

CHAPTER 16:

STYLE AND TECHNIQUES IN THE USE OF ELONGATED CARICATURE FEATURES IN FIGURE PAINTING

Contributed by

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Introduction

The history of figure painting dates back to the pre-historical period when the ancient dwellers were using animal blood with organic and inorganic materials to paint on rock and stone surfaces. Their figures were caricature-like as they lack good knowledge of human anatomy (Janson, 1966). For instance the rock engraving in the cave of Addaura produced by Monte Prellerino C 15,000 -10,000 BC titled “Ritual Dance” is highly represented in a hilarious manner. The human figure titled “Spirit Man” with a spear in his right hand throwing it at running kangaroos in an aboriginal painting from Western Arnhem Land, North Australia C 1900 on a tree bark are represented in a stylistic manner.

Likewise, the early African art which has been characterized by subjective proportion of human forms and shapes, the arts constitute one of the most diverse legacies on earth (Adepegba, 1995). He mentioned that from c. 6000 B.C., rock drawings in Africa have included representations of animals and hunters which are figure paintings. He is of the view that from the beginning of tribal differentiation, tribal art has become a way of isolating one tribe from another, and tribal art can take the form of scarification, body painting, or sculptural masks used in religious

ceremonies. (Adepegba, 1995) also is of the opinion that diversity also appears in separate geographical regions, where natural resources controlled the materials used, while tribal power, wealth, or sophistication was responsible for the type of objects produced.

Often, African art production has been related to ritual or tribal ceremonies, as well as serving more secular decorative functions. However, it is not always easy to determine the function of a particular work. Each African society has varied artworks including figure paintings, carving of human figures and other objects, ceramics wares, indigenous textiles and designs, terracotta figures, bronze works, ivory carving and many others.

For instance, the traditional Zulu beer pots which are made by women employing the coiling technique, the Kuba of the Democratic Republic of Kongo embroiderer pieces known as “kasa velvet” produced by women with raphia squares woven, the Zimbabwe stone figure which are carved from soapstone, soft but very dense materials that can be carved with great precision and often used for smaller detailed works, the “zigwa” human figure of Tanzania, which has a traditional stretched bust tightens to free up space for slender arms extended large fingered hand with abdominal projection in beaks, overhangs a marked size, is carved in an elongated style. The wooden figure sculpture produced by the Dongo people which is now called Mali, represents an androgynous male figure raising an object above his head, which is also represented in an elongated style technique and many others (Santace and Santace, 2009).

In West Africa, Nigeria to be precise there are various traditional art which include: Nok art, Ife art, Esie stone figure, Benin bronzes, Igbo Ukwu bronze, indigenous fabrics, pottery wares and others. It is only the Nok culture that engages in figure terracotta with elongated features. The Nok art currently in modern day which is located at the middle belt region in Jaba Local Government Area of Kaduna State of Nigeria dates back to 500

BC, possessed unique elongated art style in some of its terracotta figures.



Plate 1: Nok sculpture Louvre 70-1998

Source:<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/>

File:Nok_sculpture_Louvre_70-1998-11-1

The most distinguishing Nok artifacts are clay figurines of animals and stylized human beings, usually heads, perforated eyes of an elliptical or triangular shape are typical of the style. Other artifacts of the Nok culture include iron tools, stone axes and other stone tools, and stone ornaments. Ife figures and Benin bronze heads are highly naturalistic in style (World History Encyclopedia, 2019). Some contemporary artists like Grillo, Enwonwu, Onobrakpeya and a few others who have been influenced greatly by indigenous African art produced some works with elongated styles, but the caricature features were lacking.

Therefore, this research is anchored on the principle of changing the rhythms by adding caricature features to elongated pictorial figures, altering the style and techniques of draftsmanship in pictorial composition of visual elements, also the themes and media of expression; sort of a parading shift.

Purpose of the study

This novelty in elongated figure painting with caricature features, its visual analysis, and experimentation would further showcase the impact of elongated style with caricature features in modern art style. Moreover, the results of this study will be beneficial to the following:

- **Educationally:** Students will be aware of the importance of creating caricature figure paintings that will speak on Nigeria's political activities and other issues in the country.
- **Socially:** it will create awareness that caricature painting could be used to create comic relief in society.
- **Politically:** It will serve as an information tool to convey the ugly political happenings and activities in Nigeria.
- **Art Historians:** It will be used as a springboard for the advancement of painting in the history of modern Nigerian art historiography.
- **Artist:** These novelties in elongated figure painting with caricature features will further showcase a new style and technique, to the artist, art lovers, gallery owners, and art collectors.
- **Future Researchers.** The findings of the study will serve as reference material and a guide for future researchers who wish to conduct the same exploration study or any study related to elongation and caricature figures.
- **Knowledge:** it will also add to the body of knowledge.

What is Art Style?

Art style describes the way the artwork looks. Style is the manner in which the artist portrays his or her subject matter and how the artist expresses his or her vision. Style is determined by the characteristics that describe the artwork, such as the way the artist employs form, colour, and composition, to name just a few. Another important factor in determining the

style of an artwork is to examine the way the artist handles the medium, taking into account the method or technique that the artist uses. An additional aspect of art styles is the philosophy or driving force behind the artwork. All of these stylistic elements are defined by the choices artists make as they compose their artwork. (ArtisFun, 2023)

Type of Style and Technique

There are different type f style and technique which are: Naturalism, Surrealism, Impressionism, Cubism, Abstractionism, Expressionism, Optical and Pop.

Naturalism

According to (Sasa, 2023). Naturalism in art represents the orientation of artists towards the most natural forms in their work. This tendency can be recognized either in individual elements of the work of art or in its entirety. As such, this term is used for the purposes of analyzing this artistic trend regardless of the time period in which the work was created. (Sasa, 2023)also defined Naturalism was an artistic movement that developed in informal forms during the first half of the 19th century to reach it speak of popularity in the second half of the 19th century.

A great spectrum of current Nigerian artists has continued to explore naturalism as a model of creative expression. In naturalism, it is valid to state that the innovative efforts of Onobolu (1882-1963) to modern art in Nigeria (Oloidi, 1986).

Impressionism

According to (Rewald, 1973) Impressionism is an art movement in the 19th century that began as a loose association of Paris-based artists whose independent exhibitions brought them to prominence in the 1870s and 1880s. The name of the movement is derived from the title of a Claude Monet work, Impression, Sunrise

(Impression, soleil levant), which provoked the critic Louis Leroy to coin the term in a satiric review published in *Le Charivari*. Characteristics of Impressionist paintings include relatively small, thin, yet visible brush strokes, open composition, and emphasis on the accurate depiction of light in its changing qualities.

(Folaranmi, 2014) define Impressionism as a stylistic convention that uses the effect of light to depict strong shadow quality in their painting. It also employs pure, prismatic colour fresh from the tube unmixed in the pallet and laid directly on the canvas.

Cubism

Cubism demands concentration on both the objects and the space surrounding them. Each object in the drawing is developed into a cube, after which attention is directed to cubing the space. After the student has completed the drawing, colour is applied to the cubed sections. Since the cube has three visible sides, each side will be a shade of a single colour. A tree, for example would be painted light brown, dark brown, and brown to define the three sections of the cube. This procedure is used for all the areas painted. (Robert, 1978).

In the spring of 1907, 25-year-old Pablo Picasso showed a few friends a large new painting that would be given the title *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)*. This would become the most important painting of the twentieth century, as the forerunner of Cubism, "the most complete and radical artistic revolution since the Renaissance," which Picasso and his friend Georges Braque went on to create in the next few years. (David and Bruce, 2001).

Abstractionism

(Merriam, 2023) defined abstractionism as the principles or practice of creating abstract art. In order for Abstractionism to retain its form during the process of drawing, the method of interpenetration is used. For example, if the initial drawing depicts two trees standing in front of a house, the student extends the lines

of the house through or in front of the trees. When an object overlaps another object, the object that is farther back in the picture plane is partially covered, with the result that if the front object were removed this case the trees-the entire house would be visible (Kalilu and Abodunrin, 2015). In painting, the same picture the retention of the form requires a close relationship between the colors of the overlapped objects. For example, if the colour of the house is red, and the tree is painted white, then that part of the tree overlapping the house will be expressed in pink. The success of the Abstract demands this type of colouradjustment. (Robert, 1978).

Expressionism

Expressionism is a theory or practice in art that seeks to depicts the subjective emotions and responses that object and events arouse in the artist (Merriam, 2023). Expressionism is perhaps the most difficult to comprehend, partly because of the difficulty in communicating the artist idea of emotion. Expressionism is an intuitive blast of emotion that takes form on paper in a comparatively brief period. Its apparent uncontrollability arises from an intense struggle of restraint and drive. It is like a tug-of-war in which two opposing forces are attempting to win. Because the two are of equal force, the tension remains activated throughout the struggle. The struggle of the Expressionist painter lies in the strong urge to sprawl his emotions onto canvas and simultaneously control them. (Robert, 1978) and (Adepegba, 1995)

Surrealism

Surrealism aims to transform human experience. It balances a rational vision of life with one that asserts the power of the unconscious and dreams. The movement's artists find magic and strange beauty in the unexpected and the uncanny, the disregarded and the unconventional. (Tate, 2022).

Exploring the art of surrealism, objects in drawing are change to objects of unreality. Aesthetically; philosophy of Surrealism espoused the traditional view of the imagery of painting as but a record or copy of something of prior existence. The creativity of the mind, according to the Surrealists, might escape the constricting embrace of causal explanation, but the idea that painting might constitute a newly invented reality, entirely *sui generis*, was a possibility they did not entertain. (Mundy, 1987).

Trees may change to pencils or paintbrushes; rocks may become minute umbrellas; an automobile can take the form of an animal with oversized claws acting as wheels, a tail substituted for the exhaust pipe, a neck replacing the hood, and eyes replacing the headlights. Even though the substituted objects are real in themselves, the combination presents a painting of Surrealism. (Robert, 1978).

Optical Illusion

(Robert, 1978) referred to Optical Illusion as POP ART. An appreciation of the POP, artist is reflected in a repeat pattern of colors. The composition may be formal or informal but demands patience and a steady hand.

(Freed and Samuel, 1979) finally explained that POP ART affords one to "take off" on his favorite commercial item, such as hot dogs, hamburgers. Its purpose is to ridicule its existence, that is, a play on the banal or trite which seems to monopolize the world. Normally, a single item is enlarged out of proportion or a single item is repeated into a monotonous pattern

Caricature

According to (Main, 2022) a caricature is a drawing of a real person which distorts or exaggerates certain features, but still retains a likeness: in other words an exaggerated piece of portrait art. Caricatures first became a popular genre of fine art in the 16th and 17th century and were created by satirists to ridicule public

figures and politicians; a caricature with a moral message is considered a satire. They continue to remain popular today, and are used in magazines and newspapers to poke fun at film stars, politicians and celebrities. The only thing that has changed is the artist tools. Initially caricaturists used charcoal drawings, pencil or pen and ink drawings, but today an artist has access to graphics programs like Adobe Illustrator or Corel Painter.

Caricaturists have wielded significant power with their pen, far more so than a writer ever could. In the early days of the genre they transmitted messages without the need for the written word, important at a time in history when the majority of the population could not read. One of the most famous examples of this sort of graphic art is the satirical etchings of Napoleon Bonaparte by the British artist James Gillray (1756-1815). He depicted the French Emperor as very short and slightly ridiculous, in an oversized hat. Today, as a result, we still think of him as being shorter than he really was. Caricatures may be one of the most populist forms of art, but as figurative drawings they are typically just as skilful and more influential than most portrait and figure paintings. (Main, 2022)

Types of Caricatures

According to (Divya, 2021) caricature are classified into three types which are: Portrait or definition caricature, Satire caricature and Grotesque caricature

Portrait or definition – This type of caricature relies on knowledge of sophistication of making a portrait and combining it with the knowledge of creating comical effect through inflation and deflation of features.

Satire – This form is most commonly used in political cartoons. It makes use of not just physical or personality traits but also draws attention to statements by such politicians. The purpose of such

caricatures is more often than not to bring attention to political issues of the time.

Grotesque – As the name suggests, in this style, the face of a person is unnaturally distorted to make it look ugly. Grotesque art was the earliest form of distorted drawings which evolved later into caricatures.

Concept of Elongated Style in Figure Painting

This is the distortion or semi abstraction of human figure in an elongated deformed stylistic manner in painting. Figure distortion in painting is as old as the painting in a realistic rendition by the old masters such as Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), El Greco, (1541-1614), Donatello (1386-1466) and others. It is also applicable to sculpting of human form rendered in geometric and distorted manner. The first thing one may be wondering about elongated figures in art is the style involves creating stretched, exaggerated and much more extended pieces than reality.

In Nigeria, Grillo (1934-2021), his paintings and Enwonwon (1917-1994) sculptures and paintings are elongated in a stylistic rendition which perhaps is a borrowed western concept and artistic ideology of the western masters.

Elongated Style in Figure Painting

Elongation art” refers to paintings that feature figures that are painted with their forms elongated much more than they are in reality. Elongation is a form of abstract art that often depicts the stretched forms of people or objects in nature.

Elongated figures in the art world come in many different shapes and sizes. The various elongated figures presented in art come in a multitude of mediums and can be seen throughout the ages in the work of famous like artists like El Greco, Amedeo Modigliani, Palo Picasso and others who is renowned for his use of elongation in portraits, as well as more abstract paintings in the 20th century.

One will be pleasantly surprised at the large variety of items that can be elongated in the minds of creative individuals. This art style is dated back to the 15th century and captured people's imaginations from all walks of life. (Dorit, 2018)

Review of Related Painting of Elongated Styles



Title: Acqueline with Flower, Medium: Oil on canvas, Size: 116 x 88.5 cm, Year: 1954, Source: <https://www.pablo-ruiz-picasso.net/work-223.php>

“Jacqueline with Flowers” (1954) is one of the first paintings signifying the beginning of a new period in the maitre's creative work. The artist's biographer Antonina Valentin calls her a “modern sphinx”. There is definitely something mythic in this figure with a long neck and geometric shapes, catlike face and a rapier glance of her almond eyes. Jacqueline liked sitting in this position which reappears in her later portraits including those of

the “Odalisques” series. It was Picasso’s last muse that inspired the renowned series

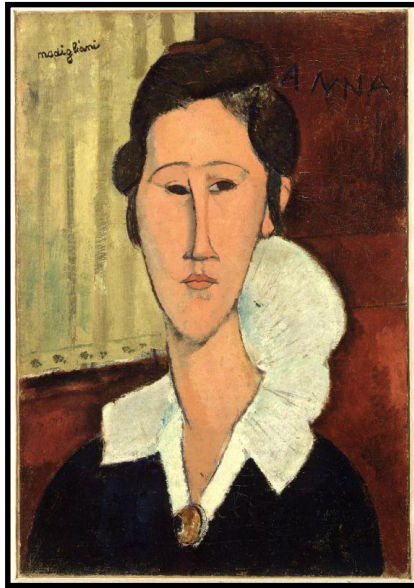


Plate 3: Artist: Amedeo Modigliani, Title: *Lady with a collar*
Medium: Oil on canvas, Size: 18 x 15 inches, Year: 1916 Source:
<https://www.themagazineantiques.com/article/why-the-long-face/>

“Lady with a collar” the canvas was completed in 1917, just three years before the artist’s tragic death, aged 35, in Paris. The work has echoes of 14th century Sienese painting, with its elongated face and neck, a sculptural style which Modigliani made all his own. "Anna" With the exception of her fanned-out high white collar and amber brooch at the base of her swan neck, there is little decoration to distract from Hanka’s detached gaze. In the top right corner, “Anna” is written in loose black capital letters, barely visible against the brown background. The sitter appears aloof, sovereign almost, and her stylized beauty radiates through her smooth, warm skin, like fresh terracotta basking in the sun.

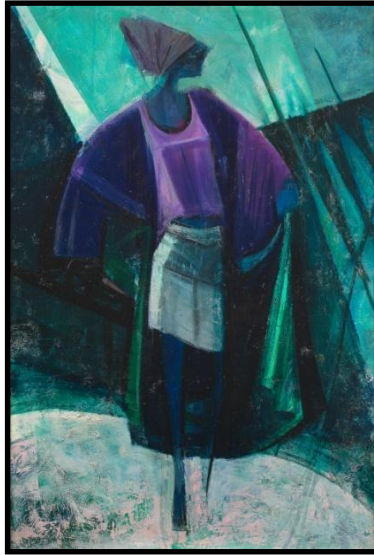


Plate 4: Yusuf Grillo, *African Dance*, Water Colour on Paper, 120cm x 82cm, 1960, Source: <https://guardian.ng/life/the-art-of-yusuf-grillo/>

“The Dancing Bride” thematically, Grillo (1934-2021), painted the people he encountered in Lagos. He favoured female subjects and had a particular interest in the Yoruba heritage which he believed to be at the heart of the city in which he was born and lived most of his life. In the present work, he captures a moment of celebration. A sense of movement is conveyed through the energetic brushstrokes used to depict the dynamic stance of the female figure: her weight rests on one leg while her hips are cocked to the side as if anticipating the next step of the dance. Executed in the cool blue and purple tones. The female figure is elongated in a process of stylization. Reflecting Grillo's enduring interest in mathematics, her body is expressed through flattened planes that echo the geometric shapes that comprise the non-representational

background. The drapery of the bride's dress is transformed into curved forms which are carefully balanced against the jagged triangles that frame the figure (Bonhams, 2023).

Summary

The research brought about finding that is safe to conclude that: thematic justification of paintings subjectively rest on the ability of the painting to display illusory and astonishing effects that is attainable through figurative illustrations, manipulations of colours and alteration of elements in the painting. The paper recommend that young artist especially in the field of painting and sculpture should be allow to freely represent figures in a stylized form.

Bibliography

Lawani Sunday comes from the rocky city of Ososo in Edo State Nigeria. Its surroundings are made up of beautiful and sought-after natural scenery, which is also the subject of some of Lawani's works. He is a graduate of the Nigerian Auchu Polytechnic with a higher National Diploma (HND) specializing in painting. In 2012, he continued his studies at Nmandi Azikiwe University Awka, where he received a Postgraduate Diploma in painting (PGD). Lawani Sunday deals with important social issues with a strong emphasis on the subject of the position of women in society. His paintings tell stories that concern each person one way or another. Lawani's art speaks directly to compassion and empathy in the depths of our soul. Thus his work becomes part of the spiritual world. Lawani Sunday believed strongly in experimenting, innovation and exploration of new media in painting and drawings, in recent times, his explorations in human forms tends to challenge the human anatomy by breaking the forms into geometric shapes of different kinds, ranging from rectangular shapes, cone, circle, triangular, oval semi-circle, pyramid, as well as the use of rhythmic lines, spiral, oblique, vertical lines to create expressive form that is

subject to interpretation. His choice of concept and composition is derived from his socio-cultural environment and daily happenings in his immediate environment, be it religious, political, cultural, social or educational. The stylistic approach of his style and technique of breaking forms into paintings, reducing human forms in an idealistic and stylistic formative manner with the use of pallet knife to create a unique and dramatic textural pattern. He as participates in national and international exhibitions including art auctions and also currently lectures at the Department of Painting, School of Art and Industrial Design, Auchi Polytechnic Auchi, Edo State Nigeria.

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