the nine (9) groups, and specifically observed eleven (11) participants. The rest of the participants mentioned in the text were not subject to interviewing and thus contributed to the research data mainly through commenting and spontaneous reactions. Through my experience of others making sense of visual culture, I provide a window through which we access the world of meaning-making in visual culture. Co-opted participants in the study are part of my objects of experience since I am the one experiencing their meaning-making, and not focusing on their experience of meaning-making: what the participants say and do, become part of my experience of them engaged in the practice of meaning-making.

Having confirmed myself as a key participant due to fact that I am an *artist* and *hail* from Buddu in Buganda, my major task or goal was to identify a small group of artisans to work with in line with a *purposive homogenous* sample. These young men hailed from Kyamuliibwa, Masaka; I hail from Bbaale, Kalisizo. Nevertheless, we all hail from Buddu where we find these two locations, which provides homo-

18 Smith et al (2009) note, "Focus groups allow multiple voices to be heard at one sitting, drawing a larger sample into a smaller number of data collection events" (p. 71).



geneity to the sample by sharing the same cultural background and as such, our general thinking became homogenous. Emma another co-opted participant hails from Kasese, in Western Uganda. In this case, there is no ethnic cultural homogeneity, but we share professions as trained artists. The third set of participants is not involved in making art with me; instead, it creates artworks external to my own art making, but in alignment with the goals of the research. The fourth set of participants is quite open with assorted individuals or groups. They included people who made comments about my work directed at meaning making, those I specifically interviewed for gaining specific data or those I encountered in open conversations. Although some participants discussed issues of 'causality' or 'veracity' (wondering how this happened) that could have interrupted my sense-making (which is where our focus should be), their input highlighted processes of meaning-making, namely, how enabling or deficient aspects of visual images could become in the due course.

My choice of participants from the same locality based on the desire to understand how people from the same locality share and use common knowledge, and how they would react to familiar concepts and objects derived from their own environments when used in different contexts and especially for artistic dispositions. This would represent a typical grassroots Ganda community. Secondly, it was also not clear whether having common knowledge would lead to production of common meaning to classify the communication as specific. Lastly, it was imperative to acquaint myself with the mechanisms people of these artisan's socio-cultural and academic backgrounds associate with and create meaning during artistic experience, both in production and viewing. At completion, I displayed the two artworks for public viewing. Several views were gathered from gallery goers mainly on how artworks depicting stories would differ from those dealing with general themes; and, in addition, to understand how people or 'others' constructed meaning from these artworks generally basing on objects, concepts, and action within the stories. I displayed written texts of the story besides the artworks so that people were able to read the story in sync as they view the artwork. The main aim this was to build an *implied familiarity* with the visual texts to establish the significance of familiarity in meaning making processes.

*Convergence and divergence* was imminent in this study. I relied more on my experience of the narratives I elicited from groups and individuals to make interpretations of that experience. Although I did not probe each individual at group level, I asked group leaders to tell me their group's experience of working with stories. Secondly, consistent with IPA, I quoted specific responses to maintain the idiographic importance of the group to the study. The key element in the interviews was to identify their sense of meaning-making rather than their mere engagement with narrative texts. I chose artwork that bore qualities that could contribute to the study from only four groups (out of the nine). The study did not focus on the detail of the co-opted participants' experience to construct a full account of 'an experience' on any single case as stipulated by IPA, although I asked them about

their experience in some cases. Nevertheless, phenomenological method considers any data deemed vital for the study at hand. Spiegelberg (1994) writes: "What is important in phenomenology is that we consider all the data, real or unreal or doubtful, as having equal rights, and investigate them without fear of favor" (p. 709).

In the case of interviews, many of the participants appeared once; on one occasion though, I interviewed or interacted with the participants more than once, but mainly about different themes in the study. I treated each case on its own merit to maintain the rich diversity of the data. Most of the time I obtained data in the process of art making, engaged in conversation, and being-with participants. Heidegger's (cited in, Smith et al, 2009) concept of 'appearing' or 'encountering' as expressed by Ebre (1997) were most at work in such situations. I studied reactions and commentary, attitude expressed by both body and word, and my personal sojourn in the world of artistic production. Through self-assessment, contemplation, and interaction with people addicted to storytelling (in TV series and conventional film), I observed and experienced immersion into narrative. I also studied a child's utterances and actions, which provided me with additional experience on narrative and meaning-making in its consumption of visual culture. I retained actual names of participants who discussed their own artwork that appears in the resultant dissertation. Where I did not inform participants that I was watching or recording what they had said, I altered the names for confidentiality. I also altered names of those participants that offered sensitive data.

### Analysis

The study was inductive. Although I had knowledge of Bruner's (1986) idea of virtual texts in narrative comprehension, I had no expectation of how my approach to data would manifest meaning-making in visual culture. In this case, I was ready to accept any information that came my way. The study too, had recourse to theoretical constructs during data analysis as a way of fitting the data together and providing it with existing knowledge. In this instance again, IPA works creatively where first order case studies were wholly inductive in an IPA style. Moving to the second stage, the analysis required typical external theory, which came at a later stage, typical of IPA. Crucially though, the dialogue with theory still adheres to IPA standards since it promptly arose from attending closely to my own experience of myself and that of co-opted participants. In effect, theorizing is still ascends 'from within' rather than being imported 'from without.' The theoretical statements regarding meaning, metaphor, and tradition came to life via this process; art making too, thrived on induction.

I took particular interest in the principal task of turning notes into themes by producing concise and pithy statements of important aspects of comments attached to a piece of transcript. As I attempted to understand indigeneity and meaning, the 'traditional referent' and 'enlargement of being' emerged as a *super-*



*ordinate themes*.<sup>19</sup> This appeared to make sense of my experience and therefore I organized the analysis in terms of this concept. The ‘dominant attraction’, ‘first impression’, and ‘unconscious imperative’, emerged as subthemes in the process of data analysis. Prompted by the central concern for a *social construct* of meaning, during this *cross case analysis* I consulted literature in this area that could provide useful theoretical underpinnings of socially grounded accounts of tradition and meaning. I also created a dynamic relationship between the comparisons of individual case studies with the writings of the various authors named above, which provides an overall theoretical platform for second-order analysis, though the analysis itself and specific content built on material from the cases. Inbuilt within the data presentation, are *scenarios* as units of experience in the study. These provide episodes of my personal experience, as standing out in relation to secondary source data from co-opted participants and other sources such as literature.

Smith et al (2009, p. 109) note: “The most orderly sequence is to take each theme in turn and present evidence from each participant to support each theme in turn and present evidence from each participant to support each theme (case within theme).” That said, “[s]ometimes, however, it could be that one favors an idiographic presentation where the participant is prioritized and themes for each person are presented together (theme in case).” This study favored a ‘theme in case’ sequence due to ‘rich’ nature of data each case presented avoiding the risk of losing vital information. In many cases, a single case highlighted more than one theme although main data clusters came in their order of appearance. There is no regular sequence of analysis by considering individual data cases although patterns of themes develop during data collection.<sup>20</sup> “The sequence of analysis is important as it points to how the subsequent second-order analysis was prompted by, rather than pre-empting the researcher’s response to the material in the individual cases,” notes Smith et al (p. 166). Three phases of fieldwork classified as prologue, interlude, and epilogue formed the structure of presentation of findings. A chapter discussing contemporary Ugandan art in general ‘appeared’ as it was inevitable to provide a context under which the data collected from the field was relevant to its source, as well as, exhibiting its unique functionality. Without strict adherence to the formation of the ‘appearance’ of information, much valu-

19 Emergent themes later served as descriptors for my presumption of accessibility (and thus familiarity with) local material that would later become specific (and thus local) to such community. The most important point of reference in the study stems from several participants who wish to see things that would instigate their meaning-making process. ‘Traditional referent’ comes to my attention through Freddy and Joy who are searching for what they need to see in order to achieve meaning. Joy would like to see traditional local jewelry in ‘Njabala’; Freddy would like to see ‘akambe’ in ‘Kaleeba’ as a feminine implement and thus defining gender-based properties of meaning-making as a cultural concern (see chapter 7). Rosa and Kirui prompt my insight into the ‘enlargement of being’. Louie also contributes immensely towards this understanding especially during the tour of the exhibition where she seems to connect with several exhibits, and not with others. Drout (2006) refers to these landmarks as ‘traditional referents.’ Remix denotes the ‘traditional referent’ so strongly whereas narrative highlights the condition described by Giovanelli (2009) as ‘enlargement of being.’

20 “Phenomenological themes in this context are understood as the structures of experience, experiential structures making up the experience,” writes Langdridge (2007, p. 123).

able data would lose value during analysis. Secondly, it was crucial to present data within its context of appearance to be able to trace its significance to the study.

To keep confined within IPA, or phenomenological method during the data analysis, I draw reference from a case cited by Smith et al (2009) that works with a *cross case analysis* involving “a form of micro theory development drawing on ideas from analytic induction whereby provisional hypotheses are modified in the light of checking each case”<sup>21</sup> (p. 166). They further contend that developing theory “is itself idiographic as each case is used to refine it” (p. 166). This aims at producing, Smith et al continue that “theoretical statements which are true for all cases in the data set or every case with clearly articulated exceptions, rather than the actuarial claims of orthodox psychological methodology” (p. 166). Practically, Smith et al note that this would require continuously moving between “the individual cases and between levels of analysis, drawing on the complete studies, detailed sub-sections, and abstracted comparison matrices”<sup>22</sup> (p. 166). Under the same pretext too, super-ordinate themes develop and promptly referenced in this text wherever applicable. This is evident in the variance of expression or statements whereas logic remains the same. Additionally, theoretical perspective applies to all participants that generate similar themes coinciding with theory, although their statements and perspectives varied substantially between participants. The study in this case now, shows “both convergence and divergence, patterning but also individual nuance, as the write-up points to what participants share at the same time as illustrating their individuality” (Smith et al, p. 166).

While analyzing data, I presume myself completely outside the experience because this is when I reflect back on the material I had gathered both through art making, interacting with and observing other participants. In principal, these were never research questions at the beginning of the study and as such, my interview schedules and conversational prompts did not contain questions or leads addressing tradition. Nevertheless, resonating with the hermeneutic phenomenological insight, I was the experiential expert and the inductive methodology allowed me to include tradition as a core element of the study “and one which featured strongly in the individual case studies” (Smith et al, 2009, p. 166). The write-up lacked a chronological narrative organization due to its sensitivity to idiographic presentation. It is evident at this stage that such a process is time consuming but significantly unpredictable and as such, much self-censuring and scrutiny of texts is quite important. Because of the social nature of narrative, I envisaged a social construct of meaning, if narrative were to represent a meaning-making entity. In

21 See sub-heading ‘Justification’ above for a glance at the provisional hypotheses.

22 Abstraction is a basic form of identifying patterns between emergent themes and developing a sense of what can be called a ‘super-ordinate’ theme that involves “putting like with like and developing a new name for the cluster” (Smith et al, 2009, p. 96). “A super-ordinate theme,” according to Smith et al (p. 166) “is a construct which usually applies to each participant within a corpus but which can manifest in different ways within the cases. For example, some of my terminology is consistent with ideas or technical reference by other researchers. Within participants too, similar themes occur especially when discussing issues of abstract/realism dichotomy – an emergent theme.

line with a phenomenological approach, all my experiences are quite idiographic although at the same time, they keep focus on the overall construction of the total experience. A statement of the theories this study worked with for data analysis comes later on in the literature review.

In conclusion, phenomenology consequently, concerns “the study of experience from the perspective of the individual ‘bracketing’ taken-for-granted assumptions and usual ways of perceiving,” remarks Lester (1999). Based in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, phenomenological approaches emphasize the importance of personal perspective and interpretation epistemologically.<sup>23</sup> Once added to phenomenological research, interpretation enables the use of results as basis for practical theory, information, informative, and supports or challenges policy and action. To be non-directive during questionnaire administration and interviews will present an opportunity of people describing their experiences, or self-reports and aesthetic expressions (Waters, 2009). Abstracting and presenting themes fully considered as essential to the unique experience, will ably find their way into presentation in an understandable way and clear how such an experience would vary from other similar experiences.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, “Phenomenologists do not view human experience as an unreliable source of data, rather they see it as the cornerstone of knowledge about human phenomenon” observes Morrissey and Higgs (2006, p. 162).

Morrissey and Higgs (2006) further point at phenomenology as resting in the premise that everyday world can yield knowledge from which we can learn about ourselves and focus into the nature of an event and how it comes about in our everyday life.<sup>25</sup> For example, by employing the phenomenological approach, Paton, Martin, McClunie-Trust, and Weir (2004, p. 177) were able to realize their goal of “supporting and facilitating student’s learning by a medium commensurate with the student’s perceptions of clinical practice and how the students made sense of particular situations.” In other words, they relied on descriptions of the participants’ “lived experiences” always considered credible. When Groenwald (2004) wanted to conduct a research into aspects of cooperative education, that he always found misunderstood or poorly practiced, he required a suitable explorative strategy that “would prevent or restrict” his own biases, and eventually had to settle with phenomenology (p. 2). In light of the lengthy discussion of phenomenology and its characteristics, it is clear that this method deals with subjective experience and that its data is as reliable as any other scientific or sociological research

23 Although pure phenomenology would suggest a strategy that begins without any preconceptions or ideas, humanist and feminist research do not agree. Instead, they advocate for clarity on how “interpretations and meanings have been placed on findings as well as making the researcher visible in the ‘frame’ of the research as an interested and subjective actor rather than a detached and important observer” maintains Lester.

24 It is apparent in phenomenology that we deal with what is unique in knowing. Secondly, being non-directive presents one with the opportunity of phenomenological data.

25 Rather, other than learning about ourselves from a distance, we are able to experience our own ways of life and learn about them in a subjective way. Thus, phenomenology as a subjective strategy is best suited for learning about the influence of images on the intellect and ways we appreciate them.

method. Similarly, depending on the nature of the study, I set out to understand, phenomenological approach was the most suitable, supported by the artistic method.

### **Artist as both inside and outside**

The second and supporting method to the phenomenological approach was of artistic tools. Artistic research draws attention to the likes of action research in the social sciences and the search for “fundamental understandings of specific phenomena” characteristic of humanities (Borgdorff, 2007, p. 12).<sup>26</sup> Simply portrayed, action research designates ‘learning by doing’ where one identifies a problem, attempts to resolve it by assessing how successful his/her efforts were and would try again if not satisfied (O’Brien, 1998). All through the artistic process, I left all texts open-ended, which helped to disrupt pre-determined ways of seeing and doing. On the other hand, existing texts (namely stories and cultural implements), prompted ideas specifically for research. The phenomenological method continues to unfold in the artistic process: the artwork I produced took its own pattern of construction away from the sketch work with which I set out. Lilja (2004) acknowledges the experience of knowledge through dance “Working with movement until it can convey its own expression and honesty is a process which, of necessity, has to expose the ego and make use of it” (pp. 13–14). In other words, other than sticking to my own pre-conceived plan, I discovered new features from either the material or technique that gave the artwork a different life from what I had anticipated. I needed to make sure that my interpretations had grounds for phenomena. Routio (2007) specifically indicates that we carry out artistic research as a goal purposefully to assist the creation of art.<sup>27</sup> In terms of the artistic inquiry, process became a major tool in this study. Studio experience, as seen by Sullivan (2005) can yield research knowledge that is socially and culturally relevant to society. In addition, Barrett (2005) considers studio production as research a predicate of an “alternative logic of practice often resulting in the generation of new ways of modeling meaning, knowledge and social relations ...”<sup>28</sup> (p. 2).

26 What artistic research seeks to incept is the development of talent, articulating knowledge and understandings embodied in artworks and creative processes; broadening and shifting our perspectives and horizons; constituting and accessing uncharted territories; organized curiosity and reflexivity; connecting knowledge, morality, beauty and everyday life; disposing the spirit to ideas through artistic practices and products. “Hence, in addition to producing artifacts, in the form of artworks and artistic practices, artistic research also generates fundamental ideas and undertakings which, although non discursive as a rule, make the world into which it is or could be. Here lies the performative and critical power of research in the arts” Borgdorff insists (2007, p. 17).

27 Whether modernist or postmodernist, or unclassified, I gain my insights through making and only realize what I have achieved at the end. Indeed, during my artistic project, I assessed the final work at the end to discover what I was looking for during the process. To discard the process is to render the entire endeavor meaningless, at least on my part.

28 Thus, artistic research thrives on tacit knowledge in addition to explicit and exact knowledge induced by emotional, personal, and subjective concerns: “An innovative dimension of this subjective approach to research lies in its capacity to bring into view particularities that reflect new social and other realities either marginalized or not yet recognized in established social practices and discourses” (Barrett, 2005, pp. 3–4). Barrett is further concerned with hermeneutics that recognizes individual

Perhaps as a deeper insight, although I am inside the process as an artist, I am outside as an observer eager to shred open the essences therein contained. Without much concern with relevance, art must exhibit its own research interest that is “specific to and developed by the work” (Schwab, 2008, p. 12). The artwork takes over the role of informing us about aspects of the world. My role only becomes supportive as an agent that is active and enables change to take place. I presume this is artistic research: we immerse ourselves into the action or we are aloof depending on what the artwork itself has to offer.<sup>29</sup> In artistic research, Lilja (2005) contends, exist opening up of secret rooms bearing new insights; unexpected meetings could suddenly avail what we particularly lacked to continue with an idea or something we yet have to articulate.<sup>30</sup> The artist is a subject of investigation as well as investigator in the process of the art production. *Immersion* draws a seamless interface of the artwork itself so that the artist becomes an accessible object to artwork by which the artwork defines its own destiny.

My position as a material, on the other hand, rests on accessibility as a quality I possess by acculturation and localized destiny; the artwork makes visible or tangible my own acculturation to suit its own environment of creation, audience, installation, and dissemination. During immersion, the artwork probes me; it squeezes me, rips me open to the bones in search of what it desires to be by controlling me. As an active agent, who offers it material and solicits for more material—other than me—that suits its demands, I dig deep into my conscience and sense of judgment to provide what the artwork requires of me as acculturated and learned experiential knowledge sensed as requirement of which I am in control. In the process, I construct my own mind as the artwork too, constructs its own being. The contemplation, the thought, the creative process results from immersion

understanding, subjective interpretation and a plurality of views as compared to positivistic or empirical methods that emphasize universal laws (ibid, pp. 3-4). Through intuitive response, objective rationality becomes secondary and “is ultimately relinquished to the material and temporal demands of making the work and to finding the means of expressing previously inexpressible psychological states” (ibid, p.10). Perhaps I express this subjective and secondary rationality in my own experience of the immersion against ordered searching for truths and equivalents.

29 When I produced Kaleeba, I did not realize that my depiction of the action was passive and that it only described a tradition preceding the action. When Freddy (one of the group members in Wakaliga) sees the artwork as Kaleeba, I begin to look for things that make it Kaleeba by description and association. I do not come with this information; I find it in the artwork. I do not realize the condition of reemphasis in the actual and implied water pot yet a shape or a pot already existed. The process becomes informative and my view of how art should be produced for less ‘Westernized’ communities changes. In phenomenology, this is an act of bracketing, whereby I shut out my knowledge about the process and leave it to experience as a route into discovery. It was a pure phenomenon. After all, I learn about my own insight from the outside, and in so doing, I am able to assess my own subjective self.

30 At one time, a participant insisted that painting during art making, for example, of any sorts was not admissible and that was his opinion. A researcher looking for alternative ways, of reinforcing meaning in the plastic arts with my community, this is a wind of opportunity because my mind becomes free and open. The thicket of tradition in the old school was unveiled and a completely new world opened up to me: I just would have never imagined cloth and metal as being compatible and later on wonderfully elegant and imposing. Cloth and wood come together to create a blend of veins and patterns of machinated curves and lines so gracefully embedded in each other. Copper, brass, beads, and animal skin coexist as artistic transformations of mundane surfaces graced with a life, yet to be a phenomenon. Lilja calls this incorporation of the self in its own mind and creating its own truths.

into the life of another thing, and since I promised myself to provide resources for its being, I fulfill my commitment. Thus, I become an accessible object as a material and active agent that is familiar, localized, and specific to the artworks’ environment: the local within its own environment—serendipity to say.

Additionally, involvement as material, I also solicit for more material outside me, connected to me, by sharing same qualities of a collective living: same space and place (accessibility and specificity respectively). The gourds, mats, stories, beads, reptiles, and cowry shells are part of me as we share the same environment and supplement each other in some parts, and we all form material that shape the life of the artwork. My study required the use of such articles in my work. In turn, the solicited materials also become part of us. Wilson (1996) examines the perplexity of art in response to intensified importance of scientific and technological research in shaping contemporary culture. One reaction pits artists as consumers of the new tools that s/he uses to create new images; sound, and video; another requires the artist to emphasize art’s critical functions of distant commentary on the development; the critical approach for this study, commits artists to enter into the heart of research as core participants.<sup>31</sup>

When we immerse ourselves into the life of the artwork, we seize to adhere to our own demands and instead yield to those of the artwork; and in process, we become objects of investigation. Immersion is some kind of hypnotic adherence to a stimulus, which engenders a condition of continuity between the texts—object and subject. Continuity rather than unity gives credence to things as a way of knowing (London, 2006). In becoming the objects of investigation, we give all there is to satisfy the demands of the investigation and at the end we are surprised at how much we had inside us that we had never been able to reveal within our own lived experiences. Knowledge produced by artistic research is as credible as any other form of knowledge domain as people today understand artistic research process to evolve from and change with the practice individual researchers undertake (Art Warez, 2008). Artistic research is thus a powerful tool in creating knowledge and furthering the academic discipline in light of the artist’s role in influencing change. Scholars emphasize the imposing role established by artistic research against other disciplines by noting that issues of how close art and science are to each other should receive attention at the methodological level (Nitgen, 2004; Routio, 2004). Thus, research in art and design yields experimental and exploratory ways of working and significantly contributes “to the development of methods and the enhancement of individual and institutional knowledge” writes Karlsson (2007, p. 166).

31 Much as the sciences boast objectivity in their approaches, they too deal with subjectivity most of the time. To this effect, Wilson (1996) thinks that scientists and technologists strive toward objectivity well as artists cultivate their idiosyncratic subjectivity as a major feature of what they do. Traditional research will most likely look different from that created by artists by provoking and moving audiences through its communicative power and unique perspectives. Tomah (personal communication, April 26, 2008) tells me a story about an embellished club in his culture that I had myself never set out to know not even thought of ever knowing.

### Art production

In this study, there are six distinctly observed stages of art production that include the Mugalaasi Project, Bugoloobi Project, African House Project, MTSIFA Year II Project, and the Makerere Episode and Wakaliga Episode, which followed each other chronologically. These projects and episodes further fall in three groups designated on periods: prologue, interlude, and epilogue. The first three projects primarily established pilot studies that led to the main art project executed under the Makerere and Wakaliga episodes. The African House Project constituted a triangulated workshop that included students from University of Art and Design Helsinki (TAIK) in Finland, Pennsylvania State University in the United States, and Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts (MTSIFA) in Uganda. The topic of the workshop was code named 'House' and each participating group was free to adopt any style of work; on our part, I prompted students to work with stories derived from their own life histories. The art productions depended entirely on their choice of medium. This intended to familiarize the researcher with how narrative could directly influence visual representation and whether the organizing element I had discovered in the Mugalaasi Project was not a one-on case that was not recurrent in other visual narrative texts. I selected two artworks for this study because of their profound revelation of organizational qualities present in stories.

Bugoloobi Project required a typical locally grounded tradition and as expected, I chose to work with stories because of their endowment with cultural artifice. The artworks produced during this project based on two local stories, which had family ties: *Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera I* (see figures 27 & 28 respectively). This project closely followed the African House Project in chronology but unlike African House, I exhibited both *Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera I* at the Makerere Art Gallery for the wider public to view and provide their opinions about the artwork through unstructured interviews. This was to establish roughly how often a work of art communicated in the same way as the artist intended. Alongside the exhibits, I provided a written story that acted as a virtual familiarity to enhance the readers' abilities to interpret the story. It would assist in identifying whether a discrepancy or improvement would accrue to determine the intensity of narrative biases in visual readings: whether there is a marked difference between reading narrative texts and non-narrative thematic texts.

The Year II Project extended for fourteen weeks, during which, I prompted 74 students from the painting class to work with locally available stories from their individual backgrounds or simply existing traditional and cultural narratives. This targeted the tendency to work with learned experiences and how it could affect the artist's course of action. Further still, I aimed at understanding the transformative process of Bruner's 'virtual text' and how this in turn, transforms the artist's sensibility in artistic production. On the other hand, *coauthoring* that took place within the groups would provide a clue on whether collective meaning would be achieved in a culturally diverse group. I mainly utilized the method of prompts during this phase in order to gain a clue on whether a narrative approach would

be viable for a wider study. Prompts would further enable me acquire desired information unobtrusively as my target was to minimize extensive influence or interference with the data obtained. I visually analyzed the artwork produced during this project through *observation* and an analysis of questionnaires administered to the students; in addition, I studied responses in course assessment forms for any vital information. This was in a bid to identify narrative traits in the visual artworks in an attempt to gain insight of the nature of visual narrative: how a reader interpreted it.

Phenomenology evident at all stages of the research is most conspicuous at the art production stage and individual studies of TV viewers, film lovers, a child's activities, conversations, and interviews. The Makerere and Wakaliga episodes comprised the greater part of the artistic stage of the research where my greatest interest lay in self-studies that would reveal how stories influenced my course of action. However, much phenomenological data came-my-way or 'appeared'. I would further obtain crucial information from viewers and actors with less interference: I did not ask questions on how they interpreted such images but rather waited for incidental comments during readings by viewers, which I recorded periodically and later analyzed. Visual citation and coauthoring were key methods I employed during artistic production where I worked with other people's ideas to gauge the instinctual and intrinsic coordinative qualities in stories that enable perpetuation of indigenous systems. This process was responsible for multiple experiences in both making art and understanding it. Specifically, I worked with Emmanuel's ideas in two artworks discussed later in this text. Because of my participation in art production, I was able to track the organizing power of narrative in images and its inducement of meaning making. At the end of the Wakaliga episode, I interviewed one of the actors in the research about his overall experience.

In addition to art production, the study also considered local Ugandan art in general; by virtue of the fact that Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts (MTSIFA) produced most art in Buganda, I studied several exhibitions to establish its nature and relevance it has to society. This was to sustain the argument that most of the contemporary art produced in Buganda today is detached from its community. There were interactions with various artists of different age groups to gain insights into their reactions to *remix* in particular and their general views about meaning in art in the context of Buganda and Uganda generally. In the Year II Project, I conducted non-scripted informal interviews, open-ended questionnaires, and course assessments that I structured towards the understanding of narrative functionality. The study administered 64 open-ended questionnaires to year II students to gain information on general views about art in Uganda today. I analyzed the data quantitatively in order to draw general patterns of occurrence.<sup>32</sup>

32 The questionnaire administered to the Year II students—of which I present the results in a quantitative format—does not contradict phenomenological methods. Rather than quantify an experience, the study—in particular of gallery goers—sought to identify patterns in artistic engagement that revealed difference and generality (divergence or convergence). In fact, instead of contradicting IPA standards, this inclusion of a quantitative analysis confirms IPA's commitment to detail and or parity when dealing

I also studied 36 questionnaires responded to by gallery goers during the ‘Women’s Day Art Exhibition 2007’ as part of the Makerere Art Gallery’s programs of ensuring better services to both artists and viewers of its art shows. I particularly looked for specific comments pertaining to views about the exhibits in relation to the audiences. Conversations, interviews, and TV programs reviewed to gain an inner insight into artists’ views and the public about the state of the artwork produced in Uganda today.

Art does not remain in one place; it spreads out further to reach other people within our multidimensional universe. In the process, usable knowledge and theories by other artists gets into being, based on work produced by deeper analysis. Craig (2003) has pinpointed artistic research as an alternative to community based research that she thinks infringes on people’s enthusiasm: “If community-based states ‘benefiting the community’ as one of its main objects, art can surely fill this role, both in terms of economic payback and in building on social capital networks” (p. 3). Chenial (2008) thinks, “in order for arts-based approaches to achieve greater acceptance or at least appreciation, there needs to be a commitment to transparency like has been encouraged in the quantitative and qualitative research worlds”<sup>33</sup> (p. 9). In artistic research rather than identifying or quantifying data, “artists rely upon their individual perceptions of the natural and social world; e.g. focusing on the appearance of objects or their interpretations of feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and values associated with objects or events” writes Silverman (2001, para. 4). ‘Democracy of experiences’ allows a “non-hierarchical research environment whereby ‘art is free to criticize science, philosophy to criticize religion, religion to criticize science and so on,” concludes Ranciere (2008, p. 4). In conclusion, artistic research has come a long way in establishing itself as a force whose structures and pillars require strengthening and reaffirmation while the synthesis of time and space becomes a strong point in artistic research. Sullivan (2005) strongly believes that the artist is the key figure in the creation of new knowledge that has the potential to change the way we see and think.

### Investigating the narrative

I analyzed narrative as a figurative entity in view of its communicative qualities. Discussion of the mechanisms by which narrative texts help in instituting communication in general were part of the study. After realizing that my core craving in the study was ‘meaning’, I picked interest in Louie’s daily activities.<sup>34</sup> In so doing, she became one of the key co-opted participants in the study on two fronts: narrative and cognition. In studying her daily activities, her initiation into speech and language

with data sets.

<sup>33</sup> Transparency in this context is the sharing of artist’s choice-making process that institutes the work. This helps in appreciating the “compelling authenticity claimed by arts-based researchers and value evocative political, consciousness-raising, emancipator re-representations” found in stories, images, sounds, and scenes. This in turn would facilitate a contextual basis for process and product that would develop a language for trans-disciplinary research and evaluative practices.

<sup>34</sup> Louie was one year and eight months when I picked interest in her behavioral characteristics.

coupled with her cognitive revelations, I was able to obtain raw data that led to vital findings and explanations to cognitive and narrative processes. Specifically, the child was vital to my understanding of narrative formulation and linguistic applications. I studied her responses to, and methods of interpreting narrative situations derived from cartoon viewership (see figures, 45a & 45b) and day-to-day speech.

From another front too, I got involved in a Television (TV) series titled ‘When you are mine’ that I followed from January 2007 until May 2008 to specifically study narrative functionalities. I worked with the *action research* method for the self-studies and observation of partners in the viewing process. More still, I relied heavily on *diary notes* to record events that such as comments by fellow viewers and self-analysis. Specifically, I set out to understand narrative dependencies and attractions during TV viewing. This was vital to the research in that it would make my argument for narrative adoption in visual constructions commendable. The quest for narrative insights extended to understanding attractions from other viewers related to very different texts such as cinema. I sporadically studied two movie addicts who explained to me their experiences. I was thus able to further understand how narrative, which I deemed vital in visual readings. This stage of the research assisted me in building several *provisional hypotheses* that guided my research and strengthened my core argument that narrative endowment with meaning-making qualities was vital for art production and reading within specific communities. Perhaps the most exciting but vital revelation was that narrative is addictive that naturally biases humans towards narrative situations: as a researcher, I fell into entanglement with the soap such that apart from studying its functionalities, I could not as a human, afford to miss any of the episodes.

Funny, is it not!

I undertook an extensive analysis of the Ganda folklore to establish its inherent qualities that has made it survive the times after the completion of the practical work. The discussion aims at shading light on the true nature of Ganda folklore, and narratives in general so that it may become a supporting factor for the choice of narratives as a basis of this study. This was because I wanted to compare the findings of the practice and the theory to make solid conclusions by further qualifying the instinctual qualities of organization and biases. I studied twelve stories of different genre and construct to extract qualities commensurate to the practical research findings. The research opted for narrative because of its psychological and social relevance to society. However, in the study, I opted to exclude the affective part although implicitly highlighted it in the musical discussions as a denominator of narrative texts. This further enhanced by reliance on material culture as a spatial construct to perpetuate continuity of the oral and the visual: both reemphasize the other’s position for a stronger result. Thus, on the conceptual basis, the study had two major insights: narrativity and remix aesthetics, which aimed at integrating indigenous knowledge with contemporary art practice in Buganda. This would offer alternative ways of meaning formation in visual readings so that art produced in particular communities bears relevance.

#### *The case of metaphor and idioms*

The information I gathered about narrative mainly focused on narrative apprehension and not its constitution. Thus, literature that stipulated what a story is in visual images was necessary to create a distinction between narrative and non-narrative texts. I sought literature in line with IPA principles prompted by attending to both Sekamwa's (1995) writings and my own artistic creations. In addition to studying narrative theory, specifically Nanay's (2008) thoughts on what constitutes a narrative, I too studied local literature and carried out an in-depth analysis of particular narrative texts. I scoured folk Ganda tales personally known to me from childhood and those written/inscribed by various authors. I considered authors such as Ssekamwa, Masembe (2002) and Nsimbi (1996) as key authors of Ganda literature. Of key importance, Ssekamwa's dialogue with stories, idioms, and proverbs was a key attraction in the course of the study. It emerged in his storytelling and that of Masembe, that idioms and metaphors—and from specifically Ssekamwa's own assertions—aid comprehension in storytelling.

In probing and analyzing my artistic productions, I sought to identify and take a closer look at the two items specifically to explore ways in which they could assist in comprehending visual narratives. In studying my exhibits, several idioms and metaphors appeared to me that I had phenomenally used in narrating my stories and indeed, were catchment points in my overall reading of the images. Since these two items were emergent sub-themes during the process of analysis, I had no particular probes of other participants' experience of them, although the items I used that triggered such analysis or labeling them as idiomatic or metaphoric were apparent during the data collection process. I thus relied on my personal experience with them as I tried to understand their metaphoricality or idiomaticity during analysis of my exhibits. Indeed, as I analyzed my exhibits, I continued to gather data for the study. My alliance or dalliance with specifically Kant (cited in, Gibbons, 2008) and Lakoff (1992) emerged with my experience of working with the articles of metaphoricality and idiomaticity, which I found quite socially and linguistically grounded. They in turn became tools for probing my conscience on why and how they could be semantically enriching. My understanding of them became a phenomenon of experience as narrated later in the full text.

*Delimitations:* the study delimited itself to the study of Ganda art as a case in the Ugandan context. This bore in mind that Uganda is a diversely multicultural group comprising over 65 indigenous communities, each with a set of cultural ideologies (MGLSD, 2006). Specifically, art making took place in Wakaliga and Makerere, both located in Buganda, 5 km apart. Due to the method employed in the study, it was inevitable that a sample population, located and residing in Buganda, would participate in the study. Conceptually, the study concentrated on how narrative could influence meaning-making in visual culture. Remix aesthetics would provide a concrete critique of historical and material constructs to both augment meaning-making and continue indigenous culture. In terms of meaning, the study explored an aspect contained within Dale's (2006) theory of meaning,

which sought to understand the process of meaning-making. The study did not engage in defining meaning nor did it engage in constituting or reconstituting theory. Coupled with literature on tradition, narrative, remix, and metaphor, the study did not attempt to define or rephrase any of the concepts advanced in the literature review. The literature dialogued with method and data for analysis and presenting findings.

## 2 / Indigenous knowledge, tradition, and meaning

### Preamble

In this chapter, I discuss issues pertaining to Indigenous Knowledge, tradition, meaning and the ways in which these concepts link with narrative and remix as working strategies. In my review, I maintain the build up to the various views and arguments presented to keep abreast with the specific ideas advanced with the use of different systems of argumentation. This provides one with a broader view of particular arguments and minimizes information loss. Having noticed IK as forming the backbone of the present study, I delve into the notion of tradition and meaning before finally linking it to narrative as a communicative system supported and facilitated by tradition. I also show that, apart from support by tradition, narrative forms tradition in turn. Cultures, of which orality and materiality are a part, evolve from tradition and thus our understanding of tradition will go a long way towards introducing us to various cultural systems. This too, sheds light on the conflicts regarding culture and cognition that formed part of Horsthemke's concerns. I demonstrate in the first two biological explanations that meaning depends largely on context and that meaning could thrive in and by the body. Secondly, with Dale's (1996) account, I show that things generally mean for the same reasons as a basic concept or understanding meaning. Pietarinen, on his part, demonstrates one of the ways in which we can make things mean what they do by providing both a pragmatic and intention based account. All the ideas advanced, crucially, show one major concept common to all, namely, context. This means that context is central to meaning. Next, the Implicature account fuses into Relevance Theory (RT) by being intention-based, while on the other hand, RT takes us another step towards describing conditions why things mean what they do in certain situations. This study adopted the concept of meaning suggested by Dale as a framework for guiding data analysis by exploring the condition proposed therein.

### Indigenous Knowledge

Although several changes have taken place within the Ganda tradition to date, most of the significant entities still lay claim to the past and as such, I will discuss

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in this text as an ancient tradition. To gloss over the aspects of meaning and traditions we need first to place the discussion in the context of this study. The core concept behind all the several ideas expressed in this study is IK. This concept derisively but inevitably implies a system representing linear succession practiced by individuals or groups stuck in traditions that no longer bide time, but indubitably, IK is an emerging field in the West and the Third World in all fields of human activity. Smylie, Carmel, Kaplan-Myrth, Steele, and Tait (2003) attest to increasing ways of generating and translating knowledge at community level in social science, native studies, and law extendable to the arts and humanities. IK is systematic, covering both observable phenomena and abstract thought comprising the rural, urban, nomadic, original inhabitants and migrants (Battiste, 2005).<sup>35</sup> More specifically, any kind of scientific, agricultural, technical and ecological knowledge, inclusive of cultigens, medicines, and the rational use of flora and fauna pertaining to a particular people or territory, transmitted from generation to generation constitutes IK (Daes, cited in, Battiste). The implication is that the methods of generating and applying IK "are participatory, communal, and experimental, and reflective of local geography" (Smylie et al, p. 141). It thus follows that IK is integrally part of the cultures and histories of local communities (Wolfensohn, cited in, Gorjestani, 2000). Gorjestani acknowledges that because IK is a locally owned and managed, resource, building on it can be particularly efficient and effective since it is often the only asset local communities control, and certainly one with which they are familiar. Consequently, communities are in control of their own knowledge because they are familiar with it. More importantly, apart from empowering local communities, IK offers mutual learning and adaptation.

Horsthemke's (2004) approach is a cautious one when handling the concept of IK.<sup>36</sup> In the realm of 'know' and 'knowledge', often, one identifies three main types: *knowledge-that* (factual knowledge), *knowledge-how* (practical knowledge), or knowledge by acquaintance. There is no controversy, he claims, if we discuss IK in the context of the third category of knowing; he finds a problem though, with the second category of tackling IK, on which he suspects most projects dwell.<sup>37</sup> Philosophically and traditionally, arguments cite *knowledge-that* (sometimes known as propositional knowledge) to constitute three necessary and logically independent

<sup>35</sup> Other names for IK or closely related concepts include traditional, folk or local knowledge or wisdom, non-formal knowledge, culture among others. For more information about IK on this matter, see Battiste (2005).

<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, some writers prefer a contrasting position that pits IK against Knowledge from abroad, global, cosmopolitan, Western, formal or world (system) knowledge. Horsthemke (2004) complaint and criticism of the concept 'IK' stems from the fact that the constitution of 'knowledge' takes little accreditation from explanation and consequently always misrepresented. "Without ramification of the concepts of 'knowledge' and 'epistemology' always used liberally, IK is unquestioningly employed as an umbrella concept to cover practices, skills, customs, worldviews, perceptions, as well as theoretical and factual understandings" (pp. 32-33).

<sup>37</sup> For example, a traditional healer knows how to cure people, notes Horsthemke (2004), implying that she presumably knows that certain roots, berries or barks have the requisite disease curing properties. There is a problem if know that and know how knowledge systems treated as one or at least as mutually dependent.

components: *belief*, *justification*, and *truth*.<sup>38</sup> On many occasions, proponents of IK portray it as covering all kinds of beliefs, with little or no reference to truth or justification, insists Horsthemke, which elevates mere assumption, superstition, divination, and sooth-saying to the status of knowledge. “In the absence of any explicit mention of truth, then, the applicable idea would be that of ‘indigenous beliefs’.” Horsthemke further notes, “Given the philosophical definition of knowledge, belief—even justified belief—does not amount to knowledge” (p. 36). The overall implication of Horsthemke’s thesis is if anything should bear the identity of IK, that thing should—in the sense of factual or propositional knowledge—meet the requisite criteria of belief, justification, and truth. I argue that not all knowledge springs from or hinges on *fact*. Secondly, IK is not about epistemology per se; communities resort to their knowledge systems for recreation, psychological maneuvers, and physiological entitlements.<sup>39</sup> After all, philosophy by which Horsthemke prefers to define knowledge thrives on belief not fact, yet ironically, philosophy falls in the mainstream of contemporary knowledge.<sup>40</sup> If he agrees, as he does, that belief is part of knowledge, he then should also realize that some knowledge systems or components remain at the level of belief, and thus function at that level as things we know and to which we adhere.

Eurocentrically, scholars attempt to reduce IK to taxonomic categories by claiming stagnation, empiricism, and spirituality but none of these approaches can adequately explain the holistic nature of IK or its basic significance to its people (Battiste, 2005). Yielding to the above generalities, we thus consider IK as ‘traditional knowledge’ comprising relatively old data handed down from generation to generation essentially unchanged. “Indigenous Knowledge is an adaptable, dynamic system based on skills, abilities, and problem-solving techniques that change over time depending on environmental conditions, making the taxonomic approach difficult to justify or verify,” insists Battiste (para. 34). Further still, treating local knowledge as simply empirical undermines its significance to indigenous peoples. Mostly so, in indigenous communities, people differ in what they know and do, and in this way, a purely spiritual system cannot uphold the definition of IK. In effect:

38 “In order for a person to know something (p), she has to believe that p, she has to be justified in believing that p (i.e., she has to be in a position to know that p), and has to be true,” (ibid, pp. 32-33). Because his preferred definition faced and still faces challenges, Horsthemke prefers to include another condition: “a person’s justification for believing that p must be suitably connected to the truth of p” (pp. 32-33).

39 Although Horsthemke (2005) acknowledges at the end that common ground arises in not only factual knowledge but also values, his emphasis on factuality as a general concept behind knowledge is misguided.

40 Horsthemke’s (2004) argument is extensive and he gives reasons for his arguments. Nevertheless, I should also acknowledge that my argument is not a misrepresentation of his idea. What I am arguing against is his assertion that without facts or truth, then IK should become mere ‘belief’. Indeed, he acknowledges IK as supplemental to conventional Western knowledge systems.

Indigenous Knowledge thus embodies a web of relationships within a specific ecological context; contains linguistic categories, rules, and relationships unique to each knowledge system; has localized content and meaning; has established customs with respect to acquiring and sharing knowledge (not all indigenous peoples equally recognize their responsibilities); and implies responsibilities for possessing various kinds of knowledge. (Battiste, para. 45)

## Tradition

In my build up to an account of tradition, I will present various views on tradition with minimal commentary or critique and I will finally present my personal views in the discussion. Perseverance of traditional knowledge, according to Gorjestani (2000), ensues *orally* and *demonstratively* as opposed to documentation while, on the other hand, it emerges gradually rather than in distinct increments. Similarly, knowledge generation commences with ‘Stories’ as base units of knowledge, and then continues to ‘Knowledge’ as an integration of the values and processes described in the stories; ‘Wisdom’ as an experiential distillation of knowledge is the end result of the process (Symlie, et al). One feature of IK then is how one disseminates it. As suggested above, it comes up in form of stories and culminates into Wisdom. The process of dissemination then takes on the form of Oral Tradition, which means that *tradition* becomes a key feature, among others, in characterizing the indigene.<sup>41</sup> Let me begin with an attempted distinction between theory and tradition. Some individuals tend to do things the way we always do things, while others have a new idea of how we should do things. Reardon (1993) understands *tradition* as ‘inherited practice’ whereas *theory* is ‘an abstract body of thought’ directed towards future practice. Distinguishing tradition and theory this way, invokes a feeling of a rigid, repressive, outmoded system of thought and action, while portraying the theorist as reformative, dynamic, and focused well into the future. There is a general feeling portrayed by Reardon of theory succeeding at the expense of tradition in practice to which this study does not subscribe. This study, instead seeks to employ tradition as practical knowledge.

Popper (cited in, Dioguardi, 2005) takes a moderate route by being critical of both rationalists and determinists in his attempt to provide a social theory of tradition. By dismissing conspiracy theories of society, Dioguardi portrays Popper as arguing that in social life, nothing is predictable, and thus things do not always come exactly the way we want them.<sup>42</sup> Social science purposefully or solely studies

41 “IK like any other form of knowledge, needs to be constantly used, challenged, and further adapted to the evolving local contexts,” concludes Gorjestani (2000, p. 7).

42 Although we always work with specific aims in mind, there are those unheralded consequences that we cannot unfortunately, eliminate. This view squares up with Burke’s: “In states there are often some obscure and almost latent causes, things which appear at first view of little moment, on which a very great part of its prosperity or adversity may most essentially depend.” In light of this claim, Burke proceeds to distrust any form of dismantling existent structures that have stood against time and replace them with those that have no proven record. Similarly, F. A. Hayek, according to Dioguradi (2005), encourages us to accept confidently all the old traditional value because science will always question even moral principles: “Complete abandonment of all traditional values is, of course, impossible; it would make man incapable of acting” (para. 20).



unintended consequences that arise only out of “our wish to know the unintended consequences and more especially the unwanted consequences which may arise if we do certain things” (paragraph, 21). In light of social theory, its task is to explain “how the unintended consequences of our intentions and actions arise and what kinds of consequences arise if people do this, that or the other in a certain social situation”<sup>43</sup> (Popper, cited in, Dioguardi, para. 22). Popper raises a view reminiscent of rationalism and at the same time irrationalism; like rationalist, we should question things, but as traditionalists, we must respect and guard our traditions: “What we call a social life can exist only if we can know, and can have confidence, that there are things and events which must be otherwise” (cited in, Dioguardi, para. 22). As regularities, we need them and therefore we should hand them on as traditions, even if they are rational, necessary, good or beautiful: “There is need for tradition in social life” (Dioguardi, para. 44). The point Popper advances elevates tradition, whereby in its absence, rational action would be impossible, just as it is with language itself. Thus to know how other people will respond to us, there must be some form of rule, at least, to which we all subscribe. Popper, (cited in, Dioguardi 2005), makes an important distinction between institutions and traditions and shows that both entities need each other. More so, that, institutions simply cannot work without traditions. He visualizes a theory of tradition through social order in that for anything to be social, it must function under the auspices of tradition.<sup>44</sup>

A look now at the Romish Tradition as presented by Collette (1886) introducing two competing traditions: one rational, the other irrational. The idea here is that this kind of account will provide us with an insight into traditional mechanisms laid into their own context without particularly relying on argument to validate them. Paul in his instructions to Timothy asserts that God gives all the Scripture by inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, proof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. In Rome’s view, the Church alone has the right to interpret the scriptures: “Indeed one article in her Creed prohibits the assigning any interpretation to any given text, contrary to the sense which that church has held and does hold,” writes Collette (p. 51). One may correct traditions, in other words, in the light of righteousness but the Church becomes authoritative in imposing a *hierarchy* barring any interpretation of the doctrines apart from her. Building on the case of interpretation or private judgment, the ‘Protestant rule of faith’ takes a rationalist approach by dismissing *priests* as bearers of the Bible. Instead, each one is entitled to individual judgment of the Bible’s teachings, in collaboration with

43 Conspiracy theories generally assume that someone out there plans everything such that someone is aware of all that is going on. However, given that no one can know all the consequences of their actions, such control is simply not possible.

44 Popper (cited in, Dioguardi, 2005) distinguishes a first order tradition—that of passing down explanations of the world that consists of critical discussions in regards to the myths. In Popper’s belief, the second myth was entirely new, which gave rise to scientific tradition. Observation, henceforth, took on new meaning and used to test some myths against others. In arguing about which myth best explains observations, observation became a way of testing myths against each other.

external aid at one’s disposal and being sincere to one’s objectives of attaining the truth, one would find it.<sup>45</sup>

Catholicism, in turn, shuns the *Protestant rule of faith* because its interpretation is individual; yet, they would best interpret tradition collectively, that is, including all the Fathers. Collette (1887) noted that, the Roman Church did not expect any possible interpretation of the Scripture by the Church or any priest, unless all Fathers *unanimously* accented to that scripture.<sup>46</sup> Further still, that since Traditions transcended Scripture, then Tradition should interpret Scriptures; “and that Tradition being entrusted to the keeping of the priests of the Roman Church, they alone have a right to interpret Tradition” (Collette, p. 70).<sup>47</sup> Reacting to Cardinal Wiseman’s assertion, the Reformed Church expressed concern over the fact that if tradition is proven on authority of Scripture, yet the Catholics believe that Scripture should be interpreted on the authority of Tradition, it becomes very much like the logician’s ‘Vicious Circle’ (p. 70).<sup>48</sup> Mindful of this view then, Tradition is blinding, a renunciation of judgment, reason, and common sense, and by doing so, we adopt the degrading submission: “I believe whatever the Church believes,” concludes Collette (p. 73). This is how tradition worked in the Ganda society where the king was the bearer of tradition and as such, what he believed is what his subjects believed. He alone and his chiefs could change tradition.

There is need too, to know what tradition really is in accordance to the structural mechanisms defining its constitution and reconstitution. An application, qua application, is the ‘end use’ of a traditional text similar to application of the law to a case (Szabo, 1996). In addition, application also constitutes a new interpretation—“a new construction of the tradition.”<sup>49</sup> Deconstruction tries to explain how new traditions come about or how they evolve by accumulating construc-

45 Furthering the argument, Protestants insist that there is no possibility of preventing a sensible man from exercising the reason and judgment implanted in him and as such citation of texts to prove the authority of Tradition, inherently appeal to private judgment. Thus, Collette (1887) writes, “depriving one of judgment is depriving him/her of reason; and, depriving one of reason is denying one sensible religious belief” (pp. 66-67).

46 Indeed the Roman Church ‘misread’ the essence of tradition to refer to the unwritten in order to avoiding discordance. In Paul’s sense, Collette further depicts to traditions as truths: “Here Paul no doubt refers to the Thessalonians to the truths he had spoken, and subsequently written in a former epistle, commanding them too ‘hold the Traditions’, or ‘ordinances’, for this is the word used” (ibid, pp. 45-46). Here again, Tradition is referred to as ordinance, moral teaching, discipline, and conduct.

47 This was because it was only Tradition that could give with “authority and certainty the right meaning of Holy Scripture,” without which, the Holy Scripture could speak in many discordant ways and thereby destroying its authority altogether (p. 70).

48 Cardinal Archbishop Wiseman in his third Lecture on the Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church (London, 1851) explained the twofold Character of the Roman rule of faith.

49 This claim is analogous with a judge using an existing law to resolve a novel case thereby setting a precedent or a preacher using religious doctrine to counter a novel contemporary moral problem, and thereby change the very doctrine in the process of its application. Viewed in this sense, we arrive at the popular epithet of ‘deconstruction’ a derivative of hermeneutics. Popularized by Derrida, it destructively ebbed from its original application by Heidegger while studying Greek philosophy and noted that translators always added their own interpretations to the texts. Heidegger argues that such interpretations accumulate over time and soon, as constructions, fill a doctrine even when we reinterpret it and thereby becoming a new doctrine.

tions including a methodology for chafing out constructions deemed to be no longer desirable.<sup>50</sup> Specifically, Szabo's view of tradition represents a Darwinian Social theory well explained by evolutionary biology and meme-based traditions. Noticing Darwinism, *Natural Selection* concerns survival of the *fit*, and not the *fit-test*, or in other words, survival of those that are able to survive (Ewins, 1995).<sup>51</sup> In his view, tradition is a form of knowledge about particular beliefs and practices put together spreads out to from the individual to the group. To explain this phenomenon, Ewins cites Gerald M. Edelman's work on the human immune system showing that it develops in a selective manner. Edelman's simple argument bears that our information about the world and how to behave in it does not conform to the idea of a pre-programmed computer: "Rather, our billions of neurons ... work in competition, testing out different behaviors and thoughts and those which succeed are favored thereafter over those which do not," he explains (para. 20).<sup>52</sup>

Interpreting Edelman's findings, Ewins posits that in the same way do humans become the idiosyncratic individual humans they are and why they find difficulty in adjusting to sudden changes in environment or our personal circumstances. Human brains are chemically prepared for an individual's *previous* surroundings and thus it takes time to adjust to new ones. Ewins' major thesis is mainly that learning in itself is evolutionary; thus, an individuals' knowledge evolves through a *selective* process by identifying 'tried and true' from our environment.<sup>53</sup> To find out what works, one considers what works for others within our midst, and not only from our contemporaries, but also our predecessors on assumption that the environment has not changed. Because tradition is 'knowledge vested' in a group's beliefs and practices that worked—and still supposedly work—for the group members, it becomes useful in this sense.<sup>54</sup> Logically so, we can only adopt a lot of knowledge simply on *trust*, rather than a great deal of trial and error. In this pro-

50 Gadamer (cited in, Szabo, 1996, para. 11), a student of Heidegger, discussed tradition as a broad normative concept denoting a "cumulative preservation that, through constantly improving itself, allows something true to come into being." Thus in terms of evolutionary hermeneutics, its propagation depends on its useful application and its useful application constitutes its use.

51 "It is not just the strongest of the smartest of any particular species that survive to pass on their genes but the strong and stupid; or the average; or even, in a lot of cases, the relatively funny and stupid. A supposedly 'weak' individual might live long enough to reproduce just by luck, and a supposedly 'strong' one may get struck by lightning and killed before it has a chance. And as the environment can change, what may be a reasonable fit at one point in time may no longer be a fit at a later time, so the question of what is 'fittest' in any absolute sense becomes moot" (Ewins, 1995, para. 5).

52 When a baby girl first tries to grasp an object, she randomly moves her arms and legs around in a wide variety of ways. By chance, one of these ways eventually brings her into contact with the object. When the baby achieves this goal, Edelman argues, it chemically reinforces the neural pathways leading to the action in her brain making it more likely that she will act the same way next time. Over time, provided that way continues to succeed, it becomes 'her way' of grasping an object. Her brain has selected for that behavior by testing a wide range of behaviors in a given environment. Moreover, the chemical process seen in this simple example occurs whenever she learns something new.

53 We learn by trial and error—that is, by testing for what works (fits) in our physical, social, and intellectual environment.

54 And 'Work', in this context, is potentially as wide in scope as 'fit' in the context of biological evolution; it makes about as much sense to worry about whether a practice 'works best' in order to be a tradition as it does to worry about whether an individual is the 'fittest' rather than simply 'a fit'.

cess, a tradition will persist over time and it may not simply disappear overnight, and after all, with unanimous consent of all members of the group to which the tradition belongs: "Even though tradition is knowledge shared by the group, the active agent in the process of change in tradition are individuals."<sup>55</sup> Via the process of selection by individuals, traditions evolve. This process also explains why it so obviously seems a contradiction: Ideally, it would be plausible for us to think that traditions are 'tried and true' after handing them down to generations so that we have reasons to favor them over an alternative practice. Analogously, adapting to environmental change, traditions must be flexible and open to change, which change is, inevitably contestable among opposing members of the group on what should change and justifiably why. Ewins' evolutionary theory provides us with a biological account, clearly places the *individual* at the heart of tradition, and demonstrates our human propensity to adjust due to natural selection.

Unlike Ewins' evolutionary theory based on neuroscience, Drout (2006a) bases his understanding of tradition on evolutionary biology showing that the key unit to the development of a gene is a *replicator* or something that can ably copy itself.<sup>56</sup> Dawkins, according to Drout, suggested that there existed an exceptionally powerful replicator on earth with indirect biological effects conceived as a meme. A meme manages to replicate itself and get copied from one person to another when someone imitates some behavior; it "is a logical construct that, while we don't know what it is made of, nevertheless represents reality quite well for purposes in which it is being used" (Drout, p. 5).<sup>57</sup> Thereupon, Drout defines tradition as "an unbroken train of incidental, non-instinctual behaviors that have been invariably repeated after the same recurring antecedent conditions" (Drout, p. 9).<sup>58</sup> Meme-

55 Ewins explains: a few individuals, at first, might decide that a certain traditional practice no longer works for them, and that they will flout tradition and do what they think is better. If their new way catches on with enough people, that particular tradition begins to fade—perhaps accompanied by the protests of those who still prefer the old practice to the new—and eventually, it may die. Then in time, the new practice can take over the mantle of the tradition.

56 In the case of living things, this replicator is the gene. Similarly, Dawkins (cited in, Drout, 2006a) notes that all living things are simply vehicles for the genes to get themselves copied: "those genes that are differentially better at getting copied will make more copies of themselves than other genes, eventually gathering resources to themselves at the expense of genes that are less good at copying themselves. In many cases however, the most effective way to 'selfishly' copy oneself is to 'generously' cooperate with other genes: say for example the other genes in an animal's genome. The process of competition, genetic inheritance, and differential reproductive success are, as Darwin saw, sufficient cause to produce complexity and design out of otherwise random stochastic processes." (p. 3)

57 Contextually, within a culture, some memes will replicate much better than others will. Normally, those memes better at getting themselves copied will be the most effective at combining with other memes. A condition of 'Universal Darwinism' will occur in the presence or replicators, variation, and competition. This ensures that the process of natural selection differently favors those memes good at replicating and thus will outnumber the lesser ones because, all the existing memes depend upon the same pool of resources, and fecund, they certainly end up competing with each other naturally. Competition drives a process that increases the local 'fitness' of the entire meme-pool. Eventually an ecosystem, Drout notes, of competing and cooperating memes (a culture) ushers in memes exquisitely adapted to the culture; "that is, they are very good at getting themselves reproduced" (ibid, p. 7).

58 Characterized mathematically by Markov Chains, the successful practice of a traditional behavior and the continued maintenance of the tradition depend upon a series of successful enactments of the behavior in question. The first time one enacts a behavior cannot in and of itself be a tradition, but the second time can be, and the first enactment one then retrospectively defines as the origin of the

based explanations of tradition are not immune to criticism though. Bowers (2009) is not comfortable with memes being used to explain cultural patterns because the root metaphor of evolution that could exacerbate ecological crises by referring to natural selection to support the market liberal ideology. Memetic tradition seems to accommodate other approaches that do not derive explanations strictly from evolutionary sources such as Popper's social theory.

Technically, a meme-plex constitutes a combination of several smaller memes that form a tradition in memetic terms, but whatever behavior it is, we see it as one meme.<sup>59</sup> An antecedent meme triggers the traditional behavior meme, thereby rendering the tradition a combination of two memes. Adding a third meme converts a simple response to a condition into a tradition. Drout (2006a) provides an example, meme *a*: every seven years, *b*: replace your regular crops with clover, *c*: because planting clover every seven years renews the soil. As a measure for clarity, Drout introduces, three Latin terms to represent the three memes: *recognitio*, which recognizes the antecedent condition; *actio*, the actual behavior of the meme; and, *justificatio*, the explanation of the meme. Drout's analysis of the meme-plex indicates that a culture could easily arise as 'trial and error' eventually becoming widespread. This is so because humans generally find recourse in apparently successful actions, imitate others' success, and hand down valuable information to younger generations. On its part, *justificatio* adjusts and changes to fit the world for the words in the meme to fit the world that they describe a process here referred to as the Word-to-World Fit condition creating the 'Universal Tradition Meme' (UTM)–'because we have always done so'.<sup>60</sup> Owing to its referential nature, the UTM *logically* supports any meme-plex with which it connects. *Justificatio*–"we have always done so"–could evolve to sublimation until we cannot question the traditional behavior so that we begin to see the tradition as part of the cultural identity of those participating in it (Drout, p. 22). This unconscious sublimation known as the 'Unconscious Imperative' is the ultimate *telos* (goal) of the UTM.<sup>61</sup> Putatively, favored traditions seem to spread and continue hereof. All

tradition. Alternatively, put another way, any behavior can be the start of a tradition, but it can only be so identified retrospectively (pp. 9–10). Drout disagrees with Shils who argues that a tradition must be a result of a pattern of behavior repeated three times: it is not clear whether an additional repetition makes something a tradition that would not have been one.

59 A meme-plex is an abbreviation of Dawkins' (cited in, Drout, 2006a) "Co-adapted meme complex" (Selfish Gene, pp. 212–13).

60 This becomes a key concept in understanding tradition and memetics, because (a) it implies existence of a world with which tradition interacts. That world includes the physical world as well as social and cultural worlds, and it must include the conception of the world, the *Weltanschauung*, held by individuals by whom the tradition meme is attempting to replicate. (b) Incidentally, if *justificatio* is adequately vague, it will on many occasions, fit the world than when it is precise. This means that the meme should not be abundantly vague or strictly precise: there must be a balance to ease the selection pressure on both ends. For a detailed discussion of the 'Universal Tradition Meme' and the ways in which it mutates and works, see Drout (2006a, pp. 18–22).

61 Nevertheless, we can reinstate the UTM, if the Unconscious Imperative fails, back to "we have always done so." This implies that while we many access traditions unconsciously, we may flip back to being self-conscious at any moment and using their *justificatio* as the UTM.

said; the study adopts Drout's explanation with regard to the notion of tradition in this text to guide analysis of data by placing it in a context of meaning.

How does meaning then interact with tradition, a form that seems devoid of interpretation at the level of the group? Perhaps let me not quip into this puzzle before I introduce what meaning stands for in traditional cultures. I will refer to Drout (2006a) once again: "Even if the denotations of words remain the same, from generation to generation, the cultural connotations vary not only from generation to generation, but even from person to person in the same generation" (p. 32). Ideally then, "even the most *textually* bound tradition has some room to adapt and change to fit its current environment." Drout insists that apparently, textual meaning is not entirely arbitrary: "There are limits to interpretation, as there is elbow room even within the most rigid textual tradition imaginable"<sup>62</sup> (p. 32). Here, he suggests some freedom of interpretation in order for the survival of tradition. We must also take into account the impossibility of a single iteration in a tradition being *identical* to another. Remember also in the Roman Tradition, it was acceptable to correct and reinterpret tradition in the light of righteousness. Memetics though, reveals that excessive freedom of interpretation might lead to *speciation*: "the splitting of traditions into more than one." Before the speciation still, there is room for limited interpretation of texts and thus, a few versions of meaning may be available.

## Meaning

Meaning does not reside in words; instead, every conversation suffers from information loss between source and destination owing to the nature of language itself.<sup>63</sup> Secondly, language is an extension of the human mind and sense organs. Words are a special kind of signs; they are symbols and as such, most symbols carry no natural quality of the things they describe (Richards, cited in Griffin, 2002; Hutchby, 2006).<sup>64</sup> Richards' position is that since words are arbitrary symbols, they pick meaning from the context in which a person encounters them. Specifically so, *context* is the key to meaning as it is a whole field of experience linkable to an event including thoughts of similar events. This makes meaning personal and thus found in people rather than words.<sup>65</sup> Griffin elaborates Richards' kingpin claim: "The greater the discrepancy in the life experience of two people, the greater the probability that words meant to describe feelings and attitudes will create semantic chaos" (p. 61). Richards' argument about meaning points at common experience as helping people to make sense of what they hear, thereupon, common language

62 'Elbow room' introduces the balancing act. For a detailed discussion of 'elbow room,' see Drout (2006a, p. 32).

63 Griffin notes that this is in agreement with Shannon and Weaver's views on 'channel noise' and information loss. See Griffin's (2002) discussion of I. A. Richards' 'The Meaning of Meaning' in which he highlights Richards' views on rhetoric and meaning, at [www.afirstlook.com](http://www.afirstlook.com)

64 There is nothing in the sound of the word 'kiss,' or anything visual in the letters H-U-G that signifies embrace.

65 Context, defined by Richards, is a cluster of events that occur together.

produces common experience. Richards' thoughts on why misunderstanding occurs during communication may lead towards understanding the phenomenon of meaning. The issue of common experience provides us with basic knowledge of the contexts and situations in which meaning is likely to occur.

Feldman and Narayanan (2004) offer an *embodied* account of meaning based on a Neural Theory of Language (NTL). The meaning of the word grasp, Feldman and Narayanan inform us, involves the motor action of grasping in some way. Under NTL, the complex synergy that supports grasping is the core semantics of the word.<sup>66</sup> These two researchers confirm Richards' (in Griffin, op cit) claims that word meanings reside within its context: "Both the meaning of a word and its defining behavior are context dependent—you grasp differently for different objects and purposes"<sup>67</sup> (p. 2). Central to Narayanan and Feldman's idea: "the reader interpreting a phrase that corresponds to a motion term is in fact performing a mental simulation of the entailed event in the current context"<sup>68</sup> (p. 7). Dreyfus (1998) on his part insists, "[...] every perceptual habit is still a motor habit and here the process of grasping a meaning is performed by the body" (para. 11). Garbarini and Adenzato (2004) advance the idea of embodiment basing on *affordances*: "Instead of abstract mental processes, which are describable in formal terms of logic, cognitive processes are considered in light of their intrinsic ties to the body's action and sensorimotor experience"<sup>69</sup> (p. 101). They further explain:

66 They choose this particular example because there is a great deal known about the intricate distributed neural circuitry involved in grasping by humans and monkeys.

67 Rizzolatti and coworkers, over the last twenty years, according to Feldman and Narayanan, have shown that frontal area F4 contains neurons that integrate motor, visual, and somato-sensory modalities for the purpose of controlling actions in space and perceiving peri-personal space—the area of space reachable by body parts (i.e., Graziano et al, 1994). In summary, over two decades of work in neuroscience suggests that cortical premotor areas contain neurons that respond to multimodal (visual, somatosensory, and auditory) sensory stimuli. In addition, the theory further portrays the meaning of a noun as depending on its possible uses or affordances. This claim draws support from linguistics and imaging data showing that the meaning of a noun depends of the uses of the underlying thing.

68 See KARMA, Narayanan and Feldman, op cit. the KARMA model uses conventionalized metaphor maps to reveal how we understand metaphors. Narayanan bases his argument of embodied meaning — presumed transferable to other forms of meaning — on children's word use in both concrete and metaphorical senses. He argues that in the NTL, abstract and metaphorical words derive their meanings from concrete words. For a detailed discussion of Bailey's model of learning, on which these two researchers base their arguments, see article: Embodied Meaning a Neural Theory of Language, 2004. Available at, [www.icsi.edu/~snarayan/Btl.pdf](http://www.icsi.edu/~snarayan/Btl.pdf)

69 "The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill" (Gibson, in Garbarini & Adenzato, p. 100). See also Gibson's bottom-up theory on perception where he claims that we perceive through data coming to us from the environment. In his postulate, "Gibson maintained that affordances are intrinsically part of objects themselves and are not constructed from an observer's needs or intentions" (ibid, p. 100). We can thus directly perceive the value to things directly from the environment and since affordances are invariant—always there to be perceived—we may or may not perceive or attend to them. The affordance of something does not change as need of the observer changes: "an affordance is not bestowed upon an object by a need or an observer and his act of perceiving it. The object offers what it does because it is what it is" (ibid, p. 101).

While observing an object, the neural system is activated *as-if* the observer were interacting with it.<sup>70</sup> ... Only when by virtually executing the action can we understand the relational significance of the object, i.e., the affordance it offers. The concept of simulation allows us to comprehend the relationship between *control* of action and *representation* of action. A motor schema allows us to execute an action as well as represent the object the action it refers to; in the first case, there is explicit codification of the motor schema, in the second, there is implicit simulation of it. (p. 103)<sup>71</sup>

However, Rosch (cited in, Garbarini & Adenzato, 2004) maintains that the *functional needs* of an interacting subject determine the way in which organisms perceive different objects. In the case of humans, social as well as biological factors determine such needs. Secondly, such biological or social factors that require the kind of mechanisms explained above form a small portion of a human's overall worldview. I will argue later that my idea of embodied meaning finds root in the social fabric. "All human experience has two faces: one side faces external life and social activity, and the other faces our inner mental life and cognitive activity. It is in the interaction between these activities that meaning construction—a socio-cognitive phenomenon—is generated" notes Hoiijer (1998, p. 169). Perhaps Dale's (1996) supposed Theory of Implicatures could be therapeutic.<sup>72</sup> This scheme of study at a glance provides us with a general theory of meaning that attempts to answer the question: why do things mean what they mean? "The main goal of a theory of expression-meaning is to say what it is about our marks and sounds, etc. that makes them mean what they mean," insists Dale (section 7.4, para. 3).<sup>73</sup> Indeed,

70 "The most interesting aspect of canonical neurons," say Garbarini & Adenzato (2004) "is that the same neuron fires not only in response to the same object, but also in response to a group of objects that have the same characteristics, in terms of the type of interaction they allow. At this level of description, an object can be 'codified' 'on relational terms,' i.e., we can identify and represented it in relation to the type of action that it affords an interacting subject" (p. 102). This means that the type of interaction established with an object is a constitutive part of the representation of the object itself. In other words, different objects can represent one in the function of the same type of interaction they allow. What makes this type of object representation possible is a mechanism of *as-if* neural simulation: while observing an object, one activates neural the system is *as-if* the observer were interacting with it. See also discussion on Mirror Neurons (Garbarini & Adenzato, op cit, p. 102).

71 For a detailed discussion on the process of neurons and the way in which they affect the process of cognition, see Garbarini & Adenzato, 2004: At the root of embodied cognition: Cognitive science meets neurophysiology. Brain and Cognition, 56, pp. 100-106. Available online at <http://bci.ucsd.edu/PAPERS/Garbarini.pdf>

72 To have a detailed discussion of Russell E. Dale's insight see, The theory of meaning (chapter 7), Unpublished dissertation available online at [www.ressulldale.com/dissertation/TheTheoryofMeaning.pdf](http://www.ressulldale.com/dissertation/TheTheoryofMeaning.pdf)

73 Dale (2006), first, attempts to make a general account of meaning wholly understood in terms of propositional-attitudes notions. He studies H. P. Grice, Stephen Schiffer, and David Lewis. Other philosophers such as P. F. Strawson, Jerry Fodor, Brian Loar, and Jonathan Bennet occasionally take on the assumption Dale harbors. Dale targets (a) the notion of conventional expressions understood in terms of propositional-attitude psychology, which he calls an expression meaning something—the notion of expression-meaning. (b) The need for a notion of a speaker meaning something on a particular occasion by an utterance to achieve understanding of expression-meaning in terms of notions of propositional-attitude psychology, which notion he calls speaker-meaning. (c) The possibility that notions of meaning that are specifically associated with language and, more generally, communication (expression and speaker-meaning) are interestingly related to notions of meaning that do not have to do with language

we may reasonably suppose, “the important aspect of our marks, sounds, etc. with respect to their meaning is their ability to be used to say things.”<sup>74</sup> Dale believes that the most important thing a theory of meaning requires is “to state under what conditions an utterance type can be used by one person to say something to another.”<sup>75</sup> We note at this stage that Dale is driving at a theory more reliant on expression than intention of the speaker. The kind of theory he would prefer, after considering the repercussions of both Grice and Schiffer’s notions of meaning, Dale suggests as such: “*P uses L just in case whenever condition C\* is true of a member of P who is presented with an L-Sentence, P comes to believe that the speaker said L ()*” (chapter 7, section 7.5, paragraph, 12). In the process of analyzing data, I explored this notion of meaning in representation of the condition therein posited.

Dale confesses that he is not sure yet of how to state what C\* is. Apparently, Dale (1996) blends the notion of conventionality although he does not think it should take center stage in describing and constituting a theory of meaning. Further, Dale retains qualities of intention-based theories of meaning and as such, he recognizes the intention of the speaker although he emphasizes the quality of the expression itself that causes the resultant behavior of the hearer. This also resonates with ‘the thing itself’ described earlier in the phenomenological approach. Apparently, implicature becomes my idea of describing meaning in Ganda society, with embodiment playing a minor role. Although implicature may not rely on convention, it seems to suggest a common antecedent condition during communication. I suspect *expression* to form part of the antecedent condition that facilitates implicature. Alternatively, it may be an ‘enabling’ condition closer to Drout’s (2006a) traditional referentiality. It is plausible to link this phenomenon to tradition as a starting point. Possibly, we will discover as we move along what the condition turns out to be. As we cogitate condition C\*, it is important to note that Dale’s theory also connects with the context based assumptions as well as emphasizing social interaction, only glossed over by embodied cognition theories.<sup>76</sup>

of communication at all referred to as natural meaning by Grice. This relates to such non-linguistic, non-communication related notions of meaning.

74 Conventional signs might be tools more ready to hand, requiring less creativity for their availability than non-conventional signs, but they mean what they do for exactly the same reasons that non-conventional signs mean, namely, one person to say something to another can use them both. Neuman (2005) thinks that the meaning making process yields as a system’s specific response to an indeterminate signal, and as such, meaning underlines a specific response to a signal.

75 This is a somewhat different project from stating what are the necessary and sufficient conditions for an utterance type to mean conventionally what it does since some utterance types can serve the purpose of saying things even though they do not have conventional meaning. The notions of saying or telling are both notions of communication, to say or to tell something to someone is to communicate something to them although the meaning intended may not be meaning interpreted.

76 At this point, I should acknowledge that many systems of perception including language might directly succumb to embodied explanations, like Gibson’s research on perception. That said; many of our activities and knowledge of the world look to its environment rather than what the brain can detect and know. Therefore, whereas a blend of embodied and social explanations would provide a great result, my preference is a profound reliance on social perspectives in this study. See Ware (2004) for a detailed discussion of Gibson’s Affordance Theory, pp. 18-20. Secondly, although the theory of meaning I propose in the study is fundamentally different from the descriptions in this assessment, it is important to note the general distinction between meaning and significance, which so often tends to present problems of

After glossing over why things mean what they do, I need to place such insight in context of the idea of meaning advanced in this study. In his Relevance Theory (RT), Pietarinen (2005) provides a blend of intention and pragmatism adapted to ideals of meaning in the context of Ganda artist practice. From the Pragmatic Maxim, Peirce (cited in, Pietarinen) developed a pragmatic theory of meaning stating that “the meaning of a concept is the sum total of its implications for possible observations and actions”<sup>77</sup> (p. 1767). This could account for Dale’s missing account of condition C\* but also suggests a pragmatic dimension to the notion of meaning. In Peirce’s (cited in, Pietarinen) account, “relevant factors or properties of an expression are those which intrude into the context of discourse.”<sup>78</sup> This theory recognizes the notion of *context* as central “since what is relevant is that which produces a tangible contextual effect, or which penetrates the context of discourse” (p. 1767).<sup>79</sup> More so, the idea of commonality exhibited in the RT reflects the collaboration instituted by common experience in usurping communicative intentions.<sup>80</sup> Ergo, Peirce’s communication theory basically rides on ‘purpose’ and full accounts of ‘meaningful intention’ by considering that each utterance comes with an intended goal that one tries to grasp, and duly, what is relevant should be accounted for.

In a snapshot view of Pietarinen and his analysis of Peirce’s pragmatic dimension of his theory of communication, I am obliged to conclude that meaning is the goal of communication. This is because, in his criticism of Shannon and Weaver’s communication theory, Chandler (1994) insists on meaning as the goal of communication rather than information. Secondly, in his relevance theory, Pietarinen (2005) laid a foundation on which to base expressions that mean what they do. That is, through purposeful intention to express, we consider what is relevant for meaning. Before I draw a conclusive stance towards meaning, tradition, and IK, we need to find a stable, or at least, a credible link between meaning and communication. As I intend to show shortly, narrative, metaphor, and idioms are some of the tools

replication. Hirsh (cited in, Blue, 2002, para. 3) distinguishes between meaning and significance: “Meaning is that which is represented by a text; it is what the author meant by his use of a particular sign sequence; it is what the signs represent. Significance, on the other hand, names a relationship between that meaning and a person, or conception, or a situation or indeed anything imaginable.”

77 Pragmatic Maxim: “consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object,” writes Pietarinen (2005, p. 1767).

78 This is an argument from cognitive economy: the goal of communication is to maximize the relevance of the phenomena available to language users while maximizing the amount of mental or cognitive processing effort. The grounds for believing in cognitive economy have their roots, in turn, in evolutionary theory.

79 Apart from cognitive economy, the idea hints at an element of utilitarianism in the definition of communicative goals in terms of maximization of something (in this case context relevance). See, Pietarinen, (2005, p. 1767).

80 According to RT, the inferential mode of communication attempts to share, distribute, and recognize acts of intention, emotion, and other modalities delivered in communication. These attempts are what contribute to the relevance of utterances intended to communicate particular pieces of related information. What agents recognize as relevant largely relates to common traces in their experience (ibid, p. 1767).

we use in communication with qualities of the indigene, tradition, and the search for meaning. In addition, as we will further notice, these tools depend on context and as such, congruous to the notion of ‘relevance’ suggested by Peitarinen. This means that even before we attempt to make any communication, some of the tools we may use already stipulate what is relevant for meaningful communication. He further contends that under situations of communication the interpreter infers context-dependency, drawing evidence concerning the intended meaning from the utterer. After all, communication is a joint process although most of the time we may think that the communicator controls the process (Downs, Linkugel, & Berg, 1977; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). Thus, what is the most appropriate communicative strategy we can adopt under the circumstances so far discussed?

### Narrative tradition and meaning

Since meaning, as I was obliged to agree, is at the end of communication, then we should find a strategy that provides us the most effective and economic means of arriving at it. First, I will discuss narrative as a strategy, then break it down to essentials and finally discuss idioms in light of metaphor and narrative structure. To begin with, Drout (2006b) notes the “ability of the traditional referent to summon entire complexes of memes by *metonymy* means that use of traditional referents is an enormously effective means of communication” (p. 278). At this point, we find the link between narrative and oral tradition. The reason for this happening is the belief that traditional referents have the ability to summon working memory to a larger complex or memes enabled by repetition. Drout thusly indicates that “for a component part to become a traditional referent it must be a recognizable part of some whole, and the best way for the association of the part to the whole to be made is for the whole to have been repeated”<sup>81</sup> (Drout, p. 278). The point advanced may seem apparently farfetched; however, it serves to link us to a wider discussion of narrative functionality. Remember also that we have linked the traditional referent to the condition C\* in Dale’s theory of meaning. This is the best moment of linking tradition and meaning. Metonymy is one of the most featured elements of narrative structure and as such substantially linked together. Notably too, despite narrative being traditional in Buganda, narrative qua narrative, functions intrinsically as a tradition.

Drout (2006a) suggests that because of its repetitive patterns, narrative serves as a tradition and due to its compounding nature it functions internally like a tradition. “The key to monastic stability and to the building of continuities was repetition,” notes Drout (p. 167). Not only do we gain stability, “but also, in creating stability, the *Rule* and the *Concordia* enforce the repetition of many actions”<sup>82</sup>

81 This traditional referentiality enables some small subset of a larger meme to awaken the referent to conscious memory in the mind of a participant in the tradition. Foley calls this process “communicative economy” writes Drout (2006b, p. 278).

82 Drout here refers to Rule of St. Benedict and Regularis Concordia, which programmed nearly every minute or every monk’s day. He further reiterates that the purpose of the Rule of St. Benedict and Regularis Concordia did not necessarily generate repetition. Repetition arose of the logic of the texts:

(Drout, p. 167). When we repeat actions, they tend towards the UTM for their *justificatio*s and “therefore, repeated actions will tend to become traditions”<sup>83</sup> (Drout, p. 167) This is due to coalescing “fallible distributed long-term memory with the ability of individuals to recognize patterns quickly, and with the tendency to repeat actions that have had previous success (the ‘stick with a winner tendency’).”<sup>84</sup> Narrative is a tradition because it runs across generations in the same way due to the constraints on its *actio* component. By default, this constraint enacts a practical rule of retelling it in-the-same-way. At this level, narrative becomes part of culture with communication as its main stake. In other words, when we tell the same story over and again as a tool for communication, it becomes a tradition due to its success rate as *justificatio*.

Narrative’s internal structure is analogous to tradition’s internal structure, first, by metonymy and second, by compounding. Naturally, repetition buttresses *justificatio* by ameliorating its Word-to-World Fit in the process of evolving towards the UTM, as well as *recognitio* because as we repeat *recognitio* we are more likely to enter or retrieve it from long-term memory. Thus and so, repetition creates patterns that cannot be missed by the human brains due to its acumen at recognizing *sublime* pattern.”<sup>85</sup> Mimetically, this process implies that once we store a meme in our memory, if the meme is part of a repeated pattern, we can call it back into “conscious perception by some smaller critical portion of the meme. A complex meme, say, an entire memorized poem, could be invoked by one or two lines from the poem” (Drout, 2006a, pp. 168-169).<sup>86</sup> Borrowing from Oral Theory, Drout refers to the meme that ‘triggers’ recollection, a ‘traditional referent’. The traditional referent invokes the much larger meme-plex with which we associate it, by the process of metonymy: “the part stands for the whole.” Narrative has this character, which I will demonstrate later.

“the stability engendered by the assumption that the Rule and Concordia lay out the one best way for humans to live generate repetition as an outcome of its internal logic.

83 This is because the longer a practice continues, the better the Word-to-World Fit of the UTM justificatio will be.

84 Remember Ewins’ “tried and true” concept of stasis. Nevertheless, this tendency continues tradition, and not repetition but also identity projected back into the past and forward into the future because participants in a tradition also imagine their descendants continuing their practices.

85 The combination of patterns means that in a culture that includes repeated traditions, information may be encoded and transmitted in significantly compressed form. Recognizing a pattern means being able to see every event in the sequence. Several things happen when we recognize such a pattern: (a) the larger sequence must be held somewhere in memory. Then our pattern-recognition abilities match the shorter sequence with the appropriate larger sequence, thus calling the larger sequence into working memory; (b) if the short sequence does indeed represent the larger sequence, the link between these two things (recognition of the pattern and the recognition that the shorter sequence fits into the pattern) will be reinforced. “Therefore, next time we see a similar short sequence we are somewhat more likely to link it to the longer sequence. The human ability to recognize patterns is so strong, in fact, that we often infer patterns where none exist, or we infer the wrong pattern based on our expectation or repetition,” insists Drout (pp. 168-69).

86 Drout provides an example: “the phrase “‘Twas the night before Christmas” might bring up the memory of the entire poem. And in fact, if the short sequence that operates as a cueing mechanism is distinctive enough, this triggering meme can be very short indeed. In the case of “‘Twas the night before Christmas,” for many people “‘Twas” is probably enough to trigger the recollection of the entire poem.

This, Drout (2006a, p. 170) reckons, entails invoking a context “that is enormously larger and more echoic than the text or work itself, that brings the lifeblood of generations of poems and performances to the individual performance text.”<sup>87</sup> Drout insists that it is important “to note that the combination of traditional referentiality with the repetition inherent in traditions and the human brain’s ability to recognize patterns leads to an incredibly rich and complex network of associations” (p. 171). First, this is proof that Dale’s (1996) condition C\* relies heavily on context and tradition as it has ability to call into memory, a network of associations.<sup>88</sup> Second, proverbs (as narratives), communicate something more than the sum of their lexical and grammatical parts “because it is difficult to decode the meaning of a proverb merely from analysis of its linguistic form”<sup>89</sup> (Drout, p. 230). The difficulty in finding denotative meaning of proverbs by deriving it from the words that make it, implies that “a proverb’s meaning must be linked associatively not so much to the words to which it is constructed, but to the proverb as a whole” (Drout, p. 230).<sup>90</sup> Thus, the proverb functions more as a lexical entity to ‘be remembered,’ and less so, as a sentence for decoding, implying that, we ideally process a proverb more than a mere lexical construction. Credibility of this hypothesis implies, rather than the sum of its grammatical and lexical components, a proverb is stored as a single lexical unit, and we can (a) explain the stability of surface structure of proverbs (b) the principle of compounding is at work extensively.<sup>91</sup> The same principle of compounding works for both stories and idioms as narrative forms and tools for communication in oral cultures. Implications are such that proverbs do not contain their own meaning; we must interpret the meaning of the proverbs.<sup>92</sup> “A person hears a proverb and he or she is

87 Notwithstanding, “[e]ach element in the phraseology or narrative thematic stands not simply for that singular instance, but for plurality and multiformity that are beyond the reach of textualization,” writes Drout (2006, p. 170). Drout’s approach differs contrastingly with others working on oral tradition and performance as being the ‘enabling event’ that informs readers/hearers that they should “interpret what I say in some special sense; do not take it to mean that word alone, taken literally, would convey.”

88 I need to point out here that the idea of the meme and functionality of metonymy in triggering traditions works exactly like Nanay’s idea of pictorial representation in narrative artifacts. I will discuss this phenomenon more in the next chapter.

89 It is possible though, at times, just as it is possible to decode an unknown word based on its morphology and its similarity to other already known words.

90 A proverbial meme-plex like “don’t count your chickens before they hatch” constitutes of the memes that make up each word, the grammatical structures that define the logic of the sentence, and the related cultural information about chickens, eggs, counting, and hatching. Further, referring to Crépeau, Pierre (1981, pp. 86–110) Drout notes the proverbs function at two levels of signification: “one referential or denotative, and the other connotative. The two levels of signification are bound together in such a way that the first level is the expression of the second.”

91 That is one can join two (or more) words into a compound word that apparently receives a new lexical entry (one can use the word “fireplace” hundreds of times and access a mental image of a fireplace each time without retrieving the individual lexical entities for “fire” and “place”). This means that the proverb compounds its component words into one unit, and this compound unit is the one that associatively links with the culturally conferred meaning of the proverb. The fact that the form of proverbs is so stable while the explication is quite variable, in form, if not in content, supports this hypothesis.

92 “This is not to say that there is not some information content implicit in the structure of the proverb that would be available to someone who is not culturally fluent,” cautions Drout (p.232).

told what the meaning is, or he or she figures out the meaning from the cultural context in which the proverb is used: people learn the meaning of proverbs the same ways they learn the meaning of individual words,” insists Drout (2006a, p. 232). More specifically, other than operating as tradition, in its tripartite memetic form—*recognitio*, *actio*, and *justificatio*—a proverb has other memetic effects that interest this study.<sup>93</sup> With our knowledge that the *actio* variation is constrained in proverb situations, (*actio* of a proverb here is “say *y*”, where *y* is the proverb), we repeat it in the actual or exact form: “Each time it is repeated, the memory of the proverb is strengthened” (Drout, p. 233).<sup>94</sup> At the helm of achieving proverbial status, a saying’s language will be marked as such and every time we use such language, we similarly mark it by association. The implications are (a) we will tend to conserve marked language as a proverb, “and therefore it will be mnemonically superior to constructions made of unmarked language; (b) the proverb will communicate meaning “through the same process as formula: traditional referentiality, traditional anaphora, and metonymy.” I will discuss these elements, especially anaphora that plays a great role in narrative as we go along. An important remark to make stems from this fact:

... because proverbs must be interpreted, and because the constraint on the proverb’s existence is not the interpretation but the surface structure of the proverb, changes in underlying ideology or perceptions of the world appear to be rather easy to adapt to: the aspect of the proverb that changes, the interpretation, has been malleable to begin with, because it is rarely articulated and has no specified linguistic form (Drout, p. 236).<sup>95</sup>

We may have noted that Drout (2006a) treats proverbs as marked language structures. This means in effect that proverbs fall in a category of language use. Secondly, interpretation of stories, like proverbs, is flexible since constraints apply to their surface structure only. Although stories may not be subject to restricted recital, we must maintain their surface structure to recognize them as the same stories. Duly, their surface structure can only change to a limited extent that allows continuation of the same overall structure. When we consider *marked language*, we realize a significant distinction that stipulates ‘marked consideration’ of that particular language. As I will demonstrate, stories, proverbs, metaphors, and idioms normally sway from standardized linguistic form because they require a

93 A proverb in the context of tradition would behave as such: *Recognitio*—when faced with situation *x*, say the following statement; *Actio*—say the proverb *y*; *Justificatio*—a variant of the Universal Tradition Meme: because it is appropriate, or the *justificatio* component has achieved Unconscious Imperative status.

94 This improved memory of the proverb as a whole would extend to some degree to a recognition of its parts. Because the repetition of a proverb is the repetition of its component parts, this repetition would tend to associate these component parts with the proverb itself.

95 Drout calls the words that make up the poem its Surface Form and the ‘standard’ interpretation of the proverb its culturally conferred meaning.

marked mechanism for their comprehension. Although some stories come into place as purely entertainment artifacts, many arise in part as directly attached to proverbs or idioms. Further still, stories, take on the character of “interpret me as a story,” requiring one to capture their ‘meaning’ in a different way. This is more likely especially in situations where storytelling is a common norm. These qualities, and more, I will discuss, namely, idioms and metaphor that form a strong point for narrative use as strategy for communication in a predominantly indigenous traditional society.

In conclusion, before proceeding to the next section, I would like to point out that Pietarinen provides us with an active theory of communication embellished with his Relevance Theory. This is a conquering strategy in communication in that it raises economic and pragmatic concerns. To control loss of information, we need also to consider that rather than focus on distribution models, the art world should advance the development of content and form in art that interests people upon its own merits and intensifying its own understanding of artistic intentions and strategies (Schrofer, 1999). One way of achieving this goal that apparently concerns the present study is through enhancing communication. When someone generates a message, the result of interaction or negotiation between the receiver and the message contains the meaning of the message rather than the message itself (Fiske, 1990). Citing Shannon and Weaver’s Communication Theory, Fiske indicates that improving the encoding of a message will increase semantic accuracy.<sup>96</sup> We must somehow see influence of a message, in behavior of a receiver in order for it to perform its communicative function since the message’s basic tenet stipulates one party observing actions performed by another party (Bodenhausen, Gaelick, & Wyer Jr., 1987). The question I need, or we need collectively, to address is thus: do we really have to make art so difficult to understand by making it too personal?

### Narrative theory

We all agree, or many of us, that some texts are narratives whereas others are not. This is an established fact. Secondly, the issue of narrative and the most appropriate theory that clearly defines it dominates contemporary philosophical concerns, as a definitive ground is yet agreeable. Nanay (2009) opted not to solve this issue in his article *Narrative Pictures*, and I will follow suit. However, I will highlight a few contentious points advanced in narrative theory, to lay ground for providing my own position. In recounting some of the issues raised by some scholars on narrative, I do not intend to carry out a critique; instead, I highlight what possibly constitutes, in my case, narrative as a form in this study and thus the conceptual scope. In the text below, I summarize some of the most recent views on narrative theory and argumentation on what constitutes narrative as a distinct text and the manner by which we could experience it including pictorial explanations. In the

<sup>96</sup> Also, see, Kress & van Leeuwen (1996, p. 46) for Shannon and Weaver’s communication model.

last section, I give a personal view on contemporary theory in relation to my own work.<sup>97</sup>

Velleman (cited in, Currie, 2006) alludes to *Emotional Cadence* as quintessential in the distinction of narrative from other texts.<sup>98</sup> Prima facie, Currie, like Velleman, disputes the notion of causality as central to distinguishing a narrative from other representations by noting that two salient events can constitute a story without necessarily bearing a *Causal* connection.<sup>99</sup> Currie does not find, however, causality a definitive distinction of what constitutes narrative texts although he finds the idea of fully denying presence of a *connection* quite tasking: “We are prone to a persistent illusion of dependence between certain kinds of events” he explains (Currie, p. 312).<sup>100</sup> An external illusion of narrative stipulates a “carryover of an effect that holds in real, rather than represented situations.” Inevitably, internality arises since what we believe about the narrative from the world, independently, does not constitute the representation of events, “Narratives are communicative artifacts, and the mere fact that narrative represents certain events as occurring creates expectations based on what we know or assume about communicative acts”<sup>101</sup> (Currie, p. 313). Although many stories carry causal formation, this condition does not satisfy the constitution of a narrative because there are, as many utterances of the kind that do not qualify as narrative, pictures inclusive. This counters the general claim that every picture tells a story, as we will find out in Monica’s testimony later in the text.

Currie (2006) though, refuses to concede that narrative is explainable only in terms of causation even if a connection seems plausible, except, in guise of *Counterfactual* terms.<sup>102</sup> Having dispelled causality as a key factor in narrative depic-

<sup>97</sup> Although some of the issues discussed may appear in other forms of representations, they do not refer to, or infer comparison; I considered them as unique in the context and framework of this study.

<sup>98</sup> In the build up to their discussions centering on narrative, Nanay (2009), Barwell, (2009), Livingston (2009), and Currie (2006) opt to raise the question on what constitutes a narrative as opposed to other texts.

<sup>99</sup> Rather he would pick interest in ascertaining whether one text has a greater degree of ‘narrativeness’ a condition he refers to as Narrativity. He proposes tests for a theory that clearly defines the distinctions of narrative from other texts by (a) constructing cases in which we may vary proposed determinants establishing intuitively whether it could result in a variation of the narrativity of discourse and (b) positively correlated features with narrative such as the role of agency. He still doubts though that agency per se, could provide a vivid example of narrative because it belongs to its nature (narrative), however, he suggests probing the variations that make narrative good at generating compelling ideas about agency (Currie, 2006, p. 311).

<sup>100</sup> He cites an example of the Muller-Lyre illusion where we perceive of the lines as having different lengths even though we know that they are of the same length, and as such, even when the evidence suggests otherwise, certain events seem to be connected.

<sup>101</sup> Generally, beyond any objections unless presumed so, when narrative juxtaposes representations of two events to make both of them salient, we expect an implicit representation of some connection between them. This is so because “[o]ur interpretive strategies, like our memories, tend to work semi-automatically and in ways over which we have limited control; they are prone to capture by certain vivid memorable ideas,” testifies Currie (313). This connects, as it looks, to the notion of emotion: “Our imagining there being a connection would be enough to include the kind of emotional response that Velleman points to; imaginings often do have quite powerful emotional effects on the imaginer” (ibid, p. 313).

<sup>102</sup> A and B occurred, but if A had not occurred, the chance of B’s occurring would have been much less than it actually was. He disputes this view too, when pinpoints David Lewis’ (cited in Currie, op



tions, Currie instead suggests relations of *reason* as sufficient conditions.<sup>103</sup> Ideally, the story world depends on the reason at a fundamental level in that things can only happen for a reason with or without an agent, whose thoughts and action underpin holding of such reasons. Currie concurs, though, with Velleman that the *reason-based* dependencies we see, or think we see “in narrativized events depend highly on the emotional mood or tone of the narrative, and the effect this has on the audience,” (Currie, p. 314).<sup>104</sup> Currie reckons that the extent to which we interpret events of the story as connected by reason-based relations can depend on our affective response to the narratives; “this perception, or misperception, of a connection has further emotional effects on us, and may contribute to our sense that this discourse is a narrative, rather than something else” (p. 314).

Citing recent remarks discrediting causal relations, in his article *Narrative Pictures*, Nanay (2009) dismisses Noël Carroll’s insistence on causality as a crucial element in alienating narrative texts.<sup>105</sup> On the contrary, Currie (2009) suggests causality while Velleman cites a sequence of events as providing narrative material if it completes an *emotional cadence*.<sup>106</sup> In turn, Nanay opts to tackle the question of the nature of operation our mind goes through when we engage with narratives by exploring the way we *experience* them or at least, narrative pictures.<sup>107</sup> Currie argues that perception has a temporal dimension in addition to being merely momentary and thus capable of temporary extension.<sup>108</sup> Thus, instead of seeing a picture and attempting to recite its sequence of action, we perceive it in its totality: “rather than saying that we see the man in the air and imagine him landing in the puddle, we should rather say that we see him jumping (although we only set on one temporal part of this action)” (Currie, 122).<sup>109</sup> Thus, we grossly misrepresent

cit) premise that this cannot account for causation owing to a general postulate that “counterfactual analyses are fundamentally flawed” (p. 314).

<sup>103</sup> Thus, “sometimes we think—more often imagining than believing—of these relations of dependence between events as basic facts about the world and not as reducible to facts about the motives of agents” (Currie, 2006, p. 313). Nevertheless, Currie maintains a casual dependency in his idea of what constitutes narrative texts.

<sup>104</sup> Currie seeks to differ because Velleman sticks to our affective response to narrative as mistaken by us to have found a substantive connection between events.

<sup>105</sup> Nanay proposes the option of looking at the necessary and sufficient conditions or identifying a crucial element that would help in understanding what differentiates narratives from non-narratives.

<sup>106</sup> What seems universal with these three presumably most recent philosophical accounts is the idea that narrative represents two or more events, which Nanay out rightly refutes.

<sup>107</sup> Narrative pictures, he insists, for example may or may not represent two or more events. Similarly, a picture is capable of depicting one event or more, meaning that a picture can represent a narrative. If one event in one picture can represent a narrative then effectively, pictorial narrative differs from literary narrative if we concur that relations between events constitute narrative texts.

<sup>108</sup> For example, the event of holding up a crown and putting it on the king’s head depicts coronation and not the recount of the action itself as depicted in the picture. This calls for individuating events represented by the picture. The casual model presupposes two acts of which we see one in the picture and the other imagined.

<sup>109</sup> Currie (2009) employs a famous analogy from Thompson Clarke that perceiving is like nibbling; when we nibble at a piece of cheese, we do not only nibble at the part that we actually touch, but at the entire cheese (p. 122).

a picture if we say that it represents two separate events, one visible in the picture and another imagined – seeing a one-time slice. Additionally, we still cannot rely on the representation of *states of affairs* suggested by Carroll because still they must turn out as more than one state of affairs.

The remedy thus suggested by Nanay (2009) is *action*. Naively conceived, a narrative is a text or picture where something happens and a happening postulates someone doing something. He argues that action is a—perhaps even necessary and sufficient—feature of people’s engagement with narrative pictures in that an action of one of the characters in the picture is part of what we are (supposed to be) aware of when looking at the picture. In light of this claim, goal-directed actions aim at achieving some kind of goal, unlike from non goal-directed actions that do not embed an ‘action token’.<sup>110</sup> If we assume that an action in a scene is goal-directed then we may consider our experience of engaging it as a piece of narrative. Implicationally, we are unlikely to experience a narrative engagement if we are not aware of the action in a narrative text as goal-directed. If and only if a suitable informed spectator is supposed to undergo the experience of engaging with narrative does a picture form a narrative, concludes Nanay.<sup>111</sup> There is a strong connection between this view and Drout’s idea of ‘interpret me *as if*’ characterizing proverbs and Dale’s (1996) idea of ‘implicature.’ Namely, rather than being truly causal or un-marked language, the idea of ‘interpret me as if’ indicates that narrative is both ‘marked’ language and takes more than being simply a linguistic expression.

How can we account for instances where we do not know that a text is a narrative, but then we deal with it narratively? Should we claim a higher order external to narrative properties, but constituted within its overall goal determining or influencing our narrative engagements? Nanay (2009) suggest that our experience of engaging narrative texts determines whether a text is a narrative or not: “The general suggestion in case of the experiential theories of depiction is that something is a narrative picture if a suitable spectator is supposed to have a ‘seeing-in’ experience when looking at it” (p. 127). Additionally, Barwell (2009) indicates that some relations are not obviously causal or, at least, not relations of efficient causality as in counterfactual relations; instead, they supply reasons for evaluative judgments. Barwell insists, “If it is the case that sometimes the counterfactual dependence of one event upon another presupposes relations that support evaluative judgments, then in these cases at least, causal significance is not the only significance necessary to narrative emplotments. Evaluative significance is also necessary”<sup>112</sup> (pp.

<sup>110</sup> For example, Currie notes that although breathing is often not a goal-directed action, some token performance of it may be goal directed such as when we have to trudge through thick smoke.

<sup>111</sup> This claim certainly raises issues of a suitable spectator should be suitably sensitive, suitably informed, and if necessary suitably prompted. However, Currie (2009) finds such a distinction irrelevant since it does not specify appropriateness of response in narrative engagement (p. 127).

<sup>112</sup> Some events presumed counterfactual depend upon constitutive relations yet others call for rationalizing relations. Constitutive relations are not obviously causal due to their lack of temporal relations between the events they relate normally marked by the propositions used: In singing his song, the Owl proposed to Pussycat; by singing it, he obtained her consent to marry him. Thus, they depend on conventions, social rules, and norms, not causal laws or laws of nature. Conversely, we presuppose

55-56). Constitutive and rationalizing relations between events or states of affairs provide reasons for evaluative judgments of subsequent events. The postulate is that supplying reasons for evaluative judgment is as basic a storytelling function as explaining their occurrence.<sup>113</sup>

In conclusion, Barwell (2009) insists that evaluative beliefs or judgments are key components of every psychological complex constituting an emotion, in cognitive theories. The reader is in some sort of psychological state necessary or even sufficient to experience a state of emotion if emploting subsumes providing reasons supportive of judgment from a person who emplots. Similarly, when and only when their objects matter to those who have them, do emotions occur, meaning that we identify *how* something matters to someone by the behavior expressing the affective appraisal. Further, *why* something matters follows from how we perceive it in connection to the subject having the emotion. It is often appropriate for one's feelings about earlier events to be *resolved*, after all, when someone's evaluation of narrative outcome is an evaluation of something that matters to one. My insistence on emotional inclusion is because in my study, expectancy as an emotion turned out as a key factor in constituting narrative dependencies. I will also consider Currie's (2006) notion that narrative is a communicative artifact, which is instrumental in achieving the main goal of this research.<sup>114</sup> Most importantly, Barwell insists that, "readers or watchers must supply some of the explanatory connections, some of the normative reasons, and many of the evaluations" (p. 58).<sup>115</sup> Although my discussion will include emotion and evaluation, I propose Nanay's (2009) experiential engagements exhibited by the 'action token' (hereafter that will refer to goal-directed actions), as a core-working concept for this study. This is because other explanations will depend on whether our experience of a text considers it to be a narrative or not, as the core factor.

## Metaphors and idioms

As suggested earlier, this study has adopted idioms as one of its major strategies of explaining narrative's superiority in communication and retention. Remember our

rationalizing relations whenever events in a narrative result from actions done for their agents' reasons; they hold between behavior and a conscious agent's intentional states for example beliefs, purposes, perceptions, and preferences. Intentional states are action guiding just because they have content. Nevertheless, like constitutive relations, rationalizing relations do not order events temporally. Additionally, "they essentially involve an evaluation or an appraisal." (Barwell, 2009, p. 56)

<sup>113</sup> Barwell (2009) assumes that the ubiquity of stories and storytelling suggests that storytelling fulfills key social functions of which telling what happened, we explain both how it happened (explanation) and how significant it is (evaluation) as basics.

<sup>114</sup> Livingston (2009) warns that whomever advocates for a causal account must successfully defend metaphysics of causation or show any prevalent or even universal 'folk theory' of causation indicating difference (scalar) between narrative and non-narrative representations. Other factors rather than causality per se, may be responsible, or contribute to the constitution of narrative.

<sup>115</sup> Ideally, we know that a story already has a goal although we contribute in constructing that goal. Barwell further suggests that temporality does not occur in constitutive relations, in that, one thing happens as the other happens. Causality is not evidently present in many visual images, however this does not imply that causality is not a component of narrative.

main goals are to improve visual reading and continuing indigenous knowledge. As observed by Gorsjestani (2000), since the most common way of disseminating and preserving knowledge systems of the indigene were oral, communicative and mnemonic devices would conform to tools that aided communication and promoted memory. I need to note that our understanding of idioms crucially would embrace some knowledge of metaphors. This is because, mostly, idioms function metaphorically (Jin Cho, 2009; Cooper, 2000; Gibbs, Jr., Bogdanovich, Sykes & Barr, 1997; Strugielska & Alonso, 2007; Sullivan, 2006). In my discussion of both narrative and idiomatic applications, I will link these two concepts with metonymy discussed in the previous chapter. I will also argue that Kant's theory of metaphor, as opposed to Lakoff's, provides a social account that suits the goals of this study.

Lakoff (1992) in his 'Contemporary Theory of Metaphor' notes that classical theory of language always defined metaphor as a purely linguistic phenomenon, rather than thought that comprises general *mappings across conceptual domains*. Such general mappings, withal, would also include ordinary everyday language as opposed to strictly novel poetic expressions: "In short, the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another"<sup>116</sup> (para. 1). In light of these thoughts, Lakoff believes that our everyday conceptual system largely depends on a ubiquitous metaphorical system embedded in emotional or abstract concepts as soon as one gets away from concrete physical experience. Thus, individuals comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning through metaphor as the main mechanism.<sup>117</sup> Only when speakers talk about physical reality, do we evidence non-metaphorical thinking (Tang, 2007).

Apparently, because within different cultures the conceptual structures for the same elements could be diverse, different languages often take disparate elements as sources denoting similar metaphorical targets. "This confirms to the major te-

<sup>116</sup> Metaphorical expressions became mutually exclusive with the realm of ordinary everyday language: everyday language had not metaphor, and metaphor used mechanisms outside the realm of everyday conventional language. To demonstrate his stance against language Lakoff offers an example: If metaphors were merely linguistic expressions, we would expect different linguistic expressions to be different metaphors. Thus, "We've hit a dead end-street", would constitute one metaphor. "We can't turn back now" would constitute another, entirely different metaphor. "The marriage is on rocks" would involve still a different metaphor. And so on for dozens of examples. We have one metaphor, in which we conceptualize love as a journey. See more of this argument at <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~israel/lakoff-conTheoryMetaphor>

<sup>117</sup> Lakoff insists by citing the general tendency to confuse the name of a mapping qua the mapping by alleging that seldom names of mappings possess a propositional form, yet, mappings themselves are not propositions. LOVE IS A JOURNEY is a name of a mapping. However, LOVE AS A JOURNEY mapping comprises a set of ontological correspondences characterizing "epistemic correspondences by mapping knowledge about journeys onto knowledge about love." Instead, linguistic expressions only name the mappings, and the metaphor is the set of correspondences: "The metaphor is not just a matter of language, but of thought and reason. The language is secondary. The mapping is primary in that it sanctions the use of source domain language and inference patterns for target domain concepts." However, Lakoff's idea of cross-domain mapping falls short of explaining how the conceptual system builds up material for its mappings, later on, his denial that it, too, is comparative in nature by instead preferring to call it an 'ontological correspondence.' Also see Anderson's discussion of Linguistic theories of metaphor where she posits that metaphor has an irreducible cognitive force (1998, pp. 12-16).

net of Lakoff's spirit that metaphors are matters of thought and not language," resolves Tang (2007, p. 92). This further rests on the fact that words *merely* reveal ideas and perspectives about the world around us. Ergo, by positing that language is a result of a set of innate universals specific to language, cognitive linguists promote "a universal set of cognitive abilities, which serve to both facilitate and constrain the development of our conceptual systems and, hence, delimit what is possible to express in language" (Strugielska & Alonso, 2007, p. 2). In objection, although we may ably access pre-stored metaphorical mappings, such knowledge may not always be accessible and used in any given context (Gibbs et al, 1997). More so, Lakoff's theory of metaphor seems to centre on the individual, detached from his own environment as an accessible acculturated being, by presuming metaphoricality as occurring at the level of originator and not the audience or place of creation. This view differs from my idea of metaphor where metaphoricality ensues within the mind of the audience or at a social level (Linda, 1994).

By excluding metaphor from the mainstream of language, Lakoff provides a very narrow account of its (metaphor) role in society because that would be vital in grasping its internal mechanisms. Bowers (2009) scoffs at Lakoff and Johnson's argument that, philosophy, science, and general knowledge begins with a person's "perceptual and motor systems—that is embodied experience" (p. 1). It is worthy acquiescence that no one doubts the origin of some metaphors in bodily experiences as suggested by Lakoff and Johnson (in Bowers).<sup>118</sup> Bowers, howbeit, argues that this account is partially correct because depending upon the culture's mythopoetic narratives and/or cosmology some of our concepts lack an embodied origin even though such conceptual schemas are different across culture.<sup>119</sup> Besides, the theory also fails to consider that words have a culturally specific history and as such, it cannot account for the "linguistic colonization of the present by the past" (Bowers, pp. 6-8).<sup>120</sup>

Lakoff and Johnson (cited in, Bowers, 2009), exigently, focus on image (or iconic) metaphors as originating in embodied experiences including those inherited from the past and framed according to the prevailing root metaphors of the culture. Our ability to ratify an ecologically informed way of thinking and behaving is contentious because root metaphors, exercise a profound influence on many as-

118 Concepts such as up and down, back and forward, full and empty, and even the old British systems of measurement of inch, foot, yard, and mile can be traced back to bodily experience. Also their discussion of how different experiences provide generative frameworks (schemas) for understanding and activity, behavior, and policy, where the already familiar becomes the model for understanding something new has to be taken seriously.

119 For example, Lakoff and Johnson would attribute the concept that underlies the use of the personal pronoun 'I' to the embodied experience of an individual, they overlook that this is a culturally constructed identity—one traceable back to the writings of post-medieval philosophers and political theorists. In Buganda for instance, one expresses individual identity as a lineage of family ties and ancestry. This is very evident at introduction ceremonies where as a matter of principal, one provides a personal name as a preamble to individual identity and then a string of ancestors dating at least three generations. The concept 'I' spreads out into the entire background of an individual.

120 For example, the limiting analogs that framed how people understood the word woman in the west over thousands of years did not arise out of the embodied/sensorimotor/neutrally connected experience of today's individual.

pects of culture, including embodied experience. This is due to its meta-cognitive explanatory schema that guides thought and behavior at the level of consciousness predominantly taken for granted.<sup>121</sup> In a bid to yield a conceptual gateway by considering the individual's culturally mediated embodied experience, Lakoff and Johnson consider cultural influence, language in building identity and thinking, embodied experience in light of disparate cultures, and ecological overtones of liaisons within cultural norms. In addition, the claim that metaphor is a model of thought defeats the idea that language is, too, a model of thought that subsumes metaphor (Nishimura, 2004). This is because, according to Nishimura though resorting to analogy and similarity, metaphor is "an act of predicating under the rule that the metaphorical word must be used as a modifier for the subject" (p. 67).

Thought is a vague uncharted nebula without language since we have no pre-existing ideas and nothing is distinct before language appears (Saussure, cited in, Dale, 1996). For this reason, Saussure thought that it was necessary to emphasize language as having its roots both in the speech practices of a community and somehow in the brains. In this way, the practical nature of metaphor assumes a position of pointing to and questioning prevalent limitations on language explicitly expressed thus and thus: "metaphor belongs exclusively to the domain of use. It is something brought off by imaginative employment of words and sentences and depends entirely on the ordinary meanings of the sentences they comprise" (Davidson, cited in, Westley, 2004, para. 23). Kant's aesthetic experience is characterized by a 'harmonious' free play of the cognitive faculties (understanding and imagination) through the process of 'animation'.<sup>122</sup> Gibbons (2008) presents Kant's theory of visual metaphor (also applies to literary metaphor), to cut the story short, thusly:

A visual metaphor is an aesthetic idea presented by a visual work of art that performs both of the functions Kant sets out for them, namely (a) they animate our cognitive faculties and they (b) act as a surrogate logical exhibition of a rational idea. (p. 147)<sup>123</sup>

121 Based on Richard H. Brown's definition, root metaphors are meta-cognitive schemata taken for granted and thus frame thinking in a wide area of cultural activity over years—even centuries. These emanate from the mythopoetic "narratives of the culture, powerful evocative experiences that are sustained over generations and from the processes of analogic-based theories by writers were able to overturn older root metaphors" (cited in, Bowers, 2009, p. 10). Today we have the 'computer age' metaphor that is deeply rooted in technology but also has a great influence on the way people work and act.

122 Determinate concepts are the ones we employ in cognitive judgments and are the opposite of indeterminate concepts—the ones we employ for reflective judgments. Whereas rational ideas are concepts of the mind that will never find an empirical intuition worthy of exhibiting them in concrete experience, aesthetic ideas are intuitions that we can never subsume under any determinate concept. Just as rational ideas search in vain for that intuition which will exhibit them adequately, aesthetic ideas search vainly for a determinate concept that will be adequate for their subsumption. For Kant, inexponible intuitions and indemonstrable concepts are such that they can never become cognition, but remain grounded in imagination and pure reason of the subjective and objective faculties respectively (p. 51). The free play of the faculties is purely reflective. No full-fledged cognition of the beautiful object is taking place such that a concept and an intuition are coming together in a determinate way. Instead, we continue to hold the beautiful object in our mind's eye and contemplate it indeterminately, i.e., we never subsume the object under any concept (p.34).

123 This presentation brings to light two elements: that not all artworks can be metaphors (b) not all

Let me place Gibbons' analysis of Kant's metaphor in context of the prison metaphor. The literal meaning of the metaphor 'MARRIAGE IS A PRISON CELL,' is the internal representation of the imagination that the words in the rendition arouse: the beclouding idea of marriage as a prison cell. The metaphorical meaning of the rendition becomes the enormous host of representations that indeterminately alter inner intuition of the ideas produced.<sup>124</sup> In effect, the metaphorical meaning becomes the indefinite amount of contemplative thought emanating from the animation of our faculties by the aesthetic idea.<sup>125</sup> That is, our struggle to represent inwardly, a prison of marriage instigates free play of the imagination and understanding. I will provide an elaborate discussion of the metaphor later in the text. Because we cannot represent such an idea determinately, Kant (cited in, Gibbons, 2008) considers such an experience aesthetic and it thereupon, constitutes a metaphor. Crucially, many contemporary metaphor theorists would agree with Kant that when we take an expression to be a metaphor, we are thereby not taking it to be a literal expression at a particular time. Here is Gibbons' explanation:

A sentence like "a squirrel is in the attic" expresses an internal representation that can be successfully processed in a determinate fashion. However, "Juliet is the sun" does not express an internal representation that can be handled determinately, but rather it must be indeterminately processed. This indeterminacy results in an aesthetic idea (metaphor) being formed in the mind of a reader/listener, and subsequently the contemplation that this metaphor gives rise to, is its metaphorical (as opposed to literal) meaning.<sup>126</sup> (p. 187)

In confronting the idea of 'deciphering', as a form of meaning generated through a 'property transfer' between objects, Davidson (cited in, Westley, 2004) insists, "[M]etaphors mean what the words, in their most literal interpretation, mean, and nothing more" (para. 10). As such, marriage literally means prison. In this respect, paraphrasing a metaphor is an attempt at describing, "[O]ur imaginative engagement with the metaphor and not a description of some 'meaning' contained within the metaphor"<sup>127</sup> (Westley, para.12). Westley links this observation to Kant's

metaphoric artworks are, comparative too. I will present this case when discussing the exhibits.

124 Gibbons explains Kant's inner intuition: "Aesthetic ideas are intuitions that a work of art gives rise to or suggests to an audience member's mind. What this means is that aesthetic ideas are intuitions brought to mind by a particular work or art, but that are not identical to the empirical intuitions of the artworks themselves. This is why Kant refers to aesthetic ideas as inner intuitions, or alternatively, as the internal "representations of the imagination" that are brought to mind by experiencing a work of art." (p. 53)

125 See Gibbons' interpretation of Frederick's metaphor, pp. 207-8

126 The literal meaning of "Juliet is the sun" is the bizarre identity it conveys between a teenage girl and the star at the center of our planetary system. In Kant's view, this is precisely what "Juliet is the sun" would convey if we were to understand it as determinate. All the words in the expression would work together to call to mind a complex internal representation of a star-girl, or girl-star, either of which would be strange indeed, and foreign to our stable of determinate concepts. However, if we understand Juliet metaphorically, then we begin to ponder the many different possible interpretations of this expression and we begin to wonder whether we possibly can grasp them all." (Gibbons, 1996, p. 187-189)

127 Black's assertion that we may explain metaphor by paraphrase, would mean that we need basic

own assessment of paraphrase: "Because the understanding cannot settle upon a determinate concept, imaginative engagement cannot be formulated into words as this would require that imaginative experience be put into propositional form: this happens if there is no determinate concept to express" (para. 12). In essence then, the content of imaginative engagement lacks meaning because what we notice in this process and what the words mean are disparate things.<sup>128</sup> There is no new meaning at the end of the process in terms of what we intended to mean.

Nevertheless, when we contemplate a situation of, say marriage as a prison cell, this is not exactly the meaning of the metaphor. What it means already lays in the words that lead to our contemplation of the imaginative compositions of the bizarre relationship. Westley (2004) insists that since meaning is simply a property of sentences and can therefore be nothing other than literal then literal meaning makes us attend to similarities but this does not result in figuratively meaningful sentences. In this case, we do not prioritize meaning of an utterance or aesthetic idea as the actual meaning of the metaphor, but rather we find it at the literal level, with what we originally receive. What the metaphor does is to prompt insight inspired by a literal statement requiring us to see one thing as another differently, through different 'lenses'. Subsequently, metaphor turns out as important in drawing attention to "the way in which language is able to communicate our experiences." Westley expresses metaphor thus and so:

On the one hand, it destabilizes our relationship to language by making the idea of meaning problematic: it highlights the limitations of language by gesturing towards the incongruity between experiences and the linguistic apparatus in place for making sense of and communicating these experiences. At the same time, it opens up possibilities for change by introducing new ways of perceiving—and consequently understanding—the world: vital for both poetry and everyday communication.<sup>129</sup> (para. 26)

cognitive content that remains constant during the process of changing the words used in expressing it. The meaning would instead become extra-linguistic. Davidson further claims that metaphorical statements do not contain such cognitive content since truth exists at the level of actual sentences, being aware that sentences do not exist somewhere outside language. His argument goes that metaphorical meaning stands at sentential level, and not beyond, for, no 're-wording' can express some "underlying, hidden meaning, as no such meaning exists within a metaphor."

128 Although metaphor may cause imaginative attention to similarities between certain things, we cannot claim that such attention is the meaning of the metaphor. For example, imagining the possibility of marriage being like prison may not be the meaning of the metaphor. "By contrast, a metaphor which has the form of sentence identifying two things 'X and Y' is literally false, and it is necessary to change the usage of words temporarily according to its particular rule which demands using the predicate Y just as a modifier of the subject X," insists Nishimura (2004, p. 66). "The point at issue here is not identity between two different things X and Y, nor subsumption of X under category Y which is normally contradictory to X, but nuanced identification of X by modifying X with certain traits of the word Y" (Nishimura, p. 66).

129 Westley further notes, "It seems, then, that metaphor is a very practical phenomenon and its value seems to reside not just in its ability to re-describe (and to be re-described in turn) but also owing to its performing in such a way that it exerts considerable power over us in bringing about a certain mental state that draws attention both to the need for re-description as well as to the content of this mental state itself" (para. 24).

Paraphrasing a metaphorical construction endeavors to describe what the expression arouses, that is, the content of our imaginative experience. Gibbons (1996) takes such imaginative experience as *metaphorical meaning*, although Davidson as well as Westley argues in favor of a distinction between literal and metaphoric meaning.<sup>130</sup> That aside, through this contemplation and the high propensity of multivariate assumptions created during such processes, we may eventually engender new relationships we have not encountered before, which could lead to innovation, comprehension, and retention. That is, contemplating marriage's confinement and that of prison cells, may engender new insight or relationships with both marriage and prisons cells not highlighted in the metaphorical construction. According to Kant (cited in, Crisp, 1997), the human mind comprises three faculties or powers: sensibility, understanding, and reason.<sup>131</sup> He tasks *reflective judgment* as a mediator between the empirically unspecifiable ideals of reason and the supposedly strictly rule governed operations of understanding. Serendipitously, according to Crisp, Kant assigned a sizable epistemological role to aesthetic properties by arguing that aesthetic judgment mediated between *reason* and *understanding*.<sup>132</sup> Central to his aesthetic philosophy, Crisp notes, is the contention that "though there are no rules of beauty, aesthetic judgments do have objectivity" (p. 252).<sup>133</sup>

If aesthetic judgments do have objectivity, it so follows that we have the ability to cognize things outside the aesthetic experience itself that Kant (cited in, Gibbons, 1996) positions as central to his theory of metaphor and art in general. Kant viewed fine art as tasked with social communication and thus, the beautiful and the sublime pleasure should accompany presentations that are ways of cognizing (Yanal, 2002). In this case, although in my postulate I maintain that metaphor finds its basic roots in the aesthetic idea, I also say that we have a cognitive element ushered in by our engagement with the metaphor. What is central to throw at the back

130 The difference in Davidson's explanation is that he is intent on achieving the intended meaning, although we cannot guarantee chances that we may arrive. Gibbons, on the other hand, considers meaning in general whereby somehow we may generate some meaning, whether intended or otherwise. Indeed, Davidson explains his position from the viewpoint of the author, whereas, Gibbons approaches her idea of metaphor from that of the reader.

131 Crisp (1997) attempts a modification of the claim: "Sensibility is the power of sensation; understanding comprises the conceptual power, which in light of strict rules, unifies a multitude of sense data and as such, gives rise to objective, scientific knowledge; and the highest mental power of all is reason. However, it could not attain on its own any objective scientific knowledge in theoretical as opposed to practical or moral matters: "Its sole, theoretical, role was to guide and regulate the functions of the understanding. What this meant in effect was that just as the understanding unified the sensibility, so reason in turn unified the understanding" (p. 252).

132 Kant believed in algorithmic induction in the understanding's possession of a set of strict rules, but in this, he was wrong, in Crisp's (1997) view. "Once this is recognized however, the epistemological role he assigned to aesthetic properties, far from being diminished, is expanded. The distinction between reason, following principles, and understanding, obeying strict rules, disappears, since there are no strict, inductive rules. When this happens, aesthetic properties rather than mediating between two different cognitive powers become a pervasive part of all our cognition. Not only is the role of aesthetic consciousness thus expanded it is also deepened in a way totally in accord with the spirit, if not the technical detail, of Kant's philosophy." (pp. 250-51)

133 For a detailed discussion of aesthetic judgments and objectivity, see Crisp (1997). Aesthetics, Cognition and Metaphor—some light from Kant, available online at <http://sunzi.lib.hku.hk/hkjo/view/9/900049.pdf>

of our minds is what Kant expresses in his idea of metaphor, namely, that metaphor exists within the mind that contemplates it and not within the objects that trigger its contemplation. It is also clear that Kant does not consider metaphor as a purely conceptual phenomenon but a linguistic entity. Based on this and other the realizations, I argue that Kantian metaphor is more adapted to a social and pragmatic theory in which my concept of meaning dwells. My thesis is metaphor cannot be fundamentally our view of the world, by implication or nature. Metaphor instead may depend on how we view the world and thus conceptualize it. That is, instead of metaphor influencing our thought patterns; it is, the way we fit into the social world that creates metaphors. We therefore, in order to achieve metaphoricality, have to interact in a social world where language and understanding take place.

How do idioms interact with metaphors?

"OKWANJALA ENGALO" is a Ganda idiom literally meaning, 'SPRAWLING ONE'S FINGERS.' This idiom expresses emptiness in the Ganda concept of possession rooted in a metaphor 'FULLNESS IS VIRTUE'. It comes about as a practice of the body normally used to portray 'being without' or 'empty hands' by spreading them out. Expressly, in order to figure out this is an idiom, one metaphorically subsumes the relationship it engenders between sprawling and emptiness. Applied to literal use, we presume a situation whereby Njabala has nothing to show off from her presumed hard work, and as such, she can only sprawl her fingers because she has nothing to show. In the eyes of the people that expected much of her it is ignominious. Nevertheless, we have a complicated situation to deal with; the context in which this situation occurs requires a declaration that 'Njabala is lazy'. Our idiomatic representation of Njabala as a lazy person is the 'sprawling fingers' that also shows emptiness. Hamilton (2000) notes that reliance of metaphors on "their effect on insights based on shared background knowledge, their audience must be capable first of identifying the connection being posited, and second of making the correct attribute linkages between the different domains"<sup>134</sup> (p. 254). To conceptualize the meaning, we need to transform it into a metaphoric construction 'Njabala is the sprawling fingers.' In imagining Njabala as 'sprawling fingers' we create a metaphor since we cannot determinately subsume Njabala as sprawling fingers.<sup>135</sup> An aesthetic idea develops because of the indeterminacy that springs up in the mind of the viewer or listener, and as a result, the contemplation that this metaphor raises, is its metaphoric (as opposed to literal) meaning.

Having realized that idioms may function as metaphors, how do idioms then link with metonymy and communication in narrative constructions? I should note here that metonymy invokes a context much larger and more echoic than the text or the work it represents (Drout, 2006b). This is also true with idioms given that

134 Hamilton also notes that metaphors have assisted designers in conceptualizing interface presentation requirements (ibid). I should note here that the use of domain in this case is a matter of language use rather than specifically in reference to cross-domain mapping suggested by Lakoff.

135 Alternatively, even, we can never fully represent empirically ignominy with sprawling fingers, and this case; we have another metaphor within the same idiom.

some idioms are indeed reflective of proverbs or entire stories, and as such, invoke a host of associations. Similarly, meaning that enables metaphoricity bears tendencies of extending (often indefensibly) to every aspect of the two compared referents (Black, 1952; Westendorp, Piet, van der Waarde, & Karel, 2007). Apparently, the qualities a sender wishes the audience to transfer to the primary subject should depend upon context (Anderson, op cit). This assumption gains support from research carried out by Ortony, Schallert, Reynolds, and Antos (1978) indicating that context rather than literalness determines how easily an audience will process metaphors.<sup>136</sup> Secondly, second language learners learning idiomatic expressions in the target culture and society, boosted their ability to learn and communicate (Jin Cho, 2009). In relation, research indicates that “adequate knowledge and appropriate use of idioms in a L2 (second language) is an important indicator of L2 communicative competence” (Andreou & Galantomos, 2008, p. 9).<sup>137</sup> In addition, children reproduce adult utterances instead of words in their early language development by repeating specific combinations of language (Warren 2005). Augmenting the above, young children exhibit preference for thinking metonymically prior to thinking metaphorically. Everyday language thus, largely builds on a surmountable amalgam of prefabricated parts such as idioms: “The most representative type of a prefabricated structure is idiom” (Andreou & Galantomos, p. 8). More so, research indicates that people’s awareness of conceptual metaphors partly motivates how they make sense of idiomatic phrases (Gibbs et al, 1997). In the same way, metaphoric thought, under many conditions, may have a role in people’s immediate understanding of at least some kinds of idioms in everyday language.

In conclusion, Gibbons (2008), as well as Kant, agree with contemporary theorists who consider content as critical when judging a work of art to be a visual metaphor “insofar as both theories place the notion of ‘comparison’ at the center of their definition of visual metaphor” (p. 148). In conformity to this realization, Gibbons argues that although not necessarily comparative in their content, Kant’s aesthetic ideas are typically comparative owing to their formal structure, which substitutes determinate representations of indeterminate thoughts and ideas.<sup>138</sup> It

<sup>136</sup> This research also dispels the general postulate that figurative language takes longer to process than the literal. Further, “[i]n many cases the interpretation is quite unproblematic; the reader or listener can almost predict what will be conveyed and the target sentence is used, as it were, to confirm an already formed hypothesis about its meaning.” Also see, Gibbs, Bogdanovich, Sykes, & Barr (1997, p. 150) for the discussion of the results of their research where they note that depending on the high speed with which people compute idiomatic speech makes it quite unlikely that people actually compute metaphorical mappings each time they read or hear idioms in discourse. This implies that we do not access metaphor constructions every time we encounter idiomaticity, but it does not dispel the fact we mostly process idioms metaphorically.

<sup>137</sup> This type of competence includes a set of abilities, such as skill to decode the various (dominant, peripheral, polysemous) meanings of a word, the ability to suspend a literal-referential strategy, to produce novel figurative expressions and to construct a coherent semantic representation related to a given figurative expression.

<sup>138</sup> Aesthetic ideas are not the patches of color or the areas of light and shadow in a picture, just as they are not the particular shapes of letters or punctuation in a poem; they are intuitions that a work of fine art gives rise to or suggests to an audience member’s mind. See, Gibbons (2009, pp. 67-70), for a detailed discussion of aesthetic ideas. What this means is that aesthetic ideas are intuitions brought to mind by a particular work of

art, but that are not identical to the empirical intuitions of the artworks themselves. In short, aesthetic ideas are particular mental images that we generate in response to works of fine art. Secondly, for someone to be artistically creative in Kant’s view, one must have all the powers of genius, namely, both able to communicate aesthetic messages to an audience, and provide them with an aesthetic experience.

art, but that are not identical to the empirical intuitions of the artworks themselves. In short, aesthetic ideas are particular mental images that we generate in response to works of fine art. Secondly, for someone to be artistically creative in Kant’s view, one must have all the powers of genius, namely, both able to communicate aesthetic messages to an audience, and provide them with an aesthetic experience.

<sup>139</sup> While analyzing the aesthetic idea presented by Le Voil and Baboon and Young, Gibbons (2008) notes that although Jupiter’s eagle “does not contain any obvious comparative visual content (i.e., it does not show a comparison in any of its depictions), it does invite us to compare the visual content of the painting with what we can imagine a determinate exhibition of ‘mighty king of heaven’ and ‘sublimity and majesty of creation’ might look like.” (pp. 142-143). Ideally, though, it becomes evident that the content of a visual artwork partially counts as enabling the status of visual metaphor. Just to clarify (a) is a function performed by all aesthetic ideas from all works of fine art whereas (b) arises from a select group of aesthetic ideas that behave as basic kind of comparison involving some rational idea(s). In this vein, bele’s (2002) discussion or images in her article Revealing and hidden life-landscape as a visual metaphor in Latvian art of the Early 20th century, does not constitute metaphoricality. See, discussion at [http://www.eki.ee/km/place/pdf/kp2\\_13abele.pdf](http://www.eki.ee/km/place/pdf/kp2_13abele.pdf). To view images of Baboon and young go to, [http://www.chess-theory.com/images/24223.picasso\\_sculpture.jpg](http://www.chess-theory.com/images/24223.picasso_sculpture.jpg) and La viol, <http://kujok.dk/billeder/Rene%20Magritte/magritte-le-viol.jpeg>

### 3 / Artistic Traditions and Narrative in Buganda

#### ART AND MEANING

In this section, I discuss Ganda tradition and interpretation, and I say, in appreciating art, the Baganda had unified views and thus consensual meanings due to their traditional values. This has not changed much especially in the more traditional communities where art was removed with no replacement value. I also show and explain that, in traditional norms rather than more interpretive instances, the Baganda artistry mainly existed in the moment, although Western values would seem to extend these moments beyond immediacy. Art will bear meaning in people's lives today if we redefine its institutionalized and academized cultural form to have a wider role, meaning, and immediacy in contemporary life situations (Halkinhal, 1999). Individuals, in appreciating Ganda art, had personal interpretations of these artifacts, yet in many cases, their meaning was tantamount to similar experiences due to hierarchy and tradition.<sup>140</sup> Further, I highlight the argument that since the Baganda reveled in common meaning, it would be grossly misconceived to bombard them with new art forms with little or no capacity to appreciate them. I also make it clear in this short passage that traditional thinking does not mean that people did not engage in interpretive acts, or that there were no means of interpretation. Our interpretations in tradition are not significant enough to influence the outcome of our thoughts beyond traditional Buganda way of learning.

#### Tradition

The proverb, “Siwa muto lugero nga talumanyi” demands that an expert offers an automatic explanation to a novice (Nsimbi, 1996). That is, when one applies a proverb, or for that matter, any other linguistic trope, figure, or jargon, one must be ready to discern the meaning. Similarly, the idiom “Abaana ba Kintu”

<sup>140</sup> Lugira (1970) holds a vital dialogue on hierarchy: “This underlying force pervades all existence in the Ganda mind. ...we find authority to be a major expression of vitalism that permeates the Ganda Weltanschauung. It is liable to decrease and increase according to factors such as power and dignity. It may be taken as a Hierarchy of authority. Thus we have it in the order of Deity: Supreme Force (= Lubaale) = Katonda, quasi-intermediary forces = Balubaale and their accessories; in the order of Humanity: The Ruler = Kabaka, the Elders = Bataka, the Chiefs = Baami and the rest of the people” (p. 18).

is typical of propagation suggested by the Baganda. Lugira (1970) locates Ganda philosophy of life in the legitimacy of belongingness. Additionally, as part of the vast migrations of the African *Bantu*, their overriding philosophy was vitalistic and conceived the world as of humans and things rooted in the idea of life expressed in origin, dynamism, unity, and vital force. Green (2005) locates the above expression in “national pride and survival of Kintu's progeny” through continuity of the clan system (p. 8). On a parallel understanding, the concept of meaning in the traditional Ganda society is communal and transcended by the concept of propagation: it is a priori in many instances and thus things outside the realm of transcendent meaning are alien and simply unconceivable. Everyone in the culture had access to *Meaning* as a way of realizing continuity.

Kasozi (1983) recounts that the commoners venerated the Kabaka's power to such an extent that they believed such powers were God given. Such belief came with the feeling that if any of the articles in use by the king were misused, the supernatural force would avenge their destruction or misappropriation. When Kintu came to Buganda and established a kingdom, he spelt out the powers of each individual within his realm thereby consecrating a conceptual hierarchy within the minds of his subjects. The king's supremacy was insurmountable and his word was final (Kaggwa, 1905).<sup>141</sup> Investigating the mentality of hierarchy, Lugira (1970) digs deep to its philosophical roots that he reckons lay in the behavior of the Baganda. He traces the principal of *vitalism* from language use expressed by the words with artistic significance: “A Muganda does not draw nor paint a picture, *but he beats it*” (Lugira, pp. 16-17). This too, extends to imagining it. Art production, duly, ensued as a practice of exerting energy, mentally and physically beating with the force that imbues the Ganda mind.<sup>142</sup>

The laborious explanation of Ganda behavior is without consequence considering Lugira's (1970) insistence on the ‘underlying force’ that “pervades all existence in the Ganda mind” (p. 18). The same force, liable to increase or decrease, depending on power or dignity for example, signals a hierarchy of authority that permeates the Ganda way of life. Its instantaneous manifestation emerges in the order of deity that includes the supreme force (*Katonda*), quasi-intermediary forces (*Lubaale*), and their intermediaries; in the order of humanity, the ruler (*kabaka*) topped the hierarchy, and then next in order of power and importance are the elders (*bataka*), the chiefs (*baami*), and the commoners (*bakopi*). Architecture, sacred

<sup>141</sup> Whenever the king wished to appear before his people for example, in a meeting or preside over an occasion, his subjects observed total respect, and indeed his guards always alert to purge any convict of the day. When he desired to take a particular route, it did not matter whether an established pathway existed; his entourage forged it immediately.

<sup>142</sup> The expression of vitality derives its attributes from the verb ‘Kukuba’ that literally means to beat, strike, win, use energy and force, or depict, which in Lugira's opinion further expresses a philosophically underlying element of vital force. In his continued argument, Lugira (pp. 16-17) further suggests that the verbs ‘Kusala’ and ‘Kulya’ (respectively meaning to cut and to eat) denote energy and force, strength, and vital union respectively. However, “eating Kabakaship” expressed ‘vitality’ similar to that of raising someone's rank or stature. In the Ganda mentality, eating food manifests as a source of energy, strength, force and unity and as such, any exhibition of raising these qualities is ‘eating’ (ibid, p. 18).



Figure 2. A stool for Kibuuka's relics reflecting conical, pyramidal, and triangular shapes predominating Ganda traditional artifacts. Photo: adopted from Lugira, 1970.

ceramics, hoes, spears, shields, bows and arrows, canoes, important musical instruments, and many utensils reflect conical or triangular patterns (see figure 2).<sup>143</sup> Such a mentality, Lugira concludes, seeks “step-by-step, to find, to respect, and to render submission to the One, the Supreme” (Lugira, p. 207). Secondly, the effects of hierarchy have an imposing presence on how the communities make sense of their environment (see figure 3). The veneration of the Supreme not only imposes itself on the physical, but also on the non-physical. This constitutes symbolism that so evidently overwhelms Ganda mentality in two ways: supernatural forces or authoritative power from the rulers dictate Meaning of objects or things from ‘above’; the supreme, so sacred and thus extolled, dictates all

representations such that his person will not be violated.

Upon belief, for instance, Lubaale Wamala, a son of Musisi reached Ssinga; he had water contained in an animal skin, which he drew from Lake Nalubaale. When he placed the skin on the ground to rest, the water poured and formed into the now Lake Wamala—today deified by the Baganda. Similarly, Lubaale Kiwanuka caused thunder according to Ganda belief. Trees, reptiles, stones, hills, forests, wells, and rivers formed deified articles among the Baganda and none of these elements contained what they believed: they signified what the people assigned to them arbitrarily because they needed accessible things to the human mind in place of the superhuman (Kaggwa, 1901). However, such meanings bore no room for negotiation; they existed a priori and in the case of recurrence by imagination, act, or contact, the same meaning was re-experienced. Meaning comprised of constants alterable only by prior consensus because once accepted, the onus lay upon hierarchy to reconstitute it.<sup>144</sup> Obviously, the social group as the source of wisdom

<sup>143</sup> Lugira's (1970) classification of the hierarchy implies that the Ganda social perspective “traditionally relied on hierarchical and pyramidal authority and power” (p. 207), which spinoffs in two ways: “All significant artifacts of the Baganda are traditionally conical, pyramidal or triangular (whether stylized or not) in design.”

<sup>144</sup> Goddie (personal communication, 2008) once narrated a story of Diikuula, a comedian, who upon belief that he would amuse his audience, urinated in a beer mug (endeku) only to find himself almost lynched. This is because there was no general agreement that one could urinate in a beer mug. However, within ‘elbow room’, people could use the gourd vessels as containers for gathering grasshoppers outside the normal expectations of being beer mugs.

and authority form the core of traditional cultures, unlike the liberal tradition, centering on the free and rational individual (Anderson, cited in, Hutchens & Suggs, 1997; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). Noteworthy, the Ganda hierarchy, largely, embedded sexism privileging men, in the social group, as superior.



Figure 3. A group of men prostrate before the Supreme. Photo: adopted from Lugira, 1970.

### Meaning

The meaning of such objects comprises a deeply contextualized and arbitrary form for the insider due to presentiment and continued exposure to the same stimulus. This process becomes typical of certain non-negotiable meanings, not even negated by the individual, but the group. The outsider on the other hand possesses the luxury of roaming free with ambiguities of signs that could mean various things. In Ganda norms, we evidence several intermediaries that intervene to create essence of the represented. Mediums, priests, and venerated objects replace the direct TV signal that once mediated my sphere of knowledge.<sup>145</sup> The vital force again becomes the supreme power by which meaning avails itself to the individual, which tends to affect them uniformly. Remarkably, although actual experience springs from the individual then to the group, the intention remains confounded in commonality, for example, one who seeks advice from the oracle meets another individual with the same intention. The meaning of the oracle to both of them bears no variation, at least not external.

Context inevitably, as evidenced in both tradition and meaning, transfigures into the medium by which signals express the inherent invariables bound by common belief. Our ability to judge social situations and respond appropriately without awareness of the condition, underlines the notion of intuition, and lays credence on implicit cognitive processes that include stereotypes and mood states (Andrade, 2005). Intuition, by no lesser standards, plays a great role in constituting contexts by which we access phenomena in a traditional setting. Going by the possibility of constituting intuition at an earlier stage preceding awareness, it thus follows that Ganda knowing is highly intuitive and responds to the whims of habituated processes. The ‘Unconscious Imperative’ or ‘telos’ suggested by Drout (2006a) operates at this level. Such processes further respond to typalized mediums to become close associates. Typicality thus far defines the extent to which

<sup>145</sup> The Arsenal Vs Tottenham game will no longer don a secondary or prototypical signal; it disintegrates into a jumble of signals mediated by third party mediums only related to the game by laborious explanations. Similarly, the child watching its favorite TV program can no longer see the images through the eyes of Tele-tubbies; mediated texts by a narrator external to the action interprets the child's own visions.



identifications with particular phenomena largely depends upon generalized concepts. Musisi in this sense associates with shaking or seismic waves because a Lubaale possess the powers to do so. In what is atypical or typical, the Baganda disconnect or connect the body, soul, and the outer realms alien in a way generically acculturated into its own culture.

Anything could represent anything in Buganda and as such when the king died, executioners killed the ‘*Omusolozza*’ responsible for keeping a symbolic fire of the king’s life burning in the palace immediately because the one it burned for, had died.<sup>146</sup> Friesen (2006) considers a genuine symbol as usually containing a cultural and logical foundation. The fire translated into a metaphor of life; a rare case of visual metaphoric representation.<sup>147</sup> ‘*Kawulugumo*’, a drum forming part of the royal battery produced a ‘roaring’ sound that prompted its nomenclature; it announced either war, triumph or death of a prince, when sounded. The roaring forms a link with might of jungle king–the lion. Other artifacts symbolized or initiated action.<sup>148</sup> Another form of symbolism contrived acts of artistry: when the earthquake

146 The roots of symbolism date as far back as the coming of Kintu. Kaggwa (1901) reveals that during this period, people throughout the kingdom rested for seven days every time the moon appeared. He further reveals that due to this norm from Magonga where Kintu lived, every king thereafter had to spend a day without performing any duty other than touching the fetishes (mayembe) containing the spirits he believed had protected him through the month. In Magonga still, virgin boys and girls ate cooked plantain obtained from a banana plant–ekitooke known as ‘Manyagalya’ believed to have been brought with Kintu. This claim also highlights the Ganda belief in the mythic-historical beginning of Buganda royal dynasty. The symbolism cited above works itself through, conspicuously, in Ganda rituals, significantly evident during the coronation of a Kabaka. For example: (1) At the ninth stage of the ritual almanac, Semanobe (oracle at Budo’s shrine) took the crown prince a tree known as ‘Oluiiki’ and got one piece–empiki, called ‘Buteba’ that was part of the ‘Mweso’ game found in an enclosure known as ‘Kigango’, ‘Gombolola’ or ‘Masengere-gansaze’. Kaggwa describes the seed as significant of the Kabaka’s supremacy in that no one assumes a wiser position than that of the king. If anyone became wiser, s/he would utilize his/her vast acumen compared to a wise player of mweso who wins an opponent with less seeds but tactically playing backwards. The piece (usually a black and smooth hard seed that grow on the Luiki tree) ‘empiki eya buteba’ in this example symbolizes the wisdom attributed to the superiority of the Kabaka and artistry of mweso players. (2) From Budo, the crown prince would select a hill on which he erected a fence–‘Akakomera’ that marked his father’s last funeral rites. The kakomera comprised of temporary materials–‘Bikabugo’ and at its completion, the prince became the Kabaka of Buganda. The oracle ‘Nalungu’ of the Lugave (pangolin) clan told Kabaka Namugala that: “This hill Naggalabi is where your grandfather Kintu overpowered Bbemba Musota, and after killing him he ‘ate’ Obuganda” (Kaggwa, 1901, p. 8) He insisted and advised him that when his child and grandchildren ate the Kabakaship, they had to go to Naggalabi. They should step on the ‘Jjembe’ (fetish) in commemoration of Kintu’s victory over Bbemba and possession of his country; thus, whoever went to that hill became the next Kabaka (ibid).

147 The only ritual with inherent qualities of what it represented comprised the process of extracting the jawbone of a dead king. The Ganda never buried a dead king; belief holds that he continued into another life. The extraction of the jawbone followed the belief that the king would continue to eat and energize his afterlife, so the bearers of the object ensured its maximum protection, suggests Kaggwa. Elsewhere, Kasozi (1983) links symbolism in the jawbone to unity since each one of us is bound to eat as a source of energy: The people will remain in unison with their fallen king. The jawbone became indexically representative of the Kabaka and his afterlife, and so far, this forms the indexical signification of physical objects yet found in the Ganda mentality.

148 ‘Busemba’ the drum of death sounded only after instigating the death of the first person to notice it. The eventual proverb “Ajukiza Busemba, y’agikuba” derives content from the symbolism behind the words and acts. Object, action, and name supplement each other to form an interlock of symbolic entities in this instance of representation. ‘Ku-semba’ means to ‘come last’ and the first person to pronounce that the drum lagged behind after the sounding of Mujaguzo went to the sacrificial table to safeguard the king against hostile spirits.

struck the land, it signaled Lubale *Musisi*, responsible for shaking the earth. After the vibrations seized, people alarmed wildly and widely and played musical instruments to recognize his authority.<sup>149</sup> The prevalence of Musisi prompted pregnant women to paint their abdomens with black soot that indicated the happening leaving behind traces similar to what Sabine (2008) calls a ‘physical trace’. This, they believed, prevented miscarriages and disease that would affect the child. Such *experiential meaning* relies on qualities that translate into visual signs that, in turn, transform an internal belief into a tangible sign. The belief mutates into another sign outside its own properties and whether or not this sign contains qualities of the belief, the mutation of physical energy into visible signs serves to relieve the bearer of the original expression and thereby constituting its meaning. In this way, oral cultures make common use of visual metaphors as a way of symbolizing their beliefs about the world and organizing knowledge. Culture legitimizes this way of knowing and expressed in a tradition of rich imagery commonly referred to as *the way* of the people (Clair, 2000).

### Ganda art practice

The Baganda expressed their ideas predominantly through thought exhibited by the wisdom they applied in constructing folk tales, as opposed to visual representation. This reflects in the minimal prevalence of representational figurative art in Ganda traditional art with the ‘Luzira pottery figure’ and *Timba* drum as some of the few known anthropomorphic images in Buganda (see figures 4 & 5).<sup>150</sup> The lack of anthropomorphic design finds root in the inability of people of Buganda to distinguish reverential or servile fear from religious representations and fear of unknown forces attributed to their attitude towards religion (Lugira, 1971).<sup>151</sup> “This

149 Musisi was the son of Bukulu. Bukulu was one of the chiefs that came with Kintu to Buganda.

150 From my studies, the first zoomorphic art form evident among Ganda impresses a snakelike figure of ‘Timba’ (python) the main drum in the Royal battery (Mujaguzo), introduced by Kabaka Kimera (see figure 6). “A Kabaka was supposed to beat Timba at his enthronement to declare publically that he had become a Kabaka,” writes Kasozi (1983, p. 15). Kasozi further reports the chief fetish of the king (Mba-jwe), comprised of a rope and a head made out of clay that likened it to a serpent. Less these two iconic representations at first level signification, many artifacts in Buganda symbolized another thing–this also included speech and behavior. Fetishes established the first contact with the superior power of mainly clan gods entrusted with the responsibility of protecting his clan members; relics such as of Kibuka the war god provide evidence of representation by physical objects at the national level (see figure 3). “The relics are the links between the living and the dead, in other words they are the tangible objects to which the ghost is said to cling, and form the sacred emblems for worship” notes Roscoe (1921, p. 140). Further still, a meteoric object of Mukasa (Neptune), the god of the lake commanded veneration and emblemized by a canoe paddle while a serpent with phallus in his mouth represented ‘Mbajwe’ one of the most important fetishes (ibid, p. 145).

151 One of their great beliefs was enshrined in spirits ‘mizimu’, in which they believed that the soul of a person was the key sustainer of life, and hence, the most venerated of religious objects in Buganda considered as forces, vital souls or power. Furthermore, Lugira (1971) mentions reflections of a person in an image, name, shadow, water, or mirror as being part of the person, and indeed his/her very soul. This belief included portraits believed to contain the soul of the person portrayed. This barred Baganda with such beliefs to have their photographs taken because anyone who possessed such portrait would be able to control or exercise fatal influence on the portrayed person. Indeed Baganda never disposed any of their transitional body parts like hair and nails because they believed wrong people would use these parts to manipulate another person’s spirit.



Figure 4. Tuzira pottery figure.  
Photo: adopted from Lugira, 1970.



Figure 5. Timba. Photo: adopted from Kasozi, 1983.

mythological, magico-religious attitude encouraged aversion towards personal images. And as the Baganda usually printed in proverbs what they wanted to hand over to coming generations so they seemed to have immortalized this notion in the Ganda proverb: “Ekifaananyi kissa” –likeness is a source of death” (Lugira, pp. 109-111). Inadvertently, this implies that it is not by accident that the Ganda did not have representational art, but rather their beliefs did not accommodate such activity (Graulle, 1950). The only way Baganda could express themselves—and even continue their local knowledge systems—was through oral means such as proverbs, sayings, and folktales. Because of this “Ganda thought has been influenced by half-true, half-legendary traditions,” notes Lugira (pp. 109-111).<sup>152</sup>

By entrusting their life with sacred, the Ganda created a sophisticated network of ideologies and beliefs that required material presence in order to realize. This meant that they had to produce articles that represented their ideologies and beliefs about the supernatural beings. In this, the Ganda created a sophisticated art form that was characteristically symbolic in nature and mainly found in sacred objects such as the war object seen in figure 5. Prior to foreign invasion, artisans were responsible for delivering goods and services to the people having developed forging, pottery, leatherwork, and basketry (Mukayiranga, cited in, Melgin, 1998).

<sup>152</sup> The legend of Walukagga explains the Ganda indifference towards anthropomorphic designs. Tradition recounts that when the king realized Walukagga’s brilliance, he asked for a humanlike sculpture produced in iron. Bound by custom, Walukagga could not decline the king’s demand, and he instead sought advice from a friend who unfortunately was bonkers. The friend advised him to demand for thousands of loads of human hair and hundreds of pots filled with human tears to facilitate the process. After attempting in vain to fulfill Walukagga’s demands, the king abandoned the entire project. Based on this legend, Lugira concludes with a realization that the mind of the Ganda has since then been inherently mixed up with “fear, admiration, and wonder for artists who produce human likeness” (Lugira, 1970, p. 112). It is not strange then that the Ganda mindset was not after producing likenesses or images, but avoiding them as much as they could. It is not strange either that Baganda considered an artist as awesome.



Figure 5b. An object from a war shrine.  
Photo: adopted from Lugira, 1970.



Figure 6. Ganda motto style. Photo: adopted from Lugira, 1970.

Along these objects, the Ganda developed narratives that described the presence of the gods or powers endowed in such objects. Lugira (1970) singles out a Ganda style of representational art that emanated from the need by the Baganda to illustrate their “numerous pithy aphorisms”, as ‘Ganda Motto Style’ (p. 114). At the time of its inception in 1922 when reading and writing was common, posits Lugira, Ddamba an editor of Matalisi newspaper started writing Ganda sayings in forms of riddles–Bikokyo. In many Ganda living rooms, were copies on paper of these riddles that later became decorations and maxims. Eventually, in 1936-1940, pictures to illustrate the sayings supplemented the written narrative, a practice that originated from Bishop Tucker College in Mukono (see figure 6). This remained an emphatic and revered practice in traditional communities in Buganda where this was the only kind of representational art. The question to ask is, “why were images added to the inscriptions?”<sup>153</sup>

Ganda artistic drive is more of a decorative character than a representational one evident by the terminology used in connection with aesthetic activities (Lugira, 1970; Kasozi, 1983). These words are all verbs except kifanaanyi (image). Being utilitarian and decorative in artistic dispositions, the only words they have in their language comparable or near to the Western concept of art are *Ku-tona* (dye,

<sup>153</sup> It is possible that since the Ganda had no direct representational art, apart from the sacred objects that represented their gods and sacred beliefs, mottos were the only forum in which they could express their prowess in imagery. Secondly, there was a need to embody the inscriptions of words with material elements that characterize what they stand for. In other words, they were trying to make them meaningful through materialization of sayings. Furthermore, since their whole life dwelt upon abstract thought, they had realized that it was not meaningful on its own; it needed another dimension that related directly to life—the artistic input that they lacked for a long time. This also coincides with the time when Margaret Trowel begins art classes at Makerere University College, in 1937. Todd (cited in, Kingdon, 1961, p. 2) is very clear about the concept of art, “If art is alive as people are alive, it is part of life. We are live people and it is part of us.”



Figure 7a. Performance as artistic experience.  
Photo: Internet source, retrieved September, 2009



Figure 7b. Functionality as artistic experience.  
Photo: Kabiito Richard, 2008.

stain, apply color), *Ku-siiga* (smear), *Ku-wawula* (smoothen), *Kwola* (engraving, tattooing), and *Ku-wunda* (fine finish, embellish) which are all verbs. This in effect implies that their artistry is enshrined in the concept of smearing-embellishing an inert body with another layer presumed to be beautifying. *Kusiiga* in Buganda symbolized a beautifying act and process and thus the smearing of a bride to be with cream (*okusiiga omuzigo*) in order to modify her appearance on her wedding day.<sup>154</sup> As an assumption, by smearing the bride with ghee, the Ganda would achieve an accentuated tenderness and glittering of the body, which is altogether a concept of beauty among the Ganda. This view echoes Sengendo's (1997) concept of the Ganda aesthetic drive that among others, entails, abstraction, decoration, immediacy, spirituality, and excellence. This underlines an aesthetic of immediacy in the Ganda concept of art production and consumption. On the other hand, examining human behavior in production and performance of skill in making and doing things that stimulate appreciation of objects and activities will provide a fuller understanding of the unique events manifesting processes of thought and interaction (Jones, 1975).

The body consumed art by experiencing its development and satisfying its utility, function, and delight (see figures 7a & 7b above). For example, when *Mu-*

<sup>154</sup> The women enhanced their eyebrows with dark charcoal powder in an act of 'okuziga ebisige' that literally implies 'dying the eyebrows', to enhance contrast and therefore, their beauty. The act of *okusiiga* represented artiness in itself and its product beautification. Unlike her neighbors, the Baganda people did not don elaborate jewelry (see figure 9). "The Baganda follow a rule of simplicity in their appearance" writes Lugira (1971, p. 41). This is also reflected in the fact that "[i]n many African languages, there is no specific word for the concept art since this would set the object apart as something without utility," observes Blauer (1999, p. 13). In Buganda, the nearest word to art is 'ekifaananyi' or image implying that there is no actual word attributed to 'art': what they understood as art is the process and functionality, and not so much the object. Significant separation of the process and product transpires when one considers 'okuba' for two-dimensional art.

*sisi* shook the earth, it instigated an artistic process that became a bodily experience. This integrates mind and body. The meaning thus, of painting the abdomen is that which the vibration of the earth refers to, concerning a Muganda pregnant woman; she experiences the meaning with the body, but the narrative that follows interprets Musisi's shaking of the earth.<sup>155</sup> Interestingly, Lilja (2006) too notes, "We see and experience with our body. All our senses combine to make awareness possible" (p. 18). In experiential knowing, we do not need to interpret phenomena because the body already recognizes and translates our experience into a meaningful event. We only have to detect a situation that fits our present needs for us to exercise the dictates of tradition. Tradition thus, does not allow independent interpretation because of things given a priori. However, tradition allows us to interpret a situation as fitting a certain tradition and as such, respond according to the demands of that tradition.<sup>156</sup> For example, we interpret the shaking of the earth as a sign of movement by the god Musisi and we duly respond according to the dictates of what its associated tradition stipulates. But that interpretation is not our own; it is a priori given by the hierarchy. In the story of 'Njabala,' we interpret laziness as a vice due to our own experiences and individual input although one could base such input on tradition. An important distinction here is that although I recognize an embodied explanation of both metaphor and meaning especially when explaining Ganda ways of experiencing art, my idea of embodiment structurally differs with many embodied theories. This is because I envision meaning, not generated within the body, but experienced by the body as an active agent in the process of appreciating it.

The implication is simple and conceivable: meaning from Ganda artistry is tangibly present and thus immediately conceived. Expressed variably, meaning was largely experiential since the experience of producing was by and within the body (see figure 7). This also implies that whoever used the same object for the same purpose achieved the same meaning. In such a case, the essence or significance of the implement is unchanged among the users and consequently, a water-pot will carry water, and a beer mug for consuming alcohol. In some cases, for example catching crickets during their season, gourds of the 'endeku' category would be used for containing the insects. These exceptional cases also meant that the alternate utility is still accepted and known in that way, but within limited bounds. Just as in Western culture, a wine bottle separates features from a beer bottle by convention. Likewise, since communally accepted, the Baganda knew and accepted the meaning of things communally. Reality in the sense of creating it is, among the

<sup>155</sup> The body mediates the process of meaning-making such that it becomes part of the meaning. In Buganda, art traditionally lies in what people do with it. The saying, "Amaaso g'oMuganda gali Mun-galo," highlights the link between body and mind enshrined in Ganda artistry. Lately, new forms of what the Ganda did with their art, have taken over. In this way, the Ganda no longer have a fallback position of artifacts that mean something to them; nevertheless, the belief lives on. Stankiewicz (2001) writing about Prang authors notes that the pillars of a good ornament lay in its fitness to purpose.

<sup>156</sup> Tradition is not devoid of interpretation in its application; before we can interpret a situation as a tradition, we must first understand it as a tradition in order to apply it to our present context in line with Drout's (2006a) 'elbow space' that allows its interpretation.

Baganda, concrete and accessible. If the postulate that meaning is a result of two coded events were to stand, then tradition has meaning in itself in that, any coded event produces meaning, although it is not strong enough to influence the whims of tradition.<sup>157</sup> In contrast, Pearce (1976) notes that people are prisoners neither of their history or their heredity because they can manage their meanings even when they cannot manage their environment or themselves. Effectively, people will always feel free to re-construe what they cannot deny.

In conclusion, due to the ethnic allegiance, the Ganda eschew of anthropomorphic design did not bar the people from the strong urge for imagery and as a result, resorted to symbolism. A symbol in Ganda mentality, generically ‘includes all that is meant by a sign, a mark or a token’ that ideally stands for something else. Braisby (2005) believes that “we can label something with a category word yet not believe that it belongs to the category: describing a statue of a lion as a ‘lion’, for example, does not indicate that we think the statue really is a lion” (p. 189). However, Braisby’s postulate that a person’s goal and extent of knowledge may influence how one develops categories creates a loophole in *human knowing* that the Baganda mentality exploit to differ considerably from conventional representation. The Baganda traditionally, do not only label things with category words; on the contrary, they believe in the *labels* they ascribe to those phenomena.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the category of spirits wields insurmountable power; *Empologoma ya Buganda* is power, period. Such blatant belief that Lugira labeled ‘blind’, makes Ganda mentality strong to surpass mere language use. Inasmuch as it is true that the Ganda symbol agrees with the conventional symbol, its significance nevertheless differs with the mentality of the people.<sup>159</sup> That exploitative loophole, too, enables the Ganda to revel traditionally in common meaning. Below is a *scenario* as a unit of my experience of how a child links mind with body to make meaning.

### Scenario1

*I showed Louie her photograph standing on her bed holding on to the bounding woodwork<sup>160</sup>. When I asked her about this pictorial representation, she responded as such: “Baby Louie is sleeping”. My interpretation of the child’s statement was that, she did not see ‘baby Louie’ in the picture but what the picture represented. This implies that although she may not have recognized her picture as the ultimate goal, the fact that she recognized the woodwork representing a bed, she had likened the representation to the*

157 See Barbieri’s (2006) discussion of natural codes and meaning.

158 ‘Word’ in this case conveniently suits all types of references including material and immaterial entities of human knowing. I would like to note here that this observation is contrary to what Horsthemke regards as true knowledge in his objection to the terminology and application of IK.

159 Owing to this fact, Greek symbolon from which the term ‘Symbol’ derives its terminology aligns with Ganda of bringing together of things. “This tool is the logical origin of the Ganda meaning. For, what the Ganda mind intends to convey through the idea Symbol, is the bringing together of ideas and objects, one of which is a certain circumstance, somehow expresses the other” (Lugira, p. 133).

160 The picture only showed a small portion of the woodwork. This took place on November 04, 2007 at Makerere.

*act of sleeping. The presence of the woodwork overrides the iconic function by giving it a third dimension that, in her interpretation of the picture, is the meaning. She does not only see baby Louie, she also sees a bed, and the relationship between the woodwork and the image, leads to the conclusion that indeed it represents a sleep act: she delinks image from what it represents in the process but links the mind with the body. She sees utility in the object that she engenders from experiencing the sight of the bed.*

Images do not represent what they are, but instead represent something else of immediate importance.<sup>161</sup> If images do not represent what they are, then the immediate thing of importance to the prospective knower, by some means, should be accessible in accordance to Ganda context of art appreciation. In referential meaning, some forms become important because of the representations they conjure in the mind about objects and events other than themselves (Hershberger, 1974).<sup>162</sup> Further, during the same episode, Louie peruses through ‘African Woman’,<sup>163</sup> in which she sees a picture that, among other things, included two bottles: One of ‘Malan (wine) and another Campari (liquor). The Malan bottle is dark while the Campari bottle is clear. She then points at the dark bottle and says “beer.” She links the bottle to beer, because it is dark. From her own experience, dark bottles contain beer, unless stated otherwise (she recognizes a coke, for example). She makes recourse to her tradition. This observation spells out a variation of the associationist theory presented by Arnheim (1996) contending that judgments of expression depend on stereotypes, whereby interpretation relies on a person’s conventions adapted as ready-made from the social group to which one belongs, rather than spontaneously or repeatedly observing what belongs together. What is interesting though is that, she does not see the bottle as an independent image but as a container. She de-links the image from the representation: she is more concerned with what a dark bottle contains, than what the image is. For the *Modern* painter, for example, a painting represents itself rather than merely representing other things (Clarke & Hollings, 1987).<sup>164</sup> Visual representations do not represent themselves per se; they are only signs of other elements or objects that they stand

161 Additionally, an image is what we conceive of an idea or thing in its lived or present state; it remains in the immediate.

162 “Some forms,” according to Hershberger (1974), “are more important with respect to the representations they bring to mind of objects and events. These forms act as signs of symbols of other objects. Perfect examples of such forms are words. The representation of the form of the word itself is trivial relative to the representation which it evokes—its meaning” (p.150). On the other hand, representational meaning bearing something known and its reference to anything occurs in the human organism as a percept, concept, or idea. The forms are not acting as signs, because the representation evoked is not of all or any previously experienced forms or various other remote or imagined objects or events, but of the observed form itself. It is more likely to be iconic, the representation being structurally similar to the observed form (ibid, pp. 148-9).

163 See, African Woman, 2007, Issue 14, p. 90

164 However, revisionist art history sees this as ideology or belief that any possible painting represents. A modernist painting may make a viewer represent a city or landscape of a father and so on, even in use of abstract forms.

for.<sup>165</sup> Among the Baganda, everything represented something from utility to appeasement of the soul and thus useful. Thus if we accept that art is a language, then we have to learn to look at images as being representative of other things, not their own properties alone.<sup>166</sup> This calls for an improvement in the way we express our ideas too, in artistic dialects so that we continue to contrive meaningful expressions.

## NARRATIVE TRADITIONS

### Preamble

A classical view of narrative definition would state that narrative is a kind of representation bearing a sequence of events. However, it extends beyond a mere collection; it reveals certain coherency in what happened, configuring causal and other connections into a narratable episode or episodes (Goldie, 2009). This general definition aligns with my former position on narrative texts at the same time providing an insight into the general structure of a narrative. Generally, narrative structure appears as a string of events related to each other by a common cause or goal. However, as will be discussed, many other formations do constitute narrative and the causal or hierarchical construction is only one of them and thus not a major denominator. In this section, I discuss the historical and social issues affecting and constituting narrativity in Buganda with genesis, development, and social significance in focus. I particularly highlight ‘accelerated’ history as a major player in shaping the trend of Ganda narrative in colonial Africa. I discuss how stories have evolved over time in Buganda in particular the state of folklore in post-independence Buganda. I summarize with offering a scenario of narrative inception and the nature of stories.

### Separating myth and history

Ssekamwa (1995) identifies two major categories of Ganda narrative: mythical and historical narratives. This, he says, has become a terrible blunder amongst western writers who dismiss the story of Kato Kintu as mythical. McKnight (1997) during a review of Christopher Wrigley’s writings indicates that myth comprises most of what passed for ‘history’ in Buganda oral tradition. He further notes that if one was to go by the notion that myth constitutes much of Ganda oral tradition, then the beginning of Buganda is in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. McKnight further posits, “While there is wide agreement that Buganda’s oral history incorporates mythical elements, much previous scholarship suggests that the mythical over time, was grafted onto real

<sup>165</sup> A picture of my father, for example does not represent itself; it represents my father. When I look at it, I see my father, not the shades and forms and their organization that make it look like my father.

<sup>166</sup> This is also a belief in postmodern times in Western cultures of any content-based art, which is typical of feminist art and most art since the 1970’s in Western art world contexts.

people and events”<sup>167</sup> (para. 4). Cautious in his opening statements, Kiwanuka (1971) admits that Sir Apollo Kagga, one of the first writers on Ganda oral tradition, set out, not to write a history and therefore some of the recorded traditions were pure myths. Notwithstanding though, many of them were true histories that require unraveling from myths. Because of Buganda’s traditions, Buganda became a source of interest to many scholars who on several occasions make gross generalizations, based on scanty evidence. Furthermore, Buganda being a centralized state was more likely to accumulate traditions because of its social political configuration that was also accruing scholars’ interest.<sup>168</sup>

Kyazze (2002) locates the clan system from about 400 to 1200 A.D when Tonda Kings ruled over the land, but later taken over by the Abalasangye in the lineage of King Kintu.<sup>169</sup> To doubt that the Ganda had their own history transmitted orally undermines their livelihoods prior to exploration, Christianity, and colonialism, which weakened the indigenous religions, myths, and legends of sub-Saharan Africa (Myth Encyclopedia, 2008). It is tantamount to claiming that the Baganda did not have a history that belonged to them. Many cultures world over did not have documented cultural values, but they managed to create institutions that kept them together and safeguarded their interest. How then did the Ganda develop their customs and traditions if they had an ahistorical past? Ssekamwa’s testimony identifies one of the reasons contemporary historians have pinned the Ganda kingdom to the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century. In the beginning, Kabaka Kato Kintu’s name was Kato but he later added Kintu to his name. This is why he is confused with Kintu of the legend. Ssekamwa’s complaint signals a self-generated mixed identity by Kato. Because Kato wanted to reign over the chiefs that he found in Buganda, he decided to add Kintu to his name and he added Nambi to his wife’s name Nnantunttulu-lu so that his subjects would consider him as the father of Baganda (Ssekamwa, 1996).

Kiwanuka (1971) is, too, discontent with the view that traditions transmitted orally lacked historical content, and myths served political situations. Kiwanuka out rightly dismisses this view as unconvincing and betrays a misconception about historical writing that creates a fallacious view that printed peer-reviewed research as the only probable form of history. Kiwanuka premised his argument

<sup>167</sup> Wrigley disregards a reconstruction of the political evolution of Buganda basing it on oral tradition without considering such a tradition as a “myth onto which supposedly real people and events have been imposed”. Wrigley’s utmost flaw is, in my opinion, going overboard to scrutinizing Ganda narrative in parallel with stories from other regions by supposing that stories bearing counterparts from other regions were myths, “the importance of which lies in their meaning and apparent historical content”. Those with no parallels but stress “the importance of particular Buganda institutions or events he regards as more historical in nature.”

<sup>168</sup> Ssekamwa deprecates this tendency of generalization basing on the matter of scanty information claiming that contemporary writers about Buganda are wrong to claim that the first King of Buganda is Kimera and that Kabaka Kato Kintu is a mythological figure. They further claim that he hailed in Bunyoro from a royal family of the Luo known as Bito who conquered the Chwezi dynasty around the year 1500, which ideally implies that Kimera a Bito conquered the kingdom of Buganda. He denounces this claim as ‘inadmissible’.

<sup>169</sup> Kyazze notes that Bbamba Musota was the last king of the Tonda Kings.

against the notion that, oral tradition lacks documentable evidence for a true history of a people, on three primary sources of English history heavily built around mythical sources. These are the Anglo-Saxon chronicle and Bede's Ecclesiastical History, which he says, bear serious limitations.<sup>170</sup> Kiwanuka's argument builds upon the fact that there are significant gaps in the two major English sources, also supplemented by information gathered from various sources including the life of saints. This historical account reflects in African histories, which one could also supplement by clan and family histories.<sup>171</sup> Atkinson (1975) embarks on an analysis of Ganda history by claiming that Kintu as the first king and Nakibinge the eighth king of Buganda is pure myth. However, there is no guarantee either that what is written is the sole truth. The question and perhaps the confusion is where myth and history begin.

There is an important issue to address; if customs, traditions, and values that govern the ways of the Baganda are scarcely documented and not even passed on through formal training (academic so to say), how then and why should cultural history be proven by mere documentation? Maurice Merleau-Ponty (cited in, Flynn, 2007) argues that since cultures experience the world differently, their emotional experiences of the world will depend greatly on the differences of language. If a custom can persist, a belief or a tradition, then even words can persist and continue from generation to generation. This is also evidence that the internal structures of the system are well in place to provide considerable consistent and reliable accounts.<sup>172</sup> Additionally, one cannot detach myths from a history because they describe historical events in non-conventional terms. Hence, the claim that history is devoid of myth in its instigation or construct may be unreliable. There is reason to believe that Ganda oral tradition is part of its history because every Ganda custom has a reason and explanation behind, corporeal or ethereal; and if these ideologies continued in time and space, it is questionable why the oral might be overtly unbelievable or unreliable.<sup>173</sup> Through kingship, clans, systems

170 For example, in Bede's writings, history of the various English kingdoms was never his ultimate goal, presumably, because of scanty information on most of them except perhaps North Umbria. Similarly, Gilda's minor source, did not consider writing a history but a tirade against the sins and excesses of the British Kings of his day. Not even the Anglo-Saxon chronicle itself clearly demonstrates that its value varies from period to period, because its earlier entries especially are tantalizingly brief: "it can tell us that certain kings fought at a given place but it remains silent on the result of the battle" (Kiwanuka, 1971, p. xiv).

171 "With the scanty and sometime not too reliable evidence, the historians of Saxon England have demonstrated that much can be learnt by re-assembling the scattered bits of information", continues Kiwanuka. This demonstrates a gap between an event and when people document it, is not a handicap towards creating a history. The reasons responsible for causing disgust in African oral history are lack of synthesis and indigestible accounts of oral literature.

172 For example, the myth of Kintu and Nambi has persisted for generations; does it imply that myths are not a part of culture of the people on which they build their beliefs? As observed earlier, some myths arose to explain events out of reach by the Ganda material entity and the strong belief they had in supernatural forces that required a sort of representation they realized in myths. However, this does not suddenly qualify the claim that Ganda deeds and beliefs were all mythical; many of them were daily experiences and some of the myths drew upon them. All such elements come together to make a history.

173 Alternatively, even, it is equally unbelievable that the oral would significantly differ from the practical since Baganda preserve many of their traditions in the body itself. The Ganda relied heavily on their

of succession and inheritance, the Ganda effectively preserved their traditions and constructed a reliable history.<sup>174</sup> In conclusion, while Wrigley is correct to align Ganda folklore with foreign tales to extract the true history of the Baganda, there is a risk of overlooking the idea that human nature builds upon the same pillars. Therefore, values, aspirations, fears, and many issues affecting various communities become similar because of shared oral histories or shared experiences.

### Genesis of stories

Meaning in Buganda capitalized on the rich heritage of oral culture to supplement symbolism enshrined in belief and objects. Like any other culture, the Ganda had a vast ensemble of folktales transmitted through speech for over 2000 years (Albert, 2007; Masembe, 2002). Furthermore, "while the surface details in these stories bear resemblance to their European and Asian counterparts, these stories are a product of the Ganda culture and philosophy, carrying the essence of what makes Baganda a distinct people with a long history and intricate folklore and mythology" (Masembe, p. V). Masembe reckons that Buganda culture under the stewardship of its peculiarities and idiosyncrasies profoundly receives representation through etiological tales, which explain for example cultural norms that bar Baganda women from eating mutton, existence of 'masiga', or the "origin of animal behavior and physical appearance" (Masembe, p. V). Etiological tales explore why the frog has no tail, chicken constantly scratch the ground, rats steal from the house and many other fauna or flora mannerisms and nomenclatures. Such categories and functions that are deeply enshrined in the Ganda way of life then explain and support Masembe's submission that Ganda narratives have their own inherent origins despite the resemblance with other cultures. "[E]very human culture in the world seems to create stories (narratives) as a way of making sense of the world," explains Agatucci (1998, p. 1). Augmenting this notion, Denning (2001) recognizes storytelling as an honored practice in primordial times, and as such, the only means villagers could assemble their knowledge and survive.

The most common form of learning before Arabs, missionaries and Europeans came to Buganda was through storytelling, because this was the most effective way of transmitting information from the elders to younger generations.<sup>175</sup> Indeed, all literature on Ganda folklore written at the time targeted the young stars. This is because the Baganda believed that the most effective way of preserving

cultural values for psychological and physiological perseverance. "The unusually high quality of the Kiganda traditions was not an historical accident. It was the result of the complex political and social organization which made the knowledge of history essential to all men in public life," insists Kiwanuka (1971, p. xxii).

174 One could pose a question as to why this study engages in such a dig into the history of oral tradition and its authenticity. This addresses Ssekamwa's concerns that Ganda oral tradition is overtly mythical and that its accounts are scanty and unreliable. This, once proven, would weaken a strong reliance on the values dispensed by the stories found in Buganda as not constituting a long tradition.

175 "Missionaries especially became real communicators between people of different countries, languages, and races," notes Fischer (1976, p. 6).

and teaching the young was through oral tradition.<sup>176</sup> “In collecting and recording these tales for future generations, it is my sincere hope that every child will have an opportunity to benefit from the wisdom and richness of our ancestors inherent in our oral tradition,” indicates Masembe (2002, p. IV). The intentions of the ‘Luganda Language Association’, for example, targeted entertainment, knowledge acquisition, and luring pupils in Buganda (Ndagire, 1960).<sup>177</sup> Optimistically, (Bastian, 1999) reassures us, today people are reverting to storytelling as way of reinvigorating their cultures after discovering that much was lost after the many years of oral tradition including its wisdom and techniques. If story telling in Buganda culminated into a way of transmitting knowledge and continuing culture, why did the Baganda rely on this tool?

Many stories in their book, according to Kizito, Segganyi, and Mukalazi (1959), were meant to respond to questions such as “why does a dog lack horns?” or how did the proverb “Oh kawakuzi” come into being? Ssekamwa (1995) reveals that the philosophies endowed by Ganda narratives are resourceful and moving with the times. The wisdom therein can never be outmoded in that at any one stage, these stories will always be useful and applicable to the contemporaneous generations. In some of the stories, for example, written by Kizito et al, there are proverbs directly transplanted from the main story and the advice is that the reader should be able to interpret the meaning embedded within such texts. This is evidence that the stories were not mere tales for entertainment.<sup>178</sup> However, many other stories address issues of when, where, how, things happened, whereas other stories simply develop out of need to tell about a something. Malagala (1961) identifies three issues targeted in folktales as we listen to stories we get involved in conversation, sometimes humorous, and on the occasions, they create wonder; (ii) we are able to know how people in the past lived; and (iii) stories caution us by showing us how

176 Communities honored storytelling practice in primordial times as people huddled around campfires in small villages and shared stories about the wolves attacking the village, or failed crops or the changing weather (Denning, 2001).

177 Nnaalinya is a title name given to the princesses of Buganda who are biological children to a reigning king. However, it also goes that all women in the lineage of royalty are princesses (Bambejja) and the men princes (Balangira). Kaswa (1964) emphatically indicates that his intention of documenting selected Ganda folktales engendered by the urge to avail such stories to young children who did never have an opportunity of listening to them. Kizito, Segganyi, and Mukalazi (1959), in their foreword, note that young children lacked opportunities that would avail them with traditional Ganda folklore and thus the very reason they made such a collection. They also urged parents and teachers to encourage young children not to concentrate on foreign stories alone but also have a comparison with their own. Important to note is the fact that traditional story telling started decaying the moment Western formal education set in.

178 Nsimbi confirms that what people are most attracted to is the meaning enshrined in the stories. He reckons that the words used in some of the stories equate to ‘wrapping materials’: whatever is inside is what we need. Hence, in stories what we needed is the meaning more than the words that constitute them. The meaning embedded in the stories is not overly oblivious but hidden and therefore one needs to find it (1996, p. IV). Significantly, though, Nsimbi uses the metaphor of a wrapper as the words that construct the narrative. The content of the package is what we need, which is purely upon us to discover not the words that communicate it. Heather (2000) contributes to this premise by applauding the study of folktales, which offers a view through which the form of culture comes as well as mirroring humanity, since world tales reflect universal concerns. The Baganda packaged their stories, as a result, with profound meaning that contrived the pillars on which their society ran, organized, and continued.

to behave and fit within our times. In addition, Kasirye (1958) reckons that stories assist many people in learning discourse, creative thought, and understanding Luganda.

### Evolution of Ganda folklore

As time passed by, Ganda folklore began to lose its verve because of new elements that came with colonization: Christianity, exploration, and trade. In the process, some tales took on new words, meanings, and forms. Mainly this was so because language itself is dynamic. Nnamugenyi, Nnamugenyi, and Nnakibuuka (cited in, Kaswa, 1964) note that as time goes by, words within stories change through displacement and replacement functions due to ‘short memory’. In Kaswa’s testimony, as time passed-by people ran short of memory, probably due to losing freshness of events in mind leading to memory decay. It could also be that as time passed by, the colonizers’ stories stopped the telling of Ganda culture and thereby, the Ganda oral history was partially lost. There is no doubt that an element of spatial-temporal effects and dynamism of language is responsible for the transfiguration of Ganda narrative. Other stories have developed parallel versions with or without the original characters, the contexts in some altered, and in others, the wording has changed considerably. This, according to Namugenyi et al, is due to displacement. New words and usage keep on cropping up every passing day, and other words dropped from usage due to merging cultures and needs.<sup>179</sup> Forces of displacement require one to replace the missing words with equal or similar words that maintain the essence of the story. Important to note in the Archimedes principle is the ‘weight’ element as a constant: weight displaces weight in equal terms. Similarly, in narrative situations, words displace other words that mean the same thing or eventually meaning may change as the same word can mean many things, and also, the meaning of a word often changes over time.<sup>180</sup>

Stories in general are bound to absorb several new elements since we mainly transmit them orally from one person to another. Since we are not able to recall the exact words the narrator used, non-conventional principles require us to continue with the narrative by maintaining its original framework constituted by its essences. In Narrative situations, meaning is the constant element that contains the balance.<sup>181</sup> However, along the way, several features may appear to mean other

179 In contemporary urban slang, color has displaced cash. In an instance of narrating a story with money in it, one replaces the word ‘cash’ with the word ‘color’. However, color remains in use within its own original context although it takes on a new meaning when used in the slang category. Such a transformation is facilitated by displacement mechanisms where by a transplant is replaced by a replica or an equivalent to maintain the original structure. In the case of color and money, there is no relationship between their functions. Perhaps at the extra narrative, money possesses colored notes.

180 See, Microsoft Student, 2007

181 What is constant in these tales or proverbs is the meaning. When one reads stories or proverbs from a long time ago, concerning for example alcohol, deceit, ungratefulness, and other things one realizes that the meaning is still the same as at their inception. This observation by Nsimbi is vital to this research although he specifically refers to proverbs. In proverbs or engero ensonge, several words have changed as well as construction to a certain extent. However, the meaning for which they came into place is the same. It is important to learn from other sources that the meaning remains constantly preserved within the Ganda folktales just as it has been in bodily and spiritual practices.

things and thereby arriving at a different meaning—the goal. The stabilizing factor or *buoyancy* in Archimedes terms dwells upon the narrative traits and contexts in which one recounts the story. Hence, color will mean cash to its contemporaries, and not hue or pigment, although in another context, blood (*musaayi*) means the same thing as cash.<sup>182</sup> Athavankar (1990) acknowledges the ability of metaphors to review an object in new ways to create a new understanding of the product and its categories, and reveal a different viewpoint about the concept linked to it. As times change, words gain new meaning, thereby changing the forms and structures of the stories. One important thing is that although such transformations take place, the main essence of such stories remains through viable substitutions such as *metaphors*. On this note, metaphors serve as a means of understanding how subtle differences as language could imply variably interpreting identical information (Ziemkiewicz & Kosara, 2008).

The need situation arises when we manipulate the words in the story intentionally to achieve new meaning. This situation does not detach the original meaning from the text but it does add extra dimensions still achieved through displacement rather than any other means.<sup>183</sup> The advantage of displacement is that it maintains or controls the level of meaning and at the same time building on the original structures. For example, weight replaces weight, which emphasizes constancy. Constancy, on the other hand, initiates and maintains continuity, such that even when we manipulate words to our own benefit, such words or collection of words must add-up to what the original narrator intended. Because of the Ganda tradition whereby people lacked access to written material, the Baganda transmitted stories orally. The implication was that what they heard is what they understood as true: the words one used to narrate a story is what they considered as being original. Hence, stories with edited or displaced words will appear original on their first reading. Eventually the diction and hence the form will keep on changing. According to the needs of the narrator, some stories take on different forms as, for example, Sekamwa narrates the story of Kintu and Nambi with the intention of revealing the rich dialect of Ganda language; Masembe attempts to look for interesting words to replace the original ones to make the stories attractive. Overall, the stories maintain their original meaning, although others take on completely new forms, sometimes their meanings change retaining only the structures.

Depending on implements and systems familiar with people is more profound within such a locale than relying on external ‘things’. Displacement strategies hinge on equality or similarity, in association possibly founded with tropes in linguistic terms. Once displaced, the replacement must seem to enrich the original

<sup>182</sup> In Kiganda slang, “*Musaayi*” which means ‘blood’ is used as a metaphor for money: blood circulation keeps the body alive and functional just as money circulation keeps economies functional. When somebody talks about *musaayi*, one means functionality of the money system.

<sup>183</sup> The other means of course is replacement. These two functions are cyclic in that the displaced requires an equivalent or similar replacement, although the functions are different.

structure or else a disposition goes berserk. Visual dialect should be transformed or enhance oral dialect on equal or similar terms. Equal or similar elements therefore, should displace processes designed for comprehension and continuity. If this kind of transformation is to take place, it must be specific and familiar in the context of its use. A ship for example, as a foreign body on water depends on the principle of displacement to maintain its weight although its volume and level might change yet its presence modifies the seascape. Similarly, new words and usage may appear to affect the structure of Ganda stories, but because of the displacement principle, the stories maintain their original meanings due to the internal organizing structures referred to as buoyant forces in Archimedes terms. These forces or internal organizing structures keep the story stable: Actors, scenes and action are at the center of buoyancy in Ganda narrative and they form the stability of the stories even when their structures undergo modification. Such stability is responsible for the propagation of the narratives within the Ganda communities, for they are the anchors of essences: the timeless essences are stable units in the Ganda folklore and therefore at the end of each tale. A detailed study of selected Ganda stories conducted at a later stage in this text reveals these principles. Notably, an energetic intention that is *transformational* always precedes *displacement*.

The sophistication in Ganda narrative however is interdependent. Idioms alone cannot suffice because they require a context in which to operate. Likewise, several folktales led to the birth of proverbs (*engero ensonge*). Idioms, proverbs, and stories are part of a culture’s narrative disposition. Nevertheless, stories are more engaging because of their longevity and dialogic entities. With reliance on displacement strategies, the Ganda managed to engage in very sophisticated mechanisms of meaning making and thereby continuing their customs and traditions. On the contrary, the stories, unlike the other two categories, are prone to displacement strategies unless the narrative keeps within its particular community, and at this point, the principle of specificity and locality arise and conspicuously abound. Idioms mainly credit their use to custodians of a language because they grasp them easily just as learning their mother tongue and for that matter highly *specific*. This observation is important to this study because it strengthens the notion that specificity and familiarity enhance meaning-making processes within a specific locale as I will show later in this text.

### **Distinctions between idioms, proverbs, and stories**

Having analyzed the theory of displacement, there is an important element to discuss too, common with Ganda narrative. The aim of this discussion is to shade light on the true nature of Ganda folklore, and narratives in general so that it may become a supporting factor for the choice of narratives as a basis of this research. Kasswa and Sekamwa identify three types of narrative dialect among the Ganda folklore: ‘*Engero ensonge*’ (proverbs), ‘*Enfumo*’ (stories), and ‘*Ebisoko*’ (idioms). ‘*Enfumo*’ are forms of aphorisms and the difference is that we regard *enfumo* as true events such as that of Kabaka Kintu or Walumbe descending on earth from heaven



(Kaswa, 1964). Similarly, Sekamwa (1995) approaches the distinction of *ebisoko*, *engero ensonge* and *enfumo* by considering an idiom (*ekisoko*) as constituting one or more words; however, its meaning is always different from conventional use. He further refers to proverbs (*engero ensonge*) as very short with less than ten words packed with hidden meanings of all sorts meant for learning purposes.<sup>184</sup> My major interest in this study is in stories and idioms. I will refer to '*engero ensonge*' for a better understanding of *enfumo*. In the first category, Ssekamwa further specifies that in *ebisoko*, the words within keep on changing according to people or tense and the words could reduce or increase. On the other hand, in '*olugero olusonge*', the words never change and therefore people learn the words in their real state according to Sekamwa. I will discuss idioms and stories in detail because of their bearing on the present study.

Sekamwa (1995) inadvertently insinuates that idioms embody meaning claiming that conversation by either written or oral that has an ingredient of idioms is more knowledgeable, emphatic and comprehensive.<sup>185</sup> He implies additionally, that an ingredient of idioms is similar to someone who talks about something and at the same time shows a picture of that thing for a person to see. However, he cautions that for one to understand fully the interpretation of an idiom one must learn its meaning a priori and without learning about the meaning, the chances of interpreting its usage are close to nil. A language user may fail to know the meaning of an idiomatic expression while s/he knows everything else in the language (Fillmore, Kay, & O'Connor, 1998). In this case, *ebisoko* seamlessly act on the principles of displacement but in a more sophisticated form. Like any other culture, the Ganda always tried to find ways of meaning making: what Sekamwa refers to, as emphasis, knowing and comprehension are meaning-making processes.<sup>186</sup> Emphasizing something draws interest in the process such that we are able to detect and decipher the essences of our newly acquired interest. "Stories of literacy merit, to be sure, are about events in a 'real' world, but they render that world newly strange, rescue it from obviousness, and fill it with gaps that call upon the reader, to become a writer, a composer of a virtual text in response to the actual." (Bruner, 1986, pp. 16-17)

According to Kaswa (1964), narration of *efumo* took place in light of their truthfulness in reference to the story of Kato Kintu, who the Baganda believed to have

<sup>184</sup> On the side of *enfumo* (stories), he reckons that it is a longer conversation than the former two, which involves actors such as people, animals, birds, and trees. These animals, birds, and trees behave, and talk like actual human beings.

<sup>185</sup> Knowledge and understanding are quite different notions even at a psychological level. The senses provide us with knowledge about stimuli; our understanding of what it is, is availed by cognitive functions. Thus in Ssekamwa's (1995) view, because idioms are emphatic, they facilitate comprehension.

<sup>186</sup> The Baganda, culturally, were keen to acquire knowledge in whichever way they could access it and hence a transliterated saying "A metal worker built by the road side to seek advice". Not only were they keen on acquisition of knowledge, they were also keen on remembering whatever they came to know and thus the saying that "Emboozu teba Nkadde" (a conversation is never old), meant to re-affirm the notion that the more they engaged in the same dialogue, the more they internalized, understood and remembered it.

been the first king of Buganda. He further cites the episode of Walumbe descending on earth, an episode encountered in the story of Kintu, the first person in Buganda. On analysis, as will be demonstrated, Kaswa refers to two generic stories: historical and mythical. My concern, however, at this point is the level at which a story is engaged. In his testimony, Ssekamwa (1995) implies that '*emfumo*' deliberated at the level of truthfulness, and therefore believed without doubt. Diehl (2009, p. 17) believes that "[t]he prop for our game of make believe is the text of the novel, but the prop also serves as an object for our imagining." Furthermore, the birds, animals and trees that the inventors of the stories referred to were disguised people. The sense in which Ssekamwa writes this observation encourages the reader to believe the story as being true by eliminating the state of the character/actor and take more credence in what the overall goal is. Hence, when we read the story, no matter the nature of the actors, what we need is to capture the essence. He further informs us that those who thought out these stories were more interested in what the reader made out of the story.<sup>187</sup>

The Baganda wanted to camouflage their mannerisms behind non-humans, as earlier noted, to emphasize the overall meaning of the tale. However, in order for one to decipher the essence, they have to gain it at the level of truthfulness. This implied that we were not to consider the '*Zzike*'-chimpanzee, or Nyonyi Muziinge-peacock in its firstness, but in its thirdness where association is important. By displacing human characters, the Baganda were in fact demanding that the reader elevates him/herself to the level of the narrative itself so that he may communicate with the animals, birds, trees, stones, reptiles, and insects.<sup>188</sup> Forest (2000) confirms the truth factor about stories by noting that folktales are 'true' because there is a bit of truth embedded in them, and not because they actually happened. The truthfulness hence created depends not on facts per se; its premise lies in the capacity of the individual to adjust the levels of signification to make the story believable. There is truth in belief; otherwise, we could not have a simplest idea of why we perceive fetishes as sacred objects.<sup>189</sup> In addition, this is where Ganda

<sup>187</sup> Although our fore grandfathers did not write, they could talk and that is why they were never distraught by re-telling their experiences through stories over and over again; it also implied that re-telling did not diminish the meaning (Nsubuga, 1990). Sayings or oral literature in Buganda have been for long, a tradition of significance, and that this custom is proof that a long time ago people were extremely bright and thoughtful, about various human conditions especially challenges and even advised on how to go around them. Nsimbi notes that in all nations many things change such as dress, politics, architecture, warfare, movement, worship, diet, language, and others.

<sup>188</sup> In folktales, there was overwhelming evidence of fiction although founded on lifelike experiences. Similarly, many of the etiological tales (fables) were fictions and only meant to describe things that were way beyond the understanding of the Baganda, like frogs not having tails. When fables, legends, fairy tales, or myths were told in Buganda, they always referred to human conditions and therefore believable. This also explains why they can be re-told so many times without losing the essences embedded within, although the form may vary from teller to teller. Because of the lifelike conditions that integrated within these narratives, the actors become secondary, and the primary element stands at how believable such a tale is. The belief in these Ganda tales derives its energy or power from the expectation that meaning will suffice at the end of the narration and whether the characters are animals or birds, the life in them maintains and continues reading.

<sup>189</sup> Ssekamwa (1995) premises the truth that he advocates for, upon beliefs rather than facts.

narrative, especially mythical, defers sharply with that considered to be historical or put in another way; this is why myth is integral in the ways of life of the Ganda. The folktales, idioms, and proverbs, even ‘ebikokyo’ (riddles) formed the psychological platforms on which Ganda philosophies persevered.

Specifically, *engeru ensonge* (proverbs) proliferated on fact-like scenarios because their construction directly related to fact. Aphorisms or maxims in form of proverbs need recital in their actual sense and hence changing their form distorts the essence. People should learn proverbs and know them in that way they were constructed and thus static although situations in which they occur emerge from lived experiences. A tale may not be a lived experience per se, but might be a derivative of an imaginary experience that lends its attributes to life experiences, for example, the fictitious tales about the hare as a comment on cunningness in society. Instances of such stories draw a detailed discussion in the following disposition. As discussed, it is important to note that Ganda narratives are worthy studying and incorporating into contemporary Ganda visual culture. Most importantly, Nsimbi (1990) confirms that what people are most attracted to is the meaning enshrined in the stories. He reckons that the words used in some of the stories equate to ‘wrapping materials’: whatever is inside is what we need. Hence, in stories what we needed is the meaning more than the words that constitute them. The meaning embedded in the stories is not overly obvious but hidden and therefore one needs to find it. Significantly, though, Nsimbi uses the metaphor of a wrapper as the words that construct the narrative, videlicet, *A STORY IS A WRAPPER*. The content of the package is what we need, which is upon us to discover, not the words used in telling it. The Baganda packaged their stories, as a result, with profound meaning that lay down the pillars by which their society ran, organized, and continued.

## Scenario2

*“Have you seen baby Koko (chick)?” “She has a back, she is wearing shoes, She has a back, she has kabina (Buttocks)”*: *“Eh, all that!”*<sup>190</sup>

As always, on our evening walk, Louie comes across chicks crossing the road. She gets quite excited about them and she narrates her experience to me that way. Narrative as an intermediary contrives narrating and story, although reciprocally, the narrative must tell a story to gain its own existence and to that effect, narrated by someone. Thus, narrative, as a discourse, lives by its relationship to the story it recounts and the narrating it utters (Genette, 1980). To express this idea in another way: “A story to be a story has to be told,” Smith (cited in, Jerome, Vickery, & Diels, 2008, p. 10). In Louie’s case, I have no idea what she is going to say next, although I am aware of what she is driving at, I do not know how it could end. However, her thoughts only become a story after narrating them to me. Another interesting observation is that she makes me believe that the chick is wearing shoes and she gets

away with it just because it is a story; truth is not a must in narration and therefore not a sufficient condition because we are ready to accept what she considers present at that material moment. Artifice is unmistakably present whenever the author tells of what we could not possibly know in real life and even though we barely know ourselves, it is information we must accept without question if we are to grasp the embedded story (Boothe, 1983). One, in other words, should take in the story without deciphering its truth or falsity conditions, and that is why it becomes part of humanity’s way of self-expression—it shields us from stinging realities. Imagining thus, that particular individuals participated in events variably one effectively appreciates a narrative work, and is bound to imagine a series of states of affairs (Diehl, 2009).<sup>191</sup> All said, telling stories is indeed a form art one can access by offering incredible opportunities to develop culture, and healing individuals as well as community (Bellingham, 2000). Besides, our everyday conversation often comprises storytelling (Shepherd, 1990).

<sup>191</sup> An important point to make is that, although I am present and the chick is not wearing shoes, Lucie says it is. In my absence from that particular scene, I could still believe without question that the chick was wearing shoes because I know it is a story. Absence or presence does not affect the truthfulness or falsity of the narrative. A story may be ‘real’ or ‘imaginary’ without loss of its power as a story in that the sense and the reference of the story bear an anomalous relationship to each other. The story’s indifference to extra-linguistic reality underlines the fact that it has a structure that is internal to discourse. In other words, the sequences of its sentences rather than the truth or falsity of any of those sentences, is what determines its overall configuration or plot. This unique sequentiality is indispensable to a story’s significance and to the mode of mental organization in terms of which we grasp it. We grasp narrative by a dual act where the interpreter grasps the narrative’s configuring plot in order to make sense of its constituents, and inevitably must relate to that plot. However, the plot configuration itself must result from the succession of events (Bruner, 1990, p. 44).

<sup>190</sup> The incident happened February 23, 2008 at Makerere University Campus.

## 4 / Narrative Application

### Preamble

In this study, intensity and familiarity function as underlying factors, rather than defining factors that directly affect the observations made about narrativity and remix.<sup>192</sup> Several issues raised by Nanay (2009) and Currie (2009) suffice: (a) it was discovered that affective response is crucially involved in narrative uptake, and (b) expectancy with auxiliary emotions in accompaniment such as individuals gain completion from within the narrative plot.<sup>193</sup> Additionally, it seems we need some prior experience of action in a text to read and thus appreciate it narratively. Because in narrative we can see the whole with the parts, a higher order as its *goal* takes precedence over its independent reading and thus our experience of such a reading is crucial in our consideration of a text as narrative or non-narrative. Barwell's account of counterfactuality appeals to me whereas the inclusion of emotion more or less explains my claim that narrative is a psychological entity and thus a human condition, necessary for incorporation into artistic practice because of its affective nature. This is an experience transferable to the reading of visual images by analyzing specific stories endowed with particular qualities. The discussion in chapter 4 also includes an analysis of internal structures of narration, namely persuasion, organization, and affect. It concludes with a scenario reflecting the significance of narrative in communication and pedagogic strategies.

### PERSUASION

---

The picturesque character of Ganda oral tradition is a profound manifestation of persuasiveness in their institutional strategy. Persuasion is goal orientated

192 The main elements discussed fall under persuasion, organization and affect. Nevertheless, intensity and familiarity, although not elevated to significance in this study, are at the second level of support to the main concepts because they ubiquitously occur under different processes of narrative activity.

193 Velleman does not specify which emotion is involved in the cadence and by this; his theory is questionable. Livingston (2009) cites "fearful expectation and eventual relief occasioned by a cliff-hanger" (p. 31). In my study, expectancy is central in sustaining narrative engagements as a primal emotion preceded by acceptance. My point here is, like Currie (p. 315), emotion is pivotal in narrative engagements although Nanay dismisses this fact. On the other hand, Nanay's (2009) dismissal of constructivism suggested by Gotthold Lessing is questionable because it fails to consider the mechanism by which we are to divorce action from process in holistic or snapshot engagements.

implying that each story contained a goal. Idioms, proverbs, and tales all engender and perform functions of essence formulation and continuity of cultural systems. Being accessible and specific at one level, intense and consistent at another, facilitate the coordination inherent in Ganda narrative. This makes narrative organized, persuasive, and affective thereby rendering familiarity, intensity, and continuity, as key to comprehension and retention of the timeless elements embedded in oral-visual phenomena.<sup>194</sup> Perhaps one way in which the Ganda propagated their narratives was by *quotation* or *citation*, through leveling. The Ganda, as they narrate their stories, personify them by quoting or citing excerpts of the protagonists-actors or participants in the story to render it life like and believable. People are bound to imagine the text as told by the fictional character in first-person novels such as Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*. One expects readers to believe it is a memoir written by David rather than a novel written by Dickens (Diehl, 2009). This allows the listener to accept and take it as true in the mind. The quotation harmonizes the *levels* of the listener and protagonist so that they begin to realize a wider familiarization process that introduces and enables us to recognize and accept the story as being true and thus believable. The ideas expressed in this short paragraph will receive more attention later on in the present discussion. Berg, Downs, and Linkugel (1977) conceptualize persuasion as a strategy that thrives on voluntary compliance and in so doing, avoids confrontation and resentment. On his part, Bettinghaus (1980) provides a minimal condition for persuasive communication that should involve "a conscious attempt by one individual to change the attitudes, beliefs, or behavior of another individual or group of individuals through the transmission of some message" (p. 4).

### Role of characters and personification

The story of Kintu and Nambi rotates around actors and their symbolism as essence formation units, and indeed its intensity flourishes within the actors, action, and scene. The duality encrypted in the choice of characters in the story achieves intensity through re-emphasis. Gulu is a character also echoed in his place of residence; Gulu's name means his place of residence. This duality is an act of re-emphasis. When we refer to Gulu the person and 'ggulu' the sky or heaven, character and scene synchronously emphasize each other such that when one talks about 'King Gulu' he also reminds us of his Kingdom in heaven. This re-emphasis facilitates retention and hermeneutic acts: we begin to interpret 'Gulu'

194 When the Baganda constructed their narratives as mediums of communication and pedagogy, they chose to take alarmist routes to create maximum impact possible. This is not to say that all tales among the Ganda are pessimistic; many of them are optimistic, and packed with more entertainment than teaching purposes. This is apparent in their capitalization on pessimism as an impactful strategy that engenders biases in the end. Notably, they employed internally familiarity and specificity as tools for essence formation, with locality an external factor for the application of idioms, proverbs, and other picturesque norms as substitutions for plain language. The human, I believe, is averse to negativity (pessimism) but at the same time very keen on it. Hence, many positive things will go unnoticed where as a few negatives will attract a lot of attention. The Baganda achieved familiarity through the processes of animation, consistency, and intensity. Within these processes, subordinate functions such as repetition, anaphora, proximity, and exemplification assisted in realizing the set goals.

and ‘ggulu’ simultaneously in order to separate the two. It also, due to repetition, aids mnemonic abilities. The oscillation between heaven and earth creates scenes, milestones, and anchors in the story. Nambi, in a far-fetched situation, implies badness: ‘mbi’ means bad. Nambi is the cause of malady that Walumbe inflicts upon Kintu’s children. There is reemphasis of a bad condition that befalls earth due to her return to heaven that builds consistency of role and character. Her role re-emphasizes the condition she instigates in the narrative thereby intensifying ability to internalize. Nambi’s character in the narrative thus, describes the gloom that comes after her action. ‘Kintu’, on the other hand, is also re-emphasizing Kintu’s failure to reign over his wife and Walumbe in the events that pertain to their roles in the narrative.<sup>195</sup>

In one version of the myth, Musoke is the means by which Gulu’s children accessed earth. The character of Musoke on this occasion emphasizes his inherent nature and the role of connecting earth and heaven or land and sky. Musoke in the Ganda dialect is the ‘rainbow’; it seems to touch the sky as well as the earth. Hence, Musoke was the actor linking heaven and earth, and, therefore, the means by which both scenes connected.<sup>196</sup> The choice of the characters and the link to what they represented was not accidental when formulating the *Kintu* myth; its intention is to perpetuate consistency and intensity and precipitate retention within the Ganda people’s deity and customs. This is also uniform with the observation and strategy of consistency in the Ganda narrative: the nomenclature is seen-through-to the action in a single file. Kayiikuzi posits, of course, as a savior by scriptural standards. However, in his role as the arbiter who tries to save the world, his intensive act of up-rooting Walumbe from the underworld describes the character category ‘Kayiikuzi’—excavation or digging into the earth using somehow crude methods with vigor and intensity. The character re-emphasizes the roles and builds intensity and consistency in the narrative. Walumbe is literally described as ‘illness’ but in other situations it is ‘death’ itself.<sup>197</sup> Hence, Walumbe the character reemphasizes the condition of death, which is external to the character in the narrative.<sup>198</sup>

195 ‘Kintu’ in an instance of the Ganda dialect, implies an improper human or thing. ‘Ntu’ in another meaning is thinghood that reemphasizes the possibility that Kintu in the capacity of a thing could not reason or act humanly. Therefore, in thinghood, Kintu appears docile and inert for failure to control Nambi’s action. Kintu could also mean a ‘thing’ that is either corporeal or ethereal; it can refer to anything and hence not concrete in any sense. This directly links with Kintu’s failure to contain Walumbe and the handling of Nambi’s return to heaven. It re-emphasizes fragility in Kintu’s character and consolidates the general sense of lack of belongingness associated with the name Kintu in the Ganda nomenclature. It is a farfetched point for this text, but perhaps it could enhance our understanding of the Ganda narrative systems: that they are impactive and instruction driven in nature.

196 Ssekamwa (1995) re-emphasizes Musoke’s role by depicting him as transient and considers him in his actual sense of being a rainbow, whose presence depends on weather conditions.

197 There is an aphorism in Buganda that “Walumbe zaaaya” that means ‘illness is a taker’. ‘Zaaaya’ comes from ‘kuzaawa’, which means out of sight for a long time. Here, to ‘take away’ is an interpretation of being out sight, translated into the whims of death.

198 The claim that Ganda narrative constitutes intensities and consistencies as a pedagogic strategy bestows itself esoterically in the aforementioned situations. Intensity attracts and captures people’s attention so that they concentrate and attend to it. Furthermore, intensity contrives consistency in that

This technically is an animation that enables understandability manifested is Ganda narrative as ‘personified’. The tendency to portray animate or inanimate beings as humans with the power to perform human activity is an animation ploy. It builds up rigorous tensions and breaks down barriers to imagination.<sup>199</sup> The Baganda have also engaged in personification of characters by means of leveling: they address animal characters with ‘wa’ as in ‘*Wakikere, Wakayima, Wanjovu*’ in order to personify them. Without the ‘wa’ it remains at the level of animalism. With the introduction of ‘wa’ it attains abilities of humans and hence elevated to the level of humans. What this strategy exploits is the build-up of imaginative power that the mind undergoes in transfiguring non-humans to humans. The transfiguration process in personification is persuasive in that the mind transfigures the inanimate object into an understandable human presence in order to achieve leveling in the narrative. Thus, persuasion becomes pivotal in the Ganda pedagogical strategy. In general, idiomatic language that is highly animated is persuasive in nature and we should know what it stipulates. In order to realize the sense in the transfiguration, the mind has to transform all the features of the non-human beings and align them with those of humans. After the transfiguration, then we are able to accept and consider as real the role of the non-human. This means that once the mind accepts that the non-human is a human, then the roles become sensible and worthwhile. “The goal of credibility, to persuade, leads to intended behavior such as voting, loving, giving, and so forth. A message that is not believed cannot persuade,” writes Doblin (1980, p. 104).

The transfiguration is an animation as well as an intensive process given the time between its initiation and transformation. This may re-emphasize character or it may intensify meaning making since it dwells on familiarity as its main source of energy. Familiar with humans, the mind ably transfigures the personified character to suit its role in the story. Personification may also be, and usually is, entertaining and pleasant to engage in as a reader or narrator, because it is normally emotional and mainly accepted through wonder, awe or joy. The re-emphasis and thus intensity experienced in such transfiguration is vital for essence formation and retention.<sup>200</sup> The transfiguration process in personification

what we encounter is consistent with what we already know. This is a case of reemphasis in the process of building consistencies. Likewise, intensity forms a virtual gestalt by making a meaningful whole that becomes a significant attraction; it also concentrates action and instigates interpretation by proximal repetitiveness. The repetitions, although disparate in composition, create psychological or even physiological impact in their use, which enhances retention: it is tantamount to rehearsal in cognitive terms. Not only are they instructional, they are also performative and hermeneutic and thus persuasive.

199 Ganda rhetoric is significantly animated both in the sense of the word and in its affiliate connotations. To define animation in simple terms would refer to personification on the one hand, and demonstration on the other. The former would apply to intensity when the Ganda wanted to create impact or what can be regarded as a ‘big-bang’; when they wanted to breathe life into inanimate objects; and when they wanted to achieve anthropomorphic forms through animals or plants. They would prompt mental images of animated forms through picturesque tendencies. In ‘Njabala’, for example, we encounter a digging ghost portrayed together with a spy dog that informs its master.

200 For example, there is personification of Musoke in ‘Kintu’ by portraying him as a character that is facilitated access to earth from heaven and vice versa; but we also see Musoke in his firstness as a rainbow that is transient in nature. It is more evident in Ssekamwa’s disposition than Masembe. Whenever

is persuasive in that the mind transfigures the inanimate object into an understandable human presence in order to achieve leveling in the narrative. Persuasion thus became pivotal in the Ganda pedagogical strategy. Indeed, many stories in the Ganda culture entail many personified situations whereby intensity in retention and comprehension are the major goal.

Amongst the numerous situations, which I have also worked with in the practical visualizations, is *Kaleeba*.<sup>201</sup> Much as *Kintu* gains its meaning mainly through the intensity of duality in characters, *Kaleeba* is more inclined towards personified intensity that anchors meaning. Briefly, *Kaleeba* is a fairy tale chronicling birds that sang so well to the awe of by-passers. These birds lived by the village well and whoever attempted to fetch water from there, failed because each time the birds saw someone carrying water they sang:

Ssemusajja agenda, Kaleeba, Ngambira abali eka'eyo, Kaleeba, Ebinnyonyi bili kuluzzi, Kaleeba, Byambadde ensimbi, Kaleeba, Ensimbi n'obutiiti, Kaleeba, Cooo Cooki, Kaleeba, Kyuuka n'ondeeba, Kaleeba.<sup>202</sup>

Every time a person turned to view the birds, the container (gourd, pot, or calabash) one was carrying fell off the head and broke into pieces. One day a leper claimed he would carry the water from the well and he was promptly availed with a container, amid contempt. Once the birds saw him carrying the water on his head, they started singing but to their surprise, the leper moved on steadily until he reached home. This earned him respect from his village mates. Although we know birds for singing, we do not know them for speaking like humans. The words uttered in the song by the birds personify them and thus elevate them to the level of humans. This choice of action against the characters is meant to create intensity by raising questions of 'why birds of all creatures'. In other words, personification is a form of leveling found in Ganda narrative. It is also comparable to visual citation in visual art practice. It also instills wonder and reemphasizes the message relayed in the text. As one wonders 'why birds talking like humans', one engages in a process of interpretation and this also tends to focus the mind more, than in situations where everything is familiar.

'Kaleeba' as the chorus, is quite intense in its *repetitive* format such that it becomes a point of *affective catchment*. Kaleeba crops from 'Ndeeba' which means 'see me' or 'look at me' in the Nkore/Kiga dialect. This implies that the Ganda

Musoke appeared in the sky, Gulu's children boarded him and descended on earth to play in the trees but since Musoke disappears fast, they never stayed for long, lest he leaves them behind (Ssekamwa, 1995). Maseembe (2002) echoes the same feeling although in a more disguised manner, that Musoke did not stay for long in the sky and therefore Gulu's children could not stay for long on earth.

201 Practical visualization in this case refers to artwork and the process of their making. Kaleeba is a story discussed later in chapter 5.

202 A literal translation: dear wo/man going away (in this case it was a man) inform those at home on my behalf, that there are birds at the well, adorned with cowry shells, cowry shells and bead girdles, do not give a damn, turn and see me.

might have borrowed some words from her neighbors. What is more interesting though is the stressing of 'Kaleeba' that in this case implies—in my own interpretation—'the seer' and its primary action embedded in seeing. This insinuates that essence piles around the act of seeing or expressed conversely; the *seeing* becomes a function of essence formation based on the *singing* of the birds. Two actions come into play to constitute the essence of the narrative; the overall meaning flares up by considering the *falling* of objects, which is a result of seeing the singing birds and the impact created by their personified state.<sup>203</sup> On a technical point of view, in the narrative, it is evident that repetition creates consistency, intensity, and familiarity with the texts and, thus, is impactful. On the other hand, intensity of action invigorates the life of the narrative. This reveals that familiarity is impactful when used in unfamiliar and unexpected situations. Importantly, it is also evidence that narratives intrinsically work like a tradition.

### Idioms and imagery

Like in metaphoric situations, there is an equal or similar transformation for things to supplement and maintain their essence. Feagin (cited in, Korsmeyer, 1998) considers a 'real metaphor' as a substitute for a real thing for which resemblance is the key to its pictorial content: "Substitutes, or real metaphors, create 'subjective spaces', in which desires are fulfilled, created and sustained through their capacity to serve as substitutes"<sup>204</sup> (p. 218). In figurative terms, idioms operate like metaphors and their integration thus enables hermeneutic procedures.<sup>205</sup> In addition, "[m]etaphors allow people to view the object in a new way. In compound statements, it not only creates a new understanding of the product and its categories but also reveals a different view point about the concept to which it is linked" (Athavankar, 1990, p. 25). Different viewpoints also reveal themselves through idioms in supporting picturesque formations by drifting the mind into constructing a picture of the action that the idiom refers to in context of what its former counterpart—that which it displaced—would have specifically meant. The idiom though, takes a longer route that allows and engages the mind into interpretative play, due to renewed energy. The revitalized energy comes into play with existing energies supplied by

203 According to Kaswa (1964), restraint is the overall meaning of the narrative. When the leper is considered, then it would also imply that we should never under-estimate others because of their apparent deficiencies.

204 For instance, 'plough' used for 'sail' in figurative situations highlights two different operations that are, indeed, far apart in normal terms. However, in figurative terms, they share similar operations that equate and thus used to transform each other's functions. Like a plough tilling the earth, a ship wedges its way through the waters. The wedge functionality becomes a transformative constant in metaphoric situations; in 'Kintu', penetration becomes a constant.

205 The Ganda narrators conditioned the mind to engage in image construction by the choice of diction or language they used in their narrations, which was highly demonstrative and hence picturesque: it required mental imagery. The most popular norm was through idioms categorized as snapshots; the other was through maxims, axioms, and proverbs. Idioms, however, integrate well into normal speech and thus form the focus of our present discussion. Idiomatic speech practices displacement. Taking a hasty insight, substitution takes place when an element replaces a similar or equal thing. Hence, there is constancy and consistency in substitution, however, the substitute specifically represents its former correspondence.

surrounding texts. These form play of buoyancy supporting and upholding the original essence of the displaced text. This process achieves status quo through a rigorous transformation that rejuvenates essence formation by making it exciting to learn about, and increases interest in readership.

The intensity of such a process is due to tension build-up between the existing texts and the replacements that require hasty tenacity. The tensions accrue from the likelihood that there might be a disparity in essence or context between the original and later texts. The force that relieves the tensions is the buoyancy that ensures constancy and specificity regarding continuity of essence. The continued essence derives its attributes from the animated thing or action within the mind that upholds and enhances the former intention or quality. The questioning and the urge to re-contextualize and reconstruct the attributes of the displacement is a revelation that tensions exist between the former and later texts. The displacement thus transforms the surrounding texts into a renewed energy of forces. This is an effective tool in consolidating essence formation in narrative texts as demonstrated by various narrators. Ssekamwa (1995), Masembe (2002), Kaswa (1964), and others have capitalized on idioms and proverbs to emphasize action and intensify meaning in their narrations. Idioms, in many cases, act as metaphors because of the function of displacement.<sup>206</sup> In effect, signification doubles through metaphor “since the word’s projective image catapults reference to an idea beyond itself by means of feelings too complex to be exactly defined” (Jayne, 1970, p. 19).

When Kintu received advice to go and inform Ggulu about the malady that had befallen his children on earth, he immediately embarked Musoke and went to heaven. To animate this action, Ssekamwa (1995) writes that “[...] yasitukiramu nga eyatega ogw’ekyaayi [...]” (p. 54). Literally, Kintu stood up immediately as one who used a banana plantain fiber for a snare. This is a metaphoric transposition. It also implies that we must first visualize the scenario of a fiber snare and the information that it has snared up a catch, and the speed or urgency that one engages to reach the scene, or capture the animal in order for us to contextualize and understand that Kintu left immediately. This commitment takes the mind through a series of internal picture formations and an interpretative maneuver in order to contextualize the idiom. The flatness of ‘immediately’ is therefore superseded by an idiom that dramatizes and accelerates intensity and essence formation. This imagery formation in turn aids retention; although it is specific and requires prior knowledge, we must also be familiar with the referenced articles. This doubles as

<sup>206</sup> The implication here is that a fiber is a weak material for use as a snare especially that it is vulnerable to weather changes: when it is hot, it becomes brittle and therefore easy to snap, meaning that the struggling animal can easily break loose. Thus, if one has used a fiber snare, one should keep one’s toes ready to pounce at any opportunity instantly. Saying that a ship ploughed through the waves, one is using a metaphor. One uses the action of a ploughshare to stand for that of a ship’s bow thereby expressing the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar since the metaphor assumes that the ploughshare’s action is familiar to that of the ship’s bow is not (Fiske, 1990). Notably, a metaphor exploits simultaneous similarity and difference by working paradigmatically: “vehicle and tenor must have enough similarity to place them in the same paradigm, but enough difference for the comparison to have this necessary element of contrast”.

intensity fosterage and as a familiarization procedure, whereby exemplification is the means by which we achieve it.<sup>207</sup> It is also an interpretative activity, whereby we realize its essence and contextual balance through interpretation of an imaginary picturesque scenario. Compellingly, it refers to the magnitude of specific knowledge we must arm ourselves with in order to grasp the meaning. Black (1957) articulates this phenomenon and, too, highlights our worth of engaging metaphors:

The shock of surprise caused by an unhackneyed metaphor, due to the presence of a familiar word in strange company, focuses attention on the characteristics that underlie the implicit comparison. A metaphor is a particularly effective way of securing a desired emphasis: ‘A man of courage’ would be a very flat substitute for ‘a lion of a man’ (p. 197).

The use of imagery and figuration also surfaces in the study of assorted Ganda story narrators who employ idioms as essence formation and intensity gimmicks to increase dependency. Masembe (2002) embroiders her narration of ‘Kintu’ with an idiom such as, “...twasanzeeo omusajja ‘n’annyingira mu busomyo...” literally to mean that they met a man who ‘entered her bone marrow’ (p. 235). In contemporary usage, this idiom is analogous to a man who ‘swept Nambi off her feet’. This idiom reemphasizes how deeply in love she was with Kintu.<sup>208</sup> This is an *intensive* animation for someone to imagine how one person could enter or penetrate another person’s bones to the marrow: it intensifies action and fosters familiarity at the same time. In other words, the reader will imagine the whole spectacle of penetrating someone’s bones to the marrow through reconstructing images of bones and bone marrow; or perhaps images of instances when one has been in touch with such a thing.<sup>209</sup> Bone marrow normally lies deep in the bone hollow that one requires hard labor to access it. The process by which we get to the bone marrow as we consume beef in a traditional

<sup>207</sup> In instructional strategies, exemplification plays a significant role in retention and comprehension; it comes in form of visual or audio aids such as demonstrations, or experiences of actual situations. While the Ganda were intent on continuing their knowledge through oral and bodily means, they were also careful about ways of transmitting such knowledge and hence, they adopted strategies that would help them achieve their goals. An idiom, as a strategy is a form of example or demonstration of the situation referenced. Furthermore, exemplification is an animation of the actual situation, which I may as well call a simulation, whereby one simulates the actual situation by offering a similar or equal condition that helps explain the actual. This sort of gesture rekindles Kuhn’s (1996, p. 189) meticulous work ‘The structure of Scientific Revolutions’ in which expresses the kind of paradigm as a shared example: “Scientists solve puzzles by modeling them on previous puzzle-solutions, often with only minimal recourse to symbolic generalizations.” Newman (2009) too acknowledges Kuhn’s paradigms in which scientists often solve “important puzzles by modeling their studies on patterns of puzzle solving that have proven successful previously in illuminating other particular cases” (p. 79). In this, we meet a better understanding of the actual situation that is not present at the time because the mind traverses a virtual but equal or similar condition. After this process, one is then familiar, in greater terms, with the preferred situation under reference.

<sup>208</sup> Reemphasis in particular is a persuasive tool and thus accelerates essence formation. By reemphasizing essence, it persuades the viewer into comprehension of a visual reading.

<sup>209</sup> An image is an abstraction of what we deem ‘real’ near to an actualization of substance. Substance may be material or ethereal as long as it is capable of transforming the mind. A mental image for example is substantive because it has the capacity to transform internal structures of the mind. Images can also be a representation on inner thought in the world of tactile forces; we can experience it by the senses.

way is so intensive that we need maximum patience and consistence. Getting to one's marrow then, is an intensive and vigorous exercise that when realized in picturesque form, demonstrates how far Kintu was into Nambi's life.<sup>210</sup>

The intensive process of imagination crammed with pictures of mental activity puts up with interpreting the former expression in relation to the later context of use. Since 'entering of the bone marrow' is far apart from 'being deeply in love' and thus their relations should be realized through interpretation. Ssekamwa and Nsimbi have referred to figurative speech specifically, idioms and proverbs respectively as near to demonstrations with real-time pictures of the scene or action. Nishimura (2004) cites metaphor as an indispensable format in compensating for the economy of language and commonplace linguistic behavior. With intensity achieved through idioms, thus, the likelihood of hermeneutic practices is inevitable. The quality of intensity engendered by Ganda narrations is vital in essence formation and continuing indigenous knowledge. Most importantly, other than being realistic, a metaphor is essentially imaginative and not bound by the principle of contiguity on the same plane of meaning; "instead, it demands, by the principle of association, that we seek similarities between manifestly different planes. It requires imagination to associate a ploughshare with a ship's bow," concludes Fiske (1990, p. 97).

Equally important to note is that whenever displacement occurs, transformation is inevitable. Transformation implies that fundamental changes take place, but maintains rapport across the transformation for consistency. Transformation on the other hand derives its attributes from adhering to a goal orientation. Within these transformations, effects of vitality and persuasion occur at a high level as inducements. In other words, the meaning of 'immediate' in the *Kintu and Nambi* myth is fundamentally transformed by Ssekamwa into an animation; however, the essence is maintained as a matter of consistency as the overall goal.<sup>211</sup> In relation with the factor of displacement, buoyancy in idiomatic forms suffices through the intensities that follow the functions of displacement. The meaning of 'deeply in

210 The process also that one grows animates the feeling Nambi had for Kintu: how deep it was. Alternatively, sweeping one off his/her feet intensifies the action as it demonstrates getting off-balance in a vigorous manner – due to intensive feeling. The process of realizing how one could penetrate another person's marrow through mental visualization attempts to perpetuate maximum impact through intensity and provide a meaning-making platform. From this chronicle, it becomes very clear that Nambi was deeply in love with Kintu nonetheless, in a manner visualized internally. It would be self-denial if one claimed that the imagination one goes through is independent of interpretation in the case of idiomatic forms. Intensity and interpretation drive towards a goal precipitated by inherent persuasiveness.

211 Metaphors create a similar displacement process, or in actuality, they are substitutive, whereby their meaning transfigures through subjective animation, exemplification or simulation of actual situations. Barry (1997) citing Gardener's research suggest, "[t]he creative mind works according to metaphors because they help us to understand one idea through another" (p. 73). This is important to note because from seeing one event through another, we create new scenarios that improve our understandability of the old ones. These simulations and other processes undergo intensive input to grasp them concurrently in order to keep up with the rest of the text. It is therefore a bumper-to-bumper situation of interpretative processes characterizing Ganda narrative readings. Referring to Bruner's (1986) virtual texts, the processes described above are cases of text re-reading, which lead to understandability of texts. The process regarded as training the mind to develop instinctive interpretations and re-interpretations due to intensity generated.

love' is adequately reformulated and represented in similar or equal terms with penetration, as a constant, to the bone marrow. Thus, in contextual terms, the displacement gains momentum, and thus essence, from the texts around it with which it coheres.<sup>212</sup>

In conclusion, the intensive penetration then forms the balance that keeps the narrative afloat, and the result is *maximum impact* reflected in the Ganda concept of vital force. The process of internal demonstrations forms the structure of the animation in this case. The words that described the events of love or immediacy are inert; once we displace them and taken through a process of image formulation that goes on internally, we breathe a new life into them by gaining new revitalized figurine and motor forms. Buoyancy is an animated force gained from its surroundings, and in this case texts that coordinate with the displacement; they come into play with the displaced energies to create an animation. Additionally, transformation is not static either; it is a dynamic process indicating vitality and renewal. The picturesque formations and internal motor activity that characterizes transformational forces, is an ultimate animation process driven by a persuasive force pointing at an overall goal. Hence, there is an instance of telling and showing which is vital for retention and comprehension. This is the ultimate goal (*telos*) under Drout's (2006a) Unconscious Imperative. Daugman (2001), however, warns against over reliance on metaphors: "We should remember that the enthusiastically embraced metaphors of each 'new era' can become, like their predecessors, as much the prison house of thought as they at first appeared to represent liberation" (p. 33).

## AFFECT AND ORGANIZATION

The animation and personification of the Ganda narratives through familiar and non-familiar things was to make them more appealing by super-humanizing them so that we may begin to wonder or get emotionally involved. They also chose their characters well and drawing from daily things that made their readers *excited* and *knowledgeable*.<sup>213</sup> Although we—because I participated in the 'Biduula'—developed biases positive or negative, we were able to remember such stories because of the psychological impact the characters inflicted on us: Forests and trees were said to swallow humans and hence discouraged the young to go there, by instilling fear. Such inanimate things were extremely memorable due to emotional impact

212 After all, the two entities possess penetrative powers that displace each other: a buoyant penetration to the bone marrow displaces the deep love and thereby the essence of penetration maintained in both instances is persuasive.

213 For example, the hare—wakayima—always depicted cunningness, because of its physical morphologies and mannerisms; the hyena was always at the losing end and depicted as greedy and lazy. The lion was the king of the jungle and the leopard as an arbiter link between the overtly wild and the mild. All these characters had psychological dimensions that they imparted to the listeners, for example the hare was most admired and its trickery much coveted by the young lads. The 'zzike' was hideous and feared such that its antics did not solicit liking by the readers especially the young.

they had on us. It is awesome for other beings to take on qualities of human beings—a strategy the Baganda narrators earmarked for retention and anchoring by attracting attention, raising questions, and attempting to answer them at the same time. Maximum impact swings into play by the reflection upon the singing birds in ‘Kaleeba’ that transfer their energy to the resultant act of turning-people and falling-objects. The singing of the birds and falling objects, for example, hinge on the emotional input they impart on the perceiving mind. Such emotions as anxiety, expectancy, and acceptance are very typical of narrative and indeed such emotions drive narrative and constitute it (Yiend & Mackintosh, 2005). We construct dependencies or compulsions in narrative upon *expectancy* and *acceptance*, and as such, because people are willing to accept narrative, be it true or false, it continues to reign in the human condition. In this way too, emotion becomes persuasive in message processing. Doblin (1980, p. 105) attests, “Emotion is important to information and persuasion as well: a boring lecture will lose its audience. Sex, violence, and humor are typical ways to arouse emotion through context.”

The people who initiated Ganda stories camouflaged the ways of the people through flora and fauna in order to dramatize their tales, so that they became easily understandable and memorable (Ssekamwa, 1995). Memorability or retention, is one of the key strategies in the Ganda folklore, which is also echoed in Kasirye’s preface that the shorter the stories, the more likely they will remain adorable and memorable. This is because the mind tends to switch off at intervals in long and unending tales so that bits and pieces of the story are lost along the way. In such an event, the story could breed boredom and consequently people could lose interest in it; however, when kept short, we consume it wholesomely and become admirable. Owing to the fact that Ganda Oral Culture was to continue indigenous knowledge, all ways of making it memorable came into place and this is an exhibition of the intelligence the Ganda used in sustaining their traditions. In fact, most folktales in Buganda remain short, precise, and seldom adorned with an idiom or a short song. These ingredients constitute a design meant to sustain dependency and court the listeners so that they can be able to adopt the stories. By reciting the idioms, proverbs and songs built within the tales, we easily achieve memorization and fitting without hustle into daily speech. They also become the talking points and hence the key informants or anchors in the tale. Crucially, apart from being dramatic and entertaining, the songs facilitate memory.

### **Musicality as interlude**

Songs aided the involvement of listeners while at the same time breaking down the monotony of flat speech. Songs normally capture the attention of the mind because they are inherently attractive and pleasant to the senses. Our interaction with the narrator during narration through musical experience increased the chances that the tale would be remembered especially when the song is interesting in terms of lyrics, rhythms, and meaning. The construction of the Ganda songs

embedded within narratives were short, had a chorus in between, and rhymes such that they were easy to grasp and memorize. In most cases, the extent of the story bore within the song such that once extracted from its original text, the meaning would be traceable. The authors of the folklore packed the interludes—musical sections—with maximum meaning such that at the second level of signification, the original meaning embedded in the stories is not lost. In addition to breaking monotony and bearing essences, the songs were points of reminiscence. Because normally, the children or even adults would remain with attributes of the song at their immediate memory levels, they were the conduits to discussing the narrative itself. Reminiscence is an independent space for performing meaning and strengthening memory specs.<sup>214</sup> Further, songs were dramatic in these stories and points of absorption as mnemonic devices by becoming extensions of the story in both time and space. Together with my contemporaries, Ganda folklore had direct bearing on our lives and behavior. Independently though, the songs constituted summaries of the story and thus became the face of the narrative. Easy to learn and memorize, songs within stories became the mainstay of narrative dependency and propagation of oral cultures within the communities.<sup>215</sup>

Interludes are invigorating but also a way of releasing tension between readers and texts and internalization by the readers. Many Ganda tales subsume interludes in form of songs. One of the main aim of the Ganda narrative strategy was to ‘keep the fire burning’ until the end. Among other ways of retaining readership and audiences, was to package them with musical interludes deemed as interactive sessions. Most of the anchors in the narratives were compacted within the musical interludes because they involved, or in other words, interacted with the listeners, in ‘Kaleeba,’ ‘Njabala,’ ‘Nkoliimbo,’ and ‘Matyansi Butyampa’ (a musical narrative). Such an activity of a narrative in a narrative coincides with Obiechina’s (1992, p. 200) ‘Narrative Proverbs’ that appear as autonomous stories of different genres embedded within larger story constellations functioning as images, metaphors, and symbols. The embedded narratives advance the meanings and formal qualities of the parent narrative. The narrators were careful in encrypting the Ganda tales with re-organizing, re-invigorating, and refreshing elements to create and maintain dependency. Here the order of succession begins to shape up. Consequently, as much as the narratives were instructional, they had an entertaining ingredient in them that rendered them likeable and attractive.

214 In their free time, the children would revisit the songs they learnt from the story telling sessions and tried to assess which ones were more pleasant to listen to basing on their emotional involvement. We could hum, sing, whistle and even play musical instruments for the tunes that were interesting and touching. I remembered the songs of the stories that I loved most. I still remember ‘Njabala’ because it was easy to play with a fiddle; yet, ‘Kiyiri’ appealed to my affective faculty the most. In ‘Kaleeba,’ the singing birds touched me as a child because of their personified role and their emotional appeal. Consequently, where the details of the story are lost, the song still bears the essence of the entire narrative.

215 ‘Njabala’ and ‘Kiyiri’ were my favorites as I played the fiddle. Many of the stories that did not have commonplace songs jumped out of my memory. The stories I can remember that did not have songs signaled important milestones in my life as a child. For example, I still remembered the story of ‘Kintu and Nambi’ because it spelt out how death came to be; ‘Matyansi Butyampa’ was frightening and the places it mentioned were accessible to me.



Intensity and consistency accrued in the musical interludes too by the order of succession, which reemphasized meaning in many tales of the Buganda. ‘Kaleeba’ is one of them. We experience repetition in the word ‘Kaleeba’, which creates intensity but, too, dictates the ordering of events in the overall story. In ‘Kiyiri’, there is repeated pronouncement of the phrase “Kiyiri Omulangira” at the end of each line and the meaning in this story mainly embedded in the character ‘Kiyiri’. ‘Nsangi’ bears an order of succession classified as *reiteration*, hierarchical in nature forming in the following pattern:

Nsangi Nsangi Nsangi, Nsangi mwana wange, Tonnamera bbeere, Lw’olimera ebbeere, Lwendigenda naawe, Nsangi ggulawo.

The song primarily means that Nsangi has not yet developed breasts and hence she cannot leave the cave in which she is hidden. A constricted recount of the ‘Nsangi’ story tells of a woman who lived in a village with many chimpanzees that were fond of eating unattended children who had not yet developed breasts. When the woman got a baby girl, she decided to hide her in cave, which the chimpanzees eventually discovered. The above song was the means by which she accessed her daughter’s hide out. When she was away one day, a chimpanzee tricked the child into opening and it consequently ate the child. The woman consulted a witch who told her to ask every chimpanzee:

Gwe olidde Nsangi? Ahaa baaba, sinalya Nsangi, Nannyini buto emabega, y’alidde Nsangi.<sup>216</sup> (Did you eat Nsangi? No, the one behind with a big belly ate her.)

She repeatedly asked the chimpanzees and they repeatedly sang back in the same way until she discovered the culprit. In repeating ‘Nsangi,’ there is re-emphasis of the character Nsangi; on the other hand, by repeating the short song response, there is re-emphasis of the character and the action of singing. There is anchoring in the successive ordering of character and action, which is progressive at the general level.<sup>217</sup> Note that in the second part of the song, the order of succession changes to *recurrence*. Both patterns are hierarchical characterized by emotional build up during reception. In the first part of the song, ‘Nsangi’ builds the ordering at two knots at level one followed by ‘bbeere’ with knots at level two. At level three, ‘naawe’ ties a knot and so far, the levels are incremental. At the last level of the extra narrative, the level drops back to Nsangi but succeeded by ‘ggulawo’ (AA-BB-C-A).<sup>218</sup> The follow-up extension of the song posits three levels in recurrence

216 Are you the one who ate Nsangi? (Nsangi is local name among the Baganda) Then the reply: Ahh baaba, I have not eaten Nsangi, the one beyond with a big tummy is the one who ate her.

217 This is a function of consistency achieved through anaphora especially when Nsangi’s name recurs by pick-ups at several intervals in the song. The exhibition of consistency and emphasis provides room for retention and comprehension.

218 See, Bier’s (2006) discussion of the ‘extra-narrative,’ which she refers to as the interpretation stage of the story.

but hierarchical in nature too (A-B-C-B). We begin to extract organizational and affective qualities as the story and song ensue. The organization develops a trajectory characterized by anchors, feedback, expectancy, and dependency.

The order of succession inevitably organizes the mind. Likewise, as we work visually, the inherent order of events takes over as an organizing tool: We consciously or unconsciously succumb to the unwavering organizational qualities in stories that determine our scheme of work. The visual mind is as vulnerable to the order of succession as oral mind is to the harmonious and soothing intersections, successions or subtle gradations of the sweet melody in the melodic line.<sup>219</sup> Tikka (2008) recounts Einstein as having conceived human expressiveness as a psycho-physiological interplay, involving the unconscious and conscious mind-body system, that today’s neuro-science interprets as favoring coherence, networking, organization, similarity categorization, and filling in the gaps, inventing or inferring the lacking information, over a coherent explanation of understanding world events. An important issue to note lies in the event that not only causal relations contribute to narrativity; non-causal relations exhibited in the orders of succession may significantly influence denomination of narrative. From this standpoint, I posit that since narrative penetrates the psyche, it suits comprehension and dependency in visual images.

### Prolepsis and primes

Grain, in this case millet from several narrators, is a turning point in the entire Kintu/Nambi myth. Also remotely is a chicken that was supposed to be the direct beneficiary of the millet. Fowls, in this case chicken, are common in the Ganda domestic set-up and their main meal from long ago is grain.<sup>220</sup> Here, the myth capitalizes on familiar things to form essence. We tend to notice and grasp familiar things in everyday life faster, easier, and further retain them in memory especially when they are locally accessible. When sending her off, Gulu advised Nambi not to return to heaven even if they forgot anything lest Walumbe follows them. Among the few things that Nambi packed were her chicken. These two scenes introduce us to future events and when we deeply analyze them, they are primes of such events or things. We are not always aware of our knowledge of the basis for our behavior as indicated by priming demonstrations, and as such, our moods could affect other people’s behavior without them ever realizing it (Andrade, 2005). When we think of Kintu, we also think of Nambi in which case Kintu becomes a prime for Nambi. Similarly, when we think about chicken in the story, we subsequently trigger thoughts about the millet. As a result, when one talks about chicken and millet, a synergy that aids comprehension arises. Priming as a functionality of prolepsis

219 See, Meyer’s (1961) discussion of the vocal, instrumental, and vocal line in music.

220 This is a significant instance of priming evidenced in Ganda narration. The millet is a prime for domestic fowls, which are vital to the understanding of specific units within the story. Priming is a remote form of reemphasis because it introduces us to its prime, which we are destined to know. When we know about it, it is a confirmation of our preconceived meaning.

is another way of building familiarity, which is vital in essence formation because we are able to read ahead of the story. Profoundly, it becomes a relationship of *collocations*, which is inherently organizational.<sup>221</sup>

Logical linkages that eventually lead to essence formation precipitate consistency. Synergies and interdependence of elements and articles form coordinated entities in the form of *gestalts* (Arnheim, 1994). Consistencies as well as intensity trickle into the 'Kintu' story through re-emphasis and priming norms typical of Ganda mentality. When things are consistent, they are also comprehensible. With the order of succession, we breed vital intensities and consistencies for comprehension and retention. Persistent coordinates build up intensive wholes that characterize continuity. Familiarity, therefore, through category building is one way of achieving consistence in visual representations; the narrative builds category clusters within its laws that form coordinative patterns, based on familiar things.<sup>222</sup> Familiar things tend to synchronize with our perceptual and cognitive systems that are a part of a wider coordinative process. Along the gradation, as visual clues slide away from the core, they appear less semantically effective in communicating category membership, yet, understandability of category and definition of human response to it, in general, depends, on the central member (Athavankar, 1990). The more coordinated phenomena are, the more comprehensible they become. When a particular word in a sentence refers to a word or phrase that occurred earlier in that sentence or in a previous one, we achieve an anaphoric relationship (Best, 1986). Therefore, organization of phenomena into logical units or categories normally lends itself to familiarity facilitated by *anaphoric* mechanisms through consistent characters, actions, and scenes. These doubly institute persuasion and mental organization within narrative texts as well as initiating 'economy of effort' cited by Warren (2005) because we naturally memorize what we repeat.

### Filmic dependencies as a case scenario

During a conversation (May 8, 2007, at Makerere) with Rosa, one of the participants I co-opted for TV viewership, she intimates that when a story is not complete, she can still predict the end sometimes. She further informs me she is kept watching a movie because she wants to know the meaning of the story. She misses something

221 When Walumbe kills Nambi's children, we already anticipated danger due to the warning and death because of the fact that his name is a prime for illness. Intuitively and strategically, the mind is not only prepared and anticipating such action, *prolepsis* organizes it (the mind) in such a manner that it will receive this information at some point within the story. Genette (1980) refers to this phenomenon as *Prolepsis*: it designates any narrative maneuver that consists of narrating or evoking in advance an event that will take place later. We are thus familiar with the situation that follows due to the priming effects enabled by *prolepsis* and nomenclature in this case. There is consistency built up between spatial and temporal constructs that is characteristic of coordinated pattern in the structure of Ganda oral literature.

222 I define *anaphora* in this text as a repetitive process that refers to familiar things or things that belong together recaptured and regrouped at intervals. The regrouping of familiar objects with each other creates cohesion in any narrative text and thus comprehension becomes inevitable. When parts keep picking up their bits, they begin to form a hierarchy that enables *gestalt* formations and consequently unitary wholes.

if she does not get to know the meaning. The prediction here is that story telling is dynamic and hence the story itself is dynamic. It can lead us into making predictions based on what we know or expect. In addition, if we do not get to know or prove our predictions, it becomes unsatisfactory at the end of the exercise. "The meaning is cut off if you do not complete the movie. You predict the end and it does not end like that," observes Rosa.<sup>223</sup> There is profound similarity in Rosa's testimony and Jose's with that of Ted. Because the story is unpredictable, Jose remains on the edge and this makes him want to see more.<sup>224</sup> He indicates to me that, a movie, for example, that has "a balance between the high and the low"; it has parts that heighten anxiety and those that keep him cooled down. Furthermore, a good story to Jose is one which has a "clear beginning and a clear end". He rejects stories right away that begin in an unclear way and end in an unclear way: "Sometimes you don't know that the movie has ended", says Jose. "If a story is so good, you just find yourself inside the story. Some movies you struggle to get into the story", he further contends. Jose makes a round-off remark: "If you want to make meaning out of communication you need to know what the person is saying". We, in other words, immediately access some meaning in a story that we are yet to confirm due to narratives metonymic nature.

Ted, a TV soap fanatic in a face to face conversation (May 09, 2007, at Makerere) claims that she does not want to get involved in any other story apart from one that she is yet to complete. When asked to explain why she had no interest in picking up another story from the up-coming ones, she replies, "Bweweteeka ku story tomalaako", meaning that when one accepts to get involved in a story, s/he exposes oneself to a lot of pressure to keep track of its proceedings. She informs me that she has no time to keep track of another story because she is busy with her studies. Apparently, Ted did not want to miss any action or dialogue in the TV soap, which would plunge her into unwarranted pressure to watch every bit of the episodes and she was not ready for such pressure and commitment. In other words, she is running away from the addiction that comes with story involvement afforded to its followers. Stories are addictive because they probably appeal to our remote senses and we have no way of getting rid of such conditions until the end—an instance of closure.

When asked why she enjoys watching films, Patio (July 26, 2008, at Makerere) replies that "nze simanyi, ndaba bulabi" (I do not know, I simply watch). There is a suggestion here that she is not consciously aware why she enjoys watching

223 Additionally, Rosa finds stories "entertaining of course" and many of them quite applicable to "day-to-day life; you learn how to go about issues." Some are educative like Louie's stories about 'Balamory' and 'Little cook, Big cook' (two children programs showing on BBC Prime television, based in England). These and many are some of the benefits of storytelling. Rosa, on the other hand, says that stories are interesting and she just finds herself involved even when she does not have to think about it. She realizes it is time for work way after having slipped into the narrative and finds it hard, at times, to let go of it.

224 Face to face conversation, June 05, 2007 at Makerere. These are fictitious names of participants due to the need for confidentiality.

movies.<sup>225</sup> Nevertheless, the movie derives its energy from tensions it creates and these tensions in turn build-up its dependency. However, the overall meaning lies in the affective dimension of excitement and joy of relief as exhibited by Patio. After the movie ends, she jumps off her raised chair and goes for lunch while exhibiting profound satisfaction and excitement from the fact that she reciprocated her emotional input with the schematic mapping of her own prediction. It is clear from this communication to the New Vision editor that Ogoro is addicted to stories when he writes to the editor of the New Vision likewise:

I am an ardent fan of the Korean TV series ‘Jewel in the parlance’, which shows on ITV Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. I know that many other Ugandans are in love with this program. I was therefore devastated when a satellite problem prevented us from watching the January 11 episode. I appeal to ITV to rescreen that episode so that we can keep up to date with our favorite TV characters.<sup>226</sup>

Well, internal structures have dominated. Are there any external factors? External consistency maintains overall meaning of stories across narrators and generations, and thus vital for facilitating continuity, although it is beyond the scope of discussion in the present text. The internal consistency exhibited in stories creates interconnected webs across each appearance or pop-up of the same narrative. The web thus created allows continuity of vital qualities for the parent narrative to persist. Similarly, in digressional consistency such as that in the Wakikere tale (not discussed here) lays the need to explain and understand details of our surroundings. Furthermore, negativity such as a frog not having a tail lingers on in the mind seeking explanations. The result is that as the mind seeks explanations, it is also likely that it will digress but reach to a conclusion at one point driven by a particular goal. Thus, the consistency within digression appears through the *intention* of the originator. This virtual consistency helps in explaining the drive of Ganda mentality. It also means that their explanatory drive is a case to address even when we engage in visual expression. Ideally, narratives especially etiological, or in other terms fables, base on pure imagination or fiction, however the drive is important to note as it embeds the intention as a genuine concern.

Stories are for the other and that is why we tell them. Otherness is a vital quality to continuity. Nevertheless, whether or not Ganda oral literature continues to suffice, one fact remains; firstly, stories are coordinated consistent entities that

225 “Tremors” is a movie founded on the premise that there is a dangerous creature that operates underground, and the communities who are terrorized by the creature must fight and kill it. When the movie ends Patio makes a remark: “Film ebadde enyuma eyo”: that it was an entertaining movie. During the action, she is non-committal to the reason she watches the film and stays on until the end. Patio’s claim that “Eno film ebadde enyuma” is not because she was pleased with the action solely, but also that her schematic appraisal had mapped-up with the movie’s scheme. Probably she had expected the killing of the creature, which indeed, died at the end. She declares it entertaining as a result. Probably she wanted to discover the nature of the creature that caused ‘tremors’ so casually, and she sees it at the end.

226 See, The New Vision, Wednesday, January 16, 2008, p.15.

could engender continuity of indigenous knowledge and foster artistic development. Secondly, narrative is a goal oriented tool or structure. Lastly and importantly, it contains qualities that aid essence formation and this explains why it was widely used by the Ganda as a pedagogical tool. This qualifies the argument that since narrative endows such qualities then we should adopt it for visual representation. Not quite so with Livingston (2009) who cites several problems associated with claims of epistemic value in narrative texts because narrativity does not determine narrative’s truth-value in the determining of content and the contents’ influence on uptake and perlocutionary effects.<sup>227</sup>

Second is the realization by Velleman (2009) that rather than Aristotle’s *Muthos* of organizing events into an intelligible whole, neither causality nor temporality is an essential narrative connective, but it is instead, emotive. With emotional cadence, the audience mistakenly feels that it has sorted out the events, having sorted its feelings about the events. “Emotional closure, which narratives provide by nature, is not the same as intellectual closure, which many narratives do not offer,” concludes Livingston (2009, p. 31). We still have hope though. Narratives represent paradigm scenarios usually comprising of notable actions and events with the role of explanandum—giving rise to interpretive generalizations that explain scenarios—and helping in tuning patterns of salience on which explanations depend (Dohrn, 2009). Sensorially, emotionally, and conceptually, readers develop representations of paradigm scenarios by appreciating relevant general structures as comprised in a way very similar to the means of appreciating general structures seen in the real world of experience. We thus dispense of the truism phobia by this assurance while strategically reinforcing the role of emotion in narrative interpretation. I argue that we do not necessarily find the epistemic value in the truism of narrative content, but rather the possibility that such content applies to everyday experience.<sup>228</sup>

### Scenario3

*Jessica, a teacher at Springdale’s Nursery School confirms (personal communication, November 11, 2008) the feeling that stories aid essence formation when she tells me that while teaching infants, she engages in storytelling to make them understand. “You cannot teach a kid without telling him a story,” says Jessica. She further notes that kids pick up interest when examples are used. She tells me about the story of Dippy Duck. She employs reemphasis as a persuasive and retention tool. When teaching the alphabet, for example letter ‘C’, she uses actions or articles that reemphasize letter ‘C’ for Clever Cat, and followed by a story about clever cat. By the time it is over, the child would have*

227 This truism-based narrativity under-determination thesis does not conform to all strong theses about narrativity’s logical link to some epistemic valence, including weaker probabilistic theses. Attempting to measure a correlation between good and bad epistemic effects and a single variable (‘narrativity’) mostly in a context where the very identification of that variable remains problematic.

228 The reader should allow him or herself guidance by the narrative, yet, bring personal knowledge and view of the real world owing to the extent of salience patterns and the developed theoretical generalities relevant to the actual world (Dohrn, 2009).

picked up, retained, and conceptualized the letter C. A case of reemphasis to familiarize the kid becomes apparent achieved by intensity, exemplification, and consistency. The acts of Clever Cat or Dippy Duck develop into points of internalization and interpretation by the child through the described process, which enhances learning abilities of the child. Jessica further informs me that she employs stories to solicit for the children's views. "If you [want] a kid to know more, you keep telling them stories. They can listen and be attentive, if you want them to learn," she maintains.

This is an important revelation for the current research because all along my argument hinges on the notion that stories constitute essence formation qualities. Not only do they tailor towards comprehension, they are also interactive and therefore assist in contemplation and interaction. That is why the kids become attentive and able to learn through stories. The Ganda in their narrative strategy worked with a philosophy of *maximum impact* geared towards realizing their cardinal philosophy of vitality and extension of life. Propagation drives the concept of maximum impact, in other words. The use of idioms and other figurative norms persuaded the individual into understanding and realizing the intended meaning. Stories possess great power because of their ability to tap people's imaginations, creating openings and enlarging their circles (Lauck, 2004). Freddy has testified in an interview (November 3, 2008) that if a child learnt about the danger of playing with delicate materials without placing it in context, the child would gain minimal meaning. This is an act of engaging our imagination, a larger scheme facilitated by persuasive mechanisms. Thus, once placed into context by narrating the outcome, the child relates the consequences to real life situations through imagining. In so doing, the narrator is persuading the child to understand the extent of his engagements. This I believe is the overall goal of the Ganda narrators.<sup>229</sup>

229 Personal interview, November 03, 2008, at Wakaliga, Kampala.

## 5 / Post-Independence Art in Buganda

### Preamble

In the phenomenon of administering 64 questionnaires to gain information on general views about art in Uganda today, to my surprise—instead of receiving responses, for example, citing interests in genre or affiliations to particular themes, or understandability of the exhibits—students referred to abstract and realism as their measures for quality, meaning, and success of an artwork.<sup>230</sup> In effect, this implied that they were satisfied if they entered a gallery and found abstracted artworks instead of finding their popular comic, a village event, or a local social comment. Similarly, in a course assessment distributed with the questionnaire, sentiments of abstract and realism permeated as measures of the success of the course even though the main aim was to assess whether the course had created an impact on their creative, inspirational, and technical abilities. This issue became a point of discussion because I observed disconnectedness of art from its communities and suspected it could be a major player in the art versus society relations. Secondly, that the art itself was hard to discern because it is highly personal. In view of these phenomena, I decided to uncover underlying factors, the mechanisms of such a dichotomy, and its effects on art practice generally in Uganda today. Lehtovuori (2000), in his article '*Abstractions and urban complexity*', finds abstraction as a way of escaping from the determinations of the local, conventional, or historically determined abstraction operates with material practice as a vehicle of constructing ideas engendered by textual support, metaphors, types, and meaning.

### FOUNDATIONS OF ART IN BUGANDA

---

#### A living legacy

Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts' inception coincides with the time when modernism was mutating into a contemporaneous movement of Post-modernism, in the Western cultures. However, at this time, people had not decided

230 Art in Buganda translates into Ugandan art in a sense that the most concentrated area of artistic practice today are in Buganda. The Makerere art school being located in Buganda makes it a defining region in the dynamics of art production and practice in general.

on which way to go because modernism was still stuck in all systems: politics, economics, society, and religion (Njami, 2004). When Margaret Trowell incepted the current Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts in 1937, she had an idea of the mixture of traditionalism based on indigenous genres of art production and subject matter colored by the context of difference and otherness (Sanyal, 2006). While Trowell held the belief in art as bearing a moral message rendered through efficient design and dispelled the hierarchy between art and craft, she never allowed her students to appropriate any of the indigenous art forms in fear of propagating ‘soulless’ modernist experiments. In line with this complaint, Stankiewicz (2001) recounts Dow Wesley’s criticism of the academic approach that provided facts to students but deprived them of the power to make and appreciate art. Consequently, art instruction was separated from textile, basketry, and weaving classes. Littlefield (2000) commends Trowell’s instincts of reliance on existent artisanal structures to “introduce new technical knowledge as a pragmatic way to ‘develop’ the visual arts in a region of Africa where representational art was rare” (p. 141). Trowell in other words, represented a didactic form of pedagogy, and, consequently, art production.

“If Trowell represented a traditionalizing approach common to projects of the 1950’s, her successor Sweeny Cecil Todd was fully committed to an African modernism based on knowledge of twentieth-century developments in Europe as well as colonial African art,” notes Littlefield (2000, p. 143). Todd, himself being trained in the British system and working in South Africa, represented a pure modernist who uncompromisingly relented to the demands of British pedagogy. This reflected in the University of London’s degrees that Makerere offered at the time. He insisted on high skill levels, a Western concept of art history, and a wide range of world art. Caught up in the euphoria of nationalism and anti-colonialism, changes that took place in the West in the 1960s, by-passed Makerere, as it got deeper into generic art forms devoid of content applicable to its environment. Although we cannot exempt Trowell from a colonial mentality and the feeling of an African ‘naivety’, she nevertheless respected the condition of the native and expressed willingness to build along what she found in place.

Whereas Trowell went for a specific and didactic model of art production, her successors went for a more encompassing and inductive model evident in the writings of the time. Kingdon’s (1961) editorial remarks in ROHO suggest excitement about the magazine that belonged to a ‘time and place’ of the 60’s and to East Africa and thus for East Africans respectively. Kingdon remarks, “Art is bread, not buns, and in this belief alone will artists find unity” (p. 2). The bread and buns analogy not only signifies universalism, but also a domineering approach towards art production that would see artists give up their own methods of work and take on new forms that reflect the spirit of togetherness. After all, most African officials opined and were hardly interested in the perpetuation of indigenous crafts believing that “one could skip over centuries of human development,” (Gardi, 1969, p. 12). In attempting to give worth to East Africa’s diversity, Kingdon and his

contemporaries diverted, the arts of specifics to the arts of universals that were eventually absorbed unquestioningly, the fruits of unity in the arts. Thus, materials, techniques, and methods that would help to achieve this goal found their way into the scheme of work at the time, while traditional art fell off the radar of the colonial notion of ‘progression’. About artists, Kingdon (1962) remarks, “When they are a part of society, when they are asked to work for society, for what they say in images rather than where their art goes, or what it *does*, then our culture will be maturing” (p. 3).

#### Scenario4

*When a year II student, walked into my office/studio (March 29, 2008) as I worked on Kato Kimera II, and asked me to advise him on the way to go: whether he would paint in abstract or realism, I envisaged a situation of interest to my study. In addition, Maria and Jack had earlier expressed similar sentiments in their artistic sensibility.<sup>231</sup> He went on to confess that his interest mainly lies in realism but Samson<sup>232</sup> had advised him to paint with abstract technique because that was the selling style. In response, I asked him what his major goals in producing artwork were. He replied that he is, mainly, interested in ‘something beautiful and which carries meaning’. He was confident that abstract work makes someone think hence keeping one busy trying to negotiate the meaning unlike realistic art that portrays the meaning immediately thereby less interesting.*

Rita,<sup>233</sup> whom I discussed the issue with on the same day, believes that the real issue is not abstract or realism because even realistic works have failed to sell on many occasions and abstract has sold in her own experience with her artwork and others. So, what is the problem with the classification according to style rather than content? Moreover, why will art fail to sell in the midst of many other popular art forms? Rita says that money is one of the factors; the other, sensitization of children right from the start of their academic careers.

### THE PLIGHT OF ART IN UGANDA TODAY

#### Creativity and originality

During an interview of two young artists (Muziri and Enoch)<sup>234</sup> on a UTV program entitled ‘Art and Culture’ (April 16, 2008) hosted by Kiwere Nathan, Enoch considers abstract art as something refreshing: “Cameras are around. Why should we continue producing portraits?” he asks. “God made man. Man should be *creative*,” responds

231 Maria is an art student in her third year and Jack is a lecturer at MTISFA.

232 Samson is a former student at the Margaret Trowel School of Industrial and Fine Arts who was under my tutorship between 1996 and 1999.

233 Rita is a lecturer and former student at the Margaret Trowel School of Industrial and Fine Arts.

234 Muziri and Enoch are former students of the Makerere Art School who underwent my tutelage at their undergraduate level. Muziri has exhibited his prints and paintings widely—internationally and locally.

Enoch to a query of his woodcut prints being mainly ‘abstract’. In his opinion, being creative is doing something further away from what a camera does because of its tendency to reproduce lifelike images.<sup>235</sup> More so, being ‘abstract’ in organizing pictorial elements does not necessarily indicate creativity. Creativity, I believe, depends so much on how humans can use available material to create alternative forms and new meaning. Shklovsky (1923) though, takes a poet as one who instigates a semantic dislocation by snatching a concept from “the sequence in which it is usually found and transfers it with the aid of the word (the trope) to another meaning-sequence. And now we have a sense of novelty at finding the object in a fresh sequence” (para. 38). Enoch is not worried whether his abstract prints were meaningful to the public; his main aim is to find new ways of representation, away from portraiture. “One must see nature as no one has seen it before. It is with the common language that one must express new ideas. Perhaps this is the only means to make them valid and to make them acceptable,” writes Cezanne (cited in, Chipp, p. 12). The belief that abstract art is refreshing is typically modernist. Perhaps autobiographical concerns could have driven the notion of the modernist to be inward looking manifested in a form of art only relevant to the artist and his group (Taylor, 1987).

Muziri (2008) refers to printmaking as an art of ‘Multiples’ because it can be reproduced so many times as the artist may wish. The only undoing comes when “people tend to shy away from them because they are not *original*” (TV interview, April 16). Muziri further defends the originality of woodcuts by reminding the viewers, “It is quite original because most of the techniques are improvised here, and all the materials are from here.” Muziri rotates his argument on modernist pillars of originality and novelty although he differs from his counterpart’s sense of originality. It is rather interesting to note in Muziri’s submission that in the first instance of originality, he refers to creativity and novelty, and in the second instance (art production), he refers to situatedness (its location). Artists want to be original in thought and action, as well as have an identity of their grassroots. Unfortunately, sentiments of originality and identity, that dominated postcolonial Africa, disappear in the frenzy of non-meaning within local communities, which dominates Ugandan art (Nicodemus, cited in, Deliss & Havell, 1995; Njau, in Kingdon, 1962). Going by Kant’s (cited in, Gibbons, 2008) idea of *genius* one finds that art can be novel and original without necessarily undergoing significant camouflage. In his argument, Kant posits that an artist (as genius) does not produce works of art like shoes in factory that have a pre-conceived idea and as such is reproducible. A work of art cannot be reproduced nor determinately predict its outcome. Thus, in any case, a work of art, according to Kant, contains characteristics of novelty.<sup>236</sup>

235 Photography too, is a creative art that requires sophisticated input in order to produce photographs that can capture the human mind.

236 This implies that we cannot make it any novel or original because according to Kant, it is already novel or original by virtue of being a work of art. See, Gibbons (op cit, p. 30) for a detailed discussion.

In similar fashion, having produced something he had never seen, Marcel Duchamp was a great admirer of Albert Roussel in his early days (Duchamp, cited in, Chipp, 1968). Our cries for originality and novelty create distance from the community rather than bring us closer. We can be creative without necessarily being novel yet retain our identity. Indeed, in the multiple arts, originality and novelty do not apply anymore because we encounter reproduction as a way of life. By borrowing, plagiarizing or stealing, *appropriation*, a key postmodernist strategy, dispels the reverence for originality by modernism. This indicates that art in the West and throughout the world no longer subscribes to the notion of originality (Barrett, cited in, Hutchens & Suggs 1997; Keep, McLaughlin, & Parmar, 1993-2000; Lynton, 2001). Highbrow culture detached art from life by concentrating it in galleries so that it may appear exclusive and elitist. Shusterman (1999) envisions popular art as an alternative aesthetic form “which is free from modernism’s traditional compartmentalizing ideology and elitist institutions, and it is anyway more in touch with our ordinary life-experience and problems, with ‘the spare parts and broken hearts’ that keep our world turning around” (p. 43). Nevertheless, Kant’s (cited in Gibbons, 2008) aesthetic idea serves a great deal to distinguish between art and non-art as do other aesthetic theories on the nature of art.<sup>237</sup>

Modernism shunned popular culture; postmodern theory incorporates the human mind with body and therefore discredits ‘art for art’s sake’ (Tansey & Kleiner, 1996). Gordon (cited in, Keifer-Boyd, Emme, & Jagodzinski, 2008) finds no fault with ‘art for art’s sake’ or the ‘I-did-it-first’ syndrome as art made for a small group of people based on innovations bearing aesthetic response (p. 60). However, also valuable is, folk art, which marks a difference in art functionality and thus recognizes its varied aesthetic needs, and a pluralistic society. Kasule (personal conversation, June 19, 2008) refers to postmodernism as a “philosophy of life which challenged the achievements of modernism” and does not subscribe to movements like cubism, abstract and so on and thus is best suited to the notion of inclusion. Motto editions, for example, are so popular within rural areas where one or more editions hang in almost each household. Mottos thrive on life experiences from within the communities, and, hence, people embrace them, yet they are art of multiples. In addition, they are cheap and affordable to the communities. ‘Not being popular’ in Muziri’s view is evident in not many people embracing woodcuts because they are not meaningful to them—on top of affordability.<sup>238</sup> Essentially, art is selection, though such a selection strives for being typical and inclusive (James, 1884).

In most galleries, the cost of woodprints varies from 300,000UGX to 500,000UGX. In Muziri’s view, they are cheap. I completely understand that art is a multidimensional discipline, which is also a career in itself. However, contempo-

237 See, chapter 2, Keifer-Boyd and Maitland-Gholson (2007).

238 Similarly, popular culture is for grassroots communities and thus more involving. Highbrow art is exclusive and thus less involving. Art is detached from its communities because of pricing and intention of production. Popular culture is meaningful to those who embrace it because it is accessible to them, consequently, we cannot popularize a culture that is not accessible to the community

rary Ugandan art has not served the communities because it is concentrated in galleries. This is evident from the TV show as both artists (Enoch and Muziri) directed one of the viewers who called in to seek access to their works to galleries such as Afri Art, Nommo, Tulifanya Art, and others; they did not mention an alternative space where such art is located. Shusterman (1998) detests the ideology of 'quarantining' art to museum, gallery, concert hall, theatre and classroom, which detaches art from everyday life and demeans aesthetic quality. This sufferance extends to artist too: "Professionally isolated from the mainstream of community life, cut off from the ordinary people who could constitute their audience, artists are more narrowly constrained in the experiential materials and sources which can serve them in artistic creation" (Shusterman, p. 39). Consequently, art becomes concentrated in galleries where expatriates normally go looking for 'Ugandan Art', a situation Muziri finds unfortunate due to the small size of the expatriate community that normally buys Ugandan art.<sup>239</sup> Gardi (1969) complained about the destruction of old ideas demoralizing many artisans that produced ancestor figures, only replaced by art produced for sale to a few foreign residents and tourist always with distinguished good taste.

Kasule (personal communication, 2008) raises the issue of producing art for sale as the main driving force in Ugandan art today.<sup>240</sup> He thinks that such a trend is modernistic and only deals with art of permanence. He further indicates that one of his aims of producing an installation of garbage was to "provoke the artists particularly the young generation to start questioning how they are taught art i.e. methods and materials in terms of applying the principles and elements of art in terms of realizing the purpose of art produced for them and to the society." Kasule argues that art is not just for selling because it is a language of communication.<sup>241</sup> In the more traditional communities like Bbaale, people still produce art for the community: mats, baskets, embroidery, pottery or carvings. Although many of these articles find their way in the markets, they remain within the communities as well and the messages they carry are those embraced by the community.<sup>242</sup> It is therefore crucial to rethink art's relation to community and its demands in order to redirect the course of art practice. Carson (1998) observes that life ways developed due to networking and community.

### *Empiricism*

An open-ended questionnaire administered (see appendix A) to sixty-four (64) second year students at Makerere Art School reveals such flaws in the use and

239 It is not clear whether it is also unfortunate that the size of the expatriate community does not provide a sizeable market for bigger returns.

240 Kasule is a lecturer at the Margaret Trowel School of Industrial and Fine Arts. He specializes in painting, sculpture and research methods.

241 This is an extract of an interview conducted by Maria, year III student.

242 Bark cloth, for example is still widely used as burial material and it not sold, but a way of 'sending-off' the deceased, and a consolation to the bereaved family. Mats, pots, utensils, and others are still produced and remain within these communities although time changes, and is changing drastically.

classification of the terms abstract and realism that are principal determinants in the production of art and its appreciation, and hence the value attached to it. When I asked for the kind of art that students preferred to see in galleries that they found meaningful, 81.2% said abstract, 48.4% realism and 14%-semi-abstract. 20.3% of students that mentioned the abstract/realism phenomenon had both styles as pivotal to their artistic activity. 43.8% students had responses ranging from artistic disciplines such as painting, graphic design, decorative textiles, ceramic, fashion, jewelry; 3.84% on Regional classification as African art; 2.56% for communicative engagements; 3.2% for emotional input; 1.92% noted personal belief like religion; 1.28% favored cultural art; 1.92% mentioned environment, narrative, society, landscape (classification within a discipline), mural, portraits and material. 0.64% did not have a response to the question of the kind of art they would aspire to encounter during a gallery visit.

The second question that drew abstract/realism responses was whether the students 'normally encountered the art that they identified with (or preferred). Forty-one (41) students responded in the affirmative, fifteen (15) in negative, while three (3) did not respond, and only one (1) rarely did. Amongst the 41 students who acknowledged the presence of art that, they identified with during their visits to galleries, twenty-nine (29) mentioned abstract, (15) fifteen mentioned realism, and eight (8) students mentioned both abstract and realism. Interestingly though, 1 student says 'no' in the first instance, but goes ahead to mention realism as the art s/he identifies with. In terms of percentage, 64% said yes, 23.4% said No, 4.7% did not respond and 1.6% rarely encountered such art. Of the 64% who said yes, 70.7% mentioned abstract, 36.6% noted realism, and 19.5% mentioned both.

In their responses, the second year students I interviewed seem to be more concerned with the forms they will eventually depict. That is, stylistic approach rather than the process through which they undertake art production. Eventually, the main concern of the student centers on the perfection of form rather than the theme, context, history or genre of the work produced. Comparably, 48% of students mentioned aspects of culture, history, genre, affect, belief and discipline as driving forces in the art for which they crave. This, compared to 81.2% who see art through the dimension of style is not sufficient to exempt contemporary art in Uganda today from dwelling too much on formalism. The implication is that production of art at Makerere Art School and its interpretation is predominantly dependent upon stylistic rather than ideological input. What are the implications? What this means is that, teaching and learning are not conceptually driven, but rather 'form' matters more than the 'meaning' behind.

### **Effects of the dichotomy**

As we began the tour of 'Hello! This Is Bark Cloth' art exhibition (July 11, 2008) Aggie declared, "I swear this creativity is too good. Come and see maize." She refers to an artwork executed with the combination of recycled paper and maize cobs. "This looks good; these *bu* things," She marvels as she appreciates the stitch-work

in 'Adoration'. She notes, "These things take time." Aggie considers 'Belief' her favorite artwork of the exhibition. "It looks too good, too nice. When you look at the title, it's already a cross", she emphasizes.<sup>243</sup> 'Adoration' is her best because she "could make out something from it." Aggie further admires 'Hope' because "it gives you that feeling of hope," she says. "It can make you keep on thinking." She qualifies her admiration by noting the artist's use of the sun to symbolize hope: "The atmosphere was dull, but when he put the sun there, people started hoping."<sup>244</sup> Aggie further justifies her position by insisting that: "It is good because you can make *meaning* out of it. It makes you want more. It makes you feel like you want to look at it, because it is not easy to analyze."<sup>245</sup> Interestingly, Aggie's adoration of the art works mentioned above revealingly dwells on meaning rather than form.

Aggie cannot compare 'Hope' to 'Gourds' in which "you can see gourds." This is because, according to her, "when it is difficult to make out the meaning, it keeps you interested; it makes you thoughtful, unlike that one where you just see kids and parents (referring to 'Adoration' this time). She intimates that "the more you look at it, the more you *discover* new things." In other words, she prefers to 'discover' than just seeing. When asked what a nonprofessional (outsider) would be looking at, she pointed at the colors, the materials, and the 'simplistic things.' She claims that her grandparents, for example, would enjoy the exhibits through discovering. "Aha, this is a person; and, by the way they would like to interpret it themselves." Aggie thinks that because of the color, people who do not know art would enjoy the exhibition as well. This response comes after I had cited the low readability of exhibits in this exhibition due to extreme idealization. Both the figures and composition are highly idealized such that the art works are less figurative; there is low recognition of images that would assist in making meaning whatsoever. However, Aggie serendipitously introduces an ideal of competence, as well as, notes that some art lovers prefer discovering meaning, to participate in the interpretation. This does not work for all, at least, with those with no basic level of competence or attunement towards interpreting visuals.

What Aggie finds most interesting about this exhibition are the compositions, the colors, and the time the artist invests into the production process: "[...] everything was done bit by bit". She finds the bark cloth and the materials the artist uses as the unique element about the exhibition. In her opinion, it is challenging. Aggie explains to me her preference of 'abstract art' to other forms as stemming from university training: "Before [we joined university] we did art and everything seemed interesting. Now I see things differently. You have changed my perception. Before everything was 'simple', but you made it hard." Aggie aims a jab at me: "I like those things that keep me thinking. I do not like things that you see and move on. And,

243 Note that Aggie bases her judgment of essence on the recognizable element—the cross, which leads her to believe that the artwork is about [religious] belief.

244 She insinuates symbolism by considering the sun as a signal for hope.

245 The meaning Aggie gains is not that of linkages and decoding messages; it is an emotional yearning for unfulfilled desires that keep her wanting more.

that is the way you people trained us." She further explains, "When you look at a painting and the things are easy to you, you tend to ignore other things because you already know." The mix of the abstract/realism phenomenon sneaks in here. "A painting like this one which is abstracted keeps you looking up meaning. For example, in 'Adoration' we missed out on the details because we got the meaning immediately. It does not keep you so long." She further insists that: "If I see something and I feel I have understood it, I move on because now I know what the artist wanted to show." Erma (personal interview, May 01, 2008) shares her sentiments:

There is a disadvantage if we have art that reveals it all. Art has to be a bit reserved; it should not be obvious that this is a boy carrying a bag. It should bother my mind and take more time for me to interpret the artwork. Then the artwork will have achieved its intention as an artwork since it is supposed to be appreciated and at the same time communicate. When I take a lot of time looking at the artwork, the artwork will have achieved its essence as an artwork by reserving some communication and by not giving me fast appreciation.

Aggie's sentiments of course come with serious repercussions. Firstly, she is adamant such a thing benefits her art because she has to think about it in order to discover the hidden meaning; she thinks this is an advantage. Adversely, this could lead to less appreciation of other people's "creativity because it is simplistic", and "you think that now you cannot appreciate simple paintings". This is because Veronica, in her submission, confesses that she cannot be satisfied, contented, or even feel good if she made a simple painting, thus, she painted over her 'simplistic paintings' with abstract since she felt "they were not good anymore". In her class, whoever abstracted *well* was a good painter. Her discernment that "if you abstract the content and figures are realistic, someone is like aha 'now I see a kid going to school'" and thus no *depth* in it, in my view is bothering and 'unfortunate'. Her 'advantage' calamitously ebbs from the basics of what art should be—clear and thus easy to decipher. Erma expresses a similar view:

Me as the appreciator I will have achieved, after looking at some artwork after a long time and then in the end I interpret it. Because, when it is obvious, then I think people would not be appreciating artwork without being given some kind of burden of interpreting them.

The most disturbing though, is her claim and acknowledgement that "however unique a painting may be if it is not abstracted, no one will consider it." She prefers abstract art (presumably where both content and form are abstracted) because "abstract art is what sells nowadays, and it is what people consider [real] art." She concludes by asserting that, "Abstract art drives my production of art because that is what my lecturers want to see, my fellow students, and the public." She however relents when she finally accepts that "it is not what drives me, but it



is what I was taught to be.” Aggie raises several issues that affect our art today in Uganda and at Makerere in particular. She raises, at first glance, the question on the nature of meaning and the issue of abstract/realism classification once again. She further raises the issue of simplicity lost, and the nature of instruction of art in higher institutions of learning. The issues highlighted pose adverse consequences to the development of art and the artist in relation to contemporary practice. I will consider the case of simplicity at length in light of the other issues raised in Aggie’s tour of the exhibition.

#### *Simple, complex, and complicated*

As we grow up, our perceptual processes become more complex, and as we learn new things, our perspectives widen. This is because the mind broadens to accommodate new phenomena along the way. During these transitions, we continue learning and communicating, although at different levels of complexity. When a child undergoes training in various fields and skills, the mind grows broader and hence attuned to deal with complexities and new things. In so doing, the simplicity with which this child—now an adult—used to do and view things is gradually forfeited for complex systems. Once such attunement luxuriates, in most cases, it is irreversible because the mind cannot function in that way anymore.<sup>246</sup> Outside the fields of excellence through training or specialization, things remain at a very simplistic and basic level such that any complexity just does not make meaning at all. More so, there are only a few complex things in people’s view of the world, and, the bigger part of our lives comprises of simple things. This is a huge generalization about a worldview assumed that we all share. One could argue that the most mundane repetitive everyday practices emerge from complex entangled social, political, historical, environmental, psychological processes. Young children guess and see complexity. If this stops, it is an educational process of indoctrination to not question, or see with curiosity. Whereas this is true, complexity at the extreme is inhibitive. The complexity we see in today’s art in Uganda is prohibitive, rather than raising curiosity. This is because, one needs to know where to start from, and this is very reason tradition works. In addition to this argument, apart from complexities we acquire through acculturation and environmental demands, life remains, in its greater part, at the simple level from where we start it. The simplicity that we start life with, therefore, remains with us and follows us through, at the least, sometimes recuperating conspicuously in old age. On the surface, it does not avail itself, but in almost everything we do, simplicity is part of it.<sup>247</sup>

246 When one learns to ride a bicycle, one cannot choose to fall because the mind can no longer handle the consequences. It is true that young and old learn to fall without painful consequences. The fact in this is that, the learning process mentioned here does not take place in some of the visual cultures we have today in Uganda. That is why we need to re-strategize the making of art and appreciating it. Secondly, when we learn to ride a bicycle, we cannot un-learn the process, unless a deficiency in functionality of our systems develops like impairment. However, learning to ride means that we lose our disability to ride and as such, we can no longer revert to our old selves. Nevertheless, our new learned systems become too simple to us that we can no longer recognize our engagement with them especially embodied practices.

247 Consider the ease with which we talk or perform acquired skills, that is not on the surface until we

The point I am advancing is that we cannot afford to become that complex—if complex means complicated in Aggie’s view—at the expense of simplicity because we only get out of touch with reality. If I have trained myself to view things through a web of complexities, it does not mean that there is nothing simple about me. Notwithstanding, this does not mean that everybody else would become part of my learnt complexity because in that person’s view, my complexity should be simple to him/her. Whereas I do not see others as simple, in addition to the fact that humans are complex and complicated, in instances where we need to communicate, simplicity is the most proactive choice. Aggie singles out *discovery* as that which would pin an art viewer down to an artwork thereby creating a dependency. I argue that we do not only discover through complexities; we can, and so many times do, discover through simplicity (taken for granted assumptions, biases, stereotypes, prejudices) because it is the greater part of us. Even when we learn these complexities, the ease with which we perform them makes them simple to us. Perhaps the fallacy or shortfall in constructing complexities is the tendency to replicate it as being complicated. Although complicatedness and complexity may intersect at one point, they differ significantly, as they take on new forms.<sup>248</sup> Something complex is not necessarily complicated although it may appear so on the surface. Something complicated is *difficult* to decipher and therefore requires an extra effort, which, in case of absence, might lead to total failure of meaning-making for example in visual culture. However, when complexity crosses the barrier of complicatedness, it becomes pleasant and enjoyable to experience. This means that complexity is not commensurate to being complicated and hence interchangeable, the two forms do not yield the same results.

The implications are in Aggie’s point of view, one might never come to any discovery at all and hence building any dependency around a picture that is overtly complex or difficult to understand by a *simple* mind, because however much one entangles with complexities, one always tries to find a simple way. It may appear that art is meant for only labyrinthine minds which can, and are capable of, reducing such labyrinths to mere basics. It is also evident, from Aggie’s submission that *abstract art* (as many scholars call it) aims at complicatedness and not simplicity, in terms of form, i.e., composition, figures, color, and surface quality. Similarly, subject matter might also become complicated and hence abstract—only known by the artist because s/he wants to remain discrete. Nonetheless, the argument and process of abstraction can be the opposite—to remove details, find essence—the ‘simple’ core or essence of idea, feeling, and observed world is abstraction. Considering international signs—designers abstract to symbol, simple read, interpret at a glance because what it is referencing is familiar to most people throughout

get to such a point that we can no longer do it in a simple way or with ease.

248 “Something complex may be well-organized and logically constructed as well as subtle and intricate, while a thing that is complicated will have something irregular, perverse, asymmetrical in addition to fundamental intricacy; complex is more formal and technical (a problem in mathematics is complex) while something like personal life can be complicated.” See, thesaurus.com available online at, <http://thesaurus.reference.com/browse/complex>

the world such as crossing out of something signs to mean 'NO'. Moreover, this is exactly for what I argue. When we learn to do things, we are at ease with them. We become simple minded about them. When things are alien to us, we require complex body and mind systems to deal with them. However, this does not mean that we are simple-minded all through. In fact, we develop a very complex system of thought and bodily processes when undertaking what seems simple to us. That is our main goal.

Complexity may prevail without particularly adding meaning to an artwork, but only serving as a beautification strategy capable of building dependency of corporeal meaning. Conversely, complexity, outside the maze, determines the fate of readability of an artwork and may go beyond actual beauty or visual enjoyment to include abstract concepts that form the core essences embedded in the artwork. Interestingly too, one can be simple but complex at the same time. Namely, one may choose, as the artist did in the exhibits under question, to be simple in subject matter but complex in application. Complexity in its mild form has order, implying that one may gain accessibility to its internal mechanisms; complicatedness has no entry point due to its irregularity. Hence, the more complicated a work of art is, the less receptive it might become to a simple mind. I do not belittle the simple mind; instead, I describe a mind that deals with preset conceptions about the world on a daily basis in that it develops a complexity of prejudices, biases, and taken-for-granted assumptions that eventually become so simple to the mind in relation to particular tasks.<sup>249</sup> To get out of this quagmire of dealing with our simple minds, remix, as suggested in this study, would form a critique of our simplicity to view the world anew; in a new and fresh perspective, not to inhibit our ways of understanding the world by providing basics from which we can reinterpret the world. The simplicity we develop over time is after all, not devoid of questioning, but full of answers.

In its simplicity, art is one of the basic things in which humankind has engaged from time to time and its dispensation therefore, should remain at its simple level. Arnheim (1994) looks at simple figures as the closest identifiers of structural equivalents of perceptual qualities because of their immediacy as entitled comprehensive stimulus configurations, and not the abstract derivatives from concrete objects of the environment. However, following this view reverts one to the arts of the universals where one finds ready-mades in the environment and does not provide room for learned experiences. If we produce art out of intuition or need,

<sup>249</sup> Simple-mindedness, however, could still mean our inability to confront complexities, or even question them. This also implies, in turn, that, to have a simple mind is to look at things the way they are, the way we see them, which indeed is not an easy task especially so if we do not have the ability to do so. This, too, means that we always have a simple and complex mind whatever our level of human development is. For the indigene, or a child, the simple things that they see, are not the complex gallery artworks, but the implements, cultures, and beliefs, they are used to seeing. Being able to see what we see, means that we can ably see through what we see and getting beyond the surface of that which is before us. Nonetheless, our engagement with what we see remains primarily grounded in the very thing that enables that visualization. Making meaning requires that we can see through what we see. Seeing the simple things, as such, is a way of seeing and contemplating the world.

then it must be able to fulfill our aspirations like any other form or order in human activity. Although I have no definite tool I could use to decode the artworks in this show, it nevertheless captivates me with the amazing detail, care, time, and skill. Arriving at such complexity, the artist employs simple things such as stitching but with utmost care, patience, and involvement to build complex networks of stitches that keep me wondering how he really did that. On this note, his work is extremely complex but pleasurable. His treatment of the material also defines *wonder* as empathetic in that it makes the viewer feel like the artist him/herself during the production process. More so, these empathies help us achieve our own desires of being able to attain what we could not afford by ourselves. Even though the subject matter is complicated, the handling of the medium is simple but complex. Coupled with familiar materials and simplicity, this artist manages to bridge the gap between complexity and complicatedness in visual art experience.

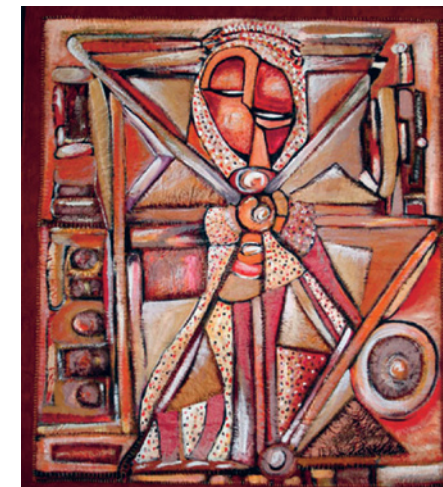


Figure 8. Sanaa Gateja, *Inzikuru*. 2007. Oil on bark cloth. (Photograph by Kabiito Richard).

### Title against content

Mano Hands Art Exhibition (Mano Hands) at Makerere Art Gallery features a renowned Ugandan artist who has explored bark cloth extensively both as material and medium of expression in art production. During the opening ceremony (June 29, 2007) of his most recent art show at the same venue dubbed 'Bark Cloth', Gregory spoke of him as having "demonstrated that he knows bark cloth very well and has interrogated it and extended it to new heights." In his scheme of work, the author of the exhibition is very indirect in that the meaning in most of his artwork is barely accessible to many, including trained artists; however, he has won international acclaim through his impassioned handling of bark cloth and recycled material.<sup>250</sup> During this exhibition, I interacted with two up-coming young artists namely Billy and Agnes who are both art students at MTSIFA.

Billy (personal communication, June 29, 2007) thinks that the artist (herein the author of the exhibition in question) succeeded in portraying the messages in his artwork of *Inzikuru* (see figure 8 above) although his view raises issues of *informa-*

<sup>250</sup> See, [news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/pop\\_ups/03/africa\\_africas\\_city\\_kampala/html/5.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/pop_ups/03/africa_africas_city_kampala/html/5.stm); [www.artofafricaonline.com/kwetu.html](http://www.artofafricaonline.com/kwetu.html); [www.artofafricaonline.com/aboutsanaa](http://www.artofafricaonline.com/aboutsanaa); [www.voanews.com/english/archive/2006-10/2006-10-26-voa61.cfm](http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2006-10/2006-10-26-voa61.cfm); [www.africanloxo.com/repert-artistes/ouganda/01.htm](http://www.africanloxo.com/repert-artistes/ouganda/01.htm)

tion loss already discussed in this study by Pietarinen (2005) in reference to Relevance Theory. Billy has thus to say “[...] the work of the *Elders*, when you look at it, it really depicts what the information is about. You really look at the thing and see that the elders are there. When you look at ‘Inzikuru’s crown’, when you look at her, you really see that Inzikuru was really crowned: the materials, the colors really show that Inzikuru was crowned.”<sup>251</sup> The observation raises two critical issues: (a) Billy depends on a *superficial familiarity* instigated by the title of the artwork and not his own acumen of artistic sensibility; (b) *Weak signals* can become strong enough to be recognized if regularized,<sup>252</sup> but quite seldom are they, because the weaker the signal, the slimmer the likelihood of being *received*. Cognitive meanings, moral expectations, subjective expressions and evaluations must relate to one another in everyday communication, a process requiring a cultural tradition covering all spheres of cognition, moral-practical, and expression (Taylor, 1987). Similarly, in visual rhetoric, “elements are arranged and modified by a rhetor not simply for self-expression—although that may constitute a major motive for the creator of an image—but also for communication with an audience” (Foss, 2005, p. 144).

The evidence of superficiality and weakness of signal stems from Billy’s concession that because he is an artist and he knows about Inzikuru, he is able to read the artwork and decode the message of crowning. It is also evident that a nonprofessional with no training at all or anyone not familiar with cultural narrative of Inzikuru would find it impossible to make any sense of such a text. In fact, Mondrian (cited in, Chipp, 1968) predicted that art would turn into a product of deepened inwardness and a more conscious pure representation of the human mind, expressing art in an aesthetically purified, abstract form.<sup>253</sup> Purity of art in an inward sense, however, does not only enslave art to the artist, but also locks out many. This is a purely modernist sense of abstraction that reflects well in Billy’s idea of what should be. Billy argues that the exhibits would be understandable in terms of theme or expression like *Leaner* and *Elders* (not shown in this text), which are typically African norms. However, the question that lingers on is whether the content itself is legible. It is true thus far, that any communication system has legibility as its starting point, without which, the meaning of a product and hence its memory become irrelevant (Dorsa, Malven, & Mickelson, 1990). I am also agreement with Gardi (1969) that the clearer the signal at its source the greater are chances of understanding it clearly once we receive it. He warns though that at times we may receive the signal but fail to grasp the embedded meaning. For example, can the reader sense the leaning in the work within the context of its cultural background? Visual phenomena like sound phenomena, must present particular prop-

251 Perhaps I would have asked him to stop blushing because ‘her’ was a reference to a superficial image of Inzikuru buried within his own conscience and less in the literal face of the artwork.

252 Regularizing the signal involves receiving it and then transforming it into a recognizable entity. Thus, it involves active participation of the receiving party.

253 See article ‘Natural Reality and Abstract Reality, in Herschel B. Chipp, p. 270. (first published, 1919)

erties if they are to become flexible functions in a coherent syntactic structure, aiming at representation and communication, cautions Saint-Martin (1987). We have, for example, to depend on the *title* entirely for the slightest recognition of anything meaningful signaling a cancer of *falsified abilities* affecting Ugandan art today and artists through systems of education that do not consider community as integral in holistic learning.

On her part, Agnes reported that some viewers liked the artwork, others did not understand it and yet some wanted to make bookings (to buy after *Mano Hands* closes). She adds hastily that some people ask the gallery attendants about the work, but normally the attendants too are not able to explain to the people what the art implies. “The only solution is to get the artist himself to try and explain the work”, laments Agnes (personal communication, July 11, 2007). It is a “turn-off” she thinks, for would-be lovers of art, and to make matters worse, she claims that some of the titles do not correspond with the content and this normally requires the presence and guidance of the artist. Quipping into Billy’s falsified ability, this is concrete evidence that the titles offer the viewer a superficial familiarity and thus cannot be entirely dependable.<sup>254</sup> Agnes is more impressed though with the artist’s unique approach to material and form: “He uses patch-work, he uses acrylic, he uses paper beads in a rare way and he creates different tones of art works”.<sup>255</sup> She suggests a *creative* approach to handling form and material, which on its own affords pleasure to the viewer; the creativity thus becomes central to the artist’s construction of dependency in his work. Furthermore, it is through the material that he emphasizes culture and since the exhibition takes place in Buganda, she imagines that Baganda have something to smile about because bark cloth is part of their culture.<sup>256</sup> *Association*, as Agnes insinuates, is a major player in appreciating visual arts. The suggested associative property is that attained through familiarity with and locality of the objects used other than the content.

One of the problems the gallery faces is that of marketing art that is produced in Uganda today because it bears no meaning to the local people: “It becomes hard to market the art work because there is no way one can explain the meaning of the artwork without the artist.” Secondly, the artists’ intentions elude the viewers especially when the meaning is not clear and thus “artists need friends to sell their works”, she laments. Parker and Pollock (1998) echoed this view when they discuss the status of an artwork in art history as inextricably tied to the status of the maker, meaning that the way a work of art is viewed depends on who made it. Agnes’ account is multidimensional: it means that art is not part of the communities from which it comes. Indeed, she mentions “gallery art is exclusive and thus omits

254 This mirrors Ismael’s (I will introduce the participant shortly in this chapter) experience when he sets out with one topic in mind and ends up with another picture.

255 The materials used in this case become the catchment point and the source of essence rather than the inferential meanings achieved through linkages of the texts themselves.

256 Agnes herself is not a Muganda; she hails from Ankole in Western Uganda. She was conducting her Industrial Training at the Makerere Art Gallery by the time of this exhibition.

people of certain calibers and levels of understanding”.<sup>257</sup> Artists should extend their art, in her opinion, to the communities thereby involving people and contributing to their earnings; additionally, it means that we do not produce art for the community per se and thus “some artists do the work to please their customers” and this has led to a gap between the local cultures and the art produced. More significantly, the artwork in *Mano Hands* does not flourish on inferential meaning but tradition, socially interwoven into our daily practice. Thus, the cultural association with which bark cloth takes over the referential intentionality, which is also a legitimate and traditional form of meaningful enjoyment within the Ganda communities; a kind of belongingness that is given a priori and could be enhanced rather than diminish.

### Sharing ideas

Ismael<sup>258</sup> is a direct painter who capitalizes on locality as an inspiration for conceptual build up. My first contact with Ismael’s painting as a practicing artist drew me to his work because it had much in common with regard to my idea of what art production should be because he had exhibited traits of similarity in approach. Firstly, Ismael works with themes drawn from his *immediate environment*, meaning that he deals with scenes of everyday experience. Secondly, he *maintains status-quo*: his works are traceable, in both time and space and thus accessible in both form and sense. Lastly, he employs signs or objects drawn from his *own environment* that are readily identifiable and thus familiar to his community. Prior to our interaction, I attempted to understand the works from my own perspective, and largely, I was able to develop a story for each one of them. Emmanuel (personal communication, June 7, 2007) admired Ismael’s work because “he has been *direct to the point*. And even that writing ‘Ddobi’ is characteristic of Uganda; even that kiosk; Celtel can be anywhere but that combination of Boda boda makes it Ugandan because it is not in Kenya or Tanzania” (see figure 9).<sup>259</sup>

According to him, painting should be a secret although nagged by the tendency that “there are so many works that you spend much time on without gaining anything.” He reckons that painting should *communicate* and short of that, he has a problem (this is a contradiction though because a secret should be confidential). Nonetheless, Emmanuel further stresses the point of *origin* and *identity*—which are functions of locality—when he identifies the combination of a spear, kanzu, and crown in *Kato Kimera I* (see figure 28) as factors responsible for its easy locatability: “it cannot be somewhere else apart from Buganda”, he concludes. Throughout the gallery, Emmanuel finds very little content in the artwork, and he cautions:

257 Eighty percent (80%) of the Ugandan population lives in rural areas with low levels of education, confidence, and economic ability. Even in the urban areas, people are still impoverished and barely educated.

258 Ismael represents artists of the younger generation having graduated from Makerere University in 2005 with a Bachelor’s degree in Industrial and Fine Art.

259 The organization of the elements in the display enabled actualization of familiarity and locality in this work. Celtel, Kiosks, and Boda boda create a specific code of a Ugandan environment.



Figure 9. Kateregga Ismael, *Market place*. 2007. Oil on canvass. (Photo by Kabiito Richard)



Figure 10. Kateregga Ismael, *Classic Ddobi*. 2007. Oil on canvass. (Photo by Kabiito Richard).

“People think art is bringing nature onto something they can see permanently; in art you capture a certain emotion and you let it live forever. When someone comes to look at it and starts moving again. When that movement is not captured again then it is a problem”. First, there is a linkage between art and emotion, which reignited every time you interact with the artwork: then, art must communicate. It also implies that a reciprocal situation during the interaction is inevitable and in any case, for art to communicate, that integration must avail itself at every encounter. The interaction constitutes the ‘emotion’ that the artwork engenders.

In his own account, Ismael’s intention in producing community-based art is the desire to record daily experiences and the struggles people go through to survive (personal communication, June 18, 2007). He notes that *Classic Ddobi* (see figure 19) is emotional: “The gentleman in this picture has played a part in my live; he is the one who takes care of my jeans”. What drives him in his artwork is to address issues affecting society in an attempt to emulate performing artists. “The reason

why performing artists are better than us is because they address issues of day to day life. So if someone does a song about them, everyone is *aware* of them and so it touches them”.<sup>260</sup> Ismael is also cognizant of the fact that, to relate with local people there must be *sharing of ideas*. “So if I made a painting for myself, it would still be important to let some other people know what I feel”. In order to realize his goal, he has to use a *language* that anyone can understand: “If you are going to address a problem, you must use a language that everyone will understand”, he advises. He is silently intimating that meaning is a *negotiated* process and *sharing* is a mode of interaction, which is vital in communication. Negotiation and sharing further reflect Ismael’s philosophy of art production by warning that it is not acceptable practice to impose personal feelings onto others; rather, “we have to come to a *consensus*”. He further posits that language is a *social process* and not an individual engagement:

Comprehension of an image requires a commonality of experience; an interaction has to develop because the artist is evoking images stored in the minds of both parties. Meaning is thus derived from experiential sequence, as a thundercloud means rain or beafbuds mean spring (Barry, 1997, p. 113).

The lack of meaning and the effects of ‘imposed art’ on others have resulted into communities seeking equivalent forms of expression, but which are meaningful to them. “Many Ugandans today”, remarks Ismael, “prefer to have a photograph because photographs speak *directly* in a language they understand”.<sup>261</sup> Accordingly, Ismael wants to be more prudent and borrow ideas from motto productions that he thinks are stipulated *guidelines* to everyday life. “If we transform art and it goes to that level whereby it has a message to deliver to somebody whenever they see it, I think we will achieve our goals”, he concludes. His comments echo Emmanuel’s ‘*enduring emotion*’ and *direct* communication as essential in an art form that survives within a community.<sup>262</sup> His thoughts relate to postmodern concepts of otherness, community, and concern for the human plight. Unfortunately, as Spadling (2003, p. 81) noticed too, “The ascendancy of the artist over art has led directly to the disenfranchisement of the viewer.” Along the lines of disenfranchisement, Wang, Regina, Hsu, and Cheng (2007) advised designers, particularly, to pay more attention to recognizability of their designs by the observers. Hence, the apogee of Ismael’s insights is that art must be purposeful and the intention of it must be clear from the start and thence, must add value to people’s lives. Important to note

<sup>260</sup> Ismael in this observation refers to a song done by one Uganda’s most celebrated singers—Bobie Wine. In this song—Kiwaani— he sings about life in the ghettos and people’s deceitfulness in contemporary Uganda.

<sup>261</sup> Ismael references his observation towards the de-linking of art from community of contemporary Ugandan. The art produced today in Uganda lacks the ‘enduring emotion’ and the direct contact with its people.

<sup>262</sup> Moreover, even when it is indirect, if it bears scenes, events, and objects of common knowledge, it still becomes a direct communication within that particular community.

though, is the fact that Ismael’s artwork appear of an impressionistic style, which is an abstraction of the impressions of the world. The labeling of either abstract or realistic is a simplified dualistic perspective of art.

### Relevance and interpretation

A questionnaire administered to gallery goers during the ‘Women’s Day Art Exhibition 2007’ was part of the Makerere Art Gallery’s programs of ensuring better services to both artists and viewers of its exhibition. According to the information contained in 36 questionnaires conducted by the gallery administration, a general remark made by one of the participants commended the show and acknowledged “all the artworks collected” had meaningful messages. Not all viewers felt the same way: “some pieces are abstract art and difficult to understand, but others are clear and send out great messages of women’s roles in society and development,” commented a viewer. The debate of abstract versus realism once again rages on as the same viewer posits, “abstract pieces of art need to have explanations for the lay person so their messages are understood.” However, the same viewer hails the organizers and wishes that it would be useful to exhibit or advertise some of the works “in various offices on campus for further sensitization and marketing.” This viewer is concerned that Ugandan art should be spread to the public and less confined in gallery spaces a view also expressed by Agnes in an earlier interview. Implicitly, the concern here refers to Pietarinen’s (2005) idea of relevance. That, which should be relevant for a certain context, and what should remain subtle to minimize information loss should become a matter of priority.

In a related reaction, another viewer acknowledges the relevance of many pieces, but decries the difficulty some raise when it comes to interpretation. This raises a second issue of relevance: the context is relevant because the artwork says something about ‘Women’s Day,’ but the detail of the content is not relevant to constitute its own meaning-making independence away from its environment. The viewer may know that one is talking about feminine issues, but might not exactly tell what the actual message is although the context is right. Dale (1996) adequately addresses this dilemma considering his proposal of expressions that mean. The same viewer offers advice, “All of the pieces should have a title that can enable the viewer to interpret better.” Contrarily, a viewer identified as an art student advised the gallery to show “more abstract pieces to overcome the plenty of obvious pieces.” It is not clear though that all ‘abstract pieces’ are discrete; some may be even more obvious than non-abstract pieces. This is the mentality of the contemporary Ugandan artist especially the one trained at Makerere University and many other higher institutions of learning. Consequently, it disconnects the artist from his community, a matter too, that concerns Halkinhal (1999):

If we hear that 300,000 people went to the Jackson Pollock show, then it is just because they were convinced they should go to the Jackson Pollock show. They pay money and they look around to see a show that they have no interest in; they go just because



somebody else told them to take an interest in this. My audience ought to be anyone on the street who is smart enough to look at my work. We do works for ourselves, for each other; we do work for this little art Mafia (p. 31).<sup>263</sup>

A question of relevance versus interpretation arises as the dialogue ensued: that some artworks are relevant to the theme but difficult to interpret. Ideally, the viewer can identify some elements in the artwork as directed towards feminine representations, but the connections between these parts cannot logically form a legible whole. This anomaly occurs in summaries most of artworks, whereby layers of text do not coordinate with the visual elements although wrapped in one package. In such configurations, it is highly likely that the pileup of layered texts will not be logical during read back. The consequence is, in most cases, failure to deliver the required communication, even though the elements used as signifiers carry attributes of the said theme. This is because such configurations require parallel read-back processes, which in most cases, require expertise or high sensibility of artistic exposure. Relevance therefore, avoids the mix up with ability to interpret or decode the message because relevance in itself is a contextual phenomenon, which does not determine the choice of combinations in visual formulations. In conclusion, Pearse (cited in, Hutchens & Suggs, 1997) tackles this dilemma with warranted advice:

We should examine cultural practices, as well as the artifacts of culture, as signifying systems, as practices of representation, not as the production of beautiful things evoking beautiful feelings. Art educators should begin to understand the rhetoric of the image and how it persuades and positions the viewer/reader (p. 36).

<sup>263</sup> Pollock—an issue of economically staged fame that works in a capitalistic society in which there are winners and losers, and top winners are designated superstars.

## 6 / Remix Aesthetics

### Preamble

In dealing with the idea of remix, I draw inspiration from the current wave of reinvention dominating contemporary culture in Buganda. Following the abolition of Monarchs in 1966 by the then president Apollo Milton Obote, Buganda and all its institutions collapsed as the hierarchy that bound it together had disintegrated. Nevertheless, during the close period of the 1980s to the mid 1990s, a wave of youthful energized Baganda activists, following the reinstatement of Monarchs in Uganda by the NRM (National Resistance Movement) government, set out to reinstate the Kingdom's past glory.<sup>264</sup> The idea of revisiting their roots dominated agendas of various social groups in Buganda, some of which included Buganda Kingdom, Nkoba za Mbogo, theatre, music, cultural villages, and visual artists.<sup>265</sup> The phenomenon of remix became a prominent entity in music, dance, and drama to represent strategically the concept of specific locale as a way of bridging the past with the present. Navas (2007) prefers to define remix in terms of music: "A remix in general, is a reinterpretation of a pre-existing song, meaning that the aura of the original will be dominant in the remixed version." I thus discuss works of art produced with the concept of remix by appropriating cultural implements to strengthen my argument that familiar and specific things are instrumental in instituting meaning making and at the same time, we continue—as question and critique what is appropriated—the knowledge that comes with the appropriated implement is space and time. Typically, the goal of appropriation is to critique taken for granted assumptions but also maintains status quo in desired situations—this is a goal of Remix aesthetics. Further, I analyze the significance of remix in constituting various levels of signification in visual narrative that appear through tropes and signs as linguistic entities and the role this plays in influencing art productions. I also interact with various artists of different age groups to gain an

<sup>264</sup> Nkoba za Mbogo is a youth wing of the Buganda cultural institution operating mainly in higher institutions of learning founded at Makerere University in 1989 to support and popularize the project of revisiting the past glory of the Buganda Kingdom.

<sup>265</sup> See Sanyal's article on "Kabiito Richard's paintings: A local reinvention in a global perspective", June 2004. Available online at, <http://www.articlearchives.com/humanities-social-science/visual-performing-arts/795065-1.html>

insight into their reactions to remix in particular and their general views about meaning in art in the context of Buganda and Uganda generally.

## ART AND THE ARTIST

### Practising remix

In this study, I work with the concept of the Reflexive Remix concept of critiquing but maintaining traces of original essences even when I use pieces of material culture and narrative in new situations to mean differently. The practice of remix that emanated from music and today known as *turntablism* stems from the tradition of sampling; “sampling is the basis for the popular practice of cut/copy and paste” (Navas, 2007, para. 2). Navas outlines three types of remix; extended, selective, and reflexive. The *extended* remix is a “longer version of the original song containing long instrumental sections making it more mixable for the club DJ” (para. 6). The *selective* remix consists of subtracting material from the original song. This may contain new sections as well as new sounds, while subtracting others “always keeping the essence of the song” (para. 7). The *reflexive* remix allegorizes and extends the sampling aesthetic, “where the remixed version challenges the aura of the original and claims autonomy even when it carries the name of the original” (para. 8).<sup>266</sup> The DJ may add or delete material but original tracks remain largely intact to be recognizable. Raymond (as I will shortly present) also believes that the clubs are not detached from their origin, although they now have a new meaning—they are no longer *enkoni*, but *Balaalo* because they now pose as the ‘Balaalo’ with deep roots in the past. Rather than merely critique tradition, remix highlights the fact that tradition remains part of the difference that we make. Navas makes elaborates on the reflexive remix:

In culture at large, the Reflexive Remix takes parts from different sources and mixes them aiming for autonomy. The spectacular aura of the original(s), whether fully recognizable or not must remain a vital part if the remix is to find cultural acceptance. This strategy demands that the viewer reflects on the meaning of the work and its sources even when knowing the origin may not be possible (para. 16).

<sup>266</sup> “Allegory”, Navas (2007) asserts, “is often deconstructed in more advanced remixes ... and quickly moves to be a reflexive exercise that at times leads to a remix in which the only thing that is recognizable from the original is the title. However, to be clear no matter what, the remix will always rely on the authority of the original song. When this activity extends to culture at large, the remix is in the end a re-mix that is a rearrangement of something already recognizable; it functions at a second level: a meta-level. This implies that the originality of the remix is non-existent, therefore it must acknowledge its source of validation self-reflexively. In brief, the remix when extended as a cultural practice is a second mix of something pre-existent; the material that is mixed at least for a second time must be recognized otherwise it could be misunderstood as something new, and it would become plagiarism. Without a history, the remix cannot be Remix” (para. 9).

### Embuukuuli

Responding to Raymond’s artwork he created with two clubs mounted on a black background (see figure 11), Gregory asks at the opening of the ‘*Different but One Art Exhibition*’ (February 15, 2008), “Ate ezo embuukuuli zaani?” (Whose clubs are those?) Gregory further asks whether they are from Bwindi after Raymond claims authorship, “Z’eBwindi zino?” (Are these from Bwindi?)<sup>267</sup> Gregory immediately remembers his trip to Bwindi through the clubs; he conceives the clubs as representations of Bwindi and therefore the meaning they invoke is the gorilla tracking in Bwindi. He does not consider the work as a complete entity in itself, but holistically as a memory of Bwindi. His mind goes beyond the clubs and settles on their meaning—Bwindi. Not only Bwindi, it also invokes tourism, the tracking of gorillas, and even the gorillas themselves. What does Gregory’s reaction contribute to this debate? It invokes the mechanisms of tradition’s influence on meaning. It further confirms metonymy’s specialty of invoking a string of other relations that aid meaning formation. Hence, the clubs, to Gregory, mean Bwindi because they carry attributes of Bwindi and therefore invoke memories of Bwindi. Gregory, in turn, adores the artwork more than many other viewers. This is because Gregory has access to knowledge about the ‘Embuukuuli’ and has an experience of them, he ably finds meaning in the artwork, and one who has no experience of it, struggles to make meaning.<sup>268</sup> However, after Gregory chips in with his comment, I begin to look at the artwork differently.

In his interpretation of Raymond’s work, Gregory refers to it as ‘*embuukuuli*’ and not whose art work it was; rather, he does not refer to the artwork itself but its means of expression—the clubs. In so doing, he links the subject with the object.<sup>269</sup> Revisiting Dale’s (1996) idea of meaning, he proposes a system of meaning whereby the conditions under which one person can say something to another with a particular utterance become explicit. The question to ask is what is it about the clubs that makes them mean what they mean, for example, to Gregory? Alternatively, in

<sup>267</sup> Bwindi is a tourist resort in the Bwindi Forest Reserve where people go to track Mountain Gorillas. It is located in Western Uganda. Academic staff of Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts, Makerere University organizes annually the ‘*Different but One Art Exhibition*.’ Its inception was back in the year 2002 curated and cofounded by Rebecca Uziel and artist from Israel and now Associate Professor Philip Kwesiga, then dean of MTSIFA.

<sup>268</sup> I personally attributed it to a walking stick, which is normally an article for the elderly, so I was attributing old age to his construction.

<sup>269</sup> Embuukuuli is a stick mainly used by cattle herders in the central, southern, and western regions of Uganda. In Buganda, it refers to a huge stick with a round head used for protection against possible danger. “Ezo embuukuli z’ani?” implies that the clubs have communicated directly with Gregory in conformity with what Gregory believes Raymond wanted him to believe that what Raymond meant to say was that the clubs are from Bwindi. Furthermore, that the “embuukuuli” means much more to Gregory than the conceptual appraisal as construed by the artist. The artist only presents the clubs for viewing in a new context and not the old one. However, the clubs retain their original meaning even in the new dimension the artist places them simply because the intention of the utterer builds upon belief of the viewer that what he intends is to make his audience believe that he actually means that the clubs are from Bwindi his audience gets to believe it. Significantly, because the artist apparently chooses relevant content for the occasion, Gregory grasps the meaning of the artwork communicate directly with minimal loss of information. Secondly, Gregory and Raymond exhibit specificity and commonality because of their common belief and association with the clubs.

respect to their meaning, what is it about the clubs that is so important for their use to say something about the land bill? Drout (2006) provides an inference, “if someone uttered ‘Sinatra wants to tour next year with Metallica,’ I would come to believe that the person said that Sinatra wants to tour next year with Metallica, even if, I never heard that sentence before.”<sup>270</sup> Placed in the context of Raymond’s exhibit, Gregory interprets upon contextual information that Raymond’s interest in getting him to recognize his (Raymond’s) intention, to get Gregory to consider a proposition is, in fact, to have Gregory recognize Raymond’s intention and to have Gregory believe that proposition and thereby get to believe it.<sup>271</sup>

Having placed Dale’s (1996) general concept of meaning in context, we now consider the implications of situations of communication under Raymond’s idea of using clubs in his artwork. The L-Sentence Dale cites in his theory is a composition of language and how an audience may participate in the use of such language. Not even in general terms as Dale’s proposal of a theory of meaning, will meaning fall short of cognition. More so, Dale emphasizes the quality of the expression, which is the enabling condition for the resultant behavior. Thus, visually the content and indeed the quality of the expression that enables cognitive behavior must be of high repute. The meaning is that we must build up favorable antecedent conditions for us to form qualitative expressions upon which we may build our belief systems. This is why I propose that Pietarinen (2005) provides an idea of the quality of Dale’s L-Sentence within which one translates one’s understanding of a proposition into a common experience between two communicating parties in relation to condition C\*. Pietarinen proposes *purpose* and full account of *meaningful intention* whereby the expression bears an intended goal that the participant tries to grasp. This calls for accountability for the relevant factors considering the expression in light of its context of reference. Dale’s theory becomes important and useful if we can ably cognize the L-Sentence implied in an extract of his arguments leading to his explicit theory:

So I utter ‘Grrr’ intending to get you to consider whether to believe that I am angry, knowing that you know that I not, and intending you to *reason* from your *recognition* that I intended you to consider whether to believe that I am angry with certain *facts* I *know to be known to you* about our friend, that I am actually trying to get you to believe that our friend is angry<sup>272</sup> (section 7.2, para. 9).

Dale’s (1996) theory is quite important because of its linkage with the idea of narrative that would work for this study especially so that it recognizes the intention

270 Dale (1996) thinks that “this is more important a fact for understanding the nature of meaning than the fact that the nicest syntactic theories that people have come up with for describing natural languages have allowed for infinitudes of sentences” (section 7.3, para. 22).

271 Dale believes that inevitably that is what happens even in the simplest cases of saying.

272 The italicized words are my own emphasis on the idea of the L-Sentence in which we find cognition and historical background to the proposition even if there is no prior history of the utterance itself.

of the artist as the initiator of communication in a visual language. My study, in addition to Dale’s provision, proposes conditions under which an audience may recognize the L-Sentence in his proposition as a believable expression and as such meaningful in that recurrent condition. To create conditions for expressions to become recognizably meaningful, we work by invoking traditions that help us interpret the situation as demanding our attention. In this way, meaning connects with tradition. I have earlier linked Dale’s condition C\* to the traditional referent in Drout’s account of tradition as it also seems to be recurrent. Turning to Raymond’s exhibits, the articles used in their capacity as original entities, with minimal or no modification may still mean the same things in new contexts and even evoke the same emotions as when deployed in their original settings.<sup>273</sup>

The revelation here is twofold: it suggests that *remix aesthetics* is still, and will be crucial to visual readings in any context: and that, narrative text can borrow from the remix concept for its explicit, introspective and affective abilities for those who hold such experiences. Perhaps, it is vital to note that both concepts narrative and remix can depend on each other to enhance comprehension in visual readings.<sup>274</sup> Whether Raymond was expressing an idea far from what Gregory expected and perceived in his reading, the expression and communication that transpired between the two entities suggests that the articles in the artwork, in some way, deliver a message to Gregory; Gregory in turn, is in complete interaction with the *embuukuuli*. Realizing that condition C\* relies on context and tradition, one could also recall Pietarinen’s (2005) suggestion that under situations of communication, the interpreter infers context-dependence in reliance to the intended meaning of the communicator. Duly, Gregory is in direct dialogue with his own socio-cultural experiences, thereby, relegating the artist to a status of initiator: he starts the dialogue and withdraws into oblivion while the enabling condition gets into direct contact with the viewer for a more comprehensive interaction.<sup>275</sup> With economic and pragmatic concerns, the artist and audience build up rapport that enables Dale’s (1996) condition C\* to luxuriate and bolster meaning making during communication.

It is important to note at this stage that Dale (1996) emphasizes in his argument that the idea he advances was not to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for things to mean what they do. He instead provides a general outline of why things mean what they do. The study conforms to this postulate in its exploration of condition C\* because it is only an aspect of his theory on which I focus. In

273 This is not to say that all articles maintain their original meanings. Some symbolic articles, for example sacred objects, once separated from their environment lose some of the symbolic content, as I will testify.

274 They do so by the process of reemphasis. By attending to a particular thing, we emphasize its presence. Reoccurrence of the same thing within the same context reemphasizes its presence and thus asserts its position onto the perceiver.

275 Here is where conceptual accounts of meaning may serve to constitute a holistic experience of an artwork, rather than dwelling entirely on the artist’s own experiences or intentions. See, Gabarini & Aenzato (2004) and Feldman & Narayanan (2004) in my earlier discussions.



other words, it is a pigeonhole for exploring the world beyond. Secondly, I retain all qualities of Dale's theory, including condition C\* as terminology for what I set out to explore, with the aim of avoiding a scenario of misrepresentation. Additionally, since Dale bases his implicature theory of the 'expression', as a core concept, we need to define the qualities of that experience. Ideally, we could define it

in different ways, nevertheless, with the present text, remix and narrative will, as working concepts, act to advance the notions in condition C\*. Importantly, after naming condition C\* as constitutive of an expression that *means*, the study will, in the following chapters, explore the recurrence of this condition with narrative and remix aesthetics as explorative tools. This is because condition C\* seems as though it is recurrent and every time it occurs, an audience recognizes it as meaningful.

### Balaalo

Upon interaction with Raymond on his clubs, the title of the artwork turns out as *Balaalo* (see figure 11 above) not *Embuukuuli* as envisaged by Gregory. Here, the artist directly mediates meaning. Contrary to my earlier interpretation of the artwork, based on Gregory's comments, Raymond was making a political and historical statement at the same time. He has always been very curious about the 'Balaalo'<sup>276</sup> (cattle keepers) who he wonders from where they hail. On the other hand, the issues that dominated contemporaneous Ugandan politics at the time constituted a

controversial Land Amendment Bill proposed by government.<sup>277</sup> Two clubs (*enkoni*) fixed on a black background face the opposite direction: one faces up, and another down. Apart from copper wires that the artist wound around them in small doses, the clubs bear no additional manipulation. "These", Raymond says, "were basically complementing the clubs." They have no basic function; it, was kind of upgrading the clubs to ordinary artworks." Raymond does not seem to believe that a work of art can come into being without formal mediation by the artist. That is to say, the artist must modify the form of his material before he can achieve forms that would eventually become *art*.

In their new context, the clubs become communicative, and to Raymond, they are not art for art's sake.<sup>278</sup> Even to the *Balaalo* themselves, there is a deep story

276 A long time ago in Buganda, there were no cattle keepers. What happened is that people from the Southern and Western cattle keeping tribes, disadvantaged at the time, and came to Buganda as cattle keepers. These people were mainly Nyarwanda and Kiga from Southwestern Uganda. They later settled and became part of the later generations of Buganda.

277 Rumor holds, that some of the current leaders are mainly people of the cattle-keeping races; hence, Raymond wants to know what their identity is because it looks like they want to grab land from its rightful owners yet traditionally, they did not possess land in Buganda. So, who are they? "Abalaalo baava wa?" he asks wondering where the *Balaalo* came from because it is not also clear to him whether everyone who holds a 'Nkoni' is a *Mulaalo*. *Mulaalo* is the individual separated from the group.

278 The clubs are more similar to Duchamp's readymade *Fountain* (1917) as aesthetic—as a theory of the

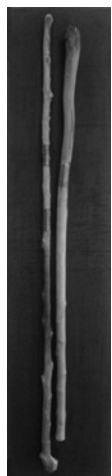


Figure 11. Nsereko Raymond, *Balaalo*. 2007. Clubs and copper wire on plywood. Photo: Kabiito Richard

about their relationships with their cows. Raymond thought about the artwork for a while and it was not accidental. Raymond chooses not to manipulate the clubs because he the message of the clubs to take a bigger percentage of the artwork and any manipulation would distort its meaning and reduce its intensity.<sup>279</sup> More so, manipulation of the clubs would interfere with, and reduce emphasis on the overall meaning. Raymond, in other words, knows that readers of his text would derive intense and invigorated meaning from the artwork if they encounter what they already know. My interest in Raymond's work was never its meaning, but its presentation and conceptual elegance. The essence of Remix aesthetics is to *re-emphasize* meaning and increase its *intensity* in the context of this study. In a flashback, the enabling condition in Dale's (1996) theory is the condition C\*, which I may confidently now identify as the 'expression' that causes behavioral changes in an active party. Ideally, in order to recognize my intention to have an audience believe my proposition and thereby come to believe it, I must make an emphatic statement in the proposition for them to recognize my intention to have them consider my proposition.<sup>280</sup>

Noticing the above statement, Raymond's artwork is elegant in its proposition that it elicits contrasting, but amicable reaction from its readers. That aside, 'Embuukuuli' in contrast with 'Balaalo'<sup>281</sup> gave Raymond another angle because he wanted to know how people reacted regionally.<sup>282</sup> Although Raymond commented on land wrangles in his work, no one actually ever comes up with such an interpretation. Indeed, he confesses that he dangled between the rich history of the 'Balaalo' and the political statement on land issues as taking dominance in his intended meaning. However, his artwork can take on any meaning or carry any message in the context one chooses to read it. Tomah told me that if he had money, he would have paid for the *clubs* because they affected him so much. "Gino emigo, nawu-

nature of art or intentionality of the artist (selective remix)—more so than a remix aesthetic in questioning and critiquing appropriation mixed with or juxtaposed with imagery to question the appropriated (reflexive remix).

279 The 'dominant attraction' in play: Raymond's suggestion in this is narratorial in nature; he wants a domination of significance that would raise questions. Furthermore, he reiterates the figure of the 'mbuukuuli' to reemphasize his intention of maximum impact by suggesting a 'bigger percentage' or saliency in narrative terminology.

280 It important to propose at this stage that, Dale's (1996) proposition is not devoid of antecedent conditions although it says so *prima facie*. For that reason, it requires strong propositional statements to attract attention.

281 'Enkoni' is a Nyankore word for the clubs. Banyankore hail from the Tuusi Races believed to have links with the races of Ethiopia and a cattle-keeping race.

282 He discovered that people from the Western region reacted more to the artwork than any other region to the extent that Tomah wanted to buy the clubs themselves not in their capacity as artworks in a gallery. Gregory looked at the artwork as *embuukuuli* in its context of being 'embuukuuli'—clubs. Ted makes a similar observation. People from the Central region - Buganda see it as 'embuukuuli' whereas those from the West look at it as 'enkoni', a perspective of herding cattle, security, arbiter and discipline. In Buganda, for example, it is mainly for security purposes and that is why its name is *Embuukuuli* because it has capacity to destroy enemies with its huge protuberance. From Gregory's point of view, therefore, he is right and on the point. Indeed, when in Bwindi, they used sticks to climb hills in Bwindi forest. Raymond's idea of *embuukuuli*, though, differs from Gregory's line of usage of the word, but he was not wide off the mark in terms of what Raymond wanted to mean.

lidde nga kinkuteko nnyo kubanga Raymond yankutte kumutima” (I felt so much concerned with these sticks because Raymond touched my heart), he explains. Analytically, it does not matter whether Raymond was making a political statement. His concern is what the clubs mean to him in his context of meaning. “In our place, this stick performs several duties: herding, security, when you are angry you settle matters there and then; when you annoy me, I hit you, you hit me and at the end irrespective of whoever overpowers the other, the quarrel is settled; the stick is used for ceremonial marriages,” he narrates.

Furthermore, it is taboo to place the ‘nkoni’ upside down or laying it flat on the ground; if a woman jumps over it, it is disrespectful; the children and women are disciplined by this stick and they consider it as their ‘ears’<sup>283</sup>; marital differences are settled by this stick. Additionally, when Tomah first saw Raymond’s work, what he liked first were the clubs.<sup>284</sup> Tom is attached to the art work because it has direct bearing to his cultural and historical setup; more so, it brings back memories of his own within alien localities; hence, Raymond touches his heart when he does not manipulate the nkoni to retain and maintain its attributes. The *originality* Tomah mentions is not about novelty, but it concerns *attachment*. Moreover, the reason why *Balaalo* is neither painterly nor sculptural is the intensity of affect it imposes on the reader. Tomah proposes to buy the clubs because of his attachment to them; without them, a lot cannot go on in his own cultural and social context. Such attachment related to the presence of the ‘nkoni’ remains the same even when we encounter it in new contexts and indeed used in different ways. The meaning derived from such a representation is far greater and more embracing than meaning derived from nowhere. Indeed, meaning from nowhere is not meaningful because we have no dimension to get into it.

What remix affords the reader is the actual experience being *re-experienced* afresh in another form. Metaphors capably maintain meaning; on top of ushering in new meaning, in case we already dealt with the artist’s expression. Metaphoricity in Raymond’s work mainly accrues between context and expression in the idea presented of *Balaalo* and the Land Bill. The clubs present an aesthetic idea: the presumption that ‘*Balaalo* are clubs’ to mean ‘the mighty power of politicians will’. That is, to see the clubs as political might one cannot determinately subsume it. Raymond, also, introduces the historical relations of the *Balaalo* with the nkoni, which make the metaphoric representation quite compelling. In addition, the nko-

283 Metaphorically used in this sense. Warner, (2002) thinks that metaphors of answering, conversation or talking back, form the normal way of imagining the interactive character of public discourse.

284 Raymond’s work is the only one that touches Tomah in the entire exhibition: “The clubs have something they remind me of. When in Kampala you forget about particular things, but when you come across it, it is so touching and eventful”. Tomah, a self-taught artist, is of the view that the work is original because even if you got a man from the remotest part of Ankole, he would say, “this is what I know out of the entire exhibition.” Original in this sense used by Tomah designates identity: roots of the works rather than being novel. Gadamer (cited in, Korsmeyer, 1998) clarifies Tomah’s experience: “The joy of recognition is rather the joy of knowing more than is already familiar. In recognition, what we know emerges, as if illuminated, from the entire contingent and variable circumstances that condition it; it is grasped in its essence. It is known as something” (p. 97).

ni enact a host of relations in a metonymic sense: Gregory re-experiences climbing the hills of Bwindi in pursuit of gorilla viewing; Tomah re-experiences cattle herding, authority, natural law, discipline and arbitration in its original context. The re-experience forms the core of meaningfulness afforded by the artwork. The rest of the works in the exhibition are not conceptually accessible to many except the authors, according to Tomah the nkoni is readily understandable to many: at least some meaning is accessible although not in the artist’s sense.<sup>285</sup> Apart from the potential to exhibit other linguistic forms later on hung in a gallery as art, *Balaalo*, designating a political might, is deeply metaphoric if we already know that it is a metaphor.

The dilemma facing art today lies in Raymond’s strategy of upgrading the clubs to ‘ordinary artwork’. Although he claims that he does not manipulate the clubs, I think he does. The spiral copper wires are an attempt to enhance or upgrade the clubs to art, believed to be a manipulation of visual texts by either reformulation or altering their appearance or by additions that enhance or detach them from their original contexts. These manipulations run by rules and procedures conventionally agreed upon by parties who have assumed artificial authority to deliberate on what should and should not be as in tradition. “The essence of art is in the idea, (conceptual art) not in its implementations, which could be many and different, but all equally inconclusive and mortal,” declares Bauman (1998, p. 33). In Raymond’s submission, he declares the clubs as being inherently communicative; but upgrading them to ordinary artworks’ contradicts that view. “Art can only exist if someone has made it. Art is always the product of a personal perspective, however subtle and ambiguous that might be. Art always expresses a point of view, even when at its most elusive. Art is a language of expression and it manifests itself through craft” Spadling (2003, p. 39).

What art is and what it is not, remains a dilemma facing art today. Other than art being the actual construction of material elements, art in the post-modern era is the concept behind its origination, and construction. Appropriating the clubs or ‘enkoni’ from being utilitarian articles and considering them as communicative in the gallery is an artistic act: it is creative and catering for the human soul. The audience should be the end recipient of visual texts though, because it feeds on concepts and ideas rather than material entities.<sup>286</sup> Materiality of artifacts is a medium that, in its dispensation, mediates between the individuals and the world of images. Hence, whatever form or shape the material articles endow is immaterial if the soul is not the end recipient; that is to say, if we do not cater for the individual and later on the group. Nevertheless, tradition sounds like meta-narratives,

285 Tomah prefers that kind of execution to individualistic work and his final verdict was that he would like to see such a technique taught at the University. On the other hand, “I embrace that technique because I want art that people relate to”, concluded Raymond. Of course, “[t]he quality of a technique can only be judged in relationship to the artist’s purpose. If treated as an aim in itself, craft becomes a trap. That is why art is more than craft; it is a language,” insists Spadling (2003, p. 38).

286 Specifically, this distinction is affecting the Ugandan contemporary artist as s/he tries to search for ‘appropriate’ art forms that suit that status.

which do not meet the requirements of the individual, thus sometimes not all conventions fulfill our goals. When one, though, takes into account Drout's (2006) 'elbow room' where tradition gains room for interpretation, such fear falls apart.

If tradition is an agreement between concerned parties then it is as a tool for collective meaning. So far, there is no binding agreement on what art is. Further still, are only guiding principles and not the bearers of essence (Spadling, 2003). Art in the middle ages up to now is dependent upon the individual as expressing his/her own feelings. What about art expressing the other's feelings? Does such a trend, then, cater for the soul of the other? On an optimistic note, *Balaalo* highlights the potential of remix aesthetics in meaning making practices within the confines of tradition. It also highlights the presence of polysemy in visual texts and the meanings they carry within cultural contexts and localized settings. Not only polysemy, it also highlights the fact that we can still interpret phenomena within the confines of tradition such as Tom does. Secondly, tradition works within the confines of remix philosophy because of the 'elbow room' that allows self-critique and at the same time questioning its transcendent or imminent competing traditions.<sup>287</sup> Tomah insinuates that articles already known to one by either convention or acculturation will be more understandable and hence more meaningful in any place or context to those particular individuals who have prior experience of them.

Art in a traditional context—or with a touch of tradition—provides the reader with meaning and does not restrict one from having a personal viewpoint. Thus, articles continue to critique and reveal traces of former meanings within their localities even if we remove them from their natural environs and place them into new contexts. These traces act as starting points for our understanding of the new intended meanings. This works emphatically in communities where tradition thrives as a basic unit of understanding the other. Further, these articles may carry explicit meanings to those who subscribe to them or have an idea of what they are unless led to believe and think otherwise. For example, Raymond's title *Balaalo* restricts the meaning to cattle herders and locks out Gregory's gorilla tracking, Tomah's notion of security and other norms, locks out my interpretation of the clubs as walking sticks. The most interesting bit though, is that each one of us has some meaning attached to Raymond's *Balaalo* according to one's own interpretation of the tradition. Moreover, this is the true purpose of art; to communicate with the viewers, whereby communication does not mean imposing meaning on the readers but allowing them to participate in the process of producing meaning. As argued earlier, tradition entails interpretation in its application; before we can interpret a situation as a tradition, we must first understand it as a tradition in order to apply it to our present context. This observation is in agreement with Drout's (2006a) submission of tradition as having an 'elbow space' for its interpretation.

287 Tradition does not conflict with critiquing because tradition itself is a tool for critique—in regenerating, and thus, perpetuating itself, tradition critiques itself and its competing traditions. Thus, remix itself is a tradition that critiques other traditions.

### *Signification levels and intimacy*

Meaning is more intimate at its basic levels of signification and becomes less intimate the more conventionalized it gets, at the extra-narrative level.<sup>288</sup> A sign implies in principle, a differentiation between a representative element and a represented one (Santander & Aimone, 2002). They further claim that the index is more of archaic ontological production of sense-body-space-objects, and the contact order, which places the index at the first signifier level of corporeality. That is, the possibility of touching the index, seeing it, and scouring it (Veron, 2002).<sup>289</sup> Meaning continues to transform itself according to the orientation of its bearer implying that meaning is not static. The tone in which Gregory and Tomah refer to the 'embuukuuli' and 'e'nkoni' is quite intimate and very subjective at its iconic level: 'ate zino embuukuuli z'ani?' is quite an intimate reference. Gregory is referring to the clubs as embuukuuli not as art works but as their name suggests—a sign of intimacy: he detaches himself a bit from the intimate connotation when he adds "z'eBwindi"—the extra narrative. If Gregory had not discovered the author of the artwork from whom he gains the extra-narrative, he would have remained at that raw stage of intimacy and still he would have gained meaning. Similarly, Tomah says that "Gino emigo ginkutteko nnyo nnyo era singa mbadde ne sente nandigiguze", meaning that the clubs touched him so much to the extent that if he had money he would have bought them.

Two things to note: the statement itself is very intimate because Tomah views the clubs in their firstness. Secondly, the clubs certainly have other connotations as Tomah narrates to me later that they are protective, symbolic in cultural engagements, and corrective. However, these connotations are in their first order of signification to Tomah because he knows them that way. Indeed, this creates the intimacy Tomah portrays with clubs; the other is that Tomah, in his conversa-

288 In their reading, symbols are very complicated to comprehend and therefore require exquisite knowledge to formulate their basic connotations because they are highly abstract and could imply anything. Icons on the other hand, are easier to read due to their subdued knowledge prerequisite. Indexes' require that we are aware of the cause in order to read their correct connotations. Hence, in terms of readability, Fred's technique is perhaps more user-friendly than Raymond's because its knowledge pre-requisite is minimal. Symbolic dialect, visual or otherwise, may prove troublesome to low knowledgeable groups or individuals due to their inflated requirements. Furthermore, symbols may not be workable on an interpersonal basis because they require or exist in their 'thirdness' of signification whereby individual subjective input is a necessary, but not sufficient condition. Tomah's claim that even a man from the remotest part of Ankole can create meaning out of 'enkoni' is because he bases his reading on iconic signification. Icons represent themselves on all fronts because their attributes are what they represent. Enkoni in Raymond's *Balaalo* iconically does not represent *Balaalo* but e'nkoni. Tomah's narrative about the utility and symbolic or ideological function bases on its physical attributes as an icon and not because Raymond uses it to represent *Balaalo* or land wrangles at the highest level. Indeed, if Tom knew the title of the work, it would exert negligible credence on his overall attitude about the meaning embedded in the work because *Balaaleness* to Tomah is second-order signification that would certainly carry no weight. Because of the presence of iconography in Raymond's work, it is able to generate meaning to both Gregory and Tomah. Metaphor is a lower order of signification and it is at the first level because its attributes are interchangeable; it is in other words, a sample or cut and paste, in a sense, earlier mentioned in remix aesthetics.

289 Griffin (2002) thinks otherwise by basing signification on Pierce's three semiotic triads of comparison performance, and thought, which he tallies with icons, indexes and symbols. See also Howell's discussion of Iconology concerning levels of signification and meaning making.

tion, does not seem to go beyond the iconic level in the context or orientation of the clubs. Even when he suggests buying them, it is not that they are artworks to him, he sees them in their raw form of signification and that is what they mean to him. He therefore does not go beyond the first level of signification to say that, the clubs are a piece of art. Why assume this as a higher level of signification? It would depend on one's theory of art, and therefore, what and how something is valued as art. Tomah had a content-based critique rather than art for art's sake critique.<sup>290</sup> All his narrations are centered on the initial importance and regard he bears upon the 'clubs' not the 'art work'—the extra-narrative in this case. This suggests that meaning-making processes may not as well succeed each other in particular situations and that they may remain at a particular level, or that a certain level may take precedence over the other.<sup>291</sup>

Raymond is more detached from the entire process because he uses the clubs at a higher level of signification that requires his viewers to have knowledge of what he drives at in the sense of symbolic properties. He uses it at the extra-narrative suggested by the name he gives them of *Balaalo*. When I asked Raymond whether his viewers knew that he commented on the land bill or sought information about the identity of the 'Balaalo', he informed me that nobody in the entire exhibition commented on the issue of the land bill or the *Balaalo*. This implies that at higher levels of signification there must be general knowledge on the issues at hand, and that there will be consensus on how to represent such issues. Arbitrariness is the order of the day at this level because anything can represent anything (Enrique & Santander, 2006; Griffin, 2002). It is hard to imagine that clubs could represent a comment on the land bill without consensus of that kind of representation. Clubs and the land bill are very different elements with no inherent relationship. The knowledge base required to make meaning at this stage is wider than that of knowing the clubs as clubs and not the identity of *Balaalo* or the land bill. Interest in the stimulus also decreases as the intimacy decreases in the viewers. Raymond fails to realize his goal because the text he uses, or the level of signification he employs does not apply to his audience. In other words, this kind of representa-

290 The assumption of whether Tomah makes meaning at a higher or lower level of signification depends on the degree of simplicity or complexity discussed in chapter 5. Our approach to a work of art will depend on our ability to oscillate between a simple or complex phenomenon concerning a particular task. We may approach a work of art from either a content-based perspective or an art for art's sake perspective, or even from a traditional perspective. Art for art's sake of course normally carries a disinterested perspective—a modernist perspective, which is always distant from the individual. Such conceptual approach normally determines the level at which we interpret the artwork, coupled with its context of appearance. At the level where the artwork is extremely intimate, one finds the icon; the image represents its own properties. At the next (indexical) level, the image adopts other images from its environment or subtracts some elements, which becomes part of its interpretation. Yet, at the last level, the image completely sheds off its inherent qualities to signify only other things with no trace of its internal qualities present (symbol). This forms a hierarchy of possible meanings that may or may not be interrelated. At times, one may as well remain at the first two levels without getting to the highest level and can still make meaning out of a given image. Yet, on other occasions, images bear only depictions at the third level, which may require extra knowledge input.

291 It is important to note this claim in that when one draws a picture for a particular audience, there must be an understanding of the level at which this drawing will be processed, and hence understood.

tion would be or would not be strenuous to particular groups reading his text. It is therefore important to read and understand the audience we produce for and apply the appropriate organizing, representative and orientative properties for such a community because meaning keeps on changing its face as it advances in levels of signification.

## Scenarios

*A cultural paraphernalia vendor on the dusty streets of Kampala always addressed me as a culturalist as he sold me his merchandise. He talked to me in anticipation that I may buy his articles from the point of view that I was aware of the various nomenclatures in the context of practicing cultural healing and I conform to the metaphysical aspects they symbolize. Thus, he tells me, (personal communication, March 5, 2008) "Ono Mukasa, ono Ddungu, ono Kiwanuuka [...]." As he points at a copper spear, a brass spear, and mild steel spear tending towards black. He also sells me a wrist strap embroidered with red, white, yellow and black colors and they all stand for a particular 'Lubaale'—cultural god: Kiwanuuka, Ddungu, Musoke and Mukasa represented on the strap made of bark cloth and colored with beads.*

At first interaction, he sounds like he refers to the spear as the god himself; but at second thought, he refers to the spear as being representative of its god. On the third note, he refers to it as bearing in mind that I know all the different nomenclatures and what they symbolize and hence what they are used for. Actually, before he tells me about the nomenclatures, I see the spear as a small dummy spear and nothing beyond that. Indeed, I still regard it as an article that represents itself and my use of its elements in the subsequent work is because it offers variety of color and texture, and because my study requires that I use such articles in my work. In my scheme of work, the paraphernalia aid me in achieving a material end whereas to him, it deals with spiritual matters. The question whether they still mean the same thing at the different levels of signification is part of that which this research seeks to understand: whether, material things or objects can still bear qualities of their former meaning as they perform a critique of existing traditions within their specific communities. This is important because remix as a history needs to be recognizable. Hence, when the vendor tells me about the gods in his paraphernalia, do they mean the same thing to him at every encounter of the said stimuli? Maybe the vendor shapes the meaning to fit needs of the buyer to sell his items (called social motive in psychology or marketing goods).

Tomah has demonstrated that the nkoni still mean the same thing to him even when he finds them in a gallery.<sup>292</sup> His suggestion to buy them was because he wanted to use them as e'nkoni and not to decorate his house with the clubs. However, we need more evidence to this claim to make it a solid point of revelation especially since I am advocating for fondness and intimacy in meaning mak-

292 The vender of cultural paraphernalia says that the objects no longer mean the same if they are not put to the same uses.



Figure 12. Mpindi Ronald, *Mulere*. 2007.  
Clay and bark cloth on wood.  
Photo: Kabiito Richard.

ing processes in the visual arts. All done and said, what do the various levels of signification have to do with narrative and comprehension of visual images? I believe narrative provides us with contexts of understanding phenomena. It also suggests the levels at which meaning should be performed because it provides the organizing factors like tropes and presuppositions. Therefore, the orientation of the narrative is significant in determining the level of comprehension in a visual text. That is to

say, the figuration process and the adoption level predetermine the meaning of a visual narrative. There is holistic meaning when one processes all levels but at least we have quality meaning when the levels of narrator and narratee seamlessly interfaced.

### Mulere

*Mulere* (see figure 12) boasts of inspiration from rock gongs found on Lolwe/Lolue/Dolwe<sup>293</sup> Island in Lake Victoria. Rock gongs are stones that resonate or produce sound when struck.<sup>294</sup> In the artwork, *Mulere*, Ronald (personal communication, May 13, 2008) worked with a flute player who got conduits from electric wires to make a flute. Although originally, as he started work on the *Mulere*, it had a mouth that he later cut off. His interest lay in this area “because that is where most activity is: blowing and coordinating with [the] fingers.” Ronald’s major concern was to “bring that naturalness and exposure of our own materials to the public—bark cloth and clay”. More so, bark cloth and clay are symbolic in a sense that people use them in shrines for worship. Ronald used to think of the simplest way of representing something and in this work, the “bark cloth was basically symbolic—for worship and representing the stones.” The bark cloth is a symbol: “it represents religion—it is symbolic to our cultural worship. The clay is also symbolic in our kind of material culture,” adds Ronald. Ronald works out his presentation with the symbolism associated with the material he uses.

However, Ronald claims that the clay is merely a material: “Whenever you change the media, there is a reason. Using metal may bring in the resonance in the work because we used [it] to hit the rocks.” He attempts to trigger ‘the person’s mind’ with the action in the work which is represented in the title “*Omulere*.” Notwithstanding though, his priority was about the symbolism and the flute. Spa-

293 The island of Lolwe has different names by different communities in the area.

294 Ronald traveled to these islands on a project known as “Rock Art Rock Music” organized by the Rwenzori Sculptural Foundation in collaboration with Pangolin Edition based in England, which included European musicians and Ugandan counterparts while the visual artists were tasked to carve images out of the rocks.

dling (2003) is also concerned with the likelihood of achieving communication in an artwork: “A language is only any good if you can use it to communicate” (pg. 37). Hence, when bark cloth is used, it is “basically because it is used in shrines.” “The black background means doom, or something I do not believe in”, proclaims Ronald. He does not think, though, “The bark cloth means the same thing outside the artwork.”<sup>295</sup> He believes he achieved what he wanted; some people ‘got’ what he was trying to stress. He is biased against “painting and painting” simply because he normally wants ‘to bridge a gap’, which “can be done gradually by dealing with what people already know.” What Ronald stresses, and what is important to this study is that “when you want to bring out something to the public, you normally look for something that will easily tell your story to the public.” Ronald’s major concern ideally is to portray the naturalness and exposure of his own cultural materials to the public. Secondly, he tries to show that materials can stand on their own without extra connotations, although in my view, he fails to do so, since he, qua his explanation, admits that clay and bark cloth are symbolic of the culture.

### Scenario6

“Oyo Macaw Uganda era office yang erring sabot,”<sup>296</sup> narrates Marie to Segundo (April 15, 2008) during a conversation, they had about art and the public. Although Marie knew that, I was indeed using witchery paraphernalia for artistic purposes he decides to call me a ‘Macaw Uganda’ (Cultural healer). This is of course false and Marie is making fun out of the materials I use for my research. However, it has some deeper connotations in that such a reference triggers another event that Marie promptly refers to: It is the meaning and functionality of such objects traditionally known; or, it is what this paraphernalia stands for in its ‘raw’ state.<sup>297</sup> Micah, also made a similar remark and it too, on the surface, was a joke; but deeper it meant the he still viewed the articles as those of witchcraft and not art materials. Hence, what they actually mean to him usually is still in the articles although in their new context they mean different things according to the level of signification.

What is the implication then?

The implication is that by questioning old traditions, remix maintains qualities of its historical renditions while creating new meanings. Such a view resonates with that I just discovered from Ronald stipulating that materials can stand by themselves, but can also mean more than they stand for. Ronald too, acknowledges that it was a way of maintaining cultural identity. *Remix* thus, continues indig-

295 In my opinion though, in the sense of the traditional use of bark cloth, it means the same inside the artwork as it does outside according to the author. Ronald uses bark cloth in this sense as symbolic of cultural values of the Buganda, and as representing bark cloth qua bark cloth. This resonates with my assumption that appropriated objects can still carry meanings of acquired within their former contexts. Nevertheless, this is an emphatic point stressing the possibility of creating new meaning with old meanings.

296 The statement literally means that, “That one is a witch-doctor and my office is now like a shrine”.

297 The state it is in before modification or elevation to another level of meaning.

enous knowledge because of its preserving nature by appropriation (sampling, cut and paste) as the most significant tool of remix aesthetics. It means that objects, event, or words allow reuse in their natural states to create alternative meanings or ‘generic connotations’ so to say. They can stand for themselves or for other things although applied in their own capacity as things. Similarly, when working on the stories of *Kato Kimera II* (see figures 49) and *Matyansi Butyampa* (see figure 42) with Emma, I realized we were referring to the materials by what we know them as and not their materiality. Hence, we referred to the skin of a ‘Kasimba’ not as leather, but by the animal’s name—akasimba.<sup>298</sup> The Characters were, on the other hand, also called by the names of who they represented therefore extending the presence of the represented—Matyansi Butyampa, Golooba Bidandi and the Murderer—who was later, nicknamed ‘Omutujju’ (terrorist). It is important to note that such references and naming propagate and retains the character and identity of things, but creates new characters and identities at the same time. By realizing that we cannot entirely detach meaning from its traditional states in the case of remix, but create continuity drawing on such states, we now need to see how far we can adapt remix to visual communication as a tool.<sup>299</sup>

### Scenario7

*When Jose and Pat (May 8, 2008) visited our studio to view what we were doing, Jose asked Pat to observe the way in which we had combined various materials. Pat said, “Emisota gyaffe gyonna bagimazeeyo” meaning that we had depleted the entire snake family.<sup>300</sup> This is certainly a gross over-statement but holds enough water for us to quench our thirst. Pat says this because he sees the alligator skin in Kato Kimera II.*

*It is significant to realize that Pat does not consider the skin a statement or reaction to our ways of seeing things in a particular way, and, trying to create new perspectives out of the old ones.*

Pat probably sees a depletion of wildlife or he sees a snake instead which, in my view, is that articles used in their actual state, in many cases, retain their original meaning, unless otherwise contextualized. One finds it, thus, quite laborious to create a distinction between tradition and meaning. Namely, unless we agree on the changes to that effect, meaning remains within the whims of tradition, the indigene will continue to interpret situations the way s/he knows them and the

298 Akasimba is wild animal in the family of the Genets (Genetta) – Genetta tigrina stuhlmanni (pattern) is a type particularly found in Buganda. Color variation is particularly conspicuous in the very large-blotched type which ranges across southern Uganda and Kenya to the moister areas of Northern Tanzania (Kingdon, 1988, p. 148)

299 That is, if the traditional state is the traditional (social) knowledge of a particular group. The discipline of cultural studies refers to such knowledge as cultural narratives, which came to be oppressive to some people in society – creating justification for injustice because of the long-standing cultural narrative of the way things are or have been and supposed to be. Remix aesthetics critiques cultural narratives by using/changing these narratives. It changes contexts, juxtapositions, showing what is absent, metaphor and many other forms.

300 ‘Emisota’ in Ganda dialect is translated as ‘snakes’; ‘musota’ as ‘snake’, and ‘omusota’ as ‘a snake’.

modern will continue to separate a beer glass from a wine glass using the same formal art principles.<sup>301</sup>

The implications are with remix, one is able to combine various elements and forms boldly without prejudice. This is another way of referencing/citation in visual text: transplant or reuse to suit new contexts. Postmodernism encourages citation in visual texts, a thing modernism rejects out-rightly. When I tried to explain to Emmanuel how I had used his ideas to produce art work, it occurred to me that I was engaged in citation of visual texts. My depiction of the ‘Matyansi Butyampa’ story and *Kato Kimera* depended on Ishengoma’s skeletal structure. This is possible because the postmodernist does not rue re-use. This makes the concept of remix pivotal in the reinvention of the self and the link with the ‘other’. It links Emmanuel’s (a Year III student at MTSIFA) idea with mine so that we both support each other’s idea. In so doing, the idea becomes common to us and it keeps growing and spreading out to ‘others’. Sega (personal communication, 2008) used stories in some of his works because he wanted to “work with something that was already known.” In other words, he is not inventing something out of this world; he is re-inventing himself and the other. The ‘other’ wants sometimes, to know about something he already knows so we can only understand ourselves better through re-invention of the selves. That is, if we already have an idea about something, it attracts attention more than what we are clearly ignorant about. In turn, it creates wonder rather than debate in the ways it comes to our awareness. We can reminisce about what we all already know and this extends phenomena both in time and space. This, however, does not mean to say that we should not deal with new things; although equally important, we should move along with the old that is vital to our well-being. Apollinaire bore the instinct of emphasizing continuity of new things with the past (Spadling, 2003).

### Greetings from Uganda

#### Unconscious Imperative

Our implicit processes, I suppose, predetermine the meaning of a story, which leads to its reading in a particular way. Metonymy as explained by Drouot (2006) and the ‘Unconscious Imperative’ work to institute things that have worked for us before. In addition, narrative can operate subliminally and thus has the ability to impose its *organizing* attributes upon an individual, to aid one’s ability to understand phenomena. This is evident in Fred’s work produced in a typical traditional philosophy of narrative as a causal art form. Contrary to my initial analysis of Fred’s narrative, the title is *Greetings from Uganda* (see figure 13) made up of figures embracing, welcoming, and at the same time, depicting different messages.<sup>302</sup> Fred deals with typical African dress like Kanza and items like pots

301 Even in highly abstract conditions, one will always try to look out for a traditional spec to kick-start the interpretive process. Thus, dismissing indigenous knowledge as traditional is like one cutting the tree branch on which s/he sits.

302 Visually, this artwork constitutes a powerful narrative. Conceptually though, on a closer look, it



and musical instruments, home implements and domestic animals that include cows and chicken. Fred's concern is an attempt to depict Uganda through greeting and the hospitable environment Ugandans boast. The artwork comprises of 74 scenes painted on different days, under different circumstances. Several viewers looked at the artwork in different ways but Fred concedes that "most of the images, although they were imagined, they have a background".

Fred confesses that he had not experienced most of the scenes he depicts in real life and he only produced mere representations of what he has heard from other people. The artwork produced in four days, comprised of scenes parallel to each other, and he dealt with not more than four ideas in a day. One of Fred's revelations indicates that he needed bigger formats when under duress because the smaller ones needed more concentration. He used bright colors to lighten up the dull bark cloth; hence, colors such as red, really minimized. "I realized that most of the people wanted it not chopped, [because they] had recognized a unitary message or story, well as me, I was seeing it in a different way" Fred narrates. Although most people thought the artwork had a message, Fred needed "to survive" and of course, follow the market trends. Nevertheless, Fred also is aware that artists see things in a different way, which things "tend to go deep into our lives". Manuel an artist and curator, together with Were (an art historian), found the work a good mural. However, Fred's intentions of producing the work and hence his perceptions of it, "were beyond the good in it"; they were in monetary terms.

Fred admits, "I saw the story of Kintu and Nambi after it was said. The chicken stuff had a big role in the Nambi story; I could see the cows, apart from the Bodaboda."<sup>303</sup> He further promises to deal with stories in his next version: "when you do it that way, it is pure Ugandan and it flows. It has given me a straight line, instead of dealing with many ideas at ago". Furthermore, "when you work, you try to imagine some figures in a certain scenario, but since I have never seen them, it seems they connect to a story from a long time ago. For example, malwa drinkers have been narrated to me and how they consume it. So the imagination is a connection to some distant story dating from the past". He views the process of

lacks a defined plot although it forms a disguised sequence. It perceptually forms a story-structure because of its chronology of episodes that seem adjoined by a common concept. Scenes although not identical, seem to lead to the next by virtue of action or expression. The narrative depicts scenes of commonality, community, values, and recreation of designated Ugandan societies to form a national narrative about ways of life. My first impression was a story of Kintu and Nambi because of the chicken. However, it became problematic building a plot of such a story at a closer look. Fred recollects or connects scenes by action, yet in some, color. In itself, color is vital; the action actualizes the virtual plot and sequence in a logical way to access meaning. Color in itself is only a medium and not a signifier, since the artwork does not depend on medium; but rather intentionality of the human plight: the need to communicate a human condition, derived from human instincts of action, intention, and objects of desire. Although the story is not out rightly declared, it gives us glimpses and or revelations of a narrative text by virtue of its disposition as a unit. Jerome Bruner (1986) reacts as such towards texts: "Its central hypotheses (pragmaticism) are as follows: A text means nothing in and of itself; it is the reader who gives it meaning" (p. 156). Besides, since the text has no stable meaning of its own, it is the reader and the critic and, finally, an "interpretive community" that make stable meanings.

303 Boda boda is a local slang for motorcycle or bicycle taxi. The term came from Eastern Uganda in Jinja where bicycles were widely, and still are, used for commercial transportation. The term boda boda further portrays traces as far as Tororo and Busia where bicycle transport is a major means.



Figure 13. Kakinda Fred, *Greetings from Uganda*. 2008. Oil on bark cloth. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

the artwork creation as a scenario of interconnected episodes, only intercepted by cases where he wanted to create pairs of the same scene. Some of the odd scenes like the boda boda cyclist— a more recent phenomenon—filter through because of prior exposure that linger on in his mind and it come out first. An important remark from Fred before he concludes is that, "there are so many stories and unless you get color and start painting, these stories come up from P.4 (Primary four) and when you make one stroke, it leads to another. When you make a stroke of a knife and it shows dancers, stories of dancers begin to come out". Tradition works on similar terms whereby small parts can awaken an entire history of a tradition. We may also come out of the subliminal mode in case we need active consciousness, just as one may refer to the 'Universal Traditional Meme'. Narrative thus intrinsically works like a tradition.

#### *A priori organization*

The different sets of scenes and ideas are a result of different mindsets one comes with every time s/he gets to work. It is evident enough from Fred's confession that stories actually do operate at the back of our minds without us ever realizing their presence. Fred only admits later that the episodes were indeed "interconnected" although he clearly works on the narrative on different days, with a mindset not similar to the previous one. More so, the scenes depict independent scenarios but at the same time, they embody the same theme, greeting. It is amazing how different scenes create harmony and interconnectedness both in meaning and

construction; it is as if they are predetermined to complement each other within their sense of ‘difference’ or ‘otherness’. As we discussed the conceptual build-up of the artwork, Fred realized that indeed, they were reflections on stories of the past that always operated on him unconsciously and hence he was able to organize his conceptual frame in a continuum of related episodes. It is also imperative to note that the concepts are not predetermined; one episode leads to the other, and so the narrative develops. Although he paints the scenes along one theme, no single episode of representation is identical to the other, but the rhythm seems determined a priori. Indeed, it takes the author time to realize that he was engaged in a narrative of surmountable sense until others, who are outside its locus, insist that there is something about the work. The ‘good’ seen in the work is below Fred’s threshold of consciousness because his prime target is survival, not the ‘good’ he develops unconsciously. Fred’s failure to recognize the ‘good’ others see, implies that he is not aware of it. All the same, once prompted, he indeed acknowledges the ‘good’ that others see is present.

The stories that Fred deals with are from the distant past, invoked remotely to allow him to organize his mindset yet such stories lay always within our remote senses. Every time we get to work in such situations, we remotely invoke stories to take control of our conscious engagement in artistic activity. On top of the conceptual dispensation in Fred’s narrative, the perceptual is equally telling in terms of narrative forms: We see the elements of language, narration, and signification combined to form a comprehensive story about Uganda. I believe that the first instance of narrative structure is its formation: organization of the overall unit. Before he could place any paint or image on the bark cloth, Fred demarcates his space in many small units that are different in shape and size. This is the first step towards narration because a narrative is made of various units that are logically interconnected.<sup>304</sup> The chop-up of small units—which would give Fred a bigger return—not only organize space, but they provide room for episodic development. While he works with the interconnected space that itself is in many arbitrary smaller formations, the law of gestaltian closure and similarity takes over even without noticing it because now the eyes are not looking at each scene independently, but in its wholeness.<sup>305</sup> Continuation then requires linked parts to relate to each other in some way in order to make sense of balance although there is chopping of the small pieces into separate units later. Fred notes that he created related episodes in order to create sets of similar scenes. My observation in this is that there was implicit demand for similarity and continuity that was so vital to completion of the work.

Disjointed scenes or episodes would cause discordance and would deter progression. Hence, in order for Fred to execute the work to the levels of his expectation, he begins with the idea of interconnectedness at the organizational level. Ob-

304 This may be causal or not, but at least there exists some kind of connection between episodes.

305 This rhymes with emotional cadence we saw in the discussion on narrative theory.

servers of *Greetings from Uganda* were very insistent on not chopping it up because the beauty and continuity it offers to the viewer—that one rarely sees—will become dead and mute. Chopping it up means immediately, losing the storyboard. We no longer have the good Gestalt that gave us the continuity that we so much desire to see. Rather than see each unit on its own, we had better view it as a whole made up of smaller units. However, Currie (2009) has indicated that perception works temporally, in addition to mere momentariness. During the search for connections between different units, the mind builds up plot even without a guided sequence. The mind begins to create a string of events that will eventually lead us to a logical conclusion. That is the organizational power of stories. Causal theories face criticism as observed earlier in the text, instead our experience with the narrative texts matters and becomes vital. Indeed, the audience of *Greetings from Uganda* testifies that our experience with narrative texts is quite important when we deal with narrative. Secondly, Barwell (2009) indicates that some relations do not necessarily exhibit causality, but instead give us reasons for evaluative judgments. Thus, when we supply reasons for evaluative judgments, we perform a task as basic as explaining the occurrence.

In conclusion, Fred’s artwork is such a hit when it comes to pictorial narrative and specificity. An important and interesting finding is how the human mind infers meaning upon stimuli based on what it already has in store: Because my interest is so *biased* and inclined towards story telling in pictorial structure, I straight away see a story of Nambi and Kintu in Fred’s work. This is in agreement with Nanay’s (2009) idea that we can only deal with a text as a story if we consider it one. This also connects with Dale’s (1996) condition C\* that calls into place, a host of relations and mnemonic material. Further still, Drouot’s idea of metonymy as a blanketing principal in the entire relationship receives attention. By virtue of the biased mind towards narrativity, the work evokes a narrative pattern within the perceiving mind immediately and begins to search for a befitting story to match its own. Enjoying it and comprehending it, the perceiver must generate a story to match that of the work and s/he is going to look out for elements that lead to some kind of synchrony with the artwork.<sup>306</sup> Once again, we see image reconstruction at play. The mind searches for images and relationships that can match those provided and invoked by the work at hand. These images and relationships come into place parallel to the work: a string of mental images line up against those of the artwork concurrently in order to create a match. This implies that immediately, the perceiving mind sees the work a search for templates that match such pictures begins. This also means that one can access the meaning of the story immediately if one can ably locate pictures in the mind that match-up those at hand. The best match is what we begin to build the story on. The implication bears that the story requires specific story structures of features that fit its own parameters. It along, creates biases towards certain goals.

306 An alignment of the artwork’s mind with that of the reader is crucial in understanding and appreciating it.



Robét one of the observers obsessed by the narrative says, “Tosala work eyo”, he continues, “Erina uniqueness eyaayo. Bwonogisala ejja kufuuka buno bulejja-alejja.” Literally, this statement implies that if Fred chopped up the narrative artwork, it would lose its uniqueness and become a cliché – tourist art. Robét, the observer, has two elements he introduces into the narrative dimension: uniqueness and fluidity. In uniqueness, I see the tradition or specificity that he does not want to see dead. The fluidity, he leads us to some sort of gossip that lacks concreteness although this concept lays minimal credence to this discussion. In other words, Robét sees tradition in Fred’s work, which in turn tells us that narrative as a tradition is specific and concrete. When Robét mentions ‘uniqueness’, he does not mean that the work is unique in its own sense of not being a normal thing we see every day in the galleries and museums; he instead sees an idea that is so specific and therefore suited to its environment and community. In other words, it continues a tradition of both material and values of the tradition.

The uniqueness of difference is inevitable. However, as I earlier mentioned that I had not seen such a work for a while. Indeed many observers marveled at its uniqueness because it was specific to them and indeed, it made a difference. A difference because it seemed to affect their personalities in a way specific to them and that is why many viewers of the work could not figure out what it could look like once chopped up into pieces. Specificity, hence, is vital in narrative text because it makes a great deal of difference when people are constructing their own replicas of the stimuli.<sup>307</sup> The perceiving mind takes centre stage in absorbing and comprehending narrative text. Thus, such narrative, for better comprehension, must be specific to the human mind and not the collective group. Nevertheless, small groups or communities, in reference to their particular setups, have particular constructs that are universal to that group, which is inevitably capable of allowing them to have the same perception of a particular element of their culture. Specificity then, like tradition, spreads out from the individual towards the group. As the community grows bigger and spreads out, specificity becomes fluid due to more interference from other cultural constructs.<sup>308</sup> When Robét talks about *lejjalejja*, he drives at universality. “Lejjalejja” means a cliché, but one rated at the lower end of society’s scale; it is like gossip, abhorred in most societies because of its fluid character.<sup>309</sup> The more a concept grows universally, the less concrete it becomes to particular communities or elements. Reducing the narrative painting to tourist art is already a universalizing process that denies it its concreteness and hence its traditional value within its specific environment.<sup>310</sup> Narrative in its

traditional state therefore, must be concrete and specific in order to make meaning and survive in its own society. In conclusion, *Greetings from Uganda’s* major contribution to this study is that narrative directs thought and as such organizes it intrinsically even when we are dealing with visual images.

307 Narrative is present objectively; it is a subjective phenomenon such that even a met-narrative is not wholly absorbed in the same way.

308 Like tradition, narrative affects the individual first before it spreads out to the group, and thus intrinsically traditional.

309 Lejjalejja could also refer to lack of identity of belonging in exhibiting specific pattern of action or thought. In this sense, I see it as a lowly art form without identity of its own.

310 Ironically, this is what tourists hope to buy.

# 7 / Prologue

## NAGGALABI

*Naggalabi* is a series of copper, aluminum, and sisal artworks made of five different panels forming a narrative about coronation of the Kabaka of Buganda at Naggalabi (see figures 14). The texts interconnect by conceptual qualities inherent in signs and tropes, which represent aspects of the coronation rituals. The artwork is for viewing in succession, but with intervals in between, creating a synthetic coherence similar to what McCloud (cited in, Pratt, 2009) calls *closure*. Closure, he posits, is an everyday process of observing the parts but perceiving the whole. He further explains how it works: “In the limbo of the gutter, human imagination takes two separate images and transforms them into a single idea. Closure allows us to connect [otherwise unconnected] moments and mentally construct a continuous unified whole” (Pratt, p. 111). In other words, although we see nothing between the two panels, experience tells us something must be there.<sup>311</sup> In this story, we begin at Naggalabi hill and end with a crowned king. It is imperative to note that this artwork is in the initial stages of my pursuit of organized form and search for meaning in the visual arts.

In the first panel (see figure 14a), I depict the symbolic elements of Kabakaship in Buganda: the crown-king and some of his symbolic names such as *Cuucu* (a type of plant). The second panel (see figure 14b) shows *Cuucu* but now includes Naggalabi hill with the legendary tree where Kabaka Kato Kintu was crowned and one of the many names he symbolically inherits—*Magulunyondo* (the king has many legs in which to hummer). In the third panel (see figure 14c), I introduce the time factor involved in coronation rituals, which begin in the night and go on throughout the day. The fourth panel (see figures 14d) manifests the crowned king with the zigzag patterns that decorate the king’s robe (see figure 15). The last panel (see figure 14e) portrays the Kabaka’s subjects prostrating before the newly crowned king (also see figure 3). It is notable that the shape of the flower or plant is present in all

311 Panels reference comics that McCloud (2009) reviewed in the cited text. This is akin to Nanay’s (2009) recount of total experience in narrative pictures. Pratt (2009) is quick to disassociate himself with closure normally referred to in the resolution of narrative tension. This is because, as discussed earlier, closure does not constitute, on its own, a narrative text per se, although from my findings, closure is a significant psychological phenomenon in creating dependency in narrative texts.

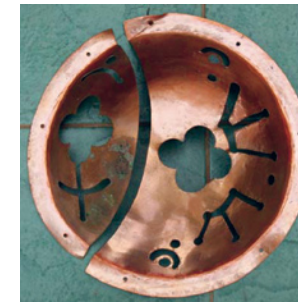


Figure 14a: The crown king and his Symbolic name *Cuucu*.

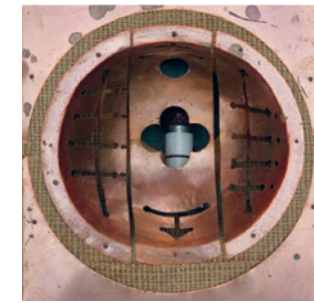


Figure 14b: The legendary coronation tree and the symbolism of *Magulunyondo*.

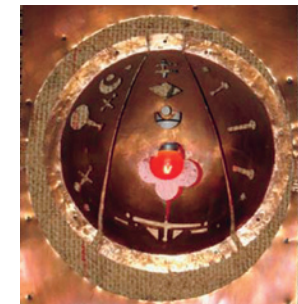


Figure 14c: Night and day rituals at Naggalabi.

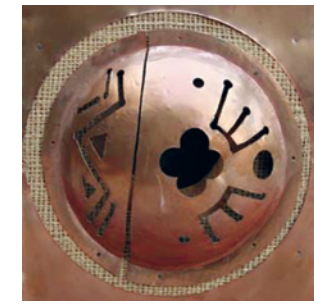


Figure 14d: Royal regalia.



Figure 14e: Prostration before the crowned king

Figure 14. Kabiito Richard, *Naggalabi*. 2004. Copper, aluminum, sisal, on board. Photos: Kabiito Richard.



Figure 15: Kabaka Muteesa II in his royal regalia. Photo: Ssekabaka Muteesa I Foundation archives

panels, which emphasizes the presence of regal authority (Cuucu). In the last two panels the zigzag patterns are incorporated to indicate that the Kabaka is crowned and donning his official regalia. In the first two panels, emphasis is on the initial processes of the event, and in the third panel, I make an introduction of the crown king outlining his symbolism to his subjects. In Buganda, the use of Cuucu as the Kabaka's personality is metaphorically significant. Cuucu is the king of plants (as presumed by the Baganda) because of its imposing odor over the other plants, and this kind of supremacy is comparable to that of the Kabaka. In order to compare smell and might of the king we have to institute a metaphoric situation, ODOR IS POWER. In other words, the Kabaka stinks of (regal) power. The imagining of the king, as an *odorous* plant cannot be determinately subsumed as *majesty* of the King and as such sets the mind into 'free play'. 'Okuwunya' (stinking) idiomatically refers to excess or abundance whereby one possesses too much that it begins to stink.

Structurally, Naggalabi creates a pattern and portrays basic tenets of well-formed narrative, with intensities, ordering, anaphora, prolepses, and more; however, the elements used are not ideally common codes directly understandable by everybody. Actually, *Naggalabi* loses its meaning in *functionality*. When constructing these artworks, they were too, part of an interior decor and thus they were to serve a dual purpose: art works with a message and at the same time lamp holders. The viewers tend to look at it more as a functional artwork than an aesthetic representation. By default, *cuucu* becomes a uniting factor because it is a shape suitable for decoration due to its social affiliation; but it is ideal for an opening of a backlight. Thus, its functionality supersedes the connotation and for empirical purposes, to date, no one has asked about the meaning of the signs in, these copper artworks.<sup>312</sup> The best explanation is functionality took center stage and the visual elements not traditional enough to stir interest.<sup>313</sup> Crucially, the signals are too weak to be detectable by a wider section of the readers. In so doing, the artworks are not able to draw public acclaim even though coronation is in its own cultural context.

In *Naggalabi*, the main idea was exploring the possibility of viewing a story in series. The individual pieces of work were placed either facing each other or at the back of the pillar so that an interval is created in between the viewing. My discovery was that the mind kept the storyline and promptly reconnected it with the next episode after the interval. However, apart from the apparent consistency of *cuucu*, nothing else indicates any causality in the formation of the episodes, although we can inevitably recognize a correlation. This explains Nanay's (2009) experience of narrative as vital in constituting narrative texts. My experience with the text in-

312 For purposes of accountability, only three artworks remain; the two removed and dismantled. Evidence is with the second panel that I reassembled for the purpose of this publication—photography.

313 In addition—context of display—in, a gallery people's tradition in such context is to interpret or make meaning. When in an interior design context, most people do not have tradition in their education to interpret.

spires a feeling of mental reconnection with the texts and this prompts further investigation. It also gave me a clue and belief that stories contain *internal organizing structures* that kept the mind at bay and that before completion, there is a possibility and a tendency to perform a *mental reconnection* of a series of related pictorial forms. This observation further leads to the belief that indeed aspects of oral literature could transfer to visual literature and work well within the scheme of vision.

## AFRICAN HOUSE

African House was a pilot project too, and in this, I prompted other people to work with stories as schemes of reference.<sup>314</sup> I preferred to work with local episodes and telling them to work with local objects and material to assess their impact on readability. During the African House project, I was inclined to drawing stories from everyday life situations and thus, during this project, I asked participants to draw stories from their own life experiences. Although the project had a range of themes to work with, I chose stories as a medium. My insistence on working with stories as technical and conceptual tools was the urge to track the organizing element and mental reconnection earlier observed in the 'Naggalabi' story.<sup>315</sup> Although many of the products in this workshop yielded exciting results, I particularly selected two artworks that were ostensibly revealing. I decided to study them to allay my fears and prove my discovery. Monica and Susan make profound revelations in their artworks based on childhood desires; Monica was obsessed with handicraft, (especially weaving), while Susan had an attraction to metaphysical practices (witch craft).

Having been aware of their work in daily practice, this was rather strange and in that event, I decided to study what made them strange, but affective. In her story, Susan talks about mediation by the witchdoctor (Kabona) who represented the gods. She describes the scene briefly as comprising of small shrines (Ssabo) with many objects of worship that assist in the mediation process "between what is physical and that [which] is not physical" (Susan, February 19, 2007); *ensiimbi*, bark cloth, animal skins, feathers, coiled baskets (*ebigali*) for offertory and many sacred objects (see figure 16). She selects these objects to design a garment for a performative disposition in combination with the structure of a shrine and its atmosphere. In the guise of unease, performance comes into being, in the realm of a promise of something, yet there, articulated, and of agency not yet recognized, or named (Rogoff, 1998). Additionally, "[v]isual semiotics has to be related to an eminently performative language which is not only dynamic in its material con-

314 The African House project ran from February 2 to March 22, 2007 culminating into an exhibition of artwork in the Diversity Room at Penn State combining artwork from Makerere University, Pennsylvania State University and University of Art and Design students.

315 The mental reconnection referenced here dwells on the ability to retain the image of antecedent phenomenon that eventually links up with its ascendant object. The link inherent in the transition becomes an organizing element in perceiving and understanding of both the antecedent and ascendant objects.



Figure 16: Nambalirwa Susan, Traditional deity. 2007. Performance. Photo: Kabiito Richard.



Figure 18: Kansiime Monica, Childhood. 2007. Installation. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

stituents but which cannot be constituted as a text without constant changes in the internal experience of the observer” (Saint-Martin, 1987, p. 10). Susan, in her performative artwork, creates an actual experience of a shrine and the feeling of witchcraft is present. First, the performance is unique in itself as an independent art form in the local context. Second, the artwork culminates into an installation with the introduction of the shrine structure; she combines two concepts of art production that are inherent within the local communities, but not identified as aesthetic visual art forms. The apparent ‘action token’ in Susan’s performance inevitably leads to our experience of her artwork as a narrative text. This is, in part, because we are suitably informed and wherefore competent spectators.

Finally and most importantly, Susan employs objects locally available and thus unique or specific to the local communities and combines them creatively to constitute a narrative. Although the parts are fragmented, she links them with a common unifying factor of the bark cloth that holds together to form a logical pattern of forms. In prompting categorization and thus accessing meaning, visual clues are indispensable in developing links with stored experience to help in our ability to apprehend new input (Athavankar, 1990). The ‘shrine’ and the dry lawn integrate with the performance by virtue of belief and mental connections both physically and abstractly forming a consistency in pattern that revealed an advanced system of organization inherent in narrative texts. Not only does the narrative assist her to organize, but it also influences her choice of objects. The connectionism revealed in Susan’s work, both material and mental emerges in Monica’s installation. Connectionism builds holistic experience that helps in organizing and choosing of articles for specific meaning making purposes. While Susan activates two lines of narration, Monica maintains a single-file narration pattern as will be evidenced shortly. Here is an analysis of Susan’s exhibits:

Like traditional education, the art of tradition/indigenous societies is conservative, having a primary purpose of reinforcing and transmitting core cultural values and beliefs. In fact, traditional arts so deeply embed in the web of culture normally they are known and judged for their functions in society rather than as works of art, frequently not even defined as artworks in their own right. In fact, many languages do not even have a word for art, which corresponds with the western conception (Anderson, 1997, p. 66).

In respect to the above view, Monica, on her part, recounts her obsession with weaving as a little child, in interplay of cultural artifacts organized in a hierarchical configuration (February 19, 2007). The hierarchy, rather than the connectionism is appealing in her visual recount. Nevertheless, our awareness of the ‘action token’ in the text allows experiencing it as a story. Choice of objects once again resurfaces: an obsession with weaving warranted a choice of woven objects, although Monica reveals to me that the objects have traditional functionalities. Monica manages to actualize her intention to narrate the story by forming a hierarchy of related objects to achieve a linkage between events (see figure 26). Withal, her intention to have the expression make the viewer believe that what she presents is her lifetime story, presents the viewer with the recognition that the expression is indeed a story, and as such, our experience of it makes her expression a narrative. Although there is chronological build up in Susan’s approach, it is evident only in individual planes—there is build up of form from the tail of the garment to the headgear, which is noticeable only after scrutiny. At the next plane of the shrine, there is no apparent sequence because it only forms two planes (see figure 17).<sup>316</sup> However, the overall formation culminates into a well-formed narrative through connections of the parts. There is apparent movement from one level to another that keeps on building momentum as the mind processes the stimulus. Because of these observations, I concluded that in my first attempt I was right to imagine that there is a mental connection of parts that belong together integratable in artistic production.<sup>317</sup>

## BUGOLOOBI PROJECT

As confidence and belief gathered momentum with my discoveries, I embarked on my first project of reusing existing local stories that people were familiar with and thus specific to their communities. My major interest lay in specified meaning that was applicable to local settings as already indicated. Consequently, furnished with concrete awareness that stories contain organizational abilities, I embarked on my

<sup>316</sup> A sequence requires a repetitive pattern of more than two objects or events.

<sup>317</sup> This mental reconnection features in Barwell’s (2009) postulate that the mind functions temporally, but crucially, the mental experience need not be a chronology of events.



Figure 19. Kabiito Richard, 'Nkoliimbo' (260 x 90 cm). 2008. (260 x 90 cm). 2008. Metal and oil color.



Figure 20. Kabiito Richard, 'Kato Kimera I'. Metal and oil color. Photos: Kabiito Richard.

next project that based on the stories of 'Enkoliimbo' and 'Kato Kimera'.<sup>318</sup> The first story recounts a man who tried to dupe a bird into believing that he had no food to eat but the bird turned out smarter. In the second story, which is an account of Kato Kimera's rise to kingship in Buganda, I also attempted to incorporate the story of 'Kibuuka Omumbaale'. In these two artworks, I set out to prove that familiar local objects within a particular community could effectively improve artistic expression within that locale because of its ability to produce specific communication easily accessed by members of such a community.<sup>319</sup> This project kicked off with a series of drawings, including among others, the stories of *Enkoliimbo* and a dichotomous drawing combining the stories of *Kato Kimera* and *Kibuuka Omumbaale*; however, viewers discredited the dichotomy due to frailties in its representation.

*Nkoliimbo* (see figure 19 above) is a metallic depiction of two figures supposedly pounding groundnuts. In the story line it depicts scenes at the beginning and the

<sup>318</sup> The work commenced on May 16 to 29, 2007.

<sup>319</sup> This part of evidence forms my choice of signs in the Nggalabi narrative, Monica's choice of objects in her recount of child hood obsessions, and Susan's preference of signifiers in her attractions to meta-physical belief.

end; the episodes in between are omitted although they hold a significant contribution to the plot and this depends largely to personal interpretation.<sup>320</sup> A mortar placed centrally represents preparation of particular types of local meals in Buganda. Conspicuous spaces between the fingers of the two figures that at some point cut through bodies and objects are a metaphor for emptiness as indicated in the story that they all ended with 'empty hands'. It also animates the idiom of 'empty handedness' (falling through) in the English dialect; it also incorporates, in the same process, an idiom in Kiganda popularly known as 'okuyita mungalo', which literally means 'passing through the fingers' and thus animates 'losses'. The 'passing through' is facilitated by the intentionally overstated gaps, which we may conceptualize with a root metaphor of 'PERFORATION'. There is emphasis created by the exaggerated fingers and the hollow emptiness and repetitions that build intensity of action and meaning. The gaps further demonstrate consistency of intention whereas the sad faces display consistency of mood. This generates both conceptual and perceptual consistencies built up in the artwork. Narrativity in Nanay terms emerges through the action token (bowing in submission) that creates a somber mood of the sad faces; objects such as the mortar and pestles are crucial in grasping the overall narrative and thus meaning. The act of pounding in the bottomless mortar-emptiness-is paradoxical and not only does this dramatize the artistic disposition, but also reinvents time by building expectancies; in addition, the action builds presupposition or implicature that is necessary for meaning performance.<sup>321</sup> The texture of the pestle functions as intentional texture that creates contrast in the artwork to break monotony, as well as represent cereals; thus, it has a dual purpose. Locality and specificity come through the mortar, dress, and fashion; a touch of color makes it exciting.<sup>322</sup>

*Kato Kimera I* (see figure 20) on the other hand is a more straight representation of royalty with the crown as the main symbol. The shield and the spear are traditional symbols of power and authority endowed and entrusted with the Kabaka. The kanzu is present instead of the royal gown because it is the traditional dress of the Kabaka and thus specifies locality. The loose handling of the implements led to dissatisfaction among viewers by claiming that it could not be a warrior as initially suggested in the combination of two characters in one representation-the Kabaka and a warrior. Thus, the pose comes to be the significant determinant to meaning performance in this particular case; it also depicts royalty where the Kabaka is seen as an idol and there is a general feeling among his subjects that he has 'got it all' expressed idiomatically in Luganda as 'okutuuka', 'okumalako' and similar words that

<sup>320</sup> In the story, the element of enkoliimbo in particular strikes me most because since childhood I always asked myself how this plant looked. Up to now, I have never known what their true nature is. In this depiction, I am still asking myself a question: are they prepared like groundnuts?

<sup>321</sup> In the artwork, the mortar is bottomless, although in a profile view it is not visible.

<sup>322</sup> It is indexical in a sense that it does not particularly resemble any cereal, but rather an ambiguous shape that signifies a cereal structure. Thus, specificity eliminated from the general structure.



express completion.<sup>323</sup> To conceptualize his ‘arrival’ as success, we need to premise it upon the metaphor ‘LIFE IS A JOURNEY’. Arrival marks Success. There is nothing, absolutely, in the image that indicates life as a journey apart from the imagination brought to our attention by the image. That is, contemplation of a ‘weapon cuddle’ as success in life leads to rational ideas of ‘nobility’ or ‘tender care.’ Thus, the relaxed handling of the instrument of power and authority is a metaphoric expression of contentment and the aura of royalty. The spear reemphasizes by its background shape but also breeds familiarity and perpetuates the idea of reuse. Observably, reused objects create intensity in the artwork and heighten curiosity among viewers.

### Search for meaning

As the work progressed, I asked Henrico, one of the most active members in the group, whether he could deduce anything from the artworks. He duly informed me that he did not understand what the images represented; however, he could recognize a woman holding a spear (referring to *Kato Kimera I*). One of them, Freddy, interjected and informed me that in *Nkoliimbo* a woman was with a kid and the other (*Kato Kimera I*) a man was holding a spear. This indicated to me that they were not very interested in what the meaning was, but actually in identifying what they could see and linking it with what they already knew. This is the first indication of collaborating common knowledge by this group of young men. Indeed Henry, after prompting, admits that he had all along mistaken the man for a woman.<sup>324</sup> Essentially though, these youths who are predominantly primary school dropouts, are looking for things they can easily identify and associate with to give them clues on what the picture means. Although they did not know what the artworks stood for at this stage, they instinctively could tell that they would be quite attractive when completed.

They were particularly excited when I informed them that I would frame the images. Henrico applauded the idea, which they all accented to, and assured me that the artwork would even appear *more* attractive. Ideally, their sense of beauty is in the material form and functionality.<sup>325</sup> Association of emotion with particular cognitive processes is not arbitrary, but a response to natural biological and social functions served by different emotions (Macleod & Mathews, 1997). The sense of *closure* that is apparently a generalization is sensitive to one of the traditional ways of sensing, expressing and appreciating beauty among the Baganda. Functional things, on the other hand, share common values and thus Baganda conceive them generally in the same way and stand for similar things, although particular use may differ from individual to individual. This concept of closure spreads out into visual analysis and

323 Okutuuka (arrive, reach), okumalako (finish)

324 Culturally women wear long dresses and this could have led to miss reading the image. Feldman’s four stages of art viewers begin with basic descriptions. Those educated in analysis can move to analysis and interpret. If not educated, then they just describe to achieve uninformed judgment.

325 The frame functions as an enhancer of beauty. This is typical of the Ganda traditional sense of beauty mainly seen in functionality and form, not the essence because traditionally art forms denote some kind of function.

sense of beauty–okuwumbawumba’.<sup>326</sup> This implies that disinterested appreciation of beauty advocated by modernists would not abound in the Ganda cultural fabric because there is a cause/effect relationship.<sup>327</sup>

Freddy is not satisfied though when he does not see what he expects to see in the artwork (personal communication, May 24, 2007). After telling him that the artwork is about e’nkoliimbo, a story well known to him, he quips: “Kyabuzeeko kambe”, literally meaning that ‘it is only missing a knife’ suggesting that a knife should have been included since it is essential in the process of preparing food. When I sought to know why, he made another comment: “Ak’omukazi kabeera nako”.<sup>328</sup> Freddy’s dissatisfaction translates into a condition that is common to any human organism: the search for meaning. In this, he is trying to locate familiar things that could help him to think along the lines of preparing food; it is rather unthinkable to prepare food in the absence of a knife because traditionally, a mortar is for pounding groundnuts used for sauce while staple foodstuffs in Buganda are prepared by peeling. This also signals the condition of the ‘traditional referent.’ Usually, we think less of how much materials that contain conscious and specific meaning have to do with determining forms of messages given that such materials provide meaning to things from which we make them (Zimmer & Zimmer, 1978). This means that in order to arrive at certain meanings there must be particular things in place that form linkages.<sup>329</sup> Interest rather than disinterestedness always saturate us when we gaze at visual images—which we get to identify with—dictated by visual patterns that heavily rely on experience and expectations (Zeghlin, cited in, Korsmeyer, 1978). Sensitivity to *representation* becomes apparent in the search for linkages between individual parts, which is not a common practice in Ganda traditional art forms.<sup>330</sup> Nevertheless, these linkages normally develop from the level of interest we have in the overall idea of engaging an artwork for viewing and our own expectations. In his attempt to create linkages, Fred looks for familiar things from his own experience in order to place the expression into context.

The tendency to search and discover familiar things in artistic forms for meaning making purposes continues to unfold when three visitors come to check on their personal work (May 22, 2007). A woman is surprised to see the artworks in the workshop and she exclaims, “Eh, these are pictures.” One of the male visitors joins her, “Eh, I can see them: this is a man; the other a woman”, but the second male visitor disagrees, “Aah, I already noticed this one: this is a woman; the other a

326 Okuwumbawumba is an aesthetically inspired concept of covering up, closing up, gathering together of some open or scattered objects. Thus, okujagalala or okusunsumala is an un-aesthetic way of referring to openness, wildness, scatteredness.

327 See, Peggy Zeghlin Brand’s article: Disinterestedness and Political Art, in Carolyn Korsmeyer (1998, p. 264).

328 This is translated as ‘the one a woman always carries’.

329 Collocations as traditions in this sense can also appear in both mental and visual form.

330 In Fred’s experience, food must follow a certain pattern of preparation and as such, some basics of preparing food must follow suit.

child.”<sup>331</sup> It is crucial to note these people are searching for meaning using possible familiar objects or clues. Secondly, these people share certain common values with the workshop group and in their meaning making process they significantly depend on *collaboration*. The search for meaning continues. Robbie seeks for knowledge about the drapery on the taller figure in *Nkoliimbo* while in reference to the netlike design on the fabric; I replied, ‘cloth’ (May 24, 2007). He complimented the accomplishment by suggesting that I had succeeded in portraying it ‘as such’. He further asked about protuberances on the ‘club’ but I informed him that they were pestles.<sup>332</sup>

Three days later (May 27, 2007), two men came to inspect their work. On seeing the two artworks, one of them exclaims in bemusement, “Eeh, kuno mutaddeko n’engabo!” He was surprised that we had included a shield in one of the artworks. Robbie replied sarcastically that “Olwo luggi lwa Kabaka; lugenda wa Muwenda Mutebi” (That is the king’s door; it is going to Muwenda Mutebi’s home). In so doing, Robbie begins to form an extra narrative by linking the shield to royalty. The man notably muses at seeing a shield used as an object of representation in an alien art form. Additionally, he refers to it as ‘engabo’ (shield) and not something outside that identity that looked like engabo. Do items lose their identity even when used in an order inferior or superior to their common order? No. They retain their identity and this is why Robbie refers to the fabric as ‘olugoye’, the figures identified as ‘musajja’, ‘mukazi’, and ‘mwana’. Therefore, objects used in artworks retain their identities and they still represent their material states and in this, their meaning only accessed through their iconic formations; from that point onwards, they develop into associations and contiguities that constitute external qualities related to the presence of the objects. The collaboration also means that since they share common knowledge, the individual members can depend on others to build up meaning, classified as specific to that group. More especially, they try to understand the artwork in view of their attitude towards non-traditional art.

After completing the artwork and making unobtrusive studies of how this group of young men made sense of art, I decided to engage them directly by reciting ‘Enkoliimbo’ to them and gathering views on whether it made more sense to them reading the picture with knowledge of the story behind the production. Robbie began by describing the nature of the plant that bore ‘enkoliimbo’ (personal communication, May 28, 2007). To make his description known to the others; he informed them that the motor in the artwork was to pound the nut-like wild grain. By referring to a more familiar process of pounding groundnuts in the local communities, he *exemplifies* the more unfamiliar grain he was trying to explain. He in other words, works with a metaphoric kind of explanation. This prompted me to ask them about what they would deduce from the artwork if they had no idea of the story. A member from the group replied that “Otunula butunuzi”, meaning

331 The dialogue ensued in Luganda and therefore these are translated texts.

332 The structure of a club is comprised of a protuberance at one end of the rod in Ganda language called ‘enddoddo’.

that ‘you just look on’. After that flat response, I concluded as such: *Familiarity* is crucial to essence formation; secondly, ‘just looking on’ creates uncertainty and thus, no association formed; lastly, without any association, no meaning formed and therefore, no impact created artistically. The bright light at the end of the tunnel is that the story excites Robert and reminds him of the songs from these tales they used to sing in childhood and he reconstructs his own time; it also indicates the affect stories impose on the intellect. He forms ‘metonymic associations’ as Drout (2006a) described them of that expression in relation to why it means so. We can only gain genuine altruism in relation to the literary text, and never in life, that we can have a relation characterized by, and by genuine acknowledgement of the otherness of the other.<sup>333</sup> “We need, then, texts we can read together and talk about as friends, texts that are available to all of us. [...] A community is formed by author and readers,” writes Nussbaum (cited in, Korsmeyer, 1998, p. 207).

During the artistic process, I relied heavily on a phenomenological approach and kept on recording all acts or utterances by the group members or visitors to the workshop about the artworks that could lead to any useful discoveries. Some of the comments were profoundly revealing especially on aspects of attitude and association. One of the statements made by Robbie (personal communication, May 16, 2007), as I showed him the drawings of the artworks he and colleagues were about to fabricate, revealed much about the general attitude that the public holds about ‘academic art’.<sup>334</sup> He disapprovingly told his colleagues that, “Abantu b’onoona sente ku buntu obwo”, literally meaning that people waste money on buying those things. This negative and disinterested attitude does not occur because of money per se but averseness to things that do not make sense. This results from the fact that intention and functionalities of most academic art are not accessible to the nonprofessional. ‘Obwo obuntu’—those things—is a negative reference, which connotes either disinterestedness, loathe, despise, lack of adequate knowledge, or understanding.<sup>335</sup>

## Scenario8

*As we walked around the studio viewing exhibits during an end of year student’s art exhibition, Louie asks continuous questions as a curious young mind that is seeking to know more of the world to which it is exposed. Suddenly she saw a poster of Safari Tea, and she informs me of a “baby taking chai Kalu” (personal communication, July 17, 2007).<sup>336</sup> Adjacent to the tea advert, she yet recognizes a trumpet, in all its disguised form, as a silhouette of the trumpet shape.<sup>337</sup> Next to this poster for Jazz Night’ at Club*

333 The knowledge that Robert has about the facts in the story create a condition that would fit into our notion of meaning to become a meaningful event. In other words, it makes us believe that indeed it is the story of Nkoliimbo and thus believable.

334 By academic art I mean the type of art that has been greatly influenced by Western ideological concepts of art production such intentional distortions and combined scenes or imagery.

335 Normally we refer to objects by their names or identity, and it is out of abnormal situations that identifiable objects refer to a ‘thing’ in the context of Robbie’s remark.

336 ‘Chai Kalu’ means black tea in her own simple language.

337 I remembered that she had seen one in her reading books, although its rendering was entirely a

5, she sees yet another recognizable image in form of a painting: it is of a young child seated with legs stretched out, while the feet point at each other. She exclaims “Eh! Baby seated in water.”<sup>338</sup> As I tried to get to terms with these discoveries, she further recognizes a woman painted with dark colors in a painting opposite the ‘Baby’ and she exclaims ‘Eh! Woman is dirty’ although with this one I had helped to figure out the image of a woman. Notice how she ascribes color to sanitation and how she creates a context in the painting, which was never part of its construction.

The child’s ability to transfer learned experiences to objects in contexts and constructs far apart requires scrutiny. The mechanisms a young child adopts in recognizing and assigning meaning to—which is not far from the primitive’s—or naming phenomena, are in the first place learned experiences. Further still, these learnt experiences are easily understandable through their representation: the variables that form gestalts that lead to some logical being are in their most recognizable state and existing within a context that brings such meaning every time a condition of that nature occurs. The processes of regrouping rely on the directional forces suggesting movement and tensions that represent action leading to a recognizable event or element. The rest of the exhibits do not mean much to Louie because she cannot easily recognize elements stored in her repertoire of experience although such elements are contained within. The actual meanings and communicative structures actualize connotations in a visual artwork with the stewardship of antecedent conditions. These we may as well perceive as recurrent or traditional expressions.

On the other hand, systemities that are more general bind in different areas of connotations actualized and directed by *context* (Somov, 2006). As such, the poster of the *Safari Tea* contains a photograph as its connotative element; a trumpet as a symbol of music represents ‘Jazz Nite’; the painting contains the image of a child while the other painting recognized because of the colors. Hence, whereas one considers the *Safari Tea* more realistically–iconically–represented, together with the painted baby, the jazz poster appears to the viewer more symbolically. Indeed, the child reaffirms her percept by revisiting the jazz poster and asking: “What is that?” and answering, “Trumpet”. She also introduces abstract concepts when she refers to the dark colors of the fourth percept as dirty because they are dark. Additionally, baby bathing was just prior in her thinking. So, clean and dirty is the story she created of the images.

One recognizes, in these observations, iconography, symbolism and abstraction at play in the initiation of a meaningful expression to her world of reality on both the concrete and abstract notions. On the other hand, in this encounter with various forms of visual representations, the child prefers to interest itself with

different format and representation; however, some traces of its shape and form still appeared.

<sup>338</sup> She recognizes her own self while taking a bath, although to me the child in the painting did not look like she was taking a bath, but because Louise is in such a pose while bathing, she ascribes that act of meaning to bathing.

those exhibits that she has experienced. She looks at the small child and she likens her to when she sits in water. Probably she pictures the nakedness, the pose that simulates a basin shower; because she has learnt about tea drinking, she is able to identify such a performative act; because her reading book contains a trumpet somewhere between the pages, she readily recognizes it. This is not any different from an adult who is searching for what he knows or who encounters something he has seen before. She asks; what is that? She responds, “Blouse”. From all the exhibits, she was only able to recognize and ascribe meaning to those items she had experienced before. Most significantly, the child is able to realize the world through those simplest images that are the most meaningful to her.<sup>339</sup> This affirms Berger’s (1974) argument that we see what we know.

### Mood and emotion

When the artwork (*Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera I*) arrived at Makerere Art Gallery, it immediately created an impression of utility. Paulo, a lecturer at MTSIFA, instantly envisaged utility due to the size, shape, and the use of metal, which are normally associated with gates.<sup>340</sup> Paulo found beauty and exceptionality in the knowledge that they are *utilitarian*.<sup>341</sup> Ramah, on her part, was more concerned with the reason why the two figures in *Nkoliimbo* were sad. She is already engaged in interpreting the artwork. She asks, “Why are they sad?” as she approached the artwork (personal communication, May 30, 2007). Nevertheless, she does not react the same way towards *Kato Kimera I*; she thinks its understandability will arise from the artist having to explain his intentions. *Nkoliimbo* communicates directly with her: “... you can see the dad is trying to comfort the kid”. Ramah, an art student at MTSIFA, also notes that someone who likes the story would think more about the picture. The story in itself rather creates a dependency outside the physical properties of the artwork. She ties her interpretation on the actions as no one is pounding and the mortar being bottomless, thus she thinks it was a lie. “When you look at the mortar, and the when you look at the hole down, then you know that there were no nuts and it was a lie”, she maintains. She is nonetheless clueless when she turns to *Kato Kimera I*: “It is not giving clues, just making me stranded,” she complains with indifference. “Some stories lead you to another stage and others leave where you are; where you found it is where you leave it”.

<sup>339</sup> Those that do not seem to capture her attention do not seem to offer her any room of pleasurable experience. Thus, the essence of a thing gains shape from abstractions and amplification of the relevant mental imagery comparable to caricature or cave art, and thus, the ability to grasp the form of ideas. Notably, combining forms into associations of more complex gestalts, exemplifies the quality of abstract thought. Consequently, when the shape of a mental gestalt finally forms to make sense of it all, emotional anxiety inherently generated by incompleteness that characterizes both mental states is relieved (Barry, 1997). This may form one of the ways by which we experience narrative texts, although it may not turn out as a sufficient denominator.

<sup>340</sup> The artwork arrived at Makerere Art Gallery on May 29, 2007. Paulo first saw the work as we off-loaded it from the truck.

<sup>341</sup> Perhaps it could have afforded him more satisfaction if I had indicated to him that my intention was about utility and not only representation per se. After all, their inception was well intended to cover up niches in a newly constructed house that looked so empty.



Ramah reveals that the ‘first impression’ you get when viewing an artwork is crucial to the overall understanding of it. She discloses that after reading the story of *Nkoliimbo* it prompts her to get back to the artwork and tally the two texts: “When you look at it, you go back to what you thought immediately when you saw it. Because when I saw it, I knew they were sad”.<sup>342</sup> She admittedly reckons that the expression worn by the two kids affected her mood. In comics, Pratt (2009) acknowledges, “a panel can inform the reader pictorially about the emotional and other mental states of the characters contained in it, without the use of words” (p. 110). This kind of episode does not stop with comics; it spreads out to all expressive pictorial structures. Indeed, Ramah’s testimony suggests that we access the possible meaning in the artwork immediately and in order to assess and prove that projection, there must be clues to that effect. Clues depend on what we already know or what we expect from previously similar conditions. Besides, she is aware that “stories always have something behind them” because her grandmother could not engage her with a story “out of the blue”: When she is sad, her grandmother tells a funny story that makes her laugh, and her reaction is normally determined by the *tone* in which she tells it.<sup>343</sup>

Ramah narrates to me how she uses stories to change attitudes and behavior of her niece quite comfortably because the kids eventually get involved in the narration and evaluation of the story. This involvement facilitates a reciprocal process through *negotiation*. When she narrates the story of ‘Kiyiri’, her niece has personal input to make “Aah mummy tayagala ba mpisa mbi”, meaning that her mother dislikes bad behavior. Consensus outlines dialogue organization whereby participants practically align their linguistic representations at various levels thereby supporting mutual understanding since alignment links various levels with each other (Garrod & Sanford, 2005). The niece’s input completes the negotiation process by evaluating the behavior of the other child depicted in the story and pitting it against her own, which prompts her to stop crying for fear of being labeled a ‘bad girl’ as the one in the story.<sup>344</sup> Comparably, the kind of evaluation implied in Ramah’s idea is in sync with that presented by Barwell (2009) in his evaluative judgments. The niece practically pits her own behavior with that of the child in the story to evaluate her behavior. In this way, Barwell thinks it is a constitutive relation, whereby, the child reflects on its own behavior, but crucially engaged with narrative. Ramah also notes that kids always memorize stories, and “the message is always got”, probably based

342 Her first impression of the story comes in the most striking element later turning out to constitute her overall interpretation of the story referred to by Ramah as the dominant attraction.

343 Ramah highlights Nanay’s (2009) position that recognizing the ‘action token’ leads to treatment of such texts as narrative. Implicitly, this is what she implies in her observation, although it apparently refers to conditions under which, her grandmother applies them.

344 Humans are averse to negativity and thus are always attempting to reverse the course of negatives and directing them to positives. The Baganda thought that by building on positives, they would achieve little because positivity, being a generally preferred and dominant condition, eventually becomes a given, which does not require any kind of interruption. Thus, by being negative, they anticipated maximum impact because then people will attempt at all costs to avert the negativity. Negativity then in this sense is action oriented.

on their capacity to instigate negotiation. Stories are thus destined to communicate by default. Lastly, when we negotiate, we narrow down the *scope of negation* to a more unified whole so that we develop a singular line of thought and action.

Sherry, an art student at MTSIFA, has a different approach towards viewing *Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera I*. On her first encounter with *Nkoliimbo*, she noticed the mortar and she immediately imagined pounding groundnuts but when she looked at the faces of the kids, they did not seem to be happy with what they were doing.<sup>345</sup> She also recognizes the textures and equates them to nuts: “The texture comes out like the nuts themselves; it is more than texture [...] you look at the grains flowing; and even their faces, they are sad” (personal communication, May 30, 2007).<sup>346</sup> I perhaps could interpret this situation closely with Spadling’s (2003) insight, “The meaning of a work of art can often hit you with immediate and surprising force, yet to appreciate all its subtlety and richness, you need to understand its grammar and vocabulary” (p. 41). She intimates that it expresses action, drama, and entails affect. “It is dramatic, there is mood,” she admits. Counterfactually, she does not think of any possible *separation* because if the kids were happy, the story would be about happiness; and the mortar removed, the essence would be lost and meaning altered. The textures place the artwork in *context* of pounding groundnuts and not cassava. “Actually, this mortar places the piece in context; it brings us the whole meaning itself”, she confidently declares. When features of objective character codes predominate, it aids the interpretation of images as information about represented objects: “their motion, location, mutual distances, forces, and inclinations, including the spectator’s movement among these objects,” writes Somov (2006, p. 150). Sherry subscribes to the notion that once we read the artwork together with the written text, it provides a better understanding of the visual image and thus the meaning than when we adopt it from other sources. Secondly, that “when you know about the story, then it gives you reason to stay around and try to [...] relate the story to the artwork”. Such a tendency builds dependency.<sup>347</sup>

Sherry is more submissive to *Kato Kimera I* than her counterpart is; she sees a man with a spear and a shield indicating that he is a warrior. Nevertheless, she doubts that anyone could fight while wearing robes. Coupled with the crown on the head, she is convinced it is a King, because “a crown gives him kingship; robes, the attire, the weapons, and even the way he holds them.”<sup>348</sup> She too admits that the written story aids her understanding of the story; she is also sure, *Nkoliimbo* has

345 In her assessment, Sherry chose to view the work from a more technical dimension.

346 Note that Sherry has a different entry point from Ramah’s: she enters through the motor whereas Ramah enters through the sad faces (facial expression). Art works have different entry points and normally we judge the essence of the artwork depending on our entry points.

347 Sherry introduces the idea of mood that characterizes Currie’s (2009) view of narrativity, which may form in turn part of Nanay’s (2009) experience since the mood created depends on our awareness of the action in the story.

348 Therefore, every time we see such articles, we may as well believe that the expression points at kingship, unless otherwise. What puzzles Sherry is my insistence that it had connotations of a warrior, something she could not ably understand.

feelings, mood, and when “you look at it, you get involved”, she confesses. Adapting to a world of comics, a similar situation arises in this relationship: “The words within comics have an interesting relationship to the diegesis, the story world that is ‘real’ to and hence can be experienced by the characters that populate it,” writes Pratt (2009, p. 108). Sherry raises two issues yet again: “When you read the story, you identify with the two girls and even in the real picture, you do”. It means that images still can afford the same *affect* an oral text can bear upon its reader and that the written text besides the art work can instantaneously offer the viewer familiarity necessary to decode the visual.<sup>349</sup> Yet, the effect of having the same experience from both texts is testimony to the *re-experience* encountered in narrative texts. The other issue is, “they are pounding, you can tell they are going to eat food, but now they are unhappy, you ask yourself”—it raises *questions*.

### Familiarity and specificity

Zoe’s, an art student at MTSIFA, analysis of *Nkoliimbo* kicks off with identifying familiar objects such as the mortar, the pestle, and the action of pounding groundnuts, the child and the elder. She agrees that the written texts were in complete agreement with the pictorial texts. She says, “When you show here that the bird went back and ate their food, it relates with the fact that they were going to prepare food” (personal communication, May 30, 2007).<sup>350</sup> She continues to explain, “Because one sees these figures, one immediately realizes that this is a mortar and these guys were trying to prepare food”. Her revelation leads further to the suggestion that familiarity is helpful, and thus a necessary condition for *conceptualization*, *identification*, and *evaluation* of sense stimuli in visual images. “An image should contain some groups of characteristics corresponding to the codes participating in identifications,” (Pratt, op cit, p. 150). Zoe engages in a self-evaluation: “When you look at this image, it shows these two figures are preparing food, the bird returned and ate their food. Now am trying to get the message,” as she tries to make sense out of the image. She bases her evaluation on *recognizable elements* to form a relationship that provides her with meaning: the mortar is a code for *preparation* the bird is a code for *perpetrator*, and the action is a code for *intervention*.<sup>351</sup>

After the analysis, Zoe is content that she had captured the message; she is also convinced that it is the right message because in her confession, she could not tally the two texts—image and word—at the start of the viewing process. Zoe’s testimony is further proof that when we are aware of something, it is easier to get the preferred message and thus the meaning of a particular text. She also makes

349 My interpretation of the affective element of *Nkoliimbo* lays credence on the fact that Kato Kintu does not create the feeling of personhood because its subject does not belong to people: it is not in the domain of ordinary experience because very few people can experience kingship.

350 This is a translated text from Luganda.

351 Zoe, on her part, enters the narrative through the action of pounding, which ideally implies preparing food. She enters it on the angle of action than mood or form. However, this action prevails in the presence of the mortar and pestles.

an exciting comment: “When you have not read the story, you realize that there are two figures pounding groundnuts; when you read the story it becomes a relation....” As noticed, some vital elements to the story are not included such as the bird. *Knowledge* alone cannot guarantee specific readings of texts, which means that a higher order process is required to harmonize the texts and provide room for creating possibilities necessary for specific tasks. Thus, knowledge is more of a generality, whereas accessibility and thus *familiarity* introduce the quality of locally *specified* readings; knowledge alone cannot supply us with sophisticated systems of dealing with specified data. Such a concept is contained in Ramah’s own assessment: “When you look at them, their eyes are downcast, their heads are downcast, and you see those eyes explain the whole: the sorrow, the sadness; but the hunger bit of it you will understand when you read the story.” Zoe is adamant that the mortar anchors the message in *Nkoliimbo*, whereas in *Kato Kimera I*, the sword and the shield show the power of the king.

### Expression and experience

Lille, an art student at MTSIFA, finds *Enkoliimbo* very expressive and can feel the *stillness* in it: “As if they have been asked to stay still,” she elaborates (personal communication, May 31, 2007).<sup>352</sup> She also thinks that *Kato Kimera I* is about inheritance, not so much about kingship because when she reads the story, it gives her an account of how Kimera came to rule Buganda and thus depicted as protective of his throne. She also cautions that people who are not artists by profession would find it very hard to understand *Nkoliimbo*. *Kato Kimera I* on the contrary is direct; “When you look at this one, you see kingship,” she confirms. She reckons that it would be very hard to think along the lines of *Nkoliimbo* without reading the story. She commends my idea of working with stories because she thinks, “this is good! It will interest any one [...] who does not appreciate art such that there are people who look at it and when you read the story, and see the piece, you are like ‘at least there is something in there.’” Her remark implies that meaning, in whatever form, is the preferred *goal* of any engagement in reading visual narrative texts.

In addition, this goal receives a boost by what we already know and on that note familiar. She recommends ‘praxis’ of letter and picture to actualize lived experiences of oral and written texts. Lille cites a story of ‘Kintu and Nambi’ that she still remembers because of its etiological dimension experienced in daily life. The story becomes part of her experience of an earthquake. Traditionally, earthquakes in Buganda result from underground movements of Kayiikuzi trying to capture Walumbe. There is another legend attributed to Musisi as the king of the underworld. “That is why whenever there is an earthquake they related it to that story. When you translate it to real life and children get to know about it, whenever they come across it they are like, ‘we have heard of this story’”. In other words, embodied experience of the story inadvertently creates memory traits and *animates* real

352 These are translated texts from Luganda. Indeed, the conversations proceeded normally as in daily speech.

life experiences so that one can easily relate to it. Conclusively, people tend to relate to what they already know, which they could probably *re-experience* than something out of touch with human experience. Bruner (1990) claims, “While we have an “innate” and primitive predisposition to narrative organization that allows us quickly and easily to comprehend and use it, the culture soon equips us with new powers of narration through its tool kit and through the traditions of telling and interpreting in which we soon come to participate” (p. 80).

Reye’s, a lecturer at MTSIFA, appraisal suggests that the artwork seemingly belonged to a certain group of people.<sup>353</sup> The question this observation raises is ‘why does the artwork offer such an impression? Because “when you read the story, and look at the images, you get a clear understanding,” he remarks (personal communication, June 4, 2007). He presumes that on the first reading without the images, something is asunder, “but the images, they more of like visualize the story: they make more of understanding the entire story—more much clearer both visually and literary”. In comics, as hybrid art forms, words appear to make the reader’s primary focus of attention (Pratt, 2009). This incident seems to occur when I juxtapose literary stories with their visual counterparts. Consequently, a *symbiosis* in the understanding process developed whereby when he (Reye) read the story and looked at the work, he looked at the artwork then the story—“that kind of two ways”. Artistically, I envision an involving process that is by default destined to build a dependency; it also makes viewing the artwork an experiential process as it involves motor, kinesthetic, and mental processes to actualize it. Experience is a coherent unit that relates features in the complex interactions between a human organism and the chaotic flurry of things that act on him/her (Eaton, 1998).

Words assist a more determinate knowledge of a character’s mental state accessible through a single image because, without text, it is ambiguous: “while it could represent just one instant of a causal sequence, it could also depict an unmoving set of objects in any span of time up to eternity” (Pratt, 2009, p. 109). The presence of the story on the other hand, builds a dependable familiarity that could be useful in artistic experience within the *existing condition*.<sup>354</sup> The presence of the familiar thing is a reemphasis of the activity of experiencing it in a new or alternative form. Reye castigates the tendency of artists to “express their personal feelings” because it leaves the community in suspense “in a kind of take-it-or-leave-it situation.” Such a view and others reappear in my arguments that artists in Uganda today have thrown the community away and instead sought inner redress thereby leaving the artwork to artists alone. “But when you have a story and an artwork, you feel a certain belonging like a Muganda, and when you come across such a story being close to a visual then you feel attached to the artwork,” comments Reye in

reaction to inwardness expressed by many Ugandan artist today. In other words, Reye is suggesting a credible re-link between art and community. Secondly, that our engagement of narrative heavily relies on the conditions laid out by Nanay (2009) in his theory of goal-directed action experienced in the ‘seeing-in.’<sup>355</sup>

Isa, a former art student at MTSIFA, sees more of a warrior than a King does in *Kato Kimera I*: “I can see a warrior with a shield and the story tells about the king going to that man and then the man telling him to go to the god of war. To me the way the man stands, you can see that he is a real warrior; you real feel a warrior with his shield and spear he feels a real king of war” (personal communication, June 4, 2007). ‘To him’ it is a network of relations rather than being merely a royal disposition: it links with might and valor instead of traditional kingship, but admits that he would not have thought so if he had not read the story. Implicationally, familiarity furnishes him with ample ammunition to confront the essence head-on; additionally, he would not have been that inquisitive either and would only look at it “just like any other work.”<sup>356</sup> Conversely, Isa does not work with stories because “it limits: sometimes the artwork changes, yet the story I had I get to realize that it does not come out that way because sometimes you realize that the painting is leading to something else and the story you harbored just has to die”. It is compelling to realize how organizing stories are from this observation and how limited in scope they may turn out to be. Additionally, we encounter limitation of stories in literary works, which belong to genres, yet genre constrains and determines choice of events and the shape of individual characters. Thus, a tragic hero cannot be a coward, and it excludes cowardly deeds not merely from the recounted action, but also from the hero’s presumed past (Goldie, 2009).

### Myths and reality

A myth is a culture’s way of thinking about something, a way of conceptualizing or understanding it. Myths work metonymically in that one sign stimulates us to access the rest of the chain of concepts that constitute a myth, just as a metonym stimulates us to construct the whole of which it is a part. “Both are powerful modes of communication because they are unobtrusive or disguised indexes. They exploit the ‘truth factor’ of a natural index and build on it by disguising its indexical nature” Fiske (1990, pp. 88-96). Notably, Ellul (1976) describes that myth as something that “does not address itself to existing feelings, but must create an image to act as a motive force. This image must have an emotional character that leads to the allegiance of the entire being, without thought” (p. 273). However, these stories have no specific linguistic code thus; they could act in any form: *Njabala* describes laziness and thus it can be a metaphor in case one wanted to narrate it

353 When Reye points at a certain group of people, he is referring to those maligned by self-referential tendencies of discreet art. He implies so: that the artist this time is not producing for himself and colleagues, he is also involving ‘others’.

354 My reliance on instantaneous familiarity unconditionally proves worthwhile based on this observation and earlier ones observed by Ramah, Sherry, Isma and Zoe.

355 ‘Seeing-in’ is operating at the level of the narrative, away from the normative one. This concept connects quite well with Drout’s (2006a) idea of “interpret me ‘as if’,” whereby language becomes marked as proverbial.

356 Nanay’s (2009) idea seems to carry a lot of weight when it comes to constituting our narrative experiences, namely that we must be aware of the action token in order for us to experience a text as a narrative.

in that way. ‘Baana ba Kintu’ for example is an idiom referencing Baganda: this idiom summarizes the entire story of ‘Kintu and Nambi’ to render it a metaphor in Buganda. “Metaphors and other rhetorical devices may serve the cognitive task of articulating facts,” notes Dohrn (2009, p. 43). I will discuss the above metaphor shortly. Members of a culture will always consider their own myths as factual and true whether scientific, historical, philosophical, or religious. “Each myth has its place in the mythology of its culture. Taken together, the myths unify the members of that culture by giving them a shared past; a meaningful, life-sustaining present; and a predictable future,” writes Rosenberg (1997, p. xxv).

In a fiction story, we experience an illusion of reality (Hoiijer, 1998) expressed by Mona, an art student at MTSIFA, who begins her search for meaning by pointing at the objects employed in the artworks: mortar, crown, spear, which is all familiar to her. She connects the “misery” of the kids to the loss of something and the downcast eyes portray this. She enters the artwork through the pose and the action of *downcast* faces. She further believes that every artwork has a story behind—but I would interject by claiming that the implementation of physical structures is not in line with story structure—and that people memorize stories because “maybe when part of the story that was told to you comes true” implying that stories are normally related to “*reality*”.<sup>357</sup> “When you face the same situation you were told in a story back you get to understand that it was real and your mind immediately gives you a *flash back*” (personal communication, June 4, 2008). Mona highlights the fact that a work of art having a story does not necessarily mean its execution in a story like manner, and in this, there is separation of *content* from *method*.<sup>358</sup> Currie (2009) is convinced that “[...] contexts determine threshold levels of narrativity” (p. 311). In other words, some texts carry a greater degree of narrativity than others do. These and other views built confidence and paved way for the research to institute further probes into the actual functionality of narrative texts and how these could be deployed in visual artistic expressions.

### Auxiliary narrative

Our conversation with Freddie, a practicing artist and former student at MTSIFA, on May 29, 2007 yielded vital findings.<sup>359</sup> Freddie, by looking at the metallic work of *Kato Kimera I*, saw *another* story of ‘Lukomera’ who, in his search of riches, received advice from a foreseer to go out in the wilderness with a spear and shield. The first house at which he stopped would be the one to find the wealth. Because the occupants practiced cannibalism and witchery, they gave Lukomera several things that he refused because of their reputation. Fearing that he would expose their habits, they gave him cows and other valuable things and as such, he became a wealthy man. The narrative that the artwork resurfaces, due to, in this study, I refer

357 What Mona refers to as reality are the lived experiences from which stories suffice, closely related to Lille’s concept of actualization where we experience the physicality of scenes expressed in a story.

358 Refer to Genette’s (1980) distinctions of narrative and story.

359 Freddie is a practicing artist and a graduate of MTSIFA.

to as an *auxiliary narrative*: that instance when the intended narrative culminates into another narrative that serves to replace the main narrative, as perceived by the reader. In other words, what Freddie sees in *Kato Kimera I* is not a king but Lukomera the fortune seeker. Freddie’s memory of ‘Lukomera’ sparks off by the same triggers that constitute the Kintu narrative.<sup>360</sup> These are the elements that are consistent with both narratives; in my construction of Kintu, I lay emphasis on the shield, the spear and crown; the *insignia*, as lexical as well as semantic articles that constitute the fabula of the story.

In Freddie’s story, the two articles serve as instances of protection; in *Kato Kimera I*, they serve the purpose of power and regality. Nonetheless, in both cases they lead to some sort of meaning performance: they mean what they mean for the same reason, namely that they occur in guise of constituting an expression. By rekindling auxiliary stories, the artwork builds a dependency external to its own intentional dependency. This is a significant revelation in visual narrative that during oral narration, stories can rekindle other stories of the same genre using similar structures by function of metonymy. This also implies that, in visual culture, artworks can create their own dependencies from supporting stories or ‘characters’ just as in a normative narrative episode. Such supportive roles are vital in understanding and sustaining readership in visual images. Not always do we gain the same information from the things we see, even though we may be looking at the same things. The implication then is that the meaning of any language, visual or verbal, is in us and not in words, letters, lines, colors, or spaces because we learn to attach meaning to these symbols (Zimmer & Zimmer, 1978).

In so doing, the artwork takes on new meaning but still rides in the confines of its trigger of the actual narrative text transformed into a new narrative. The new narrative then becomes a product of the actual narrative, which is a virtual text in itself. As Freddie views the artwork and contemplates it while he learns about Kintu’s escapades, he constructs an auxiliary narrative that is a virtual text of the actual narrative. The auxiliary narrative is what Freddie makes of the actual text. It is consistent with the actual text because it carries the same triggering elements and the same structures. The syntactical and pragmatic structures are consistent, only the semantics differ in this case. Like any other virtual text based on the same story, the semantic structure differs greatly from individual to individual or group. Bruner (1986) commends the virtual text that “becomes a story of its own, its very strangeness only a contrast with the reader’s sense of the ordinary. The fictional landscape, finally, must be given a ‘reality’ of its own—the ontological step”<sup>361</sup> (p. 37).

360 The narrative runs along the same pillars of narration. There is no meaning lost because the reader is able to decipher essence from the story. Narrative activates various remote resources and once any of such resources is adaptable to the narrative, it takes over as the main essence. The auxiliary narrative thus assists the main narrative to maintain essence and decorum in the main story. This is a typical example of polysemy.

361 According to a study I carried out on virtual texts administered to 76 art students, I discovered that the lexical and syntactical morphologies were quite similar, only the semantic structures differed: their

This does not imply on the other hand that the viewer misunderstood the work since his/her line of thought does not much differ from that of the author.<sup>362</sup> Narrativity offers room for multiple meaning of the same text. Vagueness diminishes the clarity of the text such that one cannot derive any meaning from a given text. What ambiguity provides the audience with is a multiplicity of choices, or possibilities of meaning embedded in one particular text. Therefore, one text can lead to the birth of another text with only the common features remaining constant and prominent across the two texts. When this happens, then an auxiliary narrative is born.<sup>363</sup> The text at the end, does not communicate what the author intended, but it does remain within his/her confines of thought and intention. By this, I mean interpretation of text is different across the spectrum. However, this line of thought does not counter the essence of auxiliary narrative.<sup>364</sup>

More so, auxiliary narrative is not a 'counter narrative'. Counter narrative develops to resist a dominant narrative such as a meta-narrative. It does not enhance the performance of a narrative structurally. It is a superficial deterrent to an existing narrative. In this case, an auxiliary narrative enhances the performance of a major narrative. In many ways, it helps the understanding of a given narrative because of its associative endowment. The manner, by which one story or text is interpreted and understood, will at all costs influence directly the construal of its associated text. My interpretation of the spear and the shield in *Kato Kimera I* will enhance my understanding of the story of 'Lukomera' because of the associative power I assign to the two articles. Prior to learning about the story of 'Lukomera', I already had various meanings embedded in a spear, shield, and a crown. Their appearance in another story of a different construct will enhance my understanding of that story: it will trigger imaginative play that enables one to construct his/her reality of given phenomena. The meaning I may assign to 'Lukomera' may not exactly be the same as that of 'Kato Kimera'; however, the source material of whatever meaning is assigned to which text is the same and therefore easier to reconstruct. Along this line of thought, auxiliary is a vital element of narrative by endowing it with the character of polysemy and *reemphasis*. Polysemy on its side animates

construal was far apart although they used similar words or sentence constructions. Therefore, auxiliary narrative is an independent virtual text based on a very different narrative of which certain elements intersect at the lexical and syntactical levels. The transformations that Freddie administers in his virtual text are a way of assimilating the story that he reconstructs from the *Kato Kimera I* text. This line of thought is by no means disputable especially so that, the actual text and virtual are different interpretations. It would take an entire publication to argue this case. However, the result of this interpretation is that subjunctive language is bound to impose a number of interpretations of the same text.

362 In so doing, the meaning in the original text certainly falls apart, howbeit, we may not mean what we say, but still mean in the context of Dale's (2006a) account.

363 An auxiliary narrative is a narrative triggered by a story momentarily narrated that obscures the main narrative. It takes away our attention from the narrative that we start with and takes centre stage at the expense of the 'authentic' narrative. This could happen to the author as well as a third party.

364 If I have various options of the similar profile of an entity, the onus lays on me to choose my preference. However, choice weakens if we have various options of different entities, that do not add up to constitute an intention. This features prominently within Dale's (2006a) theory and he mentions it explicitly that even if he did not mean what he said, quality of the expression that means remains the same.

difference on which the narrative builds imaginative play. Noteworthy, polysemy and reemphasis cannot successfully apply to counternarratives because their major function is to perpetuate the meaning of the story rather antagonize it.

### Scenario 9

*On a relatively quiet Monday night, as I tried to negotiate my sleep, a neighbor below my flat embarked on a tireless stint by knocking the door so hard that the people inside the flat could have been dead asleep. Since I was already struggling with my sleep, I switched to the sub-conscious: Part of me was already asleep, but the other part was still awake trucking events. During this time, I dreamishly heard opening doors and low voices and figured out images of an obscure woman wearing very big earrings just about to devour the other she found in the house. Suddenly, within my sub-conscious mode, a door opened in the flat below, and it sent a thrill through my groin that suddenly woke me up. (October 10, 2007)*

Before I gained my full conscience, I was at the stage of describing how this ruthless neighbor looked like because my mind was dangling between a hideous creature and a horrible personality. However, what I could only figure out about her possible description was a figure wearing very huge earrings curved up to her lower ear lobe. I could still clearly see a huge white shape of an earring dangling in the darkness, even after opening my eyes. Other than passing as an after image, it was a summary of the description of what that 'horrendous' neighbor who caught me between the struggle for consciousness and unconsciousness was; it is what I could refer to as a virtual text of the story. They are summaries of real time phenomena, which we transform into static, motionless pictorial representations. In relation to the above episode, reconstructions of visual texts are normally summaries of what we perceive over a long period. As a visual image, the huge earring became a summary of my description of a phenomenon spanning a considerable period. This transformed the spatial chronological events into timeless static objects of representation. We compromise the actual text: the *virtual text* takes over as the actual text and hence it gains its own ontological construct. It becomes our true text after transforming the original text.

The process of transformation engages in, the greater part, deletion of unwanted details and leaves us with the main essence of the actual text. As the story is being narrated, we are consciously present and listening or watching the action. What Bruner (1986) calls a virtual text is an in sync re-run of the text, which I predict as largely controlled by non-conscious processes. What plunges one into frenzy is the automatic re-run of the text in a more summarized or *constricted script*<sup>365</sup> that requires our attention because it is from it that we grasp the essences of the

365 See, Best (1986) when he notes: "a script is a general, content-free, mental framework that can be used to organize particular sequences of common and familiar actions. [...] Adults can call up a fairly large number of general scripts into which incoming story information is fed" (p. 67).

original texts.<sup>366</sup> Hence, as we read the text, the mind is preoccupied with the bid to understand and decipher essences from triggers or indicators, of such essences. That is why I suggest that re-reading operates in the opposite direction as we attempt to understand the texts. The intersection point of the actual and virtual texts is where the fabula lays—the *timelessness* of the story. This can occur at any point in the story depending on the speed at which the re-readings operate and the parameters employed in such an operation. In conclusion, such conditions may form a foundation for a basic understanding of our ability to interpret situations as presenting the recurrence of a meaningful expression.

<sup>366</sup> Indeed, Bruner's (1986) virtual text really is, implied because it is not locatable in time and space. We can only experience and re-experience it in our attempt to assimilate it.

## 8 / Interlude

### OPEN-ENDED TEXTS

---

#### Karimojong

These artworks (see figure 21a) developed in collaboration with two Year III students at MTSIFA: Emmanuel and Nicholas. The aim was to achieve a dynamic interplay of line and color based on the structural formations of the Karimojong dance attire.<sup>367</sup> We intentionally *idealized* and *itemized* the artwork in order to study readability and vulnerability to manipulation of non-narrativized texts.<sup>368</sup> The artistic proposition about the Karimojong is describing their dance attire, which does not have any particular sequence; it is manipulatable singly or collectively without losing the Karimojongness in it. Conversely, there is a possibility of losing track of the Kato Kimera's story if one tampered with the elements that make it mean what it means. Hence, the reason why the attire is alterable is simply because it is not narratively constructed and thus its overall structure reordered and manipulated without loss of essence. For example, Sherry has made it clear that *Nkoliimbo* is not manipulatable without loss of essence. This is ideally because all the parts are essential to the whole; it has developed a symbiotic structure that needs to hold together if what it expresses is to remain meaningful in that way. The protocol thus employed in *Karimojong* is open, whereas the Kintu's and others is arbitrary because certain defining aspects are predicates and thus must be present.

*Karimojong* thrives on informative tenets mainly tackling the theme of 'dance attire' without necessarily interlocking the events into a substantive goal-directed action that would mark our competence to engage the text narratively. The repetitions, for example, are due to the limited scope the dance attire of the Karimojong exhibits. Indeed the goal of the production of these drawings significantly depended on the need to produce various scenarios connected or depicting a particular theme designed as independent episodes that did not necessarily build up a hierarchy or an action token. It was thus not detrimental in any way for the dis-

<sup>367</sup> We started working on this artwork on November 14, 2007 as a comparative study and a sketch for glass panels for an office interior in Kampala (see figure 21c).

<sup>368</sup> Readability is essential to our interpretation and recognition of the recurrence of an expression that means in order to consider it as worthy of belief and as such attending to it.





Figure 21a. Kabiito Richard, Ishengoma Emmanuel, & Tamale Nicholas. 2007. Computer print-outs. Original drawings designed for stained glass. The artwork does not constitute a specific story; it largely depends on a thematic notion of art production.

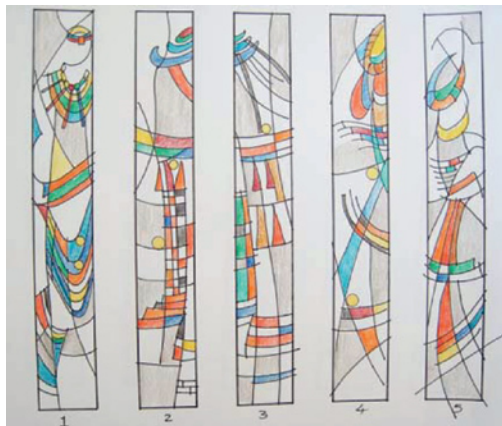


Figure 21b. Unknown artist. 2008. Colored pencil on paper. Original drawings manipulated to constitute new artworks. Stories do not offer this kind of flexibility without loss of meaning.

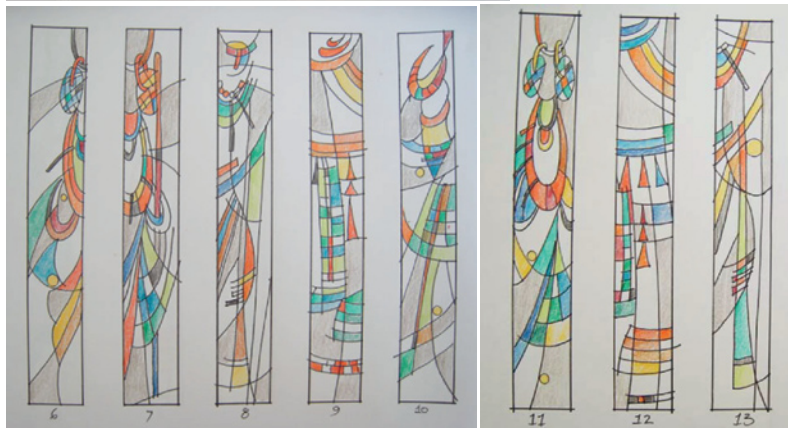


Figure 21c. Unknown artist. 2008. Fabricated stained glass in the interior of an office. Original texts almost lost. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

mantling of these productions to conform to the formats of the glass panels as per the specifications of the architect (see figures 21b & 21c).

In addition, other than the physical qualities of the Karimojong attire that are mainly color and shape, the works do not have any other extraordinary connotation of what I would refer to as abstract constructs beyond themselves. The highly idealized approach was to conform to the concept of design in line with *planer* features of two-dimensionality found in graphic forms. In these artworks, color plays the major role of representing the Karimojong attire.<sup>369</sup> The beadwork introduces an ovular shape in the displays, although the clothing is mainly checkered, or striped. Thus, the aspects of color and shape that predominate are the ones shared by all the artworks although are not sufficient, in this research's view, as conditions to constitute a concrete narrative. Because of the independence of the parts, they then become susceptible to manipulations that stretch as far as losing the original features. We can translate a theme in any way if its symbolic content is availed.

It is also evident that there is no immediate meaning attached to the works in their autonomous presence. For their reading, specialized ability is required to grasp the basic connotations of dress and jewelry. There is evidence of earrings and necklaces in several of the artworks but they are significantly transformed to the extent that the Karimojong themselves would not out rightly identify with them or even the artworks themselves. Perhaps the colors could give them a lead, but this option is also only a possibility. There are traces of the beadwork straps

<sup>369</sup> Their attire is very colorful and predominantly red, green, purple, and blue and mainly in their chromatic states.

that form the frontal parts of the gear tied around the waist camouflaged by the network of stripes so that they may not easily become recognizable. The men significantly, especially the elders, tie a knot that forms in a web-like structure out of these features that are not accessible perceptually to a 'naked eye'. There is much interference engendered by overt idealization that blocks meaning performance and instead renders the artwork purely decorative other than representing any other thing beyond itself. The meaning here is physical because it serves the purpose of embellishment. Indeed, there was no question regarding the glass panels and it was apparent that they were part of the architectural design rather than any artistic work that could possibly represent something else (see figure 21c). Nevertheless, in some there are still recognizable elements that could constitute one-on-one inferences rather than a contiguous relationship. What Karimojong lacks is quality in an expression that helps us detect its 'recurrence' thus performing a meaningful interpretation of its context. Due to lack of easily recognizable elements, the representativeness in them is lost and thus the timelessness.

### Headgear

On the other hand, *Headgear* (see figure 22), also partially inspired by Karimojong headdress, provides an open-ended narrative text that could supply material for constructing our own story. What the gear connotes seems to be immaterial presently; denotation is paramount. An imaginary story about contemporary headgear but cannot be located in time and space. It gains narrative features through its consistencies, but it falls short on generating and building a compelling 'action token.' The man looks like a typical polygamist, but the woman on the right is ready to confront him, yet, her co-wife seems resigned to tradition. I was trying to create a story out of 'no where' but mainly depending on a theme without any particular plot. There is an implied story but not exactly locatable at this point. I have no idea what a story constituting these three heads with elaborate headdresses leads to at the end of it all. Thus, it could work well as a description of a tradition rather than form a story of literary significance. Conversely, with a story in place, it would become logical and an action token would be discoverable and constitutive of an art production. Why it is open ended is because anyone can construct a story of his or her own since the headdress per se does not restrict our imagination.<sup>370</sup> In a well-constructed story, there are limited options to work with and thus the possibilities of ending up at the same point are numerous.

*Headgear* is a test in this study, of how a well-formed narrative could withstand the whims of counterfeit texts carrying the face of a story by raising the question of whether any text can be a narrative, in other words. It is thus a litmus test for the authenticity and strength of character comprising narrative texts: the intention must be spot-on and thus the result must be specific and locatable.<sup>371</sup> This claim

370 See Pickstone's (2001, p. 63) From riches to Rags article discussing Arte Povera

371 Intentionality becomes a key issue in narrative or story texts because it supplies us with goals. Headgear is 'expressionless' at first viewing: it is open and full of 'intention'. Bruner (1986) could have



Figure 22. Kabiito Richard, *Headgear* (170 x 90 cm). 2008. Bark cloth, fabric, fiberglass, and beads. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

however is only theoretical and not practically applicable in all instances of narrative engagements. Perhaps the reason for this artwork for not having a particular storyline is that I have no *ready-made* schema onto which I can map it. If this is the case, then it is a revelation that narrative comprehension and construction heavily depends on ready-mades that compose and direct our conscience and reaction to the busts both sensually and perceptually, but not narratorially. Therefore, the story lives within us, but the narrative comes when we tell it. Experience, events, and knowledge come together to form stories that we greatly revere.

To wind up this discussion, in terms of *typicality*, Fred's *Greetings from Uganda* is more typical of a story than *Headgear* because of the expression of action useful sometimes to apparent in it a chronological build up of the story and I guess constitutes the reason why many viewers were against its chop up. Although the artwork provides a wider scope of events, it also supplies us with the urge to consider it that way. *Headgear* does not; it only allows us to look at each piece independently and not as a whole due to conceptual and perceptual *fragmentation*. The innate power of stories, on the other hand, is intriguing and thus the reason we should adopt them for artistic practice. Russo (1977) dramatically leads the way out of this eye-catching exploration: "The dull expressions seem difficult for one

been correct to claim that "Narrative deals with the vicissitudes of human intentions; it has a "primitive-ness" that is appealing (pp. 16-17). By primitive, I mean that one can make a strong argument for the irreducible nature of the concept of intention. That is to say, intention is immediately and intuitively recognizable: "it seems to require for its recognition no complex or sophisticated interpretive act on the part of the beholder" (ibid). Perhaps it is a display of sarcasm, disconnectedness, and confrontation. Alternatively, it is a story about disconnectedness and intention. Intention becomes important in determining what an artwork constitutes. It could also be a sophisticated narrative dealing with fragments compiled into logical wholes. Contrastingly, it also describes relationships. There is always a tendency of figuring out the end-of-the-road. It is a typical summary. Each of the busts can tell a story of its own thereby introducing the idea of layering and fragmentation. I used Kitengi fabrics, jewelry and busuuti to perpetuate the concept of reuse thus introducing color and pattern. Headgear treads on the grounds of possibilities and human intention.



to experience and in turn envision mentally, whereas one can imagine actually doing the vivid expressions and can picture doing them” (p. 5).

## YEAR II PROJECT

With a rough picture of what goes on in the art world on the Ugandan scene, I focused on a project conducted with Year II students of the MTSIFA, which ran from February to June 2007. A class of 80 students split into nine groups and each was to produce an artwork based on a story picked from any cultural group within Uganda. The major aim was to study the nature and significance of the virtual text during the transition of stories from oral to visual form. “The virtual text is not the actual text but the text that the reader has constructed under its sway,” says Bruner (1986, p. 37). That is the reason why the actual text needs the subjunctivity that makes it possible for a reader to create a world of his own. It was necessary to trace narrative properties within the transformed texts for a concrete understanding of its operational nature. I discovered for example, smaller excerpts of summaries of the regular texts extracted to tell the entire story. This meant that significant deletions, substitutions, or additions and reorganization took place. Signs and linguistic tropes take over as dominant elements that are to determine the meaning of the visual representation because of their representative and transformative nature.

Secondly, it was imperative to know whether collective meaning is achievable in a culturally diverse group of locally situated individuals. The project commenced with all individuals dealing with the story of ‘Kintu and Nambi’ of which they were required to construct visual virtual texts. This was to assess the student’s abilities to track and identify narrative traits in visual representations. I discovered that each of the students had the ability to adapt to working with narrative due to the preliminary drawings they produced although the degree of success varied. Secondly, that each of them had one’s own unique interpretation and thus visual representation of the story.<sup>372</sup> The next exercise required to work in groups and for the group to choose one story to work with. Each one was required first to make a personal interpretation of the story and then merge their interpretations into a unitary artistic production. Although they had personal insights into the story re-reading, the group drawing was a matter of consensus. Indeed, one of the groups adopted the drawing of the most active member without incorporating any other’s ideas. The virtual texts were mainly summaries of the actual texts with significant transformations of the oral texts; in visual texts, it is severe because with less attention the plot and thus the essence could be lost.

The students embarked on their production phase that commenced after eight weeks of brainstorming and mock-ups. Our major aim in the final works was to examine how triggers could assist in producing artistic concepts of presupposi-

<sup>372</sup> This finding confirms that the notion of rationalism in tradition lets the individual interpret a tradition individually without consensus of the group’s hierarchy.



Figure 23. Group work, *Seven girls seven pots* (200 x 100 cm). 2007. Oil on canvass. Photo: Kabiito Richard.



Figure 25. Henry Lumu, *Kamasiira*. 1964. Illustration. *Kamasiira* only narratable in-that-way.

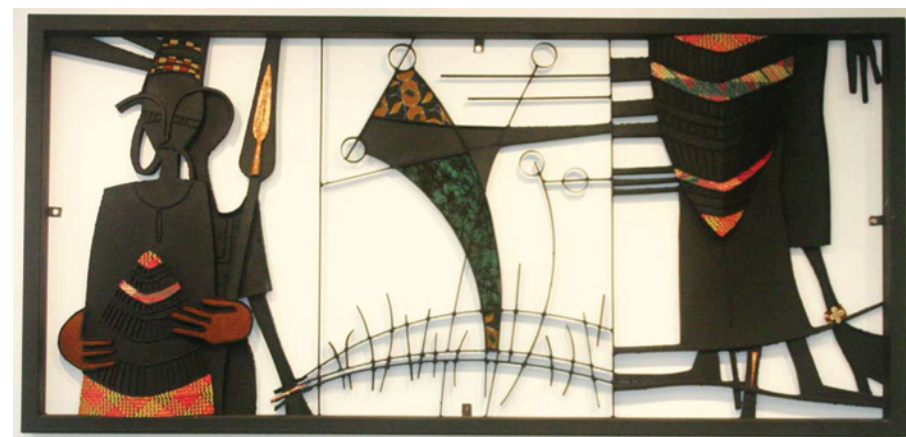


Figure 24. Kabiito Richard, *Kato Kintu* (220 x 100 cm). 2008. Spear, bark cloth, mats, fabrics, and beads on metal. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

tion to determine the enabling factors of meaning in narrative texts. At the end of the exercise, this took them another four weeks to complete. At the end, students exhibited the work for assessment to determine their strong and weak points.<sup>373</sup> For the interest of this research, I selected two artworks that displayed exemplary qualities in both execution and experience of the artists. I gathered the information through oral interviews and observation. In addition to these, three more stories were examined for their abilities or undoing's for comparison.

### **Dominant attraction, autonomy, and decision-making**

The study chose *Seven girls, seven pots* (see figure 23) because of its representational qualities and clarity of mind its authors exhibited. In their responses, they revealed a few aspects that were significantly independent of external influence. The group leader, Sherry, is proud of their achievement “because the picture tells the whole story; seven girls, seven pots, and that’s what interested us most. Why didn’t they say four girls, four posts”, she wonders. Indeed, their most conspicuous triggering object is the *number* of the girls and the pots.<sup>374</sup> They use mainly the pots as their point of emphasis. Additionally, they use the pots and the girls concurrently to maintain the storyline and avoid misinterpretation. Accordingly, Sherry emphasizes the seven girls as a necessary and sufficient condition to tell the whole story of the ‘Seven girls, seven pots’. This instance is a ‘kernel’ according to Chatman’s (cited in, Smuts, 2009, p. 9) terminology, which refers to major events that are necessary in maintaining a narrative’s essence. In this case, the representation is determined a priori and any divergence leads to misinterpretation. “There are numerous stories that are tied to a particular setting: a house, or even a room,” explains Smuts (p. 9).<sup>375</sup> *Kato Kintu* (see figure 24) further demonstrates that in the absence of Nambi, the story would lose its theme as that of Kato Kintu, the first king of Buganda.<sup>376</sup> This

373 I assessed the exhibits and conducted individual and group interviews on June 21 and 22, 2007.

374 In figure 23, one confirms the idea of ‘kernel’ as is evidence from a different point of view of a different artist who too, could not have depicted the story of ‘Six girls six pots’ (Kamasiira) any-other-way (see figure 25). Figure 33 illustrate the kernel differently: the same artist depicts the story slightly differently but also had to maintain the presence of the beasts, or else, the story loses its entry point into its meaning.

375 Smuts (2009) notes that one can plausibly retell the story behind Richard III in Nazi Germany, Othello in a high school, or Hamlet in a the present New York. However, retelling the film *City of God* outside Rio de Janeiro is practically impossible or *Sex and the City* outside of New York City.

376 In *Kato Kintu*, Nambi’s absence would significantly alter the meaning of the story and thus the message would be quite different. This is significant of how kernel influences meaning. These two art works have no definitive emplotments: we can only see the spear, shield, Kintu, Nambi Nantuntululu at different levels of visualization that form a totalizing experience. The shield, spear, and crown work as icons at the first level and symbolically at the third level of signification especially in *Kato Kimera* where most viewers considered them as representing Kingdom or royalty. The *Kanzu* is a cultural dress that is specific of locality and symbolically represents Buganda. The shield facilitates intensity, repetition, and thus reemphasis of form and objects. The mats in *Kato Kintu* are merely decorative and augmenting beauty. The crown on the vertical axis is at the level of the king because it is part of his personality while the spear and shield are just extensions. The plants in the interlude area create suspense and lead the viewer on to the last bit of completion. Interestingly, *Kato Kintu* does not portray a causal relation but rather a mental reconnection requiring experiential and explanatory credence; we have to conceive of rejoining the parts rather than capturing causality. It requires embodied experience to reconnect the parts, and as such, one could set the conceptual metaphor, as suggested by Lakoff, ablaze. Even then, our experience depends on the fact that

is a very important point to note that we cannot compromise some stories because of their compelling nature to represent it in a particular way. This claim gains credence when one considers Lumu’s (in Kaswa, 1964) representation of *Kamasiira* a story closely related to *Seven girls seven pots* (see figure 25). Thus, Sherry and her group members had no other logical way other than that or something similar but the bottom line: ‘Seven girls, seven pot. It behaves like a maxim: it is a typical summary, whereby, the hierarchy is not crucial to its overall meaning.

One of the issues the participants address in the groups is that of ‘dominant attraction’ which, here refers to that part of the story that conspicuously captures the essence in every individual. “By selecting one image rather than another, an artist can give the reader cues, drawing attention to the particularly salient aspects of the story,” indicates Pratt (2009, p. 113).<sup>377</sup> It also leads to the multiplicity in *interpretation* of any given literary text captured in the group’s insistence on the number of actors and objects. Next, on the group’s discovery is the tendency by narrative “to place the story in context” by helping artists know what happened before the story. The temporal-spatial mental events that precede any artistic initiation are crucial in shaping the course of any art production. This phase includes, but not limited to intentionality and conceptualization processes. Thus, it shapes and materializes the concept and intention of the artwork and artists respectively, which later become integral in the production process. Furthermore, one of the group members observed that stories improve *memory*: “Like when someone tells you a story, you draw pictures in your mind, you see pictures in your mind, you cannot forget these pictures, even when you forget the story; the pictures remain in your mind.” This observation is supported by another declaration that narratives facilitate a production of visions in the mind, “Whenever someone is telling you a story, every part, everything the person is talking about, you keep on like you are watching it in your mind, with that, it helps you to somehow bring more ideas; narrative helps you diversify the mind.”

In our act of the perceiving the world including pre-theoretical and theoretical knowledge, imagination plays a significant role (Freisen, 2006).<sup>378</sup> Imagination is crucial to our engagement with narrative discourses. Indeed, narration is a *pro-creative* process and well suited for images because its actualization is by creating mental pictures parallel to the narration, be it in words or letters. More so, a member of the same group mentions the expectancy that narrative builds up. “When someone is narrating, you want to know what is next; so you are *attentive*”. My study singled out *expectancy* as a necessary condition for accommodating story

we already know the human morphology and thusly expect it to feature in a certain way.

377 An artist can leave objects out of the picture and make the relevant ones stand out to varying degrees by emphasizing their size and placement within the panel (Pratt, 2009). My comment is that comics are like any other pictorial narrative in representation.

378 This view contrasts with Nanay’s (2009) dismissing imagination as purely speculative in perceiving pictorial narrative.

input.<sup>379</sup> This is testimony to my own observations and projections on how stories build up dependencies in receiving organisms. Noteworthy though, is the exhibition of autonomy by *Seven girls, seven pots*, which is a profound revelation of the organizational power constituted by narrative structure. It means that, the options one has at disposal are limited and thus aids and improves decision-making. Decision-making is a fundamental element of arriving at meaning as it helps one to opt for a choice over the other. Decision is a constituent part of intention and action initiated under conscious awareness. Indeed, decision-making preexists in our perceptual processes otherwise choices would be very hard to make. Thus, the fewer and clearer the choices are, the quicker the decision is made, although not all the time.

## Metaphor

The second artwork that I chose came from group 3, headed by Gerald, entitled *Divorce* (see figure 26). The technical application of figurative language draws me to this artwork. The group uses a chain as a 'traditional referent' that raises questions about the relationship between the dog and the woman portrayed in the painting. They further portray the chain as a metaphor for prison, which visually translates the story quite effectively. Consider Somov's (2006) remark on metaphors:

...metaphors exercising general functions appear in visual artworks as signs of other objects built in a picture (movement directions likened to lift, descent, or flight; icons of natural objects, people, animals, or tools), relating the text of a picture with external realities. ...metaphors exercising functions inside a text of visual artwork usually promote the formation of unified systemities of denotations and connotations interrelated with basic signals (p. 153).

Kant (cited in, Gibbons, 2008) disputed this analysis in his theory of the metaphor. Instead, we see the chain as causing a comparison between marriage and prison or confinement and marriage. Let me place Kant's appraisal in context. The artwork presents an aesthetic idea of marriage as a prison. Namely, the content of the artwork causes our imagination initially to represent it empirically in its actual state, but because the object is a work or art, the imagination continues to reflect on that content and produce an aesthetic idea. Because this representation does not subscribe to the limitations of the determinate constraints or empirical intuitions, it can surpass those bounds and "aesthetically expand into an indeterminate inner intuition"<sup>380</sup> (Gibbons, 2008, pp. 50-53).

379 Expectancy is one of the emotions associated with narrative uptake and it is responsible for narrative dependency.

380 "The indeterminate interactions between our subjective imaginings (aesthetic ideas) and our objective concepts (rational ideas) are one of the hallmarks of the aesthetic experience. Ideally, aesthetic ideas must be a kind of internal intuition suggested by a particular empirical artwork; if they were not internal, the aesthetic ideas would not be able to achieve their status as indeterminate. In case of aesthetic ideas, not only are they a different kind of intuition, namely an internal rather than an empirical



Figure 26. Group work, *Divorce* (200 x 100 cm). 2007. Oil on canvass. Photo: Kabiito Richard



Figure 27. Group work, *Karimojong marriage* (200 x 100 cm). Oil on canvass. Photo: Kabiito Richard



Figure 28. Group work, *Kato Kimera* (200 x 100 cm). Oil on canvass. Photo: Kabiito Richard.



Within the expansive array of the aesthetic attributes of the concept ‘marriage prison’ we have the kinships between the concepts ‘chain’ and ‘interlock,’ the implication between the concepts ‘union’ and ‘entanglement,’ the kinship between ‘divorce’ and ‘marriage freedom.’ The associations are numerous. Seeing the ‘bonding chain’ one gets to subsume such an aesthetic idea under the concept ‘marriage prison’ since its exhibition of the chain is simply a multitude of aesthetic attributes (conceptual links) that indeterminately fit the concept of ‘marriage prison’ unlike designate logical attributes suitably recognizable. This implies that the images exhibit expansive conceptual kinships that aesthetically countertype the indeterminate concept ‘marriage prison’. The rational ideas we may contemplate in this case are congenial desolation and freedom.

Technically, this presentation lies in the attempt at idealization but at the same time retaining cognitive parts of the original that can together reconstitute a meaningful whole. Largely, meaning is accessible in case one was familiar with the story. Text significantly reduces the identification scope in visual artworks to specified information by linking characteristics with object classes in different ways to present a certain set of potential connotations. In this why an image produces riddles and links to enhance imagination by creating groups of characteristics corresponding to different class objects that opens a set of identifications and ways of their visual actualization (Somov, 2006). Evidently, they are happy about their achievement because in their responses, they revealed that narrative was instrumental in their ability “to summarize their story into a small unit that can raise a hundred questions” (Sherry, 2008, personal communication).

Narrative configuration, in other words, helps to ease the pressure of *choice*: what should be included and what should not be. Their explanation though is that “you get to see things from a different perspective: a story can have various meanings; the moment you retell something, you get different angles of understanding, you can easily represent that visually.” Accordingly, narrative provides the artist with an overall overview of the story situation and summaries presented visually. The *constricted summaries* will normally have been carefully thought through and thus true representations of the temporal episodes. These operate like typical metaphors. Murdoch (cited in, Korsmeyer, 1998) recognizes their contribution in daily experience: “Metaphors are not peripheral decorations or even useful models, they are fundamental forms of our awareness of our condition: metaphors of space, metaphors of movement, [and] metaphors of vision” (p. 196).

The group members noted various interpretations of the painting and raised several questions during its execution. “They would tell us a good number of stories and then we could say ‘yeah, we have succeeded,’” said Patrice, one of the group members. Some wondered why the woman was pulling the dog. In so doing, the group thought

one, but also their possible subsumption cannot be guided by any determinate concept. Instead, we are left with an aesthetic idea (inner intuition) that we ponder over and reflect upon, but one that we can never determinately cognize” (Gibbons, 2008, pp. 50-53)

it was successful in their bid to work with narrative because people were able to see their story from different perspectives. They explained their findings to me “Even when we had not put some items like the pots, the gourds, you could find that the story was already told by the people who come to see: they question themselves; that questioning, people have [is] a trigger.” At one stage, it became emotional when an observer asked Patrice “You people, why are you punishing the dog?” Patrice sarcastically wound up by proclaiming, “I think he had many questions in his mind.” Snow (2002) posits, “Questions promote contemplation, imaginative variation and greater appreciation of what is being seen. They coax the mind into emphatic projection and understanding. They create a listening, communicative frame of mind” (p. 14).

### Scene

“A picture can set up the setting or scene of a story and can guide the reader’s perception of spatial relationships within it,” writes Pratt (2009, p. 110) just as *Karimojong marriage* (see figure 27). Optimistically, *Karimojong Marriage* is not folklore or any other story genre, but a recount of the process by which Karimojong initiate marriage between a man and woman. On average, it is a 30% deletion of original content in retelling the story with no addition of particular content; the spear is only symbolically present and its signification contiguously performed. In *Karimojong marriage*, I interpreted the *scene* as such: the girl in the background with a broken pot is the bride, while the pot signals the effects of a fight that ensued, thus significant as an index. The lads in the foreground, clad in red-brown attire represent the groom’s side and the one with a hood is the groom. The colors and decorations are ‘typical’ of Karimojong dress. The spear signals the great throw initiated beyond the gathering and into the herds. Group 1 introduces the scene as constitutive of the story and capitalizes on the size of the herd to express the importance of the occasion. Thus, they perform deletions but then recover ground by constituting contiguities that pick up the lost parts. “The decorations of the men shows the colors the Karimojong love most” says Sonnies, a student in the group.

### Lead-on

Turning to another exciting artwork related to the above, a mysterious beginning marks a mysterious ending in a picture that moves from the right to the left with gradual build up of events culminating into a climax just before the activity recedes again into oblivion. *Kato Kimera comes to rule Buganda*, (see figure 28) produced by group 6, is a typical linear narrative that ‘leads on’ and suddenly culminates into a climax of activity, figuration, and signification. Its transformation characterizes deletions of approximately 30% of the story and simple additions to it: they eliminate scenes of infidelity while a new scene of ‘looking into the pot’ as a major signifier is added. The spear as part of royalty signifies kingship hidden in the pot; while the *action* of looking into the pot makes everyone feel like ‘looking into the pot’; it creates curiosity and thus leads on the viewer. It is also dramatic in the

strong desire to look into the pot yet in the story, the kid is not in the pot. The pot replaces the womb and thus becomes a *metaphor* for ‘motherhood’. It is a summary within a summary, a phenomenon typical of Ganda narrative, which renders the artwork strong in triggering and presupposition.

Comparatively, in the main art project, the second of the hierarchy in *Kato Kimera II* (see figure 29) is dynamic and stimulating because of its lead-on, which is also evident in the same story executed by group 7 in the year II project.<sup>381</sup> There are two different readings seen in this story: the one in the group project is a continuous viewing, whereas the one in my own production is sequential in viewing in time and space. One combines space and thus less time in viewing; the other separates space and heightens curiosity. The longer the viewing time, the higher the tension built up and the stronger the relief of ‘completion’.<sup>382</sup> Although Pratt (2009) suggests that the longer the diegetic time between the gutters, the higher the potential difficulty in following the narrative, I say that in my artwork, the diegetic time is of little credence since we only have three scenes. The severance on its own is an expression of the tension of ‘reconnection’ that builds action both in viewing and perceptual completion. This is narratorial in its own sense as it builds goal-directed action. Within this interlude (gutter in comic terms) the reader gains and controls viewing time, which helps in narrative uptake and comprehension (Pratt, 2009, p. 115).

### Repetition and intensity

*Ghost in the forest* (see figure 30) is an artwork that builds intensity through reiterating the presence of the ghost woman dressed in green. The green color in itself reemphasizes the domicile of the *ghost woman* met in the *forest*. Although the group is not sensitive about scene as a narrative space, they do reactivate all episodes in the story. There are minimal deletions whatsoever, but contiguities build up in the reappearance of the woman in green—perhaps who comes to haunt the man later—but mostly, the woman as *superhuman* depicted as a mermaid at the far side. The basket and the axe symbolize domestic chores while the sun is a

<sup>381</sup> The story of *Kato Kimera II* builds chronology of events in real time and space. There is time captured and space achieved during its viewing. The spear, club, and cowhide are used as icons representing themselves and nothing beyond that unless otherwise. The spear as a symbol of power is also part of the King’s regalia. The horn is part of the cow and thus, it is iconic. Kalemera drapes bark cloth in an iconic application, while the king drapes his royal regalia with the crown presented with animal fur; it is symbolically used. The wife drapes burnt wood material used as an inherent medium. Kalemera only appears at the beginning of the story and although it is chronologically broken down, its narration does not account for the events preceding the pregnancy. The viewer can add on to the narrative build up, which makes it interactive. The king is strategically present because he is an actor in the story. There is one consistent character: the king’s wife. The narrative builds a dependency by accounting for significant episodes so that the reader fills in the missing ones. The insignia prince Kalemera dons in the neck does not resurface because he passed away. The pot symbolizes pottery; but used as a metaphor for the womb that holds the child *Kimera* from then onwards. Therefore, we may attempt to subsume it as an aesthetic idea of a ‘motherly pot’ that may bring about rational ideas of parenthood.

<sup>382</sup> This kind of climax subsists on a small scale in *Kato Kintu* whereby the interlude manipulates viewing time and space to heighten anxiety and build tension.

symbol of time in the artwork.<sup>383</sup> They achieve consistency and emphasis through repetitions and their meaning through creating a *scenario* of many ghost women. It is dramatic in the way they regenerate through multiplications of the ghost woman who only appears once in the story line. It is also dramatic how they build up the narrative by introducing each main character, and later picking the same character such that the man ends up crying under the hot sun having started with scenes of daily duties. They build a sequence but in dramatic fashion and it ends up where the story started by building a network of contiguities. A cyclic sequence builds up in their visual narrative.<sup>384</sup> “If an object is pleasant, repetition will increase its charm; if it expresses sorrow or pain, the repetition will intensify its melancholy. On the contrary, any subject that is peculiar or unpleasant becomes unbearable by repetition. So repetition always acts to increase intensity,” notes Hodler (cited in, Chipp, 1968, pp. 60-65).

Character, material, and ornament constitute the much-needed consistency in *Kato Kimera II* (see figures 29a-29c). However, repetition of characters builds up the plot due to its serial construction, unlike in *Ghost in the forest* where the character reappears on the same plane. It opens up a void that keeps the mind reconstructing the rest of the story before the subsequent viewing. Pratt (2009) cited this phenomenon earlier as ‘closure’ that refers to “mental processes whereby readers of comics bridge the temporal and spatial incompleteness of the diegesis that occurs in the gutters between panels, thereby participating in the creation of narrative” (p. 111). This view coincides with Barwell’s suggestion and my observation that we as readers must participate in creating a narrative text as an experiential phenomenon. Interaction occurs with the liberalism it affords to complete the story. In turn, this leaves the viewer hanging thus building a dependency. Wanyana reappears to visit her son who dresses like his father to regain consistency and recapture the rhythm. The king appears in figures 29a and 29b, and *Kimera* appears in figures 29b and 29c; *Katumba* appears only once in figure 29b. Wanyana appears in all three scenes (that is figures 29a-29c) as the unifying entity. I capture order of succession and consistency in actors and objects.

### Scenario10

“One day, a crocodile sat in a basin, one day a crocodile sat in a basin,  
One day a crocodile sat in a basin, one day, a crocodile sat in a basin.  
What a wonderful story!”

Early Christmas Eve, December 24, 2007, Louie told the above story and in my reading, I wondered what she was going to tell me next. She kept her rhyme until she concluded by declaring the story wonderful. I asked her mother to listen in to Louie’s story. She replied, “Louie’s stories are like Calvin’s (her cousin); they

<sup>383</sup> In Ganda beliefs, ghosts and spirits move in the hot afternoon sun.

<sup>384</sup> When the man was going to the forest, goes the cycle, he met the ghost, then he lost his wife, and thus never got what he wanted.

have no beginning, they have no end.” While Louie narrated her story, she kept on opening a DNA<sup>385</sup> prepaid manual as her source of the story. She is acting under the pretext of narration, and in my analysis of her situation, it is a reflex action. There are those instinctual features that do not require our attention and indeed, in many cases we do not realize their presence in our daily activities (Macleod & Mathews, 1997). This kind of scenario confirms the remote presence of narrativity in a human mind. Ideally, Louie imitates storytellers on TV, but at that particular moment, she was the storyteller even though her story is a repetition of one phrase; it compels one to listen to it. She is not acting out of context; an inner necessity is pushing her into story telling because the human mind anxiously designates telling stories and sharing experiences and knowledge to ensure that species survive. One interesting observation is the remark her mother makes of the structure of storytelling: beginning, middle and end.<sup>386</sup> In repeating her texts over again, Louie creates *intensity* that separates the narrative text from its surrounding texts. Such intensity is always present and needed in narrative because it instantiates meaning performance.

Louie’s narrative this time around sounds flat as it only offers one option. It is a unitary form but lacks the verve and vigor to sustain it. A good story, then, is a collection of small but related episodes that provide the dependency it requires for resistance and sustainability. In visual images, a white flat wall is a gestalt, but is boring and flat: it has no dependency created by constructing various entities. Her mother’s observation that it has no beginning and no end, confirms the fact that narrative is a construction of various components joined together by space and time. The spatiality is comprised of its physical entities and the time created by its sequences—its incremental nature. Our interaction with its spatial/temporal elements is the experience we gain from the narrative. When variety is absent, continuity is numb and expectancy is mute. However, what is interesting about Louie’s story is that it has an end, but the middle is absent which certainly weakens the narrative’s dependency. This is not true according to Nanay (2009) and Barwell (2009). What is important is our experience of it. “Nevertheless, ‘how events feel,’ the sequence by which we experience emotions as response to narrative representations, need not a tripartite form whose last stage is a resolution,” notes Barwell (p. 55).

### Objective transformation

One of the most astounding transformations emanates from group 8 with no apparent substitutions, and minimal deletions. The entire story, *Kakama*, *Kahima*, and *Kahiru* (see figure 31) fits within available space, using orientation as a major signifier for fullness, halfness, and emptiness of the pots. They omit the milk from

385 DNA is mobile telecommunications company in Finland.

386 The story Louie tells above requires one to process it as a story because of her declaration that indeed it is a story. Secondly, it is apparent that causality may not be a sufficient condition for narration, rather our experience of it (narrative) counts.

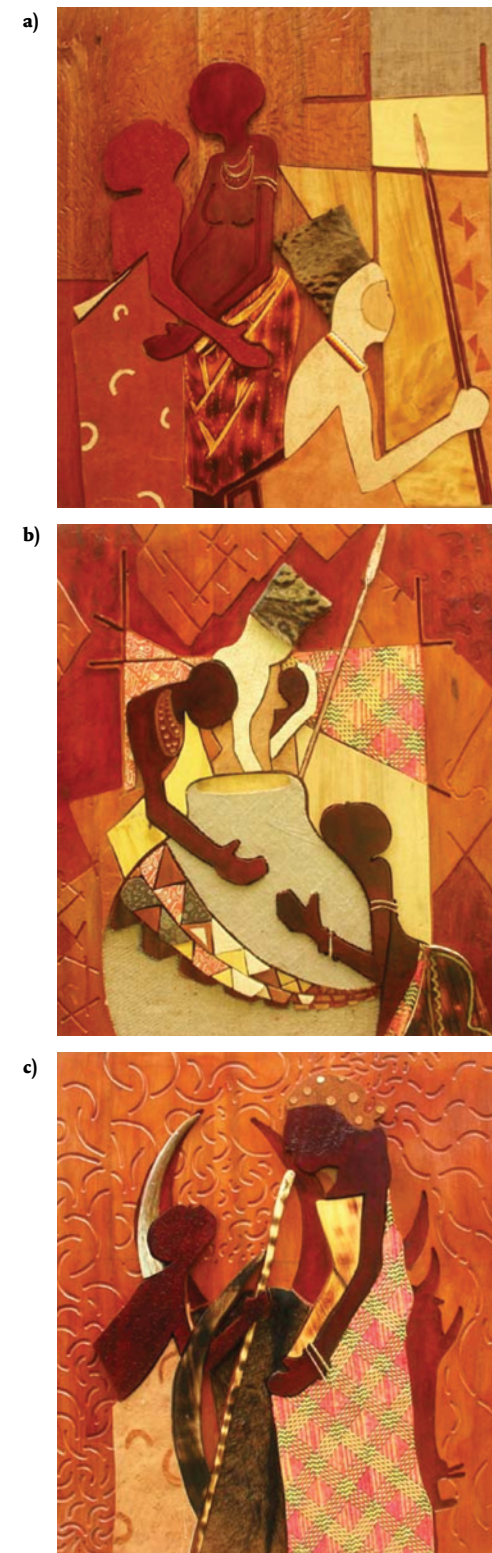


Figure 29: 'Rato Kimera' T.I. 2008. Wood, beads, animal skin, spears, mat, copper, brass, aluminum, and cattle horn. Photos: Kabiito Richard.



the constellation and only the pots in their symbolic positions remain. The narrator presents a story with no comment, leaving the reader with no guidance of explicit evaluation. Several authors and critics believe that 'objective', 'impersonal', or 'dramatic' ways of narration naturally supersede modes that allow for the author's direct appearances or his/her reliable spokesman (Boothe, 1983). The authors seem to *tell* rather than *show* in this disposition as there does not seem to be any apparent comment or subjective influence on the overall meaning of the story. Unlike *Seven girls, seven pots*, in *Kakakama, Kahima, and Kahiru* the pots play a major role in the triggering process irrespective of the presence of the three sons. The disposition represents an *objective* transformation that tells the story as it were in clear and simple terms with minimal deletions; no effects of scene could have hampered its essence. This artwork possesses resemblance with *Kakama, Kahima, Kahiru II* (see figure 40) executed at a later stage but with profound differences. The horns represent the cows that Kahima inherits, and the hoe is a metaphor of hard labor. We experience *dissociation* in this artwork and *linkages* constituted by external contiguity.<sup>387</sup>

In contrast, *Kakama, Kahima, Kahiru II* builds up anxiety within its sharply incised leaf patterns and sharp edges with huge spaces, which build tensions of interconnectedness. The tensions I assume as a narratee, build up within the interlocutors themselves and these isomorphic tensions transform into similar traits in the viewers' own experience of the artwork. The entire story constructs a summary in one representation but time assumed diegetically. Height represents status but in an ironic way. Irony creates drama: Kakama is the smallest and Kahiru the biggest. The king named the youngest Kakama, the middle Kahima, and the eldest Kahiru. The eldest son did not become leader; instead, it was the young one. The artwork builds meaning through orientation, size, and objects. Size did not affect age but orientation determined ordering: Kakama, Kahima, and Kahiru. Height symbolizes age: Kahiru the oldest, Kahima in the middle, and Kakama the youngest. Double shapes of the pots constitute intensity, consistency, and organized sequence. Roundness is also symbolic of the fruits borne by the tree, but iconically they are pots. This artwork consists of an idiom 'emiti emito' (young trees) which is a metaphor for the child in the Ganda language use; the tree is a metaphor for fatherhood. The idiom deriving its attributes from a local saying that suggests continuity provides an aesthetic idea of 'children tress' probably from a metaphor CHILDREN ARE TREES leading to inner intuitions of humanity and perseverance.

### Patch-ups

Significant deletions are quite significant in the painting *Ganda cooking place* by group 7, but also significant in additions by combinations have been expressed. The transformations however have failed to reconstitute an organized 'whole'

<sup>387</sup> Synecdoche in another explanation is a part standing for a whole or vice versa, while metonymy comes into place by external contiguities directly related to symbolism. However, this discussion is not relevant now that my position recognizes metonymy as constituting a part for a whole.



Figure 30: Group work, *Ghost in the forest* (200 x 100 cm). Oil on canvass.  
Photo: Kabiito Richard



Figure 31: Group work, *Kakama, Kahima, Kahiru* (100 x 200 cm). 2007. Oil on canvass.  
Photo: Kabiito Richard.

that maintains the original meaning of the text. Thus, there are *patch-ups* in reorganization, but the 'fabric' remains loosely connected: there is no sequential build up in the process, and thus, it may rely on constitutive judgment as a parameter of reconstituting the story. Visually though, the artwork is plausible because many elements are recognizable and hence traceable. However, the combinations of various visual elements are not logical enough to make-up for the transformations undertaken and thus weak to constitute an action token. Similarly, in *The Eagle and the Hen*, evidence of an 'action token' is weak such that, although there are recognizable elements, they create no lead to a wider conceptual build-up.<sup>388</sup>

The result of the investigation into the virtual text and its significance to a transition written or oral texts to visual artworks with qualities of meaning performance yielded several compelling realizations. Significant deletions, as in oral texts, are evident in the process of rereading the original texts and in some cases, because of the nature of the transform, additions or multiple effects were a result of substitution. These substitutions were responsible, in some cases, for the configurations of the final visual disposition. After reciting the story of 'Kintu and Nambi' to a class of 74 students, a random sample was taken to ascertain the extent of transformation that took place through constricted virtual texts. Out of the 74 (seventy-four), 28 (twenty-eight) students were sampled, which constituted almost 38% of the total sample population. Only one student had a 49.4% deletion, two students had 50% and above deletion, 10 (ten) students had 60% and above deletion, 14% of the students had 70% and above deletion, and only one student hit the mark of 88% deletion of the original text.

This technically meant that only critical elements remained and these were the episodes anchoring essences in the story, for a particular individual. The element of transformation is also evident in Lumu's (in Kaswa, 1964) depiction of the story of *Nsangi* where he replaces a spear with a stick but maintains the essence of the story through retention of the main characters (see figure 33). Significantly, Lumu does undertake such a transformation in the same publication: one is the book cover and the other is in the main text. More so, since the statistics indicated that significant deletions characterized the virtual texts then what was absorbed was a summary of the original texts. Such a summary mainly constituted the dominant attraction in most cases, which coincided with the overall interpretation of the story—Bruner's (1990) fabula. Eleven participants had both a 'fabula' and 'dominant attraction' and in these, nine responses corresponded while two were conflicting. This further confirms that on average, the dominant attraction prevails as a fabula for the overall text confirmed by the large number of responses that lacked a fabula: 56 participants indicated that it constituted their inherent and subjective interpretation of the story, while 11 participants did not respond to the question at all, or misunderstood it. As noted earlier, the nature of transformation determined the kind of representation produced and this is evident in the final group work.

388 See, Arnheim (1994, p. 133) on order of accident.



Figure 32a: Group work, Ganda cooking place (200 x 100 cm). 2007. Oil on canvass. Photo: Kabiito Richard



Figure 32b: Group work, The eagle and the hen (200 x 100 cm). 2007. Oil on canvass. Photo: Kabiito Richard

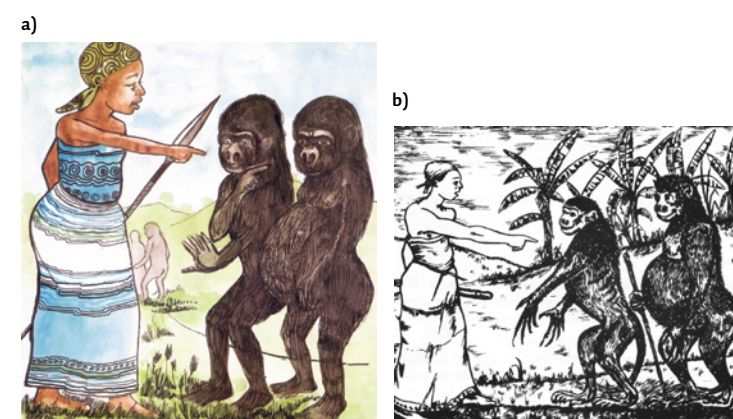


Figure 33: Henry Lumu, *Nsangi*. 1964. Book illustration. Note how the artist narrating *Nsangi* swaps implements instantly within the same publication but maintains the main characters and thus the meaning of the story.





Figure 34. Kabiito Richard, *Kintu* (80 x 180 cm).  
Bark cloth, alligator skin, mats, cow hide on wood.  
Photo: Kabiito Richard.

In *Kintu* (see figure 34), for example, meaning is enshrined in both *Kintu* and his cow. Psychologically the story of ‘*Kintu the legend*’ (see Appendix B) requires completion because it sets off the mind of the reader into a world of narration by subjecting it to filling in the remaining part of the story: “once upon a time...” is a narrative strategy that gains time by reconstructing it and conditions the mind for reception. The narrative comprises of contours that create consistencies to keep the picture together. Biographically the artwork describes *Kintu the legend* but introduces *Kintu the actor* in the story. These are acts of reinventing time. More so, it reconstructs the past through the present by presenting regular sandals that presumably, were absent at the time. Intensity on the garment is iconic in the sense that, leaves were the basic dressings at the time. Contrary to *Ganda cooking place*, *Kintu* is direct in its presentation and representation. Tectonic adjoinments and elongation builds tension that transforms the space and conditions the mind to receive the story at a higher level. Tensions

transform into physical energy to produce expectancy and desire to continue to the next stage, which is internally constructed and filled up. Intensity of contours, materials, and layers characterize *Kintu* to create dependency. The overall concept of its significance relies on its encryption of the idiom “*baana ba Kintu*” (*Kintu’s children*) translatable as “*abaana ba Kintu muwemba*” (*Kintu’s children are sorghum*) in the patterns of sorghum grains on the lower garment. At first, the aesthetic idea one gets is a ‘cereal offspring’ later throwing one into the imagining of numerical meliority that leads to rational ideas of eternity. In this way, a metaphor develops because of the idiomaticity encrypted in the art production.

## TYPES OF REPRESENTATION

The major types of representations found in the exhibits from the Year II study were in form of summaries of the actual texts that had variance:

### Free flow summary

It is a gradual build up of events and concepts to constitute a formal communication linked in a serial sequence characterized by a *lead-on* of related events in an open configuration. The mind ‘wraps up’ the components to constitute the meaning by linking parts with each other.

### Set piece summary

It is a sudden build up of events and concepts designed for maximum impact in constituting a message characterized by a set of *ideal patches* of information juxtaposed in compact configuration. The formation is highly choreographed to activate time and space at the same level in a parallel sequence.<sup>389</sup> The parts are packaged together and the mind *unwraps* the content into smaller units that could be read back to constitute a congruent whole. We need attention to join two parallel processes of identification and episodic characterization (Naish, 2005).

### Inbound summary

This is a summary within a summary. As the story moves on, there is another constricted summary of the story moving along the same path at a much faster pace but leading to the same meaning. This accelerates essence formation.<sup>390</sup>

### Constricted summary

This formation tells a full story with a single episode without patching or choreography. It depends heavily on the accuracy of its prologue—the title—to build up relations. Nanay’s (2009) view on pictorial representations suggests that a picture can represent more than one event even when it depicts only one event (Nanay, p. 121). Further still, Smuts (2009) suggest that we must retell certain stories in a particular way meaning that we cannot separate story (the what) from the discourse (the how) in some cases.

<sup>389</sup> Parallel activation requires the mind to fill up the untold parts with its own schemas so that the one views the story internally in its entirety. Linear activation presents us with a longer unit of events that do not require mental reconstruction or fill up. In linear construction, we keep discovering the parts to make up the whole from the sensual stimulus, whereas parallel activation requires that we keep on reinventing parts to fill up the whole through inner mental reconstructions. Reading of parallel or linear narrative therefore requires different mental processes to accommodate the texts. In this proposition, parallel narrative could be a more taxing text to read than a linear narrative and this explains why linear narrative has, and still is, revered in traditional communities.

<sup>390</sup> Compare the inbound summary with the ‘narrative proverb’ discussed by Obiechina (1992).

## The verdict

Finally, during the transition process, the virtual texts, largely, were re-read subjectively and thus individuals or groups tended to include their own views of the story. This greatly affected the final disposition and the nature of transformation exercised on the texts. For example, the choice of language tropes heavily depended on the individual or group's point of view, and not the point of view of the narrator. The subjective rereading in form of hypotheses that characterized all the virtual texts implied, on the other hand, that each individual had a personal interpretation that was concrete and thus a common meaning could not be achieved through individual viewing because of various attachments, background, and sensibility unless choreographed. The general interpretations were promise, admiration, love, disobedience, survival, death, life choices, marriage, discreteness, failure, carelessness, revenge, creation, supreme power, and hatred attributed to Walumbe. Some of the functions disclosed include simplification, serialization attributed to ordering, guide to content and ideation, sharpens creativity, creates mood, language functionality, summary, reconstructs time, hermeneutic by aiding interpretation, provides an overview, and stimulates imagination. Various participants expressed similar views and thus clustered as the 'common views' in the study. All groups revealed qualities of organization, however group 5 reveals the organizational forces, while group 3 only reveals the organization endowed in stories. The project thus wound up with formidable insights that helped steer the next phase of artistic production. The autonomy exhibited by *Seven girls Seven pots* and the constricted summaries, coupled with other concepts such as dominant attraction, contextualization, memory boost, multiple perspectives, figuration, and inquisition are necessary conditions for artistic production and reading in a particular localized setting. Pearse (cited in, Hutchens & Suggs, 1997) notes, "The irony for art educators is that the pluralist, decentered perspective engendered through postmodernism can serve to reconnect art and life in ways that can be meaningful to students while fostering critical reflective attitude" (p. 38).

To conclude this section, I present below evidence that meaning is at the end of communication as I posited earlier and that many of the images we produce without clear signals and relevant input end up ambiguous and therefore meaningless. This also elevates the quality of expression above the intention of the speaker to constitute Dale's insistence that it was grossly wrong to base meaning on the speaker rather than the expression. This happens quite often in the set piece summary where competence is very important.

## Scenario11

*Ambiguous patterns are combinations of various mutually exclusive structures that we should not confuse with complexity. The relative strength of the whole and the parts always creates a structural hierarchy, which is not ambiguous. However, two mutually exclusive but different conceptions with ambiguous coordination, overcome dependence when the unit of the whole is nearly as strong as the independence of the parts (Arnheim,*

1994). Consider a text message sent to 'A's mobile phone by another person 'B' who is with 'C' and C suspects that 'A' is having an affair with 'B'; A and B are scheduled to meet and discuss academic matters, but somehow C meets B: "don't come with her," reads the message.<sup>391</sup> A receives the message but thinks it was misdirected. B is surprised to see A appearing and yet B is with C who is not comfortable with the relationship between A and B. When they meet again, B complains to A claiming that she had sent a message, which was to stop A from meeting B. There was no communication in this sense, because the intended meaning was not received; the message intended was for A not to appear at the rendezvous because B was with C. Because the message is ambiguous, A continues to the rendezvous and finds B with C. I will demonstrate my claim. To make sense, perhaps the text would have read, "don't come, am with her".

391 Text message sent on, May 09, 2007 at 19:27 at Makerere. It is ironical in a sense that text messages are so cryptic most of the time, and decontextualized unless close communication like knowing the other, otherwise, text messages are often miscommunications. Also interesting, a story emanates about miscommunication, thus, a story exists in miscommunication.

## THE WAKALIGA EPISODE

I worked with ten metalworkers on this project namely Robbie, Freddy, Henrico, Saed, Mayun, Semba, Seru, Richo, Jo, and Damba all of whom hail from Kyamullibwa, Masaka District but now reside at Wakaliga in Kampala District.<sup>392</sup> They have maintained their traditional values largely, despite residing in a cosmopolitan environment. They refer to each other as Jjajja, Kojja, Taata, although they are age mates, which is *typical* of Ganda family hierarchy and social relations. They maintain certain ways of doing things that is particular to where they come from.<sup>393</sup> “Ffe tuli kukibumbe olwaleero” says one of the youths meaning that he and others were working on the sculpture/model.<sup>394</sup> They stick to their traditional perception of phenomena. Perhaps, there is a possibility that any artwork that is three dimensional in the Ganda tradition assumes the title of ‘ekibumbe.’ However, there are several other ways of referring to art in the Ganda dialect such as ‘ekifaananyi.’ They choose to refer to these three dimensional works as ‘ebibumbe’ that literally means ‘models’ made out of clay. What this implies is that these people still sway towards traditional values and have not taken on new forms of considering and looking at traditional phenomena.

### Intimacy of stories

While work on the two women carrying pots in *Kaleeba* (see figure 35) progressed, I asked Freddy to narrate any story about pots or any story with pots mentioned in it (personal communication, June 11, 2008).<sup>395</sup> I had constructed that artwork

392 The project spans 24 days from June 2 to 26, 2008 at Wakaliga, thereafter, Makerere University until July 22, 2008.

393 ‘Jjajja’ is a grandparent; ‘Kojja’ is uncle; ‘Taata’ is father.

394 ‘Kibumbe’ in Luganda means ‘sculpture’ but typically one made out of clay. However, there is a tendency of referring to any other lifelike sculpture, not necessarily clay, as *ekibumbe*. ‘Kubumba’ means modeling out of clay or any other earthenware like cement or mud.

395 *Kaleeba* gains time by reconstructing it. It builds up consistencies by action, objects while it animates space and time. The garments used iconically, signal specificity and reinvention of time; they also provide us with perceptual chronology. However, on the metallic pot it is functional since it creates surface quality and revitalizes the rather dull area. The familiarity of objects specify locality: pots and Kitengi that is widely used in many Ugandan communities. It incorporates mental chronology like



Figure 35. Kabiito Richard, *Kaleeba* (180 x 80 cm). 2008. Fabrics, clay, and copper on Metal. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

with a conscience and conviction that there is a story in my childhood that had ‘ensumbi’ in it. My mind kept on racing around our childhood story time but could not specifically locate the actual story. However, Freddy was quick to tell me about the “Maama yatuzaala musanvu, natuwa obusuwa musanvu,” (Mummy gave birth to the seven of us, and she gave us seven pots) talking about “Seven girls, seven pots.”<sup>396</sup> The story that crosses Freddy’s mind at a glance though was “akanyonyi kali kuluzi” (a bird is at the well) then I interjected, after he paused, with “Ee, kaleeba.” Two things unfold in Freddy’s action: ‘memorable’ stories and their proximity to human action that there is a story connected to what we do all the time and that stories are *easily accessible* to human memory. This I may attribute to the function of metonymy. Furthermore, my action demonstrates how remotely stories can act upon the human mind, even when they are absent or obscure in our active memory. In her anthology about storytelling, Rosenberg (1997) notes

that, stories “strike chords deep within us that continue to resonate because they deal with profound human issues” (p. xvii).

It is amazing how Freddy could remember instantly a story that had pots in it. It is interesting too that I could construct an art work based on a remote sensibility of a story encountered in the past, and not only did I encounter such a

in Kato Kintu into the expectancy of turbulence at the point of stability: It is dramatic because in the story we encounter instability. Prevalence is symbolic by the more than one figure which builds illusion of expectancy in the action to come or which might never come. The pots reemphasize the meaning enshrined in their presence—fragility: the actual pot is a belief value to let us into believing that the pots are real and thus, the story is worthy. This is goal-directed in other words and predicts an action token. Concentric circles on the fabric are functional and structural: they form perceptual gestalts that contrast with the figure in the background. The wrapper and the cloth of the background figure have intensity of form. The three intensities form a gestalt that eventually directs the narrative towards the central signifiers—pots. The action does not directly represent the meaning although it contributes to its construction in the buildup. The objects in themselves do not as well supply holistic meaning in the narrative because they only precede events that constitute the meaning. Thus, a symbiosis between the imminent action and the objects ensues. Meaning blossoms through a contiguous relationship of the objects and intended action.

396 When I looked at the work I had constructed, it did not suit such a story because mine were only two pots. Besides, before encountering the story in a class I conducted earlier on in this campaign, I had never heard of the story, although I knew there was a story in relation to pots. Most of all, I constructed this artwork from a point of view of human plight in peripheral communities where traditionalism was still emphatically alive and active.

story, but it also reflected human life. Therefore, when it comes to the story in the artwork, the human condition draws Freddy closer. He proceeds to narrate to me that a bird which sang so well interfered with everyone getting water from the well because every time one turned back to see it, the pot one was carrying fell and broke, so they all failed to return home with water. Most notable, Freddy kept on singing the song of *Kaleeba* as he worked on the girls with pots, which made the story part of his lived experience at the time. Secondly, the story, although gone, continues to linger in Freddy's mind, through the song, so that it extends itself in time and space. This is also an indication that stories slip into our mind unconsciously sometimes and they continue to operate even when they are no longer present. Furthermore, stories continue to operate under the threshold of our consciousness so that we become part of them, and vice versa. This confirms my earlier claim that songs become an extension of the story and thus the meaning we physically inherit from narratives.

The intimacy and rapport that stories build up within us, is quite useful in constructing meaning in visual texts. The interaction event of our cognitive systems with exterior stimuli, always define the meaning of an object or person (Best, 1986). Implicationally, because they form meaningful wholes, they tend to stick in the mind more than disjointed texts like conversations. The memorability of stories makes them meaningful to us, and there re-experience is always a new experience. Freddy re-experiences *Kaleeba* as he participates in its construction. He discovers a new form of experiencing his childhood story, and captivated by its presence such that even after we seize the conversation, he continues to sing the song.<sup>397</sup> The story continues to unravel in the song because music brings another dimension to storytelling. Songs are another form of text that is memorable because of their psychological impact on the human intellect. They are soothing, calming, enjoyable and captivating; they are another way of getting into the stories and interpreting their essences. It is also a way of extending the story so that after narration, the song remains as the binding factor between mind and narrative. Notably, stories occur in a public sphere and thus their enjoyment always experienced in a public space. However, if they become personal for a reason, then we subjectively enjoy them. Music is one of those aspects that personalize stories in the Ganda oral culture. This continues the story within individuals and makes them more intimate because the songs become personal things people can enjoy on their own. This personalization of narrative texts helps in building rapport with individuals that it becomes a human condition and thence, our re-experience of such a phenomenon is always exciting and affective.

397 Stories have clearly defined entry points; a conversation has no particular entry point and therefore does not tend to leave a significant and traceable path that we can retell or recollect unless really required. Stories leave trails by which we can track-them-back and recollect the entire sequence of their narration. On the other hand, re-experience provides multiples of the same experience to make it a familiar thing.

### Remote ordering and goal-directed actions

In addition to determinism portrayed by narrative technique, remote ordering is also evident in visual narrative. Feelings of symmetries, rhythms, directions of signal changes and hierarchies of their meanings, as structures of information depend on information produced by organizing codes. They in other words, act as systemities of visual signals/direction, axes, lines, focus points, geometrical similarities, whole color configurations, and systemities of designates constructed by pictures in cultural codes of visual communication (Somov, 2006). Similarly, when we work with stories on our mind, our sense of what will form part of the dispensation remotely gains order by that story the mind focuses on. This *remote ordering* also reveals itself in reading visual narrative texts as well. Because Freddy sees a woman carrying a basket, he thinks that she was carrying *Nkoliimbo* from the fields. When he sees two women carrying pots he thinks of *Kaleeba* or *Seven girls seven pots* on the second attempt. Dohrn (2009) categorically states, "In cognition, imagination presents the concrete individual object to which concepts apply, and understanding provides the concepts" (p. 39). The visual element thus influences the line of thinking—a true element of ordering. There is ordering evident in the constructor's point of view and the reader's point of view. Expressly, it is (the ordering) reserved in the first instance: we enter it at the end of the queue because its available meaning is not yet determined.

However, on the second attempt it is farfetched because he cannot instantly see the phenomenon of the seven girls and seven pots. Sometimes we may depict an action preceding the moment shown in the picture, which calls for awareness of the action prior to our engagement with the narrative. Further, we do not necessarily need to depict the character of whose action we are aware. Additionally, none of the characters has to perform, will perform, or performed the action of which we are aware. Lastly, "[t]he actions we are aware of while engaging with pictorial narratives are likely to be goal-directed actions," observes Nanay (2009, p. 125). This is where the power of narrative dwells and operates at maximum strength. That there must be commensurate phenomena for a story to mean what it normally means because its meaning is predetermined. Hence, I cannot mean *Seven girls, seven pots* with only two pots unless it is elevated to a higher level of signification.

Interestingly, *Kaleeba* skips the main action and plays on the imagining of the next action.<sup>398</sup>

*Semukazi* (see figure 36) demon-



Figure 36. Henry Lumu, *Semukazi*. 1967. Book illustration.

398 We cannot of course think about the scenario of the characters having passed the birds because, according to the story, only the leper passed the stage of breaking the pots.

strates a depiction of actual gist of the narrative where the action of ‘falling objects’ forms the core attraction in the story. In other words, this scene precedes my own depiction of *Kaleeba* in pictorial form. Nevertheless, perception is a process that is not static and thus we cannot fixate on one particular action at the expense of the entire constellation. Secondly, our ability to view a narrative in its entirety helps us in predetermining meaning and thus deciding the order of events in narrative pictures. On the other hand, *Kaleeba* fits in well because it is about carrying pots, although no broken pots are evident. Implicationally, stories organize themselves into meaningful units that help us to predetermine meaning. We implicitly develop an internal order of events due to goal-directed actions in a narrative picture. Predetermined meaning is the key to understanding of phenomena because it conditions the mind for correctly reading particular texts and provides initial clues towards capturing the wider essences. Lepper and Hubberd (cited in, Macleod & Mathews, 1997) report, “People often seem to cling to their initial beliefs, even when the evidence on which they were originally based has been totally discredited” (p. 193).

### Evolution of Stories

Despite various attempts to answer questions left behind by the narrator, the story keeps on changing form and as indicated in an earlier claim that stories are dynamic entities. We can never fully discover them and hence they will always be a source of inspiration. Not only can they be inspirational, but they can also be constant puzzles and I believe if there was nothing to wonder about them, they would cease to function. When I was working on *Kaleeba*, I depicted one of the women as wearing a ‘*Busuuti*’ and the other, a dress. Robbie (June 15, 2008) at one time asks me, “Naye ezo engoye ze bambadde zaaliwo edda?” He is wondering whether the garments the characters donned were present in the olden days. Robbie’s puzzle lies in what I would call ‘evolution’ of stories. As I have indicated before, stories are dynamic units that can and are capable of taking on various forms to suit given circumstances.

When I listen to a story of the olden days, it is very hard for me to assimilate it using elements of the past because I am not familiar with them.<sup>399</sup> The *Busuuti* came to Buganda for example when Arabs first made contact with the interior from the coast of Mombasa and Malindi in 1849 almost 150 years from today. However, the period of these stories dates far back beyond the coming of this dress code. Meaning that probably the period the stories came into place warranted garments made out of leaves and perhaps even no garment at all. However, in my reading of the *Kaleeba* story, although people were still carrying water in pots and birds communicating directly with them—consider the song of the bird—I could only imagine a woman wearing a *Busuuti* with a huge ‘*kitambaala*’ tied around her

399 On top of the familiarity, I was not present in these times so that I can reformulate such instances using images of the time. I can only base on imagination or rely on accessible information.

waist, and another wearing a patterned dress with slight jewelry.<sup>400</sup> This is possible because I can only see the story and the episodes that take place in it through my own scheme of perception. My scheme of perception assumes control from what I can access presently, but within this scheme, I can also access the past without interfering with its essences.

This is also evident when a visitor to the workshop recognizes the *Busuuti* wrapper: “Kino kitambaala?” he asks. The conversation that ensues after words is immaterial now; however, his comments are useful to this passage. Although he is not aware that it is a story about *Kaleeba*, he recognizes the wrapper because it is within his scheme of perception. The story, in the process, adapts itself to the times and thus seen as an evolution within the narrative. While working on “*Ssewandeku*” (June 15, 2008), Henrico inadvertently cut off the headgear (interpreted as a pot). One of the welders said that “*enkofiira agitemyeeko*” meaning, “He has cut off the hat”. Although they were aware that I was working on stories, which they deemed to be in the past, they still refer to the articles in them within the present—not because of the naming, but because of their scheme of perception. Well, their scheme of perception could be that a hat is a headgear and it is acceptable. Anyhow, this could also symbolize an inherent evolution of oral narrative that keeps stories around because we can see them through a contemporary eye. Damba confirms that stories evolve inherently when he comments on *Kaleeba* that, “*Yesazze Gomesi; ateddeko n’ekitambaala*” (She is wearing gomesi; she also includes a wrapper). He is using contemporary slang to assimilate and adapt the story to our times, or even, his own times. ‘*Yesazze*’ is a slang recently coined to mean “draped” or “dressed” in some attire that is especially eye-catching. *Kaleeba* therefore denotes the past seen within the present but retaining its essences.<sup>401</sup>

### Point of view

The style of depicting Kintu comes from my own experience and hence personal perceptual scheme. This implies that we all reconstruct the stories differently, depending on our point of view. My imagination of a woman carrying a pot does not base on the olden paradigm of women wrapping bark cloth around their chests, but that of women wearing *busuuti* and the younger girls wearing long patterned dresses, which in most cases were stitched out of off-cuts from their mothers’ *busuuti* fabric materials. Through this evolution, stories ably maintain their place

400 ‘*Kitambaala*’ is a belt-like wrapper worn around the waist by Baganda women to hold the *busuuti* together.

401 This is not so with Kintu. From the time I listened to Kintu’s story, I always saw a man draping leaves and stayed in the jungle. Particularly, I always, figured out, and still do, a man wandering in the fields just behind my home, through which we went to fetch water, and collect firewood. I always figured him out as a lonely man sometimes wearing a sack and leaning against his herding stick. When I sat down to construct a representation of Kintu and his cow, that is what crossed my mind, and that is precisely what was in mind. Here, I am looking at Kintu within that environment of the wild and the abandoned. Perhaps I adopted this image of Kintu from the Balaalo who were traditional herders in my home village who dressed skimpily with wattle material and light sandals. Hence, my mental formulation of Kintu and his cow bases on my experience of the Balaalo.



within a plethora of significant texts. Secondly, because we construe stories from a personal point of view, then they are subjective entities of human nature and therefore part of humanity. Because they are part of humanity, they continue to exist as they unfold in several different ways that are meaningful to each individual and within that individual.<sup>402</sup> Because stories evolve and can even mutate into new entities, they can also adapt to various forms, but within a certain context, and particular confines. Robbie for example, shifts his mindset instantly but within a confined context to align his own thoughts with the story at hand and typically, this is the way in which traditions work.

First, he aligns with the *Nkoliimbo* story because the woman in the picture carries a basket with fruits in it. In the first instance, he constructs his essences based on the contents of the basket. However, I interject by wondering whether Nambi was the one who was carrying the *nkoliimbo*. I also inform him that unless he wanted to view the woman as Nambi, it was not correct to claim so. He immediately realizes that actually Nambi could have carried millet, so he tells me that he was ‘seeing’ Nambi carrying millet for her chicken. The whole essence and the shifts Robbie makes in his judgment of the work hinge on action (Yettisse) and content (millet/enkoliimbo). Noteworthy, Robbie can ably shift from one essence to another without losing track of the action. Secondly, the story is able to adjust and adapt itself to different situations—that of *Nambi* (see figure 42) and *Nkoliimbo*—within the same context.<sup>403</sup> Much as Robert can see ‘enkoliimbo’ in the action of carrying fruits in a basket he can equally and ably transfer another essence of Nambi carrying millet within the same action using the same entry points. This makes stories very adaptive but, as I have maintained, within a confined context.

In conclusion, the story can evolve from one set of signification to another but remains intact and true to its own internal structures. The artwork itself remains constant in its construction but can adroitly emit variant signals to its readers, implying that it can adapt itself to new situations just as the story itself. Due to the internal structures, the artwork can take on more than one essence but not many because of the organizing limitations of stories. The stories evolve through adap-

tation in visual images. This adaptability is a powerful tool in meaning making processes because it allows negotiation. When working with stories in visual representation such limitations are rife. However, the olive leaf suffices through the dynamism of stories and their adaptability. I will demonstrate this claim. Robbie asked me (June 6, 2008), “Naye ako nsuumbi; nsuwa?” I replied him by noting that “Anti ensumbi n’ensuwa byonna bisena mazzi. Si kyo?” Robbie replies, “Yee” (Robbie wonders whether the pot I had used in *Kaleeba* was a small water pot or a regular pot for fetching water. I responded by noting that both big pots (ensuwa) and small water pots (ensumbi) can all draw water. He was in agreement with me).<sup>404</sup>

My interpretation of this dialogue about the pots and their functions is that whether a pot is for drinking water or collecting water from the well, what one is capable of using it for can supersede its basic principal of functionality. Because the internal structures are the same, they can be adapted to new situations. In my case, and in the story’s case, the water pot fetched water from the well. However, this does not deny it of its basic essence of being a water pot. It depends on our point of view in many cases that we may reinterpret a tradition. Similarly, even when stories adapt to new situations, they retain their internal organizing structures that are responsible for safeguarding their essences. Besides, this adaptation process gains control from the internal structures of the story and thus externality could lead to loss of essence. In this way, a story maintains its form as a tradition and the recurrence of the features it holds together will invoke our recurrent condition of an expression that means.

### Traditional referent and familiarity

During the construction of the metal artwork *Ssewandeku* (see figure 37), a conversation ensues between Saed, Mayun and friends who were visiting the workshop (June 19, 2008).<sup>405</sup> They looked at the artwork and attempted to figure out what it represented; or in other words, its meaning. “Ono Yettisse nsuwa” (This one is carrying a pot) says one of them. “Aah, gwe oyiinza okukwaata ensuwa n’omukono ogumu!” (Aah, can you carry a pot with one hand!), wonders one of

402 This claim could be supported by Robbie’s view of my artwork I originally called Basket but saw it as *Nkoliimbo*.

403 Nambi delineates a snapshot: a typical summary that only serves to highlight specific moments in the story. The meaning is direct, enshrined in the action and the object—object versus human. Intensity in the foreground tactically introduced, creates balance. The action of leaning to gain support expresses the weight of the basket, but also exposes human frailty, videlicet, Nambi was not strong enough to resist the temptation of returning to heaven, but also that she, as a human, forgot to carry the millet. Intensity on the basket reiterates connotation of weight and the meaning embedded in its content. Garments: cloth collage enriches the meaning in an iconic sense. Nambi’s dress code reconstructs time through its reliance on contemporary fashion. Nambi, like other pictorial depictions in this study thrives on the narrative time contrasted with subjective, phenomenal time, sometimes referred to as time-consciousness. Narrative time is the time internal to the narrative, multiplicationally implying, external engagement with the narrative, which itself takes place in time. Prior to event E in the narrative, we can conceive a narrative of event C, which took place earlier as a narrative of what is past or future (Goldie, 2009). Thus, we can see the time scheme in Nambi even within a single episode of the representation by representing in the mind antecedent events or ascendant to those in the narrative. The roots in the foreground metonymically connote source of problems but also expressing metaphorically, sprouting.

404 ‘Ensuwa’ is ideally a normal pot used for storing and carrying water from the well. ‘Ensuumbi’ is specifically a small pot with a long neck used to store drinking water in the traditional Ganda society. In *Kaleeba*, the big pot is the conventional utility pot. The appropriated pot is the ‘Nsuumbi’ actually narrated in the story as the kind that people were using fetch water from the well. The Baganda treasured these pots.

405 The artwork *Ssewandeku* is inspired by a local village story is dramatic with its descriptions of heroics and defeatism: it is comparative in an ironic sense of description ‘hero’. The hero leans on the ‘weak’ foe. The change of roles in biological and social strata is ironic too. The artwork itself presupposes, by an empty semicircular structure at the top, carrying of a pot. Its uptake prevails by entanglement, providence, abandonment, motherhood and encumbrance and thus, any missing object distorts the meaning. The cloth introduces color and drama: metal against fabric. It also employs the service of idioms representing “ebizibu bindi mubulago” (problems are around my neck) that is intuited by the neck scarf (similar to the English idiom, ‘on my neck’). The idiom expresses fragility, bewilderment, impasse rooted knot and rope as metaphors of gloom and death. The male figure expresses weariness, while the female expresses focus, vigor, and vitality. Reemphasis of the shape of the gourd and the actual gourd specify locality and intensify comprehension. The fabrics reemphasize and animate the dress that is iconically applied. Meaning in this artwork is enshrined in the objects and action whereas expression reigns in the entanglement at the base. The basket is symbolic of providence while the gourd relates to alcoholism.



Figure 37. Kabiito Richard, *Ssewandeke* (180 x 80 cm). 2008. Fabric, bark cloth, and gourd on metal. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

Mayun's friends. In the first place, there is a slight confusion between the act of carrying on the head and holding with the hands. This signaled that the conversation at this stage geared towards establishing the content of the artwork. They are trying to link the action with the objects in the artwork; they link 'ensuwa' to the action of carrying. Hence, the pot is a signifier in this case of an action that constitutes the signified-yettise. The group eventually arrives at the interpretation stage: "Abantu b'edda bakolanga", continues Mayun, "bettikanga ensuwa, nasiba omwana ku mugongo, nakwata n'endeku mungalo" (People of the olden days used to work hard: they carried a pot on the head, tied a child on the back and held a gourd in the hands). The combined signified action of "asitudde", "yettisse", and "aweese" bring them to a conclusion that people in the past used to 'work hard' probably in comparison to the present.<sup>406</sup>

There is a clear path towards locating the meaning of the artwork by this group of young men.

They are tracking it through linking the objects to

the corresponding action portrayed in the artwork. The meaning of this particular artwork, in the eyes of the viewer, rides on the relationship between the sign 'pot', and the signified 'action'. The process they use to account for their deficiency in linking action with objects requires the traditional referent in Drout's (2006a) account. Like narrative, the articles they try to link to action have their source in their manner of storage in memory, and duly, to access the host of associations therein, they needed to find recognizable elements capable of rekindling their memory or knowledge of these articles in relation to the action.<sup>407</sup> In his *Greek Oral Poetry and Vase-painting*, Mackay (1995) clarifies Drout's traditional referentiality thus and thus:

The inclusion of the kithara-player may be a clue to the specifically divine nature of the occasion: he is usually represented as a youth, often with incised locks of hair hanging before his ear, and so it is difficult not to perceive him as Apollo. Such tendency to automatic identification usefully illustrates the way in which traditional referentiality works in vase-painting<sup>408</sup> (p. 298).

406 'Asitudde' designates the action of carrying in the hands; 'yettise' means carrying on the head; 'aweese' implies carrying on the back. Note that intensity of action shows through the various forms of 'carrying' inherent within Ganda society. These become entry points to the narrative and forming the extra narrative and traditional referent.

407 Drout (2006a) clearly indicates that to recognize the part as a part of a certain whole requires that we should have repeated the whole at one time.

Mayun continues to interpret the elements of the artwork at yet another level: commenting on the woman's dress he says, "Kano nno kali k'esibye bulungi" meaning that the woman was properly dressed. At this level, he includes personal opinion and judgment based on traditional values of well dressedness, which is a summation of the entire scene. He is now at the third level of signification that requires external input in order to keep track of what he infers to this artwork. He is commenting, in my opinion, on current trends in the fashion industry where young girls have taken on the habit of wearing skimpy outfits that contravene traditional and cultural values of where he hails from.<sup>409</sup> What Mayun engages in, is negotiating the meaning in the artwork by reconstructing it through the iconic, indexical, and symbolic levels of signification. What is important to note, is that, Mayun has a starting point of interpretation grounded in the objects and later on, in the action. They are starting points because they are recognizable as part of some whole. The physical construction of the artwork allows him space to internalize its significance. That is, there are elements both visible and imaginable that guide him in this meaning making process. Augmenting the physical, for example, structure forms the backbone for constructing meaning in oral narrative texts that rely on the totality of tradition to create precise meaning, "All the stories and narratives heard by listeners contribute to the creation of every character, every action, and every narrative motif" (Goyet, 2008, p. 15). Structure and role of the text develops "real options for the listeners and opposing them to each other, in confrontation that allow definition, understanding, and judgment" (Goyet, p. 19). That is, the story itself forms the vehicle for intellectual debate.

The group is in consensus that the figure in this artwork is representing time and appropriate dressing, which are significant entities of their own values.<sup>410</sup> Interestingly, this group of metalworkers is composed of low literacy levels to the extent that writing is a problem to some of them while their interpretation of visual images is significantly representative of the grassroots communities. Their interpretation of visual images is highly dependent on iconic levels of signification. Any lack of recognizable elements means that these young men will not infer meaning to any of the images in my art constructions. It is evident then that meaning performance begins at the first level of signification-iconic level-and it culminates into many other interpretations of hard work or dress code and or cultural values at the higher level. The three ways an artwork may contribute to cognition are, (a) by helping in tuning patterns of salience in order to appreciate worldly facts adequately (b) it may suggest generalizations and their relationships

408 See, van Eijck's (2005) discussion of identity and belief coherence in his *Discourse Representation Theory*.

409 This is another indicator that these young men are still deeply entrenched in their own cultural values.

410 Meaning in the artwork by these young men prevails through a negotiated and collective process whereby each other's view contributes to the overall understanding of the story. What this implies is they all gain the same meaning because of the values they attach to it as a group with the same background.

to perceptual phenomena that form a testable theory in the actual world, and (c) discovering modal truths through fiction (Dohrn, 2009).<sup>411</sup> This is a case of narrative engagement.

Subsequently, as a result, Fred is able to identify a story for the pots because he is familiar with them. Mayun and the rest are able to detect action in *Sewandeku* because they are familiar with the objects that signify the action and even the action itself.<sup>412</sup> Although they are not able to identify the second person in the artwork, and therefore missing the precise interpretations, they adroitly draw their own meanings. Mayun and company are not too far off from the message put forward because at least they talk about hard work, and they pay little attention to alcoholism because they did not recognize the gourd.<sup>413</sup> However, the position of the 'ndeku, the child, and the implied pot, are good enough to initiate the feeling of action towards the construction of meaning in the artwork. The conversation turns out to be an entirely new experience in the understanding of an expression that means something whenever a similar condition arises.

### Imagery and imagining

Amid laughter, Robbie acknowledges that, "Naye engero ezo zanyumiranga. Mbu akakookolo. Naye akakookolo ako oba kafaanananga katya!" he wonders (June 12, 2008). "Tebakakubako mu kifaanayi?" he asks. Robbie raises two issues in this conversation: (a) he acknowledges that he used to enjoy such stories in his childhood as *Kaleeba* and he is particularly excited by the name 'Kakookolo': 'leper' in the local dialect; (b) he wonders how such creatures looked like and he goes on to ask whether such images were ever represented visually. The first observation is purely emotional and Robbie was evidently excited and happy to rekindle such memories—of old childhood tales. He particularly wonders how the Kakookolo looked like. Once again, wonder appears as we visualize internal images of the story. "We tell the stories with emotion" quotes a CNN advert. The content of the story might not necessarily be emotional; however, the way one transmits and receives them may include some basic emotions that the story holds.<sup>414</sup> Nevertheless, the second observation is cognitive than being purely emotional: he is trying to figure out the likeness of 'akakookolo'. This leads to the claim that we absorb narrative by reconstructing it. By reconstructing the narrative, we are figuring out its likeness in the objects of representation used. This confirms the discovery made in 'Seven girls, seven pots' that whenever one attends to a story, one keeps on watching it in

411 Consider Lewis's (cited in, Dohrn, 2009) analogy of a dignified beggar, whose existence we can only prove by a story.

412 Sewandeku recounts a local village man nicknamed 'Ndo' because of his drinking habits. He left the work to his wife: to tend for the children and look after the family as he spent all day in a bar. Most interestingly, Ndo only had three biological children out of the eight because of alcoholism.

413 I did not prompt them about the second image of the drunken man because I thought it would preempt their own interpretation.

414 Subsidiary emotions like fear, anger, disappointment or joy, are in the extra narrative bit of the story. Wonder for example is a ground emotion that other emotions come to be rooted.

the mind and in the process, more ideas develop thereby diversifying the mind.

For example, Robbie could have figured out a grotesque human creature with wounds all over its body and stinking so that it is entirely an outcast (I am too, only imagining what Robbie could have tried to figure out). Perhaps to him, akakookolo was a funny figure and that makes him excited by merely mentioning it. With the visualization of the story, Robbie obtains a lifetime service of experiencing it visually; it would be an exciting moment for him to figure out visually the true nature of the creature he craved to understand. Not only does Robbie raise an issue of figuration, but he also points at the issue of the need for a visual representation of such stories; it could afford many people a lifetime experience because our construal of such stories is diverse and far between. A text's narrative structure is comparable to the identifiable shape of an object in visual work as a necessary cognitive category for the proper understanding of a work (Chung, 1998). I would never have for example, imagined akakookolo to be a funny creature just as Robbie insinuates; I would detest it, just as I have always done. The story provides a new angle to it making it imaginable in a sense that we can see it in our mind. Most importantly is that, the excitement Robbie achieves is responsible for instituting a concrete dependency in visual images based on localized stories because they mean a lot to such communities from where they emanate. Secondly, Robbie emphasizes the point that working with stories could be a worthwhile alternative in performing meaning in visual images.

### Truth and leveling

During our work process, with these metal artisans, they continue to talk about the stories the work depicts and they give names to the images, such as "Oyo Nnamugerwa omumaze?" (Have you finished Namugerwa?) Damba asks.<sup>415</sup> By naming one of the images likewise, Damba re-experiences such an episode (June 24, 2008). Notwithstanding though, Saed has his own views about stories. "Ebyo byaali byadda": 'those are things of the past', in reference to Robbie's admiration of stories. He does not believe anymore in stories told a long time ago. He finds them too hard to believe in and even wonders how we are able to believe in them. Of course, it is normal to outgrow certain situations and mind-sets. However, it is not possible to outgrow certain human functions such as stories. The settings of such stories that, during this conversation, viewed as real were real to us then. For example, Freddy, Robbie and Saed reminisce about the relationships between the characters depicted in these stories particularly *Wakayima* and *Kakookolo*. Notably, Saed the skeptic engages in reminiscence about the characters in the stories, which, portrays a side of him that still admires the stories.<sup>416</sup> On the other hand,

415 Namugerwa is a name probably that is symbolic of an episode particular to Damba. On a similar note, Damba is raising the issue of leveling and lifelikeness of images. When he talks of 'Oyo Nnamugerwa', he is personalizing the image and thus elevating it to his own level of actual life experience. Alternatively, he aligns himself with the image so that they live in the same world and thus they can both share the same life.

416 This is a great indicator of leveling effects in narrative uptake.



reminiscence itself is part of understanding the essences of the story. By engaging in such an activity, Saed is still trying to negotiate what these characters stood for. Even then, use of animal characters in place of human beings is still an ongoing phenomenon in contemporary story telling such as cartoons. The differences in the stories we heard then are that (a) they have no visuals for one to meet the characters visually; (b) we had no idea of some of the characters so we had to construct our own as we absorbed the narratives. Suitably, it looks more believable now than it was before, but this is only superficial.<sup>417</sup> The major lock-up in Saed's dilemma is the mode of narration: oral versus visual. Carroll, Smyth and Dryden (2004) consider the image as the nearest one can get to the true nature of reality.

## Scenario12

*Reminiscing about the film Last King of Scotland, Joseph remarks, "Amin bamusala enamba; guy yateekayo. Oba yabayitako atya?" That Nicholas duped Amin and Jose wonders how he beat the security (personal communication, July 26, 2008). His remarks clearly attempt to reconstruct time-space relationships. He is trying to figure out the security positioning; their whereabouts or location in the movie itself from the time they left Nicholas for the dead to the time he boards the plane. His mind reconstructs the time factor in his actual experience and relates it to the spatial distance between the terminal and the plane. More so, not only does he wonder how Nicholas escaped in actual experience, Joseph experiences Amin's times and does not believe that this canny doctor still duped his former employer. During this process, we reconstruct the mind to suit that experience in a mediated space as well as linking it to his contemporaneous state. This is a case of leveling in that one ought to stay at the same level of the narrative in order not to see Amin as Whitaker, but as Amin in the 1970's.<sup>418</sup> The film takes him back in time although he is in the present. Not only the time, but also the space because of the setting that allows him to wander through the film's spatial construction: the hotel room, the village setting, the airport, the hospital, state house, and so on.*

Firstly, as a function, narrative invents one time scheme in terms of another time scheme yet, its temporality as written text is to some extent conditional or instrumental. Of course, as a product in time, we consume literary narrative in space and time needed for crossing or traversing it, like a road or a field, and thus, from its own reading, the narrative text, like every other text, metonymically borrows temporality (Genette, 1980). Secondly, what is notable in this session of reminiscing about the film is that our emotional bias seems to dictate our starting point of reconstructing the movie, and extracting our common essences. Emotional import and emotional response in narrative thinking arise either as

417 Louie still wants to re-visualize her favorite characters in her cartoon stories even though she has visual replicas of the referents.

418 It seems to me that Joseph was inside the life of the filmic structure in order to experience the physicality; if one is watching the movie outside its own life, then one cannot experience such physicality or the emotion it evokes. This is proof that the story elevates the readers to its own level in order to become part of the action.

an 'internal' part of the narrative, integral to it or they can arise as a response to what is narrated, and in this sense be 'external' to the narrative (Goldie, 2009). I realized my point of departure remained at Amin introducing Nicholas to his wife as a man who 'saved his life'. It based its entry points on a purely emotional input-amusement external to it.

When Jose was retelling this movie, a few months earlier, his narration hinged on Amin being treated for 'Air spaces' and he ends up farting. It was such an amusement to Jose. The character of Amin impresses Reye, with whom we watched the film, by the way in which Whitaker flourishes in that role. His assessment rotates around contentment and satisfaction by the success of role performance, which is internal to the narrative. A summation, contributes to the overall meaning of the movie and the means of reconstructing it. In other words, our spatial-temporal visualization of a story largely, depends too, on the emotion experienced during viewing. Secondly, imagination and truthfulness of a story depend on the level at which uptake of the narrative occurs. That is, if we manage to elevate ourselves to the level of the narrative, it does not count the degree of falsity of truthfulness, instead, the unconscious imperative takes over and we subsume the story *as if* it were a real phenomenon.

## MAKERERE EPISODE

### Character

As we assembled the artwork *Matyansi Butyampa* (see figure 38) JB exclaimed, "Eh, mukyaali ku musajjawo Matyansi!" (April 15, 2008).<sup>419</sup> Literary, he was surprised that we were still working on my 'man' Matyansi.<sup>420</sup> Not only does the story gain its meaning through the character of Matyansi rather than the action, but also characters gain associations of real life situations: Matyansi's diegetic life and that of his character on earth. Matyansi becomes my associate in a real life scenario thereby attaining an interface between the two different life situations. The two

419 This phase of the project started in February to end of May 2008 mainly comprising of wooden artwork. Matyansi Butyampa is comic despite its despicable semantic dimension. Thus, people could refer to death as comic because of the preceding action of defiance. It is a typical linear narrative setup chronologically in a triptych with figures and objects overlapping. It rotates on characters to draw meaning. Intensity succeeds through the formal qualities of the leaf pattern while the use of clubs and spears specify locality and create formal variance. One of the dogs carries decorations with a necklace as a dramatic gimmick before it meets its demise. The mats are purely aesthetic and functional as they form the garments. They also specify locality while animal skin used iconically forms animal fur in the artwork just as the spears. The action of stubbing presupposes the demise of Butyampa and his dogs. The artwork mainly builds on action and actors as meaning making units. Matyansi is a typical Ganda tale that is linear and straight to the point. Intensity reflects in the leaf patterns and plant growth to reemphasize the brutal scene. The scene is at the bridge and we show Golooba as retreating. The narrative progresses from the beginning to the end. This is ideal for the local communities because of its directness.

420 'Musajjawo' is a derivative of 'musajja' that means 'man'. 'Your man' is an idiomatic use for close acquaintance with another person who is a male. Thus, 'your' designates the proximity and relationship there is. In other words, musajjawo means 'your friend'.



Figure 38. Kabiito Richard, *Matyansi Butyampa* (220 x 100 cm). 2008. Cow hides, mats, bark cloth, beads, cowry shells, and copper on wood. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

other characters only feature in a distant supporting role. Although the story is tragic, everyone who visits our ‘working scene’ tends to over look the tragedy and instead finds humor in the character of Matyansi who, after all, in the story is depicted with a big head. The big head here bears metaphoricality accruing from the idiom “omutwe omunene” (big headedness) also present in the English language. Its connotations in Ganda cultural dialect point at stubbornness and obstinacy, although in another sense, it could imply daftness or thickness and stupidity as Emmanuel thinks. Our subsumption of its meaning is through metaphor; we get to think about the size of the head and its content in relation to his character leads to a metaphor such as VASTNESS IS CHARACTER. Our continued imagination of a ‘sizeable scalp of substrate wit’ (aesthetic idea) and ego (rational idea) causes a vast array of associations that we can never determinately subsume under the prevailing circumstances.

To continue with my discussion, the character becomes the timeless element in the story rather than the action intended to avail its essences. Currie (2009) distinguished between character as a person and character as property of a person. A character (person) in a story might have a very clearly drawn or interesting character (property), yet there are stories with characters in them, but are not narratives of character (property)–narratives that give some explanatory role to the notion of character (property). To start with, Matyansi had developed into the lead character and actually, the story has taken on the title of “Matyansi”. Consequently, the entire story rotates around Matyansi Butyampa and it is evident in the visual representation that Emmanuel makes him physically larger than the other two characters. Furthermore, the meaning of the story rotates around Matyansi and this is a major finding: that the lead characters normally are the anchors of meaning in any storyline. For example, during our work, we kept on referring to the artwork as Matyansi and actually, his name mentioned the most times. The murderer who has no name is least talked about, and Emma comes up with a characteristic make-

shift nomenclature–Omutujju (terrorist). On the contrary, in Kato Kimera where there is no apparent lead character, no name or actor takes on the meaning of the story; it is a ‘joint venture’ whereby every character adds surmountable energy to the meaning of the story. Currie confirms that narrative suitably represents character due to its richly individuated temporal and causal connections between motivation, decision, and circumstances in ways unmatched by other representational forms. This is exciting to note because we see how the work develops and how characters shape up and gain autonomy and their own identities.

Crucially too, the story builds up character as it progresses. The mind mulls over the characters and identifies the one that matters most in the story and qualifies him as the lead character; we have not agreed that we all refer to the story as ‘Matyansi’; it only comes intuitively and we refer to it as such. As we process our visual representations, the mind processes the characters and identifies the underlying timeless fabula of the story through the lead characters. In plot, character functions as a facilitator of counterfactual robustness of the plot’s events by turning unlikely results that depend on accident into events with dramatic inevitability (Currie, 2009). As I reconstructed Emmanuel’s narrative for example, I did not realize that I gave Matyansi glowing colors just to make him stand out from the rest.<sup>421</sup> At this stage, no one had laid emphasis on the action yet, apart from the characters. Even after placing the spears in the picture, no one comments on them as part of the action, and therefore as anchors of meaning in the story.<sup>422</sup> Our conversations and those of the visitors centered on the characters rather than the action or weapons quite evident in the visual texts. Because stories draw on life situations, we normally see them through actual life situations. By returning the projection back to their real-world prototypes, fictional characters benefit from cognition by our projection of actual-world structures onto them as well as contributing to our understanding of actual-world configurations (Newman, 2009).<sup>423</sup> More interesting, the more we called the characters by their names, the more the ‘others’ were drawn into the story for example Segga, a resident sculptor at MTSIFA, had not heard of the story since childhood. He also joined in to narrate the story of Matyansi Butyampa and his friend Golooba Bidandi.<sup>424</sup>

421 Emmanuel, one of the two students I worked with on this project, authored the artwork *Matyansi Butyampa* as part of this project. He left this artwork at the stage of preliminary drawing or sketch form and I executed it to suit the context of the research.

422 Anchors in this text are part of my terminology to refer to the traditional referent in Droutian (2006a) terms.

423 “Characters do this by eliciting, from audiences who are bent on critically understanding them, puzzle-solving procedures that become paradigmatic for illuminating aspects of human reality,” explains Newman (ibid, 73).

424 We pre-occupied ourselves with the contextualization of the stories: creating right scenes and characters of brevity, cowardice, and cruelty. Nevertheless, when Fred and Segga (April 18, 2008) encounter a physical visualization of the story, they realize their own dilemmas that faced them during childhood and because they now meet Golooba Bidandi and Matyansi Butyampa on their way to Kooki and the murder at the bridge, the scenario becomes more vivid and comprehensive. It is just as if they had been present at the bridge, probably hiding in the willows or caught in the crossfire to witness the murder. This is another form of leveling whereby we feel present when we interface with narrative action so that

When Fred tackles the story of ‘Matyansi Butyampa’, he has some memories of its contexts and location and he reminds me of old school times when life was just at its infancy. The memory visibly moves him as he attempts to recover its recital. Sega is equally excited about the use of stories especially ‘Matyansi Butyampa’ which he was “fond of as a child.” He also attempts to reconstruct it but the bits and pieces are lost although the characters and fabula of the story are still present. There is evidence of re-experience of infancy by attempting to reconstruct the stories in their actual form and context. Fred and Sega are visibly excited by the recollection of childhood stories and scenarios that they keep on tracking the progress of the artwork; the reconstruction of time that occurs briefly refreshes their minds and cuts of the woes of adulthood. Reye who has been following the progress of our work is equally excited about the idea of working with stories to re-create time in visual images. He also knows about ‘Matyansi Butyampa’ and others but he had not heard of the story in a long time. I had not heard of ‘Matyansi Butyampa’ either in about 20 years until a student came up with it in a class exercise. It is important to note how stories cut across generations. More so, such a visual record is another way of continuing the dialogue across generations. The dialogue we engage in now about the story would probably be the same years to come, although the contexts would be different. Hence, stories tend to attract those who know about them because they feel obliged to retell their own experience of the story, and the stories in turn soon spread out to ‘others’. Stories, at the end, become part of conversation and talking points once remembered.<sup>425</sup> In so doing, as work on the stories continues, we extend them both in time and space as we reminisce. A movie watched in a cinema hall extends to bar space, home space, classroom space—as it regains time during the retelling. Eventually, it was a work of art representing Matyansi Butyampa, the lead character and no longer the story of a gruesome murder at a bridge. Similarly, as we talk about the characters, objects and scenes in the two stories, we are extending its attributes spatial-temporally and thereby continuing its presence. On top of being extensive in space, stories regain time and hence useful as temporal constructs.<sup>426</sup>

we are part of the scenario as witnesses or actors. It creates a dependency because of its elicitation of buried life episodes, and the desire to realize how it shapes up. Indeed, Matyansi Butyampa built a strong dependency of viewers during its construction because of its affinity.

<sup>425</sup> Further still, some characters could become dominant thereby becoming the key anchors in the story.

<sup>426</sup> This transpires as an informative gimmick as well as a mode of reconstituting and resolving our personal dilemmas. Tom, on the one hand, saw the clubs in Matyansi Butyampa with burnt stripes and commented likewise, “Ogwo omugo ewaffe waliyo abatagukwaatako; Bwa gukwaatako alwaala” (no touches that stick in our home; whoever touches it, falls sick), referring to a certain clan in Western Uganda. The artwork in this instance takes on the role of an informer. It taps information from its viewers, which becomes an inquiry in itself. In visual inquiry then, the artwork we produce is capable of eliciting information from various sources and transmits it to the reader or producer. In so doing, the artwork becomes a source of knowledge and bank for cultural texts. Emmanuel, in an interview about his work Matyansi Butyampa, notes that stories are his bank for ideas. Similarly, artworks with cultural texts are custodians of culture and therefore continue indigenous knowledge. Perhaps our major concern at that time was to visualize the stories and attempt to create mental or physical scenarios that would allow us experience such stories.

### Traditional referent and the action token

When I asked Joy to tell me about my work *Njabala* (see figure 39), she said she could not make out the meaning (May 9, 2008).<sup>427</sup> However, she could tell that there was a woman in the artwork but what she was doing was unclear when I asked her to look critically at the coffee beans, she still could not make out anything. I eventually told her that it was a coffee-picker. She then recognized the action. She told me that she could not make out the meaning because the action was not clear; she expected a hand that was perhaps holding the coffee beans rather than one flat-out and only the beans loosely attached.<sup>428</sup> She did not specifically make-out the loose coffee beans and the spread-out hand to constitute an act of picking coffee and as such telling a story about coffee picking or a lazy child. The meaning was emphatically enshrined in the ‘action’ of picking the coffee rather than the articles within the artwork.<sup>429</sup> When I turned round the piece of art and put it up right, she claimed it was clearer to her but then immediately confessed that it is because I had told her the title. Hence, the meaning was enshrined in the title for her, but its construction in the action. To transpose a story (retelling it in a different medium), we must ably distinguish between story and presentation. “If what constitutes a story is sometimes dependent on what elements the presentation emphasizes, then one worry is that a new presentation could make new elements not present in the original salient,” writes Smuts (2009, p. 10). In other words, she did not have enough background knowledge to instigate the search for things that could lead to think in a particular way about the action.

Joy could not decode this disposition, however, because of her lack of extensive knowledge about coffee picking and the idiom used to express the action. Carroll et al (2004) advise that for visual communication, the image must possess both ‘clarity and strength’ for effectiveness, whereby ‘strength’ concerns the ability to attract the viewer’s attention by the image whereas ‘clarity’ entails the image’s ability to keep the viewer’s interest. Coffee picking takes place in rural ar-

<sup>427</sup> Although *Njabala* is my favorite in terms of structure and form, it is passive and innate; indeed, it expresses ‘laziness’ and ignominy while it animates well the idiom it adopts in the process. In this artwork, I use copper and gold to presuppose wealth, well-being, and hard work. Furthermore, the artwork builds abstract hierarchies through internal reconstruction of the entire text to fit in the new depiction. Specificity sits in the picking technique, Ganda mat patterns, and the busuuti. Drama operates in the negative attitude of the picking technique, animated by a local Ganda idiom “Okwanjala engalo” (sprawling fingers). This metaphorically implies nothingness in language use and its meaning achieved at a higher level of interpretation whereby it implies empty handedness or nothingness, which is a complete opposite of the luxurious depiction. It develops into an indirect speech act at the level of linguistic use and this is where its power lies. It implies that there is a possibility of transforming the coffee beans into money with hard work: it dwells on the eventuality of ‘would be’.

<sup>428</sup> This is an effect of using idiomatic language that specifically known by the sender and receiver. The action points towards reemphasizing poor technique of picking coffee beans. I expressed this however, symbolically to show attitude. The idiom used “Okwanjala engalo” is an animation of attitude *Njabala* had towards work. The name *Njabala* is also the title of the story meaning that the character disseminates the meaning.

<sup>429</sup> In the ideation process of *Njabala*, I considered it as an activity of the traditional coffee harvesting technique of the Baganda, and never did I anticipate that it could represent the story of *Njabala*. Therefore, its subsequent naming was a result of Joy’s intervention in the interpretation process that I realized it was a deeper story than merely depicting coffee picking.

eas where traditional values are still rife. Joy suggested that since it was a village scene, the necklace should possess beads because it was more village-like. As she engages in this conversation, dialogue ensues between her and the artwork, which creates dependency. I then explained to her that loose dispensation of the action was directly expressing a picking technique whereby the beans have to fall freely rather than hold them in one's palm. Significantly, the contradiction is that Njabala uses a basket other than a spread-out fabric on the floor to trap the rampaging beans, which is dramatic in a sense and creates dependency. Bruner (1990) holds forth: "Dramatism in Burke's sense focuses upon deviations from the canonical that have moral consequences—deviations related to legitimacy, moral commitment, and values" (p. 50). Citing Bradley, Currie (2009) reminds us that seldom, we can best explain a character's action by noting that the drama requires it.

On another front, this picture of the coffee-picker brews a story of a lazy girl called "Njabala" who could not do anything for herself due to poor upbringing. The ghost of her dead mother would come up to help her whenever there is a crisis. In this artwork, Joy's concern of a less becoming act, instead gives a new insight of narrative construction—and presence: it tells me that art works that are instinctively narrative in construction breed their own lines of narration that come to characterize their own dependencies. In my construction of this artwork together with *Kaleeba* and *Ssewandeku*, I have no particular story I am following not even *Nambi* (see figure 42). These artworks simply construct their own stories and thereby gain their identity by the visual signs embedded within them by action or form.<sup>430</sup> Robbie (one of the guys at the welding cite) first sees 'enkoliimbo' in my 'Collector', but after my intervention, he sees 'Nambi' carrying millet for her chicken; another case of auxiliary narrative in the making, but also another revelation that artworks themselves can breed their own narratives.<sup>431</sup> Freddy also sees *Kaleeba* in the artwork of the 'Pots' that I created with-



Figure 39. Kabiito Richard, *Njabala* (180 x 80 cm). Copper, mats, aluminum, beads, fabrics, and bark cloth on wood. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

430 In *Ssewandeku*, I had at the back of my mind a typical traditional Ganda male that drunk all day and left the wife to tend to the home. However, in the end she becomes the pillar he leans on.

431 I intervened by reminding him that the 'enkoliimbo' were tackled in the previous project we had dealt with. Immediately it occurred to him that it was *Nambi* carrying millet. It is also crucial to note

out reference to any particular story but had faith that it could indeed develop its own line of narration and create a dependency out of such minds that consider it a story. This power on the one hand, comes from the ability of the artwork to exhibit tendencies of narration and the ability of the perceiving mind to identify it as a narrative.<sup>432</sup> Such an artwork therefore endows the power of transition, ordering and re-experience, which are peculiar with a certain genre of story. Thus, *Njabala* can represent a technique of picking coffee or alternatively a lavish way of picking; in one meaning lies in the action, the other in form respectively.<sup>433</sup>

However, this does not declare stories as open-ended in meaning performance; stories retain strict and definitive entry points into their essences, which is vital in the construction of meaningful expressions. Perhaps one could claim that Freddy's view of the *Pots* as *Kaleeba* and Robbie's view of *Basket* as *Nambi* could have meant very different things in another setting—probably a fruit basket or collecting water from a rural well.<sup>434</sup> That would work well too. Nevertheless, Freddy and Robbie already immersed into the storyline attempt to align their own imagination and experience with that of the artwork. If they were not aware that the art works they were working on were born out of stories, they probably could not have thought likewise. The alignment that these two readers and creators engage in is a powerful tool for comprehending visual images. The mind being able to align itself with the basic signifiers drawn from actual experience creates the kind of understanding or comprehension of such images. Hence, the information that Freddy and Robbie utilize to assign meaning to my artwork provides them with the much-needed confidence that is necessary in decision-making.

Sometimes and on many occasions, non-meaning is a result of indecision, lack of the cutting edge in decision making. Narrative is decisive in that we already know what it is about and hence we have made a decision about what it means to

that at this, before Robbie's intervention, *Njabala* bore the title of *Collector*. Due to the intervention of others, the process of shifting positions, as I tried to interpret and understand the artwork, equally affected me.

432 Freddy springs from the desire to know a story that has pots in it. However, Freddy immediately cited 'Kaleeba' and 'Seven girls, seven pots'. This means that the artwork had a very strong signal for activating thought in that particular direction. Freddy is aware too, of the fact that it is a story and thus he can ably locate it in his repertory. Secondly, Freddy assisted me in interpreting *Pots* (as I had originally named it), as representing the story of 'Kaleeba' and thus its subsequent title as *Kaleeba*.

433 The action of laziness is expressed by attitude and handling of the coffee beans. The 'elaborate' emphasizes attitude, but indicates what she could be—just a mental image. Idiomatic in that it relies heavily on mental imagery described earlier on. It is dramatic because it does not show the actual events in the story; it relies on sarcasm built into metonymy. The alligator skin is an index of wealth. Intensity on the garments and the basket builds dependency at both the material and immaterial levels. Bruner (1990,) further rants: "There is another feature of well-formed narrative, what I have called elsewhere its 'dual landscape' (pp. 51-53). That is to say, events and actions in a putative 'real world' occur concurrently with mental events in the consciousness of the protagonists. Stories have to do with how protagonists interpret things, what things mean to them. It begins to be clear why narrative is such a natural vehicle for folk psychology. 'It deals with the stuff of human action and human intentionality. It mediates between the canonical world of culture and the more idiosyncratic world of beliefs, desires, and hopes. It renders the exceptional comprehensible and keeps the uncanny at bay...' (Bruner, *ibid*).

434 Similarly, in both Freddy and Robbie, only two stories emerge meaning that after all, stories are not extravagantly open-ended.



us. Such confidence building is vital in meaning making processes because it curbs ambiguities and intervening factors that would otherwise derail us. When Robbie asks “Oyo Nambi?” he has already decided that it is Nambi carrying millet for her chicken and he confirms his decision with concrete confidence, “Anti ndaba yet-tisse obulo bwenkoko ye” (personal communication, June 12, 2008).<sup>435</sup> It is true that if we know about the theme or topic of an artwork, we will be obliged to think along the lines of its signification. Similarly, when Freddy sees my artwork as *Nambi*, he remembers the story of ‘enkoliimbo’, which we had earlier worked on.<sup>436</sup> However, for us to make any lasting meaning out of such artwork we need to be decisive and confident. Working with stories offers us this extra quality of meaning performance, because we have already decided on what the story means to us.

### Visual adaptation and inquiry

#### *Experiencing art making*

I realized that we had re-interpreted and reinvigorated our original idea and a new one took over the way we should handle this wooden artwork. It emerged that in visual inquiry there are many alternatives and always the best alternative suffices.<sup>437</sup> *Kakama, Kahima, Kairu* (see figure 40), kept on reorganizing itself in a manner that continued to dispense its various dimensions of tackling. In this sense, the artwork itself becomes a source of inspiration and it gains the capacity and mandate to dictate and determine its own destiny. Nevertheless, it has to stick to the basic tenets of the storyline. For this is the very reason, I observed that in visual inquiry we have no definite position because at some stage during the working process, the artwork itself takes over the course of events: it keeps on modifying itself into a new entity that requires a fresh mind as well. To tell a story we have to assemble information into a coherent structure—narrative—while the story turns out as the irreducible substance making narrative a means of understanding and organizing experience that draws together aspects of spatial, temporal, and causal perception (Carol et al, 2004). However, causality alone cannot constitute narrative as already indicated because we can have structures without necessarily being causal or temporal. After all, all speech is temporal in its physical construction, but it is within the mind though that we experience the story developing, which may not be necessarily temporal or causal.

435 Is that Nambi? “But I can see she is carrying millet for her chicken.” This seemingly determinate subsumption of the story stems from the ‘Unconscious Imperative’ instituted by our subliminal reaction to stimuli we traditionally know.

436 Although the activation signals have changed, the alternative signal is still able to activate a similar reading, although the entry point is now different. The entry point here is the basket, yet in Nkoliimbo, it is the facial expression and the motor.

437 As one works, new ideas keep on emerging and it is, therefore, always uncertain of how our final product will look like. More so, we can never be certain of how long it is going to take us to complete an artwork. A continuous process, keeps on refreshing itself whenever we look like hitting a dead end. Hence, the best way of representation keeps the inquirer in a state of equilibrium where the mind is open to new or emerging ideas that come together to constitute a visual representation.

An excursion into the possibility of visual narrative poses several challenges to the artist as a result because the narrative continues to change shape as it develops into a complete understandable unit.<sup>438</sup> A point probably a number of artists could miss noticing is ‘decisiveness’ in visual inquiry. Being decisive in visual inquiry creates tranquility and progression. An element of risk and compromise is unavoidable after all as one tries to negotiate the best positioning of a representation. As the picture transforms itself, it portrays the dynamic sense of narrative because it keeps on adapting itself to new environments and contexts. Just as in narrative, the artwork together with the artist attempt to negotiate meaning in trying out various options or hypotheses. *Kakama, Kahima and Kairu* had to transform its self into an adaptable unit because its dependency relied entirely on its ability to generate new ways of reconstructing it. *Kato Kimera* and *Matyansi Butyampa* did not create a lot of maneuvering tasks because their reconstruction did not require adaptation as a tool; they created a dependency straight away at the ideation phase through action. *Kakama, Kahima, Kairu* has eminent indicators that see it through the meaning making process smoothly because it relies mainly on the second and third levels of signification; for it to create a dependency it must transform itself in the reconstruction process and that is what happens exactly.

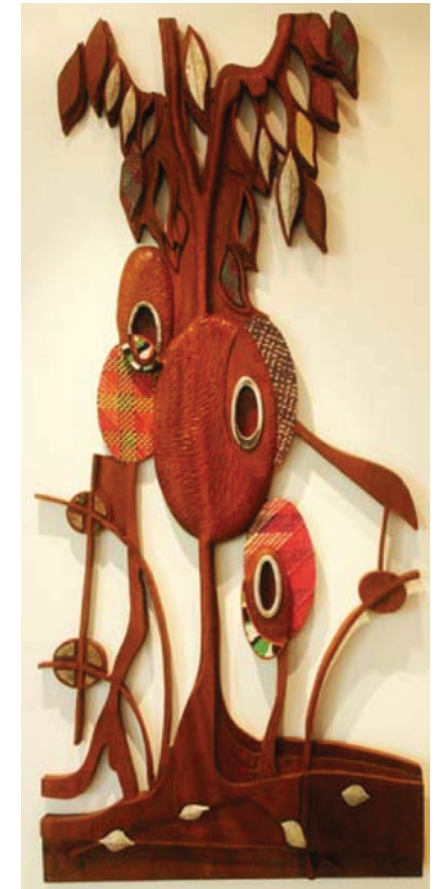


Figure 40. Kabiito Richard, *Kakama, Kahima, Kairu* (180 x 80 cm). Aluminum, mats, and beads on wood. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

#### *Dynamic picture*

In the era of postmodernism, transience has become the order of the day as in performances, installations, environmental art, site specifics and many other forms of non-permanent art. In this transition, I deduce a narrative situation that is only present as it transforms itself into a story. Beyond that, we only have memories of its

438 For example, certain connection points reserved for stability later interfere with visual balance and the main actors in the story. I decided to risk the compaction of the physical structure in bid to have the message clear. Both internal and external debates present themselves during such an inquiry and each one of them supports the other. After eliminating the extras, I achieve visual balance and a clear message.

presence and perhaps its effects on us. This implies that narrative is dynamic and transient as much as contemporary art is dynamic and transient. When I mention contemporary art, I mean the art that is produced, driven by the conceptual basis, rather than its form because contemporaneity is dynamic itself. Just as one could claim that postmodernism is a historical phenomenon, contemporaneity is not any different from such a phenomenon. Getting back to the point, not all art produced today is postmodern simply because its mode of construction does not embrace the requirements that make it so. Hence, contemporary in its dictionary or literal sense might be misleading in this instance. Contemporary then, in this present text, will refer to art produced basing on recent trends of art production mainly concept driven.

Why pursue such a discussion at this stage of the text?

As I worked on my stories with natural color and form, I discovered something interesting and unique. Some of the materials are not static; they are dynamic in a sense that they may require replacement or replenishing after some time due to the demands of the day. For example, I used cloth, locally produced using the tie-and-dye method combined with screen-printing. The cloth bear locally inspired patterns, hence generated, and probably give the work a local ingredient anyway. However, I asked myself what would happen if the cloth got dirty or if not needed anymore. At first, I had no answer to such a question in case posed by a skeptic. Then I later realized that it is the dynamism encountered in stories: stories keep on changing form and pattern although they retain their basic structures. The cloth becomes the dynamic element of the picture to make it changeable as and when required. It renders the picture dynamic in form and pattern thereby enhancing the dynamics of storytelling. This also demystifies the concept of permanence as the goal of art production and replaces it with transience. The story thence, manifests itself in the art work in two forms: the timelessness of the fabula and the changing physical form of the visual component; what it looked like today, might be absent tomorrow and what is still present is the basic structure of the intended meaning and form. Thus, I discover through practice, a way of achieving and keeping transience in permanent art forms.

#### *Visual Citation and co authorship*

Emmanuel, the author of *Matyansi Butyampa* and *Kato Kimera II* marvels at the way his work or idea develops and changes, as it undergoes transformation (April 24, 2008). In my experience, and what I learn from this is that in visual inquiry we can also quote texts of other artists and fit them within our own desired goals. Emmanuel, as the author of the artwork, is merely designing an artwork for later reproduction although he relies on the subject of using stories. I only implement his idea by picking it up and attempting to fit it in my own work scheme. I reconstruct it further by adding other elements like cultural paraphernalia using various materials like wood or metal, thereby re-visualizing it. In re-visualizing it, I adopt a text that originally belonged to another author and I transform it to

suit new contexts or forms that based on personal needs. This equates to literature citation in conventional writing where, one appropriates and adjusts texts of other authors to suit one's own texts or scenarios. "Texts give birth to other texts [...]" and the more widely disseminated the greater likelihood that the output will leave a lasting imprint," writes Sigurdsson (1998, p. 259). In this way, the concept of intertextuality surfaces in visual inquiry in a new way.

My own reconstructions of the two stories gain their meanings from what Emmanuel has already created—his texts. After all, I had not realized certain elements of Emmanuel's creations until he exposed me to a glimpse of his mind. In *Kato Kimera II*, I had not realized that there were five characters; instead, I thought of three characters and this information helped me to reconstruct the story appropriately. In *Matyansi Butyampa*, I had not realized the essence of making Matyansi the bigger figure than I made the others until Emmanuel exclaimed with amusement, "This Matyansi already looks like Matyansi. Even before one tells you about the story, he already looks stupid". He continues: "I wonder how images communicate so easily".<sup>439</sup> After a while, as he peruses through the remix version of his work, Emmanuel again, with laughter, exclaims, "the big head", as he points at Matyansi. "Eeh! The big head because he is bigheaded." I interjected with acknowledgement amid laughter. The work builds up *co-experience* in its understanding and reading. On another note, more people are bound to know about its meaning rather than the individual work done inside 'closed doors'.

It is interesting to learn how the picture itself becomes a source of conversation and even dialogue. Anyone who bothers to know about its meaning engages in some sort of conversation because the artwork itself develops a character of its own. This character is that of referring or citation: that in visual inquiry we adopt other people's texts and make them ours. Even those who create conversation out of my work or Emmanuel's idea are referencing and that is how reading visual texts that have cause for citation becomes exciting. In visual citation, we build pillars for collective meaning and experience: the way the author knows his creation passes on in the same way to build a meaningful expression in visual knowing. Importantly, in coauthoring, we build collective meaning, associations, and understanding of works of art. We can thus experience the artwork in a similar way that is comparable to 'traditional meaning' and thereby *multiplying* artistic experience.

#### *Artist as active agent*

The mind becomes a familiar thing because it shares with other familiar minds its properties of having similar thoughts about objects used in the visual stories. The people thus share-in within a familiar mind working with a local mind of things and objects of use and communication specific to his environment. Because I am an active agent in the artwork, it reads into my own mind demanding for things of its

439 Once again, wonder comes into the picture of visual readings and narrative.

own being; as material, I have capacity to transform its being. In so doing, I become the mind of the art work with which it manipulates and dictates its own destiny. Through me, it realizes its own face and sense of belonging: our beings fuse up and it becomes a continuous flow of pulses between the artwork and me. Because I have no control at one time of what it demands to be, I am equally surprised at how it turns out at the end. It dictates its own destiny just as *Kaleeba*, *Njabala*, *Nambi*, and *Kintu* dictate their own names by virtue of what they demand to be, and not what we want them to be. This is a pure phenomenon.

The artwork and the narrative have a significant transformation in my own experience as an agent of change. As a local being within my community, I avail myself to the artwork as a material by which their locality and placement is achieved. My locally specific material—the body and acculturated mind—undergoes transformation in the process of art production and at the end; phenomena turn out more understandable and integrated in my own self. A new being with a new form of knowing and understanding caused by offering itself as a material of engendering meaning making in the artistic work. The art itself became a source of information in the artistic process as it solicited information I was never to know if I was not its material for realizing its ontology. My choice of objects and materials that compose the artwork depends on my knowledge of the local and familiar: I am thus both local and familiar agent in the transformative process of the artwork (see figure 41). The familiar and local form a synthesis that is vital for bringing specific and common understanding of visual texts.

Notwithstanding, the job of the artist is to analyze and represent issues. The artist is an analyzer who is, as per our definition, an abstractionist because his or her duty is to identify essentials for representation.<sup>440</sup> For example, if one wants to depict a scene of a fight, in the visual ‘still’ arts we are not able to capture the entire action. All we can do is selecting elements that are typical of a fight. We then depict such elements of the fight as representatives of the entire scenario as a summary. The artist is then identifying essentials and eliminating other components that may not add up to the depiction of a fight. By so doing, the artist is abstracting the scene of the fight and whether he used lifelike elements or simplified forms, he abstracts his depictions by default. Therefore, if one considers the definition of abstraction as a reduction to essentials, all art is abstract, and at the same time real. This experience the artist realizes as s/he works; that he had to reduce the story of ‘Matyansi Butyampa and Golooba Bidandi’ to basic essentials: three characters, two dogs, and implements used in the fight, the place at a bridge and the act of stabbing. Hence, the artist had to restrict himself to basic elements that would create an impression of his message legible. This implies that the artist is an abstractionist by default, although he must create an expression that means.

440 The word abstraction in this text applies in many different ways because in its orientation, it is polysemous and thus can mean so many things ranging from unreal, inconcrete, immaterial, incomprehensible, inaccessibility by human sensibility, to grotesque figurine images and simplicity.



(a) Sketching onto wood panels.



(b) Cultural paraphernalia as material for art making.

Figure 41. The artist is an active agent in the process of art making. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

### Wonder and other emotions

Wonder is an emotion evoked by awe or admiration of something extraordinarily beautiful or unusually surprisingly mingled with curiosity (Encarta Dictionary, 2006; Word reference, 2008). The explanation of the emotion ‘wonder’, reveals that there is an element of admiration and curiosity in the act of appreciating visual arts. Eaton (1998) reflects on Kris and Kurz demonstration that ‘the myth of the artist’ reflects the fact that people value special creative talent focusing also *how* it came to be aspects of cause as well as effect because what we value often lies largely beyond the created object. On the other hand, Strugielska and Alonso (2007) acknowledge that emotion is one of the most central and pervasive aspect of human experience whose cognitive veracity invades human language, behavior, and physiology. Patrick an employee of computer point and a friend who works with Patronics,<sup>441</sup> use the word ‘wonder’ as a leading force in their admiration of *Kakama*, *Kahima*, *Kairu* as they viewed it (July 23, 2008). They both wonder how I came up with such an idea of the general composition. They further wonder how I was able to cut through the wood with much precision. They still wonder how another human being can produce what others cannot. Patrick indeed comments that what I had done was beyond going to school but something extra-ordinary that I possessed on my own. They also exhibit curiosity in trying to discover how I did all the work *Kakama*, *Kahima*, *Kahiru*, how long it took me, and the tools I used.

Clearly, for any artwork to capture one’s attention, it must be able to evoke emotions of at least wonder, expectancy, and anxiety or curiosity. Robinson (cited in, Barwell, 2009) argues that a core of an emotion is perception (an affective appraisal) and physiological changes that that perception initiates sometimes felt. “Mystery provokes wonder, awe, poetry, and resists explanation. Allowing mystery to embody one’s lived images, honors and energizes their meaning and

441 Patronics is a Ugandan company that deals in importation of electronics and installations.

value,” indicates Snow (2002, p. 22). We can only experience such emotions if we can get absorbed into the mysterious forces and energies emitted by the artwork itself.<sup>442</sup> These forces and energies entangled in a web of tensions create curiosity, anxiety and expectancies that are responsible for dependencies in art appreciation. Color, texture, line, movement, rhythm are some of the elements that emit energetic forces that interact with our own mortar and kinesthetic energies to create tensions responsible for any compulsions that may accrue during the viewing process. These tensions, forces, and energies interact in a situation whereby our own expectations should match with the expectations of the artist. In this case, there must be clues, or revelations landmarks that lead us in the direction of the artist’s intentions so that we can initiate an interactive process with our own expectations.

### Scenario 13

*Work continues on Kakama, Kahima and Kairu (see figure 46a). It has entered its 11<sup>th</sup> day. I am nearing the finishing stages and one of my tasks is to curve out the pots to give them a feeling of roundness.<sup>443</sup> An external student of casting (a local artisan who was training in metal casting), finds me curving the pots and observes me for some time. He finally asks me “Bino biki?” (What are these?) I replied “pots” (May 6, 2008). Then he went on to ask me why I was working with pots. I informed him that I was working on a story of three sons of a king given tasks to keep their milk in the pots, and on this task, the king would find a way of assigning them roles. He mused at the visualization of a story. He then asked me to narrate the story. I particularly narrated the story but after sometime, he came back and asked me whether anyone of the sons retained any milk in the pots. I showed him the different pots by touching them: “Eno yali nzijuvu, eno yasigazaamu kitundu, eno teyasigazaamu” (This one was full, this one had a half, and this one had nothing left).<sup>444</sup>*

442 “Jenefer Robinson further suggests that an emotional response is a response set off by a noncognitive affective appraisal which sets off physiological changes that register the event in a bodily way and get the agent ready to respond appropriately,” writes Barwell (2009, p.57).

443 Roundness in Kakama, Kahima, and Kahiru is a tool used for reemphasis. The oval shapes of the pots and the mouths are already indicative of the pots. To accentuate this form of roundness, the pots are curved out to reemphasize the feeling of roundness so that experiencing it becomes totalizing.

444 He confessed to never to have conceived art as capable of containing embedded meaning or even depict stories. I was describing the sons by the pots, which were the only accessible part of their presence. In this, we find separation of constituent parts, which renders the representation a synecdoche. Secondly, this comment is typical of the local communities’ attitude towards ‘academic’ art. It is far away from their ‘Knowing’ and thus there are things they find unbelievable or even unconceivable. Important to note is the fact that it seems unconceivable in the public domain that ‘trained’ artists can produce work full of meaning. More so, that visualization of stories is possible from an artistic point of view. This is a profound revelation that art produced within the circles of formal training tends to distance itself from the community. Further still, it is unconceivable that such art could even bear any meaning to the public. Indeed this student confesses that “okutambula kulaba,” a saying in Luganda meaning that we can only discover new things if we move around. For him to have the ‘opportunity’ to train at an art institution attached to a major university is a revelation: that the art produced there bears meaning after all. (“Okutambula kulaba” is short form of a proverb designating movement as a source of knowledge: thus, its short form unveils as a metaphor – walking is seeing. When we get out of our box, we gain knowledge).

From a narrative perspective, when I narrate the story in bits, this man keeps on asking for more until he finally discovers what happened in the end. This is typical of the ‘completion’ phenomenon. Until information is ‘completed’, material remains in the ‘active memory’, as lingering in conscious representations (Macleod & Mathews, 1997). It is also typical of the retelling nature of narrative; that stories continue both in time and in space after retelling them: when I told him that it was a story I was working with, he quickly asked me what the story was. He could not wait to hear about the story. It is also proof that visual narrative can instigate story telling thereby creating a dependency. This man sticks around for some time trying to tally the vocal with the visual. This is a dependency created by the artwork and this is its ‘attractive’ side. On a good day, when the viewer had an advantage, he could recognize the artwork. On a bad day, the viewer tangles between the urge to know and the desire to re-discover himself within the artwork. So is the nature of visual narrative. Because the plot had not fully developed, he needed more information to build up meaning. This confirms—as it may seem—Bruner’s observation that we extract meaning from the plot build-up, but this is only and only if emplotment is the most significant part in the narrative. In this case, he only discovered an action token and needed to exploit its overall experience.

### The Breakthrough

Rosa finds *Nambi* the most exciting of all the metallic artworks because she understands it most. “Kali Kekasiinze okunsanyusa” says Rosa about *Nambi* (see figure 42). “Oba kensiinga okutegeera,” she wonders (personal communication, July 22, 2008).<sup>445</sup> In my research, this proved triumphant because all along I argued that we could only appreciate an artwork if it is meaningful to us. I would link her feeling to aesthetic pleasure suggested by Dohrn (2009), “Aesthetic pleasure may not only depend on but also contribute to a calibration of imaginative, sensory, and conceptual responses” (p. 45). The meaning it imposes on us is material or immaterial, physiological or psychological. As we viewed *Ssewandeku* after installing it in its designated space, one of the people we were with said that, “this must be a hardworking woman.” In my interpretation of such a comment, I envision empathy as the means by which the commenter derives meaning from this artwork. It could be psychological, but it can also be physiological in the sense that it can move someone physically, by feeling sorry, for example. It seems empathy is a paradigm of self-oriented response whereby one empathizes with another, one inevitably experiences the other’s mental states in a sense as if they were one’s (Giovannelli, 2009).<sup>446</sup>

445 ‘Okutegeera’ is ‘to understand; ‘kutegeera’ means ‘understanding’ in the Ganda language.

446 While empathy equates to feeling with someone, sympathy amounts to feeling for him/her. Responding sympathetically seems to emphasize the other’s experiences and situation, often perceived as different from one’s own. Nevertheless, empathizing always leads to sympathy in that normally, representing to oneself another’s experience leads to sympathizing him /her. This suggests an understanding or concern that amounts to “the adoption, in imagination, of the target’s relevant goals” (Giovannelli, 2009, p. 83-91).





Figure 42. Kabiito Richard, *Nambi* (200 x 90 cm). Copper, brass, fabric, and aluminum on metal. Photo: Kabiito Richard.

In Rosa's case, she is excited and I could see a smile on her face as she comments. The meaning she gains translates into kinesthetic energy that makes her smile. May be she is attracted by what the woman in the artwork does, but also could be excited by gender relations, or things like color and fabric.<sup>447</sup> As we empathize with someone, "we imaginatively represent to ourselves among other things, some of the target's evaluations and desires with respect to the situation," explains Giovannelli (pp. 88-89). In so doing, we adopt the target's evaluations and desires as our own. Kirui (August 25, 2008) too, is visibly excited at recognizing the woman picking coffee in *Njabala* and perhaps curing his curiosity relieves him. What is interesting about all these observations is the ability to work out some kind of clue that gives the viewers an entry point into the artworks. There is also the realization that 'difficult' things do not offer much because we might never be able to overcome them. Complex things create 'wonder', an emotion together with others, responsible for dependen-

cies in the visual arts. In the event of complex or 'difficult' things as Aggie put it, interfacing is quite problematic because the interaction is initiated by what the reader is able to grasp at a glance. If there is no entry point into the web of intricacies, the interactive process breaks down, and the result is non-meaning.

This observation leads to my claim that art is a basic psychological entity of our daily activities and largely driven by emotional input. This is also the reason narrative enhances our understanding of visual elements because it is too, psychological and a daily tool for invoking meaning driven by things of which we have a clue, or capable of exhibiting clues leading to their comprehension. Incidentally, by emending one's understanding of sympathy one augments his/her appreciation of the significance and power that narratives contain in bringing about '*an enlargement of our being.*' Such a state partly radiates from our sympathetic responses, "through the stories we encounter as perceivers of narratives and as people who live our own lives and, in a sense, live those of our fellow humans" (Giovannelli, 2009, p. 92). Consequently, narratives provide their perceivers with opportunities for deep rich engagements that in

447 The meaning Rosa gains centers on her action and that is how she materializes it. The corporeal body materializes embodied meaning. Internal linkages that are not accessible to any of our senses materialize inferential meaning.

real life occur only in those rare cases when we can closely connect to a situation.<sup>448</sup>

The connection is guarantee that communication is successful and as such, meaning achieved. Enlargement of being connects the perceiver with the percept and thus crucial in meaning-making. This emerged from the excitement participants displayed for having achieved meaning from their respective objects of perception—the artwork. Connection lacked when Joy, Robbie, and Freddy did not see what they expected—they did not have the connection between their modes of perception and the percepts. This enlargement of being is describable under both the 'enduring emotion' and the 'unconscious imperative' linked with the 'traditional referent.' In turn, the traditional referent is the technical tool predominant in meaning making and 'enlargement of being' as the overall experience of meaning-making. All through the text, one encounters episodes of enlargement of being and traditional referentiality as overarching themes in the process of meaning-making, for example incidents experienced by Louie, Rosa, Emmanuel, and JB.

Studies suggest that direct experience of *perceptions* form human experience, and only secondary by sensations. We experience the world as sensations constructed by perception: "people do not consciously experience raw sensations, that by the time a sensation has made it through to consciousness it has been modified by cognitive, social, or neural mechanisms that turn the sensation into perception" (Brummet, 2003, p. 26).<sup>449</sup>

We then view the world as a constructed whole through active usage that relates things to each other through active linkages taking place during our perception of the world. On another footing, perception means, "a construction built up out of sense data" (p. 26). To perceive a thing as a chair, we pull together and interpret many sensations. The implication is, as a constructed world of perceptions, we experience it "as formed or patterned rather than random"<sup>450</sup> (p. 26). The construction of patterning resulting into perceptions is abstraction, "or sorting together of sensations that we deem to be similar"<sup>451</sup> (p. 26). Experience in itself, is characteristic of recurrence—yet, recurrence is part of perception—in the sense that "it comes to us more or less in uniform contexts" (p. 27). Thus, in perception, the most important part to note is "recurrences (a group of data) in experience and to construct abstract categories that treat every new experience as being a particu-

448 This can happen in situations when someone we know especially well takes time to share with us his or her experiences (by telling us his/her 'story'), or when we think back to important events that affected us (by telling ourselves our 'story').

449 Essentially, meaningful, are the structures of Sense-Data and experience. What we consider a 'fact'—in this case reality representation, and simulation—is a complex notion conceived as the "source and context of signs to which we react successfully." Our perception of facts or reality naturally serves our interests of creating 'success' in everyday experience.

450 It is not a collection of fragments nor an amalgam of pieces, we feel it in its totality or whole— as a constructed whole.

451 A particular impression is already a product of concrescence. Behind, or in it, there has been a coming together of sortings." (p. 27). Whenever we 'perceive' what we name 'chair', we are interpreting a certain group of data. We ought to interpret what we experience, although interpretations too recur, never unique in their psychological context. Dale's (2006a) meaning is not devoid of psychology as it involves cognition and interpretation.

lar type.” There is proof now that perception is the reworking of sensation into categories, sorting, abstractions, and patterns emerging “in consciousness in a constructed form, different from how it began” (p. 27). In other words, “perception is the re-presentation of sensation.” This also means that experience bases on representation of sensory data.

Percepts are representations, in mind, the objects of perception. Many times people may perceive an object without necessarily connecting with it. Many times, too, such percepts decay and thus discarded from our objects of perception. That is, if perceivers do not connect with their percepts, they immediately decay. Thus, Robbie had no connection with *Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera I* at their time of inception and his to them as ‘those things’ provides evidence for his disconnection and subsequent indifference. The second super-ordinate I will mention now is the ‘enlargement of being’ that we continue to evidence through the study.

## 10 / Conclusions

### Summary

I have to vindicate my choice to work with a phenomenological method, in that, I got to access meaning at an experiential level. I indicate too, that artistic research as a practical tool not only involves the artist as an active agent in the research process, but also surpasses scientific methods in instituting credible and novel data. As a follow up on the search for meaning, I then chose to involve indigenous knowledge as a general tool for reconnecting contemporary art practice with connatural community where ways of life still rely on ancient tradition. In my discussion, I show that communities locally own IK and for that reason, adapted to local conditions. Furthermore, unlike the general conception that tradition prohibits, it may suffice at the individual level, and not the group. However, even at individual level, within tradition, the individual interprets conditions as suitable for application of a tradition. Secondly, we cannot avoid tradition and therefore many of our activities depend on tradition and as such, IK is enormously useful to contemporary knowledge. Thus, meaning in this suffices on the auspices of tradition as suggested in Dale’s (2006a) account of meaning where we encounter a recurrent condition that *means*. In this account too, we discover why things mean what they do in general, other than providing sufficient and necessary conditions because after all, things mean for the same reasons.

We understand and identify things through subjecting them to the processes of meaning making, a creative process as Laber (2008) suggests, “[s]omeone who has done art can easily make out images, but there are also people who are creative and can easily make out meaning.”<sup>452</sup> Narrative being a basic linguistic structure that has served the purpose of communicating for generations provides a strong point of departure towards reinstating meaning in the local visual arts. Art will bear meaning in people’s lives today if we redefine its institutionalized and macadamized cultural form to have a wider role, meaning, and immediacy in contemporary life situations (Halkinhal, 1999, p. 67). Mayun, Robbie, Freddy and the rest, by virtue of being traditionally oriented even though they stay in a different location and context of domicile, still collaborate in meaning-making activities espe-

452 Personal interview, July 11, 2008 at Makerere Art Gallery.

cially so in the arts. Apparently, the group of students in the Year II Project had individual interpretations and sure that interpretation of the 'Kintu' story was clear, true and binding, unlike the traditional or less knowledgeable group of artisans; they only unified their interpretation when working in groups. This is so because each individual learnt, through training to interpret sophisticated visual data or information to extract meaning, which is evidently absent in the rural communities. Ideally, rural sub-cultures tend to suffer from the tendency by urban elites to take literacy for granted while communicating to them (Zimmer & Zimmer, op cit, p. 31). However, we need a more understandable visual language today since cultural groups no longer live in isolation bearing in mind that, historically, man developed means of non-verbal communication in need to communicate (Giard, op cit, p. b. 2).

Bearing in mind that Baganda people consumed art experientially, rather than inferentially, it meant that every experience was common to each member during and after the process of production of the artifacts. In experience, when we separate artistic objects from their conditions of origin while operation as their general significance with which aesthetic theory deals, becomes almost invisible (Dewey, op cit). Participation in a culture where the symbolic systems used by individuals in constructing meaning were already in place and deeply entrenched in the language, render meaning public and shared (Bruner, 1990, pp. 11-13). Because, the meaning of the symbols and their usage and thus experience belonged together, the Ganda people achieved meaning communally in what we call 'art appreciation' in conventional terms. Due to hierarchy and the Ganda reverence of the supreme, these signs remain unchanged and thus mean the same things each time they occur. Thus introducing new or alien art forms not ably experienced and thus consumed the same way, as art in the Ganda society, is tantamount to disenfranchisement of the individual and the group. The key to [art] work that affects people does not come from dialogue between artists that defines the art world, but from the dialogue of communication (Colombo, 1999, p. 50). More so, since we cannot turn back the clock, we can only work within existing structures to rearm the communities with one of their most revered and essential tools of human perseverance.

Art should be useful rather than serving as an unrelated accompaniment to life, by interweaving with an intensifying human experience, making it profound, rich, clear, and coherent (Davis, in Chipp, op cit, p. 473). Art of the past, as viewed by art history, falls in categories constituting a hierarchy of art forms based on stratified system of values whereby painting and sculpture enjoy a high profile while traditional art appears as 'applied', 'decorative' or 'lesser'.<sup>453</sup> The degree of utility and skill coupled with attributes of minimal intellectual input support

453 In chapter six, I demonstrate and discuss some of the issues that affected art during its provenience in Buganda and it is clear that the present generation of artists still work along modernist pillars. This meant that art produced since then, became personal devoid of communal values. This is because one of modernism's key vices was to break with the past and further accentuating the divide between what art is and is not.

this hierarchy (Parker & Pollock, in Korsmeyer, 1998, p. 44). The traditional arts in which the communities derived a livelihood and pleasure disintegrated to the periphery and so did the pleasure of experiencing them. Muziri and Enoch portray the plight of Ugandan art while Aggie and Billy show what we lost as trained artist and how this affects our appreciation of art today respectively. Rather than facilitation of creativity as expected, schools inhibit it through ritualistic procedure and demands for conformity to existing rules, well as seldom punishing creative behavior instead of reward it decries Shaw (1971, p. 372). In respect with this observation, the intention of the artist then, is far different from the intention of the artist today. Similarly, the consumption of art then differs greatly from the consumption of art today. The artist doubled as consumer and producer whereas we as artists only produce today, without consuming our own art because it is not for our society or even consumption.<sup>454</sup>

After analyzing Ganda stories and producing practical work along structure, evidence emerged indicating that stories contain both internal and external meaning making qualities. Organization, affect, and persuasion were some of the qualities identified in narrative structure useful for production and comprehending visual images. The qualities of specificity and familiarity inherent in the internal structures within Ganda folklore provide the transformative power to reconnect the arts with the people. I identified such qualities as enriching in art production in the African House Project, Mugalaasi Project, Year II Project and the Makerere and Wakaliga episodes.<sup>455</sup> Fred demonstrated in my study that prompting, as suggested by Nanay, significantly increases the chances that we will engage a text narratively. In the *Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera I* studies, participants demonstrated that priming or pre-knowledge of a text as a narrative increased the probability that we will engage such a text narratively.<sup>456</sup>

Remix aesthetics on its part solicited information during the study as demonstrated in the three phases of art production. Together with the presence of stories, it became a major attraction for incepting dialogue and dependency during and after the production of the artwork. In particular, it drew involvement, and dependency due to its association of familiarity and accessibility (locality) or presence within the vicinities in which I produced the works of art. People reacted, told stories about the articles for example the clubs, and reminisced about the stories in the artwork while exhibiting emotions such as joy, anger, and most of all, wonder—the emotion behind appreciating *Sewandeku* and *Kama*, *Kahima*, *Kahiru* as examples. This because an individual's emotional behavior is visible to others (though not perfectly), can ably communicate one's emotional status including

454 This claim only refers to the artists who work within Buganda region.

455 Qualities of organization, summary, utility, negotiation, dominant attraction, decision making, combination and sequence, intensity, and scene were identified and singled out as factors contributed by the presence of story structure in the art work.

456 This does not explain however, why we deal with a text narratively without prompting or pre-knowledge.

physiological responses such as sweating when anxious or heart racing when agitated or excited (Yiend & Mackintosh, 2005, pp. 464-468).<sup>457</sup>

## Conclusions

### Preamble

Robbie, so do Tomah, Pat, Kasule, and Miki among others, reveal that objects, once removed from their contexts, could retain their identity under the concept of remix. Robbie identifies fabrics in *Kato Kimera I* with their own names and practical use, and figures of humans as man or woman. Further, sharing common knowledge leads to communal meaning and this is specific to particular groups as demonstrated in the Wakaliga group, in contrast to the Year II group, and thus, such meaning becomes specific to that group. Familiar and accessible things are crucial to meaning-making. While discussing *Nkoliimbo*, the Wakaliga group was totally disconnected from its (the artwork) form, and thus, referred to it as a 'obuntu obwo' (those things). One of the group members confessed that in case they had no means of deciphering meaning, they would just 'look on.' This meant that they needed a reference point, which, of course, requires a 'traditional referent.' However, the presence of stories in the artwork excited many participants including Robbie, Freddy, Freddie, Fred, Sega, and Reye. Through the process of metonymy, these participants reformulated their childhood and thereby relived or re-experienced. This built dependency in the artwork. The averseness to things that did not make sense as portrayed by Robbie calls for recontextualizing visual culture to suit its communities.

During the tour of an exhibition, Louie interests herself with only exhibits containing content of which she had prior knowledge, certainly, experience. Most profoundly, the child expresses attraction and excitement to those things that were most meaningful to it. At first impression, *Nkoliimbo* is sad, and this is the point from which Ramah begins her interpretation of the exhibit. The mood it creates, gives an instant impression from which the viewer builds his/her understanding of the image. In Ramah's revelation, we access the meaning immediately, and begin assessment, thereafter, for clues to prove the initial projection. Such clues depend on what we expect or know from similar conditions, directly referring back to the 'traditional referent.'

Remix on the other hand, places the artwork in context. Context is a crucial component of the condition proposed in the theory of meaning that guide analysis

<sup>457</sup> Conversely, feelings are private and subjective states of experiential awareness by definition. This in turn meant that we consume art and stories indeed, partially, emotionally and most of the dependencies exhibited, had emotional bases—wonder. Similarly, the articles made meaning making units or anchors in my study that also exhibit themselves in the narrative trajectory. These make entry points to the story and in the artwork to provide it with essence. Fred and Sega connect with Matyansi Butyampa, so does Tomah with Balaalo, Gregory connects with Balaalo; Freddy connects with Kaleeba, Rosa with Nambi, and Kirui connects with Sewandeku. The apprentice, additionally, connects with Kakama, Kahima, Kahiru and the story continues. All these connections bear different entry points and thus variant experiences. The bottom-line is, whether elite or not, we have some kind of connection and that was the paramount notion in the search for meaning.

of this study's results. This also implies, in Sherry's view, that adopting meaning from other sources, rather than the artwork itself, blurs the actual meaning, and readability in general. We should radiate from the context of the artwork outwards towards its properties to create meaning in conjunction with our lived experience. *Kato Kimera I* creates a flat mood because of its regal attributes, leaving an impression that people normally do not associate with what they are not familiar with in actual experience. Kinghood does not occur to everybody, and as such, it does not inspire as much reaction as does *Nkoliimbo* that deals with inherently a life condition. Lille thinks that working with stories will interest anyone because, in my interpretation, stories affect everybody. The key point in this though, is the level of accessibility that people have to their object of appreciation.

Reye reaffirms that artists in Uganda neglected community in favor of self-expression thereby creating a take-it-or-live-it situation. This is because they concentrate on expressing personal feelings. Mona reacts to familiar things as she sets out to interpret the meaning of *Nkoliimbo* and *Kato Kimera*. She tries to look for any condition instigated by the artwork that would aid her comprehension. *Karimojong*, on its part, lacks a quality in an expression that helps one detect its (the expression) recurrence to performing a meaningful interpretation, in regard to the content. The 'dominant attraction' emerges as a unit of meaning-making experience directly linked to the 'first impression' suggested by Ramah.

Narrative also provides context for a meaningful event to take place, as evidenced in Sherry's group. The spatial mental events that precede any artistic initiation are crucial in shaping the course of any art production. Crucially, this group discovers that *whenever* someone tells a story, it seems as though one is watching it his/her mind, which helps bring more ideas and diversity of mind. Narrative exhibits organizational qualities through the 'kernel' whereby depiction becomes autonomous. This improves decision-making as a fundamental element of arriving at meaning.

Metaphor raises questions; it stimulates awareness from the artwork *Divorce*. Narrative eases the pressure of choice by enabling summary of various meanings into smaller units. Further, one gains an overview of a given text and as such, could have various entry points. Narrative creates dependency in images considering the set up of *Ghost in the forest*. Repetitiveness of the ghost-woman creates traditional referentiality that enables consistency and reference in the reading of the picture.

The climax of the study is when Rosa singles out her favorite art work (*Nambi*) because it is the one she understood the most. Recognizing a woman picking coffee in *Njabala* excites Kirui. The viewers evidently work out clues, as traditional referents, that enable them to interpret the work. By appreciating the artwork and identify with it, perceivers experience 'enlargement of being.' This is a function of narrative which provides a sense of living one's life and living that of others in a story context through sympathetic responses engendered by the story. This normally occurs when we can closely connect to a situation.

By connecting to a situation, through affect provided by narrative, also linked

to Emmanuel's 'enduring emotion', we enlarge our being through connecting with others. In other words, when we connect with a meaningful event, we also live the life of the other's life of meaning, on top of ours. We can also connect with one another by being drawn together by the story. Freddy's experience with *Kaleeba*, where he connects with his own former lived experience that is part of his social world, attests to this observation. He continues to sing the song long after the story had ended. He still living his own life, but also living that of the characters in the story. The enlargement of being is conspicuous in the intimacy and rapport created by narrative situations, and thus, re-experiencing story episodes extends our being, within space and time. With these observations and emanating from both participation and art making, there is belief that the questions raised at the beginning of this study receive an emphatic answer.

#### *Statement of conclusions*

The experience of working with narrative and remix aesthetics in the process of art making with the intention of understanding how people make meaning in visual culture is an aggregate of smaller units of experience that provide a holistic understanding of meaning-making. From this experience of art making with the use of narrative and remix aesthetics, I conclude as such:

1. Narrative engenders affect that connects us with our percepts so as to enlarge our being. This connection is crucial in the process of meaning-making. Second, through metaphor (metonymy), narrative stimulates insight into specific objects of perception. Narrative therefore, should be incorporated into the process of art making within specific locales.
2. Remix, on the other hand, provides rich cultural resources on which the traditional referent thrives as evidenced throughout the study. Narrative on its own is too fluid to do so given that many narratives reappear in different communities, societies, and nations throughout the world. Second, the concept of 'sampling' of 'cut and paste' as appropriation means that exhibits retain cultural and historical traces, this making remix a grounding tool. Finally, remix critiques old traditions in order to create new ones and this promotes the idea of 'difference' that is crucial in the process of continuity.
3. With the above two conclusions, I now state the third: a synthesis of remix and narrative would encourage and foster meaning-making in visual culture within specific locales.

I would thus, have reason to believe that whenever a member of the Ganda community tells a story of Matyansi Butyampa in a work of art using indigenous local artifacts, I would come to believe that person said 'Matyansi is a big head', even if, I never saw that artwork before. That is, upon contextual information, I interpret that the member's interest in getting me recognize his intention to have me consider that 'Matyansi is a big head' is, in fact, to have me get to recognize

his intention to have me believe that 'Matyansi is a big head' and thereby get to believe it.

Lastly, a synthesis of narrative and remix aesthetics transformed into a success story during the artistic process and in my recommendation, areas into narrative discourse, emotionality, dream narratives, and trivialities within the narrative need further investigation.<sup>458</sup> In reiteration, by making the story and artifact useful again, its lifespan extends. By revisiting and getting back to its basics, meaning thrives in both the realm of the spoken and the seen.

#### **Ability to see what we see**

I will sum up this discussion by providing an analysis of the children art to demonstrate what we lost when we trained as artists. This will go a long way to explain why art took a very different route from what it was destined. "They normally look for real art. They are tired of abstract I think. They come looking for real art and works that are not expensive" (Ravine, personal communication, May 31, 2008). Ravine<sup>459</sup> is supervisor at the Makerere Art Gallery where she has spent three years and she knows that Ugandan art is expensive for the local art lovers who always visit looking for gifts, ceramics, paintings, and fabrics. Although some gallery goers buy the abstract pieces, they still prefer "the realism-real art." This in her view is "because they don't understand the abstract pieces." She particularly singles out the 'SOS children's Exhibition' that was running at the time and she notes that local art lovers would like it because of its more 'realistic' approach. On his part, Jumna, an art teacher at the SOS Hermann Gmeiner Secondary School, reckons that his students "are very direct in what they express. When you put the picture, you cannot figure out what they are saying. But when you call them and ask them, they know the story inside them." Aged 14 – 16, these children work freely with the material they have (as narrated by Jumna) and they represent an idea in the way the mind represents it internally; the directness in their representations is intrinsic volition to tell something. When we finally externalize it, what we see is what it is internally; anything beyond is a concoction of what it is that we saw inside us. The world thereafter confers upon that image a style or genre designed to contextualize it and fit it in its diverse networks of concoctions.

The children are direct and able to explain the story backwards because they still see, in their representation, the same 'thing' that they saw inside them—that is what they directly expressed (see figure 43). The *primitive* and *naïve* still see their externalities as representing what was inside them and thus satisfied that they see the same thing you and I see. These internalities however, rely on the external world and the artist, after contemplating them, decides to reintegrate them in a new form that emanates from within him/her so that they reenter the mainstream of concepts and things. Ability is only a social construction engendered by phi-

<sup>458</sup> Chatman (cited in, Smuts, 2009, p.9) refers to Satellite events as minor events omittable without destroying the 'narrative logic'.

<sup>459</sup> Ravine is an art graduate from Michael Angelo Academy of Art affiliated to Kyambogo University.



Figure 43. Sos children's art exhibition. 2008. Note the 'directness' of pictorial expression in the art produced by children. Photos: Kabiito Richard.

losophy and contaminated with extra externalities that discredit the internality of the creative mind by the time it reaches the primitive. The children are "thinking that this is what I want. They will pick color and put it there. They have no external influence of a style that influences them," Jumna remarks. Ann and Barry (op cit, p. 80) do not consider the child's image or a cave painting 'primitive' as being crude. Instead, they are equally "complex and sophisticated as [the] perceptual process itself, and all show a profound grasp of the essential characteristics of the thing, revealing no more detail than is necessary to make the point, and including only that detail that is meaningful within the context of the action or situation."

It is the biological need to gain access to the outer world through communication, not only psychological, but also physiological that gives us access to socially constructed networks, which enable us to belong together as humans. One way by which we can communicate is by externalizing what we see inside by making it available to other externalities for developing interpersonal networks, with common goals by common beings. The systems that develop through the interaction of externalities come to constitute a *language* that is able to link all externalities uniformly and thus the language we seek in visual arts, oral cultures, and bodily practices. The belongingness we seek for human survival is the urge we have to communicate. Language is a biological need and so is expression. An average person with a sound mind and purpose will always attempt to express him/herself in the best way possible. The claim to nothingness in communicative behavior and intention is a feigned reality that defeats humanity. There is no intention about nothingness; thus, nothingness does not exist in the realm of intention. When we train as artists, we lose a part of us that we can never regain because our new sensibility cannot allow us to gain full control of the older one; in the process, the thing we lose is the ability to see what we see.

Dramatically too, sometimes we have a conflict between what we see internally, and how we externalize it, which is certainly at a more sophisticated level

of deliberation that the 'raw' mind is free from. During their practice, the children work freely and are not encouraged to copy; when they are limited, they try to copy. "When you limit them, they get away from their *freedom*. It is like they don't think on their own." Copying creates conflict in the mind because it is no longer free although sometimes, copying is a priming factor in recognition and shaping abilities. These internal conflicts occur when we are no longer confident that what we see inside us is what we *can* externalize. The same confusion perpetuates a dichotomy between realism and abstraction because we have lost that purity of interaction between the internal self and outer social world. When closely examined, these children indeed had biographical internal connections with the world in their exhibits. Moreover, what they used to *express* it was the everyday language of the common person: no sophisticated vocabularies, no implied nothingness. "It is in the end our ability to create meaning out of raw experience of life that makes us human," observes Chung (1998).

"When you ask, they will tell a story, it becomes real, and that's how it works".



## REFERENCES

- Ābele, K. (2002). Revealing a hidden life – Landscape as a visual metaphor in Latvian art of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from [http://www.eki.ee/km/place/Kp2\\_13abele.pdf](http://www.eki.ee/km/place/Kp2_13abele.pdf)
- African Woman. (2007). Issue 14, pg. 90.
- Agatucci, C. (1998). African storytelling. Retrieved May 2008 from [web.cocc.edu/agatucci/classes/hum211/afstory.htm](http://web.cocc.edu/agatucci/classes/hum211/afstory.htm)
- Anderson, E.M. (1998). *The use of metaphor in online advertising*. University of Florida: Unpublished dissertation. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/amdoo34/master.pdf>
- Anderson, R. L. (1998). From Calliope's Sisters. In Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell publishers.
- Anderson, T. (1997). Art Education: Content and Practice in a Postmodern Era. In Hutchens, J. & Suggs, M. (Eds). *The National Art Education Association*.
- Andrade, J. (2005). Consciousness. In Braisby, N. & Gellath, A. (Eds). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Andreou, G., & Galantomos, I. (2008). Teaching idioms in a foreign language context: Preliminary comments on factors determining Greek idiom instruction. *Metaphorik*, 15. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://www.metaphorik.de/15/andreou-galantomos.pdf>
- Arnheim, R. (1966, 1994). *Toward a psychology of art*. Collected essays. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Renewed 1994).
- Art Ware, (May 14, 2008). Who is afraid of artistic research? Retrieved from [www.artwarez.org/?p=258](http://www.artwarez.org/?p=258)
- Athavankar, U. A. (1990). The semantic profile products: An approach to product semantics based on strategies used in human information processing. In Vihma S. (ed), *Semantic visions in design: Symposium on design research and semiotics*. Helsinki: UIAH Publications.
- Atkinson, R. R. (1975). The traditions of the early kings of Buganda: Myth, history, and structural analysis. *African Studies Association*. Retrieved from [www.jstor.org/pss/3171464](http://www.jstor.org/pss/3171464)
- Augé, M. (1995). *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. Verso.
- Barbieri, M. (2006). Life and Semiosis: The real nature of information and meaning. In Damesi M. & Perrou, P. *Semiotica*, Volume 158-1(4). New York: Moutou De Gruyler.
- Barrett, E. (2005). *Creative arts practice, creative industries: Method and process as cultural capital*. Deakin University. Retrieved from [www.speculation2005.qut.edu.au/papers/Barett.pdf](http://www.speculation2005.qut.edu.au/papers/Barett.pdf)
- Barry, A. M. (1997). *Visual intelligence: Perception, image and manipulation in visual communication*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Barwell, I. (February 2009). Understanding narratives and narrative understanding. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 49-59. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Bastian, M. (1997-1999). Traditional Storytelling: The World of the Mande: History, Art and Ritual in the Mande Culture, and Caste Systems in Mande Society. *Anthropology/Africana Studies* 269 and *Anthropology/Africana Studies* 267. Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.
- Battiste, M. (2005). Indigenous knowledge: Foundations for first nations. WINHEC. Retrieved June 16, 2009, from <http://www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Journal/Marie%20Battiste%20copy.pdf>
- Baumann, Z. (1998). On art, death and postmodernity – and what they do to each other. In Hannula, M. (ed), *Stopping the process: Contemporary views on art and exhibitions*. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. Jyväskylä. NIFCA publications.
- Bell, C. (1989). *Art: The classic manifesto on art, society, and aesthetics*. Oxford University Press. (First published, 1914).
- Bellingham, D. (2001, 2003). *Storyteller*. Brisbane, Australia. Retrieved May 25, 2008, from <http://www.storytell.com.au/artnsintro.html>
- Berg, D. M., Downs, C. & Linkugel, W. (1977). *The organizational communicator*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers.
- Berger, J. (1974). *Ways of seeing*. London: Based on British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books. First published, 1972.
- Best, J. B. (1986). *Cognitive psychology*. West Publishing Company.
- Bettinghaus, E.P. (1980). *Persuasive communication* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Black, M. (1952). *Critical thinking* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Prentice-Hall, Inc. New Jersey. (Original work published, 1946).
- Blauer, E. (1999). *African elegance*. London: New Holland Publishers (UK) Limited.
- Blue, A.S. (2002). Meaning, intention, and application: Speech act theory in the hermeneutics of Francis Watson and Kevin J. Vanhoozer. *Trinity Journal*. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3803/is\\_200210/ai\\_n9099312/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3803/is_200210/ai_n9099312/)
- Boothe, W. C. (1983). *The rhetoric of fiction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Borgdorff, H. (2007). Artistic research and pastuer's quadrant. *Gray Magazine*, 3, pp. 12-17. Geritt Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from [www.konst.gu.se/digitalAssets/1040/1040866\\_Henk\\_Borgdorff.pdf](http://www.konst.gu.se/digitalAssets/1040/1040866_Henk_Borgdorff.pdf)
- Bowers, C.A. (2009). Why George Lakoff and Mark Johnson Theory of Metaphor is inadequate for addressing cultural issues related to ecological crises. *Language and Ecology*, 2(4). Retrieved June 12, 2009, from [http://www.ecoling.net/Lakoff-Johnson\\_Theory.pdf](http://www.ecoling.net/Lakoff-Johnson_Theory.pdf)
- Braisby, N. & Gellath, A. (Eds). (2005). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Brand, P. Z. (1998). Disinterestedness and Political Art. In Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell publishers.
- Brier, S. (2006). The Cybersemiotic model of communication: An evolutionary model of the threshold between semiosis and information exchange. In Damesi M. & Perrou, P. *Semiotica*, Volume 158-1(4). New York: Moutou De Gruyler.
- Brummett, B. (2003). *The world and how we describe it: Rhetorics of reality, representation, simulation*. Praeger Publications.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press Cambridge.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press Cambridge.
- Butsch, R. (2000). *The making of American audiences, from stage to television, 1750 – 1990*. Cambridge University Press.
- Byrne, M. M. (April 2001). Understanding life experiences through a phenomenological approach to research. *AORN Journal*. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_moFSL/is\\_4\\_73/ai\\_73308177/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_moFSL/is_4_73/ai_73308177/)
- Caroll, F., Smith, M., & Dryden, L. (2004). *Visual narrative and virtual reality*. Retrieved 20, March 2009 from <http://www.benogo.dk/publications/Visual2.pdf>
- Carroll, N. (February 2009). Introduction. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 1-3. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Carson, R. (1956, 1998). *A sense of wonder*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Chandler, D. (1994). The transmission model of communication. Retrieved April 18, 2008, from <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/short/trans.html>
- Chenial, R. J. (October 13, 2008). “But is it research?” A review of Patricia Leavy's method meets art: Arts-based research practice. *The Weekly Qualitative Report*, 1(2), 7-12. Nova Southeastern University, Florida. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from [www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/WQR/leavy.pdf](http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/WQR/leavy.pdf)
- Chipp, H. B. (1968). *Theories of Modern Art: A source book by artists and critics*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Chung, P. (July 1998). The state of visual narrative in film and comics. *Animation World Magazine* 3(4). Retrieved May 15, 2008, from <http://lamar.colostate.edu/~pwryn/absracts7.htm>
- Clair, R.N. St. (2000). Visual metaphor, cultural knowledge, and the New Rhetoric. In Reyhner, J., Martin, J., Lockard, L., & Gilbert, S. (eds), *Learn in Benty: Indigenous Education for a New Century*. Northern Arizona University. Retrieved June 12, 2009 from, <http://jan.ucc.edu/%7Ejar/LIB/LIB8.html>
- Clarke, D. & Hollings, J. (1987). *Modern Art: A graphic guide*. Camden Press Limited.

- Clyde, H. (Ed.). (1987). *Group processes and intergroup relations*. London: Sage Publications Inc.
- Collette, C.H. (1886). *Rome's theory of tradition*. London: E.S. Johnson & Co. Retrieved on June 16, 2009, from, <http://www.archives.org/stream/a62o6516oocolluoft/a62o6516oocolluoftdjvu.text>
- Colombo, P. (1999). Changing the system? Artists talk about their practice. *NIFCA*. Helsinki: Central Tryckeriet Borås.
- Cooper, T.C. (2000). Processing idioms in L2 learners of English. *Tesol Quarterly*, 33(2), pp. 233-262. Retrieved June 12, from [http://pc171115.pc.waseda.ac.jp/ccdl/cl\\_korea/0515\\_handout.pdf](http://pc171115.pc.waseda.ac.jp/ccdl/cl_korea/0515_handout.pdf)
- Couldry, N. (2005). *Media audiences* (McGraw – Hill Education). Open University Press.
- Craig, K. (2003). Alternative research methods and outputs: Sharing Community-based knowledge through art. *Artistic works and statement* and *Gooseneck Grazing poem*. University of Victoria. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from [www.clayoquotalliance.uvic.ca/ES4o0C/projects/kettie\\_project.pdf](http://www.clayoquotalliance.uvic.ca/ES4o0C/projects/kettie_project.pdf)
- Crisp, P.G. (1997). Aesthetics, cognition, and metaphor – Some light from Kant. *Annual Conference of the Poetics and Linguistic Association*. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from <http://sunzi1.lib.hku.hk/hkjo/view/9/900049.pdf>
- Currie, G. (February 2009). Narrative and the psychology of character. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 61-71. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Currie, G. (Summer 2006). Narrative representation of causes. In Feagin, S. L. (Ed). *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 64(3), 309-316. Wiley-Blackwell. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://web.syr.edu/~nanay/Currie%202006.pdf>
- Dale, E.R. (1996). *The theory of meaning*. Russell Elliot Dale: Unpublished Dissertation. Retrieved June 12, 2009 from, <http://www.ruselldale.com/dissertation/TheTheoryofMeaning.pdf>
- Danto A. C. (February 1983). Art, philosophy, and the philosophy of art. *Humanities*, 4(1), pp. 1-2.
- Daugman, J.G. (2001). Brain metaphor and Brain Theory. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://www.cl.ac.uk/~jgd1000/metaphors>
- De Baere, B. (1998). The integrated museum. In Hannula, M. (ed), *Stopping the process: Contemporary views on art and exhibitions*. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. Jyväskylä. NIFCA publications.
- Deihl, N. (February 2009). Imagining De Re and the symmetry thesis of narration. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 15-24. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Deliss, C. & Havell, J. (Eds). (1995). *Seven Stories of Modern Art in Africa*. Flammarion: St Martins Press.
- Denning, S. (2001). Introduction to storytelling. *Storytelling passport to 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Retrieved May 15, 2008, from <http://www2.parc.com/ops/members/brown/storytelling/Introo-table.html>
- Dewey, J. (1930). *The quest for certainty: A study for the relations of knowledge and action*. London: George Allen & Unwin. (Original work published 1929).
- Dewey, J. (1998). The live creature. In Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell publishers.
- Dioguardi, M. (2005). Notes on Karl Popper's "Towards a Rational Theory of Tradition." Available online at <http://www.geocities.com/criticalrationalist/tradition.htm>
- Doblin, J. (1980). A structure for non textual communications. In Kolers, P.A., Wrolstad, E.M., & Bouma, H. (eds), *Processing of Visible Language*, 2. Nato Conference Series (Series III: Human Factors). New York and London: Plenum Press.
- Dohrn, D. (February 2009). Counter narrative explanation. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 37-47. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Dorsa, E., Malven, F. & Mickelson, A. (1990). Semantically safe. In Vihma S. (ed), *Semantic visions in design: Symposium on design research and semiotics*. Helsinki: UIAH Publications.
- Downs, C., Linkugel, W., & Berg, D.M. (1997). *The organizational communicator*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Dreyfus, H. (1996). The current relevance of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of embodiment. *Electronic Journal of Analytic Philosophy*, 4. Retrieved from <http://www.focusing.org/apm/papers/dreyfus2.html>
- Drout, M.C.D. (2006). A meme-based approach to oral tradition theory. *Oral Tradition*, 21(2), pp. 269-294. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from <http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/21ii/Drout.pdf>
- Drout, M.D.C. (2006). *How tradition works: A meme-based cultural poetics of Anglo-Saxon tenth century*. Arizona board of Regents for Arizona State University (ACMRS). Tempe, Arizona.
- Eaton, M. M. (1998). Locating the Aesthetic. In Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell publishers.
- Ellul, J. (1976). International propaganda and myths. In Fischer, H. & Merrill, J.C. (eds.), *International and intercultural communication*. New York: Hastings House Publishers, Inc.
- Embree, L. (1997). What is Phenomenology? Retrieved March 13, 2009 from <http://www.phenomenologycenter.org/phenom.htm>
- Encarta World English Dictionary. (2006). Microsoft Corporation.
- Ewins, R. (1995). Evolving a theory of tradition. *Division of Pacific and Asian Studies, RSPAS*. Australian National University. Retrieved from <http://www.speedysnail.com/pacific/evolving.html>
- Feagin, S. L. (1998). Paintings and Their Places. In Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell publishers.
- Feldman, J., & Narayanan, S. (2004). Embodied meaning in a Neural Theory of Language. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://www.icsi.berkeley.edu/~snarayan/Btl.pdf>
- Fillmore, C.J., Kay, P., & O'Connor, M.C. (1998). Regularity and idiomaticity in grammatical constructions: The case of *Let Alone*. *Language*, 64, pp.501-538. University of California at Berkeley. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <https://eprints.kfupm.edu.sa/61833/1/61833.pdf>
- Finlay, L. (2008). *Introducing phenomenological research*. Retrieved March 20, 2009 from <http://www.lindaifinlay.co.uk/phenomenology.htm>
- Fischer, H. (1976). Forms and functions of supranational communication. In Fischer, H. & Merrill, J.C. (eds.), *International and intercultural communication*. New York: Hastings House Publishers, Inc.
- Fiske, J. (1982, 1990). *Introduction to communication studies*. Routledge.
- Flynn, B. (2007). The development of the political philosophy of Merleau-Ponty. *Continental Philosophy Review* 40(2). Retrieved from <http://philpapers.org/rec/FLYTDO>
- Forest, H. *Storytelling Activities & Lesson Ideas*. Retrieved May 15, 2008, from <http://www.storyarts.org/lessonplans/lessonideas/index.html> - 32k
- Foss, S.K. (2005). Theory of Visual Rhetoric. *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media*. Lawrence Erlbaum. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://www.sonjafoss.com/html/foss4.pdf>
- Friesin G. J. (2006). *Imagination, image of God and wisdom: Theosophical themes in Dooyeweerd's Philosophy*. Retrieved March 13, 2009 from [www.members.shaw.ca/hemandodooyeweerd/imagination.html](http://www.members.shaw.ca/hemandodooyeweerd/imagination.html)
- Garbarini, F., & Adenzato, M. (2004). At the root of embodied cognition: Cognitive science meet neurophysiology. *Brain Cognition*, 56, pp. 100-106. Retrieved from <http://www.bci.ucsd.edu/PAPERS/Garbarini.pdf>
- Gardi, R. (1969). *African crafts and craftsmen*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.
- Garrod, S. & Sanford, A. J. (2005). Language in Action. In Braisby, N. & Gellath, A. (Eds). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Genette, G. (1980). *Narrative discourse*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Gibbons, S. (2008). *Kant's Theory of Metaphor*. University of Rochester: Unpublished Dissertation. Available online at <http://hdl.handle.net/180276311>
- Gibbs, R.W., Bogdanovich, J.M., Sykes, J.R., & Barr, D.J. (1997). Metaphor in idiom comprehension. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 37: pp. 141-154. University of California: Santa Cruz. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from [www.sciencedirect.com/science?\\_ob=m/ngc\\_cdi=68966\\_user=16388](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=m/ngc_cdi=68966_user=16388)
- Giovannelli, A. (February 2009). In sympathy with narrative characters. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 83-95. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Goldie, P. (February 2009). Narrative thinking, emotion, and planning. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 97-106. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>



- Gorjestani, N. (2000). Indigenous knowledge for development: Opportunities and challenges. *World Bank*. Retrieved June 16, 2009 from, [http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/ikpaper\\_0102.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/ikpaper_0102.pdf)
- Goyet, F. (2008). Narrative structure and political construction: The epic at work. *Oral Tradition*, 23(1), pp.15-17. Retrieved June 16, 2009, from [http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/23i/03\\_23.1goyet.pdf](http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/23i/03_23.1goyet.pdf)
- Graulle, M. (1950). *Arts of the African native*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Green, E. D. (2005). *Understanding ethnicity and nationhood in Pre-colonial Africa: The case of Buganda*. Development Studies Institute, London. Retrieved April 22, 2009 from <http://www.benogo.dk/publications/Visual2.pdf>
- Griffin, E.M. (2002). A first look at communication theory. *The Meaning of I.A. Richards* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Retrieved June 16, 2009, from <http://www.afirstlook.com>
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A Phenomenological research design illustrated. *Professional Educational Services*. University of South Africa. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from [www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3\\_1/pdf/groenewald.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3_1/pdf/groenewald.pdf)
- Halkinhal, O. (1999). Changing the system? Artists talk about their practice. *NIFCA*. Helsinki. Central Tryckeriet Boras.
- Hamilton, A. (2000). Metaphor in theory and practice: The influence of metaphors on expectations. *ACM Journal of Computer Documentation*, 24(4). Retrieved June 12, 2009 from, <http://portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=353935>
- Hannula, M. (Ed). (1998). Stopping the process: Contemporary views on art and exhibitions. *The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art*. Jyväskylä. NIFCA publications.
- Hebdige, D. (1987) Cut 'n' mix: culture, identity and Caribbean music. *Comedia*. London. Retrieved 28, February, 2009, from [http://remixtheory.net/?page\\_id=3](http://remixtheory.net/?page_id=3)
- Heidegger, M. (1975). The basic problems of phenomenology. Introduction, p. 1 – 23. Indiana University Press (First published, 1954). Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/heidegge.htm>
- Hershberger, R., G. (1974). Predicting the meaning of architecture. In Lang, J., Burnette, C., Moleski, W., & Vachou, D. (Eds), *Designing for human behavior: Architecture and the behavioral sciences*. Stroudsburg: Dowcen, Hutchinson & Ross Inc.
- Hoiyer, B. (1992). *Media, culture and society* 14.
- Hoiyer, B. (1998). *Approaches to audiences: A reader*. London: Arnold.
- Holcombe, C.J. (2007). Theories of meaning. Latlings Ltda. Retrieved on June 12, 2009, from <http://www.textetc.com/theory/theories-of-meaning.html>
- Horsthemke, K. (2004). Indigenous Knowledge – conceptions and misconceptions. *Journal of Education*, 32. Retrieved on June 12, 2009 from, <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/joe/JOEPDFs/joehosthemke.pdf>
- Howells, R. (2003). *Visual culture*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Hutchby, I. (2006). *Conversation analysis and the study of broadcasting*. Open University Press.
- Hutchens, J. & Suggs, M. (Eds). (1997). *Art education: Content and practice in a Postmodern era*. The National Art Education Association.
- James, H. (September 1884). The art of fiction. *Published in Longman's Magazine*, 4, reprinted in *Partial Portraits* (Macmillan, 1888). Retrieved from <http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/campbell/engl462/artfiction.html>
- Jayne, E.C. (1970). I.A. Richards: Theory of Metaphor, theory as metaphoric variation. *Affective Criticism: Theories of Emotion and Synaesthesia in the Experience of Literature*. S.U.N.Y at Buffalo: Unpublished dissertation. Retrieved from, <http://www.edwardjayne.com/critical/Richards.pdf>
- Jenks, C. (1996) *What is post-modernism?* London: Academy Editions.
- Jerome, L., Vickery, & Diels. (2008). Senior communication theory. *COM 450*. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from <http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=Jerome%2C+Senior+communication+theory.+COM+450.&aq=f&oq=&aqi=>
- Jin Cho, H. (2009). Teaching American idioms based on metaphor. *SFSU MATESOL Conference*. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://nowf.net/webpicturesdata/hyunjinhandout.pdf>
- Jones, M. O. (1975). *Handmade object and its maker*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Berkeley.
- Kaggwa, A. (1905, 1934, 1952). *Ekitabo kye mpisa za Baganda*. London: McMillan and Company Limited. (Original work published 1905).
- Karlsson, H. (2007). Kontext – Kvalitet – Kontinuitet, 2001-2005. *CM Digitaltryck*. Bromma.
- Kasirye, J. S. (1958). *Ssebato bafuma*. Kampala: East African Literature Bureau, Eagle Press.
- Kasozi, P. (1983). *The royal art of Buganda*. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, Makerere University, Kampala.
- Kaswa, J. (1964). *Tuula tufume*. Kampala: Mk Publishers.
- Keep, C., McLaughlin, T., & Parmar, R. (1993-2000). What is postmodernism? Retrieved June 2004 from <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/elab/>
- Keifer-Boyd, K., Emme, M. J., & Jagodzinski, J. (2008). Incite, insight, insite. *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education: The First 25 Years*. National Art Education Association.
- Keifer-Boyd, K. K., & Maitland-Gholson, J. (2007). *Engaging visual culture*. Worchester, MA: Davis Publications.
- Keifer-Boyd, K. K., & Maitland-Gholson, J. (2007). *Expose, explode, empower: Visual culture explorations in Art Education*. Worchester, MA: Davis Publications.
- Kiebuszinska C. O. (2001). Intertextual loops in modern drama. Fairleigh Dickson University.
- Kingdon, J. (1998). *East African mammals: An atlas of evolution in Africa*, 3. University of Chicago Press.
- Kingdon, J. (Ed.). (1961). *Roho: Journal of the Visual Arts in East Africa*. Kampala: Makerere College Library.
- Kingdon, J. (Ed.). (1962). *Roho 2: Journal of the Visual Arts in East Africa*. Kampala: Makerere College Library.
- Kiwanuka, M. S. M. (1971). *The kings of Buganda* (Ed). Nairobi (KA): East African Publishing House.
- Kizito, E. K., Segganyi, E. A. K., & Mukalazi, J. K. S. (1964). *Ssebato Bafuma*. Nairobi (KA): East African Literature Bureau, Eagle Press.
- Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Krausse, A. C. (1995). *The story of painting from the renaissance to the present*. Koln: Konemann.
- Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Kuhn, T. (1996). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1962).
- Kyazze, J. Y. (November 9, 2002). The Ganda clan system. *Gwangamujje*. New York & New Jersey.
- Lakoff, G. (1992). The contemporary theory of metaphor. Retrieved on June 12, 2009 from, <http://terp-connect.umd.edu/~israel/lakoff-conTheoryMetaphor>
- Lauck, J. (2004). *The grace of small things*. Retrieved from <http://www.joannelauck.com/instruct.html#>
- Langdrige, D. (2007). *Phenomenological psychology: Theory, research and method*. London: Pearson Education Limited.
- Lester, S. (1999). An introduction to phenomenological research. *Stan Lester Developments*. Taunton. Retrieved from <http://www.sld.demon.co.uk/resmethypdf>
- Lichang, S. (2004). Cultural effects as seen in Chinese metaphors. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 13(3). Retrieved June 21, 2009 from, <http://www.uri.edu/jaics/content/2004V13n3/06%20SU%20Lichang.pdf>
- Lilja, E. (2004). Dance for better for worse. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from <http://sensuousknowledge.org/2006/01/efva-lilja/>
- Lilja, E. (2005). *Words on artistic research*. Retrieved May 20, 2009 from [www.efvalilja.se/pdf/WordOnArtisticResearch.pdf](http://www.efvalilja.se/pdf/WordOnArtisticResearch.pdf)
- Lilja, E. (2006). Movement as memory of the body. Stockholm: Katarina Tryck AB.
- Linda, B. (1994). Towards a rhetorical theory of metaphor: A transactive analysis of metaphor in the arts. *Annual Meeting of the PAPC Conference*. Loyola Marymount University, California. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICwebportal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp>
- Littlefield, K. S. (2000). *Contemporary African Art*. Thames & Hudson Inc.

- Livingston, P. (February 2009). Narrativity and knowledge. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 25-36. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- London, P. (2006). Art in Place. *Lecture at Schumacer College*, England. Recorded video footage.
- Lugira, A. M. (1970). *Ganda art*. Kisubi: Marianum Press.
- Lynton, N. (Summer 2001). Scandinavian modernism. In Fuller, P. & Oddy, J. (Eds.), *Modern Painters* (p.59). Fine art Journals Ltd, England: ABC Consumer Press.
- Mackay, E.A. (1995). Narrative tradition in early Greek oral poetry and vase painting. *Oral Tradition*, 10(2), pp. 282-303. Retrieved June 16, 2009, from [http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/10ii/7\\_mackay.pdf](http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/10ii/7_mackay.pdf)
- Macknight, G. H. (2003). Reviewed Work(s): Christopher Wrigley, 1997, Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 3(3), pp. 588-589. Canadian Association of African Studies. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/486206>
- Macleod, C. & Mathews, A. (1997). *Cognitive psychology and emotional disorders* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Chichester Hohn Wiley & Sons.
- Malagala, E. K. (1961). *Engero zikuwoomera*. Kampala: East African Literature Bureau, The Eagle Press.
- Marie, A. & Barry, S. (1997). *Visual intelligence, perception, image and manipulation in visual communication*. State University of New York Press.
- Marie-Laure, R. (1992). The modes of narrativity and their visual metaphors. *Style*, 26(3), 368-87.
- Masembe, H. (2002). *Engero zaffe*. Kampala (Ug): Fountain Publishers. First published, 1996.
- Melgin, E. (1988). *African crafts*. Helsinki: Government Printing.
- Meyers, L. B. (1961). Emotion and meaning in music. *University of Chicago Press*.
- Microsoft Student, 2007. Microsoft.
- Mieke B. (Ed.). (2004). *Narrative theory: Major issues in narrative theory*. Routledge.
- Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). (2006). The Uganda national culture policy: A culturally vibrant, cohesive, progressive nation. The Republic of Uganda.
- Morrissey, G., & Higgs, J. (March 2006). Phenomenological research and adolescent female sexuality: Discoveries and applications. *Qualitative Report*, 11(1), p. 161-181. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR11-1/morrissey.pdf>
- Myth Encyclopedia*. (2008). African mythology. Advameg Inc. retrieved from <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/A-Am/African-Mythology.html>
- Naish P. (2005). Attention. In Braisby, N. & Gellathly, A. (Eds). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Nanay, B. (February 2009). Narrative in pictures. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 119-129. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Nannyonga-Tamusuza, S. A. (2005). Bakisimba: Gender in the music and dance of the Baganda people of Uganda. Routledge. Retrieved from <http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&lr=&cites=1736306769031050114>
- Navas, E. (2007). The three basic forms of remix: A point of entry. Retrieved on April 13, 2008 from [http://remixtheory.net/?page\\_id=3](http://remixtheory.net/?page_id=3)
- Ndagire, I. D. (1960). *Engero amakumi abirimu ebbiri*. Ekibiina Ky'olulimi Oluganda. Essex: Longman Group.
- Neuman, Y. (2005). A note on life as meaning-making machinery. In Braisby, N. & Gellathly, A. (Eds). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Newman, I. (2009). Virtual people: Fictional characters through the frames of reality. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 73-82. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Nigten, A. (2002). Human factors in artistic are search and development in multi- and interdisciplinary collaborations. *v2 Lab*. Rotterdam. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from [lab.v2.nl/home7\\_docs/nitgen\\_2002\\_humanface.pdf](http://lab.v2.nl/home7_docs/nitgen_2002_humanface.pdf)
- Nishimura, K. (2004). Is visual metaphor possible? *JTLA (Journal of the Faculty of Letters, The University of Tokyo, Aesthetics)*, 29(30). Retrieved June 16, 2009, from <http://repository.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2261/21001/1/jt2930005.pdf>
- Njami, S. (2005). Identity and history. In Martin, J. (Ed), *Africa remix: Contemporary art of a continent*. Hatje Cantz Publishers.
- Nolan, R. (1994). Distinguishing perceptual from conceptual categories. *New York Philosophy and the Cognitive Sciences*, pp. 221-231. Holder-Pichler-Tempsky.
- Nsimbi, B. M. (1996). *Siwa Muto Lugero*. Essex: Longman Group Limited.
- O'Brien, R. (April 1998). *An overview of the methodological approach of action research*. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://c-2-cproject.com/oc/METHODOLOGY/O'Brien-1998-ActionResearchMethod.pdf>
- Obiechina, E. (1992). Narrative proverbs in the African novel. *Oral Tradition*, 7(2), 197-230.
- Ogoro, P. (2008, January 16). Jewel in the parlance. *The New Vision*, pp.15.
- Orleans, M. 7 (Nov 2008). Phenomenology. In *Encyclopedia of Sociology* (Macmillan Reference USA, 2001). Retrieved March 13, 2009, from <http://everything2.com/title/Phenomenology>
- Ortony, A., Schallert, D.L., Reynolds, R.E., & Antos, S.J. (1978). Interpreting metaphors and idioms: Some effects of context on comprehension. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 17: pp. 465-477. Retrieved June 26, 2009 from, [www.cs.northwest.edu/~orton/Andrew%20ortony\\_files/metaphors%20and%20idioms.pdf](http://www.cs.northwest.edu/~orton/Andrew%20ortony_files/metaphors%20and%20idioms.pdf)
- Parker, R. & Pollock, G. (1998). Crafty Women and the Hierarchy of the Arts. In Korsmeyer, C. (Ed). (1998). *Aesthetics: The big questions*. Blackwell publishers.
- Paton, B., Martin, S., McClunie-Trust, P., & Weir, N. (July/August 2004). Doing phenomenological research collaboratively. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 35(4). Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.jcenonline.com/view.asp?rID=4380>
- Pearce, W.B. (1976). The coordinated management of meaning: A rural-based model of interpersonal communication. In Miller, G. (ed), *Explorations in interpersonal Communication*. Beverly Hills, CA & London: Sage Publications.
- Phelan, P. & Rogoff, I. (September 2001). Without: a conversation (Interview). *Art Journal*. J. College Art Association. Retrieved from [http://www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary\\_0286-10301385\\_ITM](http://www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary_0286-10301385_ITM)
- Pickstone, C. (Autumn 2001). From riches to rags: Arte Povera, the Turin shroud & the truth about modern art, In Poole & Dorset (Eds.) *Modern painters* (pp.62-63). Fine art Journals Ltd, England: ABC Consumer Press.
- Pietarinen, A. (2005). Relevance Theory through pragmatic theories of meaning. *Annual Meeting of Cognitive Science*. Stresa. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://www.psyh.unito.it/csc/cofscios/frame/talk/f728-pietarinen.pdf>
- Pietersen, C. (June 2002). Research as a learning experience: A phenomenological explication. *The Qualitative Report*, 7(2). Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR7-2/pietersen.html>
- Plotkin, B. (2008). *Nature and the human soul*. <http://www.natureandthehumansoul.com/Shift%20-%20summer%2008.pdf>
- Pratt, H., J. (February 2009). Narrative in comics. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 107-117. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTAR>
- Psychology Glossary. (2009). Association Theory. Retrieved April 14, 2009 from <http://www.alleydog.com/glossary/definition.php?term=Association%20Theory>
- Rancière, J. (Summer 2008). The (re)distribution of the sensible: Five lessons in artistic research, art & research. *A journal of ideas, contexts and methods*, 2(1), ISSN 1752-6388. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n1/preface.html>
- Reardon, P.H. (1993). Theory and tradition. *Touchstone*. Fellowship of St. James. retrieved June 16, 2009, from, <http://www.touchstonemag.com/archives/article.php?id=o6-04-025-f>
- Rogers, E.M. & Shoemaker, F.F. (1971). Communication of innovations (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York & London: The free press & Collier-Macmillan Ltd.

- Rogoff, I. (1998). "How to Dress for an Exhibition." In Hannula, M. (Ed), *Stopping the process: Contemporary views on art and exhibitions*. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. Jyväskylä. NIFCA publications.
- Roscoe, J. (1921). *Twenty-five years in East Africa*. Cambridge at University Press.
- Rosneberg, D. (1997). Folklore, myths, and legends: A world perspective. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing Group.
- Routio, P. (2004). *What is artistic research?* Retrieved March 13, 2009 from [www.uiah.fi/projects/metodi/133.htm](http://www.uiah.fi/projects/metodi/133.htm)
- Routio, P. (2007). Developing art with scientific methods. Retrieved March 13, 2009 from [www2.uiah.fi/projects/metodi/133.htm](http://www2.uiah.fi/projects/metodi/133.htm)
- Russo, L.L. (1997). Idioms and metaphors: Vividness and sex-specificity as related to usage by male and female speakers. *Southern Conference of Linguistics*. Greensboro, N. Carolina. Retrieved June 16, 2009, from [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/39/ef/c7.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/39/ef/c7.pdf)
- Rutherford, A. (2005). Long Term memory: Encoding to retrieval. In Braisby, N. & Gellathy, A. (Eds). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Saarnivaara, M. (2003). Art as Inquiry: The autopsy of an [Art] experience. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), pp. 580-602.
- Saint-Martin, F. (1987). *Semiotics of visual language*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Sanbine, A. M. (2008). How does a physical trace of a happening affect our memory of that particular happening? What can a physical trace tell us? Retrieved June 2008, from [www.artandresearch.nl/index.php?n=HP2008](http://www.artandresearch.nl/index.php?n=HP2008).
- Sandvoss, C. (2005). *Fans: The mirror of consumption*. Polity.
- Santander, P. & Aimone, E. (2006). The Palace of La Moneda: From the trauma of the Hawker Hunters to the therapy of signs. In Damesi M. & Perrou, P. *Semiotica*, Volume 158-1(4). New York: Moutou De Gruyler.
- Sanyal, S. K. (2006). *Modernism and cultural politics in East Africa: Cecil Todd's drawing of the Uganda martyrs*, 39. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Modernism+and+cultural+politics+in+East+Africa%3a+Cecil+Todd's+drawings...-a0147301085>
- Schrofer, J. (1999). In Changing the system? Artists talk about their practice. *NIFCA*. Helsinki: Central Tryckeriet Borås.
- Schwab, M. (2008). Artistic research as programme. *Art and research: How? International Conference*. Tallin: Estonian Academy of Arts.
- Semakula, M. E. (2007). The founding of Buganda: Kintu the legend. Buganda Home page. Retrieved on February 13, 2007 from, <http://www.buganda.com/kintu.htm>
- Sengendo, P. N. (1997). African artists: School, studio, society. Un-published paper presented to SOAS. Kampala.
- Shaw, M. E. (1971, 1976). *Group dynamics: The psychology of small group behavior* (McGraw-Hill, Inc.). New York: R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company.
- Shepard, A. (1990, 1996). Finding your Story. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from <http://www.aaronshp.com/storytelling/Tips1.html>
- Shepherd, A. (1990). Storytelling. *Simple productions*. Arcata, California.
- Shibutani, T. (May, 1955). Reference groups as perspectives. *The American Journal of Sociology* 60(6). The University of Chicago Press.
- Shklovsky, V. (1923). Form and material in art. Retrieved January 2009 from <http://www.dalkeyarchive.com/article/show/141>
- Shusterman, R. (1998). Transforming art and philosophy. In Hannula, M. (ed), *Stopping the process: Contemporary views on art and exhibitions*. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. Jyväskylä. NIFCA publications.
- Sigurdsson H. (1998). Infotactics art: Extrinsic implantations within the Rhizomatic Field of Media. In Hannula, M. (ed), *Stopping the process: Contemporary views on art and exhibitions*. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. Jyväskylä. NIFCA publications.
- Silverman, H. R. (2001). Learning about art: Artistic & scientific research. Retrieved March 20, 2009 from [http://instructional1.catastatela.edu/laa/research\\_1.html](http://instructional1.catastatela.edu/laa/research_1.html)
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P. & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Smuts, A. (February 2009). Story identity and story type. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 67(1), p. 5-13. The American Society for Aesthetics. Retrieved on May 11, 2009, from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122194625/PDFSTART>
- Snow, J.J. (2002). The power of visual metaphor: Miracle, mystery or Mirage? Retrieved June 21, 2009, from <http://www.jerrysnow.com/01.pdf>
- Somov, G. Y. (2006). Connotations in semiotic systems of visual art (through the example of works by M.A. Vrubel). In Damesi M. & Perrou, P. *Semiotica*, Volume 158-1(4). New York: Moutou De Gruyler.
- Spadling, J. (2003). *The Eclipse of art: Tackling the crisis in art today*. Munich: Prestel Publishing Limited.
- Spielgelberg, H. (2007). *The phenomenological movement: A historical introduction*. Kluwer: Academic Publishers.
- Spirkin, A. (1983). Dialectical materialism. Progress publishers. Retrieved February 2009 from <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/spirkin/works/dialectical-materialism/index.html>
- Ssekamwa, J. C. (1995). *Ebisoko n'engero ez'amakulu amakusike* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Kampala: Fountain Publishers Limited.
- Stankiewicz, M. A. (2001). Roots of art education practice. *Art Education in Series*. Massachusetts: Davis Publications, Inc.
- Strugielska, A. & Alonso, M.R.A. (2007). Idiomatic expressions in multicultural integration: a cross-linguistic perspective. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/ati/diversity/multiculturalism/mcb1/strugielska%paper.pdf>
- Sullivan, G. (2005). *Art practice as research*. Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage Publications Inc.
- Sullivan, K. (2006). Lexically filled items and metaphor in idioms. *The First Nordic Conference on Syntactic Freeze*. Retrieved June 12, 2009 from, <http://eprints.ktupm.edu.sa/61833>
- Symlie, J., Martin, C.M., Kaplan-Myrth, N., Steele, L., Tait, C., & Hogg, W. (2003). Knowledge translation and indigenous knowledge. *Circumpolar Health*. NUUK. Retrieved on June 16, 2009, from <http://socserv.socsci.mcmaster.ca/ihkrn/ihrkt-images/KnowledgeTranslationIndigenousKnowledgeSymlie.pdf>
- Szabo, N. (1996). Hermeneutics: An introduction to the interpretation of tradition. Retrieved on June 12, 2009, from <http://szabo.best.vwh.net/hermeneutics.html>
- Tang, C. (2007). A comparative study of English and Chinese idioms with food names. *USTWPL*, 3, pp. 83-93. Retrieved June 21, 2009 from, <http://ling.edu.tw/USTWPL/vol3/7%20%20ochihsia%20Tang%20-revised.pdf>
- Tansey, R. G., & Kleiner F. S. (1996). *Gardener's art through the ages* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Harcourt: Brace College Publishers.
- Tavin, K. (2000). Just doing it: Towards a critical thinking of visual culture. In Weil D. & Anderson H. (Eds), *Perspectives in critical thinking: Essays by teachers in theory and practice*. New York, NY: Peter Lang. 187-211.
- Taylor, B. (1987). *Modernism, post-modernism, realism: A critical perspective for art*. Winchester, Hampshire: Winchester school of art press.
- Tikka, P. (2008). *Enactive Cinema: Simulatorium Eisensteinense*. Dissertation, University of Art and Design Helsinki. Jyväskylä: Gummerus Printing.
- Trochim, W.M.K. (2006). Qualitative approaches. Retrieved March 13, 2009 from <http://www.Socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualapp.php>
- Trowell, M. (1960). *African design*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Twain, M. (1897). *Storytelling*. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from <http://42explore.com/story.htm>
- Väkevä, S. (1990). What do we need semiotics for? In Vihma S. (ed), *Semantic visions in design: Symposium on design research and semiotics*. Helsinki: UIAH Publications.
- van Eijck, J. (2005). Discourse Representation Theory.

- Verwijnen, J. & Lehtovuori, P. (eds.). (2000). *Managing urban change*. University of Art and Design Helsinki.
- Wang, Regina, W. Y., Hsu, and Cheng, C. (2007). The method of graphic abstraction in visual metaphor. *Visible Language*. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3982/is\\_200709/ai\\_n25419432/pg\\_5/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3982/is_200709/ai_n25419432/pg_5/)
- Ware, C. (2004). *Information Visualization: Perception for Design* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Amsterdam: Morgan Kaufmann Publishers.
- Warner, M. (2002). *Publics and counter publics*. New York: Zone Books.
- Warren, B. (2005). A model of idiomaticity. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 4(1), 35-54. Retrieved, June 12, 2009, from <http://ojs.ub.gu.se/ojs/index.php/njes/article/viewFile/270/267>
- Waters, J. *Phenomenological research*. Capilano University. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from <http://www.capilanou.ca/programs/psychology/students/research/phenom.html>
- Westendorp, Piet, van der Waarde, & Karel. (2007). Visual metaphor in user instructions. Retrieved from [http://findarticles.com/P/articles/mi\\_qa3982/is\\_200709/ai\\_n25419434/pg\\_4/](http://findarticles.com/P/articles/mi_qa3982/is_200709/ai_n25419434/pg_4/)
- Westley, B. (2004). Kant, Davidson and the value of Metaphor. Retrieved June 21, 2009, from <http://www.dur.ac.uk/postgraduate.english/Westley.htm>
- Wilson, S. (1996). Cultural importance of scientific research & technology development. Retrieved March 13, 2009, from [Userwww.sfsu.edu/~swilson/papers/artist.researcher.html](http://Userwww.sfsu.edu/~swilson/papers/artist.researcher.html)
- Yanal, R.J. (2002). Duchamp and Kant: Together at last. *Angelika*, 7(1). Retrieved June 12, 2009, from <http://homepage.mac.com/ryanal/DuchampKant.pdf>
- Yiend, J. & Mackintosh, B. (2005). Cognition and emotion. In Braisby, N. & Gellath, A. (Eds). *Cognitive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Ziemkiewicz, C. & Kosara, R. (2008). The shaping of information by visual metaphors. Retrieved June 16, [http://webpages.uncc.edu/~caziemki/documents/ziemkiewicz08\\_visual-metaphors.pdf](http://webpages.uncc.edu/~caziemki/documents/ziemkiewicz08_visual-metaphors.pdf)
- Zimmer, A. & Zimmer, F. (1978). *Visual literacy in communication*. University of Michigan.

## APPENDIX A

## ASSESSMENT FORM/FEEDBACK FORM

Your comments on the course help us improve it and make sure that you get the best training we can offer. Please mark the sliding scale with a circle.

**Your objectives:**

What were you hoping to learn from this course?

How much of this did you actually learn?

Nothing                      Enough                      All

\_\_\_\_\_

**Usefulness to you:**

How useful did you find this course?

Not useful                      Enough                      Very useful

\_\_\_\_\_

**Presentation of the course:**

Was the course material presented at the right speed?

Much too slow      About right      Much too much

\_\_\_\_\_

Was there enough technical material?

Much too little      About right      Much too Much

\_\_\_\_\_

Was the technical material easy enough?

Much too simple      About right      Much too difficult

\_\_\_\_\_

**Course Organization:**

Was the course administration efficient?

Very bad                      Adequate                      Very good

\_\_\_\_\_

Was the course material (handouts, documentation) useful?

Not Useful                      Adequate                      Very useful

\_\_\_\_\_

**General comments:**

What did you like about the course?  
What did you like least about the course?  
Which other subjects should have been covered?  
Which subjects should have been left out?  
Please add any other comments you wish.

*Thank for your comments*

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON MEANING**

Dear participant, please respond to the questions as objectively as possible. This study is about meaning in art and its proximity to localized communities. Please answer accordingly.

How often do you visit an art gallery, museum or exhibition?

Do you normally have particular expectations from the art you intend to see in a gallery? What are these expectations?

How often are these expectations fulfilled?

Does most of the art you see in the galleries often make any meaning to you?

What kind of art would you like to see in the galleries that makes meaning to you?

Which factors in an artwork do help you to perform meaning?

Do you normally encounter the art that you identify with? What kind of art is it?

In your opinion, does the art produced in Uganda today have any bearing to its communities?

Suggest ways in which art can get closer to its communities?

**APPENDIX B**

**A Story about the Wild Nuts (Nkoliimbo)**

Once upon a time there was man who married a wife. They gave birth to twins twice namely: Nakato, Babirye, Wasswa and Kato. When wide spread famine befell them, their father (Ssalongo) went to cultivate food.

There was a pumpkin at the back of the house, which was taken by the twins and cooked for a meal. They did not take long to send Nakato to go and fetch their father to get back home for lunch. A large bird asked her, “You Nakato, where are you going?”

*Am going over to the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

So the bird told her that, “Repeat so that I can hear”. So she repeated:

*Am going over to the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

So the bird told her to stand still. Nakato, too, stood still.

However, her siblings realizing that she was taking too long to return, they sent Babirye. Babirye told her that, “You Nakato, you were sent a long time ago but you are just standing there still!” Then Nakato said, “There is a big bird which has stopped me from walking”. The bird said immediately that, “You Babirye, where are you going?”

*Am going over to the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

The bird told her, “Say it again and I hear”:

*Am going over to the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

So the bird told her to stand still too.

The people at home then sent Wasswa. When he saw Babirye, “You were sent a long time ago but you are standing here!” The bird asked him too, “Where are you going?”

*Am going over to the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

So the bird told him too to stand where he was. So he also stood still as the others. After Kato realized that his siblings were not returning, he followed them. When Kato saw them he said, “You people were sent a long time ago but you are just standing there!” They told him there was a bird that had prohibited them from moving. He was asked too by the bird that, “You Kato, where are you going?”

*Am going over to the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

As they were all standing there, Ssaalongo came back from where he had been cultivating crops. As soon as the bird saw him, it asked him, “You Ssaalongo where are going?”

*Am from the other hill to inspect the wild nuts,  
However the wild nuts yielded nothing but lies*

He too was told by the bird, “You stand there too”. Soon after the bird went and ate all the food they had prepared and left nothing. When it got back to where it left them, it told them that, “You may go now”. So they went. When they arrived home there was no food at all yet they were so hungry.

*End of the story.*

### **Kato Kimera comes to rule Buganda**

King Chwa I of Buganda had a son, Kalemra, who loved him so much that he could not move away from him. The King got fed up and made plans to send his son to exile in Bunyoro. While in Bunyoro, Kalemra fell deeply in love with one of the King’s wives and made her pregnant. Knowing this, Kalemra was afraid that the King would kill him with his people. He made plans with his friend Katumba to tell the King that a sorcerer had sent a message to him from the well that if he hears that one of his wives is Pregnant, he should not go to see her; he should throw the baby into the pit.

Then Kalemra left Bunyoro for Buganda but he failed to reach; he died on the way. The king did as instructed and Katumba took the baby boy from the pit to his wife to nurse.

The baby was named Kimera. He grew up believing that Katumba was his father

In Buganda, King Chwa I had disappeared and his only son Kalemra had died. So there was no King in Buganda.

When the chiefs learnt that Kalemra had a son and he was alive, they made plans to bring him and make him a King. With the help of King Chwa’s two wives, Kimera returned and overthrew Sebwana, a commoner King. Once again Buganda was under the true descendant of the Royal Family. He did not forget Katumba; he made him a great chief and titled him “Mugema”: the father of Kabaka (King of Buganda).

### **Kintu the Legend**

Long long ago, Kintu was the only person on the earth. He lived alone with his cow, which he tended lovingly. Ggulu the creator of all things lived up in heaven with his many children and other property. From time to time, Ggulu’s children would come down to earth to play. On one such occasion, Ggulu’s daughter Nambi and some of her brothers encountered Kintu who was with his cow in Buganda. Nambi was very fascinated with Kintu and she felt pity for him because he was living alone. She resolved to marry him and stay with him despite the opposition from her brothers. But because of her brothers’ pleading, she decided to return to heaven with Kintu and ask for her father’s permission for the union.

Ggulu was not pleased that his daughter wanted to get married to a human being and live with him on the earth. But Nambi pleaded with her father until she

persuaded him to bless the union. After Ggulu decided to allow the marriage to proceed, he advised Kintu and Nambi to leave heaven secretly. He advised them to pack lightly and that on no condition were they to return to heaven even if they forgot anything. This admonition was so that Walumbe, one of Nambi’s brothers should not find out about the marriage until they had left, otherwise he would insist on going with them and bring them misery ( *walumbe* means that which causes sickness and death). Kintu was very pleased to have been given a wife and together they followed Ggulu’s instructions. Among the few things that Nambi packed, was her chicken. They set out for earth early the next morning.

But while they were descending, Nambi remembered that she had forgotten to bring the millet that her chicken would feed on. “I have left my chickens’ millet on the porch, let me return and fetch it,” she begged Kintu. But Kintu refused and said, “Don’t go back. If you do, you will meet Walumbe and he will surely insist on coming with you.” Nambi, however, did not listen to her husband, and leaving him on the way she returned to fetch the millet. When she reached the house, she took the millet from the porch, but on her way back, she suddenly met Walumbe who asked: “My sister, where are you going so early in the morning? Nambi did not know what to say. Filled with curiosity, Walumbe insisted on going with her. Therefore Kintu and Nambi were forced to go to earth together with Walumbe.

It did not take long for Kintu and Nambi to get children. One day, Walumbe went to Kintu’s home and asked his brother-in-law to give him a child to help him with the chores in his (Walumbe’s) house. But remembering Ggulu’s warning, Kintu would not hear of it. Walumbe became very angry with Kintu for refusing him the simple favor he had asked. That very night, he went and killed Kintu’s son. Naturally, this caused a deep rift between them. Kintu went back to heaven to report Walumbe’s actions to Ggulu. Ggulu rebuked Kintu, reminding him of the original warning he had disregarded. Kintu blamed Nambi for returning to get the millet. Ggulu then sent another of his sons, Kayikuuzi, to go back to earth with Kintu and try to persuade Walumbe to return to heaven or if necessary return him by force.

On reaching earth, Kayikuuzi tried to persuade Walumbe to go back to heaven but Walumbe would not hear of it. “I like it here on earth and I am not coming back with you” he said. Kayikuuzi decided to capture Walumbe by force, and a great fight broke out between them. But as Walumbe was about to be overpowered, he escaped and disappeared into the ground. Kayikuuzi went after him, digging huge holes in the ground to try and find his brother. When Kayikuuzi got to where he was hiding, Walumbe run back out to the earth. Further struggle between the brothers ensued but once again Walumbe escaped into the ground. The famous caves that are found today at Ttanda in Ssinga are said to be the ones that were dug by Kayikuuzi in the fight with his brother Walumbe. (*Kayikuuzi* means he who digs holes).

The struggle went on for several days and by now, Kayikuuzi was close to exhaustion. So he went and talked to Kintu and Nambi as follows: “I am going back into the ground one more time to get Walumbe. You and your children must stay



indoors. You must strictly enjoin your children not to make a sound if they see Walumbe. I know he is also getting tired so when he comes out of the ground, I will come upon him secretly and grab him.” Kintu and Nambi went into their house, but some of the kids did not go in. Kayikuuzi once again went underground to find Walumbe. After a struggle, Walumbe came back out to the surface with Kayikuuzi in pursuit. Kintu’s children who were outside at the time saw Walumbe coming and screamed in terror. On hearing the screams, Walumbe went underground once again. Kayikuuzi was furious with Kintu and Nambi for not having followed his instructions. He told them that if they did not care to do the simple thing he had asked of them, he was also giving up the fight. Kintu in his embarrassment had nothing more to say. So he told Kayikuuzi “You return to heaven. If Walumbe wants to kill my children, let him do so, I will keep having more. The more he kills, the more I will get and he will never be able to kill off all my children”. Ttanda, where the fight between Walumbe and Kayikuuzi allegedly took place is figuratively referred to as the place of death (i.e. Walumbe’s place).

So that is the legend of creation, and how sickness and death started. Nonetheless, Kintu’s descendants will always remain as Kintu said in his last words to Kayikuuzi. Hence the Kiganda saying “*Abaana ba Kintu tebalifa kuggwaawo*”. Which means that Kintu’s children (i.e. the Baganda), will never be wiped off the face of the earth.

Kato Kintu the first king used this saying to his advantage, by taking on the name of the reputed father of all people in Buganda. However Kintu the legend and Kato Kintu the first king are distinct and should not be confused with one another. Kintu the legend was reputedly the first person on earth and therefore could not have been a king since he had no people to rule over!