



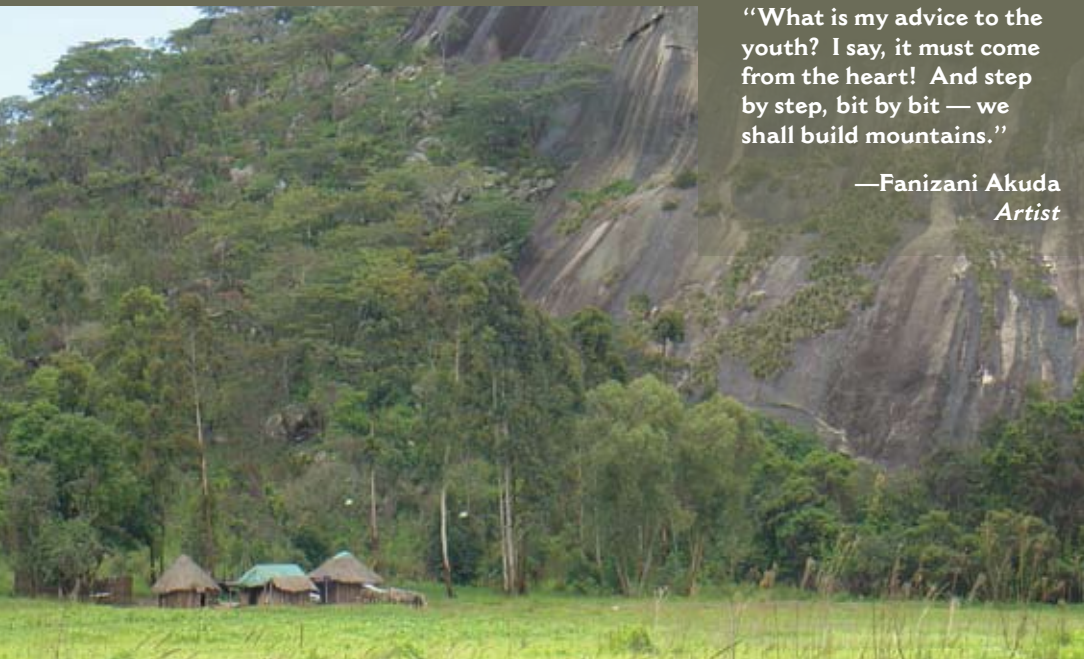
“Friends Forever has changed the lives of the artists. We are seeing miracles. We actually have medical insurance and are getting good health counseling. In our time, HIV/AIDS has become a global emergency. We have lost a lot of good artists from the AIDS pandemic. Thanks to Friends Forever, we are not only being educated on HIV and AIDS, but are finding new ways to address it within our community. So, I hope Friends Forever will continue to do the wonderful work it is doing. I am proud to be a founding member.”

— Mekias Munyaradzi  
 Founder & Director, Friends Forever



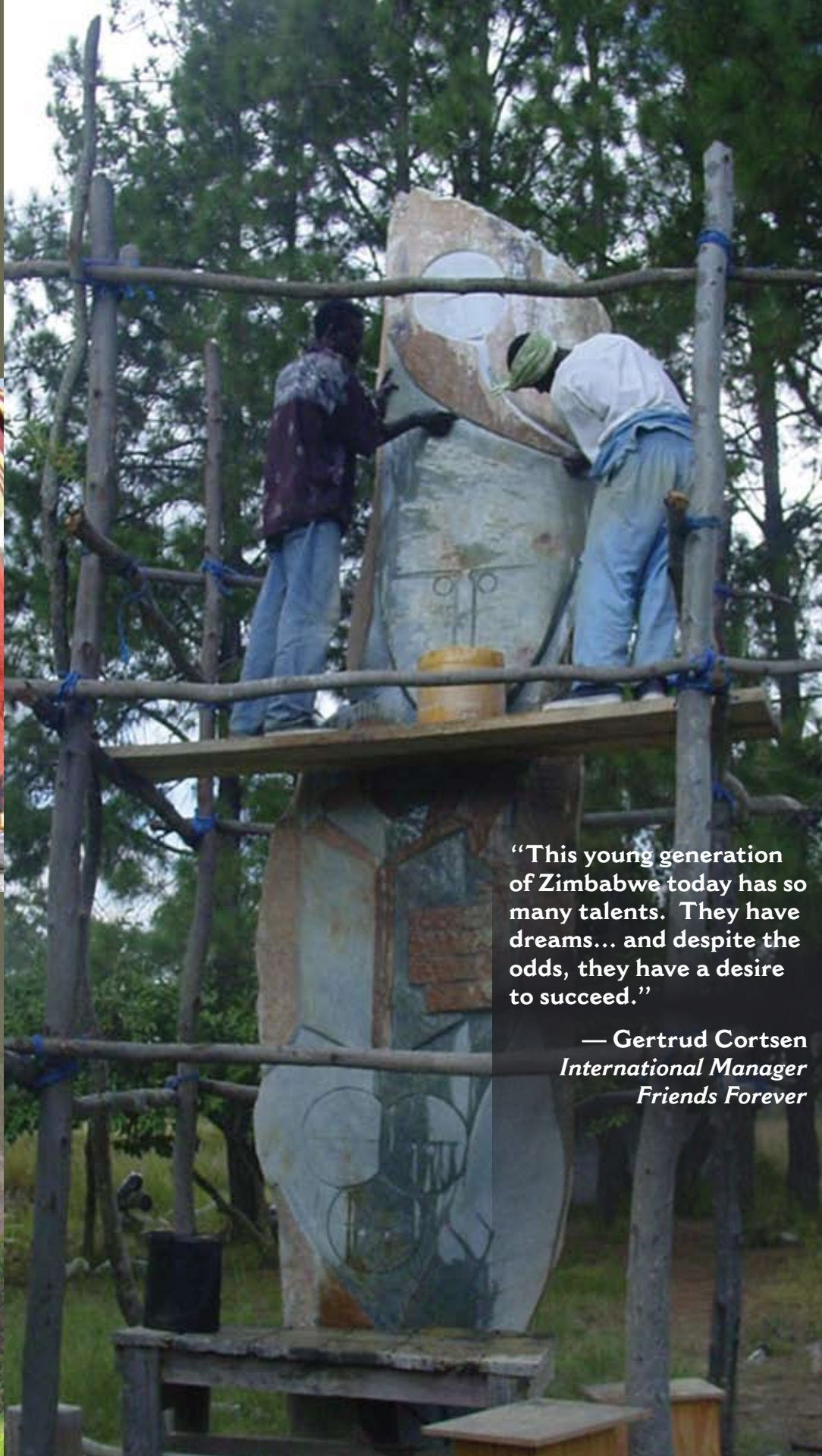
“Through stone sculpting, one generation imparts both skill and knowledge. The older generation also hands down techniques and stories of years past. Through this kind of accidental interaction, we nurture today’s youth. They love this craft; and what I [as Curator] am given is the opportunity to witness the fact that they don’t even realize how they are contributing to the evolution and development of this art form. With stone, water, wax, fire, vision, imagination and hard work, both artist and apprentice talk to the world about hope and loss, about strong human relations... about dreams realized, and about a better tomorrow.”

— Sune Joergensen  
 Curator, Friends Forever



“What is my advice to the youth? I say, it must come from the heart! And step by step, bit by bit — we shall build mountains.”

—Fanizani Akuda  
 Artist



“This young generation of Zimbabwe today has so many talents. They have dreams... and despite the odds, they have a desire to succeed.”

— Gertrud Cortsen  
 International Manager  
 Friends Forever

# Expressions Master Sculptors of Zimbabwe in Stone

June 24 - September 5, 2008  
 The World Bank Atrium



## Expressions in Stone

The World Bank Art Program is honored to present the exhibition “*Expressions in Stone: Master Sculptors of Zimbabwe*”. The 23 sculptures on display represent the work of 14 artists who work in a medium that represents the people of Zimbabwe: stone sculpture. Energetic and exuberant, spirited and inspiring, these sculptures are etched from a variety of stones including opal, serpentine, springstone, cobalt and lepidolite. These masterpieces honor the meaning of the name of the country. The name Zimbabwe, is derived from the phrase, “dzimba dza mabwe,” meaning, “great stone house” in the Shona language.

Through these sculptures we come into contact with modern interpretations of ancient African tradition, and we can see the unquestionable similarities to works by artists like Picasso, Miro, and Moore, even though most Zimbabwean sculptors of the first and second generation have never been exposed to art from the Western world.

Using rock considered to be among the oldest on earth, sculptors can choose between soft and hard stones and from a multitude of colors and textures. Materials that invite the artist to explore and find new ways of expressing his ideals and subjects; sometimes they are inspired by the rock, sometimes by spiritual beliefs and old customs, and other times by folk traditions and modern life.

Stone sculpting is a fascinating process. It begins with just a slab of rock, and blow by blow the sculptors with an innate understanding of the stone, patiently finds a way to communicate the power of their traditions and beliefs through subjects like people, animals and geometrical forms.

This exhibition offers a unique opportunity to see the works of Zimbabwean “First,” “Second” and “Third Generation” master sculptors.

Evangelina Elizondo  
Acting Curator

Yao E. Odamtten  
Exhibition Coordinator

## Expressions in Stone *Master Sculptors of Zimbabwe*

Zimbabwe is renowned for its breathtaking landscape, colorful stones, and vast mineral wealth. The complex combination of stone with colors and texture is unique to Zimbabwe and its sculptural tradition. The source of the minerals and stone is the Great Dyke, a remarkable 2.5 million year-old volcanic mountain ridge that runs through the middle of the county.

Stone sculpture in Zimbabwe has its origins in the 12th-century, granite-block city of Great Zimbabwe. Located in the southern part of the country, this is one of the oldest pre-historical cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, and is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. The first evidence of Zimbabwean stone carvers was found in the late 19th century, when soapstone carvings of “Shona Birds” were discovered. While modern Zimbabwean stone sculpture draws on this ancient sculpting tradition, it is nonetheless a distinctly modern art form.

The contemporary Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement began in 1958, when Frank McEwen was appointed as the first Director of the National Art Gallery in country’s capital. He had previously been curator at the Rodin Museum in Paris and had links with various artists of the time, including Picasso and Matisse. McEwen first encouraged the “Attendants” of the National Art Gallery to paint, then after being impressed by the stone sculptures of Zimbabwean native Joram Mariga, he gave the Attendants sculpting tools and stone and encouraged them to sculpt. Thus began of the National Gallery Workshop School. The Attendants became full-time sculptors and formed the basis of the First Generation of contemporary Zimbabwean sculptors.

Zimbabwean stone sculpture rose to prominence in the 1950s and 1960s, when it was embraced by the Western art scene. Art collectors in London, Paris, and New York were impressed by stone sculptures’ expressive and artistic originality as well as their organic medium. Art lovers, critics, curators, and the general public were drawn to the deeply humanistic expressions of the sculptures.

As Zimbabwean sculptors refined their technique and craft, many gained international recognition as master sculptors – rivaling carvers like the late English artist Sir Henry Moore, who was renowned for his large-scale abstract cast bronze and marble sculptures. After Moore’s death in 1986, art critics were quick to note that the world’s more notable sculptors could now be found in Zimbabwe. As critic Michael Shepherd wrote, “Now that Henry Moore is dead, who is the greatest stone carver in the world? In my experience there are three outstanding contenders ... and all three come from Zimbabwe.” (Michael Shepherd, Art Review, London, 1988)

Today, members of that “First Generation” continue to offer the art world their breadth and depth of expertise and originality. In fact, some of these sculptors are present in this current exhibit. Alongside these First Generation artists, *Expressions in Stone* also features “Second” and “Third Generation” artists, who have embraced and expanded inherited techniques, creating works that speak to the past, present, and future.

## Friends Forever

In 2004, a group of Zimbabwean artists and their friends joined hands to create, promote and collectively sell their art. Their goal was to not only create a platform on which to improve their livelihoods, but to also develop a new model for collaboration; collaboration that envisaged sharing their sculptures with the global market. Today, this community is known as *Friends Forever*.

Collaborating with partners in Europe and the USA, *Friends Forever* has staged exhibitions in major cities, including, Atlanta, Berlin, Chicago, Moscow, Oslo, Vienna and Washington DC. 1/3 of sales are direct cash income to the artists; 1/3 is applied to the artist’s health insurance and benefits; and 1/3 covers Friends Forever’s management and operational costs.

*Friends Forever* collaborates with The Federation for Associations Connected to the International Humana People to People Movement (in brief *Humana People to People*).



FRIENDS FOREVER

## Humana People to People



Headquartered in Zimbabwe, *Humana People to People* is an international development membership organization. Through Humana People to People’s efforts, 270+ social projects have reached more than 10 million people annually. Humana People to People’s projects focus on food security, community development, the environment, basic education, health and on HIV/AIDS education and prevention. In the United States, *Humana People to People* is represented by *Planet Aid*.

## Planet Aid



*Planet Aid* is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the environment and creating sustainable development in Africa, Asia and Latin America. *Planet Aid* collects and recycles donated clothing, shoes and other items for overseas development efforts. The proceeds are used to support education, community development and HIV/AIDS programs.

