



**EXPLORING BLACK WOMEN'S DIVERSE HAIRSTYLES THROUGH ART: A
CASE STUDY**

by

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Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to Vaal University of Technology

DECLARATION

I, Zanele Lucia Radebe, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, except where otherwise stated. The dissertation has not been previously submitted at any other university. All sources are acknowledged and explicit references are provided.

Zanele Lucia Radebe

Date: May 2019

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DEDICATION

This Master's dissertation is dedicated to the hard-working black female artist, Lebohang Motaung.

ABSTRACT

Problem statement

This study investigates black women's diverse hairstyles through art. The main research question is: How can black women's diverse hairstyles be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles? The research question is informed by a black feminist theory.

Objectives of the study

Based on the research problem, the objectives of the study were first, to find out how black women's diverse hairstyles could be understood through art to appreciate the meanings attached to these hairstyles. Secondly, to examine similarities and/or differences between how Lebohang Motaung (hereinafter referred to as Motaung) and Lorna Simpson (hereinafter referred to as Simpson) construct and express meanings of diverse hairstyles in their artworks. This was done by means of analysing the two artists' artworks. Thirdly, to find out what or who influences Motaung's choice of hairstyles, which was done by conducting an in-depth individual interview with Motaung. Fourthly, to find out what or who influences Simpson's choice of hairstyles, which was done by reviewing the literature on Simpson. Fifthly, to explore how Motaung and Simpson interpret their physical appearance based on their hairstyles.

Research design and methodology

The empirical investigation focused on analysing black women's diverse hairstyles by means of analysing artworks of Motaung (black South African female artist) and Simpson (black American female artist). This study contextualises black women's artworks as visual responses to patriarchal, social subjugation and objectification of black women's hair, by using black feminist epistemology through artistic production. Data collected through visual material were analysed using Barnett's (2011:37-38) critical analysis of artefacts strategy. Barnett's steps of critical analysis include description of the artefact, interpretation of the artefact, analysis of the artefact and personal report. The analysis of the artworks enabled the researcher to compare and

contrast the artworks of the two selected participants. The researcher first analysed the black South African contemporary female artist, Motaung's (b.1992), work as a visual form of resistance to masculine control of images of black women's hairstyle representations and self-definition. The researcher believes that Motaung creates self-defined artworks that appreciate the beauty of black women's hair and she demystifies the ambiguous meaning attached to black hairstyles. Secondly, Simpson's (b.1960) artworks were analysed in the study to understand what or who influences her choice of hairstyles. The researcher found it appropriate, for her study, to focus on Simpson, because she is a prominent contemporary black American feminist artist, who explores the concept of black hairstyles, focusing on themes such as race, gender and identity formation. Furthermore, one in-depth, individual interview was conducted with Motaung. The analysis was based on black feminism that enabled the researcher to listen to Motaung's views and be part of her portrayal of black women's diverse hairstyles. The qualitative data collection and methodology were guided by ethical considerations of the Vaal University of Technology for undertaking research. Ethical procedures were followed regarding selected participants for both artwork analysis and the interview. Five themes emerged from this analysis, namely Motaung's personal background, black hair politics, conceptual work, choice of medium and working process, art influencers and artwork clarification.

Black women's diverse hairstyles

In contemporary times, black women's hairstyle representations are highly politicised as black people strive to reclaim their identities. The changing meaning of what is good hair for black women is highly controversial; some black women consider natural hairstyles as good and authentic hair for black women, because they embrace the Afrocentric beauty standard that was degraded by whites since the colonial era. On the other hand, other black women are comfortable with altered hair that is viewed as a European beauty standard, because altered hair has become part of black women's culture and identity. The literature review suggests that historically, narrow European-centric beauty standards have deemed black women's natural features as unattractive and unprofessional, especially their textured, curly to kinky hair. These restrictive ideals have left black women in a compromised position,

having to adhere to certain societal norms for the sake of upward mobility, whether that is getting ahead professionally or fitting into a myriad of social environments in which they can be accepted.

Main findings

From the literature review, the study found that there are controversial viewpoints regarding what is or is not suitable for black women in terms of their hairstyles. The controversy led to black women's hairstyles being discussed constantly in binary opposition of good/ bad hair, natural/ unnatural, Afro-centric/ Eurocentric, authentic/ inauthentic, African/ Western, low/ high self-esteem, amongst others. The literature further indicates that there is a need to conduct a study that embraces diverse (both natural and unnatural) hairstyles to get rid of the politics, oppressions and binary oppositions placed on black women's hairstyles. From the analysis of the two artists, Simpson's works were found suitable for this study because her body of work links with that of Motaung's, in terms of concept, style, theory, content and technique, despite the fact that these artists are located in different geographical contexts and settings. From the individual interview, the study found that Motaung was prompted by black hair politics, such as the politics of exclusion of black hairstyles, such as afros and braids in educational institutions and work places. Such politics inspired her to create artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles. Motaung focused on natural hairstyles because she wanted black women to see what they can do with their natural hair. By using natural hairstyles, Motaung wanted to challenge the misconception that natural hair is not beautiful. The study also found that Motaung focused on unnatural hairstyles because there is bias against black women who wear synthetic hair. Motaung created artworks using synthetic hair to make a bold statement that synthetic hair is not fake hair but rather extra hair, which black women can use to self-express and self-define.

Recommendations

- The study recommends that self-definition is a black feminist strategy that black women can use to self-insert and self-represent using diverse hairstyles. The act of insisting on black women's self-definition validates black women's power as

human subjects, against structural patriarchal forces and beauty standards that are continuously set for black women.

- The study recommends that it is significant for black women to embrace diverse hairstyles, to get rid of the politics, oppressions and binary oppositions placed on black women's hairstyles.
- From the artworks of Motaung and Simpson, the study recommends that it is significant for black female artists to produce artworks on diverse hairstyles to diminish oppressive structures that are placed on black women's hairstyle representations.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Hairstyles - are elaborate works of art, showcasing braids, plaits, patterns shaved into the scalp, any combination of shells, flowers, beads, or strips of material woven into the hair (Chapman 2007:14). Black hairstyle is a matter of doing, styling, naming, or making 'black.' Whatever it may comprise of or look like, a black hairstyle becomes any hairstyle that results from the manipulation of that which is itself performatively named and produced as 'black hair' and any hair located on a body variously and multiply racialised as black (Dosekun 2016:65).

Self-definition - is the power to name one's own reality. Self-definition is important for black women because they experience the intersecting oppressions of racism and sexism, which both contribute to the creation and perpetuation of controlling images of black womanhood (Snelgrove 2015:2).

Art - is a skill encoded in an affecting, sensuous medium (Barnet 2011:1). In this study art refers to the expression or the application of human creative skill and imagination typically in visual forms such as such as drawings, prints, photographs, installations, videos, music, and sculpture. The art used in the study portray black women's diverse hairstyles to appreciate the meanings attached to black women's hairstyles.

Black feminism - is a social theory that contends that black women have a self-defined standpoint on their oppression (Martin, Horton & Booker 2015:104).

Black women - are women who self-identify within the African diaspora (Flint & Adewumi 2016:8). The term black women, is broad and include African (black) women, Indian women, Chinese women and Coloured women. For the purpose of this study black women refers to African (black) women and exclude Coloured, Chinese and Indian women.

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This qualitative, interpretive case study explores black women's diverse hairstyles through art. According to Versey (2014:810), hairstyles serve as important cultural artefacts, because they are simultaneously public (visible to everyone), personal (biologically linked to the body) and highly malleable to suit cultural and personal preferences. However, Lawrence (2017:1) argues that for black women across the African diaspora, the choice of how one wears their hair is sometimes not about personal choice, but it is linked with social and political issues that can have a profound impact on all aspects of one's life. In line with this thought, Brown (2017:1) asserts that women of colour in the workplace, particularly those with natural hairstyles, are penalised because they often do not conform to traditional notions of beauty. Brown (2017:1) goes on to say that while no one has ever empirically measured the various biases people have about different types of hair, or whether certain styles are professional, women of colour face major barriers to success.

Johnson and Bankhead (2014:88) maintain that in the 1700s, black people's hair was underrated and misunderstood and was described as wool and compared to that of animals. Furthermore, Antunez (2013:12) postulates that in the 1700s, white slave owners sought to pathologise African features like dark skin and kinky hair to demoralise these slaves, especially the women. During the 18th century, according to Thompson (2009:833), it was fashionable for white men of the upper class to wear wigs; in turn, slaves who worked in the "big house" also took to wearing wigs, while others styled their own hair to look like a wig. Research findings by Brown (2017:1) show that white women demonstrate the strongest bias, both explicit and implicit, against textured hair, rating it as less beautiful, less sexy or attractive and less professional than smooth hair. She further posits that black women experience more anxiety related to their hair and a greater social and financial burden of hair maintenance than white women do.

This study contextualises black women's artworks as visual responses to patriarchal, social subjugation and objectification of black women's hair, by using black feminism through artistic production (Fletcher 2011:1). Thus, two female artists' works are

adopted for this study, one black South African and one black American. This study thus combines the systematic and rigorous qualities of conventional qualitative methodologies with the artistic and imaginative features of the arts. Consequently, the study first analyses a black South African contemporary female artist, Lebohang Motaung (hereinafter referred to as Motaung) (b.1992). Her works are a visual form of resistance to masculine control of images of black women's hairstyle representations and definition. The researcher believes that Motaung creates self-defined artworks that appreciate the beauty of black women's hair and she demystifies the ambiguous meaning attached to black hairstyles (Bayliss 2015:105). In the researcher's schema, Motaung's self-defined artworks are an act of subject formation that validates her own experiences and those of other black South African women. An in-depth, individual interview is also conducted with Motaung to get a much deeper understanding of what or who influences her choice of hairstyles. Secondly, Simpson's (b.1960), artworks are analysed in the study to understand what or who influences her choice of hairstyles. Furthermore, the researcher found it appropriate for her study to focus on Simpson (hereinafter referred to as Simpson) because she is a prominent contemporary black feminist artist who explores the concept of black hairstyles focusing on themes such as race, gender and identity formation (Waitoller 2011:58).

The intention of this study is to compare and contrast two female black artists' works and to identify similarities and differences in their artworks. Simpson's work was found suitable for this study because her body of work links with that of Motaung's in terms of concept, style, theory, content and technique, despite the fact that these artists are located in different geographical contexts and settings. For the researcher, the images that have been produced by the two artists are useful data sources, which were used for presentation and interpretation of this investigation.

Furthermore, the study is interested in understanding how both artists make use of black women's diverse hairstyles, to express their subjectivity and display agency in a manner that evokes black feminist strategies for self-identity and self-determination. To foreground the study, black feminism, is adopted as a framework for this study. To achieve this objective, the works of various scholars, feminists, womanists, artists and creative writers who contribute critically to various issues

pertaining to Africa, black women and feminism in relation to visual arts are reviewed. The leading black feminists' works are those of, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), bell hooks (2000), Patricia Hill Collins (2000) and Christen Qunta (1987). In addition art scholars Lee-At Meyerov (2006), Brina Hagro (2011), Lorraine Portia Malatjie (2011) and Matshepo Priscilla Matoba-Thibudi (2016) and black female artists such as India Arie (b.1975), Beyonce (b.1981), Shani Crowe (b.1989), Laetitia Ky (b.1996), Nikiwe Dlova (b.1988), Masego Phalane (b.1989).and Zanele Muholi (b.1972).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem that this study investigates is black women's diverse hairstyles through art. Research by Brown (2014:309) indicates that black women face different challenges when it comes to self-presentation because of the patriarchal constructions of black women's diverse hairstyles. Marco (2012:41) corroborates Brown's study by stating that patriarchy has a role in dictating how black women should represent their hair. Indeed, black hair has been treated with disdain for years because black women have been fighting to be emancipated from enslavement and oppression, fighting to get into mainstream society, and fighting for equal rights as argued by Bongela (2015). For Konneh (2013:16), black women who wear altered hair are often assumed to have self-hatred, loss of identity and are seen to be conforming to white beauty standards. For this reason, Dosekun (2016:63) asserts that there is a tendency, scholarly and popular, in Africa and beyond, to see black women's appearance with hair longer and less 'kinky' than nature would have it, as evidence of a relative racial self-hatred and inferiority complex; as a form of repudiating 'blackness' and a sign of desiring 'whiteness'. Nyamnjoh and Fuh (2014:59) mention participants on a South African television debate on the topic of Natural vs Weave and they who contend that black women in weaves mimic the standards of beauty set by whites, standards which push them to seek to distance themselves from their natural black African hair, seen and treated as inferior. Consequently, Dara (2014) suggests that black patriarchy has biases towards black women who wear altered hair. The researcher argues that if these problems are left unabated, misrepresentation of black women's hairstyles will continue to cause more

anxiety relating to their hair experience. The research questions that guide this study are posed below.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of the study is:

How can black women's diverse hairstyles be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles?

Sub-question 1:

Are there similarities and/ or differences between how Motaung and Simpson construct and express meaning of diverse hairstyles in their artworks?

Sub-question 2:

What or who influences Lebohang Motaung's choice of hairstyles?

Sub-question 3:

What or who influences Lorna Simpson's choice of hairstyles?

Sub-question 4:

How do Lebohang Motaung and Lorna Simpson interpret their physical appearance based on their hairstyles? Based on these questions, the objectives of this study are stated below.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to:

Explore how black women's diverse hairstyles can be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles. The sub-objectives of the study are to:

- Explore similarities and differences between Lebohang Motaung and Lorna Simpson regarding how they construct and express meaning of diverse hairstyles in their artworks.

- Understand what or who influences Lebohang Motaung's choice of hairstyles.
- Understand what or who influences Lorna Simpson's choice of hairstyles.

Establish an understanding of how Lebohang Motaung and Lorna Simpson interpret their physical appearance based on their hairstyles. In the next section, the rationale of this study is provided.

1.5 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The researcher was prompted to undertake the study after noticing that people are biased regarding which hairstyles are suitable for black women in South Africa. Although numerous studies have been conducted on hair and art, none of these studies was conducted at a university of technology (UoT) in South Africa, regarding black women's diverse hairstyles. The selected UoT has been identified as a suitable site for this study because it has a department of visual arts that will enable easy access to participants identified for this study. Furthermore, the two artists that have been selected for this study have previously not been used to explore black women's diverse hairstyles. Through the artworks these women have produced, the researcher will be able to engage in a critical analysis and debate and contribute, although on a small scale, to the existing body of knowledge on black women's diverse hairstyles in South Africa.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is black feminism. Black feminism is a feminist movement that took form in 1960 and was led by activists such as Crenshaw (1989), hooks (2000) and Collins (2000). It is a critical social theory, which holds that black women self-define and design to oppose a system of racial, gender, sexual and class oppression and resist negative images of black womanhood existing in patriarchy and discriminatory social practices (Crenshaw 1989). For Collins (2004:327), black feminist thought reflects the interests and standpoint of its creators.

Collins' (2000:327) discussion of black feminist thought suggests that marginal positions in academic settings have been occupied by African American and South

African black women for an extended period. This marginality is viewed as the outsider within status, in which black women have been invited into places where the dominant group has assembled, but they remain outsiders because they are still invisible and have no voice when dialogue commences. A sense of belonging can never exist because there is no personal or cultural fit between the experiences of South African black women and the dominant group, although presently a black government rules the country post-apartheid (segregationist) regime since 1994. Since there is no place, space, or stance provided for this cohort, Collins's paradigm posits the importance of ideas "produced by black women that clarify a standpoint of and for black women" (Collins, 2000:468).

Hence, the researcher opted to study the works of two female artists, namely Motaung and Simpson. According to Collins (2000:468), there are three key themes in black feminist thought. First, the framework is shaped and produced by the experiences black women have encountered in their lives, even though others have documented their stories. Secondly, although the stories and experiences of each woman are unique, there are intersections of experiences between and among black women. Thirdly, although commonalities do exist among black women, the diversity of class, religion, age and sexual orientation of black women as a group are multiple contexts from which their experiences can be revealed and understood. These themes may not become apparent to South African black women initially, so one role of "black female intellectuals is to produce facts and theories about the black female experience that will clarify a black woman's standpoint for black women" (Collins, 2000:469).

Further delineation of the themes of black feminist thought provides greater insight into the paradigm and how the concepts were formed. The first theme implies that many people besides South African black women have shaped their identity. The theme also implies that the ways in which others have shaped black women's identity have been erroneous and stereotypical. These "externally defined images have been designed to control assertive black female behaviour" (Collins, 2000:469). Therefore, it is important that self-valuation, self-definition and knowledge validation replace the negative images of self in the minds of these women. Oppressive images are difficult to erase, however, when they have been reinforced over a long period.

The multiple identities of race, gender and class are interlocking components of most South African black women's identities. Furthermore, these multifaceted identities are immersed in oppression and subordinate their "status in an array of either/or dualities" (Collins, 2000:472). Placement at the inferior end of the status continuum because of these dualities has been the pivotal reason for the perpetual domination of black women. The lives of South African black women have been shaped by so many outside influences that the third theme encourages them to develop, redefine and explain their own stories based on the importance of black women's culture. These new stories have come in song, dance, literature, film and other media, helping to share the culture and experiences of black women from their own personal points of view. The philosophy of black feminist thought has not been entertained by many women of colour because they do not view themselves as feminists based on the mainstream definition. However, Collins's perspectives certainly provide a deeper context and meaning for South African black women who have been searching for a voice within rather than one heard from the outside.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

Marco (2012:3) maintains that hairstyle practices have evolved and changed over centuries for black people and it is possible to trace these practices and representations to periods of colonialism as well as in a post-colonial era. Research conducted by Thompson (2009:833) indicates that prior to the transatlantic slave trade, black hairstyles denoted cultural and spiritual meanings for both men and women. In 15th century Africa, hairstyles were used to indicate a person's marital status, age, religion, ethnic identity, wealth and rank within the community (Thompson 2008:79). Chapman (2007:14) posits that in the early 15th century, hairstyles functioned as a carrier of symbolic messages in most African societies. Hair was a major part of the language system in which various hairstyles had powerful social significances. While some of the hairstyles that were dawned by Africans during this period are still worn today, including twists, braids, Zulu knots, Nubian knots and dreadlocks, once the slave trade began, the African's connection to their hair was forever altered and complicated by life in North America. In the early 1900s, Madam C.J. Walker discovered the hot comb, also called a pressing comb (Thompson 2008:79). This device was the first of its kind to be marketed by a black

woman to other black women and it completely changed the hair game. In the 1960s, George E. Johnson's chemical straightener, also known as a relaxer was promoted as a more convenient way to straighten hair since it could be applied at home and it was more permanent – only requiring re-application every two to three months (Thompson 2008:79-80). The 1960s was a period where the black is beautiful movement emerged; hair became a key determinant in visually declaring black pride through embracing natural hairstyles such as the afro and various braiding styles (Brewington 2013:7). In the 1980s, weaves raised the black beauty bar even higher to hair that is not just straight, but also very long (Tate 2007; Thompson 2009).

1.7.1 Perceptions on representations of black women's hairstyles

In current times, black women's hairstyle representations are extremely politicised as black people attempt to reclaim their identities. The shifting meaning of what is good hair for black women is exceedingly debatable, other black women consider natural hairstyles as genuine hair for black women, because they admire the Afrocentric beauty standard that was degraded by whites since the colonial era (Sieber & Herreman 2000; Konneh 2013). Some black women root for unnatural hair that is viewed as a European beauty standard, because unnatural hair has become part of black women's culture and identity (Muhammad 2016; Gasho 2017:1). Hence, Jahangir (2015) poses the following question: "Do we (black women) still feel like we're compelled to appropriate white culture or is it now a choice, whatever's convenient, whatever's in fashion?" Lawrence (2017:1), suggests that historically, narrow European-centric beauty standards have deemed black women's natural features as unattractive and unprofessional, especially their textured, curly to kinky hair. These restrictive ideals have left black women in a compromised position, having to adhere to certain societal norms for the sake of upward mobility, whether that is getting ahead professionally or fitting in a myriad of social environments in which they can be accepted.

1.7.2 Black women's diverse hairstyles in a South African visual arts context

In South African visual arts, the studies of Meyerov (2006) and Marco (2012) are important. Meyerov (2006) examines selected artworks of a South African artist

Tracey Rose, to explore the manifestation of hair as a symbol of cultural and gender identity. Meyerov explores how Tracy Rose use the concept of subject formation through hair and body to problematise and disrupt notions of both the racially constructed category of Coloured and the monolith of woman, with its associated ideals of beauty and femininity (Meyerov 2006:78). Post-colonial feminist discourses inform the theoretical framework of Meyerov's study. Meyerov's dissertation is significant, because like Tracy Rose's artworks, this study also intends to explore how Motaung and Simpson use the concept of hair to disrupt the notions of black women's beauty ideals, through diverse hairstyles representation. Brown (2017:1) states that black women in the natural hair community have more positive implicit and explicit attitudes toward textured hair than other women do, but they nonetheless perceive the social stigma of wearing natural hair. Black women are twice as likely to report social pressure to straighten their hair at work compared to white women (Johnson, Godsil, Macfarlane, Tropp, & Goff 2017:12). Millennial 'naturalistas' have more positive attitudes toward textured hair than all other women do. This is consistent with past studies showing that millennials identify as progressive, confident, self-expressive and open to change. In postcolonial times, black patriarchy viewed Afrocentric beauty standards as ideal for black women's hairstyle representations and shamed black women who embrace white women's hairstyles (Dara 2014). Dara further suggests that a considerable number of Afrocentric men are supportive of black women with natural hair but not without a catch. There is a recurring theme among some black men to uplift natural hair while spitting in the face of black women with weaves or relaxers. Thus, in the post-colonial time, black men are sub-oppressors of black women (Deyi 2013:4). According to Deyi (2013:4), sub-oppressors are a portion of the oppressed group, which believes that to attain affirmation and to be humanised they have to emulate the oppressor, thus they become oppressors themselves. In the case of black women's representation, black men have taken it upon themselves to dictate what black women can and cannot do with their hair (Gasho 2017). Consequently, the perception of a black woman's hair by patriarchy is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Qunta (1987:15) suggests that there are two steps for black women's emancipation. The first is defeating colonialism and imperialism. The second step is eradicating all the effects of exploitation based on race, nationality, sex and class. For Collins (2000:300), black women need to self-define and find power to create their own reality in patriarchal systems. Spivak (1988:271) contends that black women are doubly oppressed first, by white patriarchy and secondly, by black patriarchy. Black women are pulled in all directions when it comes to their hair; historically, white patriarchy assaults notions of black beauty and sees European beauty standard as ideal for black women hairstyles representation (Collins 2004:19).

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative, interpretive, research paradigm and exploratory case studies design (Valley 2017:6). The researcher opted for the qualitative paradigm because it is naturalistic and constructivist (Nieuwenhuis 2016:53) and it ties to the nature of the researcher's art expertise. From an epistemological stance, the researcher is informed by an interpretive perspective, which views the researcher and the research participants as co-creators of knowledge. Ontologically, the researcher adopts an interpretive position, which assumes that the social world is constantly being created through group interactions and thus social reality can be understood via the perspectives of the social actors enmeshed in meaning-making activities (Hesse-Biber 2017:6). Unlike quantitative research, which relies on objectivism and measurement (Valley 2017:6), the researcher is interested in understanding how the selected participants construct meaning regarding black women's diverse hairstyles expressed in their artworks. The researcher thus carried out the research from an informed perspective of the reflective practitioner as participant observer (Mallins, Gray, Bunnell & Wheeler 1995:9). For Nieuwenhuis (2016:53), naturalistic research is conducted in natural settings where the phenomenon that is being investigated is situated. Qualitative researchers are thus interested in how human beings arrange themselves and their settings and how they as inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings (Given 2008:33). This enables a critical context of practice and research, as well as the use of contextual review to situate the researcher and to help generate and raise a level of critical debate (Mallins *et al.* 1995:9).

Thus, this study makes use of art analysis to unpack how black female artists use their art practice to advance knowledge, from a black feminist perspective (Collins 2004:327). Sullivan (2010:xi), asserts that art/ visual research creates knowledge that can help us in understanding, in a profound way, the world we live in and how we learn to make sense of it. Hence, arts research is significant for this study because it accentuates the notion of artists as knowledge creators engaged in the act of knowledge advancement and disciplined inquiry (Given 2008:29-33).

1.8.1 Research design

Based on the problem statement, the research questions and the qualitative perspective, an exploratory case study design was found suitable because it focuses on in-depth exploration of the actual case (Creswell 2012:465). Yin (2014:16), suggests that case study design refers to empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon, set within its real world, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear. Hesse-Biber (2017:226), argues that the main aim of the case study is to understand, in a meaningful and nuanced way, the view of those within the case. Yin (2014:119), maintains that the major strength of a case study data collection is the opportunity to use different sources of evidence to gain new insights about black women's diverse hairstyles. Thus, the researcher explored two specific artists' works on black diverse hairstyles as cases. These artworks were compared and contrasted, through critical artwork analysis because the researcher wants to illuminate how power is infused in the knowledge-building process regarding conceptions about black women's diverse hairstyles.

1.8.2 Target population

According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:52), a study population is the full set of elements from which a representative sample is taken as a target of respondents. There are more than fifty black female artists in South Africa and in the USA that deal with black hair; because this is a case study, the researcher opted for one South African black female artist who studied at the selected UoT and one USA black female artist whose work is similar to that of the South African artist. Within the qualitative tradition, a small sample is acceptable because it is context-bound and

the results of the study will not be generalised to a larger population (Creswell 2012: 206).

1.8.3 Sampling technique and sample

For this study, a purposive sampling technique was adopted. Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling procedure in which researchers intentionally and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon, which in the case of this study, is insight about black women's diverse hairstyles from the perspectives of Motaung (a black South African artist) and Simpson (a black American artist) (Creswell 2012:626). The two women artists are found suitable to be informants for this study, because hair plays a prominent role in their day-to-day lives. Hair foregrounds their artworks; they can relate to, or at least understand the intimate and complex relationship between a black woman and her hair (Marco 2012:41). In addition, black women artists were chosen because of the importance placed on displaying their ideal hairstyle representations. The researcher aims to get rich information that is contextual and holistic from the experiences of these two selected participants for the study (Creswell 2014:186).

1.8.4 Data collection

Multiple data collection strategies are employed (Creswell 2014:189). The two artists, namely Motaung and Simpson are chosen as informants for this study because they create self-defined artworks that portray black women as empowered people who are in control of their own body, beauty and image through the concept of hair and hairstyles. By studying the works of the two selected artists, the researcher intends to discover and generate new knowledge, by moving away from a research methodology that is straightjacketed, to one that humanises and centres the researched as knowing subjects in a specific field. First, the researcher analysed Motaung's works, a local, South African black female artist. Her artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles were examined critically to reveal how she defines herself through black women's diverse hairstyles. Secondly, Simpson's works, an artist situated in the United States of America, was critically examined. Thirdly, the researcher conducted an in-depth interview with Motaung to get rich information about her artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles.

Data collection was carried out by means of gathering multiple visual materials of Motaung and Simpson's artworks on diverse hairstyles (Punch & Qancea 2014:210). These visuals were studied, analysed and interpreted to theorise and contextualise the study. For each artist, a minimum of eight artworks are discussed. Motaung's artworks on diverse hairstyles include *Self-expression* (2013), *Enhancement* (2015), *Bottle ba Makgonthe* (2015), *Plaited from the roots* (2016), *Plaited identity* (braided) (2017), *Deeply rooted* (2017), *My expressive crown* (2018) and *Benny and Betty evolve* (2018). Motaung's artworks were collected from online exhibition catalogues, her personal archive, social media platforms and her digital portfolio. Simpson's artworks on diverse hairstyles include *Wigs* (1994), *Stereo Styles* (1988), *Counting* (1991) and *1978-1988* (1990), *ID* (1990), *Momentum* (2013), *Frosty* (2016) and *Commemorative Bust* (2016). Images of Simpson's artworks were collected from the Internet: online portfolio, exhibition catalogues and academic articles and books. Qualitative data were collected through an in-depth interview with Motaung. The interview was guided by open-ended questions and probes, but conducted in a conventional or discursive style (Creswell 2012:13).

1.8.5 Data analysis

Data collected through visual material were analysed using Barnet's (2011:37-38), critical analysis of artefacts strategy. The researcher analysed the artefacts of the two selected black female artists. Barnet's (2011:37) steps of critical analysis included: (a) Description of the artefact (b) Interpretation of the artefact (c) Analysis of the artefact and (d) Personal report. After critical analysis of artefacts, the study employed a comparative analysis of Motaung and Simpson to identify similarities or differences in their works of art (Given 2008:100). Comparative analysis is chosen because it is an effective analytical technique to show the qualities of the works (Barnet 2011:135). In comparing Motaung and Simpson's work, the study employed point-by-point comparative analysis method. Point-by-point analysis means interweaving comments on the thing being compared (Barnet 2011:138). Comparison included the theoretical perspective, concept of exploration, hairstyles, mediums and subjects in artworks, technical approach, methodological processes and growth of an individual artist over time.

Data collected through an in-depth, individual interview with one female participant, Motaung, were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework for conducting the thematic of analysis: (1) Become familiar with the data; (2) Generate initial codes; (3) Search for themes; (4) Review themes; (5) Define themes and (6) Write-up (Braun & Clarke 2006). From the qualitative interview data, six themes emerged. These themes are: (i) Motaung's personal background; (ii) black hair politics; (iii) conceptual work (iv) choice of medium and working process; (v) art influencers; and (vi) artwork clarification.

1.8.6 Strategies employed to ensure quality data

To ensure quality data, a measure of trustworthiness is a fundamental element in qualitative research. Creswell (2014:206) indicates that to establish trustworthiness of the findings of this study, the researcher will ensure that the data collected on black women's diverse hairstyles is believable, accurate and coherent. As Harrell and Bradley (2009:5) argued, trustworthiness is attained if another trained researcher could analyse the same data in the same way and come to essentially similar conclusions.

Credibility, which is considered one of the most important aspects in establishing trustworthiness, concerns itself with the internal validity of the study (Creswell 2014:210). Internal validity for this study will be ensured by ensuring that the views of the participant are correctly portrayed and that the researcher employs those descriptions as specified by the participant to have accurate representation of the data. The interview transcripts will be further subjected to peer debriefing to foster credibility. The peer debriefing, alternatively known as analyst triangulation will also take the form of an audit of the decision trail, whereby all stages in the data collection and analysis will be scrutinised by the research supervisors to check the adequacy of the research process. Credibility of the qualitative study also depends on the extent to which the emerging themes relate to the data. As recommended by Graneheim and Lundman (2004:110), representative excerpts from interview transcripts are used in this study to support the emergent themes. The researcher will ensure that the themes that emerge from the analysis of an in-depth interview also tie in closely with black women's diverse hairstyles in art, thereby providing

evidence of internal validity (Walker & Jones 2012:18) and reliability, which indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Creswell 2014:201). As a result, the concurring themes will be considered valid in addressing the phenomenon under study. The second criterion to be considered is transferability. Transferability refers to the external validity of the study, which is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations. Lincoln & Guba (1986:7) aver that thick descriptive data allow for transferability of findings to develop into further research. Thus, to ensure transferability, detailed descriptions and sufficient information on the case in study will be provided to allow the reader to establish whether the data and results from the study will be applied to other similar contexts (Creswell 2014:211).

Thirdly, dependability refers to the logical process in which the research will be conducted, how well it has been logically documented, analysed and structured. Dependability in this study will be addressed directly by ensuring that the process within the study is reported in detail, in so doing enabling future researchers to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results (Lincoln & Guba 1986:77). Fourthly, conformability refers to a degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others (Lincoln & Guba 1986:77).

1.8.7 Ethical considerations

The researcher will adhere to the ethical considerations of the Vaal University of Technology. Ethics is conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group (Babbie & Mouton 2012:520). For qualitative researchers, ethical practice is usually defined as a moral stance that involves respect and protection for the people actively consenting to be part of the study, these ranges from issues of confidentiality of data to issues of anonymity and permission to access individuals or subjects of the proposed research (Meyers 2013:49). In the context of this visual art research, the names of the two participants are exposed because they are prominent artists in the public eye. Hence, research ethics require due permission to be sought before data is collected. Therefore, the researcher will subsequently schedule a meeting where the participant, Motaung, will be informed about the intent of the research and its significance. Motaung will be informed fully about the purpose, methods and

intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved. The research participant will not be coerced to participate. Harm to the research participant will be avoided at all costs. The independence and impartiality of the researcher will be made clear and any conflicts of interest or partiality will be made explicit (Babbie & Mouton 2012:523).

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

This chapter provides background and context of the study. The chapter also elucidates the research problem and states the research objectives. An outline of the research design and methodology is presented, followed by a clarification of the role of the researcher and research ethics are outlined.

Chapter 2: Literature review on black women's diverse hairstyles through art

This chapter provides relevant research literature on black women's diverse hairstyles. A black feminist theoretical framework is adopted to foreground the study.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

In this chapter, the qualitative, interpretive, research method is used to explore black women's diverse hairstyles. A case study research design was adopted.

Chapter 4: Presentation and analysis of Motaung and Simpson's art works

This chapter presents analyses, compares and contrasts Motaung and Simpson artworks. Barnett's steps of critical analysis are used to analyse these artworks.

Chapter 5: Qualitative data analysis and interpretation

The analysis and findings of the data collected from an in-depth individual interview with Motaung are discussed in this chapter. The chapter also presents the data analysis methods and techniques, the presentation of themes and sub-themes as well as findings that are derived from the data.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and conclusion

This chapter summarises the study, discuss the findings, and suggest recommendations and areas for further research on the topic.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON BLACK WOMEN'S DIVERSE HAIRSTYLES THROUGH ART

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This qualitative, interpretivist, naturalistic study examines black women's diverse hairstyles through art. The previous chapter provided the background to the study and presented black feminism as a theoretical framework that foregrounds this study. This chapter critically examines the literature on black women's diverse hairstyles through art, drawing from diverse scholars in the field of black feminism and artists. The literature reviewed, provides a solid framework for this study. However, what is missing in the literature is how black women in a South African, UoT explain black women's diverse hairstyles and how these inform their self-definition. This study hopes to contribute, albeit in a small scale, to this gap in the literature.

To develop a logical argument, the researcher first discusses black feminism. This discussion is followed by a presentation of politics of black hair in feminist discourses. The discussion further exposes patriarchal views on black hairstyles. This discussion is followed by a presentation of public media debates on black women's hairstyles. Then black women's hairstyles in art exhibitions are presented. Finally, conceptual artworks on black women's hairstyles are presented. In the next section, the theoretical framework that undergirds this study is presented.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: BLACK FEMINISM

Crenshaw (1989:160) indicates that black feminism is a branch of feminism; its basis is largely from the United States of America in the early 1970s. While the first wave of feminism favoured white women and concentrated solely on the issue of gender equality with white men, black feminism concentrated on black women's oppression (hooks 1984:1). According to Malatjie (2011:14), black feminism is an extension of feminism and black feminists do not necessarily differ from other feminists. The difference is that black feminists employ strategies and theories to discuss black women's experiences instead of the experiences of women in general. For Minoo (2015:2334) what distinguishes black feminism is that it is not only concerned with

oppression, but also equally concerned with resistance, activism and politics of empowerment. Hence, black feminism is an activist response to black women's oppression (Collins 2000:22). For Treva (2015:1) the existence of black feminism, solidify around disrupting, challenging and radicalising intellectual production through centering the voices, stories, experiences and standpoints of black women.

Hooks (1984:1) argues that feminism has never emerged from women who are most victimised by sexist oppression; women who are daily beaten down, mentally, physically and spiritually – women who are powerless to change their condition in life. Crenshaw (1989:152) also critiqued that the value of feminist theory to black women was diminished because it evolves from a white racial context that is hardly ever acknowledged. Consequently, feminism, as a whole, failed to acknowledge that women of different races and classes, within a particular context, do not face oppression the same way.

Black feminism as a movement considers context specificity in its advocacy for black women (Malatjie 2011:15). Black feminism acknowledges that black women around the globe experiences oppression differently. For example, black women in the United States of America experience hair oppression differently from black women from South Africa. Furthermore, women from rural areas experience hair oppression differently from black women from urban areas. Thus, black feminism takes into consideration that every black woman experiences life and oppression, differently unlike feminism that assumed that all women of different races face the same oppression and have the same life experiences (Crenshaw 1989:152). Self-definition is one of the strategies in the black feminist movement that encourages black women to self-insert and narrate their own realities. Collins (2000:300) defines self-definition as the power to define one's reality. Collins (2000:114) further argues that by insisting on self-definition, black women question not only what has been said about black women but the credibility and the intentions of those possessing the power to define. Rodgers (2013:38) defines self-definition as an act of authority over the narrative of the self, which has been denied to black female subjects. Rodgers further states that self-definition is more about African female subjectivities and their formation within colonial and post-colonial times. Another black feminist, Mahmood (2011:32), indicates that self-definition requires a self-conscious agent who asserts

“her own agency” against structural patriarchal forces. Overall, the act of insisting on black female’s self-definition validates black women’s power as human subjects.

In the context of this study the strategy of self-definition through black women’s diverse hairstyles is significant because it emphasises how black women should be allowed to fashion (which means to make) their own images through diverse hairstyles. According to Dash (2006:27), self-definition through black women’s diverse hairstyles is vital for black women, because they have the power to control how they should be represented. For Muhammad (2016), a black woman wearing diverse hairstyles has the freedom to explore and figure out what fits her best and style her hair however she feels most comfortable without receiving backlash because she is not fulfilling patriarchal trivial standard of blackness. Chapman (2007:34) states that diverse hairstyles are good because they broaden the definition of attractiveness by embracing difference, while Johnson and Bankhead (2014:98) indicate that hair plays a crucial role in self-definition that cannot be ignored. Giving voice to this issue sends a message of self-acceptance, which is necessary for black women’s well-being.

Self-definition through black women’s diverse hairstyles is important because it empowers and unites black women. Gasho (2016) writes that black women’s hairstyle presentations are highly political and black women themselves are divided when it comes to hairstyle presentations. For example, black feminist such as Collins (2000), Ribane (2006), Mara Louw (b.1957) to name a few, argue that black women should only wear natural hairstyles, while other black feminists such as Dosekun (2016) and Dineo Ranaka (b.1983) root for altered hairstyles (these different views are discussed in the literature below). These different views on hairstyling create separation and conflict amongst black feminists. Hence, the strategy of self-definition through black women’s diverse hairstyles is important as it builds what hooks (1984:58) refers to as “Sisterhood”. Hooks (1984:58) posits that when black women strive to learn with and about one another they take responsibility for building Sisterhood. They can stand together united in political solidarity, in feminist movement. They can also restore to the idea of Sisterhood’s true meaning and value.

2.3 POLITICS OF BLACK HAIR IN FEMINIST DISCOURSES

Numerous studies have attempted to explain why black hair is highly political. Mokoena (2017:166) asked why is it that the subject of black hair still provokes so many extreme reactions on all sides. Prior to examining these tensions about black women's hair, it is imperative that the topic be placed in context with prior works from black feminist scholars who have explored the subject of black women's hair and hairstyles and with those who have provided varying perspectives on black women's diverse hairstyles.

Collins (2000) touches on the subject of black women's hair and argues that beauty is a controlling image that oppresses black women and women in general. She contends that black women are judged by their skin colour and hair texture. In the book, Collins (2000) uses autobiographies of prominent black feminist in an American context to show how black women have been oppressed based on their hair texture. These autobiographies revealed that black women in slavery times were discriminated against based on their hair texture. Embracing blackness and wearing black hair in its natural state was viewed as bad hair, while altered hair that emulated white beauty standard was perceived as good hair. Collins (2000) argues that in the post slavery time it is significant for black women to embrace blackness and their natural hair.

In line with Collins (2000), Ribane (2006), explores black women's beauty in modelling, in a South African context. Ribane use numerous photographs of some of the female celebrities of yesteryear such as Patty Patience, Hazel Futha and Dolly Rathebe together with images of contemporary icons in the modelling industry. Ribane argues that the Western criteria for assessing beauty instead of African criteria came to prevail in South Africa in the mid-20th century. Similar to Collins, Ribane argues that black women were supposed to look like white women to be deemed beautiful; blackness (dark skin and African textured hair) was not considered beautiful. Hence, this notion pressured black women to use damaging skin lighteners and hair straighteners. Ribane (2006:73) acknowledges that it was only in the black consciousness era where black women started to feel 'blackness was actually beautiful'. Hence, Ribane urges black women to embrace their

blackness. Collins and Ribane view embracing blackness, which also includes natural hairstyles as beautiful, because they grew up in an era where beauty was linked with white aesthetics; hence, in their books, they show the need to promote and embrace blackness in post slavery and post-apartheid era.

On the other hand, a black feminist like India Arie (2006) argues that she is not defined by her hair or her skin in a song titled *I am not my hair*. In the song, she gives an autonomous standpoint by narrating her hair struggles as a black woman living in America. She described her lifelong trials and tribulations with her hair, describing her move from a press and curl to a Jheri curl to a relaxer to locks and then to a shaved head as well as lamenting the difficulties of obtaining a corporate job with natural hairstyles, such as locks (Onwuachi-Willig 2014:1129). She argues that each hairstyle was criticised by either white regime, black patriarchy, society, beauty standards and the corporal world. Through self-introspection, she concluded that she is not what the society expects of her. She expressed in the song that:

“I looked in the mirror for the first time and saw that, hey, hey, I am not my hair, I am not this skin, I am not your expectations, no, no, I am not my hair, I am not this skin, I am a soul that lives within (2006)”. While Arie wanted to detach herself from her hair and skin, some feminist argued that it is important for black women to embrace their blackness. For example, a study conducted by Hargro (2011), focused on promoting black women’s natural hair. Hargro (2011) argued that African American women are conforming to a beauty aesthetic that does not affirm them. Hence, the focus of the study examines the historical roots of this problem, the imagery that has bolstered it and the effort to reverse it by encouraging African American women to embrace their natural beauty. Similar to Arie, Hargro (2011) used art (posters), namely fine art (visuals), to promote a positive perception of natural hair. Hargro’s (2011) art show positive imagery of African American women with natural hair to convince the viewer of this natural hair aesthetic.

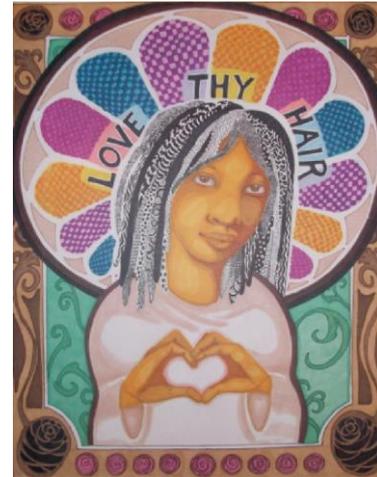


Figure 1: HAGRO, B. Figure 2: HARGRO, B. Figure 3: HARGRO, B.
2010. *Shea butter poster*. 2010. *Natural poster*. 2010. *Love thy hair poster*.

Another study conducted by Brewington (2013) also views black women's natural hair as beautiful. Brewington, in her study, argues that European colonists constructed these beauty standards during slavery to eradicate African self-identity in order to break down, psychologically, black women's self-esteem and identity. In embracing blackness Brewington's research examined the natural hair movement and its influence on black women in the United States. The findings of the study reveal that as the natural hair movement is gaining more of a presence, more people have begun to respond positively towards its goal of uniting black women and uplifting natural beauty.

In the same concept of promoting blackness, a large group of black women gathered in Maboneng precinct of Johannesburg, South Africa, to partake in the *Natural Hair Meet Up* in March 2015. The event aimed to promote natural hair and hairstyles. Black women were offered tutorials on how to achieve and maintain various natural looks; including cornrows, locks and afros. The event served as a platform where black women voiced their opinions on natural hair through panel discussions. According to Mafupha (2015) the major concern that the women expressed was the acceptability of natural hair in the workplace and how natural black hair was considered inappropriate in most corporate environments. The black women expressed that the inappropriateness of black hair was created by South Africa's racialised past.



Figure 4: MAFUPHA, E.R. 2014. *Jozi natural hair meet up.*

In 2016, South Africa, Zulaikha Patel, led a protest at Pretoria High School for Girls that fought over the school's code of conduct, which oppresses black students and undervalues blackness (Chutel 2016). The students addressed that the main problem was that black female students attending at the school were forced to straighten their hair. Patel and other black students wanted the historical policing of black female students' hair to stop (Kachipande 2016:1). Thus, the students formed a protest and signed a petition that demanded racist practices at the school to be brought to an end (Chutel 2016). Over 4500 South African black students as young as 13 protested, for the right to wear their natural hair at a prestigious formerly whites only school (Chutel 2016). For this bravery at a young age of 13, Patel was crowned the BBC 2016 youngest influential black activist in the world.



Figure 5: PATEL, Z. 2016. *The image of a schoolgirl sporting an Afro and standing up to a white man.*

The concept of embracing blackness, especially in the post-colonial time, makes an enormous amount of sense. However, the problem with studies such as Hargro and Brewington's (2013) and the naturalista movement is that while the aim is to promote blackness via natural hairstyles, they do not do it without viewing black women who prefer unnatural hairstyles as in-authentic, un-African, trying to be white, filled with self-hatred and low self-esteem. For example, a study conducted by Mougoué (2011), used interviews conducted in 2011-12 and 2015-16, as well as newspaper records, to explore how journalists and readers struggled to control women's behaviour by regulating their cosmetic rituals in post-colonial time. The study revealed that male and female journalists were against the modern black women's beauty rituals such as skin whitening, diet, wig wearing and cosmetics. They viewed these rituals as foreign practices and black women emulating white women's beauty. In South Africa, singer and actress, Marah Louw, also stresses that black women who wear weaves and bleach their skin have low self-esteem (Venge 2017:1). In an interview with DJ Sbu on Rise FM, Louw further argued that these cosmetic rituals are an insult to what God has created and went on to state, "[y]ou will never find

white people wearing our hair the way we [wear] other people's hair; going all out like that. You will never find white people wearing afro wigs, black afro wigs to go out and stuff, unless it's a [themed] party or the circus" (Venge 2017). Another South African feminist poet, Nstiki Mazwai, on a South African television programme, *3 Talk*, also expressed that black women who straighten, relax and weave their hair are emulating whiteness in a natural versus weave debate (3 Talk 2012).

In contrast, a number of black feminists have argued that altering hair is not necessarily a signifier of low self-esteem or black women wanting to be white. For example, Thompson (2008) writes that due to the context of oppression in which altered hairstyles were created and promoted, it is understandable to view altered hairstyles as alienating black women. However, altered hairstyles have evolved to be part of black culture and do not necessarily equal self-hatred anymore (Thompson 2008:847). Dineo Ranaka, a South African feminist, on a natural vs. weave debate on the *3 Talk* TV programme, expressed that she proudly wears weaves and further argued that the idea of black women wearing altered hair, equalling to not being truly African, is insulting (3 Talk 2012). Another black feminist scholar, Dosekun (2016) argues that weaves have become a normative part of black beauty. Dosekun (2016:63) points out that there is a tendency, scholarly and popular, in Africa and beyond, to see black women's appearance with hair longer and less kinky than nature would have it as evidence of a relative racial self-hatred and inferiority complex; as a form of repudiating blackness and sign of desiring whiteness. Dosekun (2016) conducted interviews with young black women from Lagos who wear weaves, to hear their viewpoints on weaves. The interviews revealed that black women embraced altered hair and viewed weaves as part of beauty and femininity and a subjective sense of self-confidence and empowerment. Participants in the study positioned themselves as already empowered or post-feminist subjects and happily beyond patriarchy.

Similar to Dosekun's study, Konneh (2013), finds it problematic that academic and socio-cultural arguments situate African women who choose to process their hair as engaged in inauthentic practices engendered by self-hatred, low self-esteem and the desire to be white. Using diverse (Afrocentric and Eurocentric) hairstyles, Konneh explored the gendered nature of Afro-diasporic hairstyling; the burden of

representation placed upon African-Australian girls and women to perform culture on behalf of the African-Australian diaspora and the industrial and personal economy of black hair as imbricated with the explicit and implicit labour of African-Australian identity. She used interviews to collect data from seven African-Australian women, aged 22-63, with the intent to analyse the cultural significance of hair and its methods of stylisation in the African-Australian diaspora. The interviews with participants revealed that hair in the African-Australian community is simultaneously psychologised and de-psychologised; good and bad; authentic and inauthentic; natural and unnatural. These contradictions were continuously used in the discussions on the complexities of African-Australian hair and identity.

King and Niabaly (2013), also find it problematic that the literature homogenises all black women's experiences regarding their hair without taking into consideration their ethnic diversity. Hence, the researchers felt the need to conduct a study that explores African and African American college women's feelings about their motivation to chemically straighten or wear their hair natural. Interviews with 12 African and African American college women wearing either chemically relaxed hair or natural hair revealed that African and African American women are influenced by different factors when it comes to their hairstyle choices. African women with relaxed hair revealed that they were inspired by media and community while African American women were inspired by family concerning their hair decisions. Both African and African American women with natural hair viewed their hair as a personal choice rather than a political statement.

In South Africa Majali, Coetzee and Rau (2017), examined young black women's everyday perceptions of hair and uncovered the meanings they attach to hair, hairstyles and beauty. The study analysed everyday perceptions of hair as it intersects with race, gender and class. Interviews were used to gather data with eight young African black women between the ages of 19 and 29 in Bloemfontein, South Africa. The findings revealed that young black women wear both traditional African styles and Western styles as they desire. The results dispute the notion of African black women emulating whiteness and expressing symbols of self-hate or low self-esteem. For participants of the study, Western hairstyle preferences and practices do not represent betrayal of their African roots.

Thus, studies by Konneh (2013), King and Niabaly (2013), Dosekun (2016), and Majali *et al.* (2017) showed that altered/ unnatural hairstyles are part of black culture. These studies were interested in finding out why black women choose to wear altered hairstyles and they showed that interviews are the best data collecting method to get personal opinions and perceptions. These studies are significant for this study because they acknowledge the existence of unnatural hairstyles in black culture and feminist discourses but they do not emphasise the importance of black women self-defining using diverse (both natural/unnatural) hairstyles.

A broader perspective on black women's diverse hairstyling has been adopted by Oprah Winfrey (2014) who argues that black women have the choice to do whatever they like with their hair. Winfrey (2014), in *O Magazine*, argues that it does not matter if the hair is styled natural or unnatural. Winfrey further states that when it comes to hair black women have the choice to change it, dye it, lose it, buzz it, grow it out – and everything else that makes it the best it can be.



Figure 6: WINFREY, O. 2014. *Let's talk about hair.*

In line with Winfrey, a book by Elizabeth Benedict (2015), explores diverse hairstyles using different women of different races. The book is based on 27 essays from a diverse range of authors. These essays reveal personal experiences of each woman's hair and hairstyle choices. The book uses narrative writings to show that women are in control of their own appearance. The shortfall of this book is that it only

uses narratives; it does not include visual art forms. This book is significant because it created a safe space for women to communicate their hair struggles, to share their personal experiences, to accept who they are and most importantly to empower women to take control of their own body, images and appearances.

In line with Winfrey and Benedict, Beyonce Knowles-Carter (hereinafter referred to as Beyonce) a self-proclaimed black feminist singer uses her art to embrace black women's diverse hairstyles in the music video *Formation* (2016).

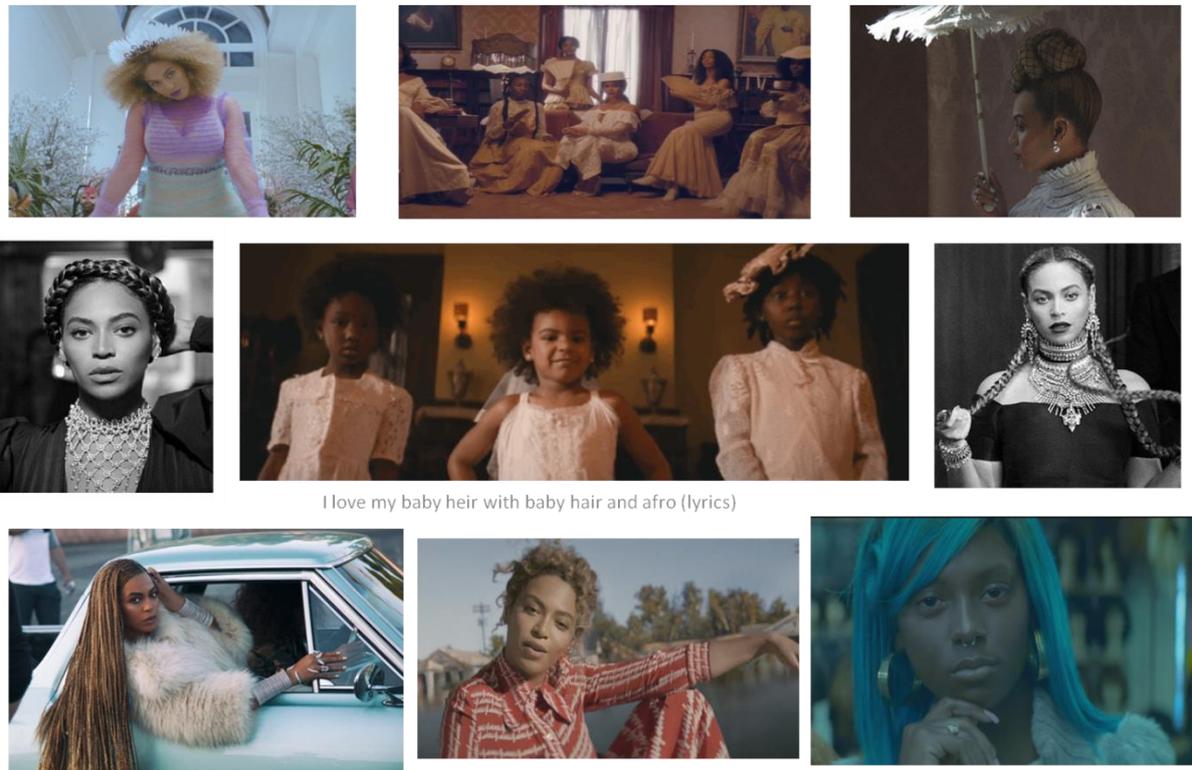


Figure 7: KNOWLES-CARTER, B. 2016. *Formation*.

Formation (2016) is a sheer black hair excellence because it embraces all diverse hairstyles from cornrow braids, to children wearing afro hairstyles, to a black woman wearing a blue weave, a group of black women wearing Victorian natural hairstyles and Beyonce proudly embracing blond hair through long braids, blonde lace wig, blonde afro weave and blonde bun. *Formation* (2016) encourages black women to dominate and take control of their own images. Beyonce uses lyrics such as “*Okay, ladies now let’s get in formation*”, “*we slay, okay*” to empower and unite black women as a whole, the act of black women getting together and working together to make

black women lives better is what refer to as “Sisterhood” (hooks 1984:58). The lyrics of the song also include words like “*I love my baby heir with baby hair and afro*”, which emphasises black self-love and addresses the culture of open social hate and bullying towards girls like her daughter who proudly wear afros (Bolanos 2016:1). Thus, *Formation* (2016) is an example of black pride and activism (Prins 2017:37) and exists in a canon of black feminist protest art (McFadden 2016:1).

Black feminist literature indicates that there are very few studies on black women’s diverse hairstyles. Black women’s hair is conversed in binary oppositions of natural or unnatural hairstyles. Thus, in line with Winfrey and Beyonce, this study aims to fill this gap by looking at black feminist artists that view both natural and unnatural hairstyles as beautiful and suitable for black women.

2.4 PATRIARCHAL VIEWS ON BLACK HAIRSTYLES

In South Africa, black men have also inserted their opinions on black women’s diverse hairstyles. In advancing the black conscious movement, a South African philosopher, Steve Biko, insisted that black is beautiful. Biko (1987:104) is against cosmetic rituals performed by black women such as skin lightning and straightening black hair. He argues that by black women using lightening creams and straightening devices for their hair they believed that their natural state, which is a black state, is not synonymous with beauty (Biko1987:104). In line with Biko (1987:104), Hugh Masekela (2015:1), the late legendary Jazz vocal artist, argues that black women should embrace their blackness. Masekela (2015:1) emphasised that he will not take pictures with women who do not have natural hair/hairstyles. He justifies his statement by stating, “I just refuse to take pictures with women whose hair looks out of kilter or looks really Indian, because for me I have never seen a Swedish person or Indian person or Chinese person wearing our hair,” (Zimela 2015:1). In contrast to Masekela (2011:1), three young black men from South Africa revealed that they prefer women with weaves compared to natural hair in a South African TV program, *3 Talk*, that aired 12 July 2012. The Naked DJ, who is a South African DJ, rooted for altered hair and argued that he loves it when a woman is able to reinvent herself every two weeks. He loves feeling as if he is dating many women in one woman. If the hairstyle looks good and she is comfortable in it, he is happy (Nyamnjoh & Fuh

2014:60). While the late TV presenter Simba Mhere made it clear that women have the choice to decide how they want to look, emphasising that he personally prefers women with natural hair but he does not have an issue dating women who wear weaves (3 Talk 2012). Kabomo, a vocal artist and writer insisted that black women should self-define and do whatever they want with their hair (3 Talk 2012). He remarked that black women should move beyond patriarchal standards of beauty and stated, 'If a man does not like that you have natural hairstyle, let him go and if a man does not like the fact that you have a weave, let him go' (3 Talk 2012).

This review on patriarchal views shows different perceptions on black women's diverse hairstyles. Steve Biko (1987:104) and Hugu Masekela (2015:1) despised altered hair because they grew up in era where the apartheid regime forced black women to emulate white beauty standards and the concept of embracing blackness was perceived undesirable and not accepted. Steve Biko (1987:104) and Hugu Masekela (2015:1), in the post-apartheid era, see the need to correct what the apartheid regime has done and encourage black women to embrace their blackness. While The Naked DJ, Simba Mhere, and Kabomo understand that in the post-apartheid South Africa, black women have the freedom of choice, which means they can represent themselves however they want to.

2.5 PUBLIC MEDIA DEBATES ON BLACK WOMEN'S HAIRSTYLES

In documentaries and TV shows hosted by Chris Rock of the USA and Debora Patta of the South Africa, the theme has resurfaced, making the hair of black women a highly contentious issue (Nyamnjoh & Fuh 2014:67). The documentary film *Good Hair* (2009), directed by Jeff Stilson and narrated by comedian Chris Rock, provides viewers with an entertaining education about the contemporary world of black hair (Krinsky 2009). The film takes its inspiration and its heading from a question asked by Chris Rock's six-year-old daughter: How come I don't have good hair (Nadège Compaoré 2011:15)? The main focus of the documentary was on black people explaining why they prefer chemically straightened hair or weaves or natural hair (Mokoena 2017:115).



Figure 8: ROCK, C. 2009. *Good Hair*.

To answer the question, interviews were conducted with black male and female celebrities to get their opinions on black women's hair. The documentary film also focuses on various issues regarding black hair. *Good Hair* (2009) explored: the multi-million-dollar business of black hair; how hair issues can translate into intimacy issues between men and women; importance of hair to one's self esteem (Krinsky 2009:1); why some black women with particular hair types invest in an array of products and services that alter the natural texture and appearance of their hair (Jackson 2010:117). The findings of the documentary revealed that there are practically no African-American-owned hair product companies: they are mostly Asian. The scientific experiment showed that hair relaxers have enough chemicals to dissolve a Coke can completely (Kit 2009:1). The findings also showed that the black hair industry is a \$9 billion industry, with 60 to 70 percent of that industry being made of the human weave hair alone (Nadège Compaoré 2011:155). The film reveals that black people make up 12 percent of the population and buy 80 percent of the hair in the United states of America (Jackson 2010:117). Rock concludes the film by stating that what matters is not what his daughter has on her head, but what is in it (Nyamnjuh & Fuh 2014:67).



Figure 9: LEWIS, E. 2012. *3rd degree makes waves over weaves*.

In the South African context, on 22 May 2012, *3rd Degree's* journalist, Debora Patta, explored the world of weave versus natural hair on an episode titled *It's just hair isn't?* The main question asked was: What defines beauty. The aim of the show was to find out the perceptions of black women about their hairstyle choices. Data were first collected through six random black women in the streets of Johannesburg, secondly, through a debate with two South African celebrities, a poet, Lebo Mashile, and TV anchor, Nikiwe Bikitsha, who were spokespeople for natural hair. TV presenter, Bonang Matheba and Cosmopolitan editor, Sbu Mpungose, rooted for unnatural hairstyles. Thirdly, data were collected through conversations with six random black men on the streets of Johannesburg.

The findings of the documentary revealed that 50 percent of black women on the streets of Johannesburg preferred natural hairstyle while the other 50 percent preferred unnatural hairstyles. The debate amongst South African celebrities revealed that black women who are now into wearing their hair natural, started by wearing unnatural hairstyles, conforming to white Eurocentric views of beauty, because their career path and social norms forced them to. Hence, they regret following these norms and they are now embracing their natural hairstyles. Women who rooted for unnatural hair pointed out that black women have the freedom to express themselves however they want to, they have a right to explore diverse

hairstyles. Findings on black men showed that hair means beauty and by women taking care of their hair, they are beautiful. 50 percent of black men stated that black women wearing unnatural hairstyles are beautiful and they show that they are capable of taking care of themselves. The other 50 percent stated that black women should look natural and embrace their natural beauty. Both the TV programmes look at black hair in binary opposition of good/ bad hair, natural/ unnatural hair, tidy/ untidy hair; in these public debates there was not much said about black women having options to embrace diverse hairstyles.

2.6 BLACK WOMEN'S HAIRSTYLES IN ART EXHIBITIONS

In the South African art scene, several exhibitions have engaged in black women's diverse hairstyle discourses. Robert Kissolo held a photographic exhibition titled *Obsession* (2016) at the Alliance Francaise du Cap, in Cape Town, from the 1 to 30 September 2016. The exhibition aimed at celebrating the beauty and strength of black women's natural beauty. Kissolo was inspired to explore black women's hair after he heard his niece say that she does not like her natural hair. Hence, Kissolo, in his artworks, argues that black women should embrace their natural hair and be assured that it is good to wear it (Cotton 2016).



Figure 10: WASHINYIRA, T. 2016. Robert Kissolo: *Obsession* exhibition.

Kissolo's artworks comment on various things, such as South African school girls, who are told how they should wear their hair (Washinyira 2016:1). He also

comments on the pressures that black women get from the society, based on how they should represent their hair (Cotton 2016:1). He also argues that the African hair market is flooded by fake hair (weaves and wigs), thus making natural hair in danger of disappearing (Washinyira 2016:1). Kissolo's work promotes natural hair and hairstyles, while at the same time views altered hair as bad for black women. Kissolo blames fake hair for causing natural hair to be in danger of disappearing. He does not acknowledge that altered hair has become part of black women's culture and that some women feel comfortable in wearing it or women can alternate and wear both natural and altered hairstyles. His artworks are one-sided; hence, there is a need to conduct research on artists who embrace both natural and altered hairstyles for black women.

In contrast to Kissolo's exhibition, an exhibition titled *WAM: doing hair* did not only focus on embracing natural hairstyles but diverse hairstyles. The exhibition took place on 19 August 2014, at Wits Art Museum, in Braamfontein, South Africa. The exhibition featured artists from different parts of Africa and celebrated the creativity, individuality and innovation in hairstyling using both natural and unnatural hairstyles.



Figure 11: BEGA, M. 2014. *Doing hair: Art and hair in Africa*.

The exhibition was not limited to black women's hairstyles but also explored hairstyles worn by black men. The exhibition explored the political, social, cultural and economic implications of hair and hairdressing using artefacts such as sculptures, paintings and thought-provoking interactive displays (Loewenstein 2014:1). The display included a number of extraordinary objects that are used to protect hairstyles and adorn hair, historical and contemporary artworks, barbershop posters, films and installations from Wits Art Museum and other public and private collections. In line with the diversity of this exhibition, this research study aims to go in-depth into black women's diverse hairstyles and explore specific black female artists who embrace diverse hairstyles in their practice, instead of discussing black hair in general and including anything and everything that has to do with black hair as the WAM exhibition did.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL ARTWORKS ON BLACK WOMEN'S HAIRSTYLES

Black female artists have used the concept of black hair as a medium to create art that embrace black women's hairstyles. This section focuses on how black female artists have use their art to address issues faced by black women about their hair. This section also discusses how black female artists have used their art to promote self-definition and self-love among black women and how these artworks produced empower black women to take charge of their own images.

Richardson (2013:22) posits that black hair practices such as hair braiding, known as cornrows stem from African traditions, do not mimic European standards of beauty. A hairstylist, Shani Crowe (b.1988), from the United States of America, uses a hair-centric portrait series titled *Braids* (2016) to embrace the beauty of Afrocentric hairstyles. The striking black-and-white portrait series features images of black women wearing intricate cornrowed designs created by Crowe that conjure royal headdresses, halos and other historical images (Harmon 2016). Crowe uses a creative mix of yarn, extensions, wires, beads and cowrie shells to achieve these phenomenal hair sculptures. Crowe's inspiration comes from a prominent Nigerian photographer J.D. Okhai Ojeikere, who published a book titled *Hairstyles* (2000), which features images of African women in sculptural and braided coiffure (Best 2016).



Figure 12: CROWE, S. 2016. *Braids*.

Crowe's *Braids* (2016) photo series is significant because it celebrates the art and tradition of black hair (Harmon 2016:1). In an interview with Best (2016:1), Crowe expressed, "I wanted to create images that portray black women in a way that would inspire them not to be necessarily pretty, which is what most beauty stuff is about, but to kind of embody that and more within themselves". She further states that "[e]verything starts within you and how you feel about yourself. It's just trying to glorify black women and make them imagine themselves beyond their wildest dreams" (Best 2016:1). This indicates that Crowe's work promotes self-love amongst black women and self-definition through hair, which is highly political. Crowe's work is not only about self-expression and black empowerment, but it also modernises and creatively preserves an African hairstyle. Crowe expressed that it is important to represent the black narrative of these hairstyles, which are unique to the black community, so the history behind them can be preserved and the story is told in the right way (Gebreyes 2016:1).

In Africa, an Ivory Coast female artist, Laetitia Ky (b.1996), uses hairstyling as a mode of self-expression (Wanshel 2017:1). Ky has dreadlocks, which fall under natural hairstyles; she uses them to create amazing sculptures. Ky's work promotes self-love through hair and art and inspires black women to celebrate being black and creative.



Figure 13: KY, L. 2017. *Expanding the Horizons: Ivorian Artist Laetitia Ky*.

The artist depicts hands, bunny ears and dancing women on top of her head with her lovely locks. The materials she uses to create her art include pins, thread, fabric, wire and hair extensions (Wanshel 2017:1). Ky expressed in an interview with Wanshel (2017:1) that the only thing she really wants to express with her art is the beauty of difference. Ky argued that “I live in a beautiful country with extraordinary and creative people who unfortunately are afraid of expressing themselves for fear of being judged, which I find is a shame”. Acquaye (2017:1) argues that Ky artistic work focuses on the beauty of black women’s original aesthetic, before it was compromised by Western culture.

Blagrove (2017:1) asserts that Ky styles her hair in creative masterpieces, not only to express her passion for art, but also to show the beauty and versatility of natural black hair, which has long been ignored and rejected in mainstream spaces. Her work makes a statement about the importance of having more representation

and celebration of natural hair and to encourage people to embrace the locks they were born with.

In the same line of embracing black women's natural hairstyles, a South African artist, Nikiwe Dlova (b.1988), creates hair sculptors using an African indigenous hairstyle called Benny and Betty. The Benny and Betty hairstyle is usually done by using a black thread and worn mostly by children. Dlova re-creates it by using rainbow coloured threads to form hair sculptures. Thus, she re-imagines, recreate and redefine the hairstyle to suit modern grown black women (Sibisi 2017:6). Dlova argues that black women's hairstyles are not only about black empowerment, creativity and self-love, but also about recreating and persevering African indigenous hairstyles.

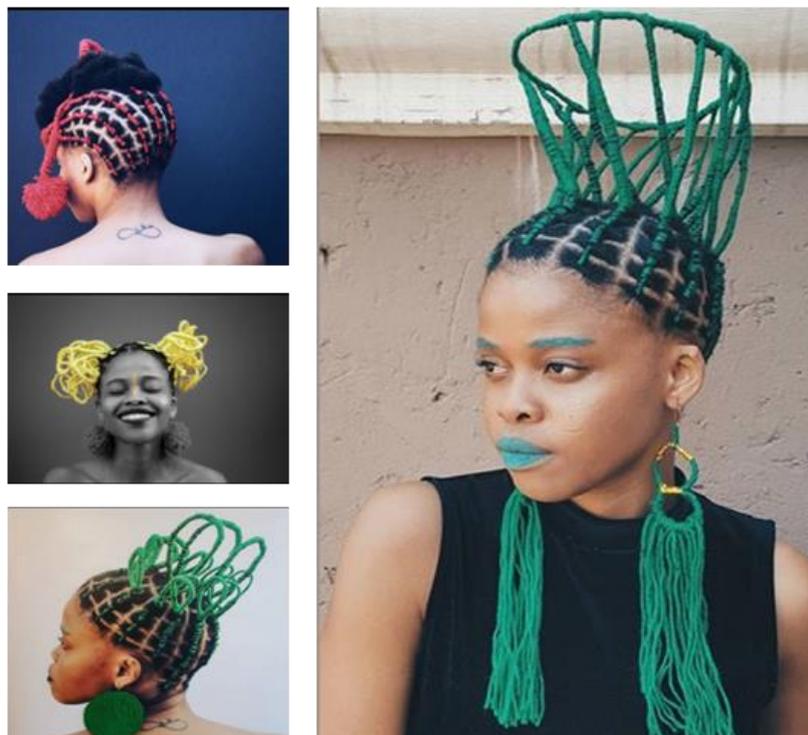


Figure 14: DLOVA, N. 2017. *Betty evolves hair series*.

Betty evolves hair series (2017), celebrates and evolves the Benny and Betty hairstyle into creative arts (Sibisi 2017:6). According to Puzzle Pieces (2017:1), Benny and Betty is a threading hairstyle, named after a book read and recited around the time of Bantu education. Nokwe (1954:12) defines Bantu education as the education which was designed for the Native of South Africa by the Nationalist

Government. Dlova turns this historical oppressive hairstyle worn by black females, into a colourful contemporary art that inspires black women to self-define creatively. Similar to Ky, she uses her art to self-define and inspire others to do the same. Her work inspires black women to wear their natural crown and embrace individuality through hair and hairstyles (Sibisi 2017:6).

Another South African black female artist, Nonkululeko Sibande, uses her art to embrace Afrocentric hairstyles. Sibande disputes the notion of good hair being straight hair within African communities and natural black hair being labelled as bad hair.



Figure 15: Sibande, N. 2017. Title unknown.

Through her work, Sibande educate young girls about the importance of how they can wear their natural hair without damaging it with the use of hot irons and straightening chemicals, also expanding the bountiful actualities of African women by critiquing beauty ideals defined by Western standards (Netshia 2017a:89).

In contrast, South African artist, Mpho Phalane encourages women to wear their hair however they want to. In her photographic series titled *Women, wear your hair as a crown* (2017), Phalane documents black women who self-define in diverse

hairstyles. Her photographs depict black women with colourful weave, shaved head, to wool dreads and natural dreadlocks as shown in Figure 16. Phalane acknowledges the existence of unnatural hairstyles within a black culture. She does not tell women to wear certain styles over others.



Figure 16: PHALANE, M. 2017. *Women, wear your hair as a crown.*

The artworks produced by black female artists show favour to natural hairstyles. Artists emphasise the importance of self-definition through black aesthetics; artist's stress that black women should not conform to Western standards of beauty. Not much has been done on unnatural hairstyles worn by black women, especially in the South African context. The problem with the artworks discussed above is that they do not acknowledge unnatural hairstyles as part of black women's identity and culture. Hence, this study wants to re-conceptualise the black hair discourses in the art practice by focusing on the concept of diverse hairstyling and looking at black female artists that have produced artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles.

2.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the theoretical framework that foregrounds this study was presented. An exposition of the literature on black women's hairstyles was also presented. The existing literature on black feminist studies, patriarchy, media and art, shows that when it comes to black women's hair and hairstyles there are controversial viewpoints regarding what is or is not suitable for black women. Thus, black women's hair is discussed constantly in binary opposition of, for example, good/ bad hair, natural/ unnatural, Afro-centric/ Eurocentric, authentic/ inauthentic, African/ Western, low/ high self-esteem, amongst others. The literature further indicates that there is a need to conduct a study that embraces diverse (both natural and unnatural) hairstyles to get rid of the politics, oppressions and binary oppositions placed on black women's hairstyles. The next chapter presents the research design and methodology adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the theoretical framework that underpins this study was presented. A literature review to unpack how black women's hairstyles can be understood through art was undertaken. In this chapter, the research design and methodology that guides this study is discussed. The qualitative, interpretivist, naturalistic design was chosen for this study. The rationale is to probe deep into the knowledge, experiences and perceptions of the selected research participants of what it means to wear a particular hairstyle and what role of self-definition does hairstyle play in their image of who they are.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN/IMPLEMENTATION

Although the structure described below is a generic research process, it is anticipated that the conceptual scope and thoughtful design will incorporate any of the approaches to research covered in this course. Visual art research will be discussed to expand the qualitative methodological landscape.

When conceptualisation is considered within the context of research that emphasises the importance of visual methods, conceptualising involves identifying a research problem that this study intends to address, which is unpacking how diverse hairstyles of black women in South Africa are perceived. This study considers all the necessary ways to tease the research questions posed and their implications for policy and practice. According Maxwell (2013:39), 'getting inside' a concept, idea or issue to identify appropriate research questions will be partly determined by the various visual and conceptual analytic strategies you can develop that make sense to you. In the context of this study, the researcher has chosen two female artists, one an American and the other a South Africa to understand how they through their artworks, portray black women's diverse hairstyles.

3.3 RATIONALE FOR QUALITATIVE APPROACH

A qualitative, interpretive, research paradigm and an exploratory case study design are employed in the study. A qualitative approach was chosen because it provides a

new grounding position to conduct research that fosters particular ways of asking questions and provides a point of view onto the social world whose goal is obtain understating of a social issue or problem that privileges subjective and multiple understating (Hesse-Biber 2017:4). According to Creswell (2007:80), the intent of qualitative research is to examine a social situation or interaction by allowing the researcher to enter the world of others and attempt to achieve a holistic rather than a reductionist understanding. Ontologically, the researcher adopts an interpretive position, which assumes that the social world is constantly being constructed through group interactions and thus social reality can be understood though the perspectives of social actors enmeshed in meaning-making activities (Hesse-Biber 2017:6). An interpretive perspective views the researcher and research participants as co-creators in the knowledge-building process and emphasises the perspective of the participants.

It was the researcher's contention that purely quantitative methods were unlikely to elicit the rich data necessary to address the proposed research purposes. For example, unlike quantitative research, which relies on objectivism and measurement (Valley 2017:6), the researcher is interested in understanding how the selected participants construct meaning regarding hairstyles expressed in their artworks. Thus, the qualitative research is significant as it focuses on words and creating meaning, rather than on mere numbers and statistics.

The study is premised on visual art enquiry within a qualitative framework. Several art scholars have indicated that art is part of research. Chapman & Scrivener (2004:2-3) argue that artistic activity and creative outputs are regarded as research. Busch (2009:3) an advocate of art as a legitimate knowledge form argues that "the work is the research". Qualitative research approach and visual art research are chosen for this study because they both focus on creating meaning and acknowledge artists as co-creators of knowledge. Similar to Williams' (2009:5) assertions, this study argues that there is a good deal of potential to tell stories that matter in ways that are culturally and personally transformative for readers/viewers using visual art and qualitative research.

3.4 RATIONALE FOR CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

Based on the research problem, research questions and the qualitative perspective, an exploratory case study design was found suitable because it focuses on in-depth exploration of the actual case (Creswell 2012:465). Yin (2014:16) is one of the experts on case study design and suggests that case study design refers to empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon, set within its real world, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear. The primary purpose of a case study is to generate in-depth understanding of the topic (Hesse-Biber 2017:221). The present research fits in well with Hesse-Biber because it sought to understand how black female artists construct and express meaning of diverse hairstyles in their artworks. Yin (2014:119) maintains that the major strength of a case study data collection is the opportunity to use different sources of evidence to gain new insights about black women's diverse hairstyles. Thus, the researcher explored two specific artists' works on hairstyles as cases. These artworks were compared and contrasted, through critical artwork analysis, to illuminate how power is infused in the knowledge-building process regarding conceptions about black women's diverse hairstyles.

3.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

A purposeful sampling procedure was used to select this study's sample. Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling procedure used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind (Maree & Pietersen 2016:200). The purposive sampling consists of two black women artists, Motaung and Simpson. The two women artists were found suitable to be informants for this study, because they both produce artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles. In addition, black women artists were chosen because of the importance placed on displaying their ideal hairstyle representations. The researcher aimed to get rich information that is contextual and holistic from the experiences of the selected participants (Creswell 2014:186).

3.6 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Maxwell (2013:102) states that qualitative research can be used to describe a state or situation and it is common in qualitative research to use multiple methods when collecting data. Multiple methods enable a researcher to choose the methods that will best suit the research. In this study, the purpose of using multiple methods is to gain in-depth information about different aspects of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell 2014:189). First, the researcher analysed Motaung's works, who is a local female artist. Her artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles were critically examined to reveal how she defines herself through black women's diverse hairstyles. Secondly, Lorna Simpson's works, an artist situated in the United States of America, were also critically examined. Thirdly, the researcher conducted an in-depth interview with Motaung to get rich information about her artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles. The two artists, namely Motaung and Simpson were chosen as informants for this study because they create self-defined artworks that deal with the concept of black women's diverse hairstyles. By studying the works of the two selected artists, the researcher intended to discover and generate new knowledge that centres the 'researched' as knowing subjects in a specific field.

3.6.1 Phase 1: Visual material

Visual materials in form of artworks were used to theorise and contextualise the study (Punch & Qancea 2014:210). The visuals material included Motaung and Simpson's artworks on diverse hairstyles. A minimum of eight artworks were discussed per artist.

3.6.1.1 Motaung's artworks

Motaung is a young artist who has been exploring the concept of black hair since 2012. The researcher called Motaung and politely asked her to email a digital portfolio with the images of her artworks. The digital portfolio included Motaung's recent works, which included *Enhancement* (2015), *Bottle ba Makgonthe* (2015), *Plaited from the roots* (2016), *Plaited identity (braided)* (2017). The image of the artwork titled *Hair: medium for self-expression* (2013) was retrieved from the Internet on the *Absa L'atelier's* 2014 Catalogue, which showcased the artists that were in the

top one hundred in the 2014 *Absa L'atelier's* competition. *Deeply rooted* (2017), *My expressive crown* (2018), *Benny and Betty evolve* (2018) images were collected from *Amafrikan* website. The artworks were selected with the intention to show the evolution of the artist's artwork from 2013 when she started to explore black hair to what her artworks have transitioned to in 2018.

3.6.1.2 Simpson's artworks

Simpson is a prominent black American artist who explores the concept of black hair and has been in the art scene for over three decades. Images of Simpson's artworks were retrieved on the Internet, as the researcher was not able to call the artist because of geographical reasons. Images of the artworks: *1978-1988* (1990) and *ID* (1990), were taken from a pdf exhibition Catalogue titled *Projects 23: Lorna Simpson* in the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York, July 6-August 26, 1990. *Wigs* (1994), *Stereo Styles* (1988), *Counting* (1991), *Momentum* (2013), *Frosty* (2016) and *Commemorative Bust* (2016) were retrieved from *Lorna Simpson's Studio* website. Similar to Motaung, these artworks were selected because they show the historical evolution of the artist. As Simpson has been in the art scene for over three decades, the researcher intentionally selected her artworks from the 90s to show how Simpson initially engaged with the subject of black hair. Simpson artworks from 2013-2016 were chosen to discuss how she deals with black hair in the present time.

3.6.2 Phase 2: interview

Data for this qualitative case were gathered through an in-depth individual semi-structured interview with one participant, in order to answer the interview questions that the researcher developed. The interview guide consisted of 10 semi-structured items in total, one focused on Motaung's personal background; five explored her conceptual work; two focused on her choice of medium and her working process; one focused on people who have influenced her concept and the last one focused on Motaung's purposefully selected artworks for this study.

The 10 questions are as follows:

1. Please, tell me more about yourself?
2. What inspired you to create artworks on black women's hair?

3. Could you share with me, what inspires your conceptual work? Why?
4. Tell me, how has your conceptual work evolved since you started practicing as a professional artist?
5. Which diverse hairstyles are you creatively exploring? Why are these important for you?
6. Do you think that it is important to situate your work in a particular discourse? Why?
7. What do you think is important about your medium?
8. Can you please tell me how you go about in your creative process?
9. Do you have any South African models who do the same artwork as yourself? Why are they important to you?
10. Do you have something more to tell me?

An in-depth individual semi-structured interview enabled the researcher to get more comprehensive information from the participant who is a South African black female artist that deals with the concept of black women's diverse hairstyles. The interview was held at the participant convenience. A camera and audio recorder were used to record the interview. Responses from the participant were video and tape recorded and then transcribed. The interview was recorded and transcribed for verbatim analyses in the event of ambiguity and vagueness of the participant's statements (Merriam 2009:110). Clarity was sought further through probing questions. After conducting the interview, the researcher read and re-read the transcribed data, then code-identified common themes and categorised them. The researcher selected semi-structured interviews as a data collection instrument, which is clarified below.

3.6.2.1 In-depth individual semi-structured interviews as data collection methods

The aim of the in-depth individual, semi-structured interviews in this study is to explore how black women's diverse hairstyles can be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles. The in-depth individual, semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with Motaung. According to Remler and Van Ryzin (2011:63), semi-structured interviews are defined as a set of open-ended questions, sometimes accompanied by probes that help guide or

structure the discussion. A semi-structured interview was found suitable for this study because it allows for spontaneous interaction whilst maintaining a modicum structure and provides the interviewer with the different ways of grasping and understanding the topic.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

The interview guide consists of open-ended questions developed by the researcher and her supervisors, after careful consideration of the research topic and the literature on the topic at hand. The questions were developed to allow the participant to give intricate accounts of her experiences, perceptions and observations based on the topic. The informed consent letter is attached as Annexure B and participant letter of consent for the use of video and voice recording equipment is attached as Annexure C.

3.8 ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS OF DATA

Maxwell (2013:104) notes that any qualitative study requires decisions about how the analysis will be done and these decisions should inform and be informed by the rest of the design.

3.8.1 Analysis of artworks

Blau and Burak (2010:84) explain that art analysis has to do with separating individual parts to understand the composition and meaning of the whole. Barnett (2011) further states that when you analyse, you are seeking to account for your experience of the work (Analysis thus includes synthesis, the combination of the parts into the whole).

Employing Barnett's (2011:37-38) critical analysis of artefacts strategy, the researcher analysed the artefacts of the two selected black female artists.

Barnett's (2011:37), steps of critical analysis included:

- Description of the artefact
- Interpretation of the artefact
- Analysis of the artefact, and

- Personal report

3.8.2 Comparative analysis

A point-by-point comparative analysis method was used to compare Motaung and Simpson's work. Point-by-point analysis means interweaving comments on the thing being compared (Barnet 2011:138). The purpose of the comparative analysis was to evaluate relevant similarities and differences between the two artists' work, to reveal details about trends within historical periods, regional similarities and growth of an individual artist over time (Smith 2009). The artist artworks were compared and contrasted based on the following concepts; the theoretical perspective, concept of exploration, hairstyles, mediums and subjects in artworks, technical approach, methodological processes and growth of an individual artist over time.

3.8.3 Analysis of interviews

According to Neuman (2011:507), analysing data may be defined as the systematic organising, integrating and examining of information gathered during the data collection process. In this study data collected through an in-depth, individual interview were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework.

In analysing qualitative data, the researcher opted for Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework because it offers a clear and usable framework for doing thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt 2018:3355). Maguire and Delahunt (2018:3355) suggest that thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. The goal of a thematic analysis in this study was to identify themes, or patterns in the data that are important or interesting and use these themes to understand how Motaung perceives black women's diverse hairstyles through art. The researcher was more interested in identifying semantic themes because she was interested in the surface meanings of the data and not looking for anything beyond what Motaung had narrated. The analysis of Motaung's interview identifies themes at the semantic level.

The researcher was interested in Motaung's accounts of her experiences and points of view regarding black women's diverse hairstyles. This determined the interview

questions and management of the data as well the analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006) distinguish between a top-down or theoretical thematic analysis, driven by the specific research question(s) and/or the analyst's focus and a bottom-up or inductive one that is more driven by the data itself. The researcher's analysis was driven by the data that was gathered through the interview questions.

As indicated earlier, the researcher opted for Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework for conducting the thematic of analysis.

- Step 1: Become familiar with the data
- Step 2: Generate initial codes
- Step 3: Search for themes
- Step 4: Review themes
- Step 5: Define themes
- Step 6: Write-up (Braun & Clarke 2006)

The researcher transcribed her interview and used excerpts from the transcript to support the qualitative data she reported on. The interview was held with one female participant as indicated earlier. From the qualitative interview data, six themes emerged. These themes are: (i) Motaung's personal background; (ii) black hair politics; (iii) conceptual work (iv) choice of medium and working process; (v) art influencers; and (vi) artwork clarification.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher adhered to the ethical considerations of the Vaal University of Technology. The researcher, at all times, strove to maintain objectivity and integrity in conducting research that is based on ethical responsibility and adherence to the highest possible standards of academic practice. The researcher also honoured the responsibility to foreseeing any potential harm which might befall the participants and thereafter establishing mechanisms that will remedy the situation should a need arise. These ethical responsibilities are imperatives, which mean that the research should not harm the participants in any way. In order to facilitate ethical interaction with the participant, the researcher informed the participant about the purpose behind this research, why this study is important and why it needed to be undertaken. The researcher explained the details of the study to solicit involvement.

A consent form was signed by the researched subject, Motaung. The consent form established an ethical contract and mutual consolidation of the collaborative practice between the participant and the researcher.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Creswell (2012:199), limitations are potential weaknesses or problems with the study identified by the researcher. These weaknesses are enumerated one by one and they often relate to inadequate measures of variables, loss or lack of participants, small sample sizes, errors in measurement and other factors typically related to data collection and analysis.

3.10.1 Limitations regarding the sample

In line with a qualitative research strategy, a major limitation of this study was that the research sample was restricted to two participants. Therefore, a critique of this research might be the limited possibility of generalising this study to other black female artists dealing with the concept of black women's diverse hairstyles. Furthermore, the sample was selected using only black female artists, situated in two different geographical areas, namely United States of America and South Africa.

3.10.2 Limitations in terms of the data collection methods

In terms of data collection, the study consisted of two participants Simpson and Motaung. Visual materials were collected from both participants using the Internet. The limitation was that the researcher was not able to conduct an interview with Lorna Simpson because of geographical barriers. Hence, the interview was only done with Motaung.

3.10.3 Limitations in terms of scheduling the interview

For the researcher to conduct an interview with Motaung, she had to reschedule twice because the participant was very busy. The in-depth individual interview with Motaung happened two weeks later than the researcher initially planned.

3.10.4 Limitations in terms of recording the interview

The interview was conducted at Motaung's studio (Victoria Yards Studios), for her convenience. When recording the interview, it was hard to control the background sounds, such as people talking outside, cars passing and hooting on the road and other artists playing music in their studios. The researcher tried to ask people and artists to keep quiet until the interview was done, but the background sounds were beyond the researcher's control and they are present in both the video and audio recordings.

3.10.5 Limitations in terms of the literature studies

A very limited number of South African art studies on black women's diverse hairstyles were found. There is a large number of studies done on black women's hairstyles in social sciences, both locally and internationally, but there is not much done in the field of fine art.

3.11 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter provided a detailed description of this study's research methodology. Qualitative case study methodology was employed to explore how black female artists construct and express meaning of diverse hairstyles in their artworks. The participant sample was made up of two purposefully selected individuals. Two data-collection methods were employed, including a visual analysis with both artists and an in-depth individual interview with one participant. Barnett's (2011) critical analysis of artefacts strategy was employed to analyse the artworks of the two artists. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework for interpreting raw data were employed to analyse an in-depth individual interview with Motaung. Lastly, the limitations of the study were presented. The next chapter presents artworks of Motaung and Simpson.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF MOTAUNG AND SIMPSON'S ARTWORKS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the research design and methodology that guides this study was discussed. This chapter discusses Motaung and Simpson's artworks to add new insights about black women's hairstyles. A comparative analysis is employed to explore similarities and differences between Motaung and Simpson regarding how they construct and express meaning of diverse hairstyles in their artworks. The two artists are chosen because their artworks employ strategies that aim to decode the subordination of black women's hair, which has been put in place by a white apartheid patriarchy, black patriarchy and imperialist forebears. Their artworks are placed within a black feminist's perspective to reflect how they self-define and assert their subjectivity by using diverse hairstyles. Exploring Simpson and Motaung's work from a black feminist point of view requires an acknowledgement of identity politics such as gender and race. These two points have informed Simpson and Motaung's continual use of their racialised and gendered black hair in their artworks.

To address the research questions, this chapter discusses eight artworks of each artist. The artworks are considered in conversation with Barnett's (2011) steps of art analyses, which are imperative to understanding the artist's work.

4.2 MOTAUNG'S ARTWORKS

Motaung is a 27-year-old hairstylist and fine artist who was born in 1992 in Evaton, in the Gauteng province of South Africa. She obtained a Diploma in visual arts in 2012 and completed a Bachelor of Technology (B-Tech) in fine arts at the Vaal University of Technology in Vanderbijlpark, south of Johannesburg. She continued with her studies and obtained a qualification in printmaking at Artist Proof Studio. She was awarded a certificate of excellence in printmaking at the studio in 2015. Presently, Motaung is a practising artist who explores the concept of black women's diverse hairstyles and the ambiguous meaning attached it (Bayliss 2015:5).

Motaung grew up drawing and experimenting with her grandmother's hair. When she was 10 years old, her interest in braiding grew stronger and she used her skill to support her financial needs (Ownurcrown 2017:1). As a hairstylist, Motaung was fascinated by her client's hair stories while she braided their hair and she was intrigued by her creativity and capability to manipulate hair. Motaung's initial concept was inspired by several black women clients, who indicated that they did not like their natural hair, thus negative comments about African natural hair inspired Motaung as an artist and a hairstylist to show women that they can do fascinating things with their natural hair (Bayliss 2015:105). As an artist, she translated her life experience of being a hairstylist into her area of research and practice. Her artworks show cases arrangements of patterns, colour and different textures of hair and hairstyles.

4.2.1 Hair: Medium for self-expression (2013)

The artwork *Hair: Medium for self-expression* (Figure 17) consists of negative and positive spaces. The positive space depicts a foreground showing a head with a cornrow braids hairstyle and two hands braiding a person's head. Yohannes (2014:16) defines cornrow braided hairstyles as types of braids that follow the head shape intimately. The negative space shows a caved white background that makes the foreground stand out. The face of the model is anonymous and the hairstylist is not identified. The hairstyle shows interesting patterns and different textures that you get after braiding the hair. One can conclude that the hands belong to the artist, as she is a hairstylist. Looking the person's head in frames of gender, race and hairstyle preference one can conclude that the head belongs to a black woman. Motaung has expressed, in an in-depth interview that she plaits black women only, because her clients are black women and they are people she connects to and relates with.



Figure 17: MOTAUNG, L. 2013. *Hair: Medium for self expression*.

In this artwork, Motaung uses a linocut, which is a perfect medium for detailing the patterns of the cornrows. Wheaton-Smith (2017:14) defines a linocut, as a floor covering made from solidified linseed oil, powdered cork and fillers. It is often on a canvas or burlap backing for strength and often on a supporting block for rigidity. The linocut print results from using a gouge or other tool to cut out pieces of lino creating a white line or area on a darker background when printed. Netshia (2017a) avers that Motaung's linocuts focus on the patterns and the texture of hair, because of the different mark makings that comes with carving a lino. Hence, Motaung's hand-signed linocuts display a rich sense of patterns, texture, contrast, precision and realism. Collins (2000:203) stresses the importance of black women's activism using their everyday lives. Motaung self-defines by narrating her everyday life experiences as a black woman, hairstylist and an artist. Makgato (2015) asserts that Motaung's work is a manifestation of the relationship between herself and her clients. This shows that her clients and their hair stories play a vital role in her life and art making

process. Hence, in the artwork Motaung describes her relationship with her client, the labour, the time and process that goes into braiding hair and creating artworks (Ownurcrown 2017).

This artwork (Figure 17) dispels negative connotations about black authentic hairstyles. It celebrates an Afrocentric hairstyle (cornrow braids), that has long been viewed as bad by Eurocentric standard of beauty. In the researcher's opinion, Motaung uses this artwork to affirm black women to embrace their natural hair texture and find ways to manipulate it creatively.

4.2.2 Enhancement (2015)



Figure 18: MOTAUNG, L. 2015. *Enhancement*.

Enhancement (Figure 18) is one of Motaung earliest work that embraces the beauty of Afrocentric hairstyling. The artwork depicts a head with long braids that are tied

up, creating a vertical hairstyle arrangement. Inside the braided hairstyle, there is a twisted wire with sharp edges placed diagonally, aligned with diagonal braids. There are two hands coming out of the hairstyle on the right hand side. The artwork consists of a detailed black and white foreground and a plain white background. The medium used to create this artwork is a linocut. In an interview with Ownurcrown (2017), Motaung expressed that she is fascinated with working with linocut medium, focusing on the patterns and the texture of hair and the different mark makings that comes with carving a lino. In the artwork, Motaung focuses on the long braided hairstyle. Brewington (2013:12) defines braids as a collection of long, individually flowing parts. Braids depicted in the artwork are done by using a method where synthetic hair is braided into a person's own hair, thereby creating the illusion of long hair (Thompson 2009:80).

This type of hairstyle is highly controversial because black women claim that it is an African hairstyle that has been worn by black women, thus it belongs to the black women's culture; while white culture claims it is a Western hairstyle that uses synthetic hair (unnatural) and gives an illusion of long hair, which is associated with whiteness (BWW 2016:10). It is interesting to see Motaung expressing and categorising this kind of hairstyle as an African hairstyle that is capable of dictating a black women's identity. The use of hands in this artwork represents Motaung the hairstylist, while the head represents the client. Motaung uses the same strategy as Simpson, of using certain body parts to represent the whole. Thus, hands and heads in Motaung's work present a shift in the dynamics of representation through her use of herself and others as subjects. The twisted wire with sharp edges symbolises pain that the client, hair stylist and artist endure in the process of creating the hairstyle and artwork. Every black girl and woman who has done synthetic braids will tell that the hairstyle is painful. It is painful while the hairstyle is being plaited and after the hairstyle has been completed. Coleman (2012:8), in her thesis expressed that,

Many black women can lament about how painful it was to have their hair braided as a child or as an adult. After many hours of sitting and having your hair tugged into a cornrows, twists or individual braids, headaches and an overall tightness of the scalp

is felt. The pain felt afterwards only lasts for a few days however it is constant.

Hence, the use of wire alludes to the sayings or phrases that state, “beauty is pain” or “one must suffer to be beautiful”. The pain does not only affect the client but the hairstylist/ artist as well, which in this case was Motaung. Braided hairstyles takes a day or two to make depending on the size and thickness of the braids. The hairstylist endures physical pain by sitting or standing when plaiting the braids for a day or two. Motaung, as an artist also endures pain when creating a large-scale artwork using linocut and carving tools. Carving tools have a tendency to strain the hands and fingers when carving for a very long period of time. In the researcher’s opinion, the artwork expresses the extent to which black women go in the name of beauty and the amount of hard work that goes into creating a hairstyle and an artwork.

4.2.3 Bottle ba Makgonthe (2015)



Figure 19: MOTAUNG, L. 2015. *Bottle ba Makgonthe*.

Bottle ba Makgonthe (Figure 19) is a Sotho title, which means the beauty of Makgonthe. This artwork depicts the back of the women's head (Magonthe), there are two hands caring the flowers, which gives an illusion of a bun. Underneath the bun, there are dreadlocks that are styled using vertical lines. In this artwork, Motaung maintains her stylistic composition of having a plain background and a detailed foreground. The medium used in this artwork is etching, in an interview with Ownurcrown (2017:1) Motaung expressed that her etching works, represent the pain and the time-consuming, laborious process that comes with plaiting hair. The main theme of the artwork is beauty. By Motaung titling the artwork *Bottle ba Makgonthe* she brings an idea that the woman's beauty is in her head. Motaung, in this artwork, expresses that hair/ hairstyles have the power to dictate how one is seen or perceived. The artworks also reveal that a woman's hair is a sign of femininity; hence, the hairstyle determines Magonthe's beauty and identity as a woman. The hairstyle depicted in the artwork is a dreadlock hairstyle. Historically, meanings attached to dreadlocks carried the negative stigma, labelled as unacceptable to wear (Richardson 2013:19-20) and people who wear them are often seen as dirty (Mokoena 2017:121). Shava (2015:11) states that the dreadlock culture was at first mainly embraced by Jamaican and other Caribbean people of African descent as a symbol of identity and a signifier of nonconformity to Western norms. Shava (2015:11) further states that this was largely related to the influence of the Rastafarian movement and the teachings of the Jamaican political leader Marcus Garvey, who encouraged the rejection of European standards of beauty.

According to Richardson (2013:19-20), dreadlocks are a political form of resistance to defy colonisation and embrace a lifestyle of Afrocentrism. By Motaung linking dreadlocks with beauty, she is expressing that black women can wear this natural hairstyle and be viewed as beautiful. The usage of flowers in the artwork symbolises natural beauty. Hence, by Motaung using flowers, she alludes that the black woman's natural hair is beautiful. She challenges the Western historical overview of dreadlocks being seen as bad hair and the idea that good and beautiful hair is straight hair (Settler 2017:7).

4.2.4 Plaited from the roots (2016)

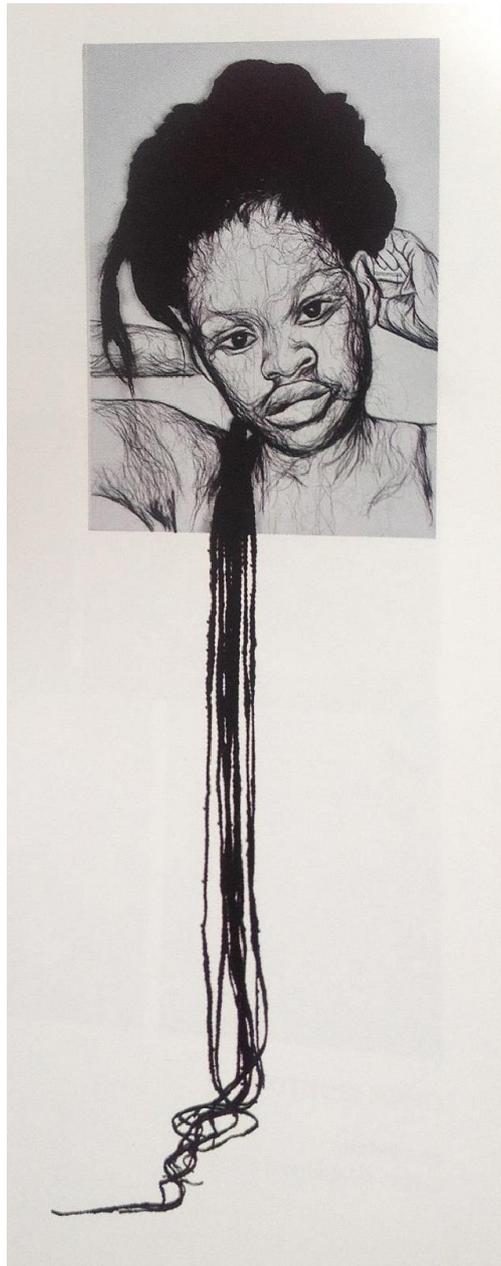


Figure 20: MOTAUNG, L. 2016. *Plaited from the roots*.

This artwork, *Plaited from the roots* (Figure 20), depicts a black and white self-portrait of a woman in synthetic braid hairstyle. The woman portrayed in the artwork is Motaung and she is braiding herself. In this artwork, Motaung still maintains her stylistic approach of having a plain background and a detailed foreground. In this artwork, there is shift in terms of the concept, medium and technical approach. In the previous works, Motaung concept focused on embracing natural hairstyles only and

encouraging black women to self-define through natural hairstyles. In this artwork, Motaung considers altered hairstyles as part of black women's culture and identity. Motaung's artworks centre on printing making mediums such as linocuts and etching. In this artwork, we see Motaung creating artworks using synthetic hair on paper. Her use of synthetic hair as a medium emphasises that black women have the right to self-define through unnatural hairstyles and that black women are not limited to natural hairstyles only. In South Africa and around the globe there is huge controversy on whether black women should embrace altered hair. This controversy is well articulated in the literature review (Section 2.3). Motaung expresses that black women can self-define in diverse hairstyles in this artwork. In a random conversation with the researcher, Motaung expressed that at first, she felt that black women should embrace their natural hairstyles but after self-introspection and looking at black women's hair world, she then realised that altered hair is actually part of black women's culture and identity. In the artwork, Motaung shifts her technical approach. In her previous works, Motaung represented herself using hands, her face and the client's face were anonymous, but in this artwork, she decided to reveal herself. Her artworks were based on her client's head and the particular hairstyles they prefer. In this artwork, Motaung self-inserts by portraying herself. The inclusion of Motaung in her artworks represents her assertion of her identity as a black woman, hairstylist and an artist. Hooks (1995), in her book *Art matters* expresses, the fundamental concern in black feminism is to engage with the notion of self-insertion. The notion of self-insertion plays an integral part in questioning challenging and overcoming all forms of domination that black women experience in society. In this artwork, the hairstyle is less detailed as compared to previous artworks. The details and emphasis is placed on face. The face reveals the gender and race of Motaung. Linking synthetic hair with gender and race, the researcher concludes that Motaung is emphasising that black women can self-define using altered hairstyles. Black women are not confined to natural hairstyles; they have a variety of hairstyle to choose from. That black women have the right to self-express however they want, without the pressure of the society's standards of beauty.

4.2.5 Plaited identity (braided) (2017)

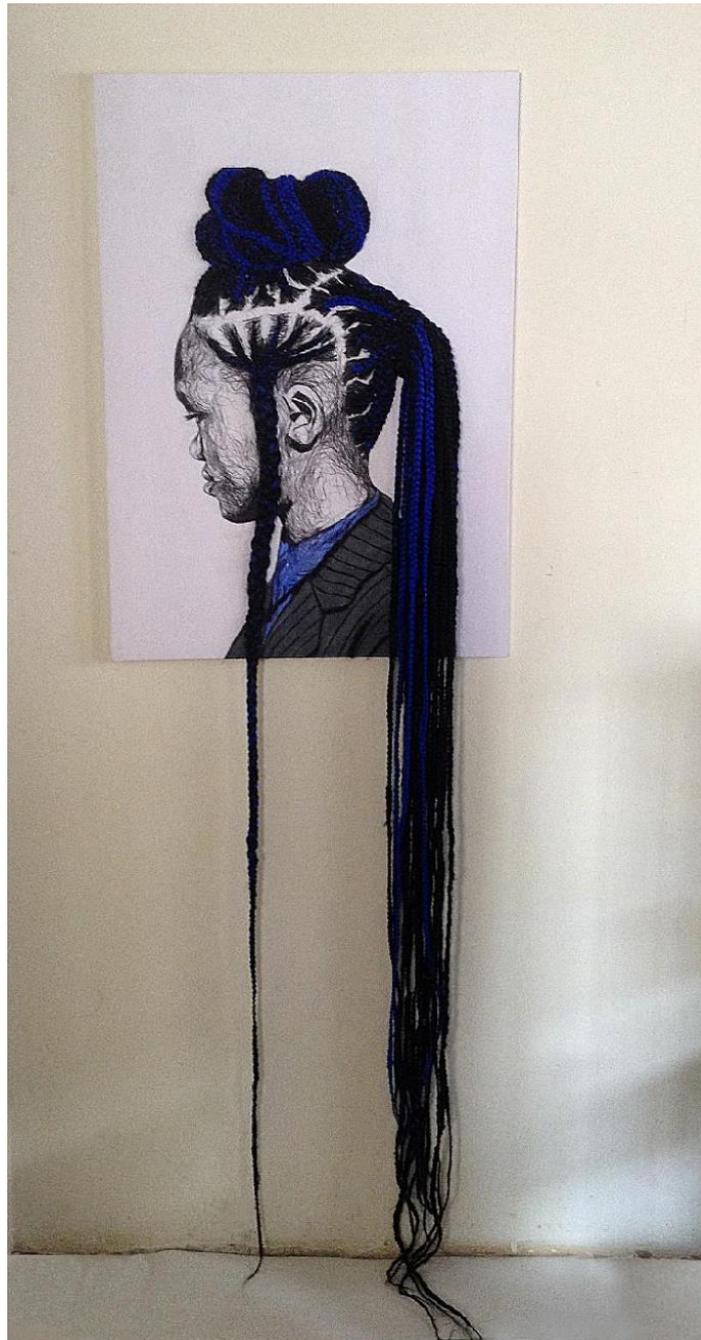


Figure 21: MOTAUNG, L. 2017. *Plaited identity (braided)*.

Plaited identity (braided) (Figure 21) portrays a woman facing side way in blue and black synthetic braids. The braids are styled in three sections, the upper section shows braids styled in a bun, the back section shows braids in a ponytail and the front section shows seven braids plaited into one thick braid. In this artwork,

Motaung braided many different ideas into one whole. Motaung, in an interview with Mayuyuka Kaunda, expressed that “[b]raids, especially long ones, are my favourite hairstyle because you get to style them in many different ways. They allow me to be more creative and playful” (Kaunda 2017). In this artwork, it is evident that braids are flexible and a medium to showcase creativity.

The artwork is a synthetic drawing on paper. Motaung introduces a new technique of braids on paper. This technique brings a realistic feel to Motaung artworks. In the previous artworks, Motaung used linocuts, carving tools and patterns to create texture. In this artwork, she uses synthetic hair to create different textures: smooth texture on the face by using few synthetic hair fibres and a rough-patterned texture on the head using thick synthetic hair fibres to make braids. In terms of composition, Motaung maintain her plain background and detailed foreground. In the artwork, Motaung also introduces the colour element in this artwork, as seen in the woman’s braids and clothes. The previous artworks discussed were strictly black and white.

Motaung uses synthetic hair as a medium for beauty, a symbol of pride, identity, time passing and, ultimately, art. Motaung uses braids to express the significance of braids in black culture and racial identity. Similar to Mokoena (2017:120), Motaung shows that the desire to elongate hair by using artificial hair is common throughout the African continent. By using altered hair, she shows the reality and broadness of black women’s beauty. Several studies have indicated that black women are comfortable wearing artificial hair and this choice has nothing to do with wanting to be white (Dosekun 2016) as articulated in the literature chapter (Section 2.3).

Motaung self-represents in order to re-construct and re-structure black women’s identities in post-colonial time. A South African black women’s activist, Nkululeko (1987:88-89), asked whose role it is to break oppressive structures for the oppressed. In relation to this question, Motaung uses her art to break oppressive structures (white apartheid patriarchy, black patriarchy and imperialist forebears) regarding black women’s hair by expressing that black women can self-define through diverse hairstyles.

4.2.6 Deeply rooted (2017)



Figure 22: MOTAUNG, L. 2017. *Deeply rooted*.

The artwork *Deeply rooted* (Figure 22) consists of a black and white photograph of two Black women facing in opposite directions. The hairstyle presented is cornrow braiding; the woman on the left showcased a cornrow braid with a thick synthetic ponytail braid connecting to the other head. The woman on the right showcases cornrow braids that are divided into sections. In this artwork, Motaung experiments with a different medium. She creates hair sculptors and documents them using photography. This type of art is also explored by the Nigerian Photographer J.D Okhai Ojeikere (2000) and an American artist Shani Crowe in Figure 12.

This artwork presents the connection that exists among Black women and the relationship that Black women have with their hair; this connection hooks (1984:44) refers to as sisterhood, which means 'the spirit of power in unity'. Gaskin (2014:2) elaborates that because of the time it takes to braid hair, people often socialise while braiding and having their hair done. The process of braiding is a unifying gesture; it brings people together. Likewise, braiding practice carries on a tradition of bonding between experts and the next generation.

4.2.7 My expressive crown (2018)



Figure 23: MOTAUNG, L. 2018. *My expressive crown*.

My expressive crown (Figure 23) is a portrait of Motaung, done in synthetic hair and showcasing a Mohawk long braids hairstyle going upwards and two braids with black beads on each side of the face. There is an injection of red colour on Motaung lips. The background of the artwork is light blue and the foreground depicts a fully detailed portrait.

In the artwork, the Mohawk long braids hairstyle going upward creates sculptural form, which shows a strong sense of balance in the hairstyle. According to Njoroge-Kristian (2016), hair sculpting simply means styling hair in a manner that is shaped in a specific way to give hair form and balance. The face of Motaung is drawn using synthetic hair, in an interview with Ownurcrown (2017) Motaung expressed that she

makes portraits using synthetic hair, “to show how a person’s hair can be a symbol of one’s identity and how it has the power to dictate how a person is seen. I use human hair and synthetic hair to portray my subject matter”.

The title of the artwork is *My expressive crown*. By *My expressive crown* Motaung means self-defining through hair and hairstyle; proudly wearing a particular hairstyle without taking into account male’s materialistic views of women, which falls under female stereotypes and wearing a particular hairstyle without taking into account society’s pressures that black women face regarding their hair, as explained in India Are’s (2006) song *I am not my hair*. In an interview with Ownurcrown blogger, Motaung also shared that owning your crown means “being able to use my talent to inspire other women while I’m also being inspired” (Ownurcrown 2017).

4.2.8 Benny and Betty evolve (2018)



Figure 24: MOTAUNG, L. 2018. *Benny and Betty evolves*.

The *Benny and Betty evolves* (Figure 24) depicts a black woman in a side view caved on black and white linocut. The hairstyle presented in this artwork is called

Benny and Betty done in a yellow thread. The Benny and Betty hairstyle is over a patterned wire, therefore, it presents some sculptural form.

This artwork is a collaborative artwork between Motaung and Nikiwe Dlova whose work was discussed in section 2.7 (Figure 14). Collaboration can be defined as a social process of at least two or more partners working together to achieve a common goal and share their knowledge. In collaboration, each partner comes with different skills, knowledge and expertise.

Palmitessa (2012:11) asserts that for a collaboration to be rewarding for all parties, everyone participating must have something to offer and in return, have something to gain. This project focused on Dlova's black hair theme *Benny and Betty evolves*. Dlova offered her expertise in hair sculptor, while Motaung offered her expertise in hairstyling and creating 2D art. Motaung created the hairstyle worn by Dlova (woman in the artwork). The sculptural form of the artwork is featured in Dlova's *Betty evolves hair series* that was created in 2017 (Figure 25), while Motaung on the other hand turned the sculptural hairstyle into a 2D linocut print in 2018 (Figure 24). Both parties contributed different skills and knowledge and, in return, they both benefited from the collaboration.

In black feminist discourse, collaborative work amongst black women is encouraged. Collins (2000:38) emphasises that exploring the common themes of a black women's standpoint is important. Both Motaung and Dlova practice focus on embracing black women's hairstyles; they encourage black women to self-define using their hair creatively. Both their artworks want to get rid of stereotypes that are embedded in black women hair representations. Using the Benny and Betty hairstyle, they are tackling issues of race and gender. The Benny and Betty hairstyle was an oppressive hairstyle worn by black women in colonial time. Motaung and Dlova focus on this hairstyle to reconceptualise its oppressive nature into a hairstyle that can be celebrated and proudly worn by black women. Thus, reworking and refashioning the past conception of the Benny and Betty hairstyle.

4.2.9 Benny and Betty evolves (2018)

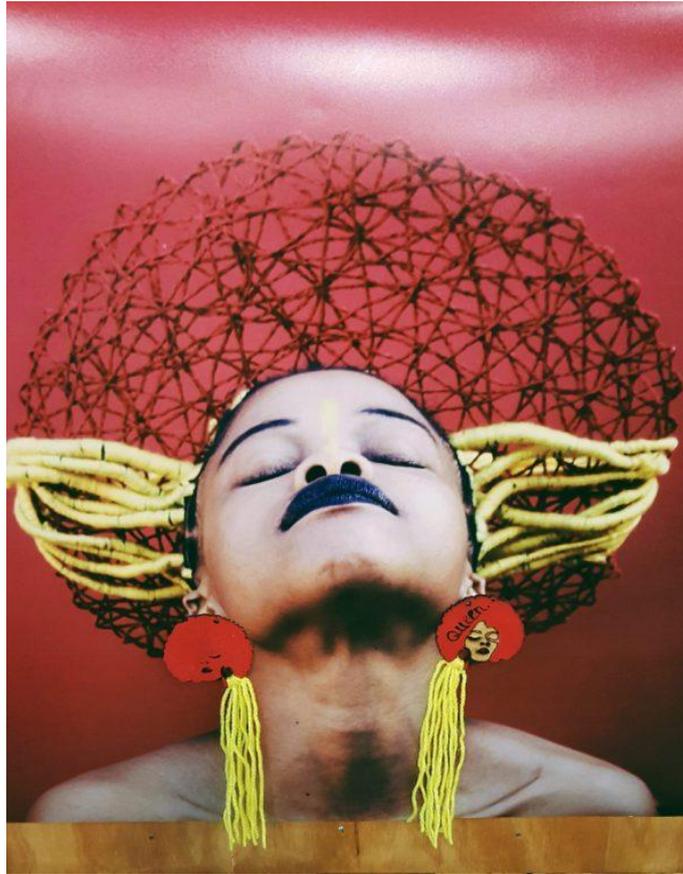


Figure 25: DLOVA, N. 2017. *Benny and Betty evolves*.

4.3 SIMPSON'S ARTWORKS

Simpson has had an extensive and prolific career. She was born in 1960 in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. She attended the High School of Art and Design and the School of Visual Arts in New York and received her MFA from the University of California, San Diego. Simpson studied documentary photography in college but became disenchanted with what she considered the role of the viewer and photographer as voyeur. Her first critical recognition came in the mid-1980s, for a series of large-scale artworks that combined photographs and text to challenge views of gender, race, identity, culture, history and memory (Brooklyn Museum 2011:1). Simpson's work refers to these histories and their legacies, articulating new ways of understanding the past and, therefore, the present (Waitoller 2011:22).

4.3.1 Stereo Styles (1988)



Figure 26: SIMPSON, L. 1988. *Stereo Styles*.

The artwork *Stereo Styles* (Figure 26) from 1988 alludes to the words stereotypes and hairstyles and deals with the politics of black women's hair and hairstyles (Waitoller 2011:22). The artwork consists of a monumental installation of 10 Polaroid prints and 10 engraved plastic plaques. The artwork depicts black women from behind, in identical dresses, with different hairstyles. This pose places an emphasis on the hair, thus making the hair the primary focus and the wearer as secondary focus (Hargro 2011:4). The work consists of popular hairstyles and words that are associated with the stereotype they convey. The row of comments in the text panel offers feminine adjectives such as "Daring, Sensible, Severe, Long and Silky, Boyish, Ageless, Silly, Magnetic, Country Fresh and Sweet" (Simon 2014-15:3), which are placed in between the rows of photographs of black women's images. The artwork has a playful side to it because it challenges the viewer to guess what stereotypical feminine adjectives match what hairstyles. The different hairstyles

revolve around relaxed hair, not the black women's natural hair, which conform to the conventions of Western femininity (Fletcher 2011:37).

One of the many important interventions of black feminism is the emphasis on telling the stories of black women (Treva 2015:1). Simpson, in this artwork, tells black women stories by focusing on stereotypes associated with different hairstyles that black women do. This artwork falls in black feminist discourses because Simpson uses photographic images and texts to question the way in which black women, are classified and analysed by a larger society and, simultaneously, reveal just how embedded racial and gender stereotypes are in contemporary visual culture. In *Stereo Styles* (Figure 26), Simpson also presumes that hairstyles can present an insight into a person's identity or character (Weichbrodt 2013:152). This assumption alludes to the fact that when black women fashion their hair in a particular style, they are actually engaging in an act of subject/ identity formation.

The artwork also focuses on hair ritual and struggles that black women face to maintain the ideal standard of beauty. This artwork shows labour that goes in to attain good hair. For example, for black women to have silky and long hair they have to relax their hair, which means using chemical relaxers that burn and damage their scalp, then re-apply the chemical every month to maintain the silky and long hair. The labour does not end in relaxing the hair, but also in styling it. In short, the artwork *Stereo Styles* shows that black hair is not just hair, but it is filled with meanings, labour, time and creativity. Black hair is a tool for black women to express and present themselves to the world, thus promoting the act of self- definition.

4.3.2 Wigs (1994)



Figure 27: SIMPSON, L. 1994. *Wigs (Portfolio)*.

Wigs Portfolio (Figure 27) consists of 21 individual black-and-white images of store-bought wigs printed onto white felt panels, incorporated 17 smaller texts panels. The depicted wigs were purchased by Simpson in Fulton Mall in Brooklyn, a strip that in the early 90s, was filled with hair shops targeted at black women (Weichbrodt 2013:149-50). The wigs and hairpieces portrayed in the artwork range in style, tone and texture. They include a wavy blonde wig, afro wig, braided wig, tight corkscrew curls, a shiny knot of black hair and a dark wiry patch. Texts panels consist of poetic fragments, along with excerpts from sociological interviews about sexual identity, an escape narrative by a former slave and an account of the activist Sojourner Truth being asked to bare her breasts to prove her sex (Weichbrodt 2013:149-50). Felt, as a medium, offers surrogates for the body in the taxonomy of wigs (Simon 2014-15:7). According to Gross (2016:36), felt refers to the photographs' material surface and at the same time, invokes the memory of touch or strong emotion. Bodies feel and bodies are felt. Yet, there are no depicted bodies, no human figures. In *Wigs* (portfolio), only objects meant to stand in metonymically for those figures, meant to invoke the body. Thus, the artwork shows simultaneity of presence and absence

(Gross 2016:36). Wigs are devices that represent a lack – in this case, a lack of hair – and are being used by Simpson as a part to represent the whole (Gross 2016:36).

Wigs are “pull over” altered hairstyles (Yohannes 2014:14), that allow women to radically alter their appearance overnight without compromising the health of their own hair (Weichbrodt 2013:148). Jackson (2010:118) avers that in the 21st century, it is common to find black women embracing either wigs or weaves (fake hair sewed or glued into the scalp). Therefore, by using wigs, the artwork shows the efforts that black women put in covering and revealing their identity. This artwork also reveals that altered hair is part of black women’s culture and a tool that helps black women to represent themselves to the world.

Hair is the biggest signifier of racial and gender difference (Gross 2016:36). Straighter hairpieces like wigs have always fuelled an ongoing debate on black pride, black unity and Pan-Africanism throughout the diaspora. Black women who wear wigs are often viewed as affirming to Eurocentric beauty standards and viewed as having self-hatred and low self-esteem (Chato 2010:13-14). According to Onwuachi-Willig (2010:1106), by black women relying on wigs, they are trying to meet mainstream norms of femininity. Chato (2010:84) also argues that the inauthentic nature of wigs is perceived as an incomplete representation of the self.

However, Simpson’s work dispels negative comments about wigs in a black culture. Texts and wigs in the artwork refer to the identity of black women as they follow or rebel against standards of beauty sustained by whiteness. It shows that wigs are part of black hairstyles and they are tools for black women to express themselves, hence, the artwork show the reality of what is it like to be black and female. The artwork employs a black feminist strategy of self-definition through having a voice. Black feminists such as Collins (2000:99) and hooks (1984:24) emphasised that black women need to tell their stories and focus on giving voice to personal experience. Simpson, in the artwork, does that by using text panels between the wigs, which allude to historical situations in which personal appearance was critical to the way people were treated. Thus, the wigs are accompanied by voicing’s that narrate issues in and around gender and race.

4.3.3 Counting (1991)

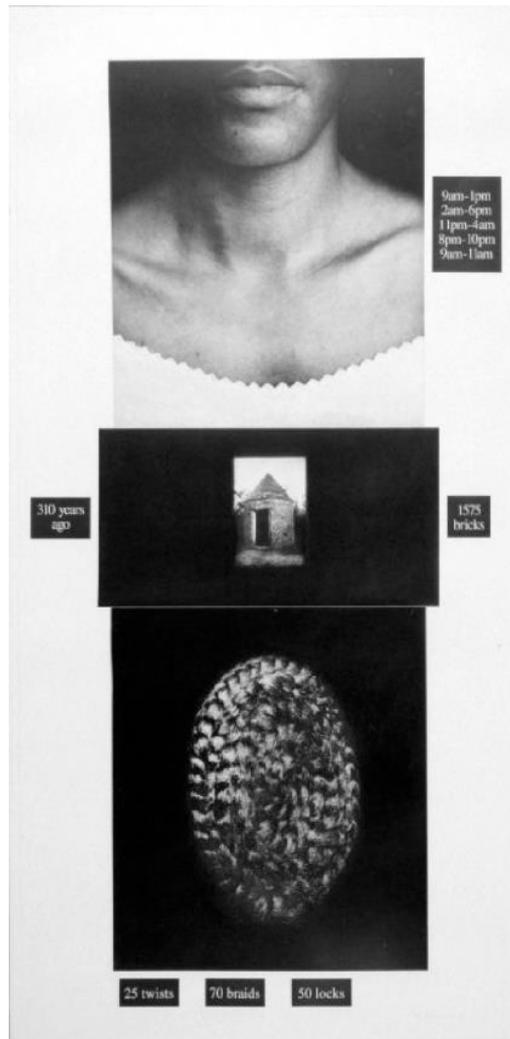


Figure 28: SIMPSON, L. 1991. *Counting*.

Counting (Figure 28) is an artwork produced in 1991 by Simpson; the artwork consists of three photographs placed in a vertical position. The first photograph presents a Black American woman, the second photograph shows a brick hut and the last photograph depicts braids. The Black woman is portrayed with time slots, which suggest work shifts. A hut brick is depicted with 310 years ago and 1575 bricks, this text alludes to the beginning of slavery with a southern smoke house once used as a slave hut (Artspace 2018:1). The braids are accompanied by texts such as 25 twists, 70 braids, and 50 locks. The texts show the arrangements of multiple intricate braids. *Counting* reflects on African American history to blur lines between past and present, by depicting difficult past while alluding to present-day

structures of oppression (Waitoller 2011:21). Narration is one of the black feminist strategies that black women can use to give voice. Simpson, in this artwork, narrates black women's struggles and experiences of white patriarchy and imperialist forebears. Simpson uses her photographs to give a self-defining standpoint and to reflect on black women's history in America. The artwork is ambiguous in nature and does not present an obvious interpretation. Simpson uses ambiguity by taking three different images and turning them into a one whole. She uses ambiguity to draw viewers to make their conclusions about the artwork. Hence, the purpose of the work is not to provide clear-cut answers for the viewer. Thus, the researcher concludes that the artwork refers to the difficult history of slavery for African American women.

4.3.4 I.D. (1990)



Figure 29: SIMPSON, L. 1990. *I.D.*

The artwork, *I.D.* (Figure 29), depicts two black and white images that are placed in a portrait format. *I.D.* (Identify-Identity) pursues Simpson's investigation into prejudice and stereotypes. On the right panel is an image of the back of a female model with short hair, the image is paired with the word identity. On the left panel, the image depicts braided knotted hair without a body paired with the word identify. The right panel features the back of a model whose short hair is at the same latitude as the knot. The words identity and identify are placed in the same latitude as well.

In the work titled *1978-88* (Figure 30), Simpson depicts four vertical panels, which showcase four rope-like hair braids that are layered with 13 small panels with related words tangle, tug, knot, part, tear, twist, split, weave, which refer to how hair can be manipulated. Three panels are inscribed 1978, 1982 and 1988 hinting that the artwork could be read from left to right. The reference to time *1978 to 1988* alludes to the time that keeps moving but there is no transformation in the way the braids look or are represented. For Gorchakova (2016) the text indicates diverse hairstyles in vogue, in the period from 1978 to 1988. According to Belisle (2011:170), *1978–1988* refers specifically to the identity of African Americans and how they conform to or rebel against prevailing white standards of beauty by braiding, dying, weaving and processing their hair. Usually Simpson conceals the model or crops the face of the model as seen in *Stereo Styles, Counting and I.D.* In *1978-88*, she does not depict any anonymous black woman. She depicts braids that are free from a body. Hence, in the artworks, braids represent a person and her everyday struggles better than any other part of the woman's body would (Gorchakova 2016). Even though Simpson's artwork does not show the human figure, she still engages with the politics of race and gender.

In the artwork, Simpson addresses issues of femininity and representation. The artwork comments on the pressures that black women face in maintaining their hair. Gorchakova (2016) argues that in the 70s, as well as the 80s, black women were under pressure to modify their natural appearance. Hence, the artwork shows a black woman's relationship with her hair in a chronological order, revealing diverse hairstyle choices ranging from knots to twist to weaves and other forms of hairstyles.

4.3.6 Momentum (2013)



Figure 31: SIMPSON, L. 2013. *Momentum*.

Momentum (Figure 31) is a performance based on Simpson's own childhood memory. The purpose of this artwork was to recreate Simpson's own stage debut in New York's Lincoln Centre at the age of 11 (Knelman 2014). The performance is almost seven minutes long and took place at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in 2010. The performance consists of ballet dancers coated in gold body paint, accessorised with matching afros.

In *Momentum*, Simpson moves away from the black and white photo-text artworks, that she was creating in the 80s and 90s, to colour and movements. In this artwork Simpson use her signature style of concealing the models/ dancers by painting them gold, thus hiding the race of the dancers.

The artwork focuses on memory, narration and life experiences. These are significant themes in the black feminist discourse. Hooks (1984:111) avers that black women artists draw on elements of everyday life experiences in black homes and communities. Simpson does that by focusing on her childhood memory, re-enacting the childhood performance to address issues of gender, race and hair politics.

Simpson's performance touches on hair discourses, the previous artworks discussed hairstyles that included relaxed hair, wigs and braids, in this artwork Simpson focuses on a highly political hairstyle the afro hairstyle. She challenges the norms of ballet dance by having dancers with big afros. In the ballet dance, you hardly see ballet dancers with big hair; the hair is always silky, neat and tidy. consequently, the artwork celebrates the afro hairstyle and black beauty in a white-dominated dance.

4.3.7 Frosty (2016)



Figure 32: SIMPSON, L. 2016. *Frosty*.

In *Frosty* (Figure 32), Simpson moves away from the photo-based artworks and video installations to working on paper photographic collages. In these photographic collages, Simpson mixes photographs and images from historical issues of *Ebony* magazine. In *Frosty* (2016), Simpson portrays a foreground image that features a black woman's head with a wig placed on a nude female sculpture. Two brick houses are on the background. The photo of the woman is from an old issue of

Ebony magazine and the background image is from a 1931 textbook (Simpson 2016).

In this artwork, Simpson shifts from using a model to cutting out faces of black women from a vintage magazine. In her previous artworks, Simpson used her style of cropping and hiding the women's faces, but in this artwork, she reveals the woman's face, hence, revealing the woman's identity and race. The thought-provoking collage also explores the richly nuanced language of hair. This artwork shows wigs were in fashion in 70s, 80s and 90s and black women have been wearing them to self-express. Overall, the artwork presents beauty, identity and historic representation.

The artwork addresses issues of gender, race and representation. For example, in the historic Western representation, white women nude sculptors represented holiness and pureness, while black women nudes represented negative images such as Jezebels (Collins 2000:81). The artwork may be alluding to the lack of black female nudes; sculptures that represent the same holiness and pureness. Hence, by pairing the head of a black woman and the image of the white nude sculpture, Simpson is giving a new meaning of how black bodies should be seen and represented.

4.3.8 Commemorative Bust (2016)



Figure 33: SIMPSON, L. 2016. *Commemorative Bust*.

The artwork *Commemorative Bust* (Figure 33), depicts a black and white photograph of a black woman from 1950s issues of *Ebony Magazine* paired with an image from a 1931 textbook (Simpson 2016). This technique of pairing photographs is called collage. Gerstenblatt (2013:305) posits that the term collage originates from the French word *collé*, meaning glued. Gerstenblatt further states that the nature of collage work involves piecing together fragments to form a whole. In this artwork, Simpson used two archived photographs to create new meaning that suits the present time.

The collage technique falls within the feminist discourses because, according to Gerstenblatt (2013:294), collage portraits provide the opportunity to include marginalised voices and encourage a range of linguistic and non-linguistic representations to articulate authentic lived experiences. Simpson used this technique to speak to issues of race and gender faced by black women and to narrate lived experiences of black women through history in terms of black aesthetics.

The focal point of this artwork is the portrait of the black women. A black feminist art scholar, Matoba-Thibudi (2016:15), avers that portraiture enables the expression of the importance, positioning, identity and likeness of those persons portrayed for posterity. Simpson used a cut-out portrait of black women to communicate issues of race, gender and identity. In this artwork, Simpson commemorates a black woman for embracing Afrocentric aesthetics, especially in an era where black women were not viewed as beautiful, by embracing their blackness. The afro hairstyle is presented in the artwork, which is loaded with historical and political meaning. In the United States of America, the afro hairstyle in the 1950s to 1970s represented a political statement, which emphasised that black is beautiful.

The artwork is a commemorative work. The Oxford English Dictionary (2013) describes commemoration as “[a] calling to remembrance, or preserving in memory, by some solemn observance, public celebration”. This form of honouring or visibly celebrating the memory of someone is achieved by making portraits in various forms, such as miniatures, coins, stamps, prints, statues or monuments and by naming places, streets, institutions, buildings, or heritage sites after persons. Matoba-Thibudi

(2016:15) emphasised the importance of honouring and positively representing black women. In line with Matoba-Thibudi's, Simpson used commemorative work for propaganda and instilling a sense of black beauty that has been perceived bad by white standards of beauty.

4.4 A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MOTAUNG AND SIMPSON ARTWORKS

This section provides a comparative analysis of Motaung and Simpson's artwork. Comparison includes themes such as: the theoretical perspective, concept of exploration, hairstyles, mediums and subjects in artworks, technical approach, methodological processes and growth of an individual artist over time.

4.4.1 Table: Comparative analysis of artworks

	Lorna Simpson	Lebohang Motaung
Theoretical perspective	Black feminism: artist self-defines by portraying lived experience of black American women.	Black feminism: artist self-defines by narrating the self and lived experience of black South African women.
Concept of Exploration	Hair politics, identity, gender, stereotype, memory, injustice, history and vulnerability.	Hair politics, identity, gender, culture, beauty, narration and stereotypes.

<p>Hairstyles</p>	<p>Diverse hairstyles:</p> <p>Natural hairstyles include Afros and cornrow braids. Unnatural hairstyles include relaxed hair, wigs and weaves.</p>	<p>Diverse hairstyles:</p> <p>Natural hairstyles include dreadlocks, cornrow braids, Benny and Betty. Unnatural hairstyles include synthetic braids and synthetic hair.</p>
<p>Mediums</p>	<p>Photography, installations, videos performance and collages.</p>	<p>Linocuts, etching, synthetic drawings, photography and hair sculpture.</p>
<p>Subjects in artworks</p>	<p>Simpson use purposefully selected black-American women and iconic black women as her subjects for her artworks.</p>	<p>Motaung use her South African clients that she braids as her subject and herself.</p>
<p>Technical approach</p>	<p>Much of her art has focused on hair by isolating the hair into an object itself. She has compositions with black women with their backs to</p>	<p>Much of her work has focused on hair by cropping the subject's faces and making detailed hairstyles a focal point. Motaung uses hands to</p>

	the viewer, giving a full view of her hair (Brina Hargro 2011:5).	represent herself in her artworks.
Methodological processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Large scale work -Use of image and text in the artworks -Concealing the subjects and later revealing their identity. -Symbolism -Less detailed artworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A1 size -Use of texture in the artworks -Concealing the subjects and later revealing their identity. -Symbolism - Detailed artworks
	<p>Initially, Simpson's work focused mainly on documentary photography, in the early 80s and the end of her undergraduate training.</p> <p>In the 90s, Simpson was best known for pairing text and black and white photographic images of unknown African American women.</p>	<p>Initially, Motaung's work focused mainly on Afrocentric hairstyles, using drawing, painting and printing in her undergraduate work in 2012.</p> <p>In 2013 Motaung further explored her concept on African hairstyling using printmaking mediums such as linocut and etching. These medium allowed Motaung to</p>

<p>Growth of an individual artist over time</p>	<p>Simpson moved from black and white to live performance and colourful installation as seen in the artwork <i>Momentum</i> (Figure 31).</p> <p>In her latest works, Simpson moved from the photo-based artworks and video installations, to working on photographic collages. In these artworks, Simpson focused on the arrangements of vintage found photographs that speak to the visual language of her early works.</p>	<p>create detailed textured artworks and emphasise on the beauty of African hair and hairstyles.</p> <p>In 2015, Motaung introduced synthetic hair drawings. Motaung used synthetic hair as medium to indicate that black women are not confined to Afrocentric hairstyles; they can also wear altered hairstyles to self-define and be beautiful.</p> <p>In her artworks, Motaung use the concept of diverse hairstyles by introducing us to new mediums such as photography, hair sculptures and using colourful prints.</p>
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4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, Simpson and Motaung's artworks were presented, analysed and compared. The art analysis revealed issues about Motaung's earlier works. Motaung's concept was inspired by several black women clients who indicated that they did not like their natural hair. Motaung focused on embracing natural hairstyles to show black women that there is a lot one can do with natural hair. Motaung used mediums such as linocut and etching to show arrangements, patterns and different textures that comes with natural hairstyles. The art analysis also revealed that Motaung's contemporary artworks moved from natural hairstyles to altered hairstyles using synthetic hair. The use of synthetic hair in Motaung's artworks focused on promoting self-expression and self-definition through altered hairstyles and to emphasise that synthetic hair is part of black culture/ identity and it does not necessarily mean that black women desire to be white or have self-hatred for wearing synthetic hair. On the other hand, the art analysis revealed that Simpson's earlier works focused on black and white photo-text artworks. These artworks were inspired by the lives of black American women; the stereotypes that are associated with black women's hair and they challenging views of gender, race and identity. Simpson's contemporary artworks moved from photo-text artworks to performance and collages. In these artworks, Simpson reconceptualised the memories and old photographs to engage with contemporary discourses of black hair. After the art analysis, both artists' artworks were compared and contrasted based on the theoretical perspective, concept of exploration, hairstyles, mediums and subjects in artworks, technical approach, methodological processes and growth of an individual artist over time. The next chapter deals with the presentation of data analysis and interpretation from the in-depth individual interview conducted with Motaung.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Previous chapters of the study have laid the groundwork for the research. Those chapters provided an explanation of the purpose behind the research, an outline of the research questions and a description of how the project fits within the overall body of research related to black women's diverse hairstyles. In Chapter 4, the presentation and analysis of Motaung and Simpson's artworks was dealt with. The focus of this chapter is the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data arising from an in-depth, individual interview with Motaung.

In the following section, the researcher discusses the steps that were followed in the analysis of the qualitative data that was collected through an in-depth, individual, semi-structured interview with Motaung. The findings discussed in this chapter are used to provide the foundation for the conclusions and implications outlined in the final chapter. To derive a logical argument, this chapter is organised as follows:

- First, the research design adopted for this study is briefly presented
- Secondly, the data collection techniques are discussed
- Thirdly, the collected data are presented
- Fourthly, issues of trustworthiness are discussed
- Fifthly, the conclusion to the chapter is provided.

In the next section, the research design is briefly discussed.

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Based on the research questions and the qualitative approach adopted for this study, an exploratory case study design was found suitable to focus on the exploration of black women's diverse hairstyles through art (Creswell 2012:465). Yin (2014:119) posits that the major strength of a case study data collection is the opportunity to use

different sources of evidence to gain new insights and in the context of this study, insight about black women's diverse hairstyles was essential.

To obtain thick description of black women's diverse hairstyles through artwork, an in-depth, individual interview was conducted with Motaung, a South African black female artist. Yin (2014:106) suggests that case study interviews are significant because they focus directly on the case that is being studied and they are insightful because they provide explanations as well as personal views of the participants without coercion or manipulation. Indeed, Motaung's experiences as both a black feminist and visual artist provided rich, personal information, which clarified to the researcher how she views black women's diverse hairstyles. Furthermore, the interview highlighted Motaung's contribution to the hair discourse and what motivates her to carry on doing what she does.

5.3 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

First, the participant for the in-depth, individual interview was purposefully selected because the researcher believed that she has enough knowledge and experience about black women's diverse hairstyles and how these are expressed through art. Secondly, Motaung was also chosen because she practices as a hairstylist and, consequently, hair plays a major role in her day-to-day life. Thirdly, the participant was also selected as an interviewee for this study because the researcher analysed her artworks in Chapter 4. Following this analysis through an in-depth, individual interview with Motaung, from the researcher's schema, would corroborate and strengthen what she found and extend the findings with richer and better clarification from Motaung, the artist.

The interview with Motaung took place at Victoria Yards Studio, on 4 September 2018. The site and time for the interview were suggested by her and the interview was thus scheduled for 60 minutes. However, the interview continued until data were saturated. An interview protocol was used to guide the interview process (Ntombela 2011:47). The interview process enabled probing where it was pertinent.

The interview protocol consisted of the following questions:

- Please, tell me more about yourself.
- What inspired you to create artworks on black women's hair?
- Could you share with me, what inspires your conceptual work? Why?
- Tell me, how has your conceptual work evolved since you started practicing as a professional artist?
- Which diverse hairstyles are you creatively exploring? Why are these important for you?
- Do you think that it is important to situate your work in a particular discourse? Why?
- What do you think is important about your medium?
- Can you please tell me how you go about in your creative process?
- Do you have any South African models who do the same artwork as yourself? Why are they important to you?
- Do you have something more to tell me?

The next section presents data collected from the in-depth, individual interview.

5.4 DATA ANALYSIS

In analysing qualitative data, the researcher opted for Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework because it offers a clear and usable framework for doing thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt 2018:3355). Maguire and Delahunt (2018:3355) suggest that thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. The goal of a thematic analysis in this study was to identify themes, or patterns in the data that are important or interesting and use these themes to understand how Motaung perceives black women's diverse hairstyles through art. The researcher was more interested in identifying semantic themes because she was interested in the surface meanings of the data and not looking for anything

beyond what Motaung had narrated. The analysis of Motaung's interview identifies themes at the semantic level.

The researcher was interested in Motaung's accounts of her experiences and points of view regarding black women's diverse hairstyles. This determined the interview questions and management of the data as well as the analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) distinguish between a top-down or theoretical thematic analysis, driven by the specific research question(s) and/ or the analyst's focus and a bottom-up or inductive one that is more driven by the data itself. The researcher's analysis was driven by the data that were gathered through the interview questions/ protocol.

As indicated earlier, the researcher opted for Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework for conducting the thematic of analysis.

- Step 1: Become familiar with the data
- Step 2: Generate initial codes
- Step 3: Search for themes
- Step 4: Review themes
- Step 5: Define themes
- Step 6: Write-up (Braun & Clarke 2006)

The researcher transcribed her interview and used excerpts from the transcript to support the qualitative data she reported on. The interview was held with one female participant as indicated earlier. From the qualitative interview data, six themes emerged. These themes are: (i) Motaung's personal background; (ii) black hair politics; (iii) conceptual work (iv) choice of medium and working process; (v) art influencers; and (vi) artwork clarification.

These themes are discussed individually in the following section and they are supported by the relevant research literature.

5.4.1 Theme 1: Motaung's personal background

Motaung's personal background is the first thematic segment of this study's analysis. This theme provides a historical background of Motaung and how she became a hairstylist and a fine artist. Motaung expressed that certain domestic spaces influenced her conceptual work. According to Netshia (2017b:63), a domestic space is a place that is warm and comfortable, a place in which artists are free to be creative and can express themselves. Motaung expressed that Sebokeng and Vaal University of Technology are spaces where her passion for plaiting and creating artwork on black hair started. In line with the above, when asked: Please tell me more about yourself? Motaung said: *"So I was born in Evaton, in Vaal. I, I lived with my mother and my whole family but then I had to go to live in Sebokeng with my grandmother. That's when I left my mom in Evaton and I was raised by my grandmother so, uhm I think, while I was growing up, I don't know for some reason I started wanting to plait people and do all that. So I started by plaiting my grandmother like experimenting and playing with her hair and she never had a problem so everything I wanted to do to explore and experiment with hair I would do with my grandmother. So after that process that's when I realized that I am actually getting better and better at plaiting."*

Motaung expressed that her love for plaiting started when she was living with her grandmother in Sebokeng. Motaung mentions that her grandmother allowed her to play and experiment with her hair; hence, her grandmother let her head and hair be Motaung's 'canvas', where she could experiment, have fun and be creative. In the interview, Motaung further indicated that money was a motivating factor that encouraged her to plait more.

She said: *"So I would plait my family. At first it was just me plaiting my family and plaiting my friends not for money but just, just to plait nje (meaning just). And then from then, because I was raised by my grandmother and we had siblings and my mom was not supporting me in any way at that time. So that's when I decide that I am gonna do this, just for me to become independent and just for me to get money. So I plaited like, I think I started boma (meaning since) early (paused) early primary, late primary and then up to, High School where I kept plaiting people but at, at that*

time it was just plaiting for money. But then I would say that in that process I, it become something I always wanted to do. Even if it was for money but it was something I was looking forward to doing like every weekend or sometimes when I come back from school but then while plaiting.”

Motaung indicates that when she started plaiting, she did not plait for money. Plaiting was just something that she enjoyed doing. Motaung points out that the family struggle led her to plait for money. In line with this view, Mbuja (2007:1) comments that the skill of plaiting can be translated into good income for many people, hence, hair plaiting is a remarkable economic opportunity. In the above statement, Motaung also points out that money signified independence from parents. This view is supported by Labase (2017:1) who states that it is important for children to come up with ways to make their own money at a young age.

Motaung also points out that she never thought that her skill of plaiting would develop into art practice. In her words: *“I never knew that this would develop into art or anything like that but growing up I know that I always liked drawing and I didn't do art at school. I only did this art and culture which was just, it was not art like art in the, Like the subject art it was something else, but from then after my matric I decided that I'm gonna go and study Fine Arts. So that's when I went to Vaal University to study arts and then while I was there in our third year we had to come, we had to pick and, that's when we started, we had to have like concepts and themes that we can work with and then for me, because (paused). So When I was doing third year we had to come up with concepts and themes that we gonna work with and then for me it was that thing that I would go to class to study art and then usually after going to class I usually had clients waiting for me in my room because I stayed at res at the time. I usually had people who were waiting for me and then I had to plait their hair, and then it was just hair, art, hair, art and then we had to come up with a concept I was like okay I know I'm fascinated with hair, I know I love hair. I just wanna take this thing of hair plaiting and hairstyles and put it into in my art. So that's when I started to do art that is based on African hairstyles. At first it was just eh, hairstyles like, image, I would usually plait people and take images of their hairstyles and then transfer them to drawings and printmaking.”*

Motaung indicates that drawing was part of her life even though she was not studying art in high school. She also points that she never thought that hair plaiting could be turned into a concept of exploration in art, until she was on her third year at the Vaal University of Technology. Hence, the Vaal University of Technology provided Motaung with a domestic space to explore what she could do with the concept of hair and how she could bring in her everyday life experience. For the researcher, Motaung's concept is inspired by 'a lived experience'. In this regard, Collins (2000) emphasises that it is significant for black women to narrate and document their everyday lives and struggles.

Motaung, in the above statement, also mentions that her area of focus was mainly drawings of African hairstyles when she started to explore her concept artistically. She also indicates her method of creating drawings of hair plaiting, which is plaiting people, taking images and make drawings. For the researcher, emphasis on the method and process shows the authenticity of her work. It shows that she does not copy hairstyles from the Internet and redraw them. In with this view, Klein (2014:1351) accentuates that authentic art is created by the artist's decision about the arrangement of objects and material in the artwork.

The next section discusses the theme, black hair politics

5.4.2 Theme 2: Black hair politics

The theme titled black hair politics is the second thematic segment of this study's analysis. Hair politics as a theme provides a picture of how Motaung views hairstyling in relation to the patriarchal-dominated influences that continue to define how black women should view their hair and how they should be represented. From the researcher's schema, these politics, colonialism, apartheid and racism continue to oppress women, despite 24 years of democracy and liberation in South Africa (Marco 2012:50). In reference to the above paragraph, when asked what inspired her to create artworks on black women's hair, Motaung responded by indicating that she was motivated to create artworks on black hairstyles because she was always fascinated by hair politics affecting black women. Motaung's exact words were: *"When I realised that I am actually fascinated by hair that's when I started to like, realise all the things that was happening. For instance, in my high school ... there*

were these kids, the children with dreadlocks, they would always be sent home and they were always told that we don't accept dreadlocks in this school. And then I think when I got to Grade 10 there was this new rule that we don't allow braids anymore you know. For me I was always puzzled by, why exactly? Why is it that because I have this hairstyle I can't come to class? What is it that stops a teacher, from teaching me because of what I have on my hair? ... I think for me like I said that I didn't like especially with this that the protest at the Pretoria High School also where, it never made sense to me that how does my hair disturb you from going on with your day? How does it affect you?"

Motaung points out that the policing of black hairstyles in educational institutions has always been a problem even when she was in is grade 10 in 2007. Motaung also refers to the incident that occurred at Pretoria high school in 2016, where the school was accused of racism for telling black girls to straighten their hair and not wear afros and braids (Tate 2017:101). The Pretoria high school incident was addressed in the literature review on (Section 2.3). To corroborate Motaung's statement on the politics of hair in educational institutions, another incident occurred at Orlando's Faith Christian Academy in Florida in 2013, where a 12 years old girl was threatened with expulsion from school for refusing to cut her natural afro hair. She was told that her hair is a violation of her school's dress code (Tate 2017:98). Therefore, such incidents made Motaung ask, why is it that because I have this hairstyle I can't come to class? What is it that stops a teacher, from teaching me because of what I have on my hair?" How does my hair disturb you from going on with your day? How does it affect you? For the researcher, prescribing how black learners should wear their hair is tantamount to the politics of exclusion. In this regard, Saito (2018:1) argues that racial discrimination and the social construction of race have emphasised continued discrimination embedded in social, political and economic institutions, contributing to systemic racism. Motaung further indicates that people are biased towards black natural hair: *"A lot of them (meaning people) were creeped out, for the fact that oh gosh, at the time I was using natural hair I got some natural hair in America that people gave me and I use it in some of the small drawings but people were creeped out and saying that oh no you can't use natural hair even though they don't know that it's clean or not they just have that thing that it's hair and they didn't*

even wanna touch it.” In the above statement, Motaung highlights that people are biased towards black natural hair. The perception and attitude of people, both black and white, towards black hair, that privileges white beauty standards still affect black women’s representations even though we are in a post-colonial era (Marco 2012:50). In line with this view, Bongela (2015) states that black hair has been treated with disdain for years (Section 1.2). Brown (2017) also argues that there is a strong bias both explicit and implicit against textured hair (Section 1.1). Motaung points out the politics and biases that are embedded on the use of synthetic hair. In her words: *“I realise that, there's actually ... different feelings towards uhm synthetic hair as people would call it fake hair.” “it's like they see it as something like, like a sign of self-hatred that you don't appreciating your natural beauty, you using this hair because ... you wanna be like celebrities or using the long hair because, the race thing that you wanna be white and you don't appreciate your black beauty and something like that.”* For the researcher, the concept of synthetic hair being associated with self-hatred and desiring whiteness has been articulated by black feminists such as Mougoué (2016), Marah Louw (2017), Nstiki Mazwai (3 talk 2012) and black patriarchs such as the late Hugh Masekela (2015) and the late Steve Biko (1987). Motaung is one of the protagonists who argues that synthetic hair is not just fake, but part of black culture and identity. Feminists such as Dosekun (2016), Thompson (2008), Ranaka (3 talk 2012), Majali *et al.* (2017) amongst others, have argued that synthetic hair is not necessarily a signifier of low self-esteem or black women wanting to be white. In the interview, Motaung alluded to the politics of black hair in a cooperate environment.

She said:

“I was in a panel discussion the other day and this lady was talking to me telling me that uhm she had to go into an interview and they told her that she's not allowed to wear braid. She's not allowed to wear braids when she comes to an interview! And then she got the job and there were like okay this is what it is, we don't allow braids here”

In the above narrative, Motaung brings attention to the politics of black hairstyles in the work place. Motaung’s assertions in the above statement are also expressed by

Attadedji (2018:56) who states that black women can be discriminated against during job interviews if they wear natural hairstyles. Brown (2017) also argues that women of colour in the workplace, particularly those with natural hairstyles, are penalised because they often do not conform to traditional notions of beauty. Brown goes on to say that while no one has ever empirically measured the various biases people have about different types of hair, or whether certain styles are professional, women of colour face major barriers to success. This shows that black women still face discrimination and oppression in work places and they are forced to conform to white beauty standards.

The interview with Motaung reveals that black hair is constantly being attacked. There is bias against natural hair and synthetic hair is associated with negative representation. Motaung expressed that these black hair politics inspired her to create artworks on natural hair and synthetic hair (diverse hairstyles). The researcher believes that by continuing to propagate for black beauty hairstyles, Motaung aims to depoliticise black hairstyling and foster new ways of thinking about black hair (Marco 2012:52). The next section discusses the theme, conceptual work.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Conceptual work

Conceptual work informs the third thematic segment of this chapter. MacBean (2013:5) avers that conceptual art is a type of art that focuses on “getting a concept across” in the image. Hence, this theme focuses on the in-depth details of Motaung’s hair concept. The theme looks at Motaung’s subjects of exploration, how her work has evolved over time, types of hairstyles she creates and the significance of placing her work in a particular discourse.

In line with the above, when asked: Why are you specifically focusing on black women? Motaung said:

“I think for me I've been asked a lots of time why they don't see male people in my work. But I think mostly for me it's because this thing started with me being a hairstylist and being a hairstylist, all the time the people that come to me, they are people that I connect with, the conversation that I get, it's mostly from women. I don't plait men, not to say that I will never plait men, but I never get uhm male people

come to me and say I wanna do my hair. but also for me it was like, I may not know maybe because men don't wanna do this because of the gender and they will say no they are gay, and things like that. But for me, I wouldn't know exactly, why I don't plait men, but it's most because I always plait women and the connection that I have with the hairstyling thing its mostly with women, black women. I've never had like uhm white people come to me and say I wanna do my hair. So that's why I am mostly focusing on black women because uhm mostly work with black women and I relate more with them because they've been in my rooms, they've been, we talk, you know. While we plaiting we talk a lot, so that's the connection between me and black women."

In the above statement, Motaung indicates that her subjects of exploration are black women only because they are the only people who ask her to plait them. She expresses that she never had men or white women who come to her to have their hair plaited. For the researcher, the subjects represented in Motaung's conceptual work are determined by her lived experience. Motaung also stresses that black women are people she can have conversations with and make connections with while performing hair rituals (plaiting). In this regard, a black feminist, hooks (1989:1) posits that hair rituals are black women's culture of intimacy. Hooks (1989:1) further indicates that in these hair rituals, black women, even those who do not know one another, meet at home or in the beauty parlour to talk with one another and to listen to the talk. This idea is also expressed by Gaskins (2014:2) who states that due to the time it takes to plait hair, people often socialise while having their hair done. The process of plaiting is a unifying gesture; it brings people together. Likewise, plaiting practice carries on a tradition of bonding between experts and the next generation.

When asked how her conceptual work evolved since she started practicing as a professional artist, Motaung responded by indicating that her conceptual work was based on her lived experience.

In her words: *"When I was doing third year we had to come up with concepts and themes that we gonna work with ... for me it was that thing that I would go to class to study art and then usually after going to class I usually had clients waiting for me in my room because I stayed at res at the time. I usually had people who were waiting*

for me and then I had to plait their hair, and then it was just hair, art, hair, art and then we had to come up with a concept I was like okay I know I'm fascinated with hair, I know I love hair. I just wanna take this thing of hair plaiting and hairstyles and put it into in my art So when I started working with this concept ... for me it was just a process of ... Plaiting people taking images and making drawings. “The above statement reveals four important factors about Motaung’s hair concept. First, in her third year at Vaal University of Technology, Motaung was provided with the space to explore what she can do with the concept of hair. Secondly, the concepts were inspired by everyday life; a lived experience. Thirdly, her area of focus was mainly drawings when she started to explore her concept artistically. Fourthly, she mentions her method of creating drawings on hair plaiting; she plaits people, takes images and makes drawings; hence, emphasising the authenticity of her work. Motaung further indicated that her conceptual work moved from drawings to printmaking: *“When I started making more of prints and I moved away from drawing, and then from there I did my B-Tech majoring on printmaking and I did a series of 10 linocuts that’s when I actually realised that I have a very big interest in printmaking then from then that’s when I was advised by my moderator to go and study further and do more of printmaking.”* Motaung articulates that after she graduated from her third year, she furthered her studies and majored in printmaking in her B-tech (a postgraduate course). The B-tech year, gives the background of how Motaung’s work evolved from drawings to printmaking medium, a linocut. A definition of linocut medium was provided by Wheaton-Smith (2017) in Chapter 4. Motaung mentions that she created 10 linocuts; *Medium for self-expression* (Figure 17) is one of the 10 linocuts she produced. Motaung also stated that her linocuts were impressive in a way that her moderator suggested that she further her studies in printmaking. Motaung further indicated that Artist Proof Studio is a space where she furthered her studies in printmaking and learned new printmaking techniques. In her own words: *“When I went to Artist Proof Studio ... that’s when I was introduced to a lot of printing making techniques and then from there that’s when I fell in love with etching and for me the etching process was very interesting in a way that I felt like it was very similar to the process of plaiting because ... it takes time to do an etching it’s a very laborious uhm techniques also where there, you have to draw first and then you take the plate into the acid and then acid biting into the lines. For me you know like the process of*

pulling and pressing the hair and the pain and everything. For me I sort of felt like etching related more with that, uhm with the concept that I was working on and also uhm (paused)."

Motaung mentions that Artist Proof Studio is a space where she learned different types of printing mediums and techniques. Cooney (2015:83) asserts that Artist Proof Studio is a print-based community arts organisation that is based in Johannesburg. Motaung points out that etching is a medium that resonated with her plaiting process. She explains that her concept is not the only thing that is tied to her life experience of plaiting, as her choice of medium is also linked to her experience of plaiting. She states that both the processes of etching and plaiting contain laborious work, pain and takes time to perfect. Motaung further points out that her conceptual work evolved in the terms of the medium and theme when she received a residency in Boston, USA. She said: *"In 2015, the next year, the year after I joined Artist Proof Studio I was sent to Boston in USA and that's when I got there I was introduced to the technique of paper making, of making your own paper and then from there that's when I realised that there's a lot of things you can make paper with and I had a very interest in working with synthetic hair and natural hair, I just didn't know how to put it in into practice or anything like that but then for me making paper that's when I was like you know what, let me try and see what I can do with synthetic hair. That's when I started working with synthetic hair like just experimenting and putting the paper, the synthetic hair between the paper to make a sheet and then from there that's when I realised that you NO! Actually, that's not the only thing you can do with this hair.* Motaung here expresses that Boston, USA, is a space that provided her with an opportunity to learn new techniques. She learned about papermaking and this technique led her to working with synthetic hair. Hubbe and Bowden (2009:1777) state that the advantage of papermaking is that it gives artists the freedom to experiment and explore with different objects. Indeed, this is evident in Motaung's synthetic artworks. Motaung is currently known for her incredible synthetic artworks. Motaung added:

"I came back to South Africa in 2016 that's when I had a studio at Carfex from there like having that Studio for me it was like okay now I'm in my own place I'm not home anymore, let me just experiment and see what I can do with synthetic hair and

natural hair. That's when I started making portrait with hair using glue to stick it on ... Ok for me that's when I started to use synthetic hair I really! Really! Really! Wanted to use hair because I believed that the material that you use and the technique that you use it has to be associated with your subject matter and what you saying. So that's when I kept on practicing, practising, practicing and drawings with synthetic hair till I was good at it."

In this statement, Motaung indicates that Carfex studio is a space that provided her with the freedom to artistically experiment with synthetic hair. According to Sjöholm (2013:4), the studio offers space for artists' reflection, elaboration and experimentation, which are essential to produce original products of aesthetic quality. For the researcher, the manner in which Motaung describes the Carfex studio ties with both Netshia's (Section 5.4.1) definition of domestic space and Sjöholm's (2013:4) elaboration of the art studio space.

Furthermore, when asked: Which diverse hairstyles are you creatively exploring? Why are these important for you? Motaung indicated that her conceptual work deals with both natural and unnatural hairstyles.

Motaung said:

"Ok for me, at first I did a lot of uhm, in printmaking mostly I did a lot of uhm, artworks on the natural hair because I was mostly interested in the patterns from the cornrows; the cornrows are mostly done with natural hair. I was interested with the patterns and the texture of the natural hair also but then, when people come to me mostly I get a lot of different clients, you clients that come to me and say I don't want you to use hair piece on my hair, I don't want you to put wool on my hair, I just want it to be natural hair but for me it was like (pause) I realized that, there's actually a lot that's uhm there's different feelings towards uhm synthetic hair as people would call it fake hair, I don't really like to call it fake hair, I would rather call it extra hair, because it's just the extra hair, that you put on your hair to make, to make it longer or it allows you to have more actually. It allows you to have more, it allows you to be more creative, it allows you to be more playful, unlike your natural hair, which is, in my case, my natural hair is short and on the sides it doesn't grow very well. So for me I don't use natural hair because I don't like my natural, I don't use synthetic hair

(correcting herself) because don't like my natural hair. I use synthetic hair am just adding on to my short hair that doesn't grow very well but I do love my natural hair and I do wanna take care of it so I could do more with it. But for me at this point I have to use synthetic hair. So I was very (pause) I would hear a lot of people especially some of my clients when I asked them why don't you wanna use natural (meant synthetic hair) hair it's like they see it as something like, like a sign of self-hatred that you don't appreciating your natural beauty, you using this hair because you wanna be, you wanna be like celebrities or using the long hair because, the race thing that you wanna be white and you don't appreciate your black beauty and something like that. So that's when I moved from using the natural hair to using the synthetic hair mostly because I wanted to show its importance that it is not just fake hair, there's a lot you can do with this hair that you cannot use with your natural hair but besides that you just expressing yourself, you just, for me like I said it's my own canvas where I can just explore and have fun, you know. So it was just for me to show that this is not something that we use because we don't like our natural beauty. We use synthetic hair because we want to, like (paused) be more playful, be more creative, you know. So that's why in my work you see that I would use like uhm, I would make hairstyles that are exaggerated some are longer than the usual hairstyles. So for me is to show its significance that here is what you can do with this and it's not just us being (paused) not to say that we don't like our natural hair.

In the above statement, Motaung mentions that she initially focused on natural hairstyles, cornrows specifically, because she was fascinated by the patterns and the texture of the natural hair. To corroborate Motaung's view, Gaskin advocates that cornrows form a complex pattern by intertwining three or more strands of hair. Motaung also indicates that she moved away from embracing natural hairstyles to embracing unnatural hairstyles (synthetic hair) because she was tired of people labelling it as fake hair. Motaung posits that synthetic hair is not just fake hair but extra hair that black women can use as a tool to self-express.

When asked: Do you think that it is important to situate your work in a particular discourse? Why?

Motaung responded by stating:

I would like to like show people that you can actually ... do whatever you want with your hair. We have the right to express ourselves however we want! If you wanna put blonde hair, you put blond hair! If you wanna put the green hair, you put green hair! that's why for me, I felt that it's ... important neh (right) to just take these hairstyles and put them in a canvas and in a larger scale. Where it becomes, it is an art form on its own. When they see it as an art, as an artwork and then I bring in the aesthetics.

In the above statement, Motaung points to the issue of empowerment and self-definition through hairstyles. In line with this view, Oprah Winfrey (2014) argues that when it comes to hair, black women have the choice to change it, dye it, lose it, buzz it, grow it out and everything else that makes it the best it can be (Section 2.3). Motaung's statement also speaks to Mpho Phalane's work in the literature review (Section 2.7). Phalane uses her photographic series titled *Women, wear your hair as a crown* (2017) to encourage black women to wear their hair however they want. Similar to Rodgers (2013), the researcher believes that it is significant for black women to self-define because black females have long been unable to self-represent and continuously told what is appropriate or not by both black and white patriarchy (Rodgers 2013:38). In this regard, Collins (2000:112) states that black women must aggressively push the theme of self-definition because speaking for one-self and crafting one's own agenda is essential to empowerment.

The next section discusses the theme choice of medium and working process.

5.4.4 Theme 4: Choice of medium and working process

The theme choice of medium and working process forms the fourth segment of this study's analysis. This theme provides a picture of why Motaung uses specific mediums and what inspired her medium. This section also describes Motaung's working process as a hairstylist and artist. In accordance with the above, Motaung was asked: What do you think is important about your medium? Motaung responded by indicating that synthetic hair is a medium of self-expression and a tool to showcase creativity.

In her words:

“I think my medium being synthetic hair and canvases right so for me I think it's very important, if you look at the artwork behind me (pointing at the back), if you look at the artwork behind me, the whole artwork is made of synthetic hair, I did not use pen, I did not use anything. Like I said I believe that the medium that you use should say something about what you trying to say. So for me like I said I didn't like these things that I hear about people wearing synthetic hair and it's the sign of self-hatred and you should stay with your natural hair. So for me, I'm trying to like, show that with this hair, there's a lot you can do. It, it's like I said it is not just hair, there's a lot, it comes with, with more creativity! Like for us as creative people I think I want people to see that, there's a lot you can do with this, it's not just hair! It's not just fake hair! It's not just fake hair! And when you see it in my works, you don't look at it as fake hair! You look at it this as an artwork! as an installation, an installation done with what? Synthetic hair! So people must just stop saying that, fake hair! Fake hair! Fake hair! There's no fake hair, this is a medium on its own! You can draw with it! You can do whatever you want with it!”

Motaung states that she uses synthetic hair and canvases as mediums. Figure 34 is a synthetic hair on canvas artwork that Motaung refers to in the interview. Motaung states that she is inspired to work with synthetic hair because she is tired of it being associated with self-hatred. This idea was also articulated by Dineo Ranaka (Section 2.3) and Dosekun (Section 2.3).



Figure 34: Motaung, L. 2018. *Untitled*.

Motaung emphasises that she does not see synthetic hair as fake hair but rather as a medium on its own! Motaung proclaims that “there is a lot you can do with synthetic hair, you can draw with it and you can do whatever with it”. In line with Motaung, artists such as Farieda Nazier and and Alberta Whittle (Figure 35) use synthetic hair as a medium to create artistic works. Nazier and and Whittle’s works explore how Western/ Eurocentric conventions of beauty, acceptability of dress and bodily features, dominates as social convections in post-colonial settings (Netshia

2017a). The artwork *Part 1: Classification and Pencil Test* (Figure 35) is one of their artworks.



Figure 35: NAZIER, F & WHITTLE, A. 2017. *Part 1: Classification and Pencil Test*.

Another artist who also uses synthetic hair as a medium to create artworks is Nkululeko Sibande. Sibande uses synthetic and natural hair as both a medium and subject. Her natural hair artworks were discussed in the literature chapter (Section 2.7). Similar to Motaung, Sibande uses synthetic hair to draw portraits that centres on black female subjectivity and black beauty. Hence, she uses hair as an apparatus to identify facets of womanhood (Netshia 2017a:89). For the researcher, synthetic hair is a medium that black female artists use to converse issues of race, gender and beauty.



Figure 36: SIBANDE, N.
2017. *Untitled.*



Figure 37: SIBANDE, N.
Untitled. 2017. *Untitled.*

Furthermore, Motaung was asked: Can you please tell me how you go about in your creative process?

She said:

“So for me, my process of creating artworks is that uhm what I do now, I started designing my own hairstyles. So I would have like a Sketchbook and design the hairstyles that I am gonna do and get a model. Mostly, I usually use like just my clients but I realised that actually, they're just my clients and I can't keep on taking their images. So I found myself some few models that I work with, so I plait them first and then take photographs and then after taking photographs, that's when I transfer them into (pause) canvases or onto paper and then I've started using colour. I've started introducing colour in my work to just, to make it more interesting and more beautiful!”

Motaung states that her process of creating artworks involves five steps, namely designing her own hairstyles in the sketchbook, plaiting her models using the designed hairstyles, taking photographs of the plaited hairstyles, transferring photographs onto canvases and lastly, injecting colour. This process reveals that Motaung creates authentic hairstyles and authentic artworks, as previously discussed in other sections.

The next section discusses the theme art influencers.

5.4.5 Theme 5: Art influencers

Art influencers is the fifth thematic segment of this study's analysis. This theme focuses on people in the hair art industry who have influenced Motaung's concept on black women's diverse hairstyles. Motaung mentioned two artists that influence her as an artist, namely Gary Stevens and Nikiwe Dlova.

In line with the above, when asked: Do you have any South African models who do the same artwork as yourself? Why are they important to you?

Motaung said:

"I think for me the one person that I really look up to ever since I started making this would be Gary Stephens. So when I started making works with hair, I started looking at Gary Stephens and how he is doing it and the nicest thing is that when I moved to Joburg he heard about me somewhere and then came to see me and to give me advice and then from there he invited me to his Studio and sort of to like, to mentor me in a way. So for me it would be Gary Stephens because I really love his work, I really love Gary Stephens work. He also does works with uhm women and their hairstyles. So what he's process was is that he walks around the streets of Joburg photographing women with beautiful hair and all that. So for me what I really liked was the technique and the medium that he was using it was very good, the pencil drawings".

Motaung points out that Stephens is an artist that she used to reference when she started working with the concept of black women's hair. Meseldzija (2016:1) emphasises that "every artist, has his own roots, his creative parents, his

springboard. We all had teachers, mentors and role models at the beginning of our art career who helped us and showed us the way, motivated and inspired us". For the researcher, looking at Stephen's work (Figures 38-41) it is evident that he had an influence on Motaung's work. Their artworks are similar in terms of the concept, which is black hair, the types of hairstyles that they depict (diverse hairstyles), the composition of their figures (models back side with the emphasis on the hairstyles) and the detailed hairstyles that showcase patterns and texture. Motaung further indicated that she is fascinated by Stephens's choice of medium and the techniques that he uses, as well as Stephen's pencil drawings. In this regard, Omenka Gallery (2018:1) writes that Stephen's drawings explore contemporary trends in the African tradition of hair braiding. Combining long, vertical repetitive folds and pleats in the paper with string systems, Stephens emphasises the three-dimensional quality of the weave pattern and voids at several angles while moving across the picture plane. Figures 38-41 show some of Stephens's artworks on black women's hairstyles.



Figure 38: STEVENS, G. 2012.
Shiny braid knot.

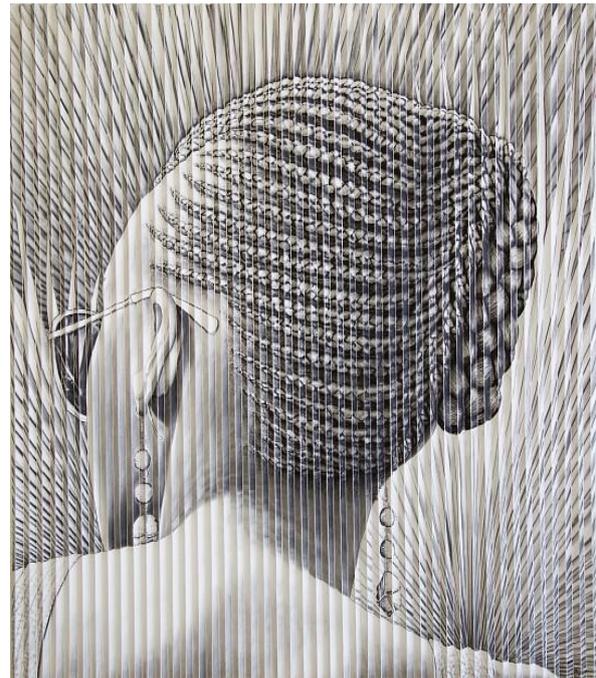


Figure 39: STEVENS, G. 2017.
Fan palm and drop earrings.



Figure 40: STEVENS, G. 2010.
Nandipha.



Figure 41: STEVENS, G. 2014.
Precious.

Motaung further indicated that:

“I like people like Nikiwe Dlova. Nikiwe is, I think I might have started, I think I might have started doing this before her but then when times goes on I went on her Instagram and her blog own your crown that’s when I saw what she was doing and she was she was also challenging this thing of natural hair and sort of bring awareness that guys we know you love your natural hair but you are free to do whatever you want! you are free to do whatever you want with your hair! And then she uses a lot of, she uses herself a lot, and then she uses different hairstylist who are doing (pause) amazing things and what I like is when she started to do a series of works based on Benny and Betty.”

Motaung points out that she looks up to Dlova because she uses her art to empower and bring awareness about natural hair. The concept of bringing awareness about natural hair is what Motaung explored when she started working with her black hair concept. For the researcher, the importance of embracing natural hair and hairstyles

was enunciated by the artist, Hargro (Section 2.3), a feminist group in a *Natural Hair Meet Up* (Section 2.3) and black hair activist Zulaikha Patel (Section 2.3). Motaung also pinpoints that Dlova uses herself a lot, which means she self-represents and self-defines using hair. For the researcher, Motaung dwells on this issue of self-representation because she also self-represents through hair in her artworks (Figures 20, 41 and 42). In line with Dlova and Motaung, Kozinets, Gretzel & Dinhopl (2017:3) argue that hair is a medium that artists use to have effective outlets of self-definition, creative forms of self-fashioning, therefore, powerful means of self-expression. Laetitia Ky (Figure 13) is one of the artists that was discussed in the literature review (Section 2.7) for using self-definition, self-fashioning and self-expression through natural hair/hairstyles. Ky uses herself and her dreadlocks to create amazing hair sculptures. When the researcher asked: Why are Gary Stevens and Nikiwe Dlova important to you? Motaung indicated:

“Nikiwe is very important because, I feel like unlike other people, she was one person, who was like, and she has a very good uhm following on Instagram and she created a blog. She was one person who was okay, cause when I talked to her she was like okay I saw that people were like uhm going on about natural hair and stuff like that. So she wanted to, she’s more creative also; she wanted to show case different hairstyles that are very, very, very beautiful and very, very creative and playful. So for me, and for the fact that she, she goes around looking for different hairstylist and what she does, she tells them that, it’s different hairstylist who are used to doing same thing and she gets them outside their comfort zone. You know, she’s like No I don’t want this normal hairstyle, this is what I want. So she’s, she’s very important to me because of that.”

Motaung points out that she likes Dlova, because she enjoys collaborative work and she insists on working with different artists. For the researcher, collaborative work is a concept that is highly encouraged by black feminists. In this regard, Jickley-Green and Wolcull (1996:161) argue that black feminist art collaborations facilitate women's personal creative expressions, as black women work together to create artworks that reflects black women's experience and the societal silence surrounding black women's life experiences.

The next section discusses the theme, artwork clarification.

5.4.6 Theme 6: Artwork clarification

Artwork clarification informs the sixth and last thematic segment of the analysis chapter. This theme focuses on clarifying the artworks that were analysed by the researcher in Chapter 4. The researcher analysed Motaung's artworks in her own perspective, hence, this theme addresses Motaung views, perception, inspiration and the context that prompted her to create the eight selected artworks for this study.

In line with the above, when asked: Do you have something more to tell me? Motaung responded by clarifying the artwork *Enhancement* presented in Figure 18.

She said:

“So the artwork Enhancement ... I was sort of exploring this uhm this thing of hybrids, hybridity like using different objects, like fusing, like I've said like here is the hair but you can see there's other objects. Which is like, we call it a hybrid, whereby I used the barbed wire to represent the pain, which is the pain that women go through when plaiting hair, from the pressing and pulling and opening the lines. And, the hands, those are my hands, to symbolise the person doing the hairstyle and if you can look closer you can see there's something like an eye there, which, which uhm represent uhm the focus and the participation and like the concentration that goes on when plaiting hair. You just can't open a line looking that way and you can't just open a line and not thinking about hurting the person, so you have to concentrate.”

In the above statement, Motaung clarifies that the artwork *Enhancement* (Figure 18), focused on hybridity. This term did not come to mind when the researcher analysed the artwork in Chapter 4. Radebe and Van der Bank (2016:7757-58) explain that hybridity is when the artist infuses two or more things in an artwork, which is what Motaung did in this artwork.

Motaung also explained that she uses symbolism in her artworks, which the researcher also emphasised in Chapter 4. Motaung noted that the barbed wire represents the pain, while the hands represent herself, the hairstylist and the eye represents focus, participation and concentration that go on when plaiting hair.

The researcher did not see the eye when analysing the artwork, up until the artist mentioned it in an interview. In this regard, MacBean (2013:3) posits that symbolism is sometimes abstract and that it needs explanation or clarification to be understood completely by the viewer. Hence, Motaung pointed out the abstract eye presented in the artwork and further indicated that, “[y]ou just can't open a line looking that way and you can't just open a line and not thinking about hurting the person, so you have to concentrate”. The figure below shows the eye that the researcher did not see in the artwork.



Figure 42: MOTAUNG, L. 2015. *Enhancement: Zoomed eye.*

When asked: Please, tell me more about the artwork *Hair: Medium for self-expression* artwork?

Motaung responded by clarifying the methodological process of creating the artwork *Hair: Medium for self-expression* that is presented in Figure 16.

Motaung said:

“Hair: Medium for self-expression artwork ... I actually took a lot of different hairstyles from different people and then put them into one artwork. So ... I was not focusing on one, like just cornrows or braids, but just hair as a whole ... of how is it uhm it expresses different meanings to different other people, you know. So that's why I took all these and put them into one, that it's a medium for self-expression, whether you white, black, we will always associate you with your hair and the next time you change your hair your look different, this time you cut it short, you're like, you're always, it expresses different meanings”.

Motaung points out three things: (i) that she focused on different hairstyles that she put into a one whole. This notion was elaborated upon by the researcher in the analysis of the artwork (Section 4.3.1). The notion of putting different parts into one whole was also expressed in Simpson's work (Section 4.4.3); (ii) that hair is not just hair but it a tool that one can use to express oneself. The importance of self-expression using hair was addressed by black female artists, Shani Crowe (Section 2.7) and Laetitia Ky (Section 2.7). (iii) She also points out that regardless of race; your hair is what people will always associate you with. In line with this view, Serico (2015:1) emphasises that your hair speaks for you, even when you do not say anything.

In the interview, the researcher also probed Motaung about the artwork in Figure 23. Prior to the interview with Motaung, the researcher labelled this artwork as *Owning my crown*. Motaung corrected the researcher and said that the artwork is actually not *Owning my crown* it is titled *My expressive crown*. She informed the researcher that the website where the researcher got the image had titled the artwork incorrectly. Motaung pointed out that the artwork titled *Owning my crown* is presented in Figure 39.



Figure 43: MOTAUNG, L. 2018. *Owning my crown*.

When Motaung was asked to tell the researcher more about *My expressive crown* (Figure 23), Motaung responded by indicating that the artwork is actually a self-

portrait, which was also noted by the researcher in the art analysis (Section 4.3.7). Motaung further indicated that:

“So I actually did my own hair there ... if you can see I have like a Mohawk and the sides are cut and usually I don't just cut my sides. I usually cut my sides because my hair doesn't grow on the sides and if you can see I exaggerated the, the top part there. Because I was looking at how, I don't have hair and doesn't grow but because of the use of material that you use to create your hair, can always go all out and I actually just exaggerated ja! (Meaning yeah)”

Motaung points out that she cut her hair on the sides because her hair does not grow on the sides. For the researcher, this was new information; the researcher did not know that there was a personal reason for Motaung to cut her hair. The researcher thought Motaung focused on this kind of hairstyle because it is currently in fashion. In this case, conducting an interview with Motaung helped to get more information about the artwork and the hairstyle she depicted (Nieuwenhuis 2016:94).

In *My expressive crown* artwork, Motaung shares her hair struggles as a woman, she expresses that her hair does not grow on the sides. The book by Elizabeth Benedict (2015), also focused on women's struggles with their hair and aimed to address reasons why women do certain hairstyles. Some of the reasons in the book included women choosing to have certain hairstyles because of their hair struggles. For the researcher, the book uses 27 women to narrate their hair stories and struggles, while Motaung uses herself and visual art to communicate her hair stories and struggles.

Furthermore, the researcher asked: Please tell me about *Deeply rooted*? Why is it so different from your artworks that we know you for?

Motaung responded by specifying that *Deeply rooted* (Figure 22) is an experimental piece with new mediums, photography and Photoshop. In her words, she said:

“When we did this artwork so what we did is that, I got my model to come in and what we did was that I plaited her four hairstyles in one day. I plait the first one, undo it. Plait the next one then, undo it, up until I was left with four hairstyles. So we kept taking different photographs of different hairstyles that are all done in the same,

same day, same person, same hairstylist. So from taking them, I really fell in love with the photographs themselves and I couldn't see how I could turn it into a drawing or into a printmaking. So I decided because I really liked it, as it is, I will keep it as a photograph and it was actually my first photograph artwork".

Motaung, in the above statement, stresses the methodological process and background of creating this photograph. She reveals that she created four hairstyles on the same person, in the same day and as a result, she fell in love with one photograph, which is the one we see in *Deeply rooted*. In Chapter 4, on the analysis, the researcher thought that they were two different women (Section 4.3.6), because of the two different hairstyles that are shown on the artwork. Motaung, in the interview, clarified that she worked with one model, plaited four different hairstyles and took photographs of each hairstyle.

Prior to the interview, the researcher saw the framed artwork of *Deeply rooted* (Figure 22) in the studio and asked Motaung how she managed to combine the braids from two women. Motaung responded by saying that she worked with one model and she used Photoshop to combine the two images into one to make the thick braid that connect the two women depicted in the artwork. She told the researcher that she was experimenting with hair and photography and she emphasised that this was her first photographic work.

The researcher also asked Motaung: Please tell me more about *Plaited identity*?

Motaung responded by stating:

"Plaited identity it's a portrait of my friend actually, my lesbian friend, her name is René... as people, we don't just wake up and say I want braids or just wake up they say I want afro. So with René what she does, is that ... she has like uhm, specific hairstyles that she does ... because of her sexuality and ... she doesn't want hairstyles that make her look more feminine... So I was looking at the how, the plaited identities, that your hairstyle gives you a certain identity off which it's what she's very cautious of. She wouldn't just do a hairstyle, she does a hairstyle that doesn't interrupt and interfere with her sexuality."

The researcher found new information about the artwork *Plaited identity* (Figure 29). When the researcher analysed the artwork, she referred to the person portrayed in the artwork as an anonymous woman who might be Motaung's client. Motaung revealed that the woman in the artwork is not just a random client; she is someone who is close to her, named René.

In this artwork, Motaung emphasised that the hairstyle René is wearing is linked to her sexual identity. For the researcher, this artwork shows the significant role that hairstyles play in black lesbians' lives. A similar theme is explored by a prominent South African black female lesbian artist, Zanele Muholi, in the series *Somnyama Ngonyama* (2015). In this regard, the Stedelijk Museum (2017) articulates that Muholi in *Somnyama Ngonyama series* (Figure 40) explores the highly intricate African hairstyles that often correlate with culture and identity of lesbians.

Motaung, in an interview with Ownurcrown (2017) blogger, also indicated that Muholi is one of the artists that "owns her crown unapologetically". Motaung also explained that Muholi is a visual activist dedicated to increasing the visibility of black lesbian, gay, transgender and intersex people. Motaung further indicated that Muholi documents the journey of the African queer community as a record for future generations. Shown below are some of the artworks from the *Somnyama Ngonyama series* (2015) that present Muholi in diverse hairstyles.



Figure 44: MUHOLI, Z. 2015. *Somnyama Ngonyama*.

The researcher asked: Please tell me more about *Plaited from the roots*?

Motaung replied by stating that:

“So with this artwork is uhm, as you can see, it's me also, plaiting myself. So I'm in the process of plaiting myself as you can see I'm holding a needle there. So it was, it was more about the process of plating and how the, with the elongated. This is the one that I've ever did with the elongated hair. So I was mostly, like I said I was mostly trying, like I said how I'm putting the, I'm trying to show the significance of the braids. So this is the first artwork which I did right with the elongated uhm hair that goes up to the floor, to show that uhm elongation process that comes with uhm braids.”

In this artwork, Motaung focuses on self-representation and the process of plaiting oneself. In the analysis, the researcher did not observe the needle; she only saw the needle when Motaung pointed it out in the interview. Motaung also indicated that this artwork is the first artwork that she did with elongated synthetic hair that touches the floor. *Expressive roots* (Figure 41) and *Enhanced* (Figure 42) are some of the elongated artworks that Motaung has produced on herself but are not discussed in the artwork analysis.



Figure 45: MOTAUNG, L. 2017.
Expressive roots.



Figure 46: MOTAUNG, L. 2017.
Enhanced.

Motaung, when asked: Please tell me about the artwork *Botle ba Mmakgonthe*?
Replied:

“So Botle ba Mmakgonthe it’s an etching that I did while I was in America. So I was uhm it’s also one of the hybrid, hybrid processes that I was experimenting with. So like, unlike sometimes you have to pick metaphors and different objects to say what you, what the artwork is all about. So for me I was looking at the, it was a hairstyle on its own, I was looking at its beauty and I wanted to, the focus to be more on its beauty. Hence the title Botle ba Mmakgonthe which is like Botle ba Mmakgonthe is like natural beauty in Sesotho. That’s why I used flowers for me I had to think of something that represent, for me Beauty! Flowers are so beautiful, that’s why, they’re beautiful whether you like it or not. So I chose flowers to represent the beauty of the hair.”

In this artwork, Motaung talks about hybridity and symbolism again and she brings a new concept of metaphor. According to Petrenko & Korotchenko (2012:555), metaphor is traditionally defined as a type of trope, a transmission of the properties of one object to another because of their similarity in any aspect or by contrast. In line with this view, Motaung, in the artwork, uses metaphors that represent natural beauty. Motaung compares black women’s natural hair/hairstyles with flowers. Motaung alludes that the dreadlock hairstyle presented in the artwork is natural and beautiful just like flowers. This notion of dreadlock hairstyle being beautiful is addressed by the researcher in detail (Section 4.3.3). The Benny and Betty is the only artwork that the researcher did not ask about in the interview because prior to the interview the researcher asked Motaung about the Benny and Betty artwork and Motaung disclosed that the artwork was a collaborative work with Nikiwe Dlova. She confirmed that they used Nikiwe’s concept and theme to create artworks, she also confirmed that they both benefitted from the project as the researcher stated in the art analysis (Section 4.3.8). Motaung pointed out that all the Benny and Betty hairstyles that are presented in the literature review chapter under Nikiwe Dlova’s artworks (Figure 43) were created and styled by her. This was new information to the researcher. The researcher is of the view that Nikiwe Dlova and Motaung only collaborated on the two artworks that are presented in Figures 23 and 24. Thus,

meeting personally with Motaung helped to clarify and give more details about the *Benny and Betty evolve series* (Creswell 2012:221).



Figure 47: DLOVA, N. 2017. *Betty evolves hair series*.

Having discussed the six themes that emerged from the qualitative interview data, the next section discusses reliability and validity.

5.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The quality of research may be questioned, therefore, a discussion regarding the reliability and validity of the research conducted is vital. According to Anderson (2010:2), examining the data for reliability and validity assesses both the objectivity and credibility of the research. Anderson (2010:2) further indicates that validity relates to the honesty and genuineness of the research data, while reliability relates to the reproducibility and stability of the data.

Anderson (2010:2) states that validity can be substantiated by a number of techniques including triangulation, respondent validation and constant comparison.

Anderson (2010:2) suggested the following validity procedures:

- Triangulation, which is using two or more methods to study the same phenomenon. In this study, triangulation was employed by using visual material and an in-depth individual interview, to explore black women's diverse hairstyles. Hence, these two methods helped to produce a more comprehensive set of findings.
- Respondent validation, which is allowing participants to read through the data and analyses and provide feedback on the researchers' interpretations of their responses, provides researchers with a method of checking for inconsistencies, challenges the researchers' assumptions and provides them with an opportunity to re-analyse their data. In this study, respondent validation was obtained through member checks (Nieuwenhuis 2016:123). By member checks, the researcher implies that the transcripts were submitted to the participant to correct factual errors. Motaung was asked to verify whether the researcher's interpretation of what she has shared in an in-depth interview was correct.

The use of constant comparison means that one piece of data (for example, an interview) is compared with previous data and not considered on its own, enabling researchers to treat the data as a whole rather than fragmenting it. In this study, data gathered from case study methods were constantly compared and supported by the relevant research literature to ensure that different perspectives were represented. Gibbs (2007:44) suggested the following reliability procedures:

- Check the transcripts to ensure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription. The researcher in this study did the proof reading to check during the process of transcribing.
- Make sure that there is not a drift in the definition of codes, a shift in the meaning of the codes during the process of coding. This was accomplished in this study by constantly comparing data with the codes and by writing memos about the codes and their definitions.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher presented Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis framework. Following this framework, the researcher familiarised herself with the data. Thereafter she generated initial codes derived from the data. The research then searched for themes. The identified themes were reviewed until she became satisfied with six themes that were defined and discussed. These themes are Motaung's personal background, black hair politics, conceptual work, choice of medium and working process, art influencers and artwork clarification. In the next chapter, the researcher provides the summary, findings, recommendations and areas for further study.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the results of the empirical study and the findings were discussed in detail. In this chapter, a summary of the study is provided to give an overview of what was discussed in the preceding chapters. This is followed by a discussion of findings and recommendations as well as suggestions for future research.

6.2 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided the background and context of the study. The chapter also elucidated the research problem and posed the research question: How can black women's diverse hairstyles be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles?

The rationale and justification of the study was provided. An outline of the research design and methodology was presented, followed by a clarification of the role of the researcher and research ethics were outlined.

This chapter outlined some of the problems experienced by black women regarding their hairstyles' representation. These problems included black women facing different challenges when it comes to self-presentation because of the patriarchal constructions of black women's diverse hairstyles. Black women's natural hairstyles being treated with disdain for years by white supremacy was stressed and black women being viewed as having self-hatred, loss of identity and conforming to white beauty standards for representing themselves in altered hairstyles was also noted.

Chapter 2 provided the relevant research literature on black women's diverse hairstyles. Black feminism was adopted to foreground the study. Politics of black hair in feminist discourses were presented. Patriarchal views on black women's diverse hairstyles were discussed. This discussion was followed by a presentation of public media debates on black women's hairstyles. Then black women's hairstyles in art

exhibitions were presented. Conceptual artworks on black women's hairstyles were also presented.

Chapter 3 focused on the research design and methodology used to explore black women's diverse hairstyles. The researcher's motivation for choosing qualitative research design was highlighted. Data collection and analysis techniques were discussed and criteria for soundness were dealt with. Limitations of the study were mentioned. Ethical considerations underlying the study were also discussed.

Ontologically, the researcher worked from the premise, which aimed to understand the construction of meanings through black women's diverse hairstyles as created and experienced by the selected participants. Epistemologically, the researcher worked from the premise that knowledge is constructed through lived experiences of those responsible for wearing diverse hairstyles and producing self-defined artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles.

Chapter 4 analysed, Motaung and Simpson's artworks, using Barnet's steps of critical analysis. For each artist, a minimum of eight artworks were discussed. Motaung's artworks on diverse hairstyles included: *Self-expression* (2013), *Enhancement* (2015), *Bottle ba Makgonthe* (2015), *Plaited from the roots* (2016), *Plaited identity (braided)* (2017), *Deeply rooted* (2017), *My expressive crown* (2018) and *Benny and Betty evolve* (2018). Simpson's artworks on diverse hairstyles included: *Wigs* (1994), *Stereo Styles (1988)*, *Counting* (1991), *1978-1988* (1990), *ID* (1990), *Momentum* (2013), *Frosty* (2016) and *Commemorative Bust* (2016).

Motaung and Simpson's artworks were compared and contrasted. A comparative analysis was employed to show the qualities of the artists' artworks by looking at the differences and similarities in their works (Barnet 2011:135). The comparison was based on the theoretical perspective, concept of exploration, hairstyles, mediums and subjects in artworks, technical approach, methodological processes and growth of an individual artist over time.

Chapter 5 dealt with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of collected data from one in-depth individual interview with Motaung. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework was employed to analyse the findings from the transcript of the

participant. From the qualitative interview data, six themes emerged. These themes are: (i) Motaung's personal background; (ii) black hair politics; (iii) conceptual work (iv) choice of medium and working process; (v) art influencers; and (vi) artwork clarification.

The data analysis was compiled in response to the research questions of the study. An analysis of the data enabled the researcher to advance an explanation of how black women's diverse hairstyles can be understood through art.

6.3 FINDINGS

The following section presents findings emanating from the research question: How can black women's diverse hairstyles be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles?

6.3.1 Research objective 1: To explore how black women's diverse hairstyles can be understood through art to appreciate the meaning attached to these hairstyles.

The study found that Motaung's earlier works were inspired by several black women clients, who indicated that they did not like their natural hair. Hence, Motaung used hair plaiting and artistic skills to embrace natural hairstyles and show black women that there is a lot that they can do with their natural hair. For natural hairstyles, Motaung focused on cornrow braids hairstyles in Figures 19 and 22 to affirm to black women that they can embrace their natural hair texture and find ways to manipulate it creatively. Motaung also depicted a dreadlock hairstyle that has been viewed by white beauty standards as dirty and inappropriate. In Figure 19, Motaung gives a new meaning to the dreadlock hairstyle by viewing it as beautiful and using metaphors that represent beauty in the artwork. The *Benny and Betty* (Figures 24 and 25) is also a natural hairstyle that Motaung explored. With this kind of hairstyle, Motaung dispels the notion that a Benny and Betty hairstyle is an oppressive hairstyle that represents poverty. Motaung reconceptualises the hairstyle and gives it new meaning. In her work, Motaung argues that this hairstyle can be worn by black women with high social status to self-define and this particular hairstyle does not necessary have to be associated with being poor (Sibisi 2016:6).

The art analysis also revealed that Motaung's contemporary artworks took a turn and moved from natural hairstyles to altered hairstyles using synthetic hair. The use of synthetic hair in Motaung's artworks focused on promoting self-expression and self-definition. Through altered hairstyles, she emphasises that synthetic hair is part of black culture and identity. For unnatural hairstyles, Motaung focused on synthetic hairstyles such as braids represented in Figures 20, 21 and 23.

As compared to Motaung, the study found that Simpson's artworks challenged the views of gender, race and identity by depicting lived experiences of black American women and the stereotypes that are associated with black women's hairstyles. Simpson's earlier works focused on black and white photo-text artworks, showcasing chemically relaxed hair and hairstyles as presented in Figure 26. These relaxed hairstyles were used to expose stereotypes that are associated with black women relaxing their hair. Simpson also depicted wigs as seen in Figure 27; the wigs included a wavy blonde wig, afro wig, braided wig, tight corkscrew curls, a shiny knot of black hair and a dark wiry patch. The wig series revealed that altered hair is part of black women's culture and a tool that helps black women present themselves to the world. Simpson also focused on the braiding hairstyles as indicated in Figures 28, 29 and 30. In these artworks, she reflects on black American history to blur lines between past and present, by depicting a difficult past while alluding to present-day structures of black women's oppressions. The use of braiding by Simpson alludes that hair texture has the power to identify a gender and race of an individual and the pressures that black women face when maintaining their hair.

Simpson's contemporary artworks moved from photo-text artworks to colour performances and collages. In these artworks, she uses the past to engage with contemporary discourses of black hair. In the performance artwork titled *Momentum* (Figure 31), Simpson focused on a highly political hairstyle, the afro hairstyle. She challenges the norms of ballet dance by having dancers with big afros instead of silky straight hair, hence, commemorating black natural hair in a white-dominated ballet dance. In her contemporary artworks, she also created collages, where she used images from historical issues of *Ebony* magazine in order to engage with the subject of black hair. In these collages, she depicts black women in wigs and afros

(Figures 32 and 33). She used these particular hairstyles to instil a sense of black beauty that has been perceived as bad by patriarchy and white beauty standards.

6.3.2 Research objective 2: Explore similarities and differences between Motaung and Simpson regarding how they construct and express meaning of diverse hairstyles in their artworks.

6.3.2.1 Theoretical perspective

The study found that Motaung and Simpson's artworks are similar in terms of the theoretical perspective. They both use a black feminist strategy of self-definition in their artworks. Motaung uses self-definition by narrating self and lived experiences of black South African women; while Simpson uses self-definition by portraying lived experiences of black American women.

6.3.2.2 Concept of exploration

Motaung's concept of exploration included the following sub-concepts: hair politics, identity, gender, culture, beauty, narration and stereotypes. Simpson focused on hair politics, identity, gender, stereotype, memory, injustice, history and vulnerability.

6.3.2.3 Hairstyles

The study found that both Motaung and Simpson create artworks on diverse hairstyles. In Motaung's artworks, diverse hairstyles included natural hairstyles: cornrow braids (see Figure 17), dreadlocks (see Figure 19) and Benny and Betty (see Figure 24). Unnatural hairstyles include synthetic braids and synthetic hair (see Figures 20-23). Simpson's diverse hairstyles included natural hairstyles such as cornrow braids (see Figures 28-31) and Afros (see Figures 31-33). Unnatural hairstyles included relaxed hair (see Figure 26) and wigs (see Figures 27-32).

6.3.2.4 Mediums

Motaung and Simpson's artworks differ in terms of mediums. Motaung uses linocuts to create patterns and texture that come with black women's natural hairstyle. The medium etching in Motaung's work symbolises the labour and time that it takes to plait hair. Synthetic hair as a medium is used to make a political statement that black

women can self-define in altered hairstyle despite the negative connotations that are associated with black women wearing synthetic hair. Photography was an experimental medium that showcased a connection between black women and their hair, while hair sculpture is a medium that showcased creativity using the hair and the self.

Simpson uses photography and text to create artworks that are ambiguous in nature and invites viewers to make their own conclusions. The photo-text artworks communicated issues of race and gender using black women's diverse hairstyles. Simpson uses installations and performance as a medium of choice to re-enact a childhood memory, therefore, self-defining and recreating a lived experience. Collages as a medium of exploration focus on the reconceptualisation on the past, memories and old photographs to engage with contemporary discourses of black women's diverse hairstyles. In the selected artworks, Simpson does not self-represent, but in her other artworks that are not discussed in this study, she does self-represent.

6.3.2.5 Subjects in artworks

Motaung uses herself and South African black women (clients) that she braids as her subjects. Simpson purposefully selects black-American women models and iconic black women from Ebony magazines as her subjects for her artworks.

6.3.2.6 Technical approaches and methodological processes

Motaung and Simpson's technical approaches and methodological processes differ. Compositions in Motaung's artworks focus on various points. Mitchell (2014:1) describes a focal point as the most important part of the artwork, where the artist desires the viewer's eye to rest. She achieves this by cropping the subject's faces and making detailed hairstyles the point of focus. Her technical approach also includes mediums that link with the process of plaiting such as linocut, etching and synthetic hair. These mediums allow Motaung to create texture by carving, etching and plaiting synthetic hair. Symbolism is also included in her artworks by using hands to represent herself in some of her artworks, flowers to represent beauty and wires to represent pain, amongst others.

Simpson uses symmetrical compositions in her artworks. According to Mitchell (2014:1), a symmetrical composition creates a balanced atmosphere and has an overall equality of size, shape, line, line direction, texture, value and colour. It is capable of division into equal parts as shown in Figures 26-29. Simpson hides the identity of her subjects by having the black women's backs to the viewer, giving a full view of their hairstyles (Hargro 2011:5). Much of Simpson's art focused on hair by isolating the hair into an object itself as shown in Figures 29 and 30. Hence, this approach conceals the subjects' identity in her artworks. Her technical approach also includes large-scale photographs and text. Symbolism is also used in order to reflect black women's history in an American context. Simpson also uses photo-montages to promote black aesthetics using diverse hairstyles (Gerstenblatt 2013:305).

6.3.2.7 Growth of an individual artist over time

Initially, Motaung's work focused mainly on Afrocentric hairstyles, using drawing, painting and printing in her undergraduate work in 2012. In 2013, Motaung further explored her concept of African hairstyling using printmaking mediums such as linocut and etching. These allowed Motaung to create detailed textured artworks and emphasised the beauty of African hair and hairstyles. In 2015, Motaung introduced synthetic hair drawings. Motaung used synthetic hair as a medium to indicate that black women are not confined to Afrocentric hairstyles; they can also wear altered hair to self-define and be beautiful. In her latest artworks, Motaung uses the concept of diverse hairstyles in which she introduces new mixed media such as photography, hair sculptures, colour prints and so forth.

In the early 80s, Simpson's work focused mainly on documentary through photography. In the 90s, she was best known for pairing text and black and white photographic images of unknown black American women. She moved from black and white photo-texts to live performances and colourful video installations as seen in the *Momentum* artwork. In her latest works, Simpson experiments with photographic collages, whereby she focuses on the arrangements of vintage photographs that speak to the visual language of her early works.

6.3.3 Research objective 3: Understand what or who influences Motaung's choice of hairstyles

Conceptually, the study found that Motaung's earlier works were influenced by several black women clients who indicated that they did not like their natural hair. Motaung used her skill of plaiting and art to appreciate the beauty and meanings attached to African hairstyles. Her contemporary works were influenced by the misinterpretation of synthetic hair worn by black women, whereby she incorporates synthetic hair in her artworks in order to communicate that this type of hair does not represent self-hatred or low self-esteem when worn by black women.

Theoretically, the study found that Motaung's artworks were influenced by oppressions that black women face regarding their hair representation. White beauty standards are major oppressive structures that continue to control how black women should represent their hairstyles. Black and white patriarchy is another oppressive structure that polices how black women should wear their hairstyles. Consequently, these oppressive structures influenced Motaung to create artworks that emphasise self-definition through diverse hairstyles.

Artistically, the study found that artists such as Gary Stevens and Nikiwe Dlova also influenced Motaung's artworks. Gary Stevens influenced Motaung's technical approach in terms of the subject, composition, mediums and technique. Nikiwe Dlova influenced Motaung to assert herself in her artworks and to give new positive meanings to oppressive hairstyles such as Benny and Betty, amongst others.

6.3.4 Research objective 4: Understand what or who influences Lorna Simpson's choice of hairstyles.

Conceptually, the study found that Simpson's artworks were influenced by the history of black American women. The struggles that black American women endured regarding their physical appearance inspired Simpson to create photographs and texts that challenge views of gender, race, identity, culture, history and memory (Brooklyn Museum 2011:1).

Theoretically, the study found that Simpson's artworks were influenced by negative stereotypes placed on black women's hairstyles. These stereotypes influenced Simpson to create artworks that give a positive standpoint from a black woman's perspective. Hence, Simpson works articulated new ways of seeing and appreciating black women's hair and hairstyles.

6.3.5 Research objective 5: Establish an understanding of how Lebohang Motaung and Lorna Simpson interpret their physical appearance based on their hairstyles.

The study found that Motaung uses self-portraits to insert herself in her artworks. She explores self-representation through synthetic hair by using long coloured braids and Mohawk sculptural braids hairstyles. The study found that in the eight selected artworks, Simpson does not represent herself, but she rather uses the physical appearance of her subjects and their choice of hairstyles. These hairstyles include wigs, afros, relaxed hair and braids, to mention a few.

6.4 FINDINGS REGARDING AN INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

This section discusses findings from an in-depth individual interview with Motaung. The six themes that emerged from the interview data are: (i) Motaung's personal background; (ii) black hair politics; (iii) conceptual work (iv) choice of medium and working process; (v) art influencers; and (vi) artwork clarification.

6.4.1 Findings regarding Theme 1: Motaung's personal background

From the interview, the study found that Motaung's love for plaiting started when she was living with her grandmother in Sebokeng. She mentioned that her grandmother allowed her to experiment and be creative with her hair. The study also found that money was a motivating factor, which encouraged Motaung to plait more. She indicated that when she started plaiting, she did not plait for money. Plaiting was just something that she enjoyed doing. Her family's struggle led her to plait for money. Hence, for Motaung, getting money from plaiting signified independence. The findings from the study revealed that Motaung never thought that her skill of plaiting would develop into art practice, until she was in her third year (2012) at the Vaal

University of Technology. The institution provided Motaung with a space to explore what she could do with the concept of hair and how she could bring her everyday life experiences into art practice.

6.4.2 Findings regarding Theme 2: Black hair politics

The study found that Motaung was prompted by black hair politics to create artworks on black women's diverse hairstyles. These politics are evident in educational institutions, work places and politics of exclusion. The findings revealed that Motaung focused on natural hairstyles because she wanted to show black women what they can do with their natural hair. She also wanted to get rid of the misinformation that natural hair is not beautiful. The findings also revealed that Motaung's concept evolved after she realised that people are biased towards synthetic hair. She emphasised that she uses synthetic hairstyles in her artworks because she wants to get rid of "this thing of calling synthetic hair fake hair". In the interview, Motaung expressed that synthetic hair is not fake hair but rather "extra hair", which black women can use to self-express and self-define.

6.4.3 Findings regarding Theme 3: Conceptual work

They are five spaces that played a role in shaping and evolving Motaung's conceptual work, her choice of mediums and techniques. Sebokeng was listed as a domestic space where Motaung learned and perfected the skill of hair plaiting. Vaal University of Technology is a space where Motaung had formal training to do art. This space revealed that Motaung's concept of hair plaiting started in her third year and it was explored using drawing mediums. Motaung, in her fourth year, used a printmaking medium and created 10 linocuts on black women's natural hairstyles. The space, Artist Proof Studio, introduced Motaung to a range of printmaking media, where she fell in love with the etching process. Motaung explained that etching stood out for her as a medium because it is a laborious and timeous process, therefore, the process is similar to hair plaiting (Ntshinga 2017:1). Boston, USA, is a space where Motaung learned a new medium of papermaking technique. Motaung explained that Carfex studio is a domestic space where she experimented with synthetic hair and papermaking techniques. She practiced working with both mediums until she

perfected the skill of working with them. Motaung is currently known for her amazing synthetic hair drawings and installations.

6.4.4 Findings regarding Theme 4: Choice of medium and working process

Motaung uses synthetic hair as a medium of self-expression and a tool to showcase creativity. She proclaimed that “there is a lot you can do with synthetic hair, you can draw with it and you can do whatever with it”. She also stated that she was inspired to work with synthetic hair because she was tired of it being associated with self-hatred. She emphasised that she does not see synthetic hair as “fake hair” but rather as a “medium on its own”.

The study found that Motaung’s working process involved five steps: i) designing her own hairstyles in the sketchbook; ii) plaiting her models using the designed hairstyles; iii) taking photographs of the plaited hairstyles; iv) transferring photographs into canvases and; v) lastly injecting colour. Motaung’s working process revealed that she creates authentic hairstyles and artworks.

6.4.5 Findings regarding Theme 5: Art influencers

Gary Stephens and Nikiwe Dlova are people who inspire and influence Motaung’s art-making process. Motaung revealed that Gary Stephens is one of the artists who she referenced when she started working with the concept of black hairstyles. She indicated that she had the privilege of meeting the iconic artist and he took her to his studio to mentor her when she first moved to Johannesburg. Motaung indicated that she was fascinated by Gary Stephens’ technique and his choice of mediums, more especially his pencil drawings. She also pointed out that she is also inspired by the artist and blogger, Nikiwe Dlova. Motaung expressed that Dlova is important to her because she uses her art to bring awareness of natural hair and encourages black women to self-express using their hair. Motaung describes the Dlova as follows: she is very creative and playful at the same time; she enjoys collaborating with other artists and getting them out of the comfort zone. Most importantly, Dlova uses herself when creating hair sculptors, which means she self-represents, self-defines, self-fashions and inspires black women to do the same. Similar to Dlova, Motaung uses

the image of herself and the hairstyles she prefers to empower black women to self-define.

6.4.6 Findings regarding Theme 6: Artwork clarification

The findings also revealed that interview as a data collection method helped in clarifying a lot about Motaung's artworks. In Chapter 4, the researcher analysed Motaung's artworks from her own perspective. In an in-depth individual interview, Motaung provided the researcher with details of her own artworks. Motaung pointed out objects that the researcher overlooked in art analysis, objects such as the needle and the eye, which the researcher did not observe while analysing Motaung's artworks. Motaung also provided reasons why she inserted those objects. The interview also helped in providing Motaung with an opportunity to give the background of some artworks. For example, Motaung revealed the reasons behind *Plaited identity* (Figure 29) where the woman depicted in the artwork is her lesbian friend, René, who insisted that she wants a hairstyle that is less feminine and does not interfere with her sexuality. The researcher would have never known this kind of information, if she had not conducted an in-depth individual interview with Motaung.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the relevant research literature, the analysis of the two participants' artworks and the empirical study of this research project, the following recommendations are made.

6.5.1 Recommendation 1: Literature review

- The study recommends that self-definition is a black feminist strategy that black women can use to self-insert and self-represent using diverse hairstyles. The act of insisting on black women's self-definition validates black women's power as human subjects against structural patriarchal forces and beauty standards that are continuously set for black women.
- The study recommends that it is significant for black women to embrace diverse hairstyles, to get rid of the politics, oppressions and binary oppositions that are placed on black women's hairstyles. The literature indicates that black women's

hair is constantly discussed in binary opposition of good versus bad hair, natural against unnatural, Afro-centric to Eurocentric, authentic with inauthentic, African as opposed Western, low in opposition to high self-esteem, amongst others. Hence, black women wearing diverse hairstyles can reduce biases based on representation of black women's hairstyle

6.5.2 Recommendation 2: Artworks

- The study recommends that artworks on black women's hairstyle should be understood as self-determination and self-definition.
- From the artworks of Motaung and Simpson, the study recommends that it is significant for black female artists to produce artworks on diverse hairstyles to diminish oppressive structures that are placed on black women's hairstyle representations.

6.5.3 Recommendation 3: Interview with Lebohang Motaung

- From the in-depth, individual interview, the study recommends that synthetic hair be viewed as part of black women's culture and identity. Motaung affirms that synthetic hair has been and is still part of black women's beauty. Several studies in the literature have shown that synthetic hair does not symbolise self-hatred, loss of identity or desiring to be white.
- Furthermore, the study recommends that black women's diverse hairstyles have to be taken outside the hair salon, to public spaces such as art galleries, museums and on the street, in the form of art.

6.6 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- The use of a small qualitative sample did not enable the researcher to get a broader perspective on how artists view their choice of hairstyles. The findings of this study cannot be generalised. The study thus recommends that future studies on black women's diverse hairstyles be conducted through both quantitative and qualitative methods so that the results can be generalised to a broader audience.

- This study provides a foundation for many future projects interested in black women's diverse hairstyles. A future research endeavour could expand on the sample to explore other black female artists and artworks on diverse hairstyles or expand the sample by including women from different racial groups to get their views on diverse hairstyles.
- This study has emphasised that black women face different challenges when it comes to self-presentation because of the patriarchal constructions of black women's diverse hairstyles. Future studies could conduct in-depth interviews with black men to get their views and perceptions on black women's diverse hairstyles.
- This study analysed both artists artworks based on the researchers' views and observations. Conducting an in-depth interview with Motaung allowed the researcher to get more information about the artist and her artworks that are discussed in this study. Thus, the researcher recommends that an in-depth interview be done with Simpson, to get her own personal views about her artworks.

There is a lack of documentation from black women writing about their identities. Thus, this research is important and amplifies writings on black women by a black female researcher in art. In conclusion, the researcher demonstrated that black women's hairstyles have been viewed through European beauty standards, black and white patriarchy. Similar to Malatjie (2011:77), the researcher argues that it is necessary for black people to acknowledge that there is not one fixed idea of beauty. It is significant for black female artists to produce artworks that are based on diverse hairstyles, rather than to produce artworks that reflect binary oppositions of good hair/ bad hair. It is black women who need to determine the nature of their freedom from oppressive black hair structures. The researcher argues that black female artists need to produce counter-oppressive images of blackness. Black female artists such as Motaung and Simpson have begun to do so by exploring black women's diverse hairstyles through their art; by foregrounding politics regarding black women's hairstyles. Hence, using the concept of self-definition through their work, Motaung and Simpson were able to portray their diverse hairstyles as they wish.

They also determined the manner in which the audience viewed these hairstyles. This ultimately diminishes the power of any oppressive gaze that black women encounter (Malatjie 2011:77).

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ANNEXURE A



FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ARTS AND DESIGN

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND INFORMED CONSENT

Dear participant

My name is Zanele Lucia Radebe. I am a Masters student at Vaal University of technology in the Human Science Faculty, Visual Arts Department. You are hereby invited to participate in a research study that forms part of my Master studies. This information leaflet will assist and guide you in making a decision to be part of this project and granting permission for oneself to participate in the project. Before agreeing or signing anything, you should read the information leaflet thoroughly and understand fully what the project requires and what it involves. You should not take part unless you understand all the aspects of the study.

This study is about exploring black women's diverse hairstyles through art and understanding what these hairstyles mean to black women who wear them. The study is interested in you as a participant, because you are a black female artist that deals with the concept of black women's diverse hairstyles, in a South African context. This project will be carried out by using an in-depth interview. As a

participant you will be answering questions and engaging in discussions, about your work on black women's diverse hairstyles.

The information gathered from the interview will be used to analyse your artworks, place your work within a black feminist perspective, and to understand how you as an artist self-define through your art practice. Thus the purpose of the study is to understand how you as an artist make use of black women's diverse hairstyles, to assert your subjectivity and agency in a manner that evokes black feminist strategies.

You are required to respond to interview questions that will be posed and to provide as much information as you can out of your free will. You are required to feel free to withdraw from participation at any time in the process of the interview.

Please note that the whole interview will be recorded, transcribed and analysed. The transcription document together with the interview analysis document will be given to you to verify if you are not being misrepresented.

To participate in this study, you have to be a black female artist that deals with the concept of black women's diverse hairstyles. The only reason that would exclude you from this project is if you are not a black female artist exploring the theme of black women's diverse hairstyles.

There will be no sensitive questions that may put you or your credibility at risk. If you do not want to respond to a question, your decision will be respected.

The potential benefits that may come from this study include; you participating in a research area that is not over-researched, being part of new knowledge creation and having the opportunity of been written about as an artist. The experience of being an informant can be emotionally rewarding.

Please note that you will not be financially compensated for participating in the study.

Your right as a participant in this study are to withdraw at any time in the process of the interview. You do not even have to provide reason/s for your decision. The information you provide will be treated with confidentiality.

Please note that I am qualified to carry this research because I have done research in my B-TECH and PGDHE courses. I will also undertake this study under the supervision of a Professor and an academic scholar, who are experts in the field of research.

For additional information regarding the study you can contact me, Zanele Lucia Radebe on 072 438 1766, Email: zaneler92@gmail.com. You can contact my supervisor, Prof. Kholeka Moloï on 016 931 2022 or 082 681 6864, Email: conniem@vut.ac.za. My co-supervisor Mrs. Matshepo Priscilla Thibudi can also be reached on 072 071 8482, Email: matshepom@vut.ac.za or matshepomatoba@yahoo.com.

Your co-operation and participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Please sign the informed consent below if you agree to participate in the study. In such a case, you will receive a copy of the signed informed consent from the researcher.

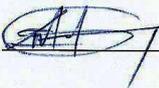
ANNEXURE B

Annexure B

CONSENT

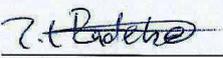
I hereby confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information. I am aware that the results of the study will be anonymously processed into a research report. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study. I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and of my own free will declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

Participant's name: Lebohlang Motawng

Participant's Signature: 

Date: 04/09/2018

Researcher's name: Zanele Lucia Radebe

Researcher's signature: 

Date: 04/09/2018

ANNEXURE C

Annexure C

PARTICIPANT LETTER OF CONSENT FOR THE USE OF VIDEO AND VOICE RECORDING EQUIPMENT

EXPLORING BLACK WOMEN'S DIVERSE HAIRSTYLES THROUGH ART: A CASE STUDY

Dear Participant,

You are kindly requested to participate in a one-to-one in-depth interview with the researcher during which your ideas and thoughts about black women's diverse hairstyles will be explored. The interview is to be recorded on a video and audiotape to ensure an accurate recording of the participant's views and body expressions and to ensure that no information is lost.

I, the undersigned, hereby give consent to the use of video and voice recording equipment in the interview with researcher.

Participant Signature: _____



Date: _____

04/09/18

Yours sincerely

Zanele Lucia Radebe (Researcher)

Date: _____



ANNEXURE D

TRANSCRIPTS FROM IN-DEPTH INDIVIDUAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Interviewer: Please introduce yourself.

Interviewee: Hi my name is Lebohang Motaung, I am a hairstylist and a fine artist. I studied arts at Vaal University of Technology and I then went to artist proof studio to further study more about print making and I graduated at artist proof in 2015 and now I am professional artist doing art full time.

Interviewer: please tell me more about yourself?

Interviewee: so I was born in Evaton, in Vaal. I, I lived with my mother and my whole family but then I had to go to live in Sebokeng with my grandmother. That's when I left my mom in Evaton and I was raised by my grandmother so, umh I think, while I was growing up, I don't know for some reason I started wanting to plait people and do all that. So I started by plaiting my grandmother like experimenting and playing with her hair and she never had a problem so everything I wanted to do to explore and experiment with hair I would do with my grandmother. So after that process that's when I realized that I am actually getting better and better at plaiting. So I would plait my family. At first it was just me plaiting my family and plaiting my friends not for money but just, just to plait nje (meaning just). And then from then, because I was raised by my grandmother and we had siblings and my mom was not supporting me in any way at that time. So that's when I decide that I am gonna do this, just for me to become independent and just for me to get money. So I plaited like, I think I started boma (meaning since) early (paused) early primary, late primary and then up to, High School where I kept plaiting people but at, at that time it was just plaiting for money. But then I would say that in that process I, it become something I always wanted to do. Even if it was for money but it was something I was looking forward to doing like every weekend or sometimes when I come back from school but then while plaiting, I never knew that this would develop into art or anything like that but growing up I know that I always liked drawing and I didn't do art at school. I only did this art and culture which was just, It was not art like art in the, Like the subject art it was something else, but from then after my matric I decided that I'm gonna go and

study Fine Arts. So that's when I went to Vaal University to study arts and then while I was there in our third year we had to come, we had to pick and and, that's when we started, we had to have like concepts and themes that we can work with and then for me, because (paused). So When I was doing third year we had to come up with concepts and themes that we gonna work with and then for me it was that thing that I would go to class to study art and then usually after going to class I usually had clients waiting for me in my room because I stayed at res at the time. I usually had people who were waiting for me and then I had to plait their hair, and then it was just hair, art, hair, art and then we had to come up with a concept I was like okay I know I'm fascinated with hair, I know I love hair. I just wanna take this thing of hair plaiting and hairstyles and put it into in my art. So that's when I started to do art that is based on African hairstyles. At first it was just eh, hairstyles like, image, I would usually plait people and take images of their hairstyles and then transfer them to drawings and print making.

Interviewer: What inspired you to create artworks on black women's hair?

Interviewee: So for me like I said that I was a hairstylist you know and I really liked plaiting people's hair but at first I was just doing it. I was just doing it because it was something that I really liked but then when I started to, when I realised that I am actually fascinated by hair that's when I started to like, realise all the things that was happening. For instance in my high school, in my high school there were these kids, the children with dreadlocks, they would always be sent home and they were always told that we don't accept dreadlocks in this school. And then I think when I got to Grade 10 there was this new rule that we don't allow braids anymore you know. For me I was always puzzled by, why exactly? Why is it that because I have this hairstyle I can't come to class? What is it that stops a teacher, from teaching me because of what I have on my hair? so I was always asking myself that question and then when I started making works with hair, it was that thing that I wanted to like uhm I wanted people to see this thing of hair plaiting as an art form of its own and me having a same, having a particular hairstyle, it's for me and for my own expression. That's just how I wanna express myself and for me as a person it's also like, it's my own Canvas. It's like your hair is the only part of your body that can allow you to just play around, be creative. So if you gonna tell me not to do a certain hairstyle I wanna

know why? Why? Why? What's the problem? but then that's when I wanted to like, introduce it as an art form of its own, not just something that you find in the salons and it has more meanings, in a way that I would say.

Interviewer: so why black women only? why are you specifically focusing on black women?

Interviewee: I think for me I've been asked a lots of time why they don't see male people in my work. But I think mostly for me it's because this thing started with me being a hairstylist and being a hairstylist, all the time the people that come to me, they are people that I connect with, the conversation that I get, it's mostly from women. I don't plait men, not to say that I will never plait men, but I never get uhm male people come to me and say I wanna do my hair. but also for me it was like, I may not know maybe because men don't wanna do this because of the gender and they will say no they are gay, and things like that. But for me, I wouldn't know exactly, why I don't plait men, but it's most because I always plait women and the connection that I have with the hairstyling thing its mostly with women, black women. I've never had like uhm white people come to me and say I wanna do my hair. So that's why I am mostly focusing on black women because uhm mostly work with black women and I relate more with them because they've been in my rooms, they've been, we talk, you know. While we plaiting we talk a lot, so that's the connection between me and black women.

Interviewer: Could you share with me, what inspires your conceptual work? Why?

Interviewee: So like I said that I started to, to look into hair as my concept when I was doing third year. So I remember when I started doing this, like it was something, we were just umh doing other subjects and playing around and experimenting. And then when we get to third year, there's like okay now you have to have a concept and now its time. So and then our lecturer told us that you don't have to look at what other people are doing, you would go for, like you know the things that everyone is doing, like Township art portraits and stuff like that and she advised that to, to do something that you know you can relate with and it's part of your life. And like I said that it was that thing that I go to class and then after coming back from class I have clients and so I was doing hey while I was studying. So I realised that this is actually

something that is part of my life and it's something that I enjoy doing and also in the process of doing the hair and all that, I became fascinated by hair by the patterns, the styles and the meanings also and of course the conversations that I had with my clients. So that's when I started to do art and then like I said that's when I was like, it's nothing, ok it's been done but I could do it in a different , in a way that I I I actually relate to it and my focus for me at first was like umh the creativity of it. You know you can see a hairstyle on someone and it's just a hairstyle, and people just see this person with a hairstyle but for me it's someone who has like and an artwork on her head. Because like, if you think about also, we as hairstylist, we go through like the planning, ideas, we use different materials to create these hairstyles. So that's why it's not just a hairstyle! it's not just hair! it has a meaning, it has the meaning attached to it and also the process that went through making that work also, you know. That's why I wanted to get people to look at this thing as an art form (clapping hands), not just hair! And look at the creativity what comes with it also.

Interviewer: Tell me, how has your conceptual work evolved since you started practicing as a professional artist?

Interviewee: So when I started working with this concept umh.. for me it was just a process of taking images..Plaiting people taking images and making drawings and then from making drawings I I think that's when I developed the interest more in printmaking because I realised umh all the textures that you can get with linocut so at first I was doing linocut and I really liked umh the mark making that you can get, specially when creating the texture of the hair and like linocut is very good for pattern also so that when I started making more of prints and I moved away from drawing, and then from there I did my my BTech majoring on printmaking and I did a series of 10 linocuts that's when I actually realised that umh I have (paused) I have a very big interest in print making then from then that's when I was advised by my moderator to go and study further and do more of printmaking. That's when I went to Artist Proof Studio and then at Artist Proof Studio that's when I was introduced to a lot of printing making techniques and then from there that's when I fell in love with etching and for me the etching process was very interesting in a way that I felt like it was very similar to the process of plaiting because it's it's, it's very (pause) it's like it takes, it takes time to do an etching it's it's a very laborious umh techniques also where there,

you have to draw first and then you take the plate into the acid and then acid biting into the lines. For me you know like the process of pulling and pressing the hair and the pain and everything. For me I sort of felt like etching related more with that, umh with the concept that I was working on and also umh (paused). So in 2015, the next year, the year after I joined Artist Proof Studio I was sent to Boston in USA and that's when I got there I was introduced to the technique of paper making, of making your own paper and then from there that's when I realised that there's a lot of things you can make paper with and I had a very interest in working with synthetic hair and nature hair, I just didn't know how to put it in into practice or anything like that. but then for me making paper that's when I was like you know what, let me try and see what I can do with synthetic hair. That's when I started working with synthetic hair like just experimenting and putting the paper, the synthetic hair between the paper to make a sheet and then from there that's when I realised that you NO! actually that's not the only thing you can do with this hair and then I came back to South Africa in 2016 that's when I had a studio at Carfex from there like having that Studio for me it was like okay now I'm in my own place I'm not home anymore, let me just experiment and see what I can do with synthetic hair and natural hair. That's when I started making portrait with hair using glue to stick it on and for me it was very interesting that when people came into my studio, a lot of them were creeped out, for the fact that oh gosh, at the time I was using natural hair I got some natural hair in America that people gave me and I use it in some of the small drawings but people were creeped out and saying that oh no you can't use natural hair even though they don't know that it's clean or not they just have that thing that it's hair and they didn't even wanna touch it. Ok for me that's when I started to to use synthetic hair I really! Really! Really! wanted to use hair because I believed that the material that you use and the technique that you use it has to be associated with your subject matter and what you saying. So that when I kept on practicing, practising, practicing and drawings with synthetic hair till I was good at it and I think ja (yeah).

Interviewer: Which diverse hairstyles are you creatively exploring? Why are these important for you?

Interviewee: Ok for me, at first I did alot of uhm, in print making mostly I did a lot of umh, artworks on the natural hair because I was mostly interested in the patterns

from the cornrows; the cornrows are mostly done with natural hair. I was interested with the patterns and the texture of the natural hair also but then, when people come to me mostly I get a lot of different clients, you clients that come to me and say I don't want you to use hair piece on my hair, I don't want you to put wool on my hair, I just want it to be natural hair but for me it was like (pause) I realise that, there's actually a lot that's uhm there's different feelings towards uhm synthetic hair as people would call it fake hair, I don't really like to call it fake hair, I would rather call it extra hair, because it's just the extra hair, that you put on your hair to make, to make it longer or it allows you to have more actually. It allows you to have more, it allows you to be more creative, it allows you to be more playful, unlike your natural hair, which is, in my case, my natural hair is short and on the sides it doesn't grow very well. So for me I don't use natural hair because I don't like my natural, I don't use synthetic hair (correcting herself) because don't like my natural hair. I use synthetic hair am just adding on to my short hair that doesn't grow very well but I do love my natural hair and I do wanna take care of it so I could do more with it. but for me at this point I have to use synthetic hair. So I was very (pause) I would hear a lot of people especially some of my clients when I asked them why don't you wanna use natural (meant synthetic hair) hair it's like they see it as something like, like a sign of self hatred that you don't appreciate your natural beauty, you using this hair because you wanna be, you wanna be like celebrities or using the long hair because, the race thing that you wanna be white and you don't appreciate your black beauty and something like that. So that's when I moved from using the natural hair to using the synthetic hair mostly because I wanted to show its importance that it is not just fake hair, there's a lot you can do with this hair that you cannot use with your natural hair but besides that you just expressing yourself, you just, for me like I said it's my own canvas where I can just explore and have fun, you know. So it was just for me to show that this is not something that we use because we don't like our natural beauty. We use synthetic hair because we want to, like (paused) be more playful, be more creative, you know. So that's why in my work you see that I would use like uhm, I would make hairstyles that are exaggerated some are longer than the usual hairstyles. So for me is to show its significance that here is what you can do with this and it's not just us being (paused) not to say that we don't like our natural hair.

Interviewer: Do you think that it is important to situate your work in a particular discourse? Why?

Interviewee: I think for me like I said that I didn't like especially with this that the protest at the Pretoria High School also where, it never made sense to me that how does my hair disturb you from going on with your day? How does it affect you? So for me I would like to, to like empower women and tell them that you can do whatever you want it's your hair! Unless I've seen that, I was in a panel discussion the other day and this lady was talking to me telling me that uhm she had to go into an interview and they told her that she's not allowed to wear braid. She's not allowed to wear braids when she comes to an interview! And then she got the job and there were like okay this is what it is, we don't allow braids here, but for me I would like even, I would like to like show people that you can actually you can do whatever you want with your hair. We have the right to express ourselves however we want! If you wanna put blonde hair, you put blond hair! If you wanna put the green hair, you put green hair! that's why for me, I felt that it's it's it's important *neh* (right) to just take this hairstyles and put them in a canvas and in a larger scale. Where it becomes, it is an art form on its own. When they see it as an art, as an artwork and then I bring in the aesthetics.

Interviewer: What do you think is important about your medium?

Interviewee: I think my medium being synthetic hair and canvases right so for me I think it's very important, if you look at the artwork behind me (pointing at the back), if you look at the artwork behind me, the whole artwork is made of synthetic hair, I did not use pen, I did not use anything. Like I said I believe that the medium that you use should say something about what you trying to say. So for me like I said I didn't like these things that I hear about people wearing synthetic hair and it's the sign of self-hatred and you should stay with your natural hair. So for me, I'm trying to like, show that with this hair, there's a lot you can do. It, it's like I said it is not just hair, there's a lot, it comes with, with more creativity! Like for us as creative people I think I want people to see that, there's a lot you can do with this, it's not just hair! It's not just fake hair! It's not just fake hair! And when you see it in my works, you don't look at it as fake hair! You look at it this as an artwork! as an installation, an installation done with

what? Synthetic hair! So people must just stop saying that, fake hair! Fake hair! Fake hair! There's no fake hair, this is a medium on its own! You can draw with it! You can do whatever you want with it!

Interviewer: Can you please tell me how you go about in your creative process?

Interviewee: So for me, my process of creating artworks is that umh what I do now, I started designing my own hairstyles. So I would have like a Sketchbook and design the hairstyles that I am gonna do and get a model. Mostly, I usually use like just my clients but I realised that actually, they're just my clients and I can't keep on taking their images. So I found myself some few models that I work with, so I plait them first and then take photographs and then after taking photographs, that's when I transfer them into (pause) canvases or onto paper and then I've started using colour. I've started introducing colour in my work to just, to make it more interesting and more beautiful!

Interviewer: Do you have any South African models who do the same artwork as yourself? Why are they important to you?

Interviewee: I think for me the one person that I really look up to ever since I started making this would be Gary Stephens. So when I started making works with hair, I started looking at Gary Stephens and how he is doing it and the nicest thing is that when I moved to Joburg he heard about me somewhere and then came to see me and to gave me advice and then from there he invited me to his Studio and sort of to like, to mentor me in a way. So for me it would be Gary Stephens cause I really love his work, I really love Gary Stephens work. He also does works with umh women and their hairstyles. So what he's process was is that he walks around the streets of Joburg photographing women with beautiful hair and all that. So for me what I really liked was the technique and the medium that he was using it was very very good, the pencil drawings and then for me also I really like people like Nikiwe Dlova. Nikiwe is, I think I might have started, I think I might have started doing this before her but then when times goes on I went on her Instagram and her blog *own your crown* that's when I saw what she was doing and she was she was also challenging this thing of natural hair and sort of bring awareness that guys we know you love your natural hair but you are free to do whatever you want! you are free to do whatever you want

with you hair! And then she uses a lot of, she uses herself a lot, and then she uses different hairstylist who are doing (pause) amazing things and what I like is when she started to do a series of works based on Benny and Betty.

Which is the hairstyle that was umh I'd say it was always associated with being poor or not having money and it was that thing that when you, when you do Benny and Betty hairstyle you have to like me maybe wear something on your head to hide it so that people don't see. So she was sort of saying that guy's you can whatever you want with your hair. So if you want to use wool and do a Benny and Betty hairstyle you can do it! No one should tell you, even if you have money you do Ben and Betty hairstyle, do it! It doesn't have to be associated with being poor and you wearing your natural hair is not enough guys! it's not enough! It's not enough! We wanna to be more creative, we are artists, we wanna be more creative.

Interviewer: So why is Gary Stevens and Nikiwe Dlova important to you?

Interviewee: Nikiwe is very important because, I feel like unlike other people, she was one person, who was like, and she has a very good uhm following on instagram and she created a blog. She was one person who was okay, cause when I talked to her she was like okay I saw that people were like umh going on about natural hair and stuff like that. So she wanted to, she's more creative also; she wanted to show case different hairstyles that are very, very, very beautiful and very, very creative and playful. So for me, and for the fact that she, she goes around looking for different hairstylist and what she does, she tell them that, it's different hairstylist who are used to doing same thing and she gets them outside their comfort zone. You know, she's like No I don't want this normal hairstyle, this is what I want. So she's, she's very important to me because of that.

Interviewer: Do you have something more to tell me?

Interviewee: So the artwork *Enhancement*, so I was, I was sort of exploring this umh this thing of hybrids, hybridity like using different objects, like fusing, like I've said like here is the hair but you can see there's other objects. Which is like, we call it a hybrid, whereby I used the barbed wire to represent the pain, which is the pain that women go through when plaiting hair, from the pressing and pulling and opening the

lines. And, the hands, those are my hands, to symbolise the person doing the hairstyle and if you can look closer you can see there's something like an eye there, which, which uhm represent uhm the focus and the participation and like the concentration that goes on when plaiting hair. You just can't open a line looking that way and you can't just open a line and not thinking about hurting the person, so you have to concentrate.

Interviewer: please tell me more about the artwork *Medium for self-expression*?

Interviewee: So far hair *Medium for self expression* artwork, I was actually, I actually took a lot of different hairstyles from different people and then put them into one artwork. So it was just like, for me like, I was not focusing on one, like just cornrows or braids, but just hair as a whole. As how, of how is it uhm it expresses different meanings to different other people, you know. So that's why I took all these and put them into one, that it's a medium for self expression, whether you white, black, we will always associate you with your hair and the next time you change your hair your look different, this time you cut it short, you're like, you're always, it expresses different meanings

Interviewer: Please tell me more about *My expressive crown* artwork?

Interviewee: So this artwork is actually a self portrait. So I actually did my own hair there, and then what I was focusing, what I was looking at there, is that, if you can see I have like a Mawhok and the sides are cutted and usually I don't just cut my sides. I usually cut my sides because my hair doesn't grow on the sides and if you can see I exaggerated the, the top part there. Because I was looking at how, I don't have hair and doesn't go but because of the use of material that you use to create your hair, can always go all out and I actually just exaggerated ja!

Interviewer: Please tell me about *Deeply rooted*? Why is it so different from your artworks that we know you for?

Interviewee: so with uhm *Deeply rooted*, when we did this artwork so what we did is that, I got my model to come in and what we did was that I plaited her four hairstyles in one day. I plait the first one, undo it. Plait the next one then, undo it, up until I was

left with four hairstyles. So we kept taking different photographs of different hairstyles that are all done in the same, same day, same person, same hairstylist. So from taking them, I really fell in love with the photographs themselves and I couldn't see how I could turn it into a drawing or into a printmaking. So I decided cause I really liked it, as it is, I will keep it as a photograph and it was actually my first photograph artwork.

Interviewer: Thank you, please tell me more about *Plaited identity*, about this artwork?

Interviewee: So with *Plaited identity* it's a portrait of my friend actually, my lesbian friend, her name is Renee. So I was looking at how, what you do also as people, we don't just wake up and say I want braids or just wake up they say I want afro. So with Renee what she does, is that she, she has like uhm, she has like uhm, specific hairstyles that she does because I don't know, I think it's because of her sexuality and eh you know. So she doesn't want hairstyles that make her look more feminine. so she would, she's doing braids but she wouldn't just do braids that have all that. So I was looking at the how, the plaited identities, that your hairstyle gives you a certain identity off which it's what she's very cautious of. She wouldn't just do a hairstyle, she does a hairstyle that doesn't interrupt and interfere with her sexuality.

Interviewer: Okay, please tell me more about *Plaited from the roots*, this artwork?

Interviewee: So with this artwork is uhm, as you can see, it's me also, plaiting myself. So I'm in the process of plaiting myself as you can see I'm holding a needle there. So it was, it was more about the process of plating and how the, with the elongated. This is the one that I've ever did with the elongated hair. So I was mostly, like I said I was mostly trying, like I said how I'm putting the, I'm trying to show the significance of the braids. So this is the first artwork which I did right with the elongated uhm hair that goes up to the floor, to show that uhm elongation process that comes with uhm braids.

Interviewer: Please tell me about the artwork *Bottle ba Mmakgonthe*?

Interviewee: So *Botle ba Mmakgonthe* it's an etching that I did while I was in America. So I was uhm it's also one of the hybrid, hybrid processes that I was experimenting with. So like, unlike sometimes you have to pick metaphors and different objects to say what you, what the artwork is all about. So for me I was looking at the, it was a hairstyle on its own, I was looking at its beauty and I wanted to, the focus to be more on its beauty. Hence the title *Botle ba Mmakgonthe* which is like *Botle ba Mmakgonthe* is like natural beauty in Sesotho. That's why I used flowers for me I had to think of something that represent, for me Beauty! Flowers are so beautiful, that's why, they're beautiful whether you like it or not. So I chose flowers to represent the beauty of the hair.

Interviewer: Thank you Lebohang for taking your time, because I know you so busy, for taking your time to do this interview with me.

Interviewee: it's a pleasure! It's a pleasure!

ANNEXURE E

LANGUAGE EDITOR'S LETTER

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English language editing

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27 March 2019

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the **dissertation** of
Zanele Lucia Radebe

for the degree

Magister Technologiae: Fine Art

Entitled:

Exploring black women's diverse hairstyles through art: a case study

The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the dissertation.

Yours truly,



Linda Scott