SELF-PORTRAITS IN ENIGMATIC CONTEXTS.

By

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the MFA and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor is it material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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(Supervisor)   Signature   Date

Mr.Kwaku Boafo Kissiedu   ………………..   ………………..

(Head of Department)   Signature   Date
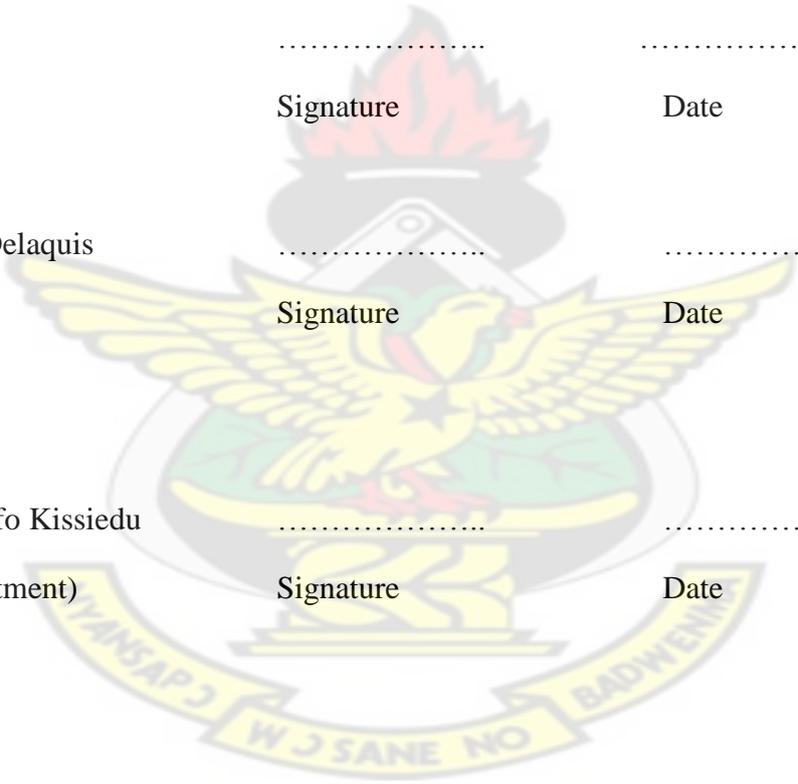
ABSTRACT

The artist/researcher in this research is applying a seemingly illogical impossibility of juxtaposing his own likeness on recognizable historical characters to create a sense of enigma and to awaken the sensibilities of other researchers in the realm of psychology so far as irrationality of the modern psyche and existence are concerned .He starts by borrowing portraits of recognizable personalities from European artistic sources as the basis for his argument. However, reference is made also to sculpture with regard to African societies like Egypt, Nok, Ife and Benin portraiture. The images selected by the artist for this painterly experiments have been categorized under three phases. They include;

a) Phase one - transposing the artist's features onto an original historical character.

b) Phase two - imposing the artist's own innate style or technique onto the original image.

c) Phase three –imitating the style of the original painting or image which inspired the artist's prototype.

An artist or researcher's philosophical comment is provided to help rationalize the use of enigmatic imagery in this project by questioning and answering some irrational and illogical actions in man's existence. He tries to establish the link between this experiment and the philosophy of Western art movements like Futurism, Dadaism and Surrealism by spelling out the rationale behind this project and reviewing of works by famous artists who belong to the above -mentioned movements. The experiments are conducted using modern artist oil as well as industrial commercial paints as the main media .Illustrations in photographic sequential images have been provided to help the reader gain a rough idea of how the artist arrived at the final works. The next section of the thesis seeks to analyze and describe the results of the

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artist's output, where the artist's works are arranged side by side with the original image for easy comparisons.

The eighteen paintings produced by the artist projects the researcher in different character roles made up as an African ancestor , an emperor, a king, famous artists, an Italian Renaissance magistrate, just to mention a few. Details of this project are spelt out in four chapters with the appropriate sub- headings under each chapter.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God for granting me the strength, wisdom and knowledge to undertake this project. My sincere gratitude is extended to Professor Ato Delaquis, my research supervisor for his devotion, dedication and guidance throughout the project. I am also grateful to friends in and outside my department who contributed and influenced me more than words can describe. Special thanks go to my colleagues who listened and debated the intensions I wished to pursue.

Finally and most importantly, I am most grateful to my family for their physical, spiritual and financial support without which this dream of mine would not have materialized.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Portrait painting has been one of the ways of depicting resemblance of people for various reasons. These may be for recognition, pride, vanity, decoration, nostalgia, recording purposes, aesthetic pleasure, psychological evaluation of features; etc.This research aims at using the researcher's own portrait by projecting his image in various historical modes for the sake of novelty and other irrational reasons.

Portraits of personalities in European history will be used to establish the link of this researcher's painterly experiments with adaptations from European artistic sources. This is because European art history has a long tradition of techniques, styles and subject in painting worth tapping. Some selected portraits produced in these periods will be used as a basis for the argument of applying the researcher's image as a subject for the project. However, since European art history is broad some portraits painted in European historical context will be selected for the researcher's experiment .Since Africa does not have an extensive tradition in portrait painting, only meagre historical references would be made to the continent. References however would be made to sculpture in regard to Egypt, Nok, Ife and Benin portraiture. In addition to the above, this project will be executed in three stylistic trends. They include;

- Phase one – transposing my features onto an original historical character or image.

- Phase two - imposing my own innate style or technique onto the original image.

- Phase three - Imitating the style of the original image which inspired my prototype.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Irrationality has been one of the means of artistic novelty and expression of contemporary international art. The researcher is applying an illogical impossibility of justaposing his own likeness on recognised historical characters to create a sense of enigma. How to make this exchange convincing is the problem and succeeding implies achieving results.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. The aim of the project is to create an enigma through the paintings that would be puzzling to a viewer .It would awaken other researchers in the realm of psychology so far as irrationality of modern sensibilities and existence are concerned.

2. To write a report on the project work.

JUSTIFICATION OF OBJECTIVES

1. Exploration of styles and techniques in international modern art will help enlighten people about some radical methods and styles, themes and techniques used in post – modern art: how they can be employed for contemporary Ghanaian art. Exploration into historical portraiture would also enlighten African painters who prefer the smooth technique.

2. The report will serve as a reference material.

DELIMITATION

The project will be limited to the use of oil paint on canvas.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Historical review and descriptive research will be adopted to give explanation of various studies related to the project.

LIST OF TERMS

Self portrait -   a portrait of one's self.

Technique - practical method of art applied to some particular work.

Painting - an act of creating a picture using paint or ink.

Modern - present day relating or belonging to the present period.

Historical -   formerly existing relating to the past, describing the past.

Portraiture - the act or practice of making portraits.

Style - a way of doing something, especially a way regarded as expressing a particular attitude or typifying a particular period.

Enamel - a paint that gives a shiny smooth finish when dry.

Palette Knife – a knife with a flat, flexible blade and no cutting edge, used to mix and spread paint.

Artist- somebody who creates art, especially painting or sculpture.

Juxtapose –to place two or more things together, especially in order to suggest a link between them or emphasis the contrast between them.

Transcribe – to write out an exact copy of something.

Superimpose – to place something such as a transparent image on or over something else.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR RESEARCH

1. MFA studio

2. Faculty of Fine Art library

3. Main University Library

4. The Internet

5. My own private premises serving as studio.

CHAPTER 2 (LITERATURE REVIEW)

Though Africa has a long tradition in portraiture, generally in sculpture and painting it was not extensively recorded as European tradition of portraiture. The famous cubist painter, Pablo Picasso imbibed African sculptural idioms to formulate cubism which is two dimensional .The researcher will apply the same idea in imbibing the past great portraits in both painting and sculpture into a contemporary context. The researcher will take inspiration from selected famous paintings of the old masters as well as sculpture from the African continent. Considering the fact that Africa does not have a long tradition in portrait painting, the researcher is forced to take inspiration from European portrait painting. Due to globalization the world is becoming smaller, for that reason there is cross cultural interactions, therefore the researcher has no qualms borrowing aspects of European or Western Art for his own digestion just as Picasso did vise versa with African art.

Segy (1975, p 118) stated that, "African art at its best is aesthetically comparable to the product of the best periods in history of art". Considering the level of craftsmanship in the art works of Egypt, Nok, Ife and Benin Cultures, Segy was right to compare African art to the World History of Art. African art is mainly produced considering the belief of the society in which it is produced. The above societies thus Egypt, Nok, Ife and Benin cultures have produced numerous artworks which serve various functions in their societies.

Egypt can be located in the north eastern part of Africa. Artworks produced by the Egyptians includes the Sphinx, Pyramids , Hierakonpolis ,Bust of Nefertiti, Plate of Narmer and the Death Mask of Tutankhamen, just to mention a few. Having studied pictures of artworks

mentioned above, the researcher considers that the most appropriate Egyptian artwork for juxtopsitioning his own likeness on recognisable historical character is the Death Mask of Tutankhamen.

FIGURE 1
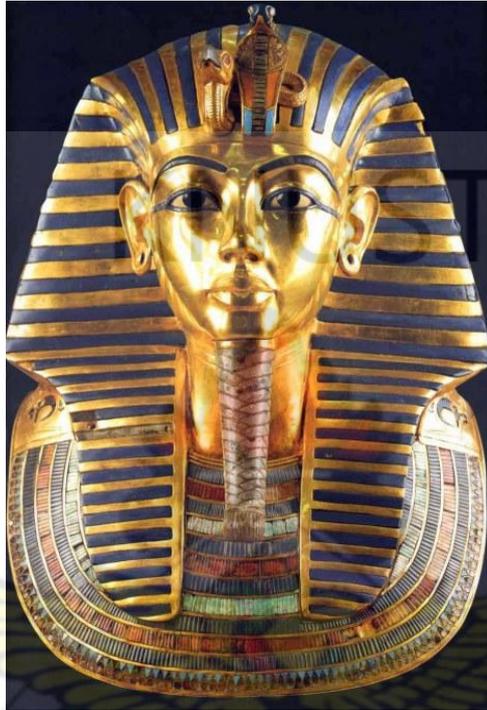
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tutankhamen

Title: Death Mask of Tutankhamen

Medium: Gold, coloured glass and semiprecious stones.

Size: 54cm high.

Adams (1994) observes that, Tutankhamen's mask was made up of solid gold, blue stone and coloured glass. The blue glass was known as" Lapis Lazuli" in Egypt. According to Adams, the Egyptians valued the stone because it had to be imported from Iran and Afghanistan. From the researcher's analysis, Tutankhamen's Death Mask is moulded from the head to the bust, while the blue stone is seen arranged linearly .However, the blue glass on the top side of

the head gear downwards are horizontal. On the forehead of the mask are a cobra and a

vulture, while a horn- like object is fixed to the chin of the Pharaoh. The lower side of the

head cloth which drops down to the chest represents the wings of the gods. The emblems

seen on the forehead, thus a cobra and a vulture are supposed to protect the King from evil

spirits. From the chest to the base are coloured glass which are red, orange and green. The

researcher dreams he would have a golden- like face to be admired by people around him like

Tutankhamen's Death Mask.

Fagg (1959) also believes that, the Nok Culture was the earliest manufacturer of terracotta in

sub –Sahara Africa and came into existence around 1000Bc. It is believed that Nok culture

developed into the Yoruba Kingdom of Ife.The Culture also produces images of animals as

part of their art works, for which the purpose is still not known. One of their most fascinating

artworks is their Human head in terra-cotta. Features associated with Nok Culture sculpture

head includes, the treatment of the eyes, which forms a triangular shape with eyebrow above

looking like an oval cut into two. The lips are slightly opened creating a hollow circle while

the pupil on the other hand is pierced. The straight nose and sloping forehead are all

characteristics of the Nok culture sculpture heads. One fascinating feature on the sculpture

piece is the representation of the hairstyle. This can be seen looking like mountains .The artist

wished his image or head will be given much reverence and attention like the Nok culture

head, so that he will feel noble and a little pompous.

Segy (1975, p188) stated that, "Ife culture was the source and spiritual centre of the Yoruba

nation". Ife is an ancient Yoruba city in South–western Nigeria .Most of the art works

produced by the society were made of Bronze and Terra-cotta. It is believed that the lost wax

technique was the most sophisticated method of casting while most of the heads had similar

styles and designs. Looking at the images of terra-cotta heads, there are incisions on the faces. Holes are seen along the hair lines on the forehead, mouth and around the chin area.

It is believed that the holes created on the faces of the terra-cotta heads held human hair. This is one of the few sculpture heads which attracted the researcher's attention and will therefore be borrowed for this project. The eyes are depicted opened but the pupils are not clearly seen while the nose and mouth of the figure are depicted to look real such that it attracts attention of the viewer. Ife terra-cotta heads are given thick necks as a strong base for the head to rest on. The artist hypothetically dreams he had features like the Ife sculpture head.

FIGURE 2   **FIGURE 3**

Source: http://hum.lss.wisc.edu/hjdrewal/Nok.html

Medium: Terra-cotta   , Size: Life Size   Medium: Terra-cotta, Size: Life Size

Figures 2 and 3 are example of Nok culture sculpture heads described in the first paragraph of page 7.

The pictures on page 9, labelled Figure 4 and 5 are examples of sculpture heads produced by the Ife society.

FIGURE 4　　　　　　　　**FIGURES 5**

Source: http://www.afrikanet.info/menu/kultur/datum/2009/06/23/are-major-africa-art-_exhibitions-only-for-the-western-world-the-case-of-ife-art-exhibiton.

Medium: Terra-cotta　　　　　　　　　　　Medium: Terra-cotta

Size: Life size　　　　　　　　　　　　　Size: Life size

Ezra (1992, p1) stated that, "Benin art is made to glorify the divine King or Oba and to honour the great Kings of the past" .This means that the Benin culture produced their artworks to serve their rulers and ancestors. It is the dream and wish of the researcher to have his image glorified just as the Benin glorified their rulers. Most of the heads produced were life size, where some of the heads were depicted wearing crowns carefully designed with cross- hatching- like effect befitting a King or a traditional ruler. The Benin artist made marks

on the forehead and sometimes around the cheeks of the figure. Some of the heads have vertical marks all over the face, whiles the eyes are depicted widely opened with the pupil. The nose, nostrils and lips are also designed beautifully to look real. Sometimes beads are depicted around the neck of the figure such that the mouth is almost covered. It is believed that if the mouth is left bare the power of the ruler will be too great. The figure is sometimes given a thick neck to act as a base for the head to rest on.

Furthermore, the artist wishes his face will have a brass or bronze- like effect and the face will shine when polished. The pictures below labelled, Figure 6, 7 and 8 represents sculpture heads produced by the Benin culture.

FIGURE 6 **FIGURES 7**

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benin art.

Size: Life Size

FIGURE 8

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benin art.

Medium: Bronze

Size: Life size

To add to the above, it is a fact that portrait painting is a genre in painting and has been accepted in our society after colonial rulers left us that art- form. College trained artists, street artists and other artisans are practising it. The researcher in the past has undertaken portrait painting as a project in his field of study. The images labelled figures 9 and 10 below are examples of portrait painting projects undertaken by the researcher. The two images are made up of different styles and techniques. The style used in painting figure 9 is the artist own innate style, the brush strokes while figure 10 is also made up of the classical style of

painting. These styles will however be employed in some painterly experiments which will be carried out later.

<div align="center">
FIGURE 9   FIGURE 10
</div>
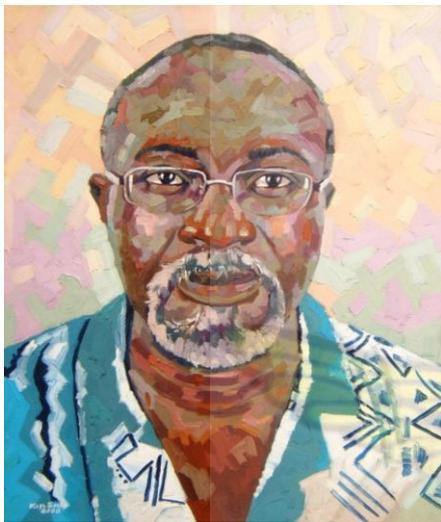
Title: Mr. Benjamin Offei Nyarko,   Title: Mr. and Mrs Prempeh,

Size: 99cmx89cm (36inx35in)   Size: 152cm x122cm (60in x48in)

Medium: Oil on canvas   Medium: Oil on Canvas

Furthermore, in the next section of Chapter 2, the researcher displays pictures of art works which will be used as basis for his argument. Pictures of works by African societies like Egypt, Nok, Ife and Benin will be displayed together with paintings of recognisable historical characters by European artist.

PICTURES FOR THE RESEARCHER'S ARGUMENT

FIGURE 11
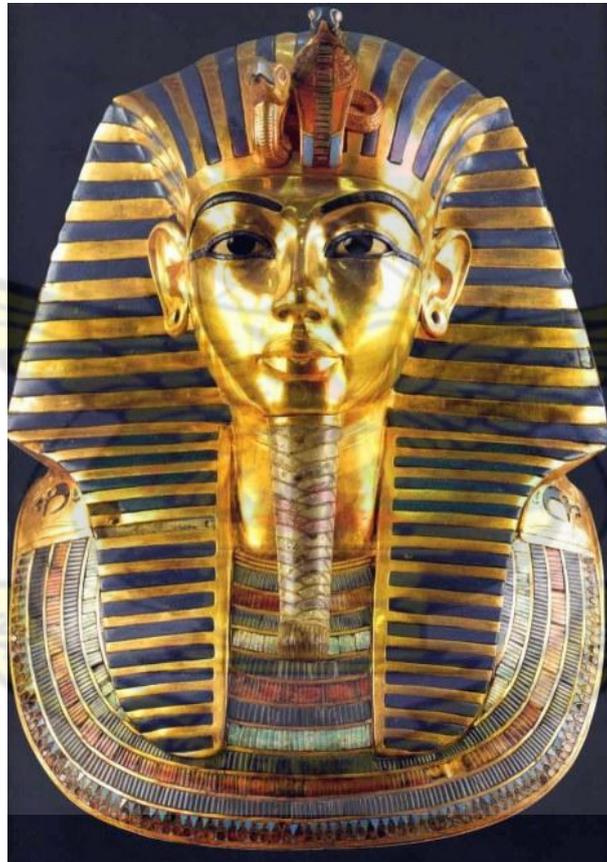
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tutankhamumm

Title: Death Mask of Tutankhamen

Medium: Gold, coloured glass and semiprecious stones.

Size: 54cm high.

The image above is the Golden Death Mask of Tutankhamen an ancient Egyptian

Pharoah,which has been described in pages 5and 6 of Chapter 2.

FIGURE 12

Source: http:// .Iss.wisc.edu/hjdrewal/Nok.html
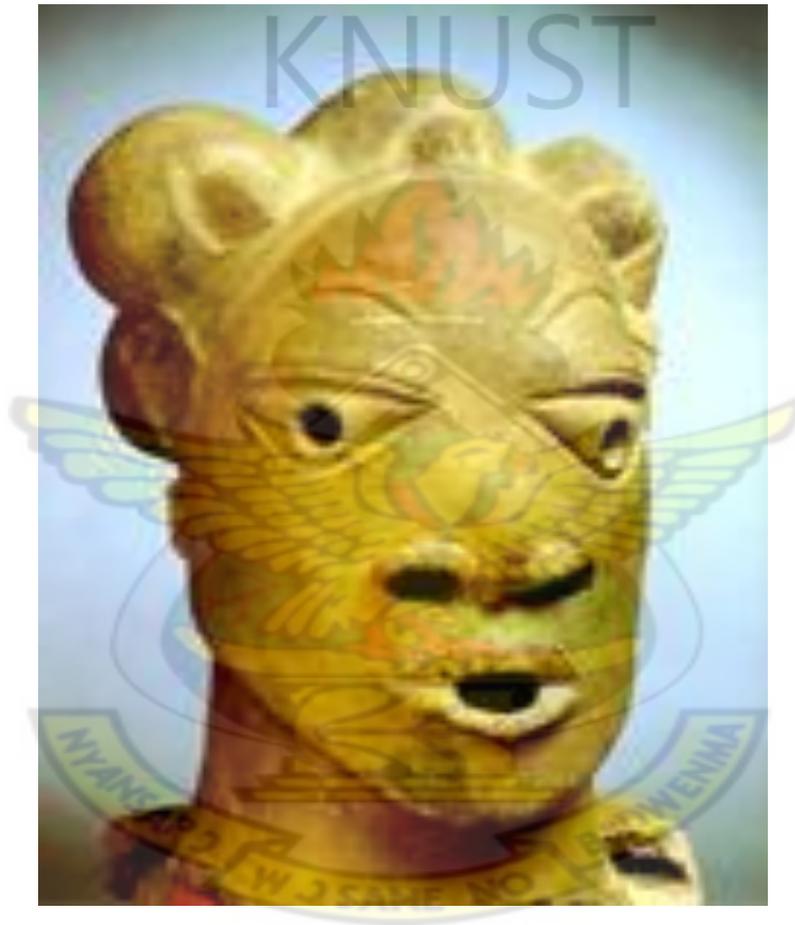
Title: A Sculpture piece from the Nok culture

Medium: Terra-cotta

Size: Life Size

The image labelled Figure 12 is one of the sculpture pieces chosen by the researcher for his painterly experiment.

FIGURE 13

Source: http://wysinger.homestead.com/benin.html

Title: Benin Sculpture Head

Medium: Bronze

Size: Life Size

Figure 13 is Benin sculpture head which has already been described .This picture has been

categorised under phase one of this painterly experiment.

FIGURE 14

Source:The-western-world-the-case-of-ife-art-exhibition/

Title: Ife Sculpture

Medium: Terra-cotta

Size: Life Size

Figure 14 is an image of Ife sculpture head described by the researcher in Chapter2 which has also been classified under phase 1.

FIGURE 15

Source: http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fi%C8%99ier:Gilbert Stuart William Portrait of

GeorgeWashinton.jpg

Title: Portrait of George Washington (1755-1828)

Artist: Gilbert Stuart Williamstown

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 73.5cmx61.1cm (29inx24in)

Above is an image of a famous painting of George Washington. The researcher has provided a source where the picture can be found.

FIGURE 16

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frans Hals

Title: Laughing Calvalier (1624)

Artist: Frans Hals

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 83cm x 67cm (33inx26in)

Figure 16 is a masterpiece of the Laughing Cavalier. Since the painting is very famous the researcher thinks there is no need to repeat what art historians have said instead, the source, title, artist, size and medium have been provided.

FIGURE 17

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas Gainsborough.

Title: The Blue Boy (1770)

Artist: Thomas Gainsborough

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 178cm x 122cm (70.08 in x 48.03in)

The Blue Boy is one of the paintings classified under phase 3 by the researcher.

FIGURE 18

Source: http://www.azerbaijanrugs.com/mp/eworth1.htm.

Title: Henry VIII, (1565)

Artist: Hans Eworth

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 229cm x 124.1 cm (90inx48in)

The image of King Henry VIII needs no introduction by the artist or researcher. The artist has provided all important details of the painting above.

FIGURE 19

Source: http://pablo-picasso.paintings.name/blue-period/gallery/self-portrait.php

Title: Self portrait in Blue period (1904)

Artist: Pablo Picasso

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: Not available

The image above is a Blue period Self portrait painting by Pablo Picasso which is a phase one category.

FIGURE 20
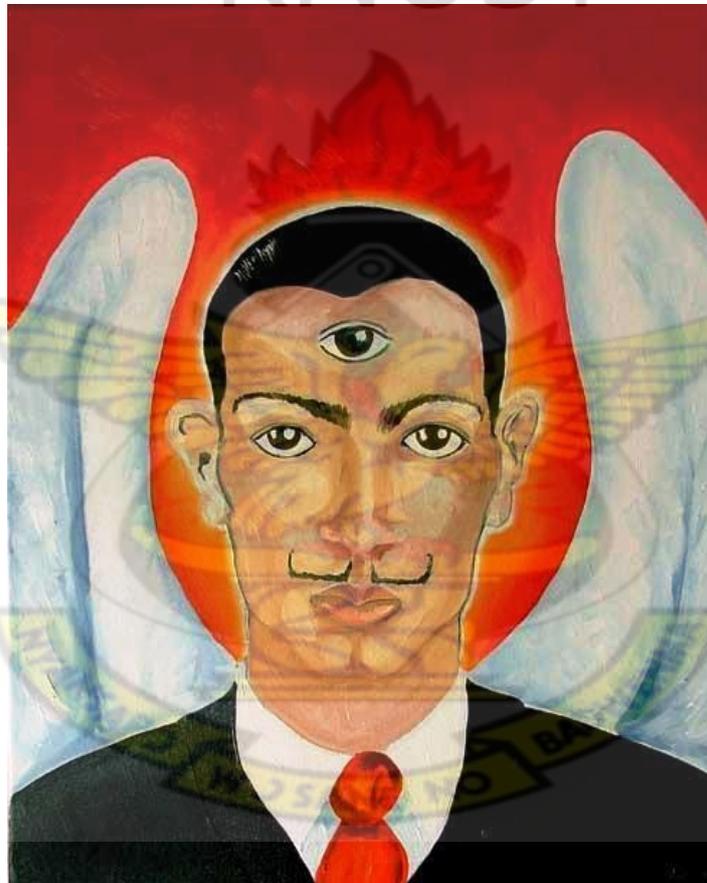
Source:http://www.allisoncarmicheal.com/famous-portrait-paintings.

Title: Portrait of Salvador Dali

Artist: Salvador Dali

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 55cm x 46cm (22inx18in)

This is an image of the famous surrealist painter Salvador Dali which is classified under phase one by the artist.

FIGURE 21

Source: A History of Western art. Laurie Schneider Adams

Title: Napoleon Enthroned

Artist: Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 260cm x 163cm (102.36 in x 64.17in)

"Napoleon Enthroned" is a famous masterpiece of western art. The researcher will be imitating the style of this painting or image in his painterly experiment.

FIGURE 22

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portrait_of_Doge_Leonardo_Loredan

Title: Portrait of Doge Leonardo Leredan

Artist: Giovanni Bellini

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 61.6 cm × 45.1 cm (24.3 in × 17.8 in)

This picture is also another famous painting by the renaissance painter Bellini. The design in the costume is so beautiful it galvanised the artist to select it for the project.

FIGURE 23
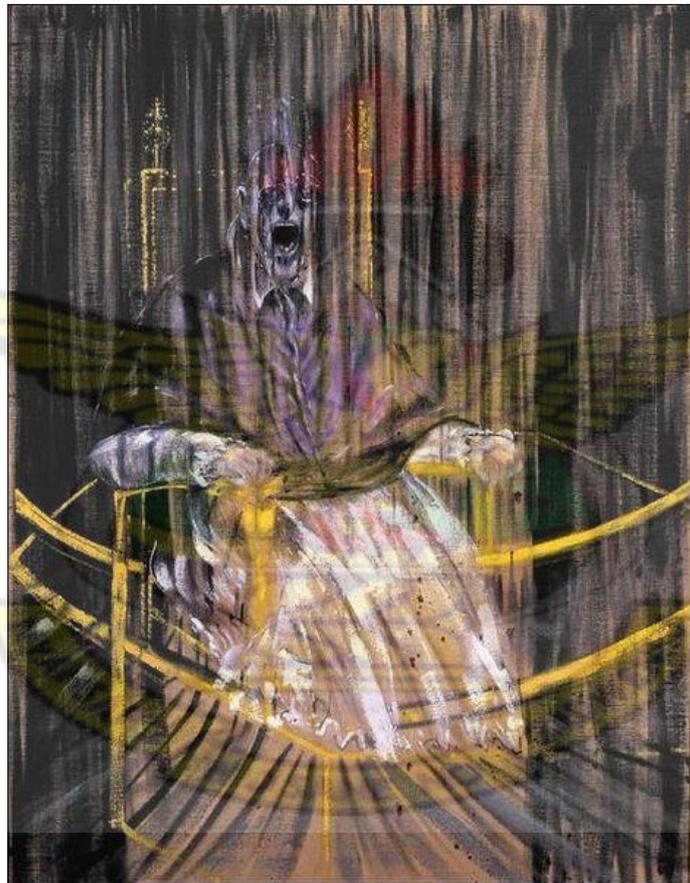
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Study after Vel%C3%Alzquez%27s Portrait of Pope Innocent X

Title: Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X (1953)

Artist: Francis Bacon

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 153cm x118cm (60inx46in)

The picture above is an image of a painting by the Irish-born British artist, Francis Bacon which is noted as one of his best paintings. It is also part of phase three category.

FIGURE 24
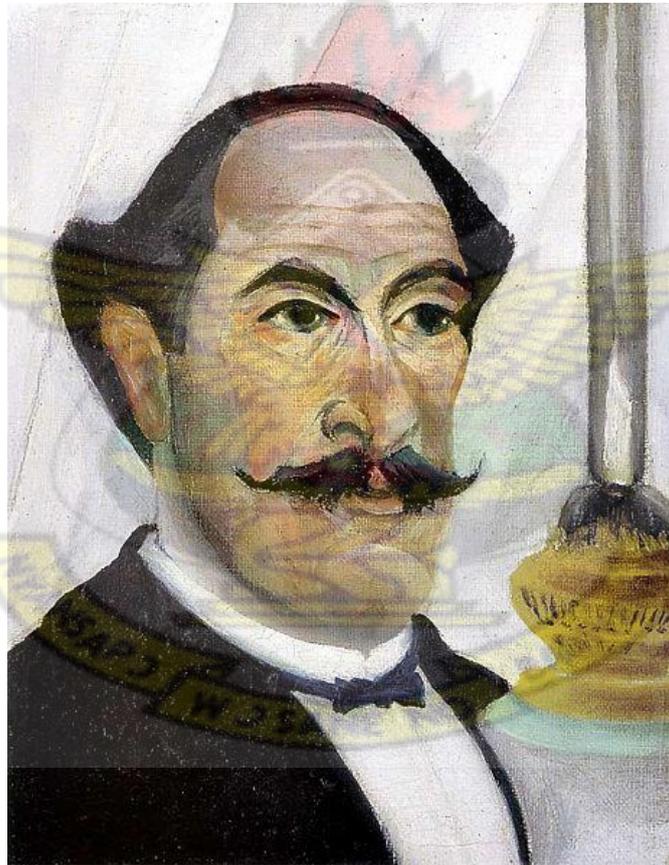
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Henri_Rousseau_-_Self-

portrait_of_the_Artist_with_a_Lamp.jpg

Title: Henri Rousseau-Self –portrait of the Artist with a Lamp

Artist: Henri Rousseau

Medium: oil on canvas

Size: 23cmx19cm (9.06 in x 7.48in)

This is a painting by the self -taught French painter Henri Rousseau which is also a phase tree category.

FIGURE 25

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco Goya.

Title: Porträt des Francisco de Goya (1826)

Artist: Vicente Lopez

Size: 93 × 75 cm (36.6 × 29.5 in)

Medium: Oil on Canvas

This picture is an image of a painting of Goya, another famous painter in his old age by a Spanish painter.

FIGURE 26
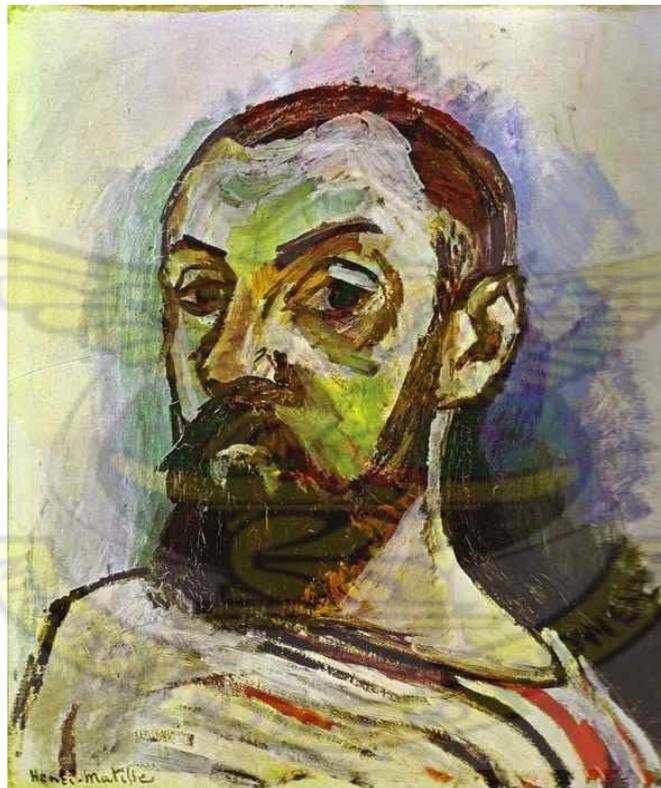
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-Portrait in a striped T-shirt

Title: Self –Portrait in a Strip T-shirt (1901-1908)

Artist: Henri Matisse

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 76 cm × 64 cm (30inx25in)

Henri Matisse needs no introduction when painting is discussed. This image represents a self
portrait of the artist. The artist has provided details of the painting and one of the sources
where it can be found.

FIGURE 27

Source: http://www.vincentvangoghart.net/Bandaged-Ear.html
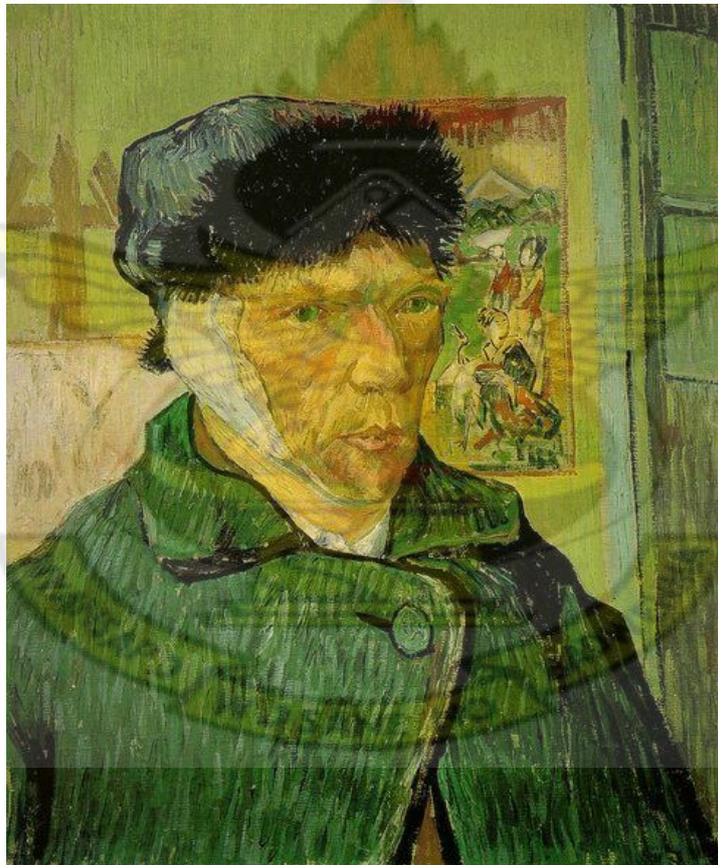
Title: Self-portrait in Bandaged Ear

Artist: Vincent Van Gogh

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 60cm x 49 cm (23inx19in)

The picture above is a masterpiece by Vincent Van Gogh   painted during his mental illness.

FIGURE 28
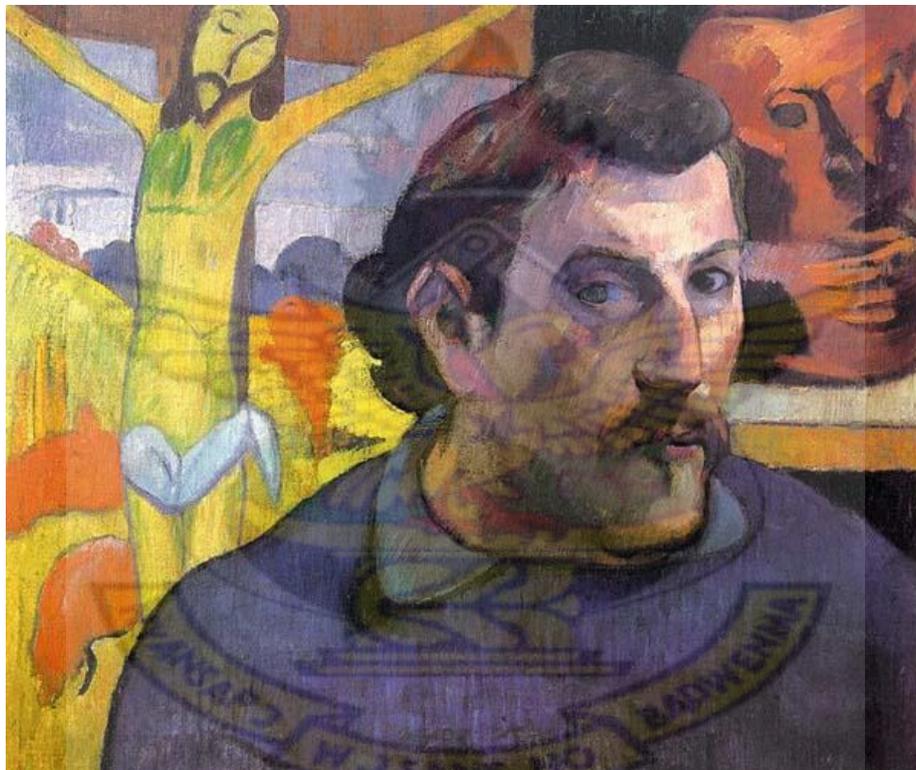
Source: http://enwikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gauguinportrait 1889.JPG

Title: Portrait of the Artist with the Yellow Christ (1889)

Artist: Paul Gauguin

Medium: Oil on canvas

Paul Gauguin cannot be left out when impressionist painters are mentioned. This image is one of the few categorized under phase two.

RESEARCHER/ARTIST'S PHILOSOPHICAL COMMENTS.

Why do we do things we cannot explain?

Why does man try to explain things or actions which are irrational?

Maybe to defend himself for acting irrational.

Sometimes certain actions are better off not explained or defended.

Why? Because words cannot explain those actions.

In that sense what do you do?

You either write poetry, express it in painting, or you compose music.

Why is the researcher applying an illogical impossibility of justaposing his own likeness on recognized historical characters?

"Irrationality" and "illogicality" has been part of man's activities since his existence. It is sometimes difficult to explain or find reason to what we do, but man tries to explain most of his actions when he tries and feels the result is nonsense. Hints of "irrational" and "illogical" actions include:

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(a) Absent-mindedly scratching the head where there is no itch.

(b) Picking a flower as one walks by a hedge.

(c) Movements of the body and limbs as one dance.

(d) Talking to oneself etc etc.

"Irrationality" and "illogicality" can be attributed to some creative disciplines of which art is a major contributor .Some Art movements like Futurism, Dadaism and Surrealism have contributed immensely to the act of applying illogicality and irrationality in their practice.

Read (1959) observed that, the Futurist movement sought to turn down all traditions in art. Rather the movement praised contemporary life by stressing on two dominant forces which are machines and movement. He further makes it known that the Dadaist movement also mocked the practice of their time through meaningless performances, poetry, and visual art. This was to react to the brutality of the First World War in an age that seems meaningless.

Also, the Surrealist, which evolved from Dadaism, dealt with the scope of dreams, the unconscious mind through the creation of poetry, motion pictures, and visual arts. In short, the artists of these movements were moving away from the norm, thus they were gravitating away from the conventional way of perceiving and appreciating things. The same will this researcher move away from the norm by justaposing his own likeness on recognizable historical characters which is more or less irrational. The researcher, will for example, take a painting of Napoleon Enthroned, and paint his own image wearing the robes of Napoleon. The researcher was inspired to use the powers of the recognized historical characters to

project himself because it would be an impossibility that is only rational in a dream, but ridiculous in actuality because it is impossible in life.

Like the famous Belgian Surrealist painter, Rene Magritte, who is noted for justaposing ordinary objects in unusual contexts by painting an image of a pipe which communicates a sense of mystery by giving it an unusual title.

Adams (1994, p16), observed in Magritte's painting, The Betrayal of Images as a "Deceptive nature of pictorial illusion".

The image in short is a realistic depiction of a pipe. Underneath the pipe are the words "Ceci n est pas une pipe", which means" this is not a pipe". From the picture the artist is saying it is only a picture of a pipe and not a real pipe. A real pipe is three dimensional while this picture is two dimensional. Also tobacco cannot be put or fixed in it for one to smoke. The same way the researcher will be posing or appearing as Napoleon in his clothes wearing his royal regalia .It will not be Napoleon but the researcher. People will not pay homage to the researcher as they did to Napoleon, rather the viewers will have the opportunity of appreciating the pictorial quality of the researcher in Napoleon's robe.

FIGURE 29

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:MagrittePipe.jpg

Title:Ceci n'est pas une pipe

Artist:Rene Magritte

Another famous Surrealist artist, Marcel Duchamp painted a picture of Mona Lisa with beard. It is very rare to see a woman in beard however there are exceptions in societies. Thus some women may be seen having traces of hair under the chin or a moustache. Of course in such cases the mass of hair cannot be compared to that of a man. Some scientists over the years have proved that such women have trace of male hormones. In the case of Mona Lisa she was not noted to have traces of hair under her chin, else Leonardo Da Vinci would have depicted it in the original painting. The only reason why Duchamp gave her a beard was to make the picture look ridiculous.

FIGURE 30

Artist; Marcel Duchamp's version Mona Lisa

Size; 19.7cmx12.4cm

Medium; Pencil on a reproduction of Mona Lisa

Furthermore, the famous Cubist painter, Pablo Picasso cannot be left out as far as this project is concerned.

Picasso for a period worked in a style which was influenced by African sculpture and for that matter borrowed some features for his painting   of Les Demoiselle d' Avignon. In this painting, Picasso took advantage of the freedom at the time to treat the facial   structure of the two left figures in a different way which was not the norm. The features and details have not been depicted, exactly as in the case of classical African wooden mask. The eyes of the figures have been painted in a simple way.   The figures on the left side of the painting look flat .Also the artist has used lines to define certain parts of the figures while other parts have been left without lines. Looking at the painting there is contrast in terms of colour rendition, which are orange and blue. Looking at the face of the figure at the left side the viewer gets the impression that it is not an African .On the other hand, the faces of the figure at the right side have features of an African mask.

The researcher in this project also borrows art works produced by African societies like Egypt, Benin, Ife and Nok culture for his painterly experiment. He does same from famous European paintings of the old masters to present modern matters.

FIGURE 31

Source; http://wiki/File:Les Demoiselle d%27Avignon.jpg

Title; Les Demoiselles d' Avignon

Artist; Pablo Picasso

Medium; Oil on Canvas

To sum up, the researcher is inspired to use the power of these pictures to project his own image. The researcher also perceives himself as these famous historical characters although they come from different environments and cultural backgrounds. In short he sees them as his heroes.

CHAPTER3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter involves the steps of procedure and stylistic trends used in juxtaposing and superimposing my likeness on recognisable historical characters. With the aid of a digital camera, images of stages in the paintings will be taken to help the viewer understand how the final works were executed and achieved. However, steps and procedures used in achieving the final work of some of the paintings will not be shown .This is due to the fact that the steps are the same, and so images which have similar steps will be summarised to avoid monotony and overloading of data.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED.

TOOLS

Bristle brushes, sable brushes of all sizes and shapes, ruler, pencil, chalk, easel, pallet knife, pallet, rag, plastic container, eraser, tack nails, wire mesh, digital camera and measuring tape.

MATERIALS

Acrylic paint, artist oil paint, industrial home enamels, linseed oil, turpentine
(artist/industrial), canvas, stretchers, sketch pad, combination of carpenter's white glue and
white emulsion paint.

**THE PICTURES BELOW EXPLAINS THE EXPERIMENT CONDUCTED BY THE
ARTIST.**

(PHASE ONE)

<div align="center">

PLATE 1(Step1)   **PLATE 2(Step2)**
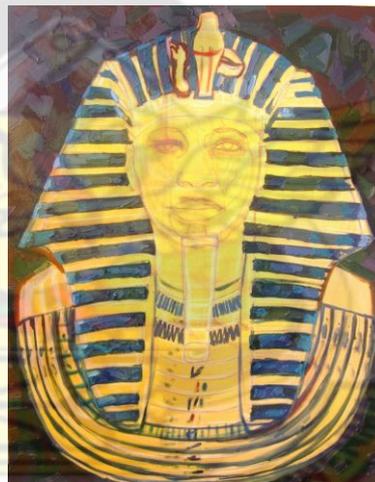
PLATE 3(Step 3)   **PLATE4 (Step 4)**

</div>

KNUST
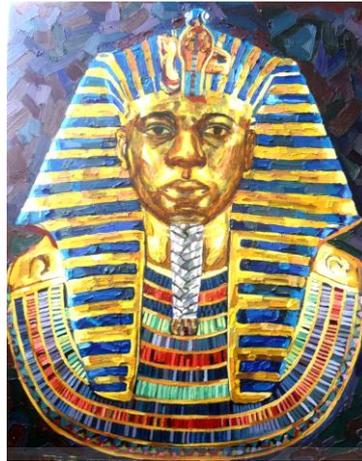
PLATE 5(Step 5)   **PLATE 6(Step6)**
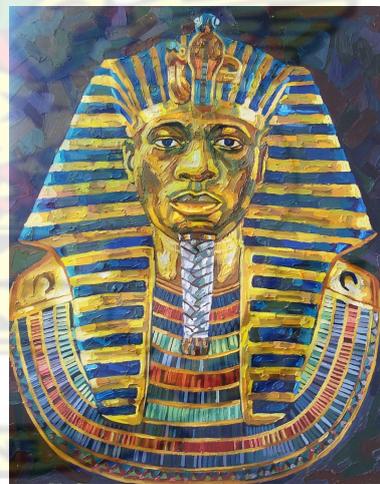
Plate 1 and 2 represents the first two steps of transpositioning my features onto an image of

the "Golden Death Mask of Tutankhamen" which is three-dimensional. I transcribed myself

onto the image of Tutankhamen in a two-dimensional format of easel painting which is part

of the phase one category. Using an image of both Tutankhamen and mine as references, a

sketch of my image was made wearing the head gear of Tutankhamen in chalk after which

corrections were made in the sketch with a pencil. With the brush stroke technique, mixtures of reds, blues, yellows and titanium white were used to paint the background before concentrating on the dark tones on the head cloth of the Pharaoh which is in thick blue horizontal and vertical lines.

Having painted the background and darker tones in the head gear, I went on to paint the golden parts of the head cloth using shades of yellow, browns and purple. At the same time demarcations were made on the face for darker tones and on the chest to represent coloured glass and semi-precious stones. The picture labelled plate3 is a photographic representation of this explanation. Furthermore, the small rectangles and squares on the chest representing the coloured glass was painted using red, blues, yellows and white. At the same time thin golden lines were drawn at the upper and lower parts of the coloured stones to separate them, after which the emblem on the forehead and the horn-like object under the chin were painted in plate 4. Plates 5 and 6 represent the final steps where the face of the artist was painted gradually from the darkest to the lightest tones. Unlike the background, small bristle brushes were used in painting the face because of the size of the head and also to help paint the nostrils, lips, eyes, ears and eyebrows. Colours used include purples, azo yellow deep, cadmium red, cerulean blue and titanium white. Finishing touches were then added to the figure, especially on the face and head cloth.

PLATES 7 (Step1)   **PLATE 8(Step2)**
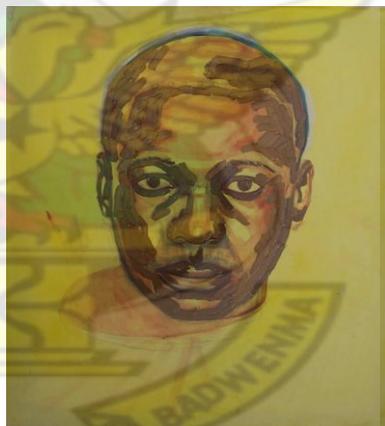
PLATE9 (Step3)   **PLATE10 (Step4)**
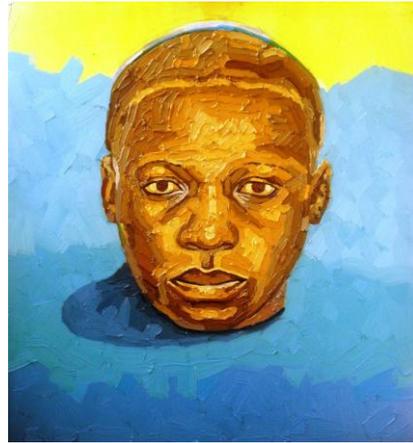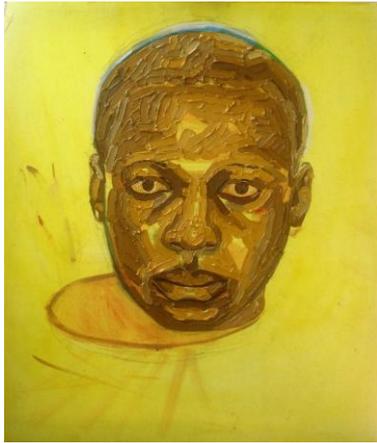
PLATE 11(Step 5)
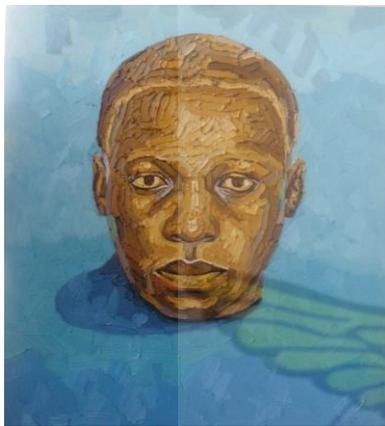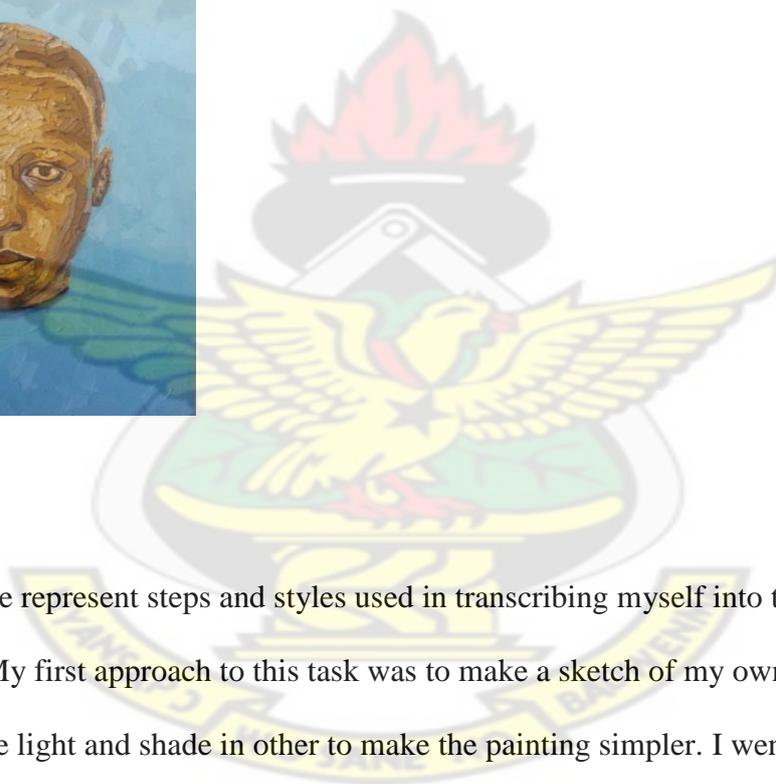
The images above represent steps and styles used in transcribing myself into the image of Ife

sculpture head. My first approach to this task was to make a sketch of my own image in

acrylic adding the light and shade in other to make the painting simpler. I went on to apply

the oils which was made up of a mixture of burnt sienna and purple on to the sketch using my

own style which is the brush stroke technique. Plates 7and 8 are photographic representations

of the explanations above. The next step was to apply the colours representing the middle

tone which is made up of different shades of yellow ochre before painting the high light areas

on the face. Cerulean blue was mixed with titanium white to paint the background of the

figure. Ultramarine was also used in painting the shadow cast by the sculpture piece. Plate 9

and 10 represents the explanation above .The final step was to add finishing touches to make

it look more attractive as seen in plate 11.

PLATE 12 (Step 1)   **PLATE 13 (Step2)**

PLATE 14(Step 3)

PLATE 15(Step4)

These are photographic images of the steps used in painting my version of the "Blue period" self-portrait by Pablo Picasso. The first step was to make an acrylic sketch of myself wearing the costume of the personality in the original painting after which the face was painted using ultramarine blue, titanium white, cerulean blue and red for the lips . These are evident in plates 12 and 13.The next approach was to paint the background in the painting using the same colour scheme used for the face of the figure before proceeding to the overcoat worn by the figure with a mixture of blue and yellow. Plates 14 and 15 represent the explanation above.

PHASE TWO

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PLATE 16(Step1)
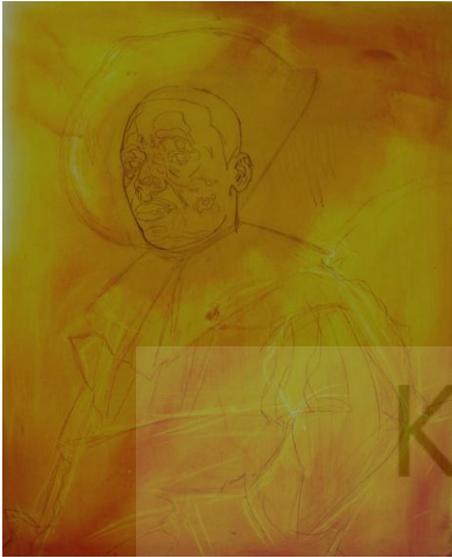
PLATE 17(Step2)
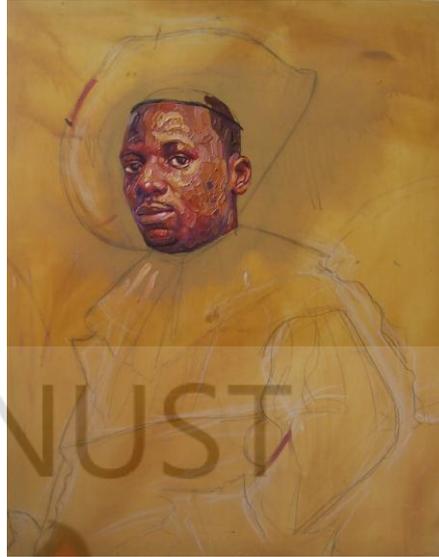
PLATE 18(Step 3)

PLATE19 (Step 4)

PLATE 20(Step 5)

PLATE 21(Step6)
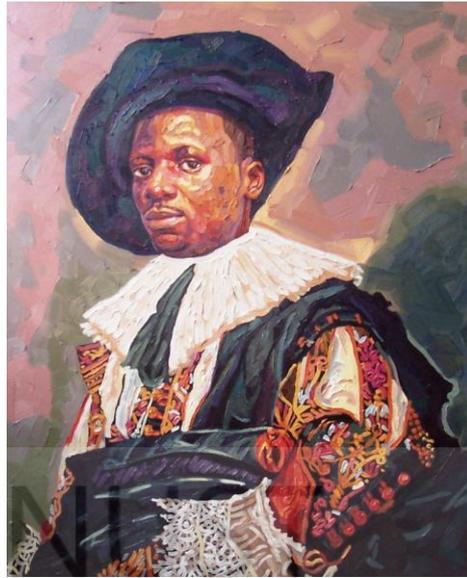
Plates 16 and 17 are the first and second steps used in painting my version of the "Laughing Cavalier". The first step was used to make a sketch of my image wearing the costume of the personality in the original image in pencil. I proceeded by painting the face of the figure by using mixtures of burnt sienna, purple, cadmium red deep, cadmium yellow, ultramarine blue and titanium white. Just as the face of the Pharaoh was painted from the darkest tone to the high light, the same style was used to paint the face of the artist in the experiment with a different colour scheme, while a small brush was used in painting details on the face.

Secondly, the costume worn by the personality in the painting was painted using mixtures of colours like ultramarine blue, purples, cobalt blue, cadmium red deep, cadmium yellow deep and titanium white .From the figure it is evident that the attire was made up of dark colour scheme excluding the ornamental designs. Therefore care had to be taken in mixing the colours because the dark colours had variations in them. In short, the darker tones were in gradation which is evident in plate 18. In painting the attire, the white collar and sleeve were painted with shades and tints of titanium white in short brush strokes. The oil paint was diluted with more linseed oil to an almost liquid consistency so that it would be possible to achieve the textural design seen in the sleeve of the attire in plate 19. This is because the

paint was supposed to be applied thickly on to the canvas with a smaller round sable brush. While painting the ornamentals in the clothes, the same style and technique used in painting the sleeve was adopted to achieve the details easily in plate 20.

Lastly, tints and shades of red, yellow and ultramarine blue were applied with a bigger bristle brush which is the final step in painting my version of the "Laughing Cavalier". Plate 21 has been provided above to represent this step.

PLATE 22(Step1)   **PLATE 23 (Step 2)**

PLATE 24 (Step 3)
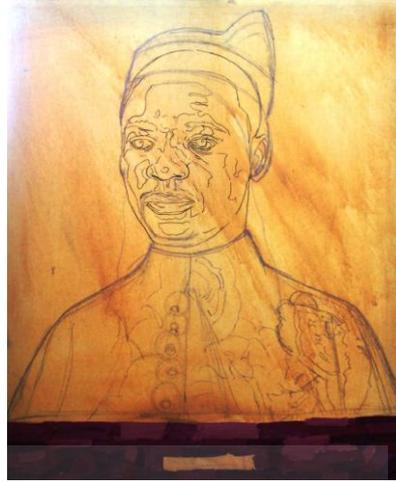
PLATE 25 (Step4)

PLATE 26(Step 5)

The images labelled plates 22 and 23 are the first two steps used in painting my version of Doge Leonardo Leredan's portrait. The first step was to make a pencil sketch of myself in his garment .I went on to paint the wooden panel in front of the figure using burnt sienna and a mixture of azo red deep and titanium white. My second step was to paint the background with tints of ultramarine and cerulean blue, making sure the background colour was subdued in other not to conflict with the figure as shown in plate 24 .Furthermore the next step was to bring out the ornamental designs in the head gear with a small round brush .Also the stick held on the bosom of the figure was painted while the face of the figure received attention. This is shown in plate 25 .The final step was to paint the attire of the personality in the picture plane. A small brush was used in other to achieve the intricate detailed ornamental designs seen in the garment. The colour used includes burnt sienna; purple, yellow, titanium white and deep red .Plate 26 is a photographic representation of the explanation of the final step.

PLATE 27(Step 1)   **PLATE 28(Step 2)**

PLATE 29(Step 3)

PLATE 30(Step 4)

Plate 27 represents the first step used in painting the artist version of Van Gogh 's "Self portrait in a bandaged ear".A pencil sketch of the researcher's image was made wearing the csotume of the personality in the original painting while the objects like the picture and easel in the background were painted using a mxture of blue ,yellow,red and titanium white. At the same time the cap and winter coat were also painted .The size of the canvas was such that a small flat bristle brush was used in other to make the work easier. Plate 28 best explains this step. The next step was to paint the bandage around the ear before proceeding to the face of the artist ,starting from the darker tones .The colours used were titanium white ,azo yellow deep ,azo red deep,ultramarine blue ,burnt sienna and cerulean blue .This is shown in plate 29.Plate 30 represents tne final or last step where finishing touches were added to the face using a small sable brush .
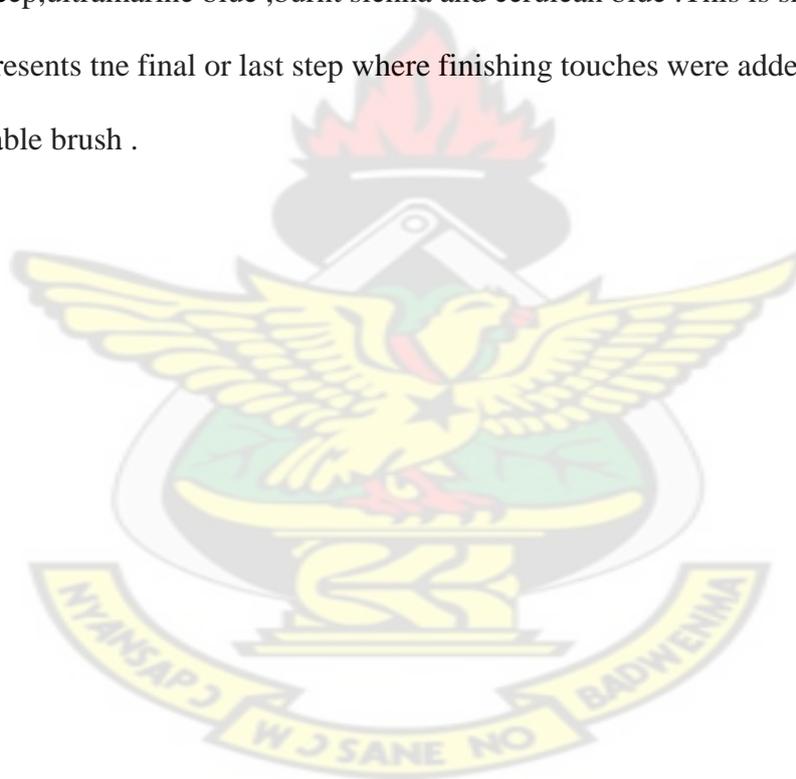
(PHASE 3)

PLATE 31(Step 1)   **PLATES 32 (Step2)**

PLATE 33(Step 3)   **PLATE 34(Plate 4)**

PLATE 35(Step 5)   **PLATE 36(Step 6)**

Initially, painting my version of the "Screaming Pope" was somehow confusing for me having studied the original image of this famous painting by Francis Bacon. This is because I wondered how the image was going to be painted amidst the numerous vertical lines in the picture; also colours at my disposal were red, yellow, blue white and black. The first step taken was to make a sketch of my own image in a sitting position wearing the costume of the "Screaming Pope" on a canvas with acrylic paint. A pictorial example has been provided above in plate 31. Enamel oil paint was then diluted with turpentine and later applied on to areas on the canvas representing the darkest vertical lines which also forms part of the background as seen in plate 32.The turpentine was added to the paint to speed up the drying process.

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The next step was to paint the middle and light tones with broken vertical lines with a mixture of red, blue, yellow and white where some of the lines at the bottom part of the painting seem to diverge, at the same time the yellow seat on which the figure is seated was painted in plate 33. Furthermore, the attire of the figure was painted using broken lines of different tonal values. The dark lines around the clothes were the first to receive attention at this stage of the experiment. Browns seen in the attire serve as part of the background which also appear as middle and dark tones in the clothes in plate 34. The next step after painting the clothes was a very crucial stage in the experiment because it determines the outcome of the artist imitation of Francis Bacon's painting which inspired him in this experiment. Though Bacon did not emphasis on the resemblance of the Pope by not showing the facial feature, I decided to show my facial features in this picture so that people will recognise my face in the painting. A flat sable and round brush were used in treating the face of the artist, at the same time turpentine was added to the enamel paint to make blending a little easy with the sable brush in plate 35 which also represents step 5 in this painting. Having painted the clothes, the next action taken was to paint the hands of the figure which were also painted using the same colour scheme on the face. Lastly, I used a thin layer of paint to indicate lines on the face of the figure in the picture .This was to ensure that some of the lines in the face of the original figure is seen in my version as shown in plate 36.

PLATE 37(Step1)

PLATE 38 (Step2)

PLATE 39(Step 3)

PLATE 40(Step4)

PLATE 41(Step 5)   **PLATE 42 (STEP6)**

The first step in painting my version of Napoleon was to make a sketch of myself in

Napoleon's royal regalia using acrylic paint where few mistakes were made and corrected.

This explanation is represented in plate 37. I used industrial enamel oil in painting this picture

by diluting the colours with small amounts of turpentine to speed up the drying process and

to make blending easy .The background in the picture was painted in dark colours as seen in

plate 38.Colours used includes red, black, blue and white .My next step was to paint the

throne on which Napoleon was sitting with mixtures of blue, red, black, yellow and white

followed by the robe and gloves worn by the personality in the painting after which a dark

colour was used to indicate the hair and eyes in plate 39. The face of the artist was painted

with the colour scheme used in the new version of Gainsborough's "blue boy" as seen in

plate 40. I further painted the designs in the cloth with a small round sable brush from the top

part of the cloth which is a fur coat before painting the crown and jewellery around his neck

in plate 41.The staffs of authority seen in the arms of the personality were the last objects to

be painted. Plate 42 backs the explanation above.

CHAPTER 4

ANALISYS AND DESCRIPTION

This Chapter involves analysis or interpretations and description of the easel paintings produced by the artist/researcher .Photographs of the original paintings have been arranged with the researcher's version such that comparison will be easier. The details of each painting have been provided on the same page with the images.

FIGURE 11
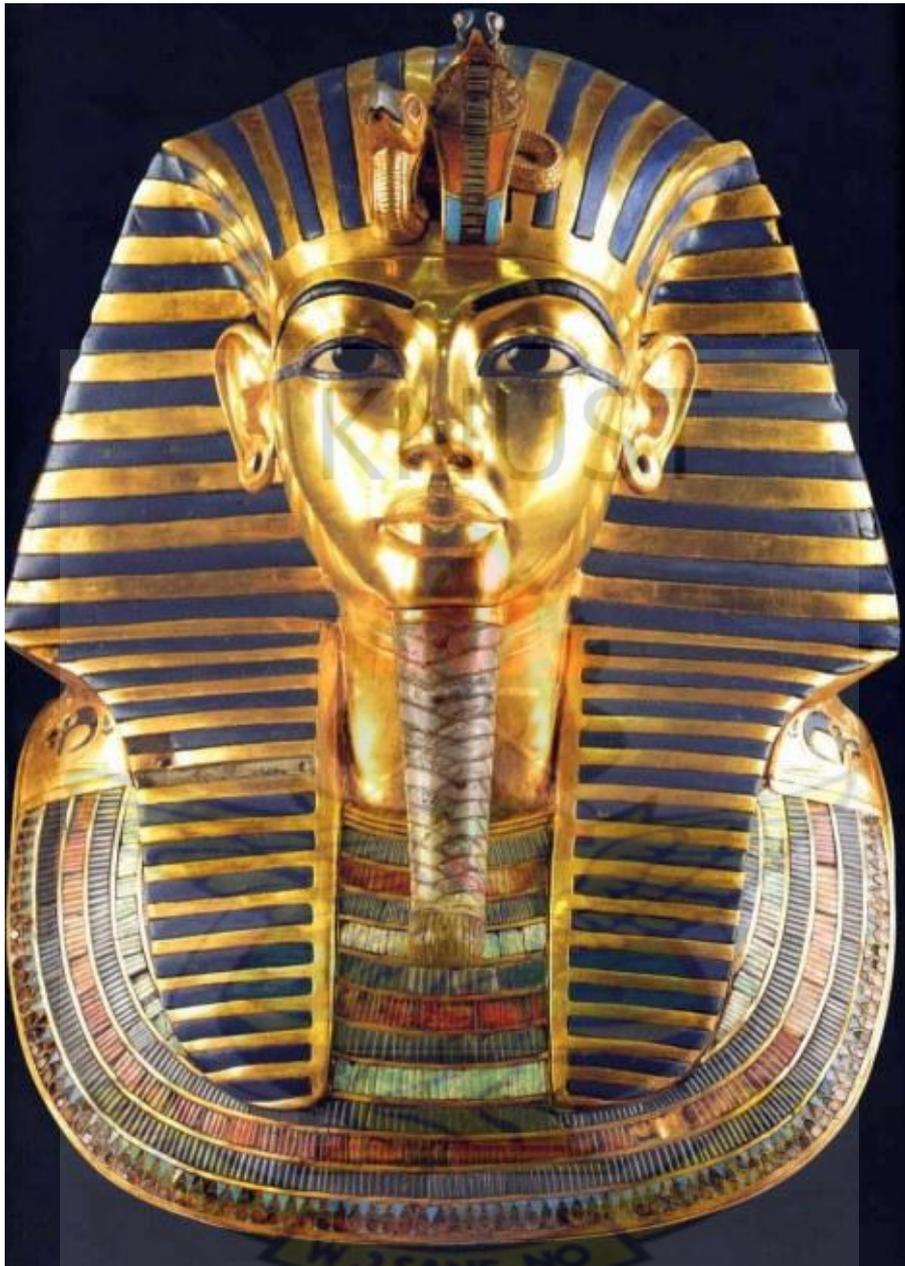
Title: Death Mask of Tutankhamen

Medium: Gold, coloured glass and semiprecious stones.

Size: 54cm high.

PLATE 6

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 84 cm x 66 cm (33inches x 26 inches)

PLATE 6

The Golden Death Mask of Tutankhamen is well-known internationally. I hereby superimpose myself into this image in a painting format despite the fact that Tutankhamen's image is a three -dimensional one. I try to draw the dichotomy between self and invoking self into another image. In other words, despite the fact that every individual human being is a personality in itself, it is also possible to "insinuate "or project or play-act oneself into another personality for various reasons and purposes. One can do so for no other reason than to represent a historical figure in a film or play. And we should not forget that one impersonate someone for the sheer thrill of being in somebody's shoes just "for the hell of it".

To "transcribe" a sculptural image into a two-dimensional format, as well as infuse the artist own face to represent a convincing representation of a pharaoh is not easy. The psychological barrier and physiological impediments in achieving a convincing enigma of a secondary imagery is almost insurmountable .I have however done my best by imploring all my technical painterly skills in achieving this dichotomy. Although the intention may be akin to an ego trip, the end result is worth contemplating in regard to surreal, aesthetic purpose. Lastly it must be noted that Egyptians are Africans and an African of modern times to ingratiate himself with an ancient counterpart in art should be understandable.

FIGURE12

A Sculpture piece from the Nok culture

Medium: Terra-cotta

Size: Life Size

PLATE 59

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 66cm x 61cm (26inches x 24inches)

PLATE 59

The Nok is one of the most recognized ancient societies in the Sub-Saharan region when sculpture is mentioned. The Nok culture is believed to have produced numerous art works which includes human heads, elephants, rams and hippopotamus. One of their most recognized art works is the human head in terra-cotta. I hereby superimpose my own likeness into this image which is three-dimensional into a two-dimensional form. Furthermore, it has been observed that the Nok culture produced their terra-cotta heads to articulate beauty. From the picture the sculpture head appears in an abstract form. However, the shape of the Nok head and representation of the features thus, the hair style, eye brows and eyes gives this sculpture work a catchy look. I question the gender of the sculpture head because the hair style looks like that of a female.

Transcribing myself into this image wasn't easy, since I was experimenting with representing features of three-dimensional imagery into one picture plane. From my version of the Nok sculpture head, I have used brush strokes technique which adds to the aesthetic qualities of the picture whereby the background colour creates contrast helping the image to stand out. Apart from the fact that I have transformed a three-dimensional image into a two-dimensional form, the main difference in the two pictures is the facial feature of the two images of which mine is more representational whilst the original Nok is more abstracted.

FIGURE 13

Title: Benin Sculpture Head

Medium: Bronze

Size: Life Size

PLATE 61

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 66cmx 60cm (26inches x 24inches)

PLATE 61

The Bronze head of Benin is well known internationally when world history of art or sculpture is mentioned .I have superimposed myself into this sculptural image in a painting format even though the Bronze head is three- dimensional. It should be known that the Bronze head was produced to honour rulers and past kings of Benin culture. Honouring chiefs and distinguished people has been part of our society from the ancient times to our present day of life. Throughout the centuries people have been honoured for their immense contribution to society by offering gift and bestowing titles, just to mention a few. Sculpture pieces are also erected to honour individuals such as heroes in our society. In Ghana statues of great people like Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and Otumfuo Opoku Ware II have been erected as a way of honouring and remembering their contributions towards society. Bust of past Vice Chancellors have been erected behind the Great Hall of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. I have transcribed this three-dimensional image into a two - dimensional format with my own face because I dream that my contributions to society as an artist will one day be greatly rewarded with a Bronze head just as the Benin culture did for their rulers and past kings. I also admire the features of the Benin sculpture head.

Furthermore, from the two images it is obvious that combining features of the artist to features of the Benin Bronze head makes it difficult to achieve the resemblance of the artist. With modern artist oil paint having a heavy consistency, it was possible to create a texture of visible brush strokes in the artist version of the Benin head. Also the Benin head in the original picture looks darker and metallic with a smooth finish except that there are incisions made on the cheeks and neck of the figure .The artist's version looks bluish with brush strokes creating interesting texture in the painting. Lastly, a warm but subdued background colour has been used so that the figure will stand out.

FIGURE14

Ife Sculpture

Medium: Terra-cotta

Size: Life Size

PLATE 11

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 64cm x 58 cm (25inches x 23 inches)

PLATE 11

Ife is the name of a society or tribe, in Nigeria which is noted for art of human heads in naturalistic form. These heads are in the form of terra-cotta, bronze etc. Just like the Benin culture, the Ife produced their art works for their kings, queens and important people in the society. Considering the fact that their terra-cotta heads were produced for kings, queens and important people, I have transcribed my likeness into the image of Ife sculpture head which is three- dimensional into a two – dimensional form. From the picture above, the Ife head is made of terra- cotta with a fine finish which enhances its beauty. Looking at the picture, it can be seen that holes are created along the hair line on the fore head and around the moustache area of the figure. It is believed that human hairs were fixed in the holes. There seems to be a faint smile playing on the lips.

Though it was not easy trying to superimpose my image onto the image of the Ife head, I adopted the use of modern artist's oil paint and brush to create my version. With the help of a bristle brush, I have been able to create visible brush strokes in empathy to the Ife terra-cotta head which is shown above in plate 11.The brownish nature of the sculpture together with the blue background creates contrast .However; there is a reflection of the blue background on the sides of the figure. Lastly, a sharp or strong light can be noticed on the fore head and the nose of the figure, whiles that of the version of the artist or researcher looks subdued. The main difference between the two pictures however, has to do with the fact that the artist has transformed the original figure which is three - dimensional into a two – dimensional form.

FIGURE15
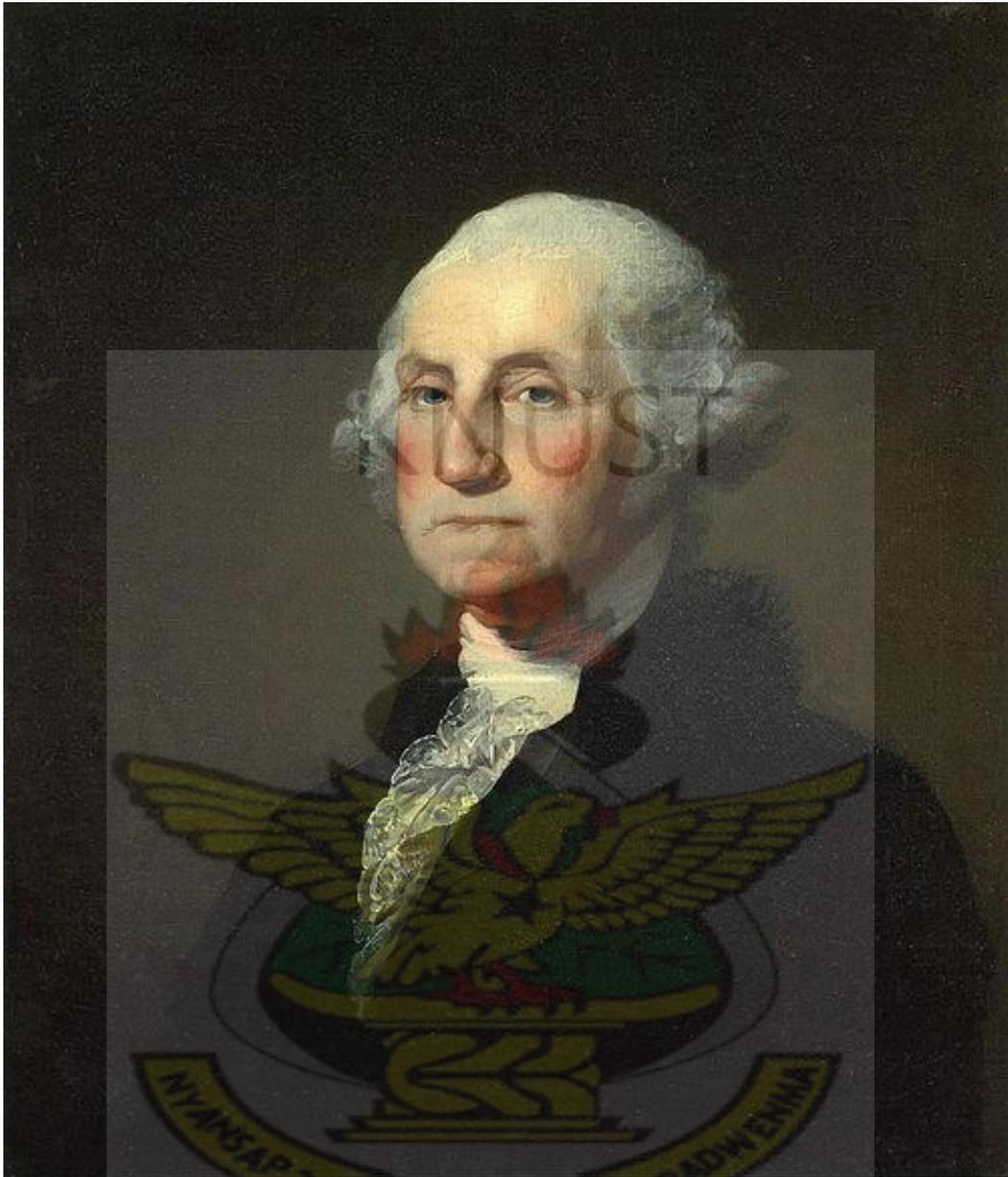
Title: Portrait of George Washington

Artist: Gilbert Stuart Williamstown (1755-1828)

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 73.5cmx61.1cm (29inx24in)

PLATE 52

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 71cm x 61 cm (29inches x 24 inches)

PLATE 52

This portrait is a famous painting of George Washington, the first president of the United States of America and one of the most important leaders in the History of America. Though this may sound or look ridiculous, I have insinuated myself into this image of George Washington due to his stature and achievement in American history .There should not be any cause for alarm insinuating myself into the image of Washington because the current President of America, Barack Obama is a black man whose father is a Kenyan while his mother is an American. It should be known that a drop of black in a person's blood makes him black even though he may look white. In South Africa people of mixed races are called "coloured".

Furthermore, there are distinct differences between the two pictures or paintings. Gilbert William Stuart painted the portrait of George Washington using the classical style of painting where the oil paint used had a constitency of enamel oil paint which allows the user to paint tightly and achieve intricate details using a softer hair brush. I on the other hand, used the artist modern oil paint which has a heavy constitency. However, with a bristle brush and thick application of paint it is inevitable for me to achieve visible brush strokes in my version of George Washington. The background in the original painting looks darker than mine .The attire worn by the figure is one of the fashions used around the 18th Century. It was possible to find affluent freed slaves wearing such attire. Lastly, from the two pictures it is obvious that there is a distinct difference in race Gilbert Stuart's painting is of a white race while the artist version is a black African race.

FIGURE 16

Title: Laughing Calvalier

Artist: Frans Hals (1624)

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 83cm x 67cm (33inx26inches)

PLATE 21

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 84 cm x 69 cm (33inches x 27 inches)

PLATE 21

The painting of the "Laughing Cavalier" is so attractive that it galvanized me to insinuate myself into this likeable Dutchman. One would wonder what is the correlation between Dutch and African .Surprisingly the linkage between Holland and Ghana go far into history. The Dutch left imprints in the then Gold Coast from the 16th Century to the 2nd half of the 19th Century when they sold their concessions to the British .Their legacy left deep imprints in the cultural life of Ghana through the Fantis up to the Ashantis .Dutch wax-prints is one of the items they bestowed in Ghana .Other less known items that Ghanaians adopted from them were Gin and Schnapps of which Akpeteshie, the local gin evoked from. The first locally manufactured muskets in Komenda and Dixcove as well as in Ashanti were copied from Dutch originals as far back as the 17-century.

So for the artist to superimpose himself into the "Laughing Cavalier "is not so far –out or far-fetched a concept as one would think. It is perhaps a measure of affiliation with the Dutch for staying so long in the Gold Coast .A lot of Dutch names through inter-breeding still remains at Elmina where they possessed the Portuguese-built castle for so long. Influences of Dutch architecture still remain in the town. A lot of seamanship by local fishermen were also learnt from the Dutch. Despite the attempt at imitation of the rich ornamental garment of the cavalier, there is distinct differences .This is because the oil paints the old masters of Europe used has the consistency of enamel paints and almost flows like honey. Therefore it allows itself for intricate details .Modern oil paint has heavy, buttery consistency that does not allow itself for intricate details except when thinned with turpentine which does not also auger well for durability. It must also be noted that admixtures of other substances like wax and water

are infused into the paint for the pigment to stay long for years in tubes. The non-flow modern artist oil paint thus is limited for application to achieve the unique technique of the old masters even though Frans Hals active and expressionistic brushstrokes were ahead of his time and modern in execution.

Furthermore, the tougher hog-hair of modern brushes for oil painting does not allow themselves for intricate details since these harder brushes should sympathize with inert modern oil paints for easy manipulation .The old masters used softer hair brushes which of course, sympathize with flowing enamel-like paints. These are the main differences of the two paintings aside from the differences of a black man and a white man. It is however uncanny to note that it was possible to find a black man in such an attire in the 17th century in Europe .There were obviously a handful of freed black African slaves in Portugal, Spain and Holland .It is on record that one Aidoo a black man domiciled in Europe and a lecture and Philosopher in a German University returned home to the Gold Coast in the mid 17th century to live the rest of his life among his own people.
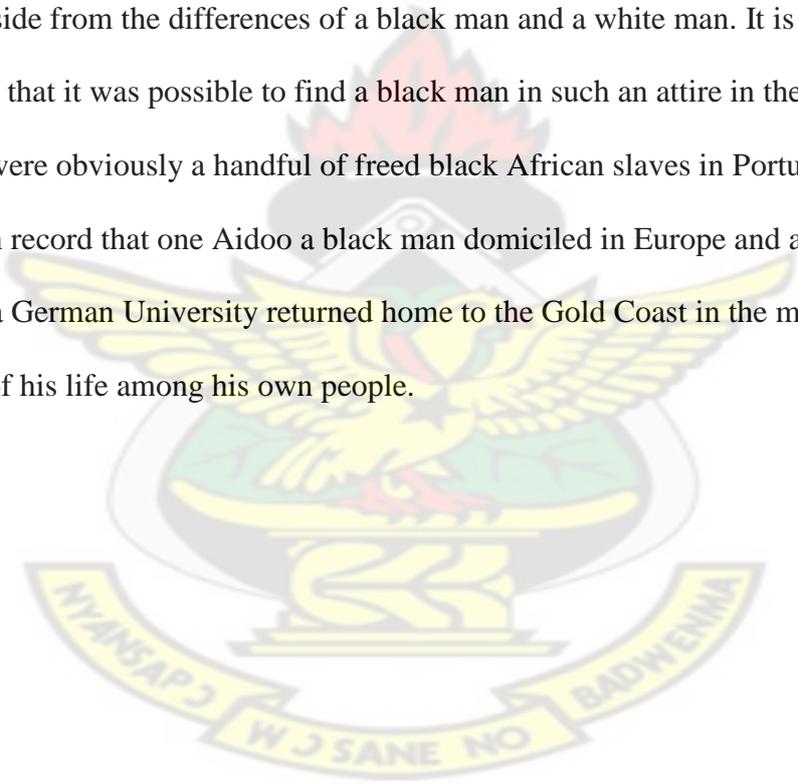
FIGURE 17

Title: The Blue Boy (1770)

Artist: Thomas Gainsborough

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 178cm x 122cm (70.08 in x 48.03in)

PLATE 47

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 122cm x165cm (48inches x 65inches)

PLATE 47

The picture above is a famous portrait painting by the English painter Thomas Gainsborough in 1770. This painting is a typical Rococo painting which is characterized by lightness, delicacy, and ornamentations .It is believed that Gainsborough painted the 'Blue Boy'as a challenge to traditional academism that Blue as a colour cannot be applied as the predominant colour in painting. The painting is attractive and eye-catching due to detailed rendition of the sky and attire worn by the figure. Gainsborough's output to me is exceptional so far as this painting is concerned; therefore I have decided to select "The Blue Boy "as one of the pictures for this experiment. From the picture Gainsborough used blends of cool and dark colours to depict an evening scene. Ornamentation forms part of the back ground but not as vivid as always seen in the morning or afternoon due to the evening mood created in the work. I have succeeded in capturing the same mood in my painting except that the amount of blues in my work is more than the blues in the original painting. The blend of colours used in the original painting creates a very interesting and beautiful scene. One aspect of the original painting which catches my attention is the folds and creases in the clothes of the figure which I have also depict in my version. However, there are differences. The original painting looks darker than my work. Industrial enamel oil paint and a sable brush were used in my version of the Blue Boy. Since the enamel oil paint has a similar consistency as the old master's oil paint, it was possible to achieve almost the same intricate details in the painting.

The two versions of "the Blue Boy "looks harmonious. Whereas the interplay of light and shade in the original painting suggest a mystical atmosphere where the light in the sky appears and seems to focus more on the figure. In my version the evidence of yellow light in the sky reflects mainly around where the figure is standing although there is interplay of light and shade on the attire.

FIGURE 18

Title: Henry VIII, (1565)

Artist: Hans Eworth

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 229cm x 124.1 cm (90inx48in)

PLATE 66

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Industrial oil (Enamel)

Size; 152cm x122cm (60in x 48in)

PLATE 66

The picture above is a well known portrait of the Tudor king, Henry VII by Hans Eworth. From this image the akimbo posture to the intricate details creates an impression of boldness. I have opted to select this painting for my experiment due to the power the paintings holds. Thus the beauty of his royal regalia in addition to his akimbo posture. This painting seems to be one of the most challenging pictures in the experiment. It may be due to the differences in size with mine. From the picture, the intricate details seem to be running throughout. Considering the fact that artist should be ready to face challenges, I decided to go ahead using this particular picture in my experiment.

I used industrial enamel oil paint which can allow me to achieve almost the same intricate details seen in the original painting. Achieving the same details in the painting especially textile designs in the curtains was a very difficult task. The types of brushes used to bring out the intricate details in the curtains were not quality enough. Aesthetically, I have achieved my aim. On the other hand, not all the details seen in the original painting was achieved, the rendition of the curtains in the picture is a clear indication. It can be seen that in my version I struggled painting the curtains where light and shade reflects on textile designs within the folds and creases. From the two paintings it is evident that the original painting is more detailed as compared to my version.

Furthermore, the carpet which King Henry stands on appears different from the artist version. There are lot of browns and details in the original work while the researcher's version is made up of red instead of browns without many details.

FIGURE 19
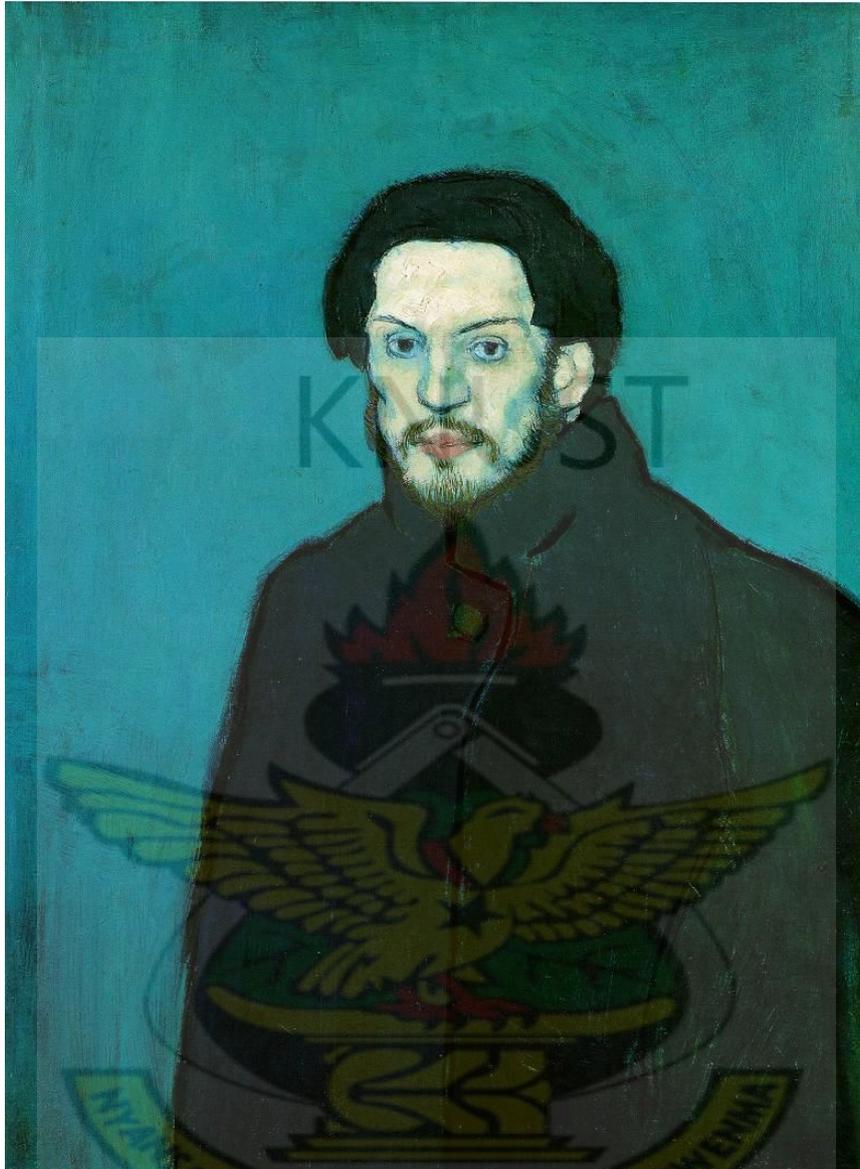
Title: Self portrait in Blue period (1904)

Artist: Pablo Picasso

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: Not available

PLATE 15

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 89cm x 61cm (35inches x 24 inches)

PLATE 15

It is a fact that life is full of dreams, hopes and aspirations. Every individual has a role model depending on the field he finds himself. An individual without a dream or aspiration is thought to be visionless. As a young artist it is my dream to become one of the greatest painters of my time. I therefore superimpose myself into the self-portrait of Pablo Picasso, one of the originators of Cubism and one of the greatest painters of modern times. This self-portrait is one of the portraits painted in his "Blue period". Picasso during his blue period, created a mood of great unhappiness and a feeling of hopelessness as a result of poverty and losing his close friend Careless Casagemas. His subjects were cantered on beggars, prostitutes and blind people just to mention a few. However, the researcher has superimposed his likeness onto the image of Picasso for admiration of his painterly output. Also the colour scheme used in this self-portrait is different from the others. I have also tried using this painterly experiment to create an enigmatic imagery due to the strange dichotomy or the relativity of someone in West Africa like me stamping my black face on to the white Picasso.

To add to that, the main difference between the paintings are the personalities involved and the value of colours used in the paintings, especially the hair and overcoat of the two images when compared. The artist version looks more bluish with patches of green while the original version is made up of bluish green, as seen in the hair and overcoat of Picasso. Also the paintings looks like a snow man wearing a winter coat. Lastly there is one feature running in both paintings which is their red lips.

FIGURE 20

Title: Portrait of Salvador Dali

Artist: Salvador Dali

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 55cm x 46cm (22inx18in)

PLATE 57

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 71cm x56 cm (28inches x 22 inches)

PLATE57

The picture above is a self – portrait painting of Salvador Dale a famous Surrealist painter noted for exploring in dreams and the unconscious mind in his paintings. From the painting, Dali has depicted himself as having three eyes and wings. It sounds ridiculous to see a man having three eyes where questions may also be posed as to which side of the world he comes from. From my interpretation, life is full of dreams and for one to really see the dream world he needs a third eye. However, it may be difficult to convince one to accept that there is a need to possess a third eye in order to see the dream world .Actually many people in the East accept the notion of an invisible third eye on the forehead !That may be why Indian women put a dot or other shaped painted on the temple. I have decided to borrow this painting for my experiment due to the mystery behind the work and for the fact that it is of an enigmatic imagery and context.

For my experiment I used the industrial enamel oil paint because it has the same consistency as that of the old masters while Salvador Dali in his original painting used modern artist oil paint .However ,I believe he must have manipulated it to achieve a fluid consistency by thinning it with linseed oil . Dali in his original painting used bright colours which are also seen in mine. There are thin dark lines drawn under the ears to the neck of the figure in the original painting which is also seen in my version. The only difference in the work has to do with the style used in painting the faces. The rendition of the face looks flat while the eyes and hair looks more graphical .My version looks more solid with the face looking darker in tones which is due to racial factor where I am a black African and Dali is a white European man. The colours used in painting the skin of the personality in the original image are different from mine.

FIGURE 21

Title: Napoleon Enthroned

Artist: Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1780-1867)

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 260cm x 163cm (102.36 in x 64.17in)

PLATE 42

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size;   152 cm x 165 cm (60 inches x 65 inches)

PLATE 42

People may wonder why a black African young man living in West Africa has decided to pose as Napoleon. Of course, one may perceive this as absurd .On the other hand, it does not sound so absurd because there was a Haitian slave called Toussaint L'Ouverture who rebelled against the French in armed combat .He actually dressed like a French general. Therefore it should not sound strange seeing a black African wearing Napoleon's robes. Napoleon was a brave French military and political leader during the later stages of the France Revolution and later become the Emperor of France. He was generally regarded as one of the greatest military commanders of all times and for these qualities I have superimposed myself into the famous painting of Napoleon by the French Classic painter Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. As the great adage goes "The down fall of a man is not the end of his life". Life is such that we sometimes fall in an attempt to make a living for ourselves, those who persevere most of the time emerge the victors. Like the great queen warrior Yaa Asantewaa of Ashanti Ghana, Napoleon was a brave insurmountable man who would not accept his faith when his forces were defeated at Leipzig. Having been exiled in the island of Elba, he escaped and returned to power. Sometimes we must accept our faith because in our attempt to fight back or rise back spells our doom. Just like political instability has brought about civil wars in some African countries like Ivory Coast ,Napoleon on the other hand was later defeated in the battle of Waterloo and eventually spent the rest of his life in confinement at St. Helena island south of West Africa in the middle of the Atlantic.

Furthermore, the painting of Napoleon by Ingres looks brighter with a darker background. I used enamel oil paint which has a similar consistency as the oil paint of old the masters for my work. From my version it is obvious that not all the details were achieved because the brushes I used are harder than the brushes used by the French master.

FIGURE 22
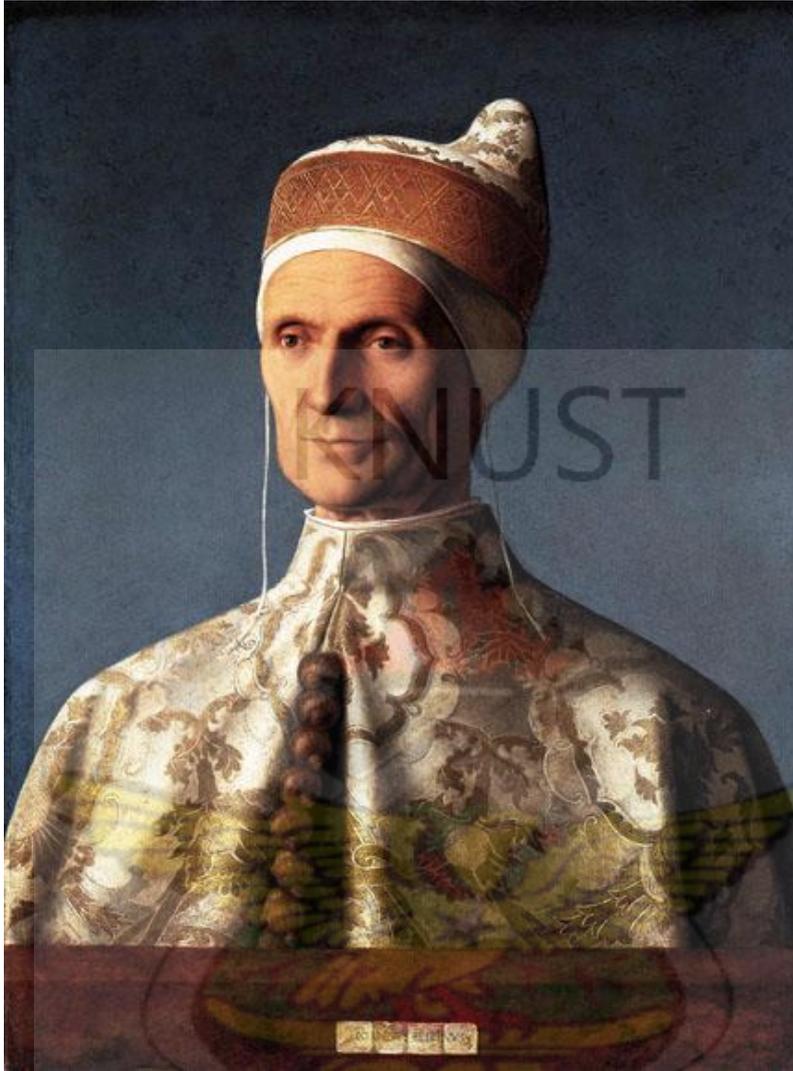
Title: Portrait of Doge Leonardo Leredan

Artist: Giovanni Bellini

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 61.6 cm × 45.1 cm (24.3 in × 17.8 in)

# PLATE 26

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil on Canvas

Size; 61.6 cm × 45.1 cm (24.3 in × 17.8 in)

PLATE 26

The picture above is a famous portrait painting of Doge Leonardo Loredan by the Italian Renaissance artist, Giovanni Bellini, who was a famous portrait painter in Venice. It is believed that Bellini was one of the painters in Venice who helped to revolutionize Venetian painting, guiding it towards a more stimulating colouristic style. I was prompted to select this painting for my experiment because of Doge Leonardo Leredan's stature in Venice, the ornamentals in his garment and the artistic enhancement of his image by Bellini. It is believed that the attire worn by Leredan is a state ceremonial garment usually worn by rulers in Venice. From the picture Bellini used the classical period style of painting. The wooden panel in front of the figure inter play of light and shade both on the figure and garment with the details on the face of Leredan looks so fascinating that the image seems three-dimensional.

For this experiment, I used my own style or technique which is the brush strokes. This can be categorized either under the impressionist or expressionist approach. With the brush stroke technique and using modern artist's oil paint, it was difficult to achieve the intricate details achieved by the artist in the original painting. A critical look at the two images above labelled figure22 and plate 26 shows that not all the details in the garment of the original painting was achieved in my version of Leredan's famous portrait . However, resemblance of the researcher has been achieved, while the image can still be compared to the original picture in terms of quality of expression. From the original image and my version, there seen to be uniformity in the garments of the figures .The ornamentals in the attire is also seen in the headgear of the personality in the painting. On the other hand, the background colour and the attire does not suggest harmony or uniformity.

PLATE 23
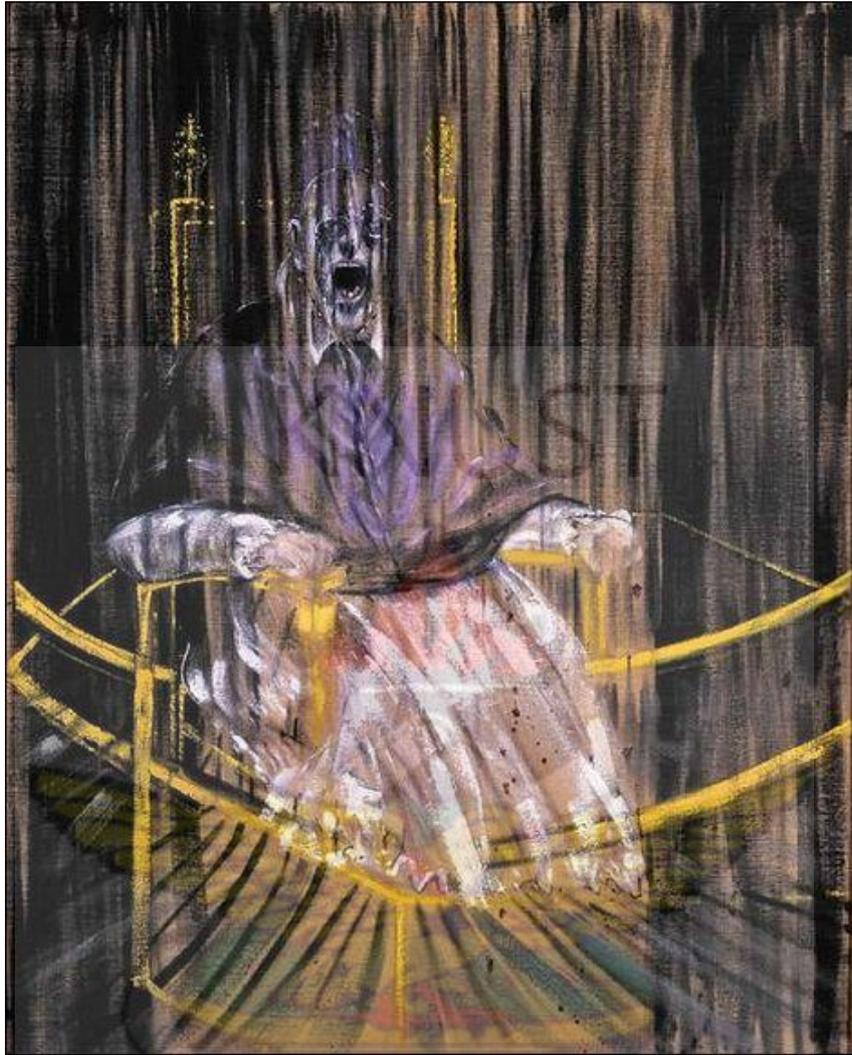
Title: Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X (1953)

Artist: Francis Bacon

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Size: 153cm x118cm (60inx46in)

**PLATE 36**

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 122 cm x 152 cm (48 inches x 60 inches)

PLATE 36

Francis Bacon after studying Velasquez's portrait of Pope Innocent X painted a distorted version of Innocent X in 1953 titled "The Screaming Pope." The nightmarish scene by Bacon in his version of Pope Innocent attracted my attention to use his version for my project. From Bacon's version, the painting is made up of lines most of which are vertical while dark rich colours have been used to create a nightmarish effect where the Pope is seen screaming .From my interpretation the Pope seems to be placed within a cage of white blurred bars while screaming. The figure has no legs but seems to be supported by the converging lines underneath the figure. One gets the impression that Bacon was not interested in the identity or capturing the resemblance of the personality in the painting. He used the interplay of lines in different shades and colours to paint and also show the echo of the scream.

I opted to create the same effect in my version which wasn't easy because I was interested in mimicking the personality of the Pope without losing the scream of the Pope. By using industrial enamel oil paint it was difficult to achieve the spontaneity of the Bacon painting. This is because Bacon used modern oil paint which dries slower than enamel oil paint, consequently I could not achieve the 'easy' vertical strips like Bacon's version. The colours used in my version are not as dark as the original painting, whiles the lines used makes it difficult to identify the personality in the original painting. This is due to the fact that the lines seem to be covering the face of the figure .Also Bacon painted the head of the Pope without paying much attention to the details on the face which enhances the resemblance. My version on the other hand shows a clear view of the figure including the face and the hands. In other not to break away completely from the original painting, I painted transparent lines on the face where the face of the personality in my version can be seen through the lines. These are the main difference between the original and my version of the "Screaming Pope".

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FIGURE 24
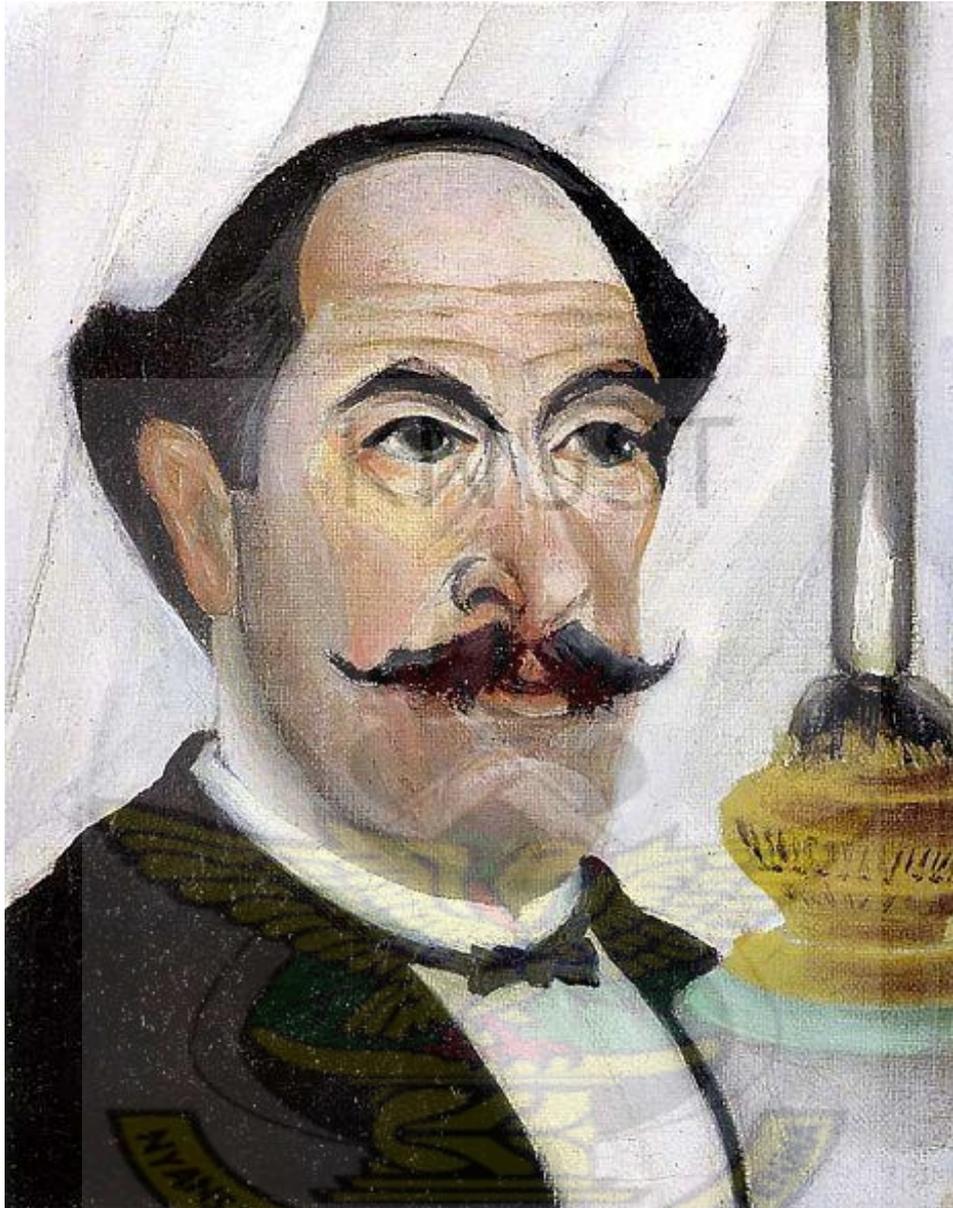
Title:Self-portrait of the artist with a lamp

Artist: Henri Rousseau

Medium: oil on canvas

Size: 23cmx19cm (9.06 in x 7.48in)

PLATE 64

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil on Canvas

Size; 56cm x56cm (22inches x22 inches)

PLATE 64

The image above is a self-portrait of the French Post – impressionist painter, Henri Rousseau whose paintings were mostly depicted in a simple primitive manner. It is believed that Rousseau was a self-taught artist who was ridiculed during his life time because of his style of painting. Rousseau always aspired, in vain, to conventional acceptance in the art market because people believed his work was childish. The picture above titled "Self-portrait of the Artist with a Lamp" is one of his most recognized portraits paintings. I have stamped my face onto this famous painting due to the style and artistic accomplishment of the artist.

From the painting the artist has painted himself wearing a tuxedo, standing in front of a white curtain with a burning lamp by his side. The picture is depicted to the bust using flat and bold colours where Rousseau does not seem to pay much attention to blending. Having studied the image I get the impression that this painting has survived a lot of climate changes throughout its existence. It may also be due to the lens of the camera used in taking the picture. In my version of the portrait industrial enamel was used because of its honey-like consistency which aids one to depict intricate details in a painting. However the style of painting used in the original painting is not the same as my version of the self-portrait, especially the head of the personalities involved. I tried to use the classical style of painting where details are normally depicted .This is evident in plate 64 where I painted myself wearing the costume of the figure in the original painting ,however the costumes ,curtains and burning lamp seen in the picture plane were depicted to appear the same in the original image. I my experiment it was not easy depicting my resemblance because psychologically I was influenced by the style used in the original painting. Bringing out the details on my face was also difficult because of the size of the canvas where the brushes used were not of good quality.

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FIGURE 25

Title: Porträt des Francisco de Goya (1826)

Artist: Vicente Lopez

Size: 93 × 75 cm (36.6 × 29.5 in)

Medium: Oil on Canvas

PLATE 69

Artist /Researcher

Size; 99cm x79 cm(39inches x 31 inches)

Medium;Oil on Canvas

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PLATE 69

The image above is a famous portrait of the renowned painter, Francisco Goya by the Neo-classist painter Vincete Lopez.This image was painted when Goya visited the court form Bordeau where Lopez lived .Goya is believed to have been about eighty years when he posed for this portait. Paintings created by Lopez is said to display traces of Rococo style eventhough he was a Neo-classist.From the image labelled figure 25 the famous master is seen in a sitting position in his beautyful attire holding a pallet and a brush .Lumps of paint are seen on his pallet creating the impression that he was working .The picture is painted such that there appears to be hamony considering the background colour and his attire which is made up of subdued blues and grays.From the image there is a white attire under his coat, the artist has managed to treat the clothes in a manner where the blues can be seen or felt in portions of the white thereby reducing the level of contrast . Lopez has managed to bring out the intricate details in the painting to make it look real.

I am fascinated by the interplay of light and shades ,especially the shadows casted in the picture plane.Lopez has produce a master piece of painting and considering the fact that this is a portrait of an old master , I hereby superimpose my image into the original image of Goy's portrait .From my version it is obvious that the work is mostly made up of blues creating harmony .It was fun painting this particular piece of artwork because of the colours involved .Modern artist oil paint was diluted with linseed oil which aided the dipiction of details.Futhermore,the foreshortened nature of the work was not easy to achieve .I struggled throughout the sketching of the figure.From the two images it is obviuos that the main difference are the personalities involved.

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FIGURE 26
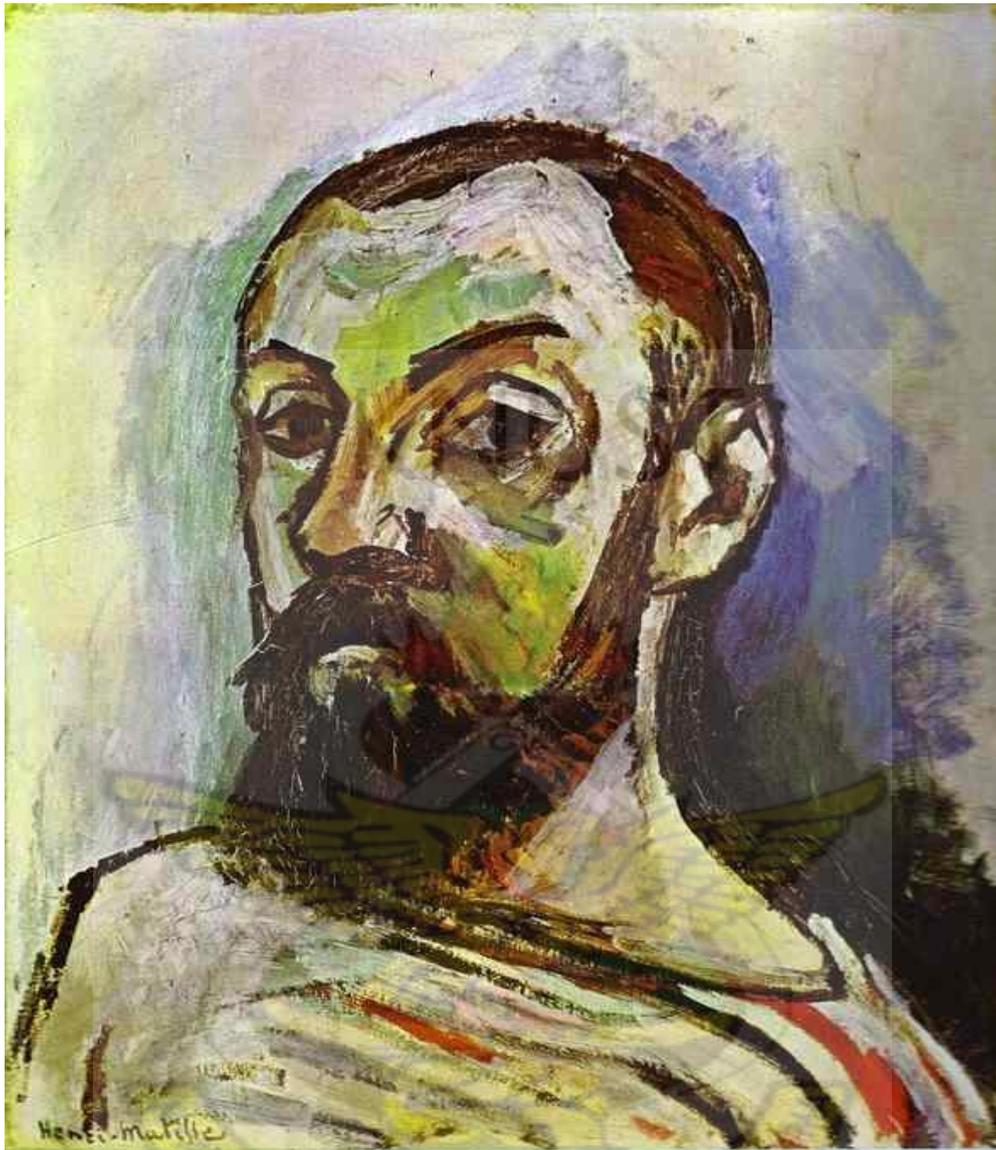
Title: Self –Portrait in a Strip T-shirt

Artist: Henri Matisse

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 76 cm × 64 cm (30inx25in)

**PLATE 54**

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 56cm x 56 cm (22inches x 22 inches)

PLATE 54

The picture above is a self-portrait of Henri Matisse, the French artist who is one of the leaders of the Fauve group. He is regarded as one of the greatest formative figures in modern art and noted for his mastery of the use of colour to convey emotional expressions. It is believed that Matisse was influenced by great painters like Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Paul Cezanne Henri Edmond Cross and Paul Signac. I have therefore superimposed my own likeness on to the image of Henri Matisse to emulate his style by experimenting with colour and form just as he did in his "Self –portrait in a Strip T-shirt". I admire him because of his painterly output and not his personality.

From the original painting, Matisse used darker lines to indicate the outlines of the figure. The brush stroke technique was used in painting the portrait by lying or dabbing of colours to create the impression that Matisse painted the work in haste and the background also looks like a water colour effect. In my version of the Self-portrait in a Strip T-shirt, I used my own innate style of brush strokes which are more prominent than the strokes used in the original painting, also the brush strokes used in my version looks more organised compared to the original painting. From the two pictures the same colour scheme has be used except that browns were used in painting my face .Also raw white was not used in my face like the face of the artist in the original painting and the hair of the original painting is not as dark as the new version. The hair in original painting is made up of dark browns and red whilst mine is made up of dark blues. Lastly, there is a kind of harmony in the two paintings whereby some of the colours in the attire can be seen in the background and on the faces of the personalities involved.

FIGURE 27
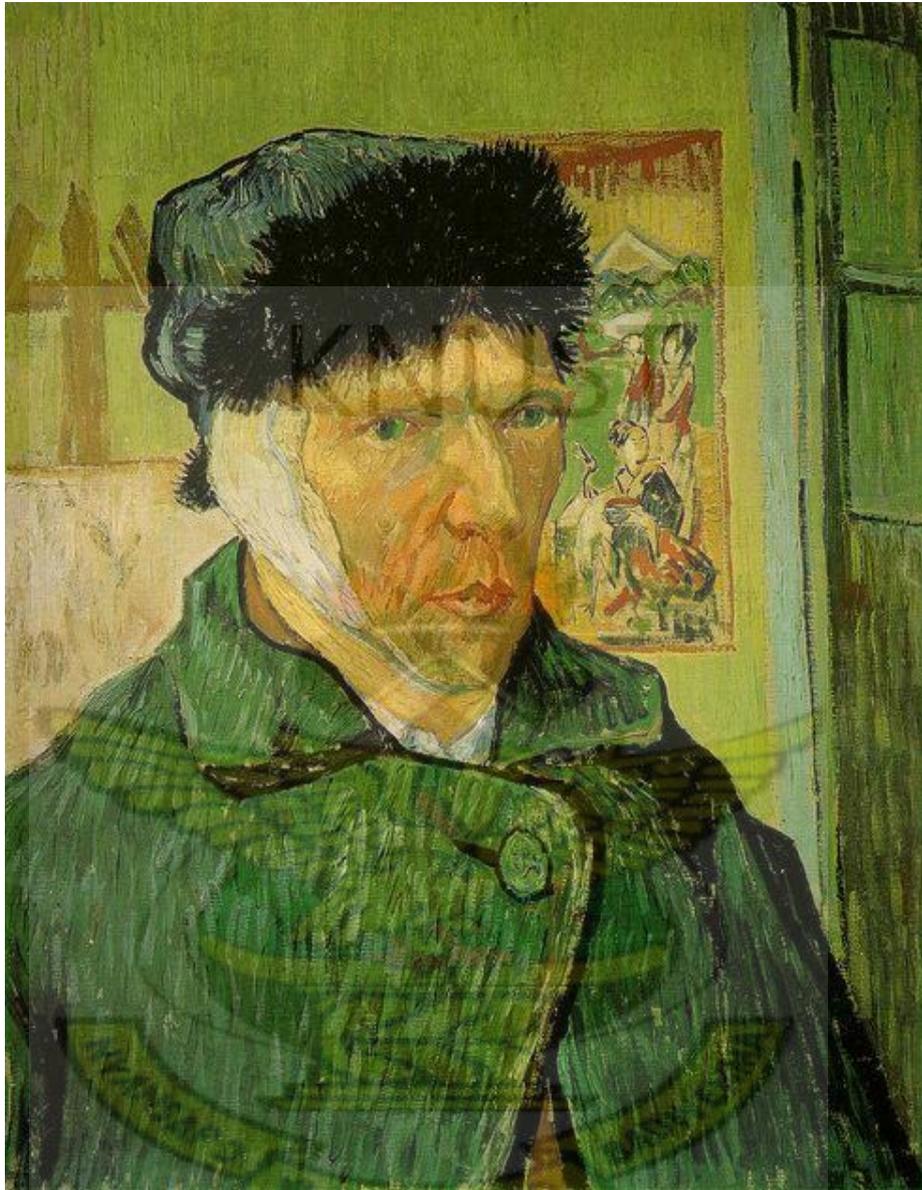
Title: Self-portrait in Bandaged Ear (1889)

Artist: Vincent Van Gogh

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 60cm x 49 cm (23inx19in)

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PLATE 30

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 55cm x 51 cm (22inches x 20 inches)

PLATE 30

Life is such that we try to emulate people who have achieved greater things or heights in their field of practice. No matter how we try to equate the achievements of these individuals, we can never be the same because we have different personalities. The picture above is a self – portrait of the Dutch painter, Vincent Van Gogh who obviously painted this portrait during his mental illness where he cut off his ear parcelled it and delivered it to a prostitute. I have superimposed my own likeness onto this famous image of Vincent Van Gogh due to the mystery surrounding it. Thus considering the fact that this work was painted when he cut off his ear and during his mental instability, the Dutch painter produced a master piece of art work. On the other hand, it is a very dubious aspiration among young painters to be famous by dying in a mental condition. However I admire greatly the painterly output of Van Gogh and not necessarily his personality, therefore I appear in his costume to show my admiration for his skill as a painter. The work is such that, the Dutch painter faces the viewer at a slight angle wearing a bandage across his ear and under his chin. He also wears a winter cap and an overcoat with only the top button fastened. The appearance of the artist in the painting suggests that he is facing mental problem or condition. In my version, I have also tried to capture the same mood and appearance of this famous painting by trying to pose the same way as the personality in the original painting. In my version of this self- portrait, I have used my own innate style which is made up of visible brush strokes just as the artist in the original painting used. The modern artist oil paint with its thick consistency enhanced the appearance of my brushstroke technique. Moreover; the two paintings suggest harmony in colour. One can attest to the fact that, the only difference in the two paintings is the racial factor and the prevalent blue overcoat of mine as against the yellowish atmosphere of the Van Gogh.

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FIGURE 28
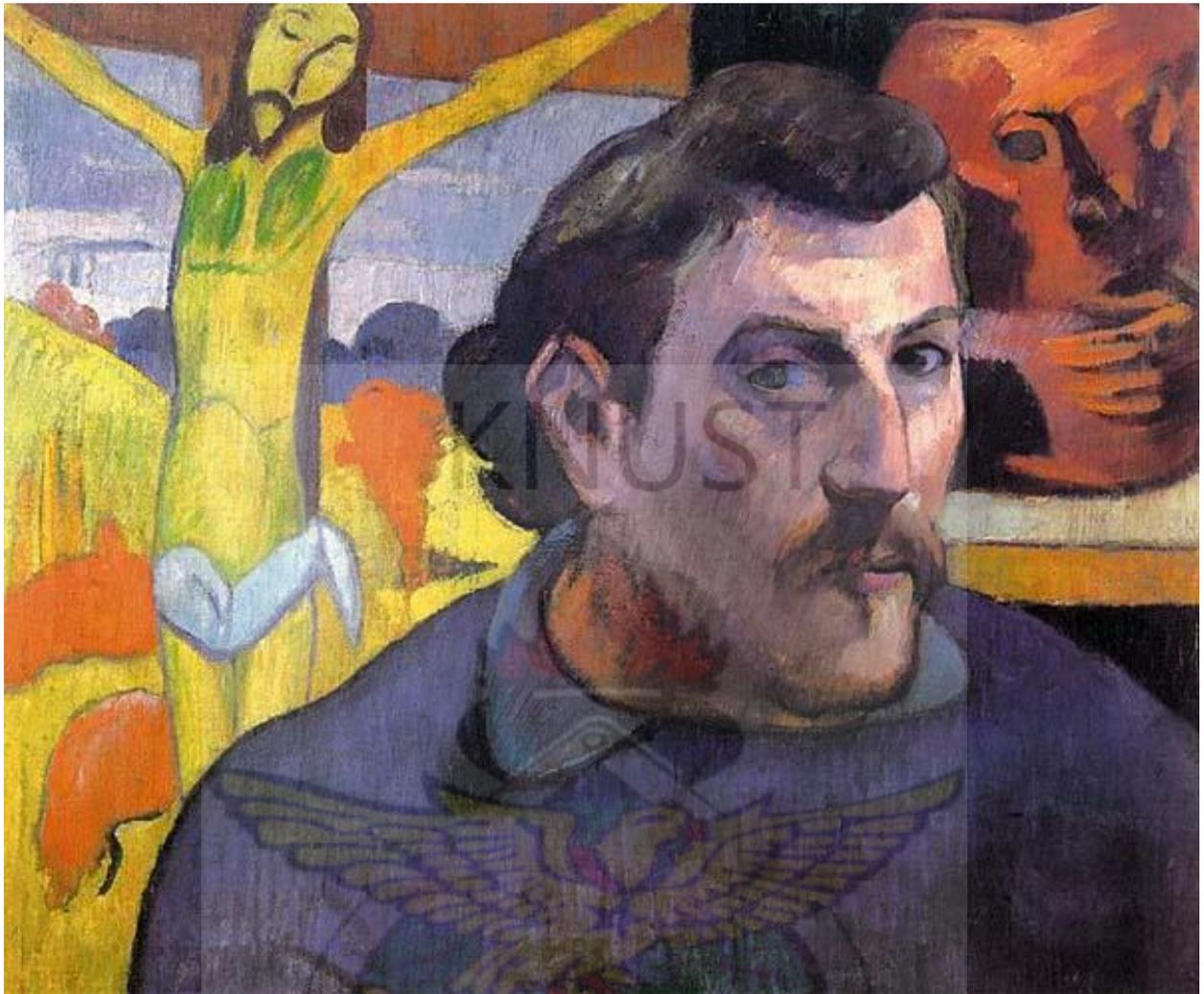
Title: Portrait of the Artist with the Yellow Christ

Artist: Paul Gauguin

Medium: Oil on canvas

Size: 30cm x 46cm (11.81 in X 18.11in)

PLATE 50

Artist/Researcher

Medium; Oil paint

Size; 56cm x 56cm (22inches x 22inches)

PLATE 50

The picture above is a self – portrait of a leading French Post – Impressionist artist Paul Gauguin. Like his friend Vincent Van Gogh, Gauguin experienced many attacks of depression and at one time attempted suicide. It is believed that his vibrant use of colour, forms and subject matter helped to form the basis of modern art. Gauguin's work developed gradually towards Coloisonnism, a style given its name by the critic Edouard Dujardin in response to Emile Bernard's method of painting with flat colour and bold outlines, which according to Dujardin, reminded him of his Medieval Cloisonne' enamelling technique. It should be known that the artist also inspired great painters like Vincent Van Gogh, Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso, just to mention a few. I was stimulated to choose this particular painting for my experiment due to his vibrant use of colour and for the fact that his subject matter, forms and colour applications influenced some of the famous painters mentioned above. Gauguin's self – portrait is made of bright colours with brush strokes as a technique. Comparing the two pictures, it can be deduced that the brush strokes in the original painting is not prominent as my version.

Furthermore, the issue of race will not be discussed under this particular painting because racial differences run through most of the work. On the other hand, my version of the portrait looks brighter than the original work and is self evident that the two faces are different. Needless to say Gauguin is actually not pure Caucausiann .He is in fact of American Indian extraction from his mother's side .His sense of adventure as a sailor left him somewhat rootless and it is no wonder he settled in the south –pacific islands and ended his days there.

The enigma my painting connotes in many ways define the human race as emanating from one root .Super imposing myself on to the Gauguin symbolizes this one root. The "primitive" head of the background seems to imply by Gauguin that he is aware of this fact.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS.

The outcome of my experiment or exploration is more of an enigmatic nature since juxtaposing my image on recognisable personalities in African and European art history seems illogical. It is not easy to explain most of the things we do, just as some dreams are difficult to interpret, leaving us with a puzzled mind. Works produced by artists in the surreal realm are results of many influences including economic, physiological and social issues which makes these artists do what they do. Therefore the mystery behind an artist's work cannot be straight jacketed in boundaries .Every artist has a different personality trait .One can decide to copy the style of another artist yet it will never be the same as the originator of the style .The same will I be different from the personality in who's costume I appear. I have projected myself in various historical modes by justaposing my image on famous personalities in different styles of painting which have been categorized under three phases.

(a)Phase one –transposing my features onto an original historical character or image.

(b)Phase two-imposing my own innate style or technique onto the original image.

(c)Phase three-imitating the style of the original painting which inspired my prototype.

Having gone through this exercises the researcher has realised that styles used in phase two and phase three can be found in phase one. In other words phase one is made up of all the styles used in this experiment. Paintings of sculpture pieces produced by African societies like Egypt ,Nok ,Ife and Benin culture were categorized under phase one where they were painted using the brush stroke technique. The same brush stroke technique is used for paintings under phase two. My version of Dali and Picasso's self-portrait are painted copying the style used by the artist in the original paintings except that some features of the researcher were added to features of the personality in the original image. A similar approach was used

in painting the researcher's version of images categorised under phase three. An example is my version of "Napoleon Enthroned", where I copied the style of the original painting which inspired my prototype.

However the purpose of this project is to create an imagery that will be puzzling to the viewer's eye by painting my image in the costumes of these famous characters to show my admiration for their achievements, features and in some cases their personality. Aesthetically I have achieved results which perhaps will not only be appreciated by the viewer but can also arouse the curiosity of the viewer. Since these art works are famous in the annals of world history, one may wonder for instance what business an image of an African black man is doing in the costumes of personalities in these famous paintings. Visitors in the studio can usually react after seeing the researcher in the costume of Gainsborough's painting, "the Blue boy". It is unusual to see an African wearing such costumes.

Lastly, the eighteen paintings produced by the artist projects the researcher in different character traits as that of an African ancestor ,an emperor, a kings, famous artist, an Italian Renaissance magistrate just to mention a few.

CONCLUSION

It is sometimes necessary for artists to explore more avenues that can add mystery or puzzle to their output so as to excite the imagination of the viewer and to also capture that aspect in a unique way just like how dreams are hard to interpret yet still arouse our curiosity. Therefore many dreams are said to be enigmatic considering the fact that the majority of them cannot be interpreted. Perhaps when pictures are self-explanatory there is no need for anyone to be inquisitive and even read deep meaning into the works .That is why enigmatic works can be

considered self-explanatory. On the other hand, it is easy for rational thinking people with scientific and rigid turn of mind to condemn such works as nonsensical. Such people simply have limited imagination. We should be aware that there are a lot of irrationality in this world, even man's inhumanity to his fellow men shows it. It is   therefore vital that such enigmatic works be shown so that observers will consider some of the irrationalities of our existence in a logical though inexplicable manner.

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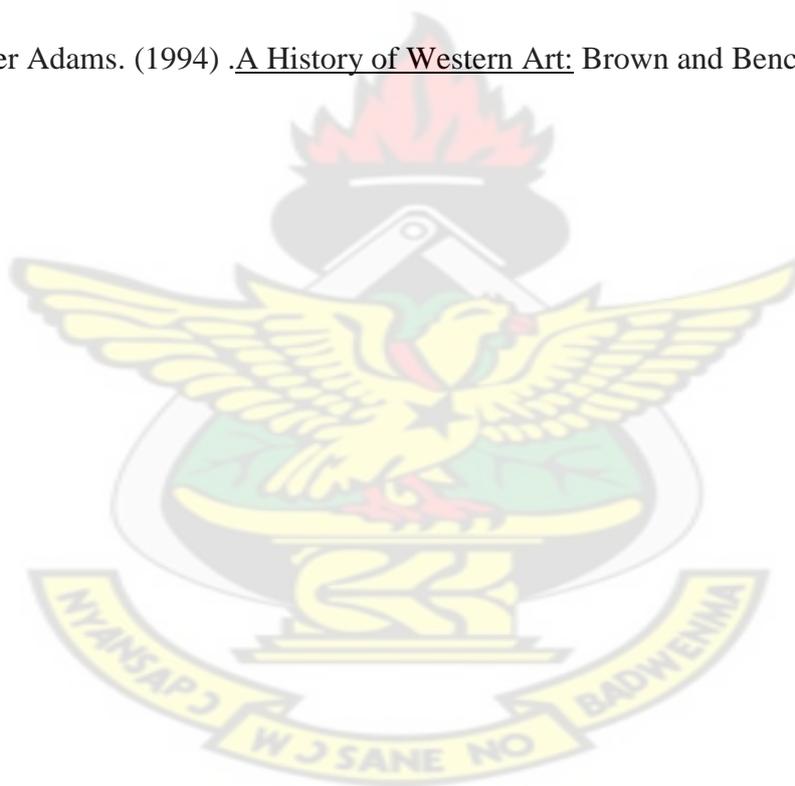
ADDENDUM

This section of the thesis represents other works produced by the artist /researcher in this experiment. It includes the steps or procedure used in painting the images below. Due to overloading of data and monotony, the researcher decided to separate it from the main thesis. It has been added in this part to enable the reader follow the procedures used throughout the project.

**PLATE 43(STEP1)**

PLATE 44(STEP2)

PLATE 45(STEP3)
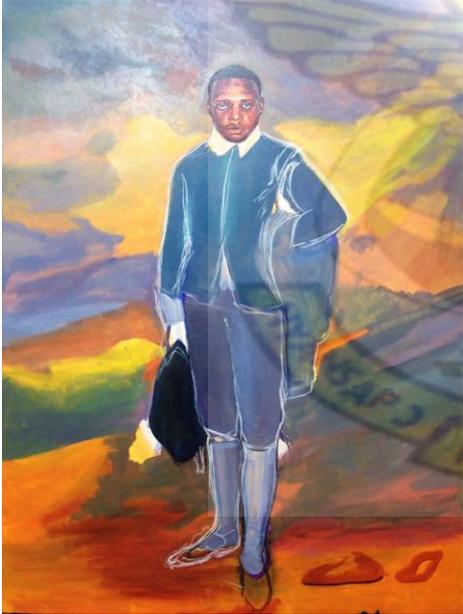
PLATE 46(STEP 4)
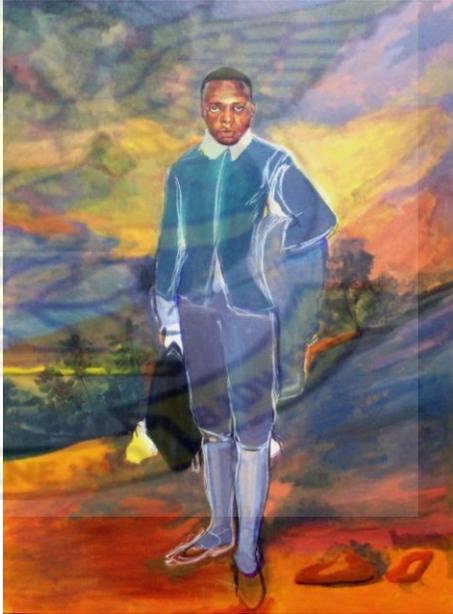
PLATE 47(STEP 5)

The images above are the steps used in painting my version of Thomas Gainsborough's "Blue Boy"
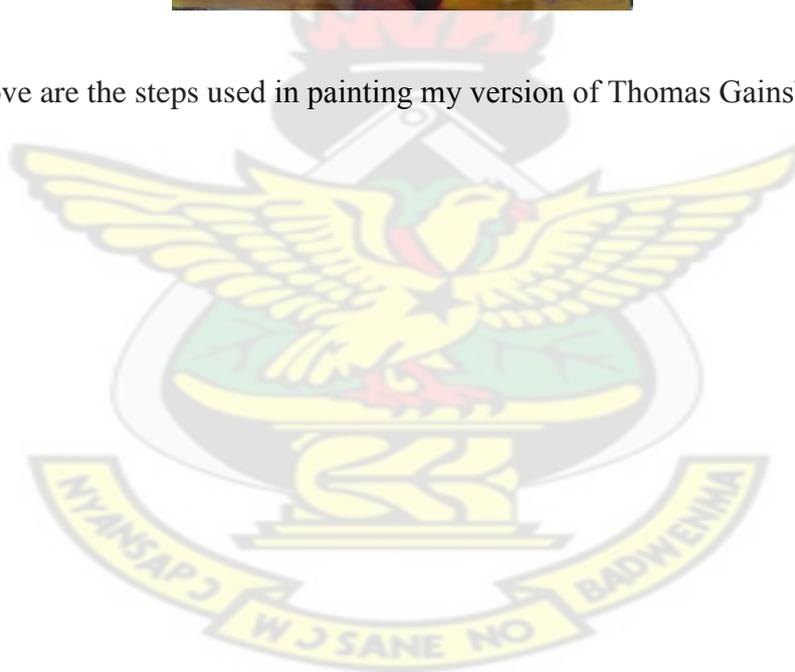
PLATE 48 (STEP1)　　　　**PLATE 49(STEP2)**
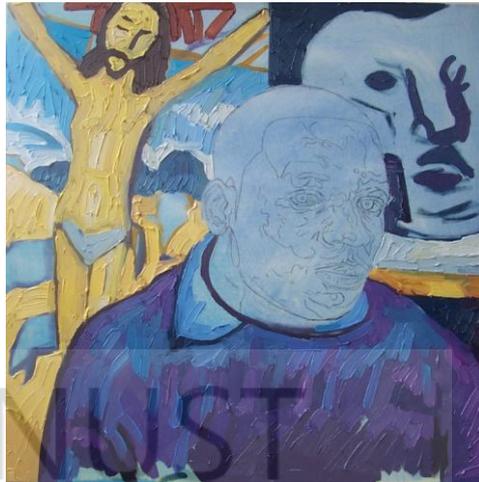
PLATE 50(STEP 3)
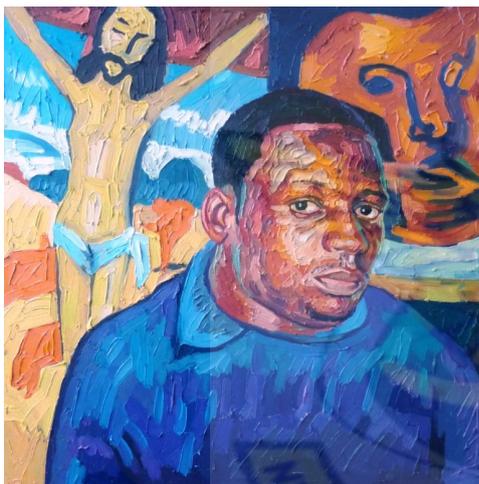
Above are images of the steps used in painting a new version of Paul Gauguin's portrait.

PLATE 51(step1)   **PLATE 52(STEP2)**
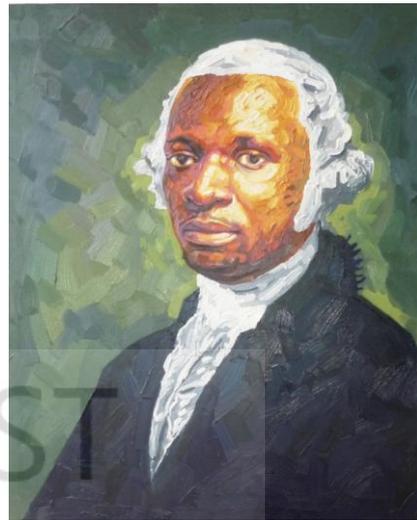
This are the steps I used in painting my version of Washignton's famous portrait.
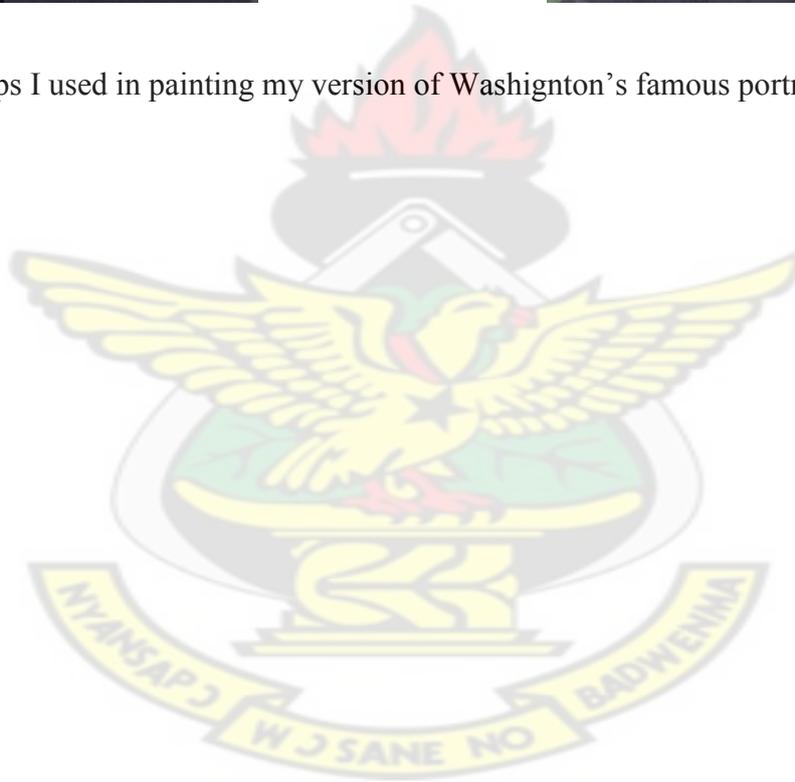
PLATE 53(step1)   **PLATE 54(step2)**

This images above are represents the steps in painting my version of Matisse's "Self portrait

in a strip T shirt"
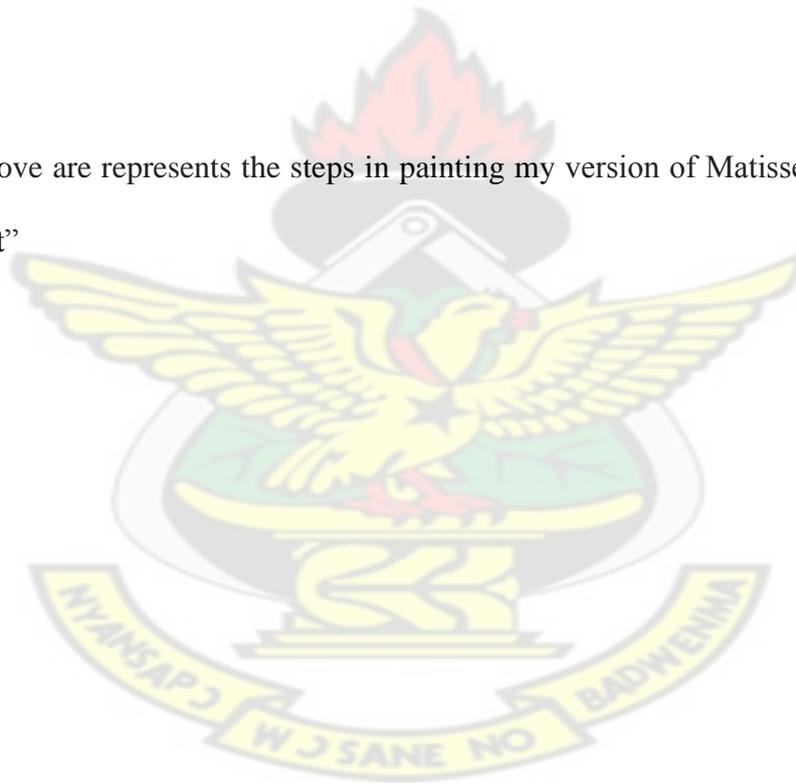
PLATE 55(step1)   **PLATE56 (step 2)**

PLATE57 (step3)

Researcher's version of Salvador Dali's portrait.

PLATE 58(STEP1)   **PLATE 59(STEP 2)**
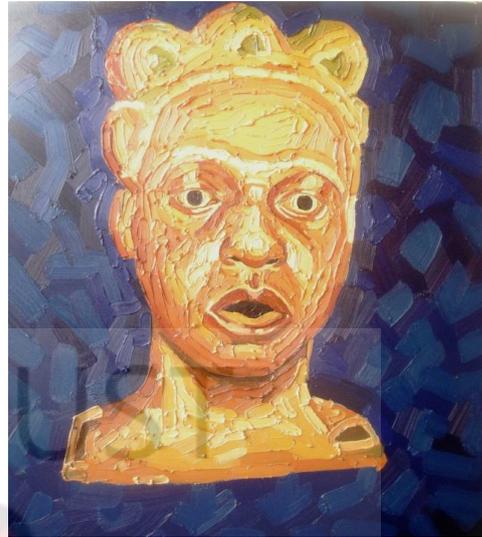

Procedure in painting my version of the Nok sculpture head.
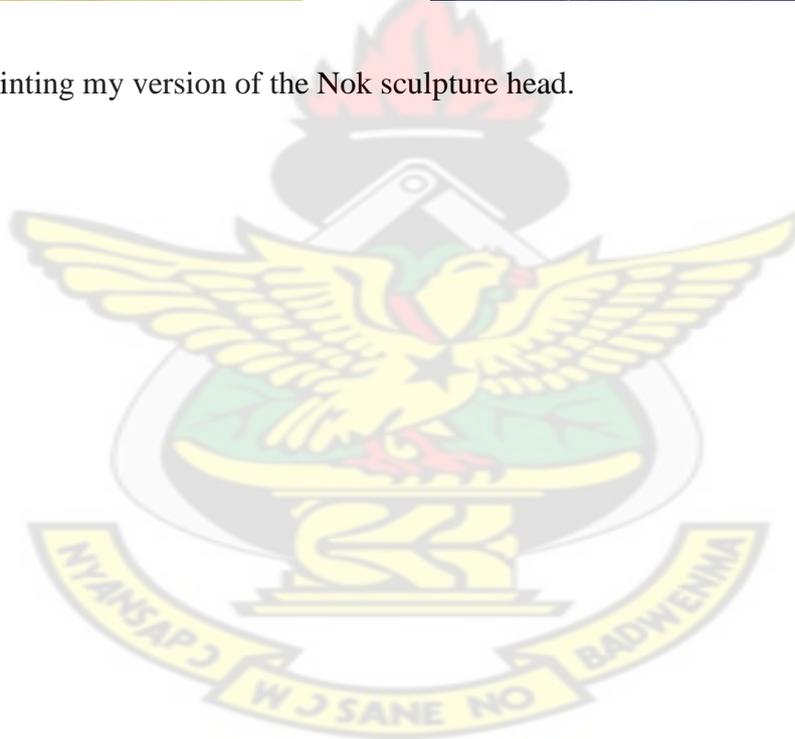
PLATE 60(STEP1)   **PLATE 61(STEP 2)**
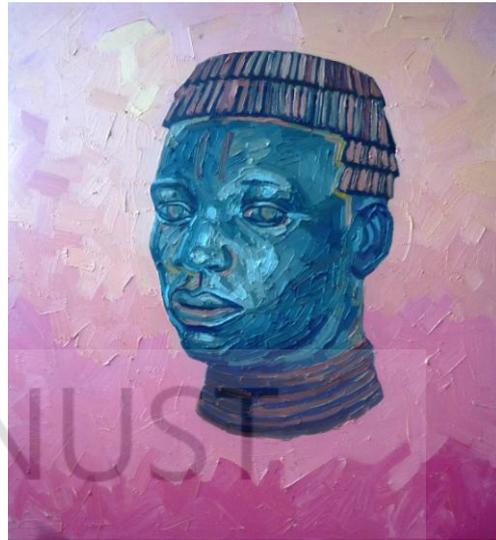
Superimposing myself into the Benin Bronze head.
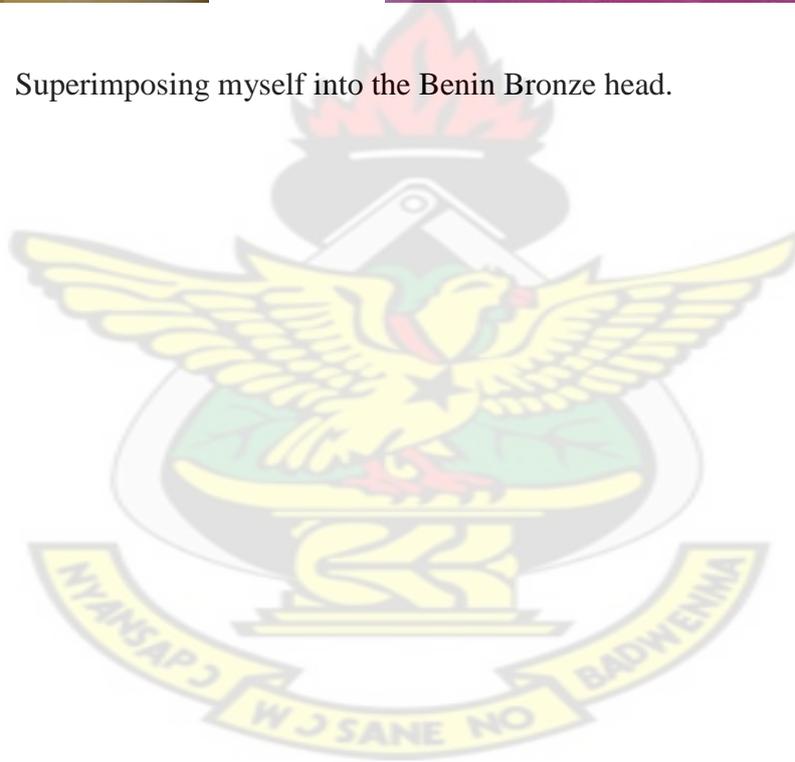
PLATE 62(STEP1)   **PLATE63 (STEP2)**

PLATE64 (STEP 3)

 A new version of Henri Rousseau's portrait by the artist/researcher.

PLATE 65(STEP1)   **PLATE 66(STEP 2)**

Plates 65 and 66 represent the steps or approach used in painting my version of King Henry

VIII.

PLATE 67(STEP1)　　　　　**PLATE 68(STEP2)**

PLATE 69(STEP3)
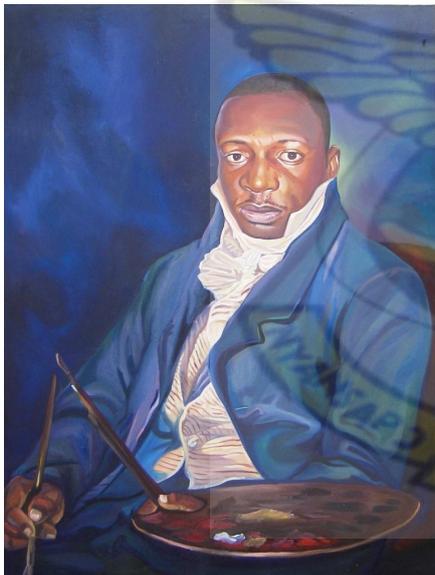
These are the steps or procedure used in painting my version of Francisco Goya's portrait.

KNUST