Line by Line
EVA OBODO
THE SPACE

EVA OBODO

Export Quality
2011
Charcoal and metal
148 x 90 x 9 cm.

Cover:

Line by Line
2015
Jute, cloth, thread, dye, tempera
216 x 120 x 8 cm.

Line by Line

EVA OBODO
The past and the present are already known. The future remains a mystery. Taking the past and the present apart or in pieces, and then reconstructing them piece by piece, bit by bit and line by line, generates visual imageries that shed light on the future.

In this show, while the charcoal works attempt to look at the historical situations of the present, piece by piece and bit by bit, the fibre works poke around the future as they deal with the present circumstances, line by line.

In fibre or charcoal, the works maximise the effectual sense of numbers, directional thrust, tenseness and colour to emphasise our ties to the natural world. Thus, the winding strands of nylon fibres in the fibre works bind a web of wrapped jute tubular forms to embody strands of thoughts. Amalgamated into linear narratives, they allude to cloth and what it stands for.

In shredding used jute sacks and animating them with different coloured threads, I seek to make explicit reference to material culture in a global context. The bound bits of charcoal, on the other hand, are constructed into openwork sculptures that reflect the fragility of natural elements and substances. In other words, with materials and processes, I seek to examine human conditions and social issues. Process appears to be the connecting thread in all the works, whether in charcoal or fibre.

I aim to establish an association between fibre and charcoal in creative ways. My studio process appears to have brought these materials close to where they seem to agree in a common artistic vocabulary and mode. In spite of the gap that may still exist in the materiality of the media (charcoal and fibre), I have pushed to find a common theatre where both of them can be engaged in a visual dialogue. So far, wrapping, tying and bundling techniques have been used to highlight the similarities and differences between the actual and the assumed.

Eva Obodo
Nsukka, May 2015

Artist Statement

Eri maara ngwugwu
Ngwugwu mara onye hie ya.
The twine knows the parcel
The parcel knows its wrapper.
(Igbo proverb)

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Eva Obodo
Nsukka, May 2015
Incisive Summary
2009
Jute, cloth, thread, dye
145 x 105 x 14 cm.

Bad Case III
2009
Jute, cotton and dye
200 x 176 x 10 cm.
Introduction

Frank Ugiomoh

When specificity was introduced into contemporary art by minimal artists in the mid-1960s, what was at issue was the legitimacy of modern sculpture, its engagement of the spectator’s consciousness with sculpture’s own internal set of relationships. Douglas Crimp, On the Museum’s Ruins, 2000: 154

One of the striking aspects of modern sculpture is the way in which it manifests its makers’ consciousness with sculpture’s own internal set of relationships. Rosalind Krauss, Line by Line, 2000: 154

When site specificity was introduced into contemporary art by minimal artists in the mid-1960s, what was at issue was the legitimacy of modern sculpture, its engagement of the spectator’s consciousness with sculpture’s own internal set of relationships. Frank Ugiomoh; PhD, fpaca, fsna AICA

The irony inherent in the dilemma Line by Line proposes is an inability to capture a tangible essence in its presentation. Against the Wall as a myth then demands of us to engage ourselves in inward reflection in order to come to terms with reality. Hero, Black Against the Wall reinforces the presence such discards could hold. This singular license of the artist remains central to what he or she confers on such discards in its presentation.

As a metaphor, Back Against the Wall evokes the truth of human dependence on unusual means towards desired goals. In another instance, the jute bag as a metaphor becomes inverted in Life is War. Rather than conceal an identity, they are upturned as agents of change. In this way, the work of Anatsui which they share migrant status with, becomes itinerant in nature. They wobble into space. Like the work of Anatsui which they share migrant status with, they are quick to invoke space yet they are site-specific. This is why Line by Line as an organizing thematic frame is a call to self-awareness in the mist in which reality engages consciousness.
Life is War
2012
Jute and cloth
301 x 172 x 26 cm.

Sausages
2013
Wood, jute, dye, nylon thread and tea pot
166 x 59 x 62 cm (variable).
Bad Case II
2009
Jute, cotton and dye
209 x 106 x 10 cm.

Obidiya II
2015
Jute, cloth, thread, dye
124 x 115 x 9 cm.
In Black and White

Charcoal, chicken mesh, copper and aluminium wires, wood and empty beverage cans

194 x 100 x 15 cm.
Line by Line II
2015
Wood, acrylic, tempera
161 x 94 x 16 cm.

Untitled II
2014
Jute, cloth, thread, dye
104 x 131 x 13 cm.
Journey of Hundred Kilometres 1 2011
Jute, dye, thread
106 x 152 x 24 cm.

Journey of Hundred Kilometres 2 2011
Jute, dye, thread
54 x 106 x 15 cm. (approx.)
Uli Na Nzu
2015
Jute, dye, acrylics, cloth, threads
170 x 160 x 8 cm.

Desert Warriors
2015
Jute, acrylics, tempera, cloth, threads
87 x 213 x 10 cm.
Banner
2015
Jute, dye, acrylic, tempera, cloth, threads
65 x 183 x 43 cm.

Okala Ijele
2015
Jute, dye, cloth, thread, acrylic
73 x 239 x 48 (approx.).
Fabric/Fibre and Charcoal: The Multiple Signification of Medium as Metaphor

Of recent, many artists across geo-cultural creative spaces have found interest in all kinds of waste products. Their interest appears to focus on the origin, material character and visual energies which these waste products possess or generate. Fascinating works have emerged, and will continue to emerge, from contemplating these encounters. This is not a surprise.

We recall that industrialisation in Europe, the First and Second World Wars, and contact between other cultures across the globe played a pivotal role in the way artists responded to the world around them. For example, the photo-realism in painting was abandoned to take on fascination with the effect of outdoor light. This gave birth to impressionism. Encounters with African civilisations revolutionised what was perceived as reality or even art. Idealism was found to be greater or higher realism. Similarly, industrial products gave birth to Pop Art. Duchamp’s famous ‘ready-mades’ and different forms of mixed media works, in the name of assemblage, arose. All of these and more can be said to have completely challenged our perception of what art is.

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Questions have arisen about what we may accept or reject as art. What is of importance in this stretched visual exploration appears to be the final convergence of the finest of human cultures. Traditional art of the world, the work of great artists like Picasso, Matisse, and others, represent a narrative that defies simplistic understanding. Obodo’s works.

Fabric/Fibre and Charcoal: The Multiple Signification of Medium as Metaphor

Obodo’s works.

In this exhibition, Eva Obodo has given us two visual experiences to contemplate. On the one hand, we are presented with works that refreshingly celebrate the aesthetic exploration of, and experimentation with, fabric and charcoal as material. The artistic possibilities of mixed media, especially of waste and common objects, so well articulated and inspired by El Anatsui, are also on eloquent display. On the other hand, Obodo’s works bring us face-to-face again and again in different ways with images of waste and environmental destruction. Although colourful, they also take the form of tortured and bundled figures that are silenced and exploited. This evokes the seriousness with which we must view Obodo’s works. They are not just beautiful art works. They are a critical assessment of a nation that often hides its weaknesses and downplays the forces that threaten its corporate existence. But in the artist’s works, we also see solutions profited. We see how through his compositions we can gain insight into how solutions can be derived from multiple applications of media for nation-building.

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Open Ended Inquiry
2009
Jute, wood, foam, fabric and dye
130 x 106 x 15 (approx.)

Believe Me!
2015, jute, dye, acrylics, tempera,
clay, cloth, threads
81 x 224 x 50 cm. (approx.)
Main inside 2009
Jute, cloth, thread, dye
120 x 127 x 19 cm.

Selected I 2014
Jute, cloth, thread, dye
126 x 93 x 8 cm.
Man of the People
2009
Jute, wood, fabric and dye
41.5 x 109 x 17 cm.

Ripples
2015
Jute, dye, cloth, thread
215 x 90 x 9 cm.
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