

Title:

Magic Lines of Uli Art Style

Word Count:

732

Summary:

Magic of Uli Lines, which is an extended dot or a moving point, has very many possibilities, particularly, the quickly drawn one. My drawing explores the evocative and lyrical possibilities of line and derives from Uli. The Uli artist works spontaneously whether on the human body or the wall. There is no question of erasing or cleaning. There is something about the spontaneously executed work, a breathtaking vitality and freshness that defy description or repetition.

Keywords:

African Art, Abstract Art, article, Black Art, Uli Art style, Nigerian Art, Igbo Art, Chidi Okoye, [www.modernartimages.com](http://www.modernartimages.com), [www.chidi.com](http://www.chidi.com), fine art, modern art

Article Body:

Uli is an expression of the people's capacity for creative design, which is firmly rooted in their myths and their experience of life in the past, present and future. At its best, it is an expression of their synthetic present, the epic of their search for a new order in the contemporary world. It is my traditional art style, which I have fallen in love with all over again and it is a privilege to share uli with you in my works. It has been shown that the knowledge of uli motifs and symbols and their application enables one to identify the traditional Igbo artifacts, giving validity to the people's aesthetic intelligence and judgment. This culture is one of the first known cultures of the world in the recorded archeologically facts to have done bronze casting. (Igboukwu bronze).

Uli symbols may be said to show graphically how the organic forms grow outwards from the core of those elements to point, line, triangle, square and circle that are universal to the concentric circle at the periphery, which contains reflections of everyday world as seen by the artists. Just as the inner circle reflects the uncommon reality or ritual reality of the cultural existence, so the outer circle is in contact with the human and ecological reality, which it expresses.

Artistic activities at Enugu formed part of the early post-1960 independence

developments in the country. There was the growing local and international popularity of Nigerian novelists, dramatists, poets, literary critics, architects, artists, and musicians, and scholars. Interesting collaborations took place among those in the literary performing, and visual arts, particularly in southern Nigeria. The efforts and artistic lives of these minds sowed a flourishing seed for an uncommon global harvest. I give thanks to God for these great minds, your outstanding contributions will not be forgotten.

Uli creations relied heavily on drawing skills whose content is based largely on Igbo culture, particularly female body and wall painting called uli and on Igbo tales, ceremonies, and beliefs. The revival of interest in uli through contemporary art had begun with Uche Okeke in the 1960s, when Nigeria's independence produced a growing sense of freedom from colonial restraints on cultural tradition. It fully developed among teachers and students in the 1970s at the University in Nsukka and was linked to renewed interest in Igbo culture after the destructive Biafran War.

Traditional uli motifs, now rarely painted on human bodies or walls, have a strong linear, often curvilinear, quality. The art makes use of contrasts between positive and negative space, its images at times appearing as sky constellations. Uli's lyrical qualities express harmony and brevity. It is art style that has often been created in freedom and spontaneity. "Uli is a pride heritage". Uli motifs generally refer to images of everyday Igbo life, farm and cooking tools, pots, plants, birds, animals, the sun, the moon, and the kola nut, though some are pure design. For ceremonial occasions and important events, skilled Igbo female artists painted uli to add beauty to the human body and the walls of buildings and compounds. Uli has made her way in modern social settings; on sculptural surfaces and on paper, board, and canvas, framed and hung on walls in homes, institutions, and galleries of the world.

Magic of Uli Lines, which is an extended dot or a moving point, has very many possibilities, particularly, the quickly drawn one. My drawing explores the evocative and lyrical possibilities of line and derives from Uli. The Uli artist works spontaneously whether on the human body or the wall. There is no question of erasing or cleaning. There is something about the spontaneously executed work, a breathtaking vitality and freshness that defy description or repetition.

An analysis of Igbo drawing and painting reveals that space, line pattern, brevity and spontaneity seem to be the pillars on which the rich tradition and heritage rests. It is these unique qualities that I strive for, both intuitive

and intellectually to assimilate in my work. Intuitively, because during my years of studying and looking at Igbo sculpture, drawing and painting, various aspects of design and recurrent motifs have become internalized in my system and inevitably surface unconsciously in the course of executing my aesthetic challenges. It is perhaps needless to add that the great works of art is a result of the harmonious marriage of intellect and intuition.