

Queerness and Gender Representation Through the Lens of Five Ghanaian Artists

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Abstract : This research delves into the nuanced representations of queerness in Ghana, presented through photographs, illustrations, film and music videos on social media and streaming platforms. The study focuses on the works of five Ghanaian artists (Va-Bene Elikem Fiatsi, Angel Maxine, Josephine Kuire, Bright Ackwerh and Philip Nee Whang) within the context of Ghana's evolving media landscape. Of primary concern is a need to uncover the various aspects of queerness captured within the distinct artistic expressions of these five creatives. This study adopts a qualitative approach by analyzing artistic expressions of queerness in Ghana's digital media spaces. Content analysis and visual semiotics served as the guiding tools to discuss and decipher the nuanced messages embedded in their works, considering both the visual and narrative aspects. This dual approach takes into account both the visual aesthetics and narrative elements, enhancing our understanding of the complex interplay between queerness and gender representation in the media. This study's contribution is twofold. First, it enriches the discourse surrounding queerness as portrayed by artists within Ghana's vibrant media landscape and situates their works within the broader discourse of global gender identities. Secondly, analyzing the creative output of these five Ghanaian artists broadens our understanding of gender minorities and the various challenges they face in Ghana (currently debating in parliament to pass an anti-LGBTQ+ bill that criminalizes activities related to gender minority groups). While focusing on the intersection of queerness, art, and gender identities, the reflections in this study challenge existing narratives and offer fresh insights into how these artists navigate and challenge societal norms through their creative expressions.

Keywords : queer, film, representation, streaming, media, gender

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