



SOUTH SHORE ART CENTER

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For Immediate Release

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To: Arts Editors

Transforming African Modernism: 25 Years of Zimbabwe Stone Sculpture (1980-2005)

Opens at South Shore Art Center September 20, 2013

South Shore Art Center will present an exhibition of stone sculpture from Zimbabwe from Friday, September 20 through Sunday, November 3, 2013.

1980, the year Zimbabwe was born as an independent post-colonial state, marked a milestone for the country's contemporary art. Independence brought new opportunities and wider horizons as the western art world began to turn its gaze on newly emerging countries around the globe. This exhibition, *Transforming African Modernism: 25 Years of Zimbabwe Stone Sculpture (1980-2005)* which covers the 25 years that followed independence, presents Zimbabwean sculptors in a new light, juxtaposing works by the "masters" of the 1960s generation with those of younger artists. Rooted in the artists' worlds the works, especially those created from the 1990s on, show how those worlds expanded in terms of form, technique, and subject, and move beyond local references to mirror the events of their times.

While Tapfuma Gutsa, among the most prominent of the artists on view, harbors few illusions that art can intervene politically, it was in full view of the horror of the 1994

genocide in Rwanda that he produced one of his richest pieces, a ritualistic work about death, perversely titled *African Genesis*. He believes that a work of art "is a gadget of influence" a gesture that the artist puts into the world to provoke a reaction. "It grips you, or it shocks you... and sometimes even the artist is shocked."

While its hardly news that cultural products--books, movies, television, music and art-- have been widely available in most of Africa for decades, the construct of an untainted primal "Africa" in the art of the continent is more recent. As culture has become increasingly portable and transportable everybody's parameters are expanded. In the twenty-first century there are many Zimbabwean sculptors working beyond the traditional monolith in provocative ways.

"Modern art in Africa is vital, marked by its movement. It will not stop still so that we can attempt to place it in categories."

Philip Ravenhill

There will be a reception, open to the public, on Friday, September 20 from 6 to 8 pm. The exhibition will continue through November 3rd and is sponsored, in part, by Panopticon Imaging in Rockland, MA.

Gallery Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10-4 and Sunday, 12-4. www.ssac.org 781-383-2787