

# ALLEGORICAL SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION IN THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS: USING THE EAGLE AS A CONCEPT

Ephraim Ugochukwu <sup>1</sup>, Bolaji Ogunwo <sup>2</sup>, Egwu Ifeanyi Ogbonnia <sup>3</sup>, Nefertiti Nneoma Emezue <sup>4</sup>, Stephen Oshiomah Aigbonoga <sup>5</sup>, Abdullahi Lawal <sup>6</sup>, Otuu Ogobuchi Idam <sup>7</sup>, Chinatu Regina Obiukwu <sup>8</sup>, Chinelo Rophina Obiukwu <sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup> Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Lagos, Akoka, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup> Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Environmental Sciences Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>4</sup> Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Environmental Sciences Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

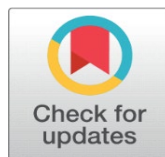
<sup>5</sup> Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>6</sup> Department of Theatre Arts Faculty of Humanities Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>7</sup> Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Environmental Sciences Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>8</sup> Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, Faculty of Humanities Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>9</sup> Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages Faculty of Humanities Alex Ekwueme Federal University NDUFU-Alike, Ebonyi State, Nigeria



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## Corresponding Author

Ephraim Ugochukwu,  
[ephrain.ugochukwu@funai.edu.ng](mailto:ephrain.ugochukwu@funai.edu.ng)

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## ABSTRACT

The paper examined the allegorical, symbolic representation of form in the visual and performing arts. When proverbs are used to express truth, especially when one cannot decode and sense the danger ahead, all would have been lost, the milk, like it is usually said, would have been spilt. All over the world, proverbs are used as simple idioms to express truth, based on common sense or experience. Scholars believe that proverbs are tools for thinking and communication. Proverbs are deployed as philosophy which keeps the mind in check, most times when human beings are praised, referred to as brave animal like the lion, tiger or an eagle among others, there is always this excitement, happiness or joy that over whelms and takes-over the individual, but when one is referred to as a lesser animal like goat, chicken, rat or even a cockroach for example, the reverse is always the case. The paper examined the eagle's great attributes. Some artworks can be considered to have allegorical content because they communicate in the same way as verbal metaphors. Some pertinent questions were asked, which gave rise to the creative work. Data was gathered through an exploratory conceptual study (a document-based qualitative study approach), relevant primary and secondary sources, electronic media, and other sources were consulted. This also led to solving environmental problems and enhancing the environment. The research created a three-dimensional, realistic sculpture piece of the eagle, and equally analyses the eagle and its other great attributes. The paper concludes that exploring idiomatic expressions, reading meaning into the daily use of words, could inspire more creative works.

**Keywords:** Allegorical, Representation, Expression, Visual, Performing Arts, Eagle



## 1. INTRODUCTION

From classical antiquity to the Renaissance and Baroque eras, artists employed symbolic hints and traits, attire, or objects to help viewers decipher the concealed message. Abstract concepts are frequently personified as human beings. The Grim Reaper (death) and Lady Justice (blindfold, scales, and sword) are typical examples. Symbolic Objects: When it comes to still life and portraits, certain objects convey deeper meanings. For example, hourglasses might symbolise time passing, skulls can represent mortality (*vanitas*), or laurels can signify victory. Paintings like Vermeer's *The Art of Painting* or Botticelli's *Primavera*, which symbolise love and fertility, are examples of narrative allegory. Allegory is frequently used for propaganda or social critique. Allegory in Performing Arts goes beyond the static image to incorporate time, motion, and interaction to convey its message. Morality Plays in Medieval dramas frequently featured characters named after abstract qualities, such as Good Deeds or Evil, to represent the spiritual struggles of mankind. Symbolic scenery and costume characters change costumes to make the state of their souls visible, while stage design acts as a symbolic locus, separating realms like Heaven and Hell. Dance and movement, such as Classical ballet and contemporary dance, use movement to embody emotions or concepts (e.g., freedom, despair) through a metaphorical lens rather than a literal narrative.

Allegorical art frequently uses common cultural or religious symbols to connect with its audience, especially in times when literacy rates are lower.

Allegory and symbolism vary in that the former uses a single object or figure to symbolise a larger concept (for example, love is represented by a rose). Allegory, however, can also represent a coherent, lengthy narrative or composition in which several symbols cooperate to reveal a comprehensive, concealed plot (e.g., an entire painting about the conflict between virtue and vice). Allegorical representation essentially turns the experience into an act of decoding by compelling the observer or audience member to go beyond aesthetic appreciation and engage in critical interpretation, such as the eagle created in three dimensions (conceptualised soaring eagle) and analysed here.

## 2. PRINCIPLES IN ACTING AND EXPRESSION

In performances that mirror internal emotional landscapes, performers frequently personify abstract concepts like joy, sadness, anger, fear, or disgust. Symbolic gestures are particular, specialised postures and movements that, as opposed to everyday, ordinary acts, are utilised to communicate deeper, frequently moral meanings. Actors who portray a notion rather than a fully realised, complicated person are known as allegorical figures. Characters in an allegorical play may represent virtues (like justice) or vices (like greed). The literal story being acted out and the symbolic value of that action are the two levels on which double-meaning performance frequently functions; historical and stylistic context performance approaches are not excluded, which also considers properties, vocabulary, movement, clothing, and space. The entire performance from acting to setting is designed to fit a single, more comprehensive, and coherent moral or political message, which sets allegorical representation apart from traditional symbolic expression.

## 3. ART AND LANGUAGE

The historical account of metaphor and its historical study as figurative language play a significant function, considering conceptions of visual metaphor, ergo theories of linguistics are applied in comprehending visual metaphors. Art relies on language to explain its concept and philosophy; both language and art rely on the manipulation of media in the service of expression. Metaphor alters the meanings of a concept as well as how we perceive the new variety of objects to which it is applied. Metaphor takes a medium and gives it another use beyond its everyday practical applications. Metaphor is a symbolic transformation that occurs when one thing (visual image, figure of speech, musical configuration, etc.) in its entirety denotes another thing in its entirety. A central idea within conceptual metaphorical theory is that metaphor should be analysed as a mapping between two domains; the target domain is conceptualised and understood in terms of the source domain. One experiential domain is partially mapped onto a different experiential domain, and traditionally it is believed that both will belong to different superordinate domains, which cuts across cultures Anderson (1989), Barcelona (2002) and Serig (2008). The use of proverbs to prove a point has been a long tradition that is as old as man itself. Albert Chinualumogu Achebe (1930-2013) defined proverbs as “the salt with which words are eaten”. Proverbs are the wisdom of a people in a nutshell. Complex stories and situations are concentrated in

a few words and phrases which capture and retain the essential meaning of the experiences from which they derive Onyeagba (2017). Ngene (2015) is of the view that the Igbo prefer to use metaphor in proverbs, during conversation and in paying homage. Aesthetics become significant in the manipulation of words to express metaphor. Egudu (1972), apart from its aesthetic attributes, proverbs remain the ready tools for thinking, communicating and a way of life. Metaphors aid proverbs to embellish speech. It challenges, persuades and attracts the listener to the conversation. It possesses philosophy, cognition, aesthetic and traditional sensibility that encourage the listener. However, in visual representation, especially three-dimensional sculpture that is philosophically driven (metaphor), one can experience the aesthetic pleasures that follow after the encounter with the created work.

All of these gave rise because modernist sculptors moved away from traditional processes and the emphasis on the depiction of the human body, with the making of constructed sculpture, and the presentation of found objects as finished artworks. Modern sculpture was born in Europe in the early 19th century, when some of the art movements, such as realism, impressionism, and post-impressionism, challenged the ideas and meaning of classical artistic conventions. Since then, a wave of interest in the exploration of form in visual art has become a concern for most artists. Modernism created the opportunities for sculptors to explore sculptures from other perspectives that involved the imagination (Ngene, 2016: 3-4). To elaborate more on current sculpture practice, which was the concept of being able to see how the created work can further explain the metaphorical concept, McEvelley (1999) posits: earlier, before modernism, ancient sculptors created sculpture that dealt with portraying the soul, as embodied in the spiritual being that exists independent of the body it occupies. Ancient sculptors' desire to create a model of human perfection was related to Plato's idea that for each species there is an absolute model of perfection on which individual embodiments are, however, distantly and imperfectly based.

This also implies that surrealism can be said to be that which portrays visual images or writing that represents expressions that could be linked with human thoughts and dreams, meaning that in real-life situations, this may not be impossible. Indeed, most things that seem not to be possible in real life are always possible in two and three-dimensional visual representations (creative works of art). Surrealism is characterised by dream-like visuals, with an offset from Dadaism. Surrealism emerged in France and spread to Spain, Belgium and later further out from its epicentre. It first reached the British Isles in 1927 with a subsequent exhibition mounted in 1931. Notable among the surrealists are Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, Joan Miro, Rene Magritte, among others.

Mattick (2003) Emmanuel Kent believes that art is an embodiment of the spirit, while Hegel terms art as a way of bringing to our minds and expressing the divine, the deepest interests of mankind and the most comprehensive truths of the spirit. Ikwemesi and Agbaiyi (2005) affirm that of all human activities going on in time and place, only objects of art and creative ideas retain their absolute value. Art is the spirit of an idea, an ideal, concretised through visual forms that are technically executed. Art as a medium of perception, the point at which the word reality begins to assume real meaning when expressed metaphorically Waldo-Schwartz (1975).

The conceptualised soaring eagle was born out of imaginative thinking that portrayed the possibility of creating the impossible by bringing it into existence, first in the soul and subconscious. With this possibility, one is able to relate the true nature of the eagle being portrayed in three dimensions. Art attempts to create occasions for experiences apart from the assumptions and values of everyday life Mattick (2003): 169). The eagle is seen clenched in its claws, flies away with the graduation cap, which symbolises 'accomplishment, freedom and graduation' of a student, after working so hard and the 'open book' represents that no one is a pool of knowledge, no man is an island, learning is a continuous exercise. The research believes that when we acquire these attributes, one way or another, we become accomplished and successful.

#### **4. ARTIST AS CREATOR OF NEW KNOWLEDGE**

Our world is changing, the artist is the key figure in the creation of new knowledge that has the potential to change the way we see and think Sullivan (2010) :78). The studio experience is a form of intellectual and imaginative inquiry and is a site where research can be understood and undertaken that is sufficiently robust to yield knowledge and understanding that is well grounded, socially and culturally relevant. Research in the visual arts asks questions about the processes and products of artistic knowing. The artist is both the researcher and the object of study Bullough and Pinnegar (2001), Feldman (2003), Read-Danahay, (1997), Sullivan (2010). The artwork carries its own status as a form of knowledge. Research of art subsequently communicates new insights into how objects carry meaning about ideas,

themes, and issues. As an object of study, an artwork is an individual and culturally constructed object that can be used to represent ideas and thus can be examined as a source of knowledge through a reflexive process Sullivan (2010).

A reflexive artist applies processes in their practice that take account of their personality or self as affecting their art-making. Perhaps a nuance of reflective thought, reflexivity connotes being part of a process or method in which considerations of the self become part of the action of making the art. Then the art object prompts further reflexivity. The artists see their art practice as a means for expressing that which they do not have the language to express; to express that which cannot be put into words; or for which no words are available Serig (2008). Carroll (2001) explains that artworks are metaphors and that there are some visual images that function in the same way that verbal metaphors do, and whose point is identified by the viewer in roughly the same way that the point of verbal metaphor is identified by the reader or listener. Serig (2008), the cycle of life to art and back involves complex thinking directed at the doing of art. Doing art for these artists necessarily involves reflexivity, in which pre-visualised ideas as well as uncertain paths can co-exist, as often disparate elements are thrown together in order to express and explore. In doing so, the artists foster a continuation of the cycle as the art-making feeds back into reflections on the meaning of the art and the meaning of their lives. The cycle also provides opportunities for the cross-domain mapping of metaphoric expressions through the doing of art in this reflexive context. Thinking historically always involves mediating between those ideas and one's own thinking. Tradition, or what is handed down from the past, confronts the artist as a task. It requires active questioning and self-questioning, which means precisely to bring one's perceptions into play. The eagle's sculpture is created by considering its cultural context for proper understanding, hence the studio becomes a place for problem finding and problem solving; material exploration and giving monolithic yet concrete ideas of personal, social and cultural meaning to form.

The creative use of metaphor may have given birth to a way of thinking in art, the visual presentation of metaphoric ideas. An artist can borrow an idea infused into the created work of art, the manifestation of creativity whereby the artist produces something new and distinctive, inspired by that culture within the range of forms and patterns, which becomes a part of the innovation in the design. A few examples of such ideas can be found in the works of Picasso. His works were inspired by the African Congo mask. However, this paper discusses distinctive forms that are representational in nature; one can make out the meaning on encountering the conceptualised soaring eagle and its distinct forms and features.

Allegorical and symbolic representation in acting and expression involves using the body, voice, and performance space to embody abstract ideas, moral virtues, or sociopolitical concepts rather than merely portraying a realistic human character. In these performances, the actor acts as a "vehicle" (the visible, concrete figure) for a "tenor" (the hidden, conceptual idea).

## 5. QUALITIES OF THE EAGLE

King James Version, Isaiah 40:31 states: "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Eagles are believed to have powerful vision, eagles are fearless, eagles are tenacious, eagles are high flyers, and they nurture their young. Eagles are known to be birds of prey; they are raptors, which is derived from the Latin word "raper," meaning to take by force. They are categorised as the hawk family, Accipitridae, and they are found all over the world. The word came from the Latin word "Aquila," which then became the word "aigle" and then evolved into the word "eagle". They are heavier and bulkier than all other raptors. They have very large heads and bills, long, flat, broad, powerful wings, and large feet with huge, strong talons with which to carry their prey back to their nests. The eagle is renowned for its incredible eyesight. He can spot a mouse a quarter of a mile away from his perch high in a tree top or while soaring in the air. Thus, the phrase "eagle-eyed." The corollary meaning for a human would be "attention to detail." To have an eagle eye means to have a keen sense of sight or insight Read (2018).

People's beliefs and customs, which are most often represented in traditional art, are mimetic in the sense that it produces an experience known to its viewers outside of art. The heart of tradition is repetition in the mode of production, in the rhythms of daily or yearly life, and the most developed form of repetition is ritual Mattick (2003). Ugochukwu (2017) writes: a people's way of organising their activities explains the how and why of daily existence. Symbols give rise to thought or creative intelligence and creative intelligence gives rise, in turn, to the customs and codes of the society, which are so internalised, from childhood onwards, that they go unquestioned as a way of life, and all areas of life are

part of an integrated whole. Metaphor is traditionally assumed to proceed from concrete to abstract domains, borrowing from the eagle, and the unique nature, human beings see it proper to connect with these great attributes of the eagle.

Alex Ekwueme Federal University is situated at Ikwo, the home of the soaring eagles. It is believed that a people's culture is what defines and separates them from other cultures. The students are metaphorically seen to imbibe and emulate the qualities of the eagle, and it is believed that with hard work, one could soar high like the great eagle.

Like the Eagle-woman metaphorically talked about in the novel *Children of the Eagle* by Akachi Ezeigbo. Eagle-woman is the name of the eponymous female character who shapes and reshapes, defines and redefines the narrative kinesis and perspective trajectory of the novel. This female protagonist is an Eagle of a woman, and her five children are made in her mould. The strength and courage of the eagle enable her to confront the retrogressive, oppressive and repressive traditional practices of male-dominated society that are exploitative and discriminatory against women. Eagle-woman stands up against the phallogocentric order and its associated traditions, vehemently resisting attempted appropriation of her land Tsaaior (2007): 169).

The researchers were privileged to attend the graduation party of one of the wards on Sunday, 21st July, 2019. (Glorious Star Missionary School, AKA Rising Star) During the Director's (Lady Erogu Patience) said;

"May I commend the school management for their several administrative innovations and initiatives that have made the school soar once more like an eagle. Our teachers have done so well in training the pupils; they are a rare gem..." This is to buttress how metaphors are used to highlight a point, especially when an animal or a thing is held in high esteem and respected.

Another example is from this unknown source: When Wike metaphorically said he felt like shooting Seun through the screen over his statement on the television on Thursday (02/04/26), blood was drawn. Our leaders are always quoted out of context. This is due to our mischievous nature and our love of debating nonsense when other nations work (WhatsApp Personal Communication, 2026). For such statements like this, it is obvious that this individual is a sycophant, boot-licker, and a political praise-singer, who is after his stomach infrastructure. Nigerian citizens are fully awake and know who tells the truth. Seun said on Nigerian national TV that they would not allow a one-party State, which I don't see anything wrong with such a statement because he was being human. Nigerians are aware of how the current president got into power. Ironically, the same individual said, "In all, we should remove politics from our reaction to public issues. When someone is wrong, even if he is on our side, we must condemn him". I guess this individual regained his consciousness after altering trash.

## 6. METHOD

Artists often use the visible world to point toward what lies beyond what we can see. What matters most is frequently what is implied rather than literally shown. Art becomes a doorway to the unseen, a space where absence and presence mix Castellote (2026). Certain artworks help us look beyond what we see. They stay with us not because of what they show, but because of what they reveal. They make us pause, look again, and recognise that meaning often hides beneath the surface. Sometimes, they help us think about ourselves. Something basic about art's power is captured; it trains us to see more deeply, to look beyond surfaces, beyond appearances, beyond our own assumptions. In an age drowning in images and distractions, this is a valuable gift.

Ordinary life encourages rapid scanning over careful looking. Social media teaches scrolling, not thinking deeply. Advertisements flash past. Photographs vanish in seconds. But standing before a good art piece demands a different rhythm. Our eyes begin moving with patience over the solid form, colours, shapes, lines, and textures. We notice relationships between light and shadow, between what's shown and what's suggested. Sometimes, they invite us to stop and think about something altogether different. About something that is beyond what the artwork portrays.

From a sculptor's perspective, this stage discusses and describes the processes involved in the creation of the three-dimensional conceptual soaring eagle. Direct concrete modelling was the process undertaken for the execution and actualisation of the conceptualised soaring eagle. The process is a tedious one, which requires the sculptor to produce these mixtures in a mortar-like form. This enables him to continually and consistently apply and check the right amount and quantity of sand, cement, and water, which enables him to manipulate and model the sculpture.

## 7. THE FIRST STAGE: A CONCEPTUALISED DRAWING

In sculpture practice, this is the first actual and usual process for direct concrete modelling. Then follows the creation of a miniature study of an 18-20 cm high sculpture piece. However, this study seems to bypass the whole process of producing the miniature study and creation. Drawing as a medium of expression, which in this study can play a dual role, as a reflective tool in articulating thoughts as a process during the studio explorations and which may also double as an independent work on its own. Drawing as a thought process offers an intimate and open field for imaginative elaboration, in which concepts and ideas can emerge and change with relative ease. Plate 1.

Goodman (2013) and Lamidi (2015) believe that the beauty of drawing to sculpture is that form adds a dimension that eludes two-dimensional visualisation. Conversely, drawing is an abstract visual means to probe the infinite possibilities of form. Drawing becomes a mode of thought, while sculpture provides the evidence of form. Drawing in any media should be seen as a foundational tool for invention; it is the thought process, while sculpture is the material realisation.

The act of redrawing keeps the designer's mind focused on the element in question, causing the designer to think about the element and its relations with other parts of the design. Sketching is the quickest and most direct means of producing visual representations of ideas. The ambiguity of freehand sketching allows multiple interpretations and thus stimulates the production of more design alternatives. The linked acts of drawing and looking invite designers to recognise new interpretations of the alternatives they propose. By drawing and looking, designers find visual analogies, remember relevant examples, and discover new shapes based on previously unrecognised geometric configurations in their sketches (Do and Gross 1996).

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Drawing of the Conceptual Eagle. Medium: Ink On Paper Year: 2021 Artist: Ukie Ogbonna

## 8. SECOND STAGE: THE ARMATURE CONSTRUCTION.

The armature construction was well planned; one can see that the weight was evenly distributed. Balance was created, which prevented it from tipping to one side. An armature construction is a sculpture framework for modelling, which is mostly created with metal or wood that holds the clay and supports a sculpture while the clay or any other chosen medium that is elastic enough is being modelled.

Kyser (2012) described welding as a process of joining pieces of metal. It involves heating the metal until it is soft enough to join with another piece of metal that then cools to make a solid joint, and also Kukhta, et al (2014) explain that the manual arc welding with coated electrodes is currently one of the most common methods of manufacturing, installation and repair of various welded structures. The advantages of the method are the simplicity of the process and the mobility of the equipment. This method allows working in different attitude positions; it is possible to weld a large

range of materials and thicknesses. Plates Ia and Ib show the metal construction of the eagle, while II shows the construction of the pedestal. A metal basket was constructed before pouring mixed mortar into it; this was solidly cast.

**Plate 1**



**Plate 1** Armature Construction Dimension: 275 Cm Diameter X 244 Cm High Medium: Metal Rods, Chicken Wire and Binding Wire Year: 2021

**Source:** Ephraim Ugochukwu

**Plate 2**



**Plate 2** Armature Construction Dimension: 275 Cm Diameter X 244 Cm High Medium: Metal Rods, Chicken Wire and Binding Wire Year: 2021

**Source:** Ephraim Ugochukwu

Plate 3



**Plate 3** Armature Construction Dimension: 275 Cm Diameter X 244 Cm High Medium: Plywood, Metal Rods and Binding Wire Year: 2021 **Source:** Ephraim Ugochukwu

### 9. THIRD STAGE: APPLICATION OF MORTAR ON THE ARMATURE

Mortar is known as a binding material for bricks, a mixture of sand, water, and cement or lime that becomes hard like stone, used in building to hold bricks and stone together. The grains of pit run sand or beach sand are usually too round. Stone dust, a waste product from quarries or stone works, can be added to smooth mixes for small-scale work. It adds strength, reduces shrinkage on setting, and may add to the visual appearance of the concrete. Limestone or marble dust is a type of stone dust. Concrete is a mix of Portland cement, aggregates, water and other optional additives that give the mix certain characteristics. Portland cement is what holds the aggregates together. Crushed stone or gravel was introduced into the mixture that was used to cast the pedestal. The aggregates are crushed stone, which range in size from 1/4" to 1". For small-scale sculpture, you probably won't need any larger than 1/4" or 5mm. Stone adds strength to larger work. Sand should be "sharp", which means it should have sharp edges, so that the crystals of cement grab it. It is usually called sharp sand, brick sand or mortar sand (Goss, 2017). Plates III.

Most of the time, we hear artists interchangeably use the words cement and concrete. Cement is a powdered substance made of calcium, silicon, aluminium, iron, clay, and other materials that have been burned together in a kiln or high-temperature oven. These ingredients are carefully chosen for their chemical properties. Cement is an important ingredient in a finished product called concrete. Concrete is a mixture of cement, a binder such as stone, sand or gravel, sometimes called an aggregate, and water, including those special chemical properties mentioned earlier. To make concrete, the cement and other materials are mixed with water, and this sets a chemical process called hydration into motion. When first mixed, concrete has a heavy paste-like consistency, but thanks to hydration, it gradually becomes extremely hard, even though it should be kept damp as it hardens. When it is finished, it is impervious to water. Cast concrete is sometimes also called cast stone Przybylek (2003).

**Plate 4**



**Plate 4** Gradual Buildup and Application of Mortar on the Constructed Armature Dimension: 275 Cm Diameter X 244 Cm High Medium: Cement, Sand, Mild Steel Rods, Chicken Wire and Binding Wire Year: 2021 **Source:** Ephraim Ugochukwu

## 10. FOURTH STAGE: CONSTRUCTION OF A SCAFFOLD AROUND THE SCULPTURAL PIECE

Scaffolding, also called scaffold or staging, is a temporary framework or structure of poles and planks used to support a work crew and materials to aid in the construction, maintenance, decoration and repair of buildings, stages, bridges, monumental sculptural pieces and all other man-made structures. In this case, a local method was used; this is also an alternative to the conventional scaffold. Materials like the local bamboo, binding wires, and nails were very handy in this stage. Though there were quite a few challenges, the researcher discovered that the locally constructed scaffold usually shifts from its original position, especially when left for a longer time. Plate IV.

**Plate 5**



**Plate 5** Improvised Scaffolds Construction Around the Conceptualised Eagle for Easy Accessibility and Proper Finishing Dimension: 275 Cm Diameter X 244 Cm High Medium: Bamboo, Cement, Sand, Mild Steel Rods, Chicken Wire and Binding Wire Year: 2021 **Source:** Ephraim Ugochukwu

## 11. FIFTH STAGE: APPLICATION OF PAINT PATINA AND GENERAL FINISHING

The final step in the whole sculpture process is called patina, or the addition of a patina. A patina is known as a thin or surface layer or superficial layer. Primer was first introduced before another surface paint was applied, and finally, a highlight of bronze effect. Plate's V and VI.

All finished sculpture pieces should acquire a patina if exposed to the air because of the action of trace chemicals and the gradual process of oxidation. Sculptors use a variety of chemicals to achieve different looks and colours of patina. Most of them are applied by heating the sculpture anywhere from 200 degrees to 300 degrees with a blowtorch and applying the chemicals with a brush or an airbrush. "It's very much a performance at this stage." No two patinas ever come out quite the same, and you have to be aware of the nuances that occur as you apply the chemicals. Some patinas bring about radical colour changes, while others impart extremely subtle and rich colour. Some sculptures are mounted on a plinth; it depends on one's choice and taste DeVries (2001).

Plate 6



**Plate 6** General Finishing and Application of Patina Dimension: 275 Cm Diameter X 244 Cm High Medium: Cement, Sand, Mild Steel Rods, Chicken Wire and Binding Wire and Paint Patina Year: 2021 **Source:** Ephraim Ugochukwu

## 12. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, may I at this point borrow from Sullivan and Serig, that visual metaphors enable artists to make meaning, which helps substantiate artistic practices as a site and source of knowledge construction, as well as a form of research. This, then, could impact art education on many levels, including curricular and pedagogical. This paper concludes that exploring one's own indigenous culture is a ready way out of the colonial entrapment that Western art idioms have imposed on African artistic expression. Africans have a very rich culture; there should be a growing consciousness amongst artists to use a truly African idiom to relate the African experience, which is hidden in our metaphorical expressions. Based on contemporary linguistic and cognitive studies, metaphor is far more than an ornamental figure of speech; it is a fundamental tool for understanding complex concepts and structuring human thought. It establishes a mapping between a concrete source domain and an abstract target domain. The cognitive and linguistic function metaphor is essential for understanding abstract ideas, functioning as a bridge between the concrete and the abstracted form. Metaphors are deeply embedded in daily language and in how people conceptualise the world, often based on shared experiences and culture. Metaphors are deliberately used to make complex or abstract subjects more understandable, rather than merely for ornamentation. Using poetic or new metaphors, provide sufficient context to avoid unintended misunderstandings. Metaphors are deeply tied to culture. One should be aware that the same metaphor may be interpreted differently, or misunderstood, by individuals from different cultural backgrounds. People

should be wary of metaphors in political or persuasive speech, as they can covertly influence reasoning and decision-making.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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