



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

4344 Shaw Boulevard • St. Louis, MO • 63110 • (314) 577-5100 • www.mobot.org

Date: March 27, 2007

Contact: Public Relations Department, (314) 577-0254 or (314) 577-5141; karen.hagenow@mobot.org or lisa.brandon@mobot.org (*media only*)

07038 - **For Immediate Release**

CHAPUNGU AFRICAN SCULPTURE EXHIBIT OPENS AT THE GARDEN APR. 28

Family, Nature and Legend are Themes of New Collection

WHAT: “Chapungu: Nature, Man, and Myth,” an exhibition of African stone sculpture
WHEN: April 28 through October 31, 2007
WHERE: Missouri Botanical Garden, 4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis
COST: Included with Garden admission or membership
INFO: Recorded general info (314) 577-9400, 1-800-642-8842 toll free; www.mobot.org
SPONSORS: Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation, Jack and Susan Taylor, Andrew and Barbara Taylor

(ST. LOUIS): “Chapungu: Nature, Man, and Myth,” 23 monumental, hand-carved sculptures by African artists from Zimbabwe, opens at the Missouri Botanical Garden on Saturday, Apr. 28. The six-month exhibition of stone animals, families, and creatures of legend will continue through Oct. 31 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

The collection depicts a traditional African family’s attitude and close bond to nature and the environment, explained Roy Guthrie, Chapungu curator. Twenty-two sculptures carved from opal stone, cobalt and springstone – various forms of serpentine – will be located outdoors, grouped by theme: Man & Family, Man & Nature, and Man & Myth. One will be displayed inside the Climatron tropical conservatory. Many small to medium-size original sculptures will be available for purchase at the Chapungu Gallery and Gift Shop inside the Brookings Center. The exhibition is sponsored by Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation, Jack and Susan Taylor, and Andrew and Barbara Taylor.

“Chief Consults With Chapungu,” a powerful opal stone sculpture by the late artist Biggie Kapeta, stands in front of the Garden’s Ridgway Center as a preview. Some visitors may recall this sculpture from “Chapungu: Custom and Legend, A Culture in Stone,” a major exhibition which made its U.S. debut at the Garden in 2001.

“After many successful exhibits in the U.S., it is wonderful to return, with a stunning new exhibit, to this beautiful garden where we were so well received in 2001,” said Guthrie.

All other sculptures in this collection have never before been displayed at the Garden, though several artists from the previous show are represented by other works this time. Two large sculptures from the earlier exhibition were acquired by the Garden for permanent display in its Azalea-Rhododendron Garden: “Protecting the Eggs” by Damian

(over)



CHAPUNGU

nature, man, and myth

April 28 to October 31, 2007

ADD ONE: Chapungu

Manuhwa, and the touching “Sole Provider,” by Joe Mutasa. “Sole Provider” was given by the people of Zimbabwe and Chapungu Sculpture Park in memory of those who died on Sept. 11, 2001.

Many of the 19 artists represented are from the Shona tribe. The Shona people believe the “Chapungu Bird” is a good omen, bringing them protection and good fortune. Chapungu is a metaphor for the Bateleur Eagle, *Terathopius ecaudatus*, a powerful bird of prey that can fly up to 300 miles a day at 30 to 50 miles per hour. It lives in the savannahs, open forests and semi-deserts of central and southern Africa.

The entire Chapungu exhibition is included with the price of \$8 Garden admission (St. Louis City and County residents, \$4 adults, \$2 seniors). Members and children age 12 and under are admitted free. Tickets to the Garden may be purchased on site, online at www.mobot.org, or by calling (314) 577-5101 during weekday business hours. (Higher admission rates apply for major special events.)

On Thursdays from May 3 through Sept. 27, “Chapungu Nights” feature summer evenings in the Garden with music and entertainment from 5 to 9 p.m. Watch the artists chisel stone into sculpture on Linnean Plaza, dine on the Sassafras café patio, and sip cocktails on Spoehrer Plaza. “Chapungu Nights” admission is \$10 (\$5 Garden members), with additional charge for food and beverages.

Create an original sculpture guided by a Chapungu artist-in-residence during five-day workshops held Tuesday through Saturday on the Linnean Plaza. No experience is required. The \$500 fee includes a sculpting stone from Zimbabwe, a set of tools to keep, and instruction by prominent Zimbabwean artists. For reservations or details, call (314) 577-5117.

For information on private group tickets or tours, contact the Garden’s Tourism Department at 1-800-332-1286 toll free or tourism@mobot.org. School groups should call the Education Division at (314) 577-5140.

To host a private evening event during “Chapungu: Nature, Man, and Myth,” call the Catering St. Louis sales office at (314) 961-7588, extension 221 or log on to www.cateringstlouis.com. For an event that does not require catering services, call the Garden’s meeting coordinator at (314) 577-9560.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of Interstate 44, two blocks east of the Vandeventer-Kingshighway exit. Limited free parking is available at the Garden and its auxiliary lots two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. The Garden is easily accessible via public transportation by taking the MetroLink commuter rail line to the Central West End station and picking up a Metro bus on weekdays.

For general information about events, hours, directions and more, log on to www.mobot.org or call the 24-hour Garden Line recording at (314) 577-9400 or 1-800-642-8842. To inquire about membership, call (314) 577-5118 during weekday business hours.

###

NOTE: For more details and digital, high resolution images available for download, go online at <http://www.mobot.org/events/Chapungu/ChapunguMEDIA.asp>