

**EXPLORING THE USAGE OF BEADS AS MATERIAL FOR ART  
PRODUCTION IN BUGANDA REGION**

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**MAY 2014**


**DECLARATION**

I, **NAKATO MARY GORRET**, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any university for the award of a Master's degree.

Signed..........

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation has been submitted to the board of examiners with our approval as a university supervisor.

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Date 28/04/2014 .....

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Signed..  .....

Date.. 28/04/2014 .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this book to my beloved parents Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Kibudde Salongo for the moral and financial support rendered in the course of this research.

I also dedicate this work to my beloved daughter Namirimu Peyton, my dear husband Nyombi Quinton, my brothers; Vincent, Fred, Paul, Expedite, Eddie, Robert, Denis and Julius. My sisters; Sr. Immaculate, Sr. Max, Cathy, Jane, Claire, Vivian, Annette and Sylvia for the support and encouragement rendered during this course.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	ii
APPROVAL.....	iii
DEDICATION .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION.....	1
<b>1.2 Statement of the problem .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1.3 Objectives of the study.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1.4 Main research questions.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1.5 Significance of the study .....</b>	<b>19</b>
1.6 Scope of the study.....	20
1.6.1 Geographical scope.....	20
<b>1.6.2 Content scope .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.6.3Material scope .....</b>	<b>21</b>
1.7 Limitations of the study .....	22
1.8 Definitions of terms .....	22
CHAPTER TWO .....	24
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	24
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	24
2.1.1 History of beads .....	24
2.1.2 Uses of beads in kabaka’s enclosure.....	26
2.1.4 Techniques used in beadwork among the Zulu.....	32
2.1.5 Materials used in beadwork .....	33

2.1.6 Methods used in beadwork .....	34
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>37</b>
3.2 Research Design.....	37
3.3 Population sample.....	37
3.5 Methods of Data Collection and Procedure.....	40
3.5.1 Questionnaires.....	40
3.5.2 Oral Interviews.....	41
3.5.5 Documentary review/Content Analysis .....	42
3.5.6 Studio Experimentation .....	44
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>4.1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>4.1.1 Studio findings</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>65</b>
5.1 Introductions .....	65
5.2 Discussion.....	65
5.2.1 Overview.....	65
5.3 Conclusion .....	65
5.3.1The characteristics of beads as material for art production.....	66
5.3.2 The traditional usage of beads in Buganda region .....	66
5.5 RECOMMENDATION .....	67
REFERENCES .....	69
APPENDIX A.....	72
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....	72
APPENDIX B .....	73

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MULTIMEDIA ARTISTS .....	73
APPENDIX C .....	75
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRACTICING ARTISTS .....	75
APPENDIX D.....	78
INTERVIEW SUBJECTS .....	78

## LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: clay and glass beads .....	3
Plate 2: How beads are used among the zulu of South Africa.....	5
Plate 3: Forms of Beads .....	6
Plate 4: Beads used to communicate marriage and wealth. ....	7
Plate 5a: Beads used to communicate Age difference, political alliance and anklets.....	8
Plate 5b, 5c: Headdresses and Head bands .....	9
Plate 6: Glass beads on cloth .....	9
Plate 7: Masai beaded necklace .....	10
Plate 8: Monsoon Wind beads .....	11
Plate 9: How beads are used on young children .....	12
Plate: 9a.....	13
Plate 10, 11: Ensinda Beads.....	14
Plate 12: Ensiiti beads.....	15
Plate 13: Amalanga.....	15
Plate 14: Amatembe Beads. ....	16
Plate 15: How beads are used for prayers .....	17
Plate 16, 17: The Zulu Bead work .....	31
Plate 18, 19, and 20: sources if inspiration of bees, flowers and butterflies.....	39
Plate 21: Materials used in the final execution of the studio work .....	47
Plate 22a, b: Hard work .....	49
Plate 23: Cooperative.....	50
Plate 24: Togetherness .....	51
Plate 25: Beautiful Environment.....	53
Plate 26: Lovely Butterflies .....	54
Plate 27: Natural Environment.....	55

Plate 28: Unity .....	56
Plate 29: Color .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Plate 30: Socialization.....	58
Plate 31: The beauty in Flowers.....	59
Plate 32: Busy Bees .....	61
Plate 33: Texture .....	61
Plate 34: Love for Nature.....	62
Plate 35: Peaceful Flowers.....	63

## **ABSTRACT**

Use of beads as material for art production has not been effectively exploited by formally trained artists. There are minimal efforts made in the use of beads as material, especially by untrained artists particularly in rural areas who produce ritual related religious crafts work connected with traditional African social-cultural practices.

The study was designed to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production among the Baganda. The study analyzed the characteristics of beads as material for art production, their traditional usage in Buganda region, factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production among Ugandan artists, and produced a body of art work using beads as material.

The study was qualitative and used exploratory descriptive methods. It involved 25 respondents whose input was transcribed and developed into art works. The study produced a number works that depict how beads can be used as material for art production. It recommends more research in other materials so as to broaden the spectrum of art materials. It recommends use of other sources of inspiration, more research into use of beads in other disciplines of art. Recommends government participation in developing art in the country.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Beads are small, pierced ball or piece of wood, glass or other material that can be strung on a thread or wire, used for decoration or other purposes.

Beadwork is the decorative work made of or with beads.

Beading is the lace or embroidery having open work through which ribbon may be run.

This study sought to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production. The Study was based on the argument that in Uganda, while informally trained artists are using beads to produce crafts such as jewelry and religious related art facts for shrines, the formerly trained artists have not fully exploited the use of beads as material for art production. Yet the current postmodern era provides an opportunity to use any form of material available for art production. The researcher noted that beads were cheap and locally available in different forms and colors.

Much as the research project was about studio exploration of the use of beads as material for the production of art, it was important at that stage to look at the history of bead designing in and beyond Uganda. This helped to bring to the fore front information about the origin, the different forms of beads, their manifestation and the functions they served. It also helped to give an insightful overview about the transformation that had occurred in bead designing and usage in the art and design industry, Uganda in general and Buganda in particular.

## **Origin of Beads**

To discuss the origin of beads is to discuss the different forms of world cultures which are using beads. This is because, for hundreds of years, different people throughout the world have been using beads for different purposes according to their needs. For this reason, my discussion about the origin of beads was based on both the global perspective and Uganda's local oral history regarding the different forms and functions of beads in Buganda region and among the Luo of northern Uganda.

Locally, it is among the Baganda and the Luo people that we have one of the rich oral history of bead designing in Uganda. The Luo people have an interesting oral history about a bead between Gipiri and Labongo who were brothers. The Luo oral tradition has it that the separation and misunderstanding of the Acholi people originated from the dispute about a bead which was swallowed by Labongo's son.

Beads were very Important in Buganda region and they included "Amatembe", "Endege", "Olusiiti", "Amalanga", "Ensiinda" among others, (as they are called in Uganda) They were used at the kabaka's royal court to decorate kabaka's items/treasures.

Beads were used to produce many visual products related to Buganda social-cultural practices such as initiation rites, bead art and twin ceremonies.

Through history, we learn that beads have been crafted from various different types of materials by various groups of people such as the Masai of Kenya, the Karamajong of Uganda, the Ndebele of Zimbabwe, the Zulu and the Xhosa of southern Africa among others. According to Lois Sherr Dubin (1987) an enormous range of beads and raw materials for beads has been available to Africans for centuries. Throughout the continent, there has always been widespread use of organic materials for adornment including clay, glass, seeds, nuts, shells, bones, tusks, and teeth.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lois Sherr Dubin (1987) History of Beads, concise edition, published in great Britain by Thames and Hudson Ltd, London pg47

The above observations are also supported by Gillow, et, al (1999) who conforms that beads made of stone and animal teeth found at la quina in France have been dated back to 38,000 B.C. They further point out that the use of beads is found in every inhabited place on earth and every conceivable material has been used in their manufacture including glass, metal, wood, shell plastic, seeds, clay and resin. They also clarify that beads are most commonly used for making jewelry, but are frequently used in embroidery or even woven into a form of fabric on a loom.<sup>2</sup> Clay and glass are very wonderful material for manufacture of beads as shown in plate 1 below.



Plate 1a: Clay beads



Plate 1b: Glass beads

Source: (<https://www.google.com/search?q=photographs>)

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<sup>2</sup> John Gillow, Bryan sentence (1999), world textiles a visual guide to traditional technique, published by Thames and Hudson.pg 216

Plates 1a and 1b above on page 3 illustrating beads made from both clay and glass materials used among the Italian in Portuguese, Bahasa in Indonesia and Fespanol in France.<sup>3</sup>

Clabburn (1980) observes that primitive beads are known from the advent of Homo sapiens 40,000 years ago. He further notes that few examples exist from the upper Paleolithic period (38,000-3000BC). The first beads were simply gloved pebbles, bones, teeth etc, by 16,000 BC abrasives and bow-drill beads from other material from the beginning beads had talismanic and symbolic connections, which have continued to this day.<sup>4</sup>

Beads have been used for body adornments in Africa for at least 25000 years with countless different styles, materials and origins. Arab traders sailing down the east African coast introduced a variety of goods and beads in exchange for ivory, slaves, and animal skins and transported them back with on dhows, an old style wooden sailboat.<sup>5</sup>

In Africa, Glass beads first developed by the Ancient Egyptians, were brought to Africa from India in about 200 BC by Arab traders and called “trade wind” beads, due to the use of monsoon winds for navigation. After 1680 quantities of European glass beads reached the continent.<sup>6</sup>

The researcher asserts that beads for art and design purposes are not new in Africa in general and Uganda in particular. This is because many African people use beads as

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<sup>3</sup> For more information about this see: [https://www.google.com/search?q=photographs of clay & glass beads&je=utl-8&oe=utl-8&aq=t8rls=org](https://www.google.com/search?q=photographs+of+clay+%26+glass+beads&je=utl-8&oe=utl-8&aq=t8rls=org).retrieved on the 14<sup>th</sup>/03/2013.

<sup>4</sup>For more information about this see: Clabburn p: beadwork (princes risborough)http://arts.jrank.org/pg/9481/beadwork.html retrieved on the 9<sup>th</sup>/07/2010

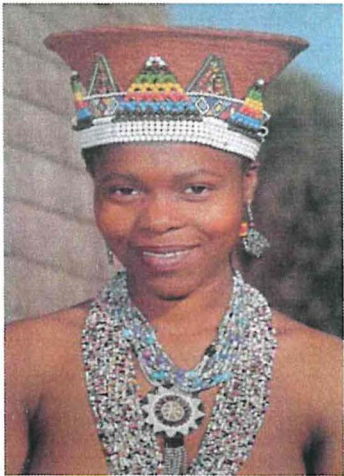
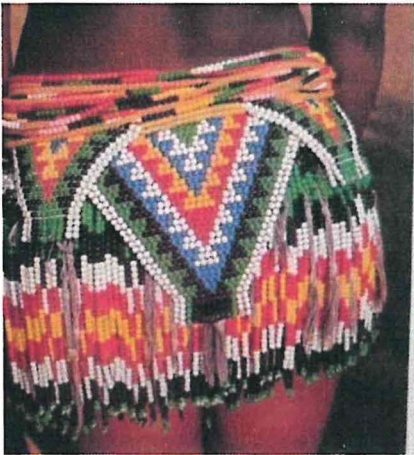
<sup>5</sup> For more information about this see,http://www.africanelements.com/index.php?option=com-content&id=9...retrieved on the 28<sup>th</sup>/04/2012

<sup>6</sup> Janet Coles, Robert Bud wig (1990) the complete book of beads, published in Great Britain by Dorling Kindersley limited. Pg 16

material for personal and adornment, where artistic creativity is manifested in the use of beads for embellishment as illustrated in diagrams below.<sup>7</sup>



Plate 2a: (Photographed by the researcher)



Plates 2b: (Photographed by the researcher)

Source: (Zulu sudafrika, German edition, art publishers, creative print products)

Plates 2a and 2b above illustrating art objects made using beads as material among the Zulu of South Africa<sup>8</sup>

**DIFFERENT FORMS OF BEADS**

<sup>7</sup> For more information about this see: Beaded splendor([http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/migrations/beads/essay\\_3.htm](http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/migrations/beads/essay_3.htm).) retrieved on the 9<sup>th</sup>/o7/2010

<sup>8</sup> Zulus sudafrika, German edition, art publishers, creative print products pg 11

Dubin (1987) defines beads as small, colorful, symmetrical, and often quite beautiful. He points out that they are frequently standardized, in expensive units that can be arranged in almost endless configurations. They can be seen not only in the familiar forms of necklaces and bracelets but also on anklets, headbands, and headdresses.

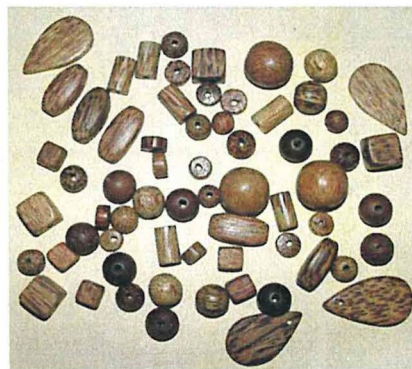


Plate 3a: Wooden beads



Plate 3b: Paper beads



plate 3c: Glass beads



plate 3d: Clay beads

Source: (<http://wwwgoogle.com/search?q=different>)

Plates 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d above illustrating the different forms of beads used among the Masai of Kenya, Karamajong of Uganda.<sup>9</sup>

In Uganda, beads are given different names depending on each tribe's language. Among the Baganda, beads are called Embira, in Tooro, they are referred to as

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<sup>9</sup> For more information about this see: <http://wwwgoogle.com/search?q=different> forms of beads 8je=utf-8&0e=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-us:of retrieved on 14<sup>th</sup>/03/2013

Enkwanzi and for the Basoga, they are called “Obutiti”, “Enkwanzi” still in “runyankole”, “Amasaro” in “Lufumbira”, “Ebiddi” in Lusamya, Otiko in Acholi.

Beads are some of the most stunningly attractive and varied items of jewelry. They are small, round objects sometimes made of wood, shell, bone, seed, metal, stone, glass or plastic. It is usually pierced for stringing so that it can be worn for decorative, or in some cultures, for magical purposes.

The word bead is derived from the Anglo-Saxon bidden which means to pray, and Bede, meaning prayer. Rosaries, number of beads for counting prayers, are used by more than half the world’s religions; Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Roman Catholicism.

Beads are used in West Africa on garments for royal statues, and coverings for kingly stools. In ancient Asia, beads were scattered like seeds beneath temples to induce bountiful harvests, and among the Kogip of Colombia they were part of ritual offerings to ensure the future of the newly built houses. In Philippines, the practice of placing two beads in a cup at wedding ceremonies still binds marriages. Beads are worn to communicate status almost everywhere, and in North America were even used to cement political alliances.<sup>10</sup>



Plate 4a: wealth

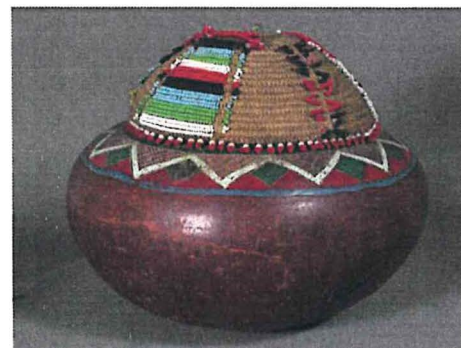


plate 4b: marriage

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<sup>10</sup> Lois Sherr Dubin (1987) history of beads, concise edition, published in Great Britain by Thames and Hudson ltd, London.pg 7

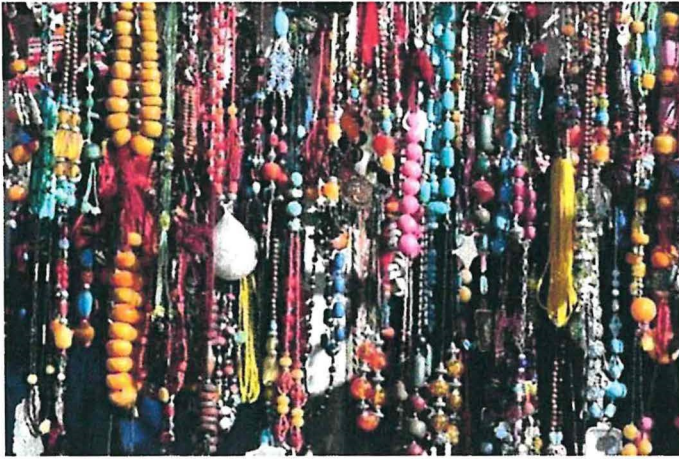


Plate 4c: age difference

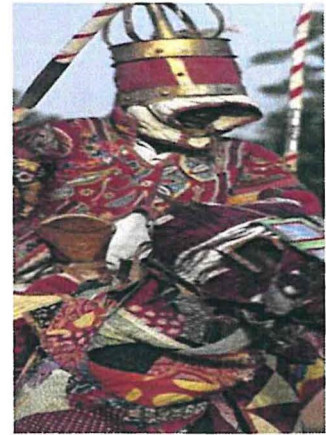


plate 4d: political alliance

Source: (<http://www.google.com/search?q=photographs>)

Plates 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d above illustrating how beads are used to communicate status for example age differences, marriages and to cement political alliances among the Masai of Kenya <sup>11</sup>



Plate 5a: anklets

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<sup>11</sup>For more information about this see: <https://www.google.com/search?q=photographs> of beads communicating status&je=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&&rI.retrieved on 14<sup>th</sup>/03/2013

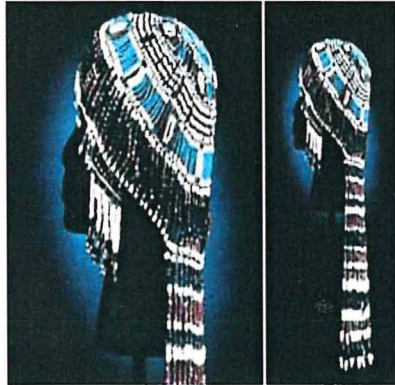


Plate 5b: headdresses



plate 5c: headbands

Source: (<https://www.google.com/search?q=photographs>)

Plates 5a, 5b and 5c above illustrating anklets, headbands and headdresses as made from beads among Zulu ethnic group, central and South American groups<sup>12</sup>

Beads are equally shared by European and American cultures that tend to think of beads as adornment.



Plate 6a: Glass beads on a lady's top



plate 6b: plastic beads on a lady's dress

Source: (photographed by the researcher)

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<sup>12</sup>For more information about this see: <http://www.google.com/search?q=groups> of people who use anklets%cheadbands&headdresses&je=ulf retrieved on 14<sup>th</sup>/03/2013

Plates illustrating how Beads are used by the western culture among the European countries in the decoration of fabrics



Plate 7: Masai beaded necklace

Source

:(<http://www.google.com/search?q=image+of+beads+wraped+around+someones>)

Plate 7 above illustrating beads wrapped around the neck among the Masai of Kenya and the Karamojong of Uganda<sup>13</sup>

Beads have been used for body adornments in Africa for at least 25000 years with countless different styles, materials and origins. Arab traders sailing down the east African coast introduced a variety of goods and beads in exchange for ivory, slaves, and animal skins and transported them back with on dhows, an old style wooden sailboat.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For more information about this see:

<http://www.google.com/search?q=images+of+beads+wrapped+around+someones> neck&hl=en&client=fire retrieved on the 14<sup>th</sup>/03/2013

<sup>14</sup> For more information about this see,<http://www.africanelements.com/index.php?option=com-content&id=9...>retrieved on the 28<sup>th</sup>/04/2012

In Concurrence with Dubin's views on beads, Coles et, al (1990) further argues that; Beads have been made on all continents since they first appeared over 40,000 years ago.

#### Trade wind Beads

During the medieval period, trade of a particular style of glass bead, the trade wind bead, dominated the market. These beads ranged in color and length but could be mass produced. Termed "trade wind beads" due to the use of monsoon winds for navigation, these beads were shipped throughout the Indian Ocean trading complex, especially to east, west and South African coastal ports.<sup>15</sup>



Plate 8: Monsoon Wind beads

Source

(<http://www.google.co.za/imgre?imgul=http://beadshop.com/assets/imagea/bollywood>)

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<sup>15</sup>For more information about this see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/history-of-glass-in-sub-saharan-africa-wikipedia,the> free encyclopedia, retrieved on the 28<sup>th</sup>/04/2012

Plate 8 above on page 11 illustrating the monsoon wind beads among the Chinese, people in Amazon and Indonesia<sup>16</sup>

### **Functions of beads**

Beads have been used throughout the ages and in virtually every culture, not simple as adornment but also to express social circumstances, aesthetic value, religious beliefs and symbolic embodiments of curative powers and as a form of currency.

It has been noticed by the researcher in this study that seed beads such as “Amalanga”, “Obutiti”, “Endege”, “Ensinda”, “Ensiiti”, “Amatembe”, among others, have played a very important role in Ugandan culture among the Baganda, Basoga, Banyolo and the Karamajong where they have been used as decorative materials to enhance the aesthetic beauty of the shrine objects such as omugelengejjo, calabashes, and twin containers. They were also used for beauty (obutiti) among the Baganda.

Traditionally, among the bantu and luo people of Uganda beads (obutiti and endege) were tied around babies’ waists, legs and hands with the aim of; attaining a defined shape in the various parts of the body, preventing them from malaria, helping babies get satisfied when breast fed, Making a baby look un naked when wearing beads, Helping babies learn how to walk as they could hear sound coming out of them.

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<sup>16</sup> For more information about this see:

<http://www.google.co.za/imagre?imgul=http://beadshop.com/assets/images/bollywood%2520bracelets/monsoon%2520300> retrieved on 14<sup>th</sup>/03/2013



Plate: 9a



Plate: 9b

Source :( photographed by the researcher)

Plates 9a and 9b above illustrating how beads are used to define babies' waists among the Baganda among.

Among the baganda, beads are made from a tree called Omuyiiki which is usually found in bushy areas.

They were used by traditional healers in shrines especially in Buganda region by the Baganda to accompany their ancestral spirits. These beads used to be displayed on the floor and in turn the traditional healers could foresee trouble or happiness for their patients, they were also commonly used for mweso game especially by the elders with the purpose of killing stress or for relaxation after work.



Plate: 10a



plate: 10b

Source :( photographed by the researcher)

Plates 10a and 10b above illustrating Ensinda beads among the Baganda in Buganda region

Ensinda beads are commonly used in making rosaries and necklaces, decorating of wall hangings and beautify sitting rooms as shown in the diagram below.



Plate: 11

Source: (photographed by the researcher)

Plate 11 above illustrating Ensinda beads as used to decorate the work of art

More so, beads (Ensiiti) were also importantly used in the African traditional culture for; Decorating traditional small pots called ensumbi which were used in ceremonial rituals for example twin ceremonies, birth and Marriage and death rituals. This was also used as medicine to cure various diseases like malaria and among others.

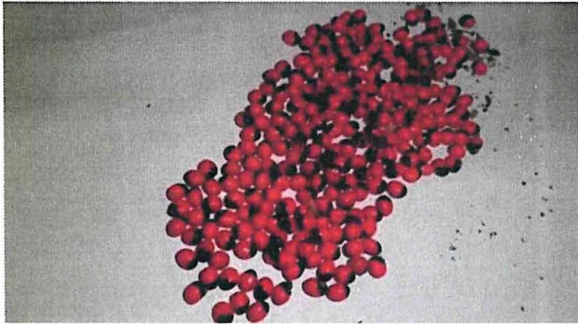


Plate: 12a



plate: 12b

Source: (photographed by the researcher)

Plates 12a and 12b above illustrating Ensiiti beads used among the Baganda in Buganda region.

Young children used ensiiti beads as eyes for their dolls (babies). This gave them courage to be creative enough. Furthermore, beads (Amalanga) were also used in the African traditional culture as; Entertainment purposes. In this case, Amalanga beads were put in musical instruments for example Enseege and Ensasi (shakers) which created sound to accompany other musical instruments.

Plate 13: Amahenga



Plate: 13a



plate: 13b

Source: (photographed by the researcher)

Plates 13a and 13b above illustrating Amalanga beads used among the Baganda in Buganda region.

Beads were also used in the making of rattles to create sound accompanied by the drums in the traditional dance called Olunyege among the Banyoro for entertainment.



Plate: 14 above, the Amatembe beads used in the making of olunyege among the banyoro

Source: (photographed by the researcher)

Plate 14 above illustrating Amatembe beads used among the Baganda people in Buganda region

Musanyusa(1992) observes that in the African culture; it was unusual for a woman to ask for sex even from her husband. For this reason a muganda woman was trained by her senga (aunt) to use the butiti as an invitation to her husband whenever she was in the mood for it. She would just tie the beads around her waist as she entered the bed and the man would understand what she wanted.<sup>17</sup>

A woman was trained that once her husband started caressing her body, she had to reach out for her butiti, which were always kept near the bed. Musanyusa further

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<sup>17</sup> Musanyusa (1992) is a muganda woman called senga (Aunt) who prepares any young muganda girl before marriage.

argues that the man is expected to play with the beads around his wife's waist in order to put her in the mood for sex.

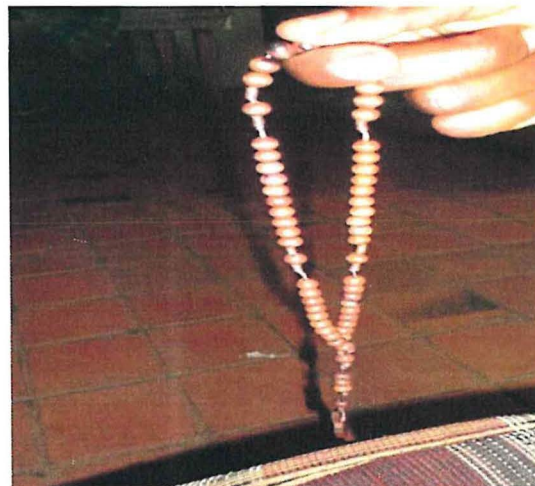
“The noise made by the butiti as you twist them around her waist has the same effect a lullaby has on baby. If a man handles the butiti properly, the woman's mind will open up and she will be ready for him within a few minutes” she advises.

Musanyusa further observes that if a husband did not find his wife with her butiti on, it meant she was not ready for sex.<sup>18</sup>

### **Uses of beads**

#### Beads and prayer

Beads have had very important meanings for many societies in the past. Some believed that beads brought great fortune and wisdom to those who wore them. Some were used as prayer, to help people recite their prayers in the order they are supposed to be said. Many believed that beads offered protection from evil, and carried them around to stay safe.



Source: (photographed by the researcher)

Plate15 above illustrating how beads are used for prayer among Catholics

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<sup>18</sup>For more information about this see: <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/29946-butiti-secrets-of-waist-beads.html> retrieved on the 28th/04/2012

## **Beads and trading**

For centuries beads have been traded for precious commodities by sea or land. From the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century beads at the forefront of world sea trade were exchanged for goods, ivory, palm oil and even slaves in a profit making venture bound up in colonization. Thousands of European beads passed into African, Asia and the Americans.

### The impact of European beads

Beads were not only an exchange commodity, but initiated new styles of adornment, and the bright colors and new materials replaced indigenous beads. North American Indians, who previously worked with wampum shell and quill, created a breathtaking variety of intricate beadwork with European beads.

### Renaissance adornment

In the west, where the medieval church frowned on forms of adornment, it was not until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when Queen Elizabeth I and other female sovereigns were in power, that bead jewelry was worn by women as well as men to enhance beauty and as a sign of status. From the renaissance beads were sewn on to clothing, and the embroidery beads, recoilless and bugles, have become a staple of glamorous fashion garments.

### Modern trends in beads

With the advent of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century middle class market for beads came new materials and techniques, such as steel, cast iron and plastics, enabling more people to wear jewelry. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century art nouveau introduced a new breed of bead makers.

In conclusion, beads have been in existence for centuries and were made in different materials. They have been used for body adornment, religious, social and cultural purposes among others by different groups of people around the world.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

In Uganda, many artists and designers were using different materials to produce various beadworks such as jewelry crafts. However, the use of beads as material for art production had not been effectively exploited by formally trained artists. Where minimal efforts had been made in the use of beads as material, it had been done by informally trained artists particularly in rural areas to produce ritual related religious crafts work connected with traditional African social-cultural practices.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

Analyze the characteristics of beads as material for art production

Determine the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region

Establish factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production in Buganda region

Produce a body of art work using beads as material

## **1.4 Main research questions**

What were the characteristics of beads as material for art production?

What were the significances of the traditional usage of beads in Buganda Region?

What were the factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art Production in Buganda region?

In what ways could a studio artist use beads to produce a body of work?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

It was hoped that the study would;

Provide awareness to the public on the usage of beads among Ugandan artists. Would Enable them prepare counter measures and think of solutions to the problems.

Serve as a future reference on the subject of multimedia crafts, especially in the use of various types of beads in the production of art works. On the other hand, this would enable the artists acquire skills and improve on their creativity of working with beads as a material.

Would be helpful to the visual art industry in Uganda by enlightening artists on the creative use of beads as material to produce work of art to articulate social issues

Help artists and designers in different art institutions of higher learning for example Kyambogo University, Department of Art and Industrial Design, Makerere University School of Industrial and Fine Art, Nkumba University School of Commercial Industrial Art and Design and Naggenda International Academy of Art and Design will benefit a lot as different ideas would be acquired on how beads can be used to produce work of art. This would improve their ability to work with beads as material hence producing a sense of creativity in their work of art.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

### **1.6.1 Geographical scope**

This study was based in Buganda region; this was identified because the researcher wanted to understand the history/origin of bead designing in the central region of Buganda, different forms of beads, origin and the functions of beads

### **1.6.2 Content scope**

The content scope of this study was based on the four set objectives.

In objective one, the researcher analyzed the characteristics of beads as material for art production. Within this, the following aspects were analyzed,

Types of beads, the material employed or used in the making of beads, the methods and techniques employed in studio exploration of beadwork, the different sizes, colors and forms of beads and the aesthetic value of beads to artists and designers.

In objective two, the researcher analyzed the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region. Within this; the researcher analyzed the following aspects;

The history (origin) of bead designing in the central region of Uganda, different forms of beads in Buganda region, the role of beads in Buganda region, methods and techniques of bead designing in Buganda region.

In objective three, the researcher analyzed the factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production in Buganda region. Within this, the following aspects were analyzed.

People's attitudes towards beads, use of beads as materials in Uganda's art tertiary institutions, availability of beads, cost of beads, art patronage in Uganda and nature of beads as art materials.

In objective four, the researcher produced a body of work using beads as material inspired by Flowers, Bees and Butterflies

### **1.6.3 Material scope**

The following materials were used in this project. The researcher was aware that different cultures had different beads. However, as per this study, the researcher used the following types of beads only.

Glass beads, Paper beads, Backcloth beads, Polythen bags beads and wooden beads

The researcher also used; Plywood, bond paper and wood glue as material to produce art works using the designed beads.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The researcher used a questionnaire as a research instrument as some respondents would give incorrect answers whereas others would answer for the sake of answering, therefore, the researcher found it difficult to identify respondents who would give the required information. This made the researcher move from place to place gathering data that would be of use to the project

The researcher had hoped to enrich her findings with information from libraries such as Makerere University main library, Nkumba University main Library, Kyambogo University main library, Naggenda International Academy of Art and Design library and libraries of various other institutions of higher learning. To her disappointment, the information got was insufficient and therefore she had to travel widely in search of more information, this proved more expensive to her.

### **1.8 Definitions of terms**

1. ART: The application or exhibition of skill, aesthetic principals, and creative imagination in the production of the beautiful or the meaningful, as in music, painting, drama or music
2. MATERIAL: Subsistence or substances of which something is or may be made or composed
3. PRODUCTION: The act or process of producing
4. A DESIGN: A preliminary plan, sketch, or outline made to serve as a guide or pattern
5. CRAFTS: Special skill, dexterity, or ability, the cabinetmaker worked with precision and craft
6. EMBELLISHMENT: To beautify with ornamentation or decorate

7. **TALISMANIC:** Relating to, or like a talisman; magical
8. **KALEIDOSCOPIIC:** A tube- shaped optical device containing loose bits of colored glass or other small objects which are reflected by a set of mirrors as a series or continually changing symmetrical patterns when the tube is rotated
9. **RECOILLESS:** To draw or shrink back, as in fear, horror or surprise
10. **GLAMOROUS:** Fascinatingly attractive
11. **MEDIEVAL:** The spirit, beliefs, customs and practices of the middle ages
12. **THERAPEUTIC:** Relating to the treatment or caring of disease or disorders

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

While many scholars have written a lot on the use of oil colors, water colors, pastels, charcoal, clay, pastels and metal in art, limited research has been done on the use of beads as material for art production in Uganda. Indeed, it is only the early scholars on Uganda's oral history such as Apollo Kagwa in his works "Empisa Za'baganda", Timothy Ssemogerere in his work "Katikisimu ya Mapeera" and Roscoe in his work the Baganda, that we find the early references to the use of beads in the history of Uganda in general and Buganda in particular. However a visit to many Baganda traditional shrines reveals that beads of different nature have been in existence in Uganda for a long time. It is important at this stage to point out that, outside Uganda as this study reveals, the use of beads for many centuries has been wide spread and treasured.

##### 2.1.1 History of beads

According to the world book of encyclopedia (2003), bead work is the craft of making or decorating objects with beads. It is used to create accessories such as belts, neckbands, waistbands, and to decorate clothing, purses and other items.<sup>19</sup>

Carved bone beads have been made for centuries made by hammering sheet metal, drawing metal, into fine wire and lost was casting.<sup>20</sup>

While one would expect Uganda's art and design institutions to promote the usage of beads as material for art production, this study reveals from oral interviews carried out by the researcher, that beads have been ignored as materials for art production. In fact

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<sup>19</sup> World book (2003) Inc. ascoltfetzer Company. Chicago.pg180

<sup>20</sup> Janet Coles, Robert Bud wig (1990) the complete book of beads, published by Dorling Kindersley limited, pg16.

one respondent pointed out that beads were used way back in shrines for rituals and by the kings for decoration.<sup>21</sup>

In his study of beads among the Baganda, Roscoe (1911) argues that before the introduction of cowry-shells, a blue bead (nsinda) was used among the Baganda. This was very rough and badly made, but it was considered to be of great value; one bead was of value with one hundred cowry-shells. Still earlier, before the introduction of the bead, a small ivory disc was used, known as sanga; one of these disc was valued at one hundred cowry-shells.<sup>22</sup>

The glass beads were introduced in Buganda by Arab traders from the coast. With the arrival of glass beads, the old forms of beads made from plant seeds, their values started declining. Glass beads when first brought to Buganda were exotic in appearance, more durable, colorful and highly finished compared to the indigenous ones. Because the supply of glass beads was limited due to the fact that they were brought from the coast, they were very expensive and highly regarded by the Baganda.<sup>23</sup> With the arrival of the beads in interlacustrine region, there was a great transformation of the social economic and cultural set up.

Madman(1976) argues that when beads were introduced at the court of king Suuna in 1848, portable currency changed first from ivory discs to glass beads, and, as the volume of trade and circulation of currency expanded, glass beads were discarded because of their limited supply and replaced by cowry- shells.<sup>24</sup>

From the above analysis about beads, it is clear that although this study is primarily concerned with the use of beads as material for art production, beads have played a major role in people's lives beyond art production. To understand this point clearly, it

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<sup>21</sup> Yiga grace ,a teacher at St John Bosco day and boarding primary School Katende, interviewed on 25<sup>th</sup>/07/2011

<sup>22</sup> John roscoe (1911) the Baganda, published by Macmillan and co, ltd St Martin's Street, London.

<sup>23</sup> R.Kigongo Mugerwa, secretary Uganda museum, interviewed on the 20<sup>th</sup>/08/2011

<sup>24</sup> Mammood Mamdani (1976) politics and class formation in Uganda, published by Heinemann educational books ltd, 48, Charles Street, London.

is important at this stage to examine the use of beads in kabaka's enclosure. The kabaka's enclosure is selected here, because in Buganda tradition, the king's enclosure always had the best products of creativity. It was the pinnacle of beauty and whatever was found in the king's palace, reflected what was happening in the kingdom.

### **2.1.2 Uses of beads in kabaka's enclosure**

#### **The king's jaw- bone**

According to Apolo Kagwa, when the king passed away, his lower bone was extracted from the rest of the skull in order to make of it an effigy of the deceased monarch. It was then washed in a mixture of banana beer and milk. After four or five times it was then considered perfectly clean and wrapped in a fine piece of backcloth which had been rubbed with butter-and was decorated with beads-and cowry-shells which had been collected during the king's life time from those succeeding to the chieftainship of clans. These beads and cowry shells were presented for the decoration of the jaw-bone and were called the king's wealth –makula.

#### **The chief's crown**

Apolo Kagwa also observed that great chiefs wore chaplets of bead-work from each of which raised four beaded sticks surmounted with small white tufts of colobus monkey hair. Such crowns were for festival occasions.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Kagwa A;BSKB,pg103-103. Okuwunda Bassekabaka=decoration of the departed kings

### **Anchorage for spirit powers**

Shrine-objects were the nearest approach to idols. Some of them were elaborately decorated with beads are many generations old, and in earlier days, the most powerful of them were the royal ones.

### **Armlets**

These were also bangles made from the tail-hair of elephants and giraffes. These were sometimes decorated with beads, sometimes plain. The hair was looped round several times and fastened with an ingenious form of double slip knot which enabled it to be stretched or reduced in size at will.

### **Children ornaments**

Children were also ornamented with colorful threaded beads around their wrists for beauty.

### **Umbilical cord**

Among the prominently embellished objects falling under *kuwunda* in royal spheres was the *mulongo*. The “*mulongo*”-twin-is part of the umbilical cord which is presented from birth and placed in a container which is decorated with beadwork.

Lugila (1970) made it clear that “*kuwunda*” is the most important term for the Baganda to express what is comprised in the Ganda notion of decoration. Though hard to translate with all its nuances, its broad significance is to give a fine finish, to embellish especially with richly colorful beads. “*kuwunda*” was an important activity carried on at the royal court in Buganda.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> A.M.lugila (1970) Ganda art, published by Osasa publication,pg36

kaggwa (1952) clearly informs us that;

*empisa yokwalula abalongo,neyokwalula omwana omu ngatefanana,  
wabelangawo ekigambo kimu ekyafanananga,amazzi  
nomwenge,namata,ebyo byebyanzanga abaana okuvakumutwe okutusa  
kubigere.naye bwebamalanga okubalula nebadira obulilabwabwe nolulimi  
lwenkoko enjeru,nebalusako empeke nensinda,eranebakunya nebombo ekalu  
bwebulezi,nebabigatawamu nakalira,ate nebasala ebiwero emyenda ebiri  
nebalyokabatekamu omulongo oyo akalira nebakasibabulungi  
nyo,ngabatekako nemikono egyambalirwako<sup>27</sup>*

In this case, twins (abalongo) in Buganda culture are very important people where the Baganda had to carry out important ceremonies called (okwalura abalongo). In the process of doing so, the twin's umbilical cords were tied together with beads called (nsinda) as the culture stipulated

In addition to Kaggwa's information on "kuwunda" (1952), he also clarifies that;

*omukazi nalongo yaberanga emanju nebagandabe abaja okuzina  
abalongo,nomusajjanabera emiryango nebagandabe; ekyo  
kyekyayitibwanga "ebibululu"; naye abatagyanga bazimbanga  
ensisila ebweruwenju eyo. Era nagenda mulusukulwoli  
eyamugalira ngabayo enkotayetoke lyanakitembe .nazingirirako  
omudo oguitibwa e'bombo,nalisa mu diro. Bweyamalanga ekyo  
natalamajoba, "kwekumwa mu mutwe  
ebibabina,"awamunabantube balinabo,okuvamukyenyi  
olukoloboze nga wagya olunwelwengalo okutusa enkoto;nokuva*

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<sup>27</sup> The mulongo (twin) represents dualism in the Ganda attitude concerning a loyal personality.

*kukutu okutusakukwerui. Eranasiba endege kumaguluge  
nabantube bona,buliwebayitabaleme okubakubako,era  
nebwebayunjanga amatoke mulusuku olutalilwabwe ngananyini  
lusuku tabogerako*<sup>28</sup>

In view of the above information, the mother of the twins could sit behind the house with her relatives and the father also does the same in front of the same house. The father of the twins could tie beads called (endege) on his legs and on his relatives too with the purpose of identifying their presence whenever they could go.

Mugerwa (1991) informs us that the Baganda people had different types of beads such as Endege, Amalanga, Amatembe and Obutiti which were used to produce many visual products related to Buganda social-cultural practices such as initiation rites, bead art and twin ceremonies. However, the Baganda people carried out the session of decorating the king's objects with beads as a sign of honoring them, appreciation and love.

Furthermore, Mugerwa (1991) explains that beads (obutiti) in the great hut were used as decorations on objects, such as the necklace of the stuffed leopard. Some of them are ritual gifts dedicated to the dead kings.<sup>29</sup>

Trowel et al (1953) clarifies that kuwunda was the most worthy form of the traditional pattern work of the interacustrine Bantu. This pattern work is geometric in form and is carried out in color with bead work. The favorite colors in the old bead work seem to have been a dark blue and another bright light blues, a deep crushed straw berry red but these may have been the predominating colors in trade beads. Such bead work is found among the ganda on objects belonging to the royal house, such as the bead covered vessels holding a dead kabaka's umbilical cord and lower jaw bone, the

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<sup>28</sup> Sir Apolo Kagawa(1952) *empisa zabaganda*, MacMillan and company limited martins street London.

<sup>29</sup> R. Kigongo Mugerwa (1991) *kasubi tombs*, published by R.M.K associates pg14.

beaded collar placed round the top of certain of the royal drums, the bead work covering the royal and blown trumpets, the beaded calabashes used for the greater chiefs.

### 2.1.3 The use of beads outside Uganda

Stephenson argues that beads are widely used among the Zulu and Xhosa people of South Africa, the Ndebele of Zimbabwe, Masai of Kenya and Karmajong of Uganda to produce ornamentation objects.<sup>30</sup>

The above observations are supported by Gillow, (2003) who states that,

*By early 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the wars of their king, Shaka, the Zulu came to dominate large portions of South Africa. They have long been renowned for the complexity and richness of their beadwork. First brought by the Portuguese, and later by English-speaking traders and missionaries, imported beads were used as part of the bride price and as everyday as well as ceremonial wear. Although worn by both men and women, they were worked into collars, belts aprons and love tokens by women. The Zulu kings established a strict royal monopoly on the import of beads, reserving certain beads for royal use or for those in royal favor<sup>31</sup>.*

With the British subjugation of Zulu power, the royal bead monopoly ceased, and, as white/ back trade increased, regional styles and a preference for certain types of bead grew.

From Gillow (2003) we learn that the Ndebele beadwork from the 19<sup>th</sup> century is mainly made up of closely worked white beads with only sparse colored details. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, more and more colored beads were used. In the 1960s

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<sup>30</sup> Michael Stevenson fine art(<http://www.michealstevenson.com/books/htm/beadwork.htm>)

<sup>31</sup> John Gillow (2003) African textiles, Thames and Hudson, ltd, London, pg 216.

new range of European beads was adopted. By that decade there was a tourist market for the beadwork that encouraged bold new eye-catching designs.<sup>32</sup>

The implication of the above is that many Africans on the coast started using beads as their material to produce products like ornaments, aprons, necklaces, waistbands and many others.

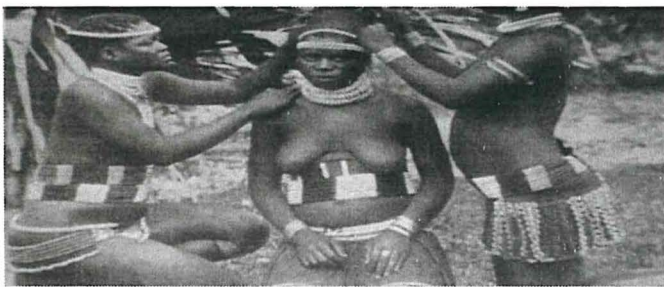


Plate: 16a



Plate: 16b

Plates 16a and 16b above illustrating Zulu girls wearing, bracelets, and neck, waist and breast aprons made in beadwork



Plate: 17a

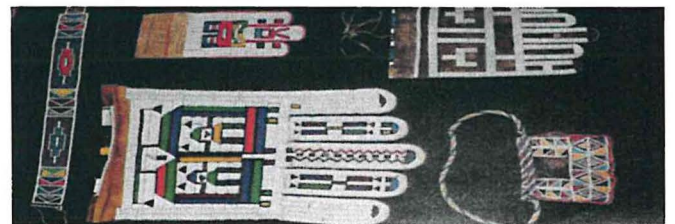


plate: 17b

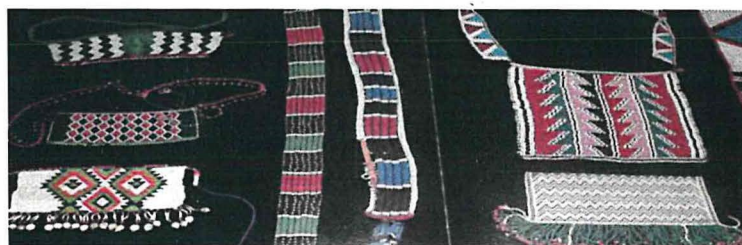


Plate: 17c

Source: (john Gillow (2003) African textiles, by Thames and Hudson ltd, London, pg 216 and pg 222)

<sup>32</sup> John Gillow (2003) African Textiles, by Thames and Hudson ltd, London, pg 216

Plates 17a, 17b and 17c above on page 31, illustrating different techniques of the Zulu people used to produce beaded waist bands, necklace for men or women, neck ornaments and girls pubic aprons

It is important to note that among the Ndebele, women carry out their beadwork not only during the quite months of winter, but also whenever they have a spare moment at other times of the year. This could stop laziness among them and at the same time getting money to earn a living as their products are sold at the market. The family wealth is displayed by the number of bracelets, neck rings, or other items of jewellery- sometimes very large pieces- worn.<sup>33</sup>

#### **2.1.4 Techniques used in beadwork among the Zulu**

The Zulu employ many different techniques to create their beadwork, including netting and herringbone stitch, though by far the most common one is brick stitch. With this method, the beads are placed in staggered rows. As each new bead is threaded, the thread is passed under a loop of thread on the previous row and back through the bead. This looping gives Zulus like motifs made up of lozenges, triangles and diagonal and horizontal lines.<sup>34</sup>

The Ndebele use several variations of herringbone stitch, particularly tubular herringbone, in their beadwork; in herringbone stitch the beads are set opposite each other in pairs at 45- degree angle for easy arrangement of the beads. The resulting beadwork patterns are linear and diagonal, with each seemingly straight line having a slightly zigzag effect. Curvilinear patterns cannot be created. Herringbone stitch is restricted to the Ndebele and some Zulu groups who are well vast with the technique used unlike other groups of people.

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<sup>33</sup> John Gillow (2003) African textiles, color and creativity across a continent, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 221

<sup>34</sup> John Gillow (2003) African textiles, color and creativity across a continent, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 216

### 2.1.5 Materials used in beadwork

The contemporary society with its industrialized culture provides enormous range of materials which can be used to produce beads of various sizes, colors and purpose. This is supported by Withers (1998) who stated that beads are easier to find and come in a wider range of materials than ever before. There are not many technical names for beads, but you should make a note of recoilless beads which are small and round, and they range in size i.e. small and tabular.<sup>35</sup>

Gillow (2003) also informs us that like other indigenous peoples of southern Africa, the Xhosa had a tradition of using ostrich- shell discs to decorate skins and hide and to make jewellery. It took little time, with some encouragement from the missionaries, to substitute beads for ostrich shells and to learn the requisite bead working techniques.<sup>36</sup>

Dubin (1987) observes that enormous range of beads and raw materials for beads has been available to Africans for centuries. Throughout the continent, there has always been widespread use of organic materials for adornment- including seeds, nuts, tasks, and teeth. The earliest known African beads are disk-shaped forms made of ostrich eggshells recovered from upper Paleolithic (100,000 BC) sites in Libya and slightly later sites in the Sudan.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, Durbin (1987) argues that small beads, of any material, whether easily available shell or more valuable pearl or semi-precious stone, have to be derived to make a bead: the smaller the bead, the more exacting the task. By the early Neolithic period (7000-5500BC) bow drills were used to perforate stone beads in the Indus valley<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Sara withers (1998) beadwork, <http://arts.jrank.org/page/9481/beadwork.html>.

<sup>36</sup> John Gillow (2003) African Textiles, by Thames and Hudson ltd, London, pg 222.

<sup>37</sup> Lois sherr Dubin (1987) the history of beads, published by Thames and Hudson ltd,pg47

<sup>38</sup> Lois sherr dubin (1987) the history of beads, published by Thames and Hudson

Wood has been used to craft beads since man's earliest beginnings. Easy to work, warm to the touch, and fragrant, wood lends its self both to incredible creations from the most skilled carver, and plain, simple shapes from the novice. Metals beads, ceramic beads, beads from nature, shell beads, pearls and coral, semi – precious beads, amber and jet beads recoilless and bugles, plastic beads, novelty beads, collectable and bead shapes.

Sentence (2004) points out that clay are an ideal material for the manufacturer of beads as a suitable shape is easily achieved by rolling a piece between the hands to make a sphere or on a hard surface to form a cylinder. It is also easy to turn out asset of identically shaped beads by pressing them in a mould, technique used in ancient Egypt for the production of scarabs intended for neck collars.<sup>39</sup>

#### **2.1.6 Methods used in beadwork**

With advancement in technology, new different types of bead design are emerging. This observation is supported by Dubin (1987) who reveals that there are hundreds of different designs of beads made all over the world, but essentially four methods are used to make small glass beads suitable for bead work. Normally they can be wound, drawn, molded or blown<sup>40</sup>

In concurrence with Durbin's views on the methods used in bead work, Gillow et al (1999) noted that there are three main ways to embroider with beads. Firstly, each bead may be sewn on individually by passing a threaded needle through it and then through the backing. The second method is to use lazy stitch which involves passing the needle through several beads before passing a stitch through the backing. Finally a

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<sup>39</sup> Bryan sentence (2004) ceramics, a world guide to traditional technique, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 189

<sup>40</sup> Lois sherr dubin (1987) history of beads, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 16

couching stitch may be used to track down a thread on to which a number of beads have already been stung.<sup>41</sup>

As I earlier pointed out, the origin of beads is not clear. However what is clear is that at a particular point in time, each culture has developed its own form of beads depending on its needs and environment in Africa. It should be noted that much as each civilization in history has generally developed its form of beads depending on its environmental, needs, over time due to increased globalization, technological development, colonialism and migrations, some types of beads have become almost “universal”,

In support of this, Dubin (1987) informs us that the history of African beads is the story of the many contrasting lifestyle that have developed in Africa. Bead making has been influenced by environmental factors, the availability and distribution of raw materials, and exposure to Islamic and European culture and technology during the past fourteen hundred years. To understand the beads of Africa, it is crucial to appreciate the influence of geography on African societies.<sup>42</sup> Geographically, Africa is located between the great sea bodies; the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean which for centuries have been trade sea routes. It is from these sea routes that beads found their way to Africa.

According to Coles et al (1990) glass beads, first developed by the ancient Egyptians, were brought to Africa from India in about 200BC by Arab traders and called ‘trade and wind’ beads. After 1680 quantities of European glass beads reached the continent. Carved bone beads have been made for centuries, as have beads made by hammering sheet metal, drawing metal into fine wire and lost wax casting. Recycled metal or

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<sup>41</sup> John Gillow, Bryan sentence (1999)world textiles, a visual guide to traditional technique, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 216

<sup>42</sup> Lois Sherr Dubin (1987) the history of beads, concise edition, published by Thames and Hudson,pg47

glass beads are popular and powder glass beads, first made in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, are native to Africa.<sup>43</sup>

In Concurrence with Coles et al views on glass beads, Dubin (1987) points out that the history of bead work is older than the history of glass ‘seeds’ beads. Through the English name would suggest that some of the earliest beads were made from seeds, and this is indeed so, the tiny drawn – glass beads were named ‘seed’ beads because of their size; as small as seeds, or even grains of sand.<sup>44</sup>

It is further noted by Gillow et al (1999) that the use of beads is found in every inhabited place on earth and every conceivable material has been used in their manufacture including glass, metal, wood, shell, plastic, seeds, clay and resin. Beads are most commonly used for making jewelry, but are frequently used in embroidery or even woven into a form of fabric on a loam.<sup>45</sup>

Withers (2010) clearly noted that there lots of ways that you can learn to wrap beads and decorate them with different wires. It is a great pleasure to be able to decorate quite a plain bead to make it very individual and special.

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<sup>43</sup> Janet Coles, Robert Bud wig (1990) the complete book of beads, published by Dorling Kindersley limited,pg16

<sup>44</sup> Lois Sherr Dubin (1987) the history of beads, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 9

<sup>45</sup> John Gillow, Bryan Sentence(1999)world textiles, a visual guide to traditional technique, published by Thames and Hudson, pg 216

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter dealt with the methods that were followed in exploring the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production. The chapter has the research design, population sample strategy, questionnaires, oral interview, direct observation and documentary analysis.

**3.1** The purpose of this study was to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design was both exploratory and descriptive in nature. This was because it required approaching the topic of research from different angles and describing the art objects produced in the study. In this study the researcher made several conceptual drawings inspired by flowers, bees and butterflies. From the developed drawing ideas, final art works were produced using beads.

#### **3.3 Population sample**

A total of 25 respondents participated in the study. They were made of the following categories:

1. 6 professional artists
2. 4 self taught artists
3. 2 ordinary people
4. 13 art students

Within this, respondents were able to tell how beads were used back in the past and in the present day, their use, origin, characteristics and history in Buganda

region. This was also to collect information on whether artists at Kyambogo University had effectively used beads as material for art production and the degree of success in the use of beads as material and the effects that had on the visual art industry at Kyambogo university department of art and design.

professional artists were selected by the researcher to collect information on the characteristics of beads as material for art production, self taught artists were also selected to analyze the factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production among Ugandan artists, ordinary people were selected to analyze the use, history and origin of beads in Buganda region and art students were selected so as to collect data on people's attitude towards the usage of beads.

### **3.5 Sampling strategy**

A purposive sampling strategy was also used to locate the respondents that the researcher thought had appropriate data that would help determine the use of beads as material for art production. Using this, the researcher was able to collect and analyze data in order to make viable conclusions regarding the use of beads as material for art production and how it related with multimedia crafts.

### **3.5 Sources of inspiration**

The researcher used a variety of flowers, bees and butterflies as sources of inspiration for producing artworks using beads as a material as shown in plates below.



Plate: 18a (worker bees)



plate: 18b

(Sources of inspirations)

Source: (photographed by the researcher)



Plate: 19a



plate: 19b(sources of inspiration)

Source :( photographed by the researcher)



Plate: 20 (skippers' butterflies)

Source (photographed by the researcher)

### **3.5 Methods of Data Collection and Procedure**

The following methods of data collection were used to collect data namely; Questionnaire, Personal interview, direct observation, Documentary review and Studio experimentation

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

The researcher began by designing questionnaires. A pilot study was then carried out on a number of selected artists, ordinary people, students, lecturers and old village men and women.

Restructuring of the questions was then done basing on the results of the pilot study. The researcher then requested for a letter of introduction from the chairman of the Department of postgraduate research committee of Art and Industrial Design, introducing her and the purpose of her research project.

The researcher went ahead to pass the questionnaires to various selected lecturers, artists, ordinary people, students and old village men and women with the aim of gathering information regarding the traditional and current usage of beads in Buganda region, their characteristics and history in Buganda region.

Questionnaires were also used to collect information on people especially in Buganda region and the current usage of beads in Buganda today. The data gathered from all of these respondents was then recorded and analyzed.

Questionnaires were used in this study because of the following reasons. It was also assumed that the respondents were knowledgeable enough to provide accurate information in the absence of the researcher.

Many respondents had limited time for the researcher to interview them which made them stick on questionnaires only

The researcher was able to gather enough information about the research project as various questionnaires were distributed to a number of respondents.

Many respondents found it easier to answer questionnaires distributed by the researcher because they needed time to answer them at their own pace.

The researcher acquired enough data since the respondents chosen happened to give exact answers because the questions were direct and precise to the answers.

### **3.5.2 Oral Interviews**

Oral interviews were used to collect information from a number of people who had a vast data regarding the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region, factors affecting the usage of beads in Buganda region, the characteristics and history of beads in Buganda region.

It was further used to generate information from artists who had once used beads as their material for art production. Information was gathered regarding their attitude towards beads, methods and materials used.

### **3.5.4 Direct Observation**

In this process, the researcher was able to capture photographs of these bees according to their style and everyday behavior and this gave her a clear picture of the bees during the studio work.

In addition to the above, the researcher moved to different vegetations and bushes with the aim of capturing pictures of different butterflies during mid morning since it was the time when they happened to fly searching for nectar, this also played an important role in the researcher's project since she was able to understand the behaviors and styles of butterflies.

Photographs of flowers, butterflies and bees were taken to help the researcher as she studied and drew the different poses of the above mentioned sources of inspiration that led to the foundation for the final project work.

Internet sites, libraries, art galleries, craft centers, museums and some exhibition halls were visited so as to acquire more data for the research. More so, photographs of other bead designed works were taken to help the researcher develop concepts.

All the data collected through observation was recorded and analyzed during studio experimentation to give a conclusive picture regarding the use of butterflies, bees and flowers as sources of inspiration to provide content while using beads as a material for art production.

### **3.5.5 Documentary review/Content Analysis**

The researcher acquired data from published and unpublished sources which included books, reports, journals, internet sites and articles from various artists. The researcher visited various libraries of selected art institutions of higher learning to collect data on the use of beads as material for art production. In this, the researcher acquired data on how beads are used and handled. The researcher also gathered data from internet sites in relation to the use of beads as material for art production.

The researcher used this method to collect available literature with reference to multimedia crafts regarding the use of beads as material for art production. The researcher also used it to collect data generated on the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region, the characteristics of beads as material for art production, factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production among Ugandan artists and to produce a body of work using beads as material. The following were looked at;

Types of beads, the material employed or used in the making of beads, the methods and techniques employed in studio exploration of bead work, the different sizes, colors and forms of beads and the aesthetic value of beads to artists and designers.

This method of data collection was also used with the aim of gathering data regarding to objective (two) of the research project, which was established to the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region.

The history (origin) of bead designing in the central region of Uganda, The different forms of beads in Buganda region, the role of beads in Buganda region and Methods and techniques of bead designing in Buganda region

In addition to the above, this method of data collection was also used to collect data regarding objective ( three), of the research project and this states that; to analyze the factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production among Ugandan artists. Within this, the following were looked at;

Some beads come in small sizes (tiny beads) which are not easy to work with, the increased prices of beads at the market hence turning them to be expensive, Beads are not easy to work with as they consume a lot of time and Beads happen to be bulky especially when work is completed.

This method of data collection was also used with the aim of gathering data regarding objective (four), which was to produce a body of work using beads as material. Within this, the following were achieved as stated below;

The researcher choose flowers in general, bees and butterflies as the sources of inspiration for the study and these worked hand in hand with the other. However, it was noticed by the researcher that bees and butterflies were lovely friends of flowers as they visited them regularly for pollen grains.

The researcher developed a number of sketches inspired by the characteristics of the selected natural phenomena and comprehensive drawings were produced.

After achieving all the above mentioned aspects, the researcher developed a body of work using beads as material and among these are; dining table, a coffee set table, flower vase among other.

### **3.5.6 Studio Experimentation**

#### **Presentation and discussion of findings**

Introduction: this chapter presents findings about the use of beads as material for art production in Buganda region. Report has been done by use of text, plates and reporting follows themes derived from objectives. Beads as materials for art production, the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region, factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production in Buganda region and to produce a body of art work

Studio experimentation started with analyzing the different works of art that had been produced using beads as material

The researcher identified and selected objectives under the use of beads as material for art production and among these are;

To analyze the characteristics of beads as material for art production

To determine the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region

To establish the factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production in Buganda region

To produce a body of work using beads as material

Studio experimentation was the method used to generate ideas where butterflies, bees and flowers were used to visualize the use of beads as material for art production. The initial ideas of studio work were developed starting with the theory part of it, that is to say;

Analyzing the characteristics of beads as material for art production

Determining the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region

Establishing the factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production in Buganda region

Producing a body of work using beads as material

This was followed by the studio designing process which involved sketches of preliminary studies, application of colors and experimentations.

These were followed by execution of the final concepts presented in chapter four.

The following materials were used in this research project.

Bond paper ranging from A4 to A1, Drawing pencils ranging from 2B to 6B, Masking tape, Carbon papers, Cutters, Plywood, Crayons/ water colors, Canvas, Sewing needles, Sowing threads, Pointed picking sticks, Wood glue (novical), Beads and Flames.

### **Bond papers**

Bond papers were used in this study compared to other surfaces because it tends to appear bright enough which is applicable for any drawing media. This also tended to be cheap compared to other drawing Medias for example canvas and many others. It was also easy to work with and made easy for storage.

### **Drawing pencils**

These were also used ranging from 2B-6B. They were cheap to buy and do lasted longer than other drawing Medias for example compo pens, crayons among others. These pencils were good for sketching and easy to rub them off when made a mistake which was not a case with drawing Medias. This simplified the researchers' work easy since pencils were chosen to be used with the accompaniment of bond papers which made the work look neat and clear.

### **Plywood**

Ply wood was selected by the researcher to be used in the study as the supporting base because the beads applied were heavy when compiled together, so she decided to use plywood since heavy materials could also be supported by heavy surfaces.

### **Masking tape**

This was also one of the materials used to join bond papers used in sketch developments. This was done to simplify the researcher's task she was dealing with large sketches and the papers were not all that big to meet the size she wanted.

### **Carbon papers**

These were used in sketching time when the researcher wanted to capture the compositions drawn on the papers to be transferred to the big boards. This could give a clear picture of the drawings drawn for easy application of beads.

### **Cutters**

These were used in bisecting papers where needed and also to sharpen the drawing pencils for easy drawing.

### **Shading Medias (crayons, water colors)**

These were used to give definite colors to the sources of inspirations after which are transformed into compositions.

### **Canvas**

This was also used as a surface in studio work where the researcher applied technique of beading.

### **Sewing needles/sewing threads**

This was used in joining the beads together hence coming out with a work of art.



Plate: 21a



Plate: 21b



Plate: 21c

Source: (photographed by the researcher)

Some of the materials used in the final execution of the studio work; Small sized beads, Medium sized beads, Big sized beads, Wood glue, Picking sticks, and Flamed ply wood.

### **3.5.7 Observational drawings of the sources of inspiration**

#### **Concept development process**

The researcher visited a number of villages, bushes, homes and various places where bees, butterflies and flowers would easily be found. The researcher made several observations of the life, behavior and characters of the bees, butterflies and the growth of flowers. This made it easier for the researcher to acquire enough knowledge which helped her practically create drawings from observation. In this, the researcher was able to capture appropriate photographs of bees, butterflies and flowers hence understanding their structure and form.

In the next stage, the researcher was able to develop several sketches of bees, butterflies and flowers as a result of observation.

In the third stage, the researcher suggested colors in the developed sketches making it easier for the final practical work.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION**

**4.1.1 Studio findings**

As the researcher pointed out in chapter three, the studio experimentations were based on the study of the different features and behaviors of bees, butterflies and flowers as sources of inspiration using beads as materials for the production of art works.



Plates 22a



Plate 22b



plate 22c

Plate : 22c  
Title : Hard work  
Media : glass beads on plywood  
Size : 123cmx87cm

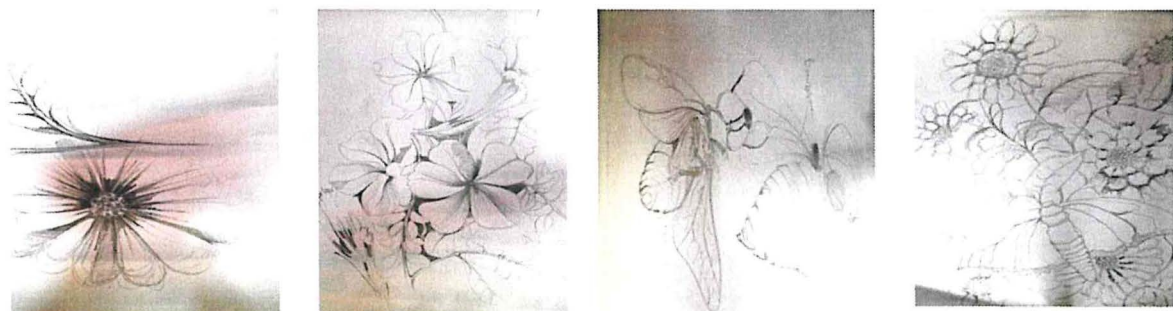
The work titled 'hard work' is a result of the researcher's studio study of flowers and bees. The works presented in plate 22a and b, are part of the designing processes for the final work in plate 22c.

In plate 22c on page 49, the researcher is symbolically using the bees as assign of hard work. Bees work collectively and through collective perseverance they collect nectar from different flowers and produce honey.

In plate 22c four bees in dark blown are presented while seeping nectar from flowers and blues signifying hope and growth.

The background is in dark blown symbolizing the soil from which flowers are grown. In this work, the bees are presented in a triangular composition to emphasize hard work as a result of consolidated efforts of the bees.

Looking at this work from bottom to toe, one realizes that the colors in the foreground are strong and those in the background are week in lighter tones to suggest growth and perspective.



Plates 23a



Plate 23b



plate 23c

Plate : 23c  
 Title : Cooperative  
 Media : glass beads on plywood  
 Size : 163cmx89

The works presented in plates 23a and b, are part of the designing process for the final work in plate 23c. In plate 23c on page 50, the researcher presents four bees in pink color seeping nector from flowers in blue and green colors.

The foreground is covered with dark brown colors and lighter yellow –browns in the background to emphasize color depth. The inter play between green and blue colors with strong dark brown in the foreground and lighter brown-yellow tones in the background, creates a sense of contrast and harmony.

Furthermore, the art work in plate 23c titled “cooperative”, the researcher is addressing the notion of cooperative as an important element which keeps people at work united. The researcher is suggesting that people need to co-operate with one another as bees do in order to achieve their goals. Therefore in this study the term cooperative is used visually to refer to work or act with another or others for a common purpose; unity in action.



Plate 24a



Plate 24b

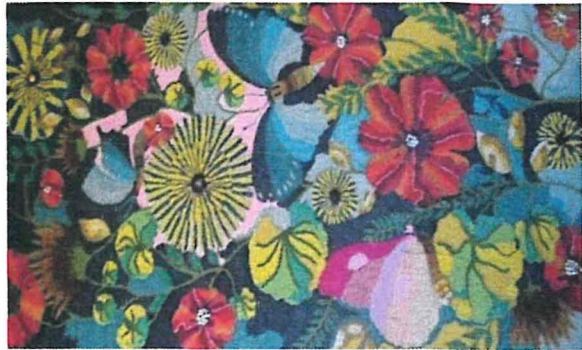


plate 24c

Plate : 24c  
 Title : Togetherness  
 Media : Glass beads on plywood  
 Size : 163cmx89cm

In plate 24a and b on page 51, the researcher presents the designing process of the final work in plate 24c. The works in plate 24a and b are drawings of flowers and bees on paper.

In plate 24c, the researcher presents bees flying with their wings spread openly, against colorful flowers in full bloom. Blues and greens dominate the entire art work.

The use of orange and yellow tones as well as pink colors against greens and blues creates a sense of contrast as the title of the art work suggest. In plate 24c the researcher is addressing the topic of togetherness as a characteristic of bees.

The school dictionary (1993) defines the word together as the state or condition of being in the company of one another or is a feeling or sense of fellowship of belonging together, as that of members or a family.<sup>46</sup> In plate 24c, three butterflies are largely presented, two in blues and one in shades of pink to create a sense of focus and to reflect the real patterns of butterflies.

Different types of beads made from polythen paper, plant seeds and wood are used. They are painted in different artificial and natural colors.

The researcher has also put emphasis on form as an element in art. These forms are inspired by the natural forms of bees and flowers.

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<sup>46</sup> Definition of togetherness, in the school dictionary (1993) published by Mac Milan mc Graw-hill School publishing company, pg 1264

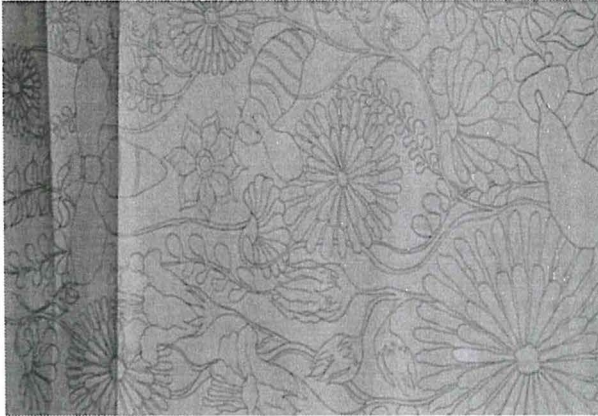
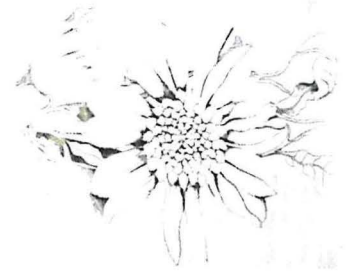


Plate 25a

plate 25b



Plate 25c

Plate : 25b  
Title : beautiful environment  
Media : glass beads on plywood  
Size : 252cmx130cm

In plate 25a on page 53, the researcher presents the designing process of the work in plate 25c. The art work is a drawing on paper. In plate 25c, the final work is presented. Different colorful beads in lighter oranges, pink, yellow and blues are presented against varying tones of brown colors which creates a sense of visual harmony.

In plate 25c, the researcher is addresses the notion of beauty

The oxford dictionary, defines “beautiful” as very pleasing to look at.

Similarly, the school dictionary 3 (1993), defines “beautiful” as the possessing qualities that please the mind or sense; beautiful has the widest application, suggesting a standard of perfection. The oxford dictionary defines “environment” as surroundings, especially as they affect people and other living things. Therefore in this work, the researchers concern is to demonstrate how beads can be used to create a beautiful environment.

In this piece of work, the researcher developed a three dimensional work of art that could be useful in everyday life. In this case the researcher made a table that is meant to be used for interior settings.



Plate 26a

Plate : 26b  
 Title : lovely butterflies  
 Media : glass beads on plywood  
 Size : 122cmx58cmx44cm  
 59cmx30cmx30cm

plate 26b

In plate 26b on page 54, the researcher presents a coffee set table whose top surfaces are decorated with colorful beads covered with a clear glass to protect them from various damages i.e. peeling off of beads, dust among others. The motifs depicted, are inspired by flowers and butterflies and hence the name “lovely butterflies”. Big and medium glass sized beads are used with the purpose of creating different surface qualities. The clear smooth glass covering the tops of the tables which allows them to be harmoniously used

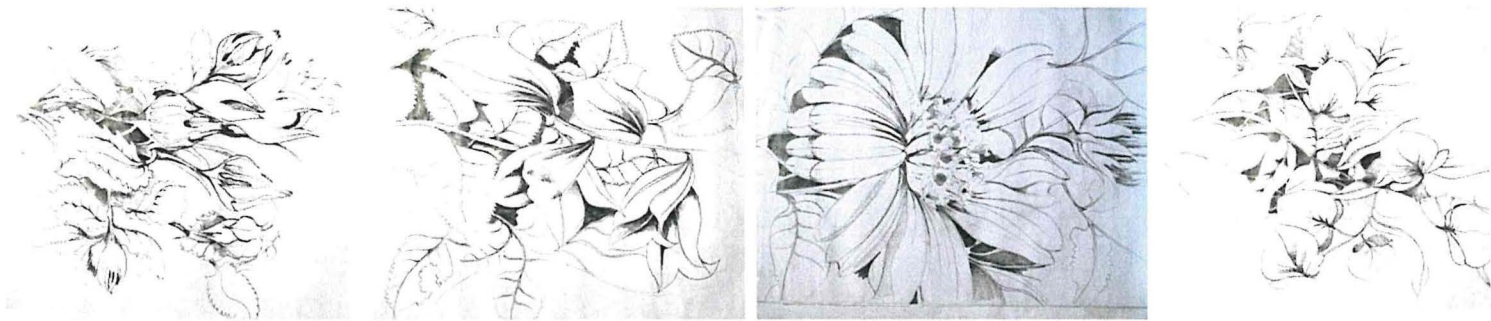


Plate 27a  
 Plate : 27  
 Title : natural environment  
 Media : glass beads on plywood  
 Size : 244cmx122cm

plate 27b

The art work in plate 27b on page 55, titled “natural environment”, the researcher is visually using flowers, leaves and branches of trees symbolically to explain the nature of the environment. Like in other works presented in this project, a sense of contrast has been achieved by giving the background harmonious browns and using contrasting colors of greens, yellow, pink and oranges to the flowers and green. This has resulted into a high sense of contrast in this



work.



Plate 28b

Title : unity

Plate : 28

Media : glass beads on plywood

Size : 222cmx61cm

In plate 28b above, the researcher presents the art work titled unity. The term unity is symbolically used to suggest being one. Unity in this work has been achieved by using

contrasting colors. Green against orange, yellow against blue and pink, Oranges against browns. The flow of design in this work also suggests forms which are connected to one another. Bees are also presented in the worker inter twined with flowers in a harmonious way. Glass beads on plywood have been used.

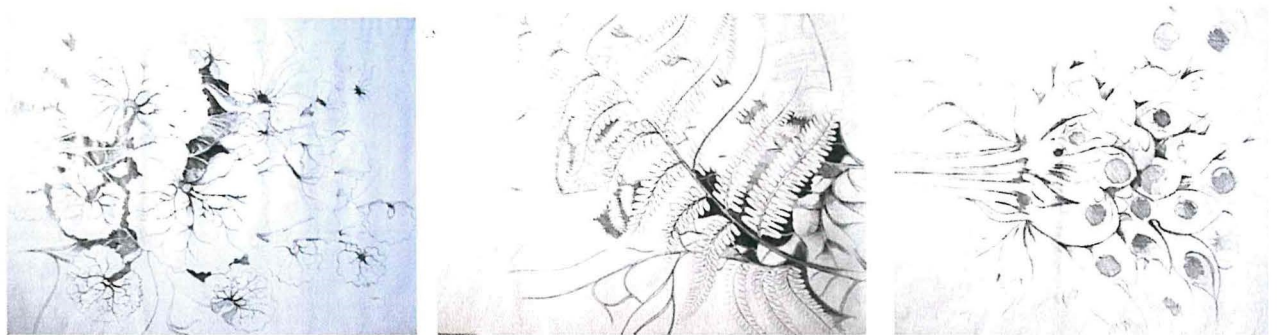


Plate 29a



Plate 29b



plate 29c

Plate : 29b  
 Title : color  
 Media : glass beads on plywood  
 Size : 168cmx93cmx80cm

The work in plate 29c above titled color, the dining table whose top is made out of beads on plywood, in this work, the researchers concern is not so much to present a dining table but rather to extend the frontiers of using beads as materials to produce art works which go beyond the traditional boundaries of art and design.

Mittler Ragans (1992) defined color as what the eye sees when sunlight or some other light bounces off an object.<sup>47</sup>

Flowers are presented in greens, blues, reds, yellows, purples, pink and greens to reflect the natural color of flowers.



Plate 30a



Plate 30b

Plate : 30b  
Title : socialization  
Media : glass beads on plywood  
Size : 222cmx61cm

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<sup>47</sup> Mittler ragans (1992) exploring art, published by the Glencoe Division of Mac Millan/McGraw-hill publishing company,pg56

In plate 30b above on page 58, titled “socialization”; the researcher used small and big sized beads symbolically to portray the message under the theme socialization. Socialization is achieved by applying psychologically numinous colors which blend into one another and create a sense of continuity.

Three butterflies are presented in blues and reds in the foreground down on the right hand side of the artwork. The bees are gathering on the yellow rose flower to suck nectar.

The presentation of bees and butterflies in this work, suggest a bond of socialization. The researcher has used beads of different sizes and colors to create this art work.



Plate 31a

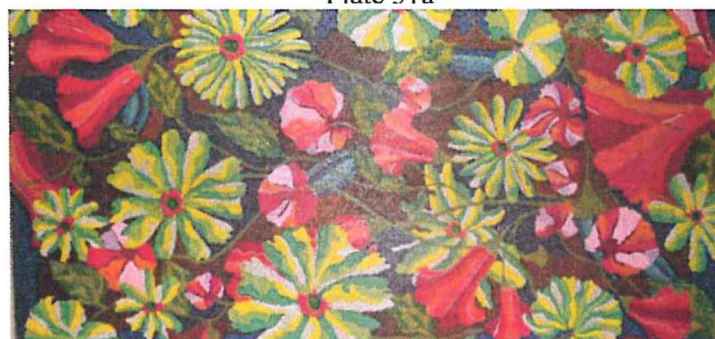


Plate 31b

Plate : 31b  
 Title : The beauty in flowers  
 Media : Glass beads on plywood  
 Size : 244cmx122cm

In plate 31b on page 59 above, the researcher presents a work titled “the beauty in flowers. The beauty in flowers is an art work inspired by the study of different flowering plants in their full blossom. The strength of this work lies in the use of contrasting and harmonious colors of different colored beads. The use of different flowers stalks in different directions and connects different parts of the flowers together.

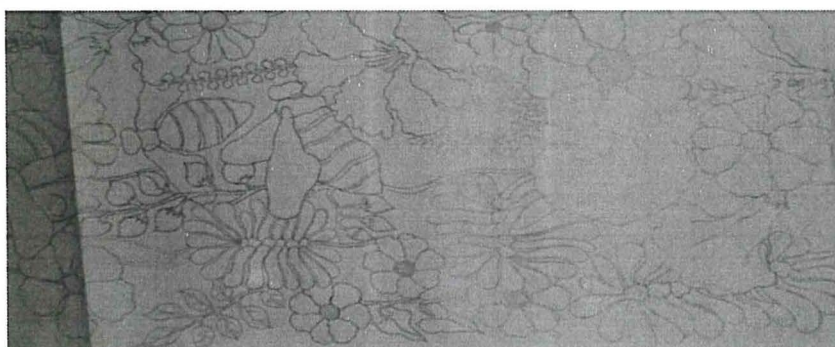
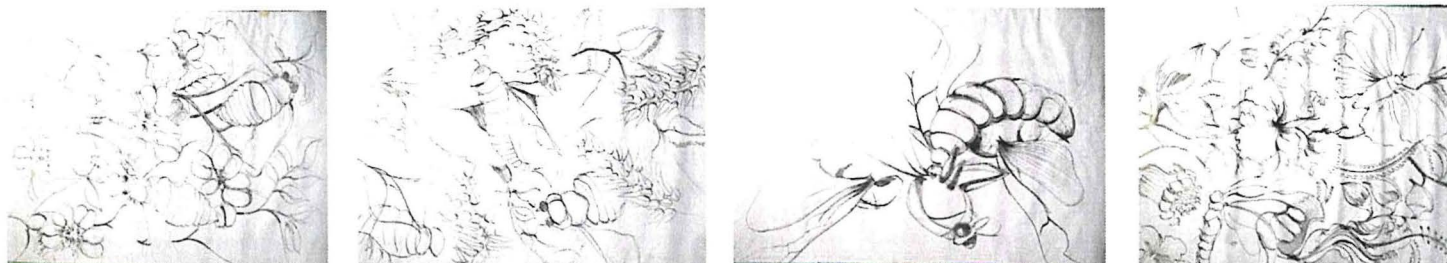


Plate 32a

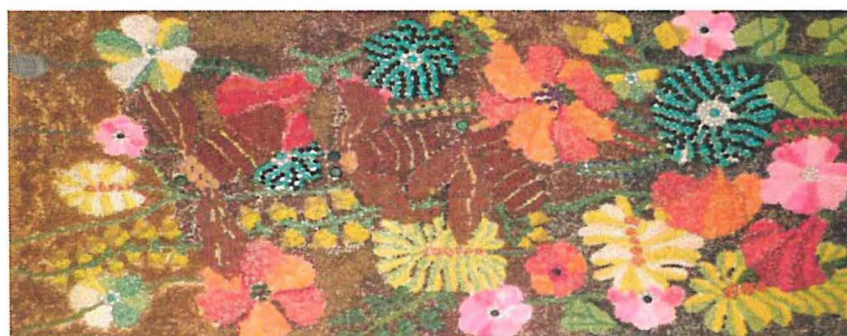
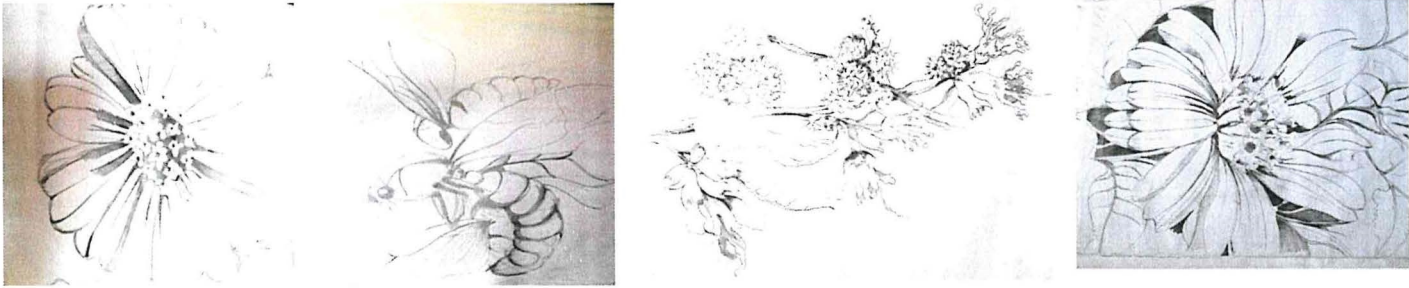


Plate 32b

Plate : 32b  
 Title : Busy Bees  
 Media : Glass Beads on Plywood  
 Size : 222cmx61cm

In plate 32b on page 60 above, the researcher analyses the work titled busy bees. Bees in brown earth colors almost fusing with the background are presented busy seeping nectar from flowers. Big brown beads made from bark cloth are protruding from the rest of flower forms on the plywood. This has been achieved by using small glass beads against big bark cloth beads.



Plates 33a



Plate 33b

Plate : 33b  
Title : texture  
Media : glass beads on plywood  
Size : 81cmx81cm

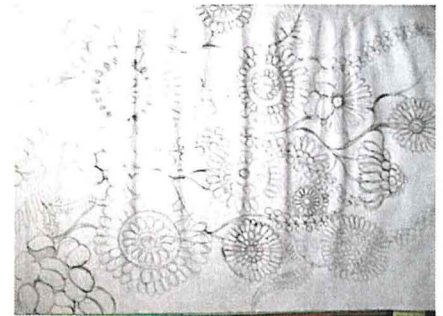
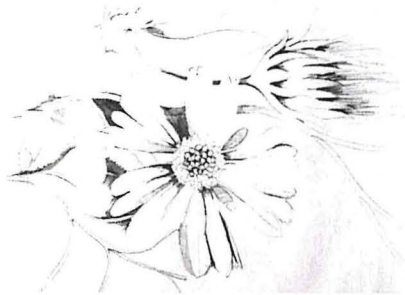


Plate 34a



Plate 34b

Plate : 34b  
Title : love for nature  
Media : glass beads on plywood  
Size : 51cmx20cmx16cm

In plate 34b on page 62 above titled “love for nature”; the researcher is addressing the love people have for their nature. The art work is presented in colors like; blue, red, yellow cream, green, pink and brown.

One big flower is clearly portrayed on both sides of the flower vase given the same colors. However, much as dark colors are used in this piece of work, light pink flowers are also used so as to harmonize the work.

The researcher has showed growth in the art work whereby the background is presented in browns from dark to light yellow. A green flower is also presented down the art work so as to symbolize the aspect of nature. Plate 35: Peaceful Flowers

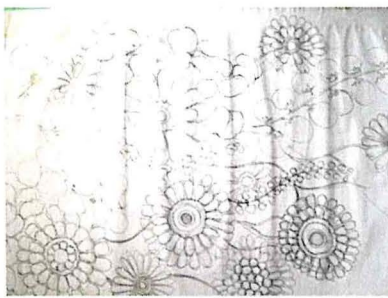


Plate 35a



Plate 35b

Plate : 35b  
Title : peaceful flowers  
Media : glass beads on fabric  
Size : 147cmx74cm

Within particular reference to multimedia crafts, in plate 35b on page 63 above titled “peaceful flowers”, the researcher is addressing how flowers can portray peace. Peace is addressed in the way the flowers are displayed and the cool colors used in the whole process which included colors like light pink, light blue, light yellow, light green among others.

Beading simply means the process of applying beads on to the fabric with the help of threads and needles.

The researcher used this technique of beading as another method of beadwork for the study. This was one of the challenging techniques the researcher used in beadwork for the whole study. In this case, the researcher faced a number of problems which included the following; there was time consuming when it came to beading since it involved picking of beads one by one with the help of the needle and threads then applying them on to the fabric.

The fabric was challenging in the whole process. This fabric was a bit hard which made it hard for the needle to penetrate through it gently which also contributed to time consuming.

The researcher also had a problem of using small spaced beads whereby many of them had small spaces in between them which could not allow the needle to pass through the small holes gently. In this case, the researcher could use a lot of force to see to it that the small needle used for beading penetrate the beads very well.

A number of colors were used in this piece of work and these included yellow, green, pink, blue and red, orange among others. This in turn helped the researcher produce a beautiful piece of work in the long run.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introductions**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. In this study, the purpose of the study was to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production.

The study was guided by the following objective,

To analyze the characteristics of beads as material for art production,

To analyze the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region,

To analyze factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production in Buganda region

To produce a body of work using beads as material

#### **5.2 Discussion**

##### **5.2.1 Overview**

As discussed in chapter four of this study, the findings are based on the study of the different features and behavior including motion of beads, butterflies and flowers, with the purpose of using them to produce work of art using beads as material.

The aesthetic beauty of crafts depends on the artist's ability to creatively manipulate features and at the same time articulate the issue of concern

#### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study sought to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production; from this, the objectives of the study were drawn. It is

with regard to these objectives that the following conclusions and recommendations were used.

### **5.3.1 The characteristics of beads as material for art production**

The researcher was able to analyze the characteristics of beads as material for art production which has not been analyzed by the visual artists. Among these are; types of beads, the material employed or used in the making of beads, the methods and techniques employed in studio exploration of bead work and the different sizes, colors and forms of beads and the aesthetic value of beads to artists and designers.

### **5.3.2 The traditional usage of beads in Buganda region**

In this, the researcher found out that artists are not well versed with the traditional usage of beads in Buganda region unlike the common glass beads used on the market by the artists today. In this, the researcher was able to analyze the;

History (origin) of bead designing in the central region of Uganda

Different forms of beads in Buganda region

Role of beads in Buganda region

Methods and techniques of bead designing in Buganda region

### **5.3.3 The factors affecting the usage of beads as material for art production among Ugandan artists.**

Within this, the researcher was able to find out the possible problems affected by the Ugandan artists in the usage of beads as material for art production, among these were; Peoples attitude towards beads, The art education system in Uganda's tertiary institutions, Availability of beads, Cost of beads, Art patronage in Uganda, Nature of beads as art materials

### **5.3.4 Producing a body of work using beads as material**

The researcher was successful in using beads as material, bees, butterflies and flowers as her sources of inspiration to produce work of art as illustrated in chapter four of this study. This required a broad span of unhindered creativity and originality of the artist. The use of specific materials like wood glue, plywood among others

The researcher's use of beads opens a new sphere of expression of visual symbolism in using beads as material where informally trained artists are using beads to produce crafts such as jewelry and religious related art facts for shrines, the formally trained artists have not fully exploited the use of beads as material for art production yet the current postmodern era provides an opportunity to use any form of material which is available for art production.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATION**

Basing on the findings of the study and the drawn conclusions, the research strongly recommends; there is a need for more research into other sources of inspiration that would help in the usage of beads as material for art production.

There is also need to broaden the curriculum of multimedia crafts at higher and lower levels of learning to sensitize artists not only on the usage of beads but also other art materials.

The study as presented has not exhaustively used all the forms of beads for art production through multimedia crafts. The researcher on this note recommends for further exploration into used of other forms of beads as material for art production.

The government needs to fund the visual and performing art industry by sponsoring and initiating workshops aimed at improving skills amongst the artists in Uganda.

The artists in Uganda should be able to access art materials that are free from taxes. Therefore the government should not tax art materials, this will help artists who are poor also to access cheap art materials.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

(RE: introduction of Mrs. Nakato Mary Gorret, Registration number  
2010/U/HD/110/MAID)

**(For questionnaire)**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MULTIMEDIA ARTISTS**

#### **A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MULTIMEDIA ARTISTS REGARDING MULTIMEDIA CRAFTS AND THE USE OF BEADS AS MATERIAL FOR ART PRODUCTION**

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this study is to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production.

Please answer the questions in the space provided.

Your answers will help build a precise image regarding artists in Uganda that have used beads as material to produce work of art.

If you need any further information regarding this questionnaire please dial these numbers.

0772197897

0703226050

Thank you very much.

#### **Particulars of respondent**

1. Title (optional)
2. Sex
  - Male

- Female

**Academic Background**

3. University of study/ Awards.....  
.....  
.....

**Professional artists**

4. As an artist who specialized in multimedia briefly explain your objectives/reasons for multimedia crafts .....  
.....  
.....
5. Briefly explain the materials that are commonly used in multimedia crafts.....  
.....  
.....
6. What are the methods and techniques commonly used in multimedia crafts.....  
.....  
.....

## **APPENDIX C**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRACTICING ARTISTS**

Kyambogo University

P.o box 1

Kampala, Uganda

Tel.....Fax.....

Email: .....

### **AQUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRACTICING ARTISTS REGARDING THEIR USE OF BEADS AS MATERIAL FOR ART PRODUCTION**

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this study is to explore the studio possibilities of experimenting with beads as material for art production.

Please answer the questions in the space provided.

Your answers will help build a precise image regarding artists in Uganda that have used beads as material to produce work of art.

If you need any further information regarding this questionnaire please dial these numbers.

0772197897

0703226050

Thank you very much

1. Title (optional)

2. Sex

- Male
- Female

**Self taught/lay artists.**

7. To what extent have the visual artists used beads as material for art production.....

.....

.....

8. Briefly explain the different types of beads commonly used by artists Uganda in general and Buganda region in particular.....

.....

.....

9. What types of social issues do you address through multimedia crafts?

.....

.....

.....

10. What are the reasons and the philosophy behind your multimedia crafts

.....

.....

11. What/who are your sources of influence for using beads as material for art production in multimedia crafts.....

.....

## APPENDIX D

### INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

**Lectures who teach multimedia crafts in selected universities and other lectures that have vast knowledge in it.**

- Kaggwa Michael, lecturer for multimedia crafts in the department of art and industrial design, Nkumba University.
- Kizito Maria Kasule, lecturer for sculpture and painting in the department of art and industrial design, Makerere University ,Kyambogo university and Naggenda International Academy of Art and Design.
- Kekimuli Joan, lecturer for painting in the department of art and industrial design, Kyambogo University.
- Wathum Edwin, the chairman post graduate committee and lecturer in the department of art and design, Kyambogo University.
- Mr Remegious Kigongo Mugerwa secretary Uganda museum of art and crafts.