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Waste and Art in Other Climes: A Review of Few Sculptors

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ABSTRACT: *The industrial revolution ushered in quantum production of goods in various materials and the continuous churning of such goods obviously led to wastes within the environment.The wastes in the ecological space which has posed serious ecological and environmental menace is hitherto engaged in art production by some sculptors that has spanned several decades .Ranging from 1917 to 2008. Waste Art was not a conventional art practice until the twentieth century when he was acknowledged as a genre of art which couldThe theory of "Take and Put, De- contextualize and contextualize" forwarded by Ibarra (2001) aptly capsulated the theoretical frame, backed up bythe philosophy of "Reduce, reuse, recycle" which is the "holy trilogyon which this study hinged onSome randomly selection of a few Sculptors are reviewed in this thesis. The analytical descriptive mode of qualitative research was employed. Sculptors, Pablo Picasso, Ray Tomasso: Alina Szapocznikow, Sayaka Ganz, PaulBonomini, Christophe Guadin , Goncalo Mabunda, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Laura Lynn Jansen, Veronika Richterova ,Peter Buggenhout and the futuristic highly technical Ralf Sander were reviewed in this study.The study exposed the artists and the waste used revealed the community of location of the waste .The waste Artist points out the danger of waste within the ecological space even as he utilizes them.*

KEYWORD: ***Waste, Art, Sculptors, Anti- Conventionalism, De-contextualization and contextualization.***

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I. INTRODUCTION

Wastes generated by man increased after the Industrial revolution of 1770 .As the wastes are churned out from the various industries man got to be exposed to quantum wastes that he could not manage in the urban centres that it actually became a menace in the ecological space .It is this same waste that has turned a twenty first century problem that some Sculptors started harnessing to make Sculptural statements.

Several studies, works, and practices have been done in the international circles of Asia, Europe and America as regards waste and art. In India, wastes from various sources have been catalogued and analyses done to determine the duration of time they take to degenerate (Figure.1)This study engaged these waste sculptors: Marcel, Pablo Picasso, Ray Tomasso, Alina Szapocznikow, Sayaka Ganz, Paul Bonomini ,Christophe Guadin , Goncalo Mabunda, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Laura Lynn Jansen, Veronika Richterova ,Peter Buggenhout and the futuristic Ralf Sander

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory of "Take and Put, De- contextualize and contextualize" forwarded byIbarra **(**2001) aptly capsulated the theoretical frame, backed up bythe philosophy of "Reduce, reuse, recycle" which is the "holy trilogyon which this study hinged on. The issues of decontextualizing and contextualizing will always hold sway if not even the spine in Waste as art studies.

Quite a number of studies in the area of reviews on waste art have been done. Majorly on waste management within the environment and not necessarily as art.Studies by Premalatha (2013) engaged the generation impact and management of e-waste. Ilian (2016) based his study of waste art from the angle of art in transformation of discards and the acts.Schwatzolt(2016)investigated the economics of garbage as material in Contemporary art in Mozambique.Iberdrola (2020)stated that in 2002 William McDonough and Michael Braungart explicitly defined concept of up cycling and also went ahead to introduce some waste artists such as Micchelle Reader,Wim Delvoyeand Yuken Teruya. Plastic flexible films waste management-a state of art review was the concern of Ohorodytskaa and Fulanaa(2018) Kayode (2006)stood at a point from waste to want in his exposition on waste and art

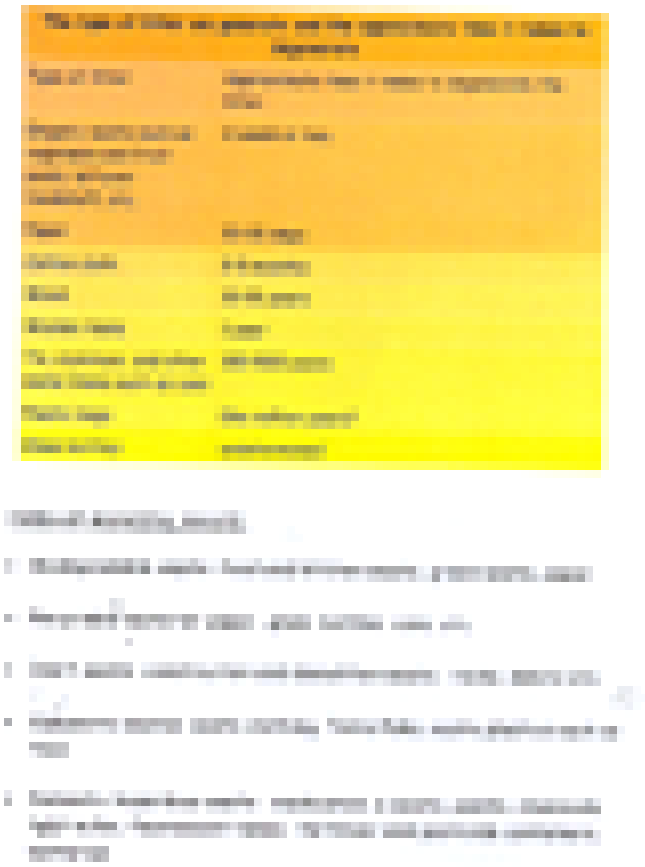

Figure 1: Types of Waste generated in India and how long it takes to degenerate. Courtesy, national solid waste association of India

There are high potentials for art in those available materials in the environment. Indeed, prior art practitioners like Pablo Picasso had initiated trends in this direction with the famous work, Bull Head (1942) where he combined a bicycle seat and its metal handle to actualize thecomposition.

Figure 2: Pablo Picasso, *Bull Head,* Waste Metal, and 844 cm x 128 cm (11.7 x 17.8ins) 1942, Courtesy, The Wall Street Journal Eric Gibson reunion des museesnationaux/art resource New York

Ray Tomasso (b.1949) is another artist that worked with waste paper and waste jeans to make relief casted Sculpture (Jacobson, 2010). It is stated that each piece of Tomasso is a statement of emotion and physical tolls left by the passage of time. Other sculptors that shared the same visions with Duchamp and Pablo Picasso in this trash art include Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948), Geogres Brague (1882-1963), Vladimir Bararoffe Rossine (1888-1944) Alexander Achipenko (1887-1954) and Henry Laurens (1724-1792),

It cannot be directly and specifically stated the particular time that this genre of art which is waste or trash art started globally. Hassan and Oguibe (2013) tried to throw more light on some of the phenomenal indices that paved way for the turn from traditional norms in art, to a reaction that has emerged from anti-conventionalism. Moreover, it can easily be pointed out too, that the continuous nature of life which is characterized with changes brings to fore, change, which is the only constant variable in art.

Lawrence Alloway (1926-1990) coined the term "junk art" which is used for original art works that utilize scrap metal, broken up machinery, cloth rags, timber, waste paper and other found materials (Martin, 2011).

Figure 3: Marcel, Fountain, Ceramics, 61cm x 48cm, 1917, Courtesy, Alfred Stieglitz

The works of Alina Szapocznikow (1926-1926) below in Fig 4 also shows the extent to which waste objects have been utilized for the production of Sculpture in Europe. Alina's parents were Jews who were medical doctors and she was born in Kalisz. During the war, she was imprisoned in German concentration camps, Alina worked in Poland, but in 1963, she went to Paris because she was attracted to a conducive atmosphere for her creative work and artistic projects. It was in Paris she began to use plastic, among others polyester.

Her work was mostly casts of her body, but also fragments of the bodies of their loved *ones such* as her son. Perhaps, working with such toxic materials had an impact on her and exposed her to breast cancer. Unfortunately, after a long struggle with cancer, she lost the battle and died in France at the age of 47 years.

Figure 4: Alina Szapocznikow, Illuminated Woman-Discarded plastics, 155cm x 57cm x 40cm, 1966-1967, MoMa, New York, and Galeric Gisela Captain, Cologne.

Her artist peers widely acknowledge Szapocznikow as one of the highly contributors to the shaping of the twentieth century Sculpture. She pioneered the use of unconventional sculptural materials, such as polyester and polyurethane, and constructed a visual language that addressed the body's pain and regeneration. The exhibition organized for this same artist, Alina, included approximately sixty sculptures, fifty works on paper, and numerous photographic works, demonstrating the tremendous range of Szapocznikow's vision and continuing influence on twentieth- and twenty-first-century artists. In the United States of America, similar works were being done by Kathryn Spence in an exhibition tagged Dirty and Clean. At Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum. Spence used found dirty, discarded materials to explore the complexities of humanism so as to garbage its place in our ecosystem. Spence, an avid birdwatcher and nature enthusiast, created life-sized animal models from scraps of paper, fabric, string, and wire. Her work plays with the idea of dirt and dirtiness as both a purifying source and as a by-product of human waste. Another artist that worked with even a more perishable waste, (garbage) is McDonald. McDonald's works at the Community Innovators Laboratory, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, combined technology and economics to help create sustainable cities.

McDonald believes this to be a missed opportunity, in that one is not getting the full use of waste when it could be turned into resources. Still in the same vein in Sayaka Ganz (b.1976) an American Japanese with multi-cultural interplay of Japanese, Brazil, and Hong Kong as a result of her interactions with places of abode. She is currently a university don ine Purdue University Fort Wayne.

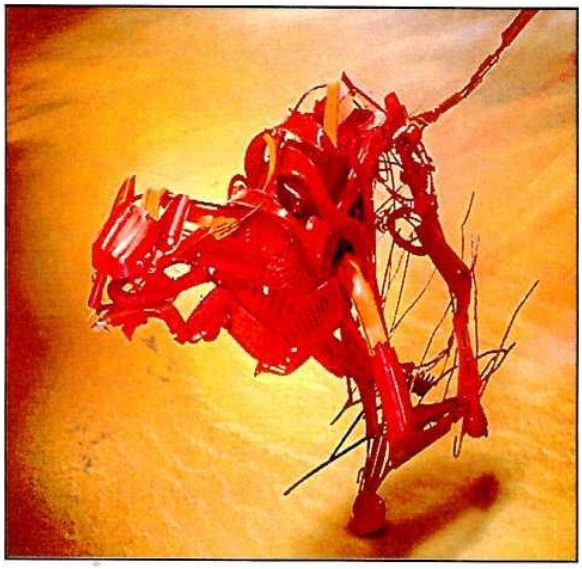

Figure 5: Sayaka Ganz, *Dragon*, Discarded plastics, 960px x 447px. Courtesy: http://www.sayakaganz.com

Figure 6: Sayaka Ganz, Wisdom, Discarded plastics, 21.2cm x 14.96cm x 3.14cm (54inz x 38ins x 8ins) Courtesy: http://www.sayakaganz.com

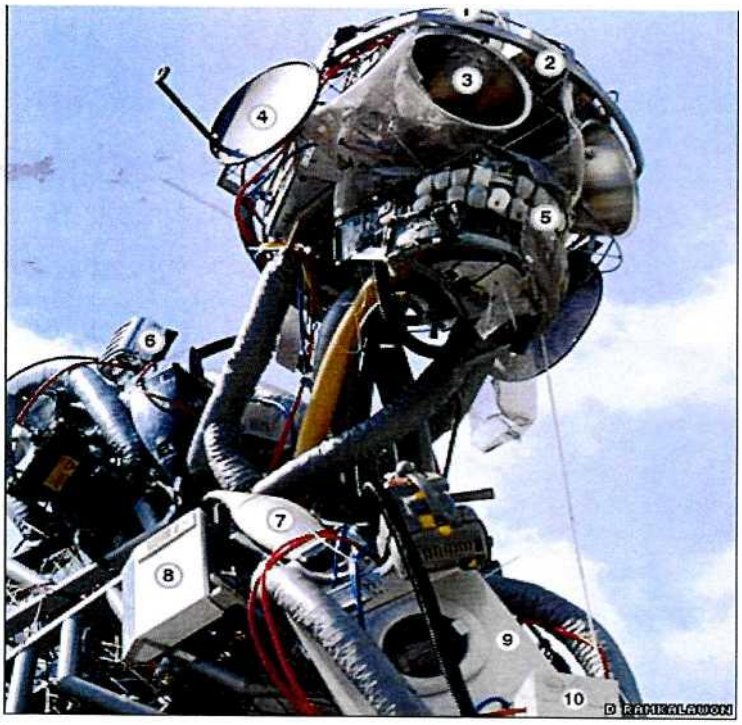

Figure 7: Paul Bonomini, wee man 2, w-waste, 7meters, 2013, Courtesy: www.shutterstock.com

Ganz utilized waste plastics as tools of expression. Sayaka's recent sculptures deposit moving animals in polychrome and energy. In the area of waste plastics, the advent of the CD, vinyl record production rapidly declined but there are still millions of old discs in circulation. Still, there is undoubtedly much vinyl out there by weight sitting unused.

Figure 8: Christophe Guadin, *"Vinyl, art disc,* Vinyl 26.5 x 162 x 88cm, Courtesy: Tony Leather

Ingeniously, the United States of America has found ways of repurposing vinyl into various items such as tiles, hose, and bottles**.** Ladies hand bags are made from vinyl and vinyl exhibits more environmental friendly trait than plastics. To make Vinyl uses less energy than other plastics and causes fewer emissions, but it never bio-degrades or breaks down in a landfill.

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Figure 9: Beckley park topiary garden, courtesy: www.parksandgardens.org/places/333

Figure 10: Goncalo Mabunda, Chair, Metal recycled weapons, Wood and Metal, 2003, Courtesy: Africa, Contemporary Art of a Continent, Remix

Abraham Cruzvillegas (b.1968) is a Mexican Sculptor whose fascination on wastethetics has earned him a space in Turbine Hall at London's Tate Modern (BBC, 2015).

Figure 11: Abraham Cruzvillegas, 1600 x 750 (sic) Courtesy: www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-34504157

Looking at the history of Plastics, one would posit that the initial studies on Ebonite or hard Rubber in 1851 paved way for studies in plastics and the successes in this area have led to the utilization of plastics in virtually all areas of industries and manufacturing. The new understanding exposed the attendant mass waste of plastics almost to a state of menace in society. The natural rubber studies set the two brothers, Wyatt and Isaiah, to create a process for producing a material made of camphor and cellulose nitrate in 1870. By 1872, the two brothers, Wyatt and Isaiah went on to establish the Celluloid Manufacturing Company. Alexander Parkes, (1813-1890) an English inventor, noticed that a solid residue was left after solvent in the collodion evaporated. As he was experimenting, he noticed a "hard, horny elastic and waterproof substance." which was the actual beginning of plastics.

In 1856 some woven waterproof fabrics emerged, (www.chem) By the 1900s, the use of plastic and all of its variations took off in its full bloom. Today, it is the most used material in the entire world not just in the United States of American industries, but with nearly every product containing plastic in one way or another. No matter the classification, all plastics are polymers.

Plastic is then customized by "hanging" different little groups to the backbone. Wastes of plastic origin could be a menace as well as an opportunity in the contemporary environment. The theory of Janet's 'Triple 'R' of reduce, reuse and recycle seems to hold sway as waste, engages in waste plastic bins filled with wastes and the impact of the wastes on the bin bag suggesting internal peeping forms that ordinarily might mean nothing to anyone until close attention is given.

A bag for collecting recyclable containers made out of stretch material .One looked at these bags and the first thing that came to mind is: why hasn't anyone thought of this before?' Repurposing engages the philosophy of "Reduce, reuse, recycle" which is the "holy trilogy" of today's contemporary twenty first century responsible lifestyle. These bags are more than their intended use; they portray the philosophy behind the three words.

One reuses and recycles garbage bags and waste and turns them into a dynamic work of art. Seeing the bag fill up and how each package that is put in, affects the bin bag, and the amount of garbage produced provokes a rethink of purchasing habits. (Busy boo, 2011).

Figure 12: Laura Lynn Jansen, Wastethetics, Dustbin bag and refuse, 2011 Courtesy: Busyboo.www.busyboo.com/.recycling

Plants and animals sculptures with waste plastic bottles have been the preoccupation of Veronika Richterova (b.1964) from Czechoslovakia. In the past decade she has assembled 3000 pet plastic bottles from 76 countries. She started her experiments in 2004 without having any environmental friendly into this sphere of creativity.

Figure 13: Veronica Richterova, Plastic bottle art, plastic bottles, (sic), Courtesy: Lucy Wang

Figure 14: Veronika Richterova, *Cactus*, Plastic bottle art, plastic bottles, Courtesy: Lucy Wang

His assembling items ranging from discards of irons, bicycles, shoes, hair dryers. He engages the repetition elements of design to state his sculptural view in installations. He at times takes to scorching with iron and the scorching marks as decorative elements. He appeals to the same cord of waste mania in the present day environment. His statements in installation came to the lime light in middle of 1980s as his works tilts towards Dada ready-made and surrealism

The other extreme of study on waste is Peter Buggenhout's(b.1963) first impression of Mumbai, his raw sculptures and installations are made from waste materials that include degradable wastes, animal intestines, and dust. At first sight, these dirty works look unattractive, odd and even frightening. It is as if they wanted to take over the room completely and infect it. It is as if Buggenhout had turned his sculptures inside out and emphasized the physical decay, the perfect perfection, erosion, and transience. His aim is to mirror the world that surrounds us. Depending on its scale, his work may take the 'form' of a large body or a shattered building in a run-down district.

Figure 15: Peter Buggenhout, Horse 1, hair, blood, polyester, epoxy, polyurethane, iron, Aluminum, Dimension: 26.5 x 162 x 88cm, 1966-1967, Courtesy:MoMa.mo.Ma.org/m/…

This Belgian artist Peter Buggenhout encountered Mumbai and his experience in a new area gave birth to his spaghetti leftover petrifying Sculptures. When Peter Buggenhout is confronted with bustling city of dreams, he sees a big plate of spaghetti. According to him a chaotic mangling of spaghetti and its accompanying source struck an indelible note in his memory which later gave birth to the bio-degradable putrefying sculpture in his solo exhibition. People are crawling over and under each other; there are cars and bikes everywhere".Buggenhout's sculptures were born out of the discarded debris of garbage heaps (Maria, 2008).

Sculpture then moved towards a safer environment and engineering in the work of Ralf Sander, this world-saving machine project that utilized solar to produce ice blocks. Environmentalism and climate change, propelled Ralf Sander to venture into futuristic thought provoking adventure.

Figure 16: Ralf Sander, World saving machine, solar panels, metal pipes, 2008, Courtesy: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RalfSander

III. CONCLUSION

There is more to waste studies other than de-contextualizing and contextualizing. It actually tells the state and history of where the wastes are situatedand perhaps the personality of the Artist.There are various types of wastes ranging from vegetative easily decomposable works of Peter, into the wastepaper and jeans of Tomasso of which the table in figure1 showed that cotton cloth takes two to three months to decompose,to the works of Pablo Picasso and Sander in metals that take one hundred to five hundred years to decompose then the plastics wastes of Veronika, Sayaka and Alina that takes even longer time than metals as stated in the findings in figure 1.One thing is very certain as exposed in this study ,in as much as the artists are utilizing wastes they can never exhaust the entire wastes generated and are still being generated globally. Critical studies and waste management decrees must be followed strictly to save the world from waste as menace.

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