



“CHAPUNGU: Nature, Man, and Myth”
April 28 through October 31, 2007
STONES USED IN CHAPUNGU SCULPTURE

Good carving stone occurs throughout Zimbabwe but mainly close to the Great Dyke, a low range of hills running south to north across the land. Stones are carved by hand. The artist believes the stone has its own life and spirit, and allows the stone to contribute to the final image.

In Zimbabwe, stones are extracted from open quarries by hand or with the use of mechanical winches and cranes. They are never blasted or cut by saws into uniform sizes. They emerge as individual geodes, which often immediately inspire the sculptors. A thin outer skin or “blanket,” oxidized over centuries, covers the stone, which contrasts with its inner color. Artists often use the blanket to great effect as part of a sculpture’s composition. Individual stones range from six inches to 20 feet in length and weigh from 10 to 20,000 pounds.

The Mohs Scale measures a stone’s hardness on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the softest and 10 being the hardness of diamond.

Cobalt Stone: Mauve. A type of serpentine, sometimes difficult to work because it tends to flake. Cobalt stone needs to be selected carefully but it can produce stunning results. Hardness: 3-5.

Dolomite: White, pink, gray, often all colors in one stone. Heavily crystallized and partially luminous, it is used more and more by serious artists. Hardness: 4-7.

Granite: Jet black, red, pink and gray. Difficult to work with hand tools. Hardness: 7-8.5.

Limestone: Gray, off-white, pink and green. Zimbabwean limestone is generally firmer than that from other countries and produces beautiful sculpture. Hardness: 4-7.

Leopard Stone: Lemon with splashes of black. Although tough to work, it polishes well and is striking and original in appearance. Hardness: 4-7.

Lepidolite: Purple, mauve, blue and green. Mined for lithium, lepidolite is a stunning semi-precious stone that requires patience and skill in the carving process. Hardness: 5-7.

Marble: White, pink. Beautiful marble occurs but is seldom used. Hardness: 4-6.

Nyanga Stone: Lemon to deep green. A serpentine found in the Nyanga area, characterized by its variation of both color and hardness. Hardness: 2-7.

Opal Stone: Green, brown, orange and white. A popular stone selected for its beautiful colors that often contrasts well with the outer brown blanket of the stone. It can be harder when quartz particles occur. Hardness: 3-6.



CHAPUNGU

nature, man, and myth

April 28 to October 31, 2007

Serpentine: Black, green, yellow, brown, red and mauve. Firm, dense and consistent in texture, it is favored by some artists for smaller works and for the beautiful range of colors that appeals to buyers. Hardness: 3-5.

Soap Stone: Green, black, brown and gray. Used by beginners and crafts people but not by serious artists. Mohs Scale hardness: 1-3.

Springstone: Black. A hard variety of serpentine favored by many committed artists for its firmness and consistent texture. Hardness: 5-7.

Verdite: Green or golden brown, depending on the presence of chrome, which colors it green. Verdite occurs in a corundum mine and often has ruby corundum running through it. It is perhaps the most beautiful of the semi-precious green stones. Hardness: 4-7.

3/8/07