



“CHAPUNGU: Nature, Man, and Myth”

April 28 through October 31, 2007

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Dominic Benhura, b. 1968 in Murewa – “Who Is Strongest?”, “Zimbabwe Bird”

At age 10 Benhura began to assist his cousin, sculptor Tapfuma Gutsa, spending many formative years at Chapungu Sculpture Park. Soon after he began to create his own works. Today he is regarded as the cutting edge of Zimbabwe sculpture. His extensive subject matter includes plants, trees, reptiles, animals and the gamut of human experience. Benhura has an exceptional ability to portray human feeling through form rather than facial expression. He leads by experimentation and innovation.

Ephraim Chaurika, b. 1940 in Zimbabwe – “Horse”

Before joining the Tengenenge Sculpture Community in 1966, Chaurika was a herdsman and a local watchmaker. He engraved the shape of watch springs and cog wheels in some of his early sculptures. His early works were often large and powerfully expressive, sometimes using geometric forms, while later works are more whimsical and stylistic. His sculptures are always skillful, superbly finished and immediately appealing.

Sanwell Chirume, b. 1940 in Guruve – “Big Buck Surrendering”

Chirume is a prominent Tengenenge artist and a relative of artist Bernard Matemura. He first visited Tengenenge in 1971 to help quarry stone. In 1976 he returned to become a full time sculptor. Largely unacknowledged, he nevertheless creates powerful large sculptures of considerable depth. His work has been in many major exhibitions, has won numerous awards in the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, and is featured in the Chapungu Sculpture Park’s permanent collection.

Edward Chiwawa, b. 1935 northwest of Guruve – “Lake Bird”

This first generation master sculptor learned to sculpt by working with his cousin, Henry Munyaradzi. From 1971 until 1973 he was a resident of the Tengenenge artist colony. He often sculpts uses strongly abstracted, round human faces. Chiwawa has exhibited throughout Europe and in Australia.

Tapfuma Gutsa, b. 1956 in Harare – “Antelope Changes Into Butterfly”

Gutsa regards himself as an international artist with African roots, who draws inspiration from sources worldwide. His work is sometimes politically charged and also capable of great poignancy. He is acknowledged as the leader of the second generation of artists and much admired for his support of many young artists.

Nicholas Kadzungura, b. 1967 in Mashawaland – “Teaching Mother to Read”

A resident sculptor at the Chapungu Sculpture Park since 1997, Kadzungura is inspired and influenced by the natural shapes of stones as they appear from the quarries. His subjects are often groups of people. Tenderness and often a sense of poetry appears in his gentle and sometimes naïve images. In recent years he has strived to create larger, powerful sculptures which are very strong and emotive.

Biggie Kapeta, b. 1956 in Bindura, d. 1999 – “Chief Consults With Chapungu”

Biggie Kapeta was an apprentice to his uncle, Sylvester Mubayi, before working independently. Mubayi’s influence was often reflected in his work. A quiet, considerate man, he spent two very creative years in the residence program at Chapungu. During this period he finished a number of fine sculptures, including “Chief Consults with Chapungu,” highly acclaimed for its fine chisel work and strong message.



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Josiah Manzi, b. 1933 in Mvurwi – “The Baboon Who Stole the Crop Guard’s Child”

Manzi’s parents originally came from Malawi. His father taught him to make masks for the secret dance society of the Ayawo people, a skill which served him well as a sculptor. He joined the Tengenenge Sculpture Community and soon became one of its prominent artists. He is an acknowledged elder of the community and much respected by all.

Bernard Matemera, b. 1946 in Guruve, d. 2002 – “Rhino Man”

Bernard Matemera is a founding member of the Tengenenge Sculpture Community and has been its symbolic leader for many years. His highly acclaimed, uncompromising and powerful images are found in public and private collections worldwide. Very African and sometimes grotesque in imagery, his works are initially difficult to assimilate but often disturbingly emotive and imbued with a deep sense of pathos. They are the subject of his dreams: animals, spirits, people and creatures, and the metamorphosis between them.

Boira Mteki, b. 1946 in Harare, d. 1999 – “Chameleon Man”

A founding member of the workshop school of the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Boira Mteki created strong monolithic heads in his early days which remain among the most uncompromising and stark images of the genre. Small in stature with a troubled personal life, he left a legacy of exceptionally powerful sculpture.

Sylvester Mubayi, b. 1942 in Chiota – “Water Spirit Returning Child,” “Chapungu Protecting Child”

Dedicated to his own traditional beliefs and customs, Sylvester Mubayi is inspired by the fusion of spiritual and earthly worlds of human and animal iconography. He is capable of creating works that are powerful and compromising, or sensitive, tender and deeply moving. A devoted family and community man, he is as proud of the amateur football team he founded and supports, as he is non-committal about his sculptural achievements.

Gift Muchenje, b. 1969 in Harare – “Beer for the Wedding”

Gift Muchenje has worked at Chapungu Sculpture Park since 1989, always with great determination, application and perseverance but with little acclaim or financial success. In recent years he has experimented with larger works, often carving numerous pieces that comprise the final work. His large innovative works have met with immediate acclaim and suggest more fine sculpture in the future.

Henry Munyaradzi, b. 1931 in Guruve, d. 1998 – “The Astronaut’s Wedding”

Purity of form, great simplicity, an ability to capture the essence of the subject matter, and minimal but precise execution are the qualities inherent in Munyaradzi’s work. His sculpture blends the simplicity of the primitive with stylized sophistication. He became one of the most prolific and sought after of all Zimbabwe sculptors, with works in public and private collections worldwide.

Joe Mutasa, b. 1964 in Rusape – “A Time Together”

Coming from a family of sculptors, Mutasa initially carved representational heads and figures for the tourist trade. When he joined Chapungu Sculpture Park, he met many committed sculptors who urged him to create art rather than mass-produced themes. Within a few years his works drew attention and acclaim. He finds inspiration in family, daily life and the environment. His touching “Sole Provider” was given to the Missouri Botanical Garden by the people of Zimbabwe in memory of those who died on Sept. 11, 2001.

Fungayi Mwarowa, b. 1968 in Chimanimani – “Young Giraffes Playing”

Mwarowa is foremost among Zimbabwe’s sculptors in searching for new stones to use – stones with a startling aesthetic presence suited to the exploration of the human figure. His work is somewhat mannerist and very studied, formally moving toward the Italian tradition of sculpture in marble. Mwarowa spent many years at Chapungu and is admired both for his ability with the hardest of stones and for his patience and understanding when conducting workshops.

Rachel Ndandarika, b. 1957 in Highfield – “Aunt Admonishing Child”

Ndandarika represents her pride in the dignity of women in her sculpture. Her sculptures stand for a world in which men and women are equal. Her women in stone, like herself, are strong and stalwart, determined and driven to succeed. A

compelling personality to whom people are instinctively drawn, she is a successful, fascinating woman and sculptor. Her smaller sculptures are intimate and appealing, while her larger works are powerful and expressive depictions of themes in her own culture.

Taylor Nkomo, b. 1957 in Bulawayo – “Me Too Mama,” “The Commitment”

Nkomo was a graphic designer for 23 years at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, where he designed catalogue covers, billboards and posters. During that time he came into contact with many famous stone sculptors. In 1998 he joined Chapungu full time to pursue a career as a stone sculptor and to supervise and encourage young new artists. Within a few short years major works began to emerge, and Nkomo was recognized as an inspirational new talent.

Agnes Nyanhongo, b. 1960 in Nyanga – “Sharing the Wisdom”

Nyanhongo is considered among the most important Zimbabwean artists and certainly the most acknowledged female sculptor. She comes from a strong sculpting family and prefers to work in the hardest stones. She is inspired by the role of women in traditional society and the interaction among family members. Her work is characterized by a sense of peace, calm and inner dignity. With considerable courage in a predominantly male activity, she has led by creating strong and powerful works. An important “Women Achiever” in Africa, she is well respected and admired within her community.

Gideon Nyanhongo, b. 1967 in Nyanga – “Chapungu Protecting Family”

Nyanhongo belongs to an illustrious family of internationally recognized sculptors. His work explores with psychological depth the relationship of family members within traditional and contemporary African society. It shows immense respect for traditions such as respect for elders, protection of women and children, and the important role of aunt as adviser within the family circle. Huge sculptures come easily to him and smaller works are expressive, emotive and superbly finished.

Bernard Takawira, b. 1948 in Nyanga, d. 1997 – “Hanging On A Leaf”

In nearly 40 years as an artist Bernard Takawira created numerous works of exceptional quality and stature, won many awards and traveled extensively. A deeply committed Christian, he philosophized about life and traditional cultural values as opposed to Christian beliefs, often translating his thoughts into powerful and evocative stone sculpture.

These artists are scheduled to conduct sculpting workshops:

Royal Katiyo, b. 1972 in Murewa

This determined young artist began carving on the Gavazi springstone claims in the hills as a schoolboy. Established artist Luke Mgavazi spotted his potential and Katiyo became his apprentice, working on his own pieces in his spare time. Defining aspects of his work are nature themes, especially birds, and a strong contrast between polished and rough areas.

Brian Nyanhongo, b. 1968 in Nyanga

A strong sense of family, nature, the spirit and respect for traditions are central themes of his art.

Collen Nyanhongo, b. 1972 in Nyanga

Another member of the important and prominent Nyanhongo family of sculptors. He is inspired by nature, searching for forms hidden in the springstone or serpentine stones that he prefers.

Amos Supuni, b. 1970 in Malawi

Concerned about contemporary social issues, Supuni sees his work as a voice for the voiceless – the plight of street kids, the poverty stricken, the starving and desperate. His powerful images are immediate and emotional in their impact

Stalin Tafura, b. 1981 in the Honde Valley

This young artist was born into a famous carving family. He is the first grandson of world renowned Claude Nyanhongo and the son of women’s champion Chapungu sculptor Agnes Nyanhongo. The beauty in everyday life is often the focus of his work in themes such as humility, respect, hardship, happiness and love.