

# MABUNGULANI CHISSANO



**Solidarity week with Mozambique '87**

My Dear Comrade Chissano,

The clarity and frankness with which you discuss your work leaves no doubt in my mind that you have documented the complete history of the continuing struggle in Mozambican art. Your works are a comprehensive effort by one man to document the history and experience of his people.

You have achieved what a dozen artists could not achieve in a lifetime; let these achievements not stop you from even higher ones.

You are a great preserver of the artistic interpretation of the history of the Mozambican people. Your gallery is a place for those who want to document the experience of the people of Mozambique.

I will see you again when I come to Maputo.

Yours most sincerely,

Lt. Colonel Clemence Gaza

## MAIN EXHIBITIONS

- 1966 — City Hall, Lourenço Marques — First Prize
- 1967 — International Competition, Washington — Second Prize in African section
- 1968 — Group Show in London
- 1971 — Group Show in Baviera, Monaco
- 1972 — National Society of Fine Arts, Lisbon
- 1975 — Various Group Shows in Mozambique and Nigeria
- 1980 — Inauguration of the National Museum of Art, Maputo
- 1981 — International Symposium of Sculpture, Belgrade — First and Second Prizes
  - Group Shows in Berlin, Sofia, Moscow, Luanda
  - Marble Sculpture Exhibition, Centre of Art and Visual Communication, Lisbon
- 1983 — Group Shows in Lisbon and Porto
  - Group Show in Harare
- 1984 — National Cultural Centre, New Delhi
- 1985 — Barberini Palace, Rome
  - Municipal Theatre, Reggio Emilia, Italy
- 1986 — Estoril, Portugal
- 1987 — Biannual Art Exhibition, Havana, Cuba — First Prize

Acclaimed as one of the major sculptors of southern Africa, Mabungulani Chissano was born in 1935 in Chicavane-Manjacaze, in Gaza province in Mozambique. He spent his first eleven years in a small village shepherding goats and growing up like any other country child. He carved and painted gourds and masks and Shitane characters, part of an oral narrative of the heroic acts of warriors and hunters. He was expelled from the mission-school for dancing a traditional dance called Ngalanga, so his grandmother, a famous medicine woman of the region, initiated him into the rituals and taught him the secrets of her trade.

When he was 12, Chissano left his village to discover the capital, then Lourenço Marques. He worked as a house servant for a tailor, and when he was 18, set off for the gold mines of South Africa.

When he returned to Mozambique in 1956, Chissano was forced to sign up for the colonial army. There he became good friends with Second Lieutenant Julio Navarro, who got him a job as a servant at the Nucleus of Art. He then worked as a painter's assistant, for two years, and at the Alvaro de Castro Museum, as a taxidermist's assistant. His contact with stuffed and sculpted animals developed his interest in the art and taxidermist Augusto Cabral became his teacher. It was an important first step.

He returned to the Nucleus of Art where he worked with Malangatana, João Ayres, Antonio Quadros, José Julio, Augusto Cabral and Lobo Fernandes. Inspired by the artistic climate in which he was living, he began his first rough carvings.

When, in 1966, Chissano began to exhibit his work, he was recognized immediately as a sculptor of some promise. His first foreign exhibit was in 1967 in Washington, where he received a second prize in the section of African art. The following year he was part of an important group exhibition in London.

In 1969, he received a subsidy from the Gulbenkian Foundation, allowing him to develop new artistic techniques to the benefit of his sculptures.

Chissano's first big triumph outside Mozambique was in 1981 at the International Symposium of Sculpture in Belgrade, where he won first and second prizes.

In the last few years, heads of state, ambassadors, artists, collectors and business people have all visited his house-museum in Matola, a suburb of Maputo. Chissano's work has begun to appear in both museums and in private collections in many countries, including England, Monaco, Portugal, Nigeria, East Germany, the Soviet Union, India and Italy.

## CATALOGUE

- 1 Mother Africa
- 2 The Wretched Couple
- 3 What a Pity!
- 4 The Old Man's Astonishment
- 5 Where Can I Perform a Miracle in this Life?
- 6 Metamorphosis
- 7 Ah, me!
- 8 What a Life!
- 9 Where Will I Leave this Bundle?
- 10 Ballerina
- 11 This is How We Heard it
- 12 I Already Knew
- 13 They Ripped Me to Shreds
- 14 I Don't Know Where to Hide with My Daughter
- 15 My Hollow Body
- 16 I Don't Think About Love Anymore
- 17 That's the Way I Think
- 18 The Love that I Don't Know
- 19 The Female Owl
- 20 The Mysterious Monkey
- 21 The Thin Owl
- 22 They Took Away My Thoughts
- 23 Ears Don't Hear
- 24 It Reminds Me of That, My ...
- 25 But...I Am Handsome!
- 26 Abstract
- 27 Don't Drink All the Milk — Leave Some for Your  
Brother!
- 28 The Owl
- 29 My Nakedness
- 30 The Hands Of Strength
- 31 Abstract
- 32 That's the Way It Used to Be
- 33 You Don't Say, Brother!
- 34 The Beauty of a Couple
- 35 The Head of Chissano's Mother
- 36 The Death of President Samora
- 37 We Want Peace
- 38 The Wonder of the People
- 39 They Cut Off My Head
- 40 Oh, My Children!