

“...EXQUISITE WORKS OF ART AND CRAFT ITEMS FOR FAIR EXCHANGE”

“LIFEFORCE IV: SPIRIT WITHIN STONE”

SHONA SCULPTURE COLLECTION

Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center, Corona, NY

Curator: CRAFTS FOR FAIR EXCHANGESM (CFFE)

Greetings! “LIFEFORCE: SPIRIT WITHIN STONE” is the name of our series of CFFE exhibits since 2002. In each, we present the wondrous stone sculpture and carvings by the artists and craftspeople of Zimbabwe. There have been more than three hundred small, medium and large works of art in the four Lifeforce collections. Most of the pieces have been sculpted from a variety of hard serpentine stone-types indigenous to Southern Africa. These pieces range in complexion from slightly marbled black, black-green and light green to mottled brown, gray, green, amber and white. Our serpentine varieties include springstone, opalstone, leopard rock, rapoko, cobalt and butter jade. A selection of the pieces has been crafted in delicate soap stone, in brown, gray and black-green colors. Many of the collection’s most exquisite pieces have been sculpted from verdite, a rare, exceptionally hard, semi-precious stone. Verdite comes in deep green with lighter green highlights, and in deep green with rich golden brown highlights.

The theme of the Lifeforce IV Exhibit is “The Many Forms of Life”. Each work is a representation of human life, spiritual life or wildlife. The sixty (60) Zimbabwean artists have expressed themselves through several styles: the Shona’s traditional, Creation (aka “abstract”) motifs; idealized Impressionism, and exactingly authentic Realism and Naturalism.

Within some cultures, stone and rock are considered devoid of life. In English, the phrases: “stone faced”, “stone cold” and certainly, “stone dead” reflect this mindset. By contrast, the people of Zimbabwe understand that stone contains energy and dynamism. In fact, Zimbabwean sculptors and carvers say that it is the “spirit” (or essence) within the stone that reveals to them the form that each piece of art must take... and when each piece is complete.

*Every work in the collections is “living proof” that stone can represent life. It is anything but inanimate. This collection has great diversity with respect to artistic expression & style, size, stone color and pricing. **It is however, the “life force” apparent within each piece, which provides the powerful, unifying theme.***

CFFE: A S.E.E.D.S., INC. TECH-EQUITYSM PROJECT

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