

NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL OF ZIMBABWE

NAMA LEGENDS AWARDS@40



RECIPIENT CITATIONS

27 MARCH 2021

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Aaron Chiundura Moyo

Writer

Aaron Chiundura Moyo is a multi-talented individual who is an accomplished novelist, playwright, poet, screenwriter, short story writer, concept developer, actor, director, radio producer, presenter and researcher.

From 1971 to 1979 Aaron worked as a presenter at Radio Rhodesia African Service and he produced several radio programmes including **Mabhuku neVanyori** which featured 31 short stories and **Mabvumira Enhetembo**, a poetry programme that featured 13 poems that were aired and discussed.

In 1981 he began close collaborations with the reorganised Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation working for Radio 2 as a Freelance Producer. During that period, he wrote several radio dramas and soaps which ran for more than 3 years including the iconic **Handei Kumombe, Chinaku Chinobva Muzevezeve, Ave Mateangungu Mutinya Nguo Dzehuswa** and **Toita Madiro**.

In 1987 Chiundura Moyo ventured into Television where he wrote and acted in many drama series and films such as **Chiwoko Muhomwe, Ziva Kwavakabva, Madhunamutuna, Masimba, Zeve Zeve, Chihwerure/Mafuro Manyoro**. In the different series, Aaron comfortably executed different production roles including, Writer, actor, floor Manager, Production Assistant, Director, Producer and Editor.

In television, Chiundura Moyo proved his mettle when he created and wrote **Studio 263** Zimbabwe's First Television soapie. He then wrote produced and directed **Tiri Parwendo** which ran for 7 years and was the first pre-colonial epic drama series ever produced in the country.

In literature, the legendary writer has penned over 20 novels and plays including **Uchandifungawo, Ziva Kwavakabva, Chenga Ose, Kereke Inofa, The Other Side of the River and Other Short Stories** and **Chabvondoka** among others working with many publishing companies for his works including Mambo Press, Longman Zimbabwe, Books for Africa, Mercury of Press, Priority Projects, ZPHouse, Book Love, Lion Press and Literature Bureau.

The veteran writer has won various broadcasting and arts Awards during his career including: P.E.N Award- for books **Uchandifundifungawo** and **Ziva Kwawakabva**, A.M.N-Best Arts Presenter of the year (radio), A.M.E- Radio Coverage of several arts disciplines, National Journalistic and Media awards (Best Radio Producer), 1st Prize Literature in Shona for **Chemera Mudundundu**, Zimbabwe's 75 Best Books of 20th Century for **Ziva Kwawakabva**, 1st Prize Best Fiction Poetry Drama for **Pane Nyaya** and the National Arts Merit Awards- Silver Jubilee Award, University of Zimbabwe Performing Arts Merit Awards- Lifetime achievement.

Adam Madebe

Visual Arts

Adam Madebe was born in Bulawayo in 1954 and trained at Mzilikazi Arts and Craft Centre where he began sculpting figurines in clay. Around 1970, metal became his chosen medium to realise his desire to make larger works. Madebe began sculpting in metal in 1982, following a workshop sponsored by Oxyco. Frustrated by the limitations of scale available to him in ceramic sculpture.

Adam consequently developed and pioneered a method to create life and larger than lifesize works, welding metal over wet clay, later evacuated, to leave a hollow figure and has earned many awards for his works. He is credited as one of Zimbabwe's most known sculptors working in metal. He subsequently became an art instructor at Mzilikazi Art & Craft Centre, teaching ceramics from 1974 through to 1992.

Madebe's sculptures, which are often life-size or larger, are part of prestigious collections across the world with some of his works such as his "Fallen Warrior" shown at the British Museum, still used as case studies for fine art students in Zimbabwe today. He has received commissions for public sculptures in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana including a brass sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi unveiled in Rustenburg in 2015.

Madebe is known primarily for his figurative work, but has also achieved great acclaim for his semi-figurative and conceptual work such as 'Hot Seat' in 1989. Madebe participated in the 1989 Pachipamwe II Workshop held at Cyrene Mission outside Bulawayo alongside other successful artists such as Joram Mariga, Bernard Matemera, Bill Ainslie, Voti Thebe, Sokari Douglas Camp and David Koloane. He was then invited by the Triangle Arts Trust to attend their annual workshop in Pine Plains, New York State in 1990 and in 1995 attended an International Artists Workshop at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

Madebe won the 1st prize in the Tower Gardens Sculpture Competition in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe with 'Looking to The Future' in 1985 and his sculpture with 'Jacket' bagged the first prize at WeldArt 1987 at the National Art Gallery in Harare. He was also a recipient of the Award Of Merit at the Zimbabwe Heritage Exhibition in 1988 with his piece 'Contemplation'. 'Togetherness' earned him the 2nd Prize at WeldArt at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in 1989. He also earned the "Award of Merit" at the Zimbabwe Heritage Exhibition with the 'Hot Seat'. He was also a recipient of the President's Award of Honour at the 1994 Zimbabwe Heritage Exhibition.

In 2000 Adam was filmed in an educational programme for Channel 4, creating figurative work using the method described above. His famous sculpture of Kgosi Mogale stands at the entrance of the Kedar Country Hotel and he was also commissioned to make a sculpture of a Miner in Krugersdorp in 2005. Madebe has participated at a plethora of international exhibitions including Madebe has participated at the Art From The Frontline Glasgow Salford and Dublin (1990), Pauline Podbrey Gallery, London 1992 and 1993, Matabele Metal Aberdeen Art Gallery 1992 WeldArt Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery 1993, WeldArt Belfast City Gallery 1994 Johannesburg Biennale 1995, A Garden For Africa British Museum London 2005, Transitions SOAS London 2005, Terre Noire Musee Departmental Maurice Denis 2007 and Art Center Hugo Voeten in 2012.

Albert Nyathi

Poet

Albert Nyathi is a poet, musician, writer, actor, and philanthropist. Nyathi mastered traditional praise poetry at school. Born on 15 November 1962 at Kafusi in Gwanda District in Matabeleland South. Nyathi started to write his plays and poems at a tender age, inspired by the national freedom struggle. Albert Nyathi studied for a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Zimbabwe where, as a student in the 1980s, he became very influential within the student union and often spoke at rallies. Later, he gave up his career in government service as a senior member of the National Arts Council to concentrate on performance poetry and the development of youth training programmes in Harare.

After experiments in community theatre and performing arts, including teaching song and dance to township youths, in 1990, he started fusing his poetry with music to reach a wider audience and became particularly famous for the poem and song "**Senzeni Na?**", which he composed following the assassination of Chris Hani responding to treachery and betrayal. Nyathi started praise poetry as a very young boy where he used to sing praise poetry while herding cattle in rural Matabeleland South. Over the years he managed to expand his audience to include other countries in and outside the African continent. In 1990 Albert started fusing poetry and song.

He formed his group Imbongi in 1995 and his debut album **Kuze Kube Nini (For How Long?)** was recorded in 1994. Many of the songs on the album are still big hits. In 1997, he performed for Nelson Mandela celebrating his visit to Zimbabwe. In 1999, he performed at the funeral of former Vice President and one of the pioneers of nationalism Joshua Mqabuko Nyongolo Nkomo commonly known as Father Zimbabwe.

Nyathi has released four Albums to date including **Welcome to Zimbabwe (Land of Contradictions)** in 2000 and **My Daughter in 2008**. Nyathi has also been involved in the development of various arts talent when in 2017 he launched The Albert Nyathi Talent Search (Ants), aimed at, primary and secondary school-going artists. The programme aimed at giving a platform to learners to nurture and develop their talent.

Nyathi has performed in South Africa saying praises about the Great King of the Ndebele and founder of the Mthwakazi Kingdom, Mzilikazi. The issues he addresses in his poetry are those that affect people's everyday lives. Nyathi performs in both English and Ndebele using straightforward colloquial language, easily accessible speech rhythms, and simple overt imagery. Nyathi reaches out to and embraces everyone with his concerns which reflect their own. His prose combines the Poet and audience into one living being reassured by a commonality in a complex world where tradition and modernity, religion and politics, poverty and wealth, hunger, unemployment and death jostle consciously at the forefront of people's, often difficult, lives.

As an artist, Albert Nyathi is a legend who has contributed immensely to the growth of the music and poetry culture in Zimbabwe. He won the Zimbabwe National Poetry Award in 1995 and his collections, *Echoes from the Kraal* and *Echoes from Zimbabwe*, were published in 2001 and 2010. He has toured several countries including Botswana, Zambia, United States, Russia, Denmark, the Netherlands, and South Africa.

Alick Macheso

Musician

Regarded as the “*King of Sungura Music*”, extraordinarily talented in terms of bass guitar playing, dancing and vocals, Alick Macheso burst onto the music scene in 1998, with his debut album Magariro, fronting the band Orchestra Mberi Kwazvo. Born in 1968, Alick can play all other guitars but he prefers bass. Arguably, Alick Macheso belongs to the elite class of Sungura musicians of all time. What makes Alick so outstanding is that he is an exceptional guitarist, lyricist and dancer all rolled into one who rose to prominence in the early 1990s. His days at Khيامa Boys enabled Nicholas Zacharia to mentor him and other musicians like the late System Tazvida.

After independence, Macheso came to Harare in 1983 where he joined the Shepherd Chinyani-led Vhuka Boys. He was earlier taught how to play the lead and bass guitars by Rogers Chimusoro and Chinyani respectively. Macheso, whilst touring with the band later met Nicholas Zakaria. Since the Vhuka band had no equipment, Macheso was forced to abandon it and later joined Zakaria who was staying in Epworth. The latter had formed the Khيامa Boys earlier. When he temporarily handed the mic, to concentrate on driving, Macheso then decided to form the Orchestra Mberikwazvo with Zakaria Zakaria, Nicholas’ younger brother.

With the help of the Bhundu Boys, Macheso went on to release popular albums such as 'Simbaradzo', 'Zvakanaka Zvakadaro' and 'Zvido Zvenyu Kunyanya'. Macheso rose to fame with the album Magariro that had several hits including Pakutema Munda, Baba naMai among many others. Vakiridzo and then another Simbaradzo in 2000. Zvakanaka Zvakadaro came in 2001, Zvido Zvenyu Kunyanya in 2003 and was followed by Vapupuri Pupurai some two years later. Ndezvashe was recorded in South Africa after Macheso’s contract with Gramma Records expired.

Alick Macheso was appointed Red Cross Zimbabwe Ambassador in 2013 after the society noticed his efforts to improve the welfare of the vulnerable and sick through his annual Chitungwiza General Hospital Charity show. He has won several National Arts Merit Awards and Zimbabwe Music Awards. These include; Best Song of the Year – Madhawu (2003), Best Live Performer (ZIMA) (2004 and 2005), Best Sungura Artiste (ZIMA) with 11 albums under his belt.

Macheso’s influence in Sungura music is pervasive. His style is influencing many upcoming Sungura musicians. His exceptional bass guitar playing skills earned him the nickname Extrabasso. The man has become so influential that his brand of music now stands as a yardstick amongst other musicians of his ilk. Taking a leaf from his mentor Nicholas Zacharia, Alick Macheso is mentoring other young musicians most of whom he uses as curtain-raisers at his numerous shows. Indeed, the title “*King of Sungura*” aptly sums his musical achievements in Sungura circles hitherto.

Barbara Makhalisa (Nkala)

Writer

Barbara Makhalisa is one of the earliest female writers published in Zimbabwe. Also known as Barbara Nkala (her married name), she is the author of several books written in Ndebele as well as school textbooks. An author of fiction and non-fiction books published in both Ndebele and English languages, Barbara is a trained educator having studied at Gweru Teachers' College, majoring in English. She taught at various secondary schools in the country before joining Longman Zimbabwe in 1981, where she rose to the position of commissioning editor for humanities subjects.

In 1991, she left Longman and worked in her family company for five years before being invited to head the International Bible Society-Zimbabwe (IBS Zimbabwe) as National Director where she was in charge of the Chichewa Bible translation project in Malawi. She coordinated the translation and publishing of the new IBS Shona and Ndebele Bibles, as well as a Chichewa New Testament. She left IBS Zimbabwe and founded Radiant Publishing; whose vision is to publish for transformation.

Barbara's writing career began when she won a national competition for her first book, **Qilindini**, a detective thriller written in Ndebele and published at a time when she was only the second female writer in Ndebele. Her second book, **Umendo** is considered a classic for its portrayal of the marriage institution. Her other books include **Umhlaba lo! Impilo yinkinga**, **The Underdog and Other Stories**, **Different Values** and **Eva's Song: A Collection of Short Stories**.

An experienced editor and Ndebele translator Barbara has scaled up her contribution to the development of literature in Zimbabwe through her Barbara Clara Makhalisa Nkala (BCMN) Literary Trust that is working on promoting the advancement and publishing of Ndebele literature, a reading culture and reading resource centres through funding and training.

In 2015 she received an Honorary Degree from the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). Barbara has excelled in writing as a writer and also as an editor at one of the country's top publishing house.

Her work at mentoring and promoting the development of other writers for the future makes her a living legend, whose dedication to her craft is second to none.

Barnabas Chadamoyo

Dancer

A traditional dancer and drummer of immense repute and endowed with vast experience; Barnabas Chadamoyo is an artist who has seen it all in the dance fraternity, from the Rhodesian era dating back to the late 60s and early 70s when arguably he was very influential in the development of dance as an artistic genre. Indeed, he was influential in the growth and development of this type of art in the country during the colonial era. As a member of SATA (Salisbury African Tradition dance Association) which became HATA after independence, Barnabas was pivotal in ensuring the practice of the traditional dance repertoire was/is maintained as part of the nation's cultural heritage, even to this day. HATA (Harare African Traditional dance Association) morphed into ZNTDA with him being actively involved in the process.

Hailing from Mashonaland East Province Uzumba specifically, the home of Mbende-Jerusarema Dance, he spent much of his time in Harare performing for Murehwa Number 1 Jerusarema Club as a dancer and also a drummer. The dance was proclaimed by UNESCO as a masterpiece for intangible cultural heritage. He was one of the semi-professional artists who inspired many other Mbende-Jerusarema dancers and cultural dance practitioners including the late Douglas Vambe and many groups in and outside Mashonaland East Province and Harare. In the mid-90s working and residing in Harare, he was retired from his duties and became a pensioner, and thereafter decided to go home to Murehwa where he then pursued his passion for dance.

Barnabas then created the group Shingirirayi Jerusarema which he trained and pushed to participate in provincial and national functions which included NeShamwari Traditional Dance Festival, Greater Harare Arts Festival, Jacaranda Arts Festival and Mbende-Jerusarema Festival just to mention but a few. Today, at above 85 years, he still trains dance and drumming for dances like Mbende-Jerusarema, Pfonda, Jiti, Chidhange, Kadhora and Chinyamusasure amongst others. He has been a trainer of trainers in traditional dance since then and an artist who also produces traditional goods (crafts) and costumes.

Dance has been his passion and his art for so many years, contributing to its growth and development. He continues to nurture dance practitioners and in the process contributing to the preservation of Zimbabwe's culture and heritage for posterity as expressed through dance. Barnabas Chadamoyo remains an iconic figure, particularly in the practice of the MasterPiece, Mbende-Jerusarema Dance.

Ben Mahaka
Actor/Director

Ben Mahaka was born in 1968 in Chipinge and shot to fame playing the role of shady businessman cum playboy Tom Mbambo in Zimbabwe's first-ever soapie *Studio 263* that Premiered in 2002.

Mahaka featured in *Yellow Card* Movie a 2000 movie about a rising young soccer star who finds himself caught between the conflicts of school, peer pressure, his sport, his family, falling in love, and the consequences of a one-night stand. His big break however came with *Studio263* a soapie about life in Harare which made history by becoming one of the few locally produced series to be aired on international television channels such as M-net. Mahaka appeared in over 600 and directed another 300 episodes of the soapie which ran until 2007 when it was pulled off the air by Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) due to contractual disputes with the producers.

Ben then had other directorial stints with other projects including *Gringo the troublemaker* and *Battle of the Chefs*. In 2011, Mahaka worked with a musician Hope Masike and directed the video for the song "*Tioneiwo Shewe*". In September 2014, Mahaka worked with a musician cum comedian Kapfupi in a television commercial.

In 2018 Mahaka's short film *Ruvimbo's Wedding* won the National Arts and Merit Awards (NAMA) in the **Outstanding Screen Production (Short Film) category**. The Film was also a finalist at the Lake International PanAfrican Film Festival (LIPFF) in Kenya in 2017. Mahaka joined other Zimbabwean actors including the late Lazarus Boora, Charlene Mangweni, Stella January, Nothando Nobengula, Eunice Tava, Tinopona Katsande, and UK-based Abraham Kausa, in the movie *Lord of Kush* produced by Tendai Maduwa.

Mahaka recently created *Gaza*, a production set and made in Chipinge which explores topical issues that are familiar to local audiences, including child marriages and gender-based violence in urban and peri-urban settings. The production is shot in Gaza Township, in the town centre, and growth points around Chipinge.

Ben has contributed immensely to the development of Film in Zimbabwe as an actor, producer, and director. He has pioneered in taking filming to remote areas in Zimbabwe by establishing a creative centre in his home town Chipinge, training both cast and crew members to shoot the series *Gaza* one of the first to make it on National Television from outside Harare and Bulawayo using his native language ChiNdawu.

Bothwell Nyamhondera
Producer/Drummer/Sound Engineer

Bothwell Nyamhondera is a Zimbabwean music producer known for producing music for a plethora of Zimbabwean musicians during and after his tenure with Gramma Records.

Nyamhondera was born in 1959 in Mutare where he did his primary and secondary education and moved to Harare in 1978 upon completion of his studies. In Harare, he formed a group called Octave with the likes of Ernest Sando, Louis Mhlanga, Chris Chabuka, Eppias Paradza, and the late Alfred de Sousa. In 1980, he joined Shed Studios as a session drummer. In 1981 he became the studio's engineer. He worked at Shed until 1982 when he joined Gramma Records where he worked for 22 years as their resident engineer and later became their chief producer.

During his career Nyamhondera also helped found and played the drums for the R.U.N.N. Family which was made up of siblings from the Muparutsa family, the best known of whom are the late Fortune and his brother, lead singer and bassist Peter Muparutsa that had several hits in the 1980s, whose songs combined mbira-inspired music with reggae and rumba influences.

With Tanga Ernest Sango high-flying producer, Bothwell Nyamhondera went on to form the band Giraffe. The band recorded the hits, *Mahobho* and *Vakomana Vekwedu* among others. The band later disbanded and Tanga embarked on a solo career.

In 2004, Bothwell left Gramma Records to work as a freelance engineer/producer at different studios. He had a brief stint at Last Power Media from 2009 to 2011. In 2013 he joined Diamond Studios.

Nyamhondera album credits include stints as sound Engineer for “*The Long Walk*” (2007) and “*Gwindingwi Rine Shumba*” (1980) by Thomas Mapfumo. He worked as a mixing engineer for “*Tsivo*” (2004) by Oliver Mtukudzi and “*Corruption*” (1989) again with Thomas Mapfumo. He was a producer for many albums including “*Jit*” (1993), *Best of the Four Brothers: Makorokoto*” (1992), and *Mechanic Manyeruke and the Puritans* (1988).

Nyamhondera is the man behind the success stories of many top musicians in the country, chief among them Alick Macheso, Madzibaba Nicholas Zakaria, Leonard Dembo, Simon Chimbetu, James Chimombe, and the late Tongai Moyo, among others whom he recorded with during his tenure at Gramma Records.

Chirikure Chirikure

Poet

Born in 1962 in Gutu, Chirikure Chirikure is a prolific poet, songwriter, and author. A graduate of the University of Zimbabwe and an Honorary Fellow of the University of Iowa, US, he belongs to a class of accomplished and resourceful Zimbabwean writing and performing artists. He worked with one of Zimbabwe's leading publishing houses as an editor/publisher for 17 years, until 2002. He now runs a literary agency and also works as a performance poet, cultural consultant and translator. He has contributed some pieces in a Shona poetry anthology, *Zviri Muchinokoro* (2005, ZPH Publishers). He has written and translated a number of children's stories and published some educational textbooks.

Over the years he has also been an occasional contributor to the print media and ran a radio programme for young Shona writers. Chirikure performs his poetry solo and/or with his Mbira music ensemble. Exhibiting resourcefulness, Chirikure ably mastered the art of fusing poetry with music, particularly Mbira music. He has recorded an album of poetry and music, *Napukeni* (2002), with his colleagues, Dete Mbira Group. He has also written lyrics for a number of leading Zimbabwean musicians and he occasionally performs with some of them. Understanding the power of collaborations in artistic productions is one of his outstanding attributes.

Along the way, he amassed a number of accolades. All of Chirikure's poetry books received first prizes in the annual Zimbabwe writer of the year awards. His first volume, *Rukuvhute*, also received an Honorable Mention in the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa, in 1990. His other book, *Hakurarwi – We Shall not Sleep*, was selected as one of the 75 Best Zimbabwean Books of the 20th Century in a competition run by the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in 2004. In that competition the same book got a prize as one of the best five Shona publications of the 20th century. He never shies away from writing and performing in his mother language – ChiShona.

Chirikure has participated in several local and international festivals and symposia over the years. His passion for writing educational books contributes immensely to the learning process in the country particularly now when the educational trajectory fully embraces arts, heritage and culture education. *Aussicht auf eigene Schatten* (poetry in Shona and English, with German translations) (2011), Heidelberg, Germany: Verlag Das Wunderhorn aptly displays his sterling efforts in breaking the language barrier and offer poetry and writings in a variety of languages.

Chirikure remains an iconic figure in the arena of performing arts (poetry), songwriting and writing educational books. His works are very inspirational to upcoming poets and aspiring writers. He has over the years created a niche in the highly competitive sphere of the performing and literary arts as distinct aesthetic genres.

Cont Mhlanga

Writer/Director

Cont Mdladla Mhlanga is a playwright, actor and theatre director. His career in the cultural and creative industries began in 1982 when formed Amakhosi which started as a youth karate club but switched to professional theatre in 1988. The Amakhosi Performing Arts Workshop (APAW) produced and toured with theatre plays written and directed by Mhlanga. In 1995 Amakhosi established the country's first privately-owned cultural centre located within the boundaries of the townships in Bulawayo.

Mhlanga has written more than 20 plays which include **The Good President, The End, Sinjalo, Children on Fire, Games and Bombs, Members only, Workshop Negative** and **Vikela**. Cont has three books to his name including the play “Nansi leNdoda” a former A level set book and “Ngakade Ngisazi” a collection of short stories.

He adapted this theatre play **Stitsha** for television and it became a series featuring the late Beater Mangethe on ZBC TV. The TV drama was tension and struggle between *Thuli* played by *Beater* and her tough on-screen brother, *Mopho*. The narrative was hugely Zimbabwean showcasing compelling Zimbabwean stories by Zimbabweans.

Another of his plays *Sinjalo* explored everyday challenges in the life of two friends, **Sakhamuzi** (Ndebele) and **Foromani**. (Shona) a narrative that sought to teach the world that both Ndebele and Shona people of Zimbabwe could live together as friends with no enmity and prejudice.

Cont has contributed tremendously to the arts industry. He has used his literary and creative prowess to champion the human rights cause as well as articulating the socio-economic and political situation in Zimbabwe. Through Amakhosi he has helped to discover and mentor some of the country's talented artists including Ba Shupi, Sandra Ndebele, Sarah Mpofu, Raisedon Baya and William Nyandoro.

Mhlanga an accomplished actor himself starred as *Mtutireli Niekwu* in an anti-apartheid movie **A World Apart** which was released in 1988. He also created and developed ‘*Friday Live at Amakhosi*’ a television show on ZBC where live music bands would perform and competitions such as Dreams to Fame also discovered young talent as they targetted up-and-coming artists.

His work in theatre and film made him the first recipient of a prize called the ArtVenture Freedom to Create Prize, awarded by a philanthropic organisation funded by a private investment group in Singapore. Cont is thus a true living legend who has contributed significantly to the development of the arts in the country as a writer, director, actor, mentor and administrator.

Daves Guzha
Theatre Producer/Director

The 23rd of January 1967 saw the birth of an artistic director, producer, actor and administrator par excellence in the form of Daves Guzha of Rooftop Promotions/Theatre in the Park. Daves boasts of a long and distinguished career on both stage and screen. His wide range of expertise and abilities derive from the more than 30 years he has spent in the cultural and creatives industries. Daves Guzha's wide body of work and experiences spans the African and European continents.

Over the years Daves has been instrumental in designing and implementing the first-ever SADC Artists HIV/AIDS Festival held in Harare and Lilongwe. Also, he was responsible for facilitating and implementing the first co-production deal between an independent production company and Zimbabwe Television. The deal was occasioned by the opportunity presented by the hosting of the Soccer World Cup 2010 by neighbouring South Africa. The arrangement was designed to properly manage artistic and cultural programming during the soccer jamboree that attracted people from all over the world.

Exhibiting excellent organizational skills, Daves played a pivotal role in setting up the Artists Trust of Southern Africa an intermediary body between artists and the regional power block SADC. Taking a leaf from the economic wing of SADC, the Trust strives to push the interests of artists and cultural practitioners in the region. Theatre in the Park, a multi-purpose performance and creative space right in the heart of Harare stands out as one of his greatest achievements hitherto. Daves was heavily involved in its designing and implementation of its attendant activities and programmes even today remains one of his key duties. The facility is the first theatre space to be constructed in Harare since 1960. He is a firm believer in the Pan African spirit as evidenced through his narratives whereby he puts African stories and experiences at the heart of his creativity, particularly theatrical performances.

Displaying a never die attitude, Daves is currently working with two other producers on a continental documentary titled the "*Great Trading Empires of Africa*" which seeks to explore the influence of Africa on the global economy and how these success stories can be used to mitigate migration. In terms of achievements, he has directed and produced over fifty plays, twenty documentaries, features and short films.

Despite performing at numerous regional, continental and international forums acting in cross-race and cross-gender roles, Daves never betrays his Pan Africanism as he is inherently attracted to indigenous Zimbabwean and African performance styles hinged on rituals, satire and storytelling. Indeed, Daves is a towering figure, a theatre practitioner of international stature.

Dominic Benhura

Visual Artist

Hailing from Murehwa and considered a revered member of the second generation of Zimbabwean stone sculptors, Dominic Benhura was born in 1968. Before his birth, his father passed away and he was raised by his mother. Academically gifted, Dominic excelled at the primary school level and a decision was made to transfer him to Harare where he ended up staying with a cousin Tapfuma Gutsa an already accomplished stone sculptor. It is Tapfuma Gutsa who introduced Dominic to stone sculpting at a very tender age of ten years.

At that very tender age, he eventually started carving small off-cuts before moving onto large stones. An elated Tapfuma Gutsa mentored, supported, and nurtured him. He encouraged Dominic to soldier on. Through that process, a unique individual stone sculpting style peculiar to Dominic was birthed. By age twelve, Dominic was already selling his first artworks to architects while sculpting became a passion for him. He frequently dashed home from school to work on his pieces. A stone sculptor of repute was born destined to travel a colourful stone carving journey amassing an avalanche of accolades and awards along the way hitherto.

Dominic started sculpting full-time upon finishing schooling. Chapungu Sculpture Park as a creative space was the launchpad for him to blossom and he flaunted his artworks for the first time in 1987 at this place while joining the resident artists program there in 1990, staying until acquiring a home in Athlone, Harare, in 1995. Through the program he worked on larger pieces; he also began travelling during this period, attending workshops in Botswana, the United States, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany. He began to add metal to his stone sculptures.

Over the years Dominic earned several awards both local and international. These include the NAMA Certification of Merit for Nomination in the Outstanding Mixed Media Category (2010), the University of Zimbabwe Chapter recognition as a distinguished honouree (2010) and The World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child. Also, he won 5 other NAMA accolades and several National Gallery of Zimbabwe awards like the National Gallery of Zimbabwe Award of Distinction in the Visual Arts (1997). His stature as an international iconic sculptor is buttressed by permanent displays like the USA: Benson park Colorado and Atlanta Airport and South Africa: Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Dominic Benhura today remains a well-regarded stone sculptor in Zimbabwe, Africa and internationally. He is so influential that other sculptors are products of his Dominic Studios. The name Dominic Benhura is now synonymous with stone sculpting. Acknowledged as a leader in stone sculpting, his massive work "*Our HIV Friend*" is an epic and further consolidates his position. Carved from a single 3 metre block of Spring Stone it talks openly of the terrible scourge of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the need for support from family and friends.

Ellen Mlangeni

Dancer

Born in 1952 Ellen started practising dance in 1986. The year 1991 witnessed the formation of the extremely popular Bulawayo-based all-female dance group Thandanani Women's Ensemble Cultural Dance group with Ellen at the helm. Performing at weddings, school events and other Government events like Independence and Heroes day celebrations saw the cultural group scaling greater heights in popularity. Under the tutelage of Ellen Mlangeni, a versatile and talented dancer, the group represented Zimbabwe at cultural exchange events in Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland. Representing Bulawayo province, the group was a regular participant at the Chibuku NeShamwari Traditional Dance and iNgwebu competitions. As part of the group, Ellen also helped in educating children at schools and students at universities in keeping the Zimbabwean culture alive and known to younger generations

Exuding rare aesthetic talent, she starred at a Warner Brothers film called The Power of One in 1991. Further cementing her artistic prowess, Ellen also starred in local dramas such as ISithembo by Ernest Ndlovu, Stitcher by Cont Mhlanga, Omunye Umnewabo by Cont Mhlanga, Isililo, Thuba Lami by Raisedon Baya and Kings Kraal by Raisedon Baya again that were all aired on ZBC TV. Flaunting that artistic finesse in acting, she featured prominently in foreign films like Another Wedding, Road to Jacaranda and Women Can Make Better in Business written by Christopher Mabhena.

Not content with dancing and acting only, Ellen is also an accomplished storyteller, an activity she undertakes concurrently with teaching traditional dances in primary schools like Gampu, Khumalo, Henry Law and Mpumelelo amongst others including Mpopoma High school. Ellen is a regular feature in corporate advertisements in the mould of iNgwebu, Yellow phone (Econet). She scooped a gold medal as the best supporting actress upon participating in the Geraldine Roche Drama Competition.

The name Ellen Mlangeni is synonymous with the perseveration of culture, particularly the Ndebele culture as expressed through dance. Many young female dancers are greatly inspired by the accomplishments that Ellen has achieved to date. In terms of dance, her remarkable skills cover instructing, directing and actual performance.

Felix Fandroy Moyo

Playwright/Actor

Felix Moyo, popularly known as “Silandulo” after his role in the television drama, *Kukhulwa Kokupela*, has been involved in the arts industry since the 1960s when he was at Loreto Primary School in lower Gweru in the Midlands Province.

1976 while working as a teacher at Msitheli Secondary School in Bulawayo he decided to go public with his first play entitled Umbaxambili which was performed at Mpopoma Hall. During the same year, he formed the Mthwakazi Actors’ and Writers’ Association (MAWA) with the late novelist and playwright Mthandazo Ndema Ngwenya who wrote the television drama *Kukhulwa Kokuphela* with Moyo, Pathisa Nyathi, and the late Robert ‘Donga’ Mele making contributions. After Ngwenya died in a car accident soon after independence, Moyo took over as the script-writer of the show.

Moyo also wrote the radio play *Zaphela Izindaba – Izindaba Zaphela* which ran on Radio 2 the show was so popular that even after retirement from radio productions he continued to provide storylines for theatre groups and producers in and outside the country.

While taking a full-time job with the National University of Science and Technology Moyo established himself as a Ndebele poetry writer and his anthology of poems, *Imbabazane* was used as an “A” Level set book. He established his own publishing company Usiba Publishers which specialises in Ndebele literature. Moyo has also assisted Ndebele authors who want to have their novels and other books published under his company.

The series *Kukhulwa kokuphela* was memorable to viewers and it had an equally profound effect on young writers in Bulawayo, who saw that it was possible to tell authentic stories from the City of Kings. Moyo developed the story of the drama to capture the social scene in the country and it resonated with the daily struggles of ordinary people especially in the city of Kings. His work made him an inspiration to the theatre sector and his work as a publisher has made him in contact with young writers who he has helped through polishing their works and assisting in publishing new authors.

Fradreck Mujuru
Mbira Musician/Manufacturer

Fradreck Mujuru, was born 31 October 1955, in Dewedzo, Rusape. He is the second child in a family of three boys and one girl. He grew up in both the Mudewairi village of his mother, and at Dambatsoko, his father and grandfather's village, after the separation of his parents. The environment was full of traditional rituals and rites because Muchatera Mujuru, Fradreck's grandfather, was a revered spirit medium. The village was a melting pot where many mbira musicians came to play for Muchatera's spirit. Mujuru thus grew up with a keen interest in the instrument, because it was held in high esteem.

At the age of eight, Fradreck learnt to play the Mbira and his ability was soon recognised by the elders. Mujuru attended elementary school at St. Theresa Catholic Mission School where he joined the Choral Music Club. In 1969 Fradreck failed to continue his education due to lack of funds and for the following two years he worked as a general hand on the farms around the Rusape area.

In 1972, Fradreck was accepted into the prestigious circle of mbira musicians at Dambatsoko who played for Muchatera who included Ephant, Fungai, Samuel, Munyaradzi, Komboni, Musekiwa and Killian Mujuru. Fradreck moved to Harare in 1974, where he stayed and teamed up with his cousin Ephant Mujuru and they built a reputation for themselves playing at ceremonies almost every weekend.

The Chimurenga war of liberation was gathering momentum in rural Zimbabwe and social gatherings were closely monitored with anything bearing political connotations deemed unfavourable including the traditional biras. Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 resurrected the old traditional rituals and rites that had been put on hold resumed in 1982 providing a platform for Fradreck to continue his craft.

Fradreck got interested in manufacturing the Mbira after receiving his first personal instrument from Ephant Mujuru in 1981 the instrument hurt his fingers and he vowed to improve on the instrument. He then apprenticed with Sekuru Gora (Thomas Wadharwa) and then Thomas Muda from Hwedza, who both emphasized the need for quality instruments. Mujuru began to specialize in making the mbira in Dambatsoko, tuning them the way the Mujurus had done for generations.

Through proceeds of mbira sales, Mujuru managed to send his children to school, including putting 3 through university. Fradreck also taught his sons, and a variety of other young people, the art of mbira making. His mbiras are now world-famous, and some are included in the collections of museums, as well as much loved by musicians playing them around the world.

Mukanya as he is popularly known is considered by many to be the greatest living mbira maker, as well as a highly respected musician. The instruments he built are now played on every continent! He has toured Europe, South Africa and the United States performing and teaching including residencies at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Eastman School of Music, Grinnell College, Williams College, and the University of Michigan. He has developed his unique doctrine of mbira playing which encourages playing without adding Western instruments, without harmonizing voices just hosho, makwa (handclapping), mbira poetry, and the mbira itself.

Helen Lieros

Visual Artist

Helen Lieros is one of Zimbabwe's finest painters belonging to a special group of the most enthusiastic teachers of art the nation boasts of. Born in 1940 in Gweru, Gwelo then, she studied art (visual Arts) at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Geneva, Switzerland. Helen excelled in her studies coming tops in her class exhibition with an unassailable mark of 90% that earned her the certificate et Prix for such an outstanding achievement. In all her artworks, she strives to be original – being an individual and searching for her true identity. This is the battle in her life and work, whether she is Greek or African. Her father was a Greek sailor. Helen is convinced that there is a link in the superstitions accepted as a Greek or as a white African. This is the view that she grapples with in her life as an artist. Suffice to say, this view reverberates in her artworks.

A visual artist par excellence, Helen has artworks on display (permanent collection) at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. Together with her husband Roy Guthrie, they established Gallery Delta a space for visual art exhibitions. The gallery has been very instrumental in nurturing a lot of young visual artists' talents by giving them space to flaunt their respective aesthetic talents. Over the years she has been offering an alternative space for the exhibition and enjoyment of Zimbabwean visual arts. Many talented artists in the visual arts genre are passing through her hands.

With an incredible knack for identifying and nurturing artistic talent, Helen continues to be pivotal in doing exactly that. She is held with immense reverence in the creative sector, particularly the visual arts genre by both established and upcoming visual artists. She regularly imparts her invaluable visual arts skills to many artists, assisting them to blossom into top-notch creatives. Helen has seen it all in the visual arts' growth and development, from being an accomplished aesthetic practitioner herself, coach/mentor in the same field to an arts administrator running a vibrant gallery. Many visual artists are continuously benefiting from her programmes and activities that include mentorship, marketing and the production of original and well thought out artistic works. As a tag team with her husband Roy, they have been a vital cog in ensuring that the visual arts sector becomes vibrant in Zimbabwe as an integral economic pillar as well as a vehicle for expressive art.

Exceptionally talented both as a practitioner as well as an arts administrator, Helen belongs to a class of people who will never be missed when the history, growth and development of the visual arts genre in Zimbabwe is put into perspective. Indeed, she is playing a critical role by putting Zimbabwe's visual arts sector on the world's artistic map.

Irene Chigamba

Dancer

Irene Chigamba is an immensely talented traditional dance practitioner. Growing up in a musical family, she performed traditional ceremonies with her parents from an early age. She toured the world with the Zimbabwe National Dance Company from the age of 19 and later continued to tour with groups she directed, as well as performed with. At age 8 Irene started dancing and she is the oldest child in a family of dancers and musicians. Her parents were the biggest influence in her chosen career of dancing.

Shortly after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, Irene travelled to Mozambique to perform with Ephant Mujuru's group Spirit of the People during a week-long celebration of Mozambique's political solidarity with Zimbabwe during the nation's liberation struggle. The opportunity arose when Ephant was looking for another female dancer to fill out his group and he was referred to Irene by one of her neighbours in Highfield, where she was renowned as a dancer.

Back home in Zimbabwe, Irene's performance with Spirit of the People also earned her a place in the nation's newly formed National Dance Company. Only nineteen years old at the time, she now had the opportunity to learn dances from various regions of the country. In her spare time, Irene soon began teaching the new dances she was learning to her younger siblings at home, paving the way for the family to form its own dance company. Through her sterling efforts, the Chigamba family became renowned as a family of traditional dance practitioners.

In 1990, the National Dance Company was dismantled during Zimbabwe's entry into an Economic Structural Adjustment Program designed by the World Bank. Building on her work with her younger siblings, Irene founded her family's first performing group, which she called the Young Zimbabweans. Given the high-level connections Irene had developed during her time with the National Dance Company, the Young Zimbabweans were regularly asked to perform for high-level government events in Zimbabwe. They were also able to start touring abroad almost immediately.

After several original members of the Young Zimbabweans left for permanent employment with the Zimbabwe Republic's Police Band, Irene trained a new group of performers, and renamed her group Mhembero, or "Celebration." As the group's artistic director, Irene has trained several generations of Zimbabwean artists, including members of Zimbabwe's Air Force Band, as well as several artists now living abroad in the US and Canada. During her time with the National Dance Company, the Young Zimbabweans, and Mhembero, Irene has performed in many countries, including Canada, the United States, Australia, England, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Romania, Russia, Yugoslavia, South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, China, Korea, Japan, and Malaysia. Besides performing, Irene is also an accomplished traditional dance adjudicator. She has been very instrumental in ensuring the practice of traditional dance in Zimbabwe. Her dancing prowess is also complimented by excellent Mbira playing skills.

Jasen Mphepo
Actor

Belonging to what can be termed as a class of enterprising, versatile and youngish thespians; Jasen Mphepo is an actor, filmmaker, writer and businessperson. He has worked on various productions such as the 36 television episodes of *Suburb D*, a comedy *Ghetto Fellaz*, *New Dawn* and a sitcom *Waiters*. He founded and is a director of Patsime Edutainment Trust which owns and operates Jasen Mphepo Little Theatre in Eastlea, Harare. The theatre space was officially opened in May 2019. He won the Outstanding Screen Production award at National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) in 2011 for *New Dawn*. Jasen is an Executive Director at Patsime Edutainment Trust.

Multi-award winning thespian and development practitioner, Jasen Mphepo is a rare breed of talent, vision and charisma. His well-played acting role as Marcelino in the first-ever Zimbabwean comedy series ‘Waiters’ brought him to stardom and from then on he has never looked back. To date, he has featured in many theatre productions at local, regional and international levels. Jasen also combines his acting skills with project management and organizational leadership. He is a certified trainer with advanced competencies in skills and knowledge transfer; teaching Drama for Amateurs and Using Arts as a tool for advocacy, conflict resolution, information dissemination and behaviour change.

Jasen’s insights, candour and creativity are what made him develop Patsime Edutainment Trust over the last ten years from a community theatre group to a world-class institution that has attracted funding across the donor and corporate communities. Patsime is today a centre of excellence, a learning hub in the use of multi-media as a development tool. Under the Trust, he has managed to craft development communication strategies in different target communities across the country. One such model is the ‘Buddies for Love’, a project which uses mostly theatre as an educational tool targeting young people of school-going age. The project reaches up to 120 schools across the country with a reach of over 30000 young students. ‘Buddies for Love’, which is a behavioural change project, is a Sexual Reproductive Health-oriented project which discusses health matters with young people from the age group 8 -17 through the medium of the arts (theatre).

His multiple awards include Best Male Actor in Theatre and film, Best Film Production, Best TV Drama scooped at the National Arts Merits Awards (NAMA). He is also a one time winner of the USAID Auxillia Chimusoro Award for excellence in development communication. Jasen is a prolific writer, performer and Director and has become one of the many successful theatre Producers in Zimbabwe of his time. The Jasen Mphepo Little Theatre is a hub of edutainment and infotainment activities that also gives aspiring artists a platform to showcase and grow their talent. It has a diverse line up of events all year round. Jasen’s entrepreneurial skills complement his art and he remains outstanding amongst his peers, figures that others aspire to emulate.

Jesesi Mungoshi

Actress

Jesesi was born on 7 July 1954 and was married to the late prominent writer Charles Mungoshi and together they had five children. Her acting career began in 1984 in the movie, **Inongove Njake Njake**. She made her Television debut in 1989, in the **African Journey** a two-part television family film by George Bloomfield which also starred Jason Blicher, Katja Blomquist, Allan Jordan, Ulla Mahaka. Jesesi featured in other Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) Television dramas that include **Ndabve Zera, Roja, Mainini Francisca, Ngozi** and **Makunun'unu Maodzamwoyo**.

In 1991, she played the lead role in Godwin Mawuru's film titled, *Neria*; after the producer of the movie, John Riber saw her on the **African Journey**, a Canadian TV series. Her role in *Neria* opened doors and opportunities for her and she went on to produce her documentaries such as **The Mystery of Mt Nyangani, Journey To The Ocean** as well as a film titled **Rwendo** that was made in the United Kingdom. Jesesi also worked on a documentary called **Camarada Presidente** which is based on the life of the late President of Mozambique, Samora Machel which received a mention in the Dubai International Film Festival.

She was featured in the 1993 short film by Farai Sevenzo titled, **Rwendo**, starring Yemi Goodman Ajibade, Ben Daniels, Eldinah Tshatedi and Frank Windsor. In 2013, with the help of her sons, Jesesi ventured into book publishing when she launched Mungoshi Press and published her husband's book "**Branching Streams Flow in the Dark**". Her sons Farai and Charles (Junior) have also published "Behind the Wall Everywhere" and "**Candle Light Thoughts**" respectively under the family stable. Under her JM Productions, she led the filming of "**Makunun'unu Maodzamwoyo**" an adaptation of her late husband Charles' book of the same title.

In 2017, she landed a role as "Gogo" in the comedy-romance film, **Cook-Off**, directed by Tomas Brickhill. The movie which showcased on Netflix in 2020 is the story of a struggling single mother (Anesu) who finds love and good fortune in a TV cooking show contest. Jesesi Mungoshi plays Anesu's grandmother, encouraging her to follow her dreams. In **Shaina** a 2020 movie production, Jesesi teamed up Leroy Gopal, Edmore Sandifolo, Marian Kunonga, and Charmaine Mujeri in an evocative story of a group of friends who encounter life-changing obstacles that mirror the day-to-day challenges faced by many adolescent girls and young women in Zimbabwe.

In a career spanning four decades, Jesesi has bagged numerous local and international awards. She scooped the Outstanding Actress award (Film and Television) for her role in the television sitcom, "Muzita Rababa" at the National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) in 2017 and was also honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Great Zimbabwe University in recognition of her contributions to the Zimbabwean film industry in the same year.

Joe Njagu

Director

1982 witnessed the birth of Joe Njagu, the award-winning writer/director who directed his debut feature film *Lobola* in 2010, which paved the way for a new chapter for independent film-making in Zimbabwe. Exercising vast adroitness in independent film making, cutting across all production levels, Joe's entry into film making brought a breath of fresh air in independent film making. Highly equipped with a burning passion and appreciation for art, Joe brings to life the self-written screenplays like *The Gentleman*. The South African trained writer/director established himself as the future of the Zimbabwean film industry through his first comedy debut, *Lobola*.

Highly inspired by Hollywood director, Chris Nolan, Joe believes *The Gentleman* is a new chapter of African cinema as the storyline, the acting, the pace and the overall 'feel' of the film surpasses the usual 'folktales' synonymous with African films hitherto. With over 15 years in the film industry, he saw his second feature film, *The Gentleman*, winning him the Best Foreign Language Director accolade at the America International Film Festival and Best Film at the NAMA awards in 2012. Over the years he has directed and shot several other feature films. These include *Something Nice from London*, *Escape*, *Tete B* and *The Letter* amongst others. Joe has also produced *Cook-Off*, the first Zimbabwean film to be acquired by Netflix.

He is also a 2016 Yali Alumni and a Mandela Washington Fellow, the flagship program of President Barack Obama's Young African Leadership initiative where he was enrolled at Cambridge College in Boston USA. He was listed amongst the top 35 under 35 young professionals working in media in Africa in 2014 by the Non-profit Young Professionals in International Affairs. He has over the years scooped several awards at the international level, making him one of the most respected film directors hailing from Zimbabwe and Africa. Independent film producers including those with the zeal to enter the industry are greatly inspired by him. Films like *Lobola* that he expertly directed resonates very well with the current Zimbabwean psyche and by extension the African philosophy as well. Such pioneering work is increasingly influencing film producers and directors to focus more on film productions that are in sync with current issues in Zimbabwe and Africa.

Joe and others of his ilk represent a new crop of young writers/directors in the film industry imbued with ingenuity and fervent zeal to portray the real and current Zimbabwe and Africa through film. He remains an iconic figure in the film industry whose influence is breaking national, regional, continental and international barriers in terms of film production. Zimbabwe's fledging independent film production industry owes its robust growth and development to people like Joe Njagu.

Joyce Jenje Makwenda

Ethnomusicologist

Born and bred in the bustling township of Mbare, Joyce Jenje-Makwenda is a renowned ethnomusicologist. Her exact year of birth is 1958. Since 1984 she has carried out research and interviews on early urban culture, music, politics, education, religion, media, fashion, taboo, sexual and cultural issues and women's histories in Zimbabwe. She continues to tackle Zimbabwean culture and township music through novels.

She traces the origins of township/urban music and how it has evolved over the years to be what it is today. A mother of four and a grandmother, she has been very instrumental in promoting the rights of women and the girl child and addressing the trials and tribulations women face in society. Her most popular writing — Zimbabwe Township Music — which is a celebration of old age popular music, which evolved in the colonial urban setting, has become the main text on the history of music.

Joyce's research on township music and her novels have been a fulfilment of her childhood dream and are a timeless and rich source of the evolution and development of music that has uniquely characterized Zimbabwe. She traces the effects of foreign music on early urban settlers from as far back as the 1930s. The other book "Gupuro" is about traditional divorce and the dilemma of a token payout. Her book Usenzi highlights the pain, sorrow and problems that see three generations of women stand up to be counted and claim their space in life. Besides tracing the growth and development of urban music, Joyce explores other topical issues that affect women through her informative books.

Joyce's interest in documenting the development of township music was influenced by the knowledge of music performances that her father David exhibited under him attending the various shows back then. David became fully abreast with the music and musicians of that time, information that his daughter Joyce gleaned from him. This soon became the back-borne and launching pad for Joyce's quest to research township music and subsequently the writing of the very informative book – Zimbabwe Township Music.

Today many music historians and music students including researchers rely heavily on books written by Joyce, particularly those in search of knowledge about how the development of music Zimbabwe panned out.

Lovemore Tshuma (Majaivana)

Singer

Born Lovemore Tshuma in Mambo Township in Gweru on December 14, 1954, Majaivana started off singing at an early age, in 1968, when he would sing in the church choir in which his father was a minister. Following his father's death, he moved to Mzilikazi in Bulawayo with his mother where he dropped out of school to pursue a career as a musician.

As the eldest of seven children, it became his duty to fend for the family. His youngest brother also wanted to help, and he took off from Bulawayo to work at the mines in South Africa. This great trek to South Africa by young men from Matabeleland which he says led him to write the song, *Isitimela Se Goli*.

At 15, he became a drummer in a local Bulawayo band. He would make a short stay at the band as he realised that there was not a lot of money performing in the city's music scene and he relocated to Harare where he performed in nightclubs singing Tom Jones and Elvis Presley songs. In the capital, he noticed that singers like Thomas Mapfumo were recording their music and playing electric guitars.

After a while, Majaivana went back to Bulawayo and performed with the Marisha band for four years after which he returned to Harare and joined the 'The Jobs Combination' named after businessman Job Kadengu who was hosting them. Together with the band, Majaivana instantly became popular with songs such as *Isizungu* and *Isitimela* which were social commentary songs. Other songs he recorded with the group that included Fanyana Dube were "Okwabanye" (some people only take but never give), "Mama Ngivulele" (Mother please give me your blessing) "Istimela" (a lover blaming the train for going with his girlfriend), "Ukhozi" (the hawk taking away a child) and "Salanini Zinini" (farewell all my friends). This however, made him move from the band's shadow to become a competent solo artist. In 1980 Lovemore had the opportunity to share the stage with Bob Marley at Rufaro Stadium during Independence celebrations and later with musical giants such as Dorothy Masuka and Hugh Masekela.

He worked as a milk man for Dairiboard after a misunderstanding led to a break-up of the group. Returning to Bulawayo in 1985, he teamed up with his brother Anderson and several other musicians who had just returned from Victoria Falls to form the Zulu Band recording *N lbum* which included the song *Amathamsanqa* which spoke about him not having done well at school, wanting to buy a car, wanting to buy a house and better his life.

That song sold well and he went out and bought a house through the sales. Majaivana and the Zulu band went on to release their first album which had original sounds that had no western influence. The album had the hit song 'Salanini Zinini' that made the band even more popular. Majaivana, recorded his last album *Isono Sami* and quit music in 2001 when he went to America to pursue personal interests. "Angilamali" was one of the songs from his last album which expressed his pain about how he had been treated by the music industry in Zimbabwe until he emigrated to the US.

A true legend of Zimbabwean music, Majaivana has been a great inspiration to many a musician such as Jays Marabini, Solomon Skuza, Sandra Ndebele, Africa Revenge, Willis Watafi, Busi Ncube, Albert Nyathi and many more. The legacy of his music is carried on today in the likes of Lwazi Tshabangu, his son Derrick Majaivana and Royal Destiny.

Matesu Dube
Theatre/Dance

Matesu Dube founded Umkhathi Theatre Works in 1997, in Njube Bulawayo together with Maqhawe Moyo, Alexander Mhlanga, Richard Mahachi, Tshoga Ndlovu, John Ndlovu and the late Mthandazo Sithole.

The group was created as a way of creating employment for youths in the Njube suburb after the collapse of Young Warriors Theatre Company, which used to do its rehearsals in Njube. After the group, Matesu and some members of the folded group decided to use the skills they had already acquired by forming their group.

The name Umkhathi was inspired by the mood and environment they were living in at that time. The group specialises in drama, theatre and traditional dances such as Isitshikitsha, Amantshomane, Amabhiza, Muchongoyo, Chinyambara, Jerusalem and Setapa, a Botswana traditional dance.

At that time the group embarked on the production of very popular radio plays and made money for the group. They also performed at different schools in the city where they staged plays for the pupils.

The groups breakthrough came in 2001 when they were invited and performed at the Mitisong Festival in Botswana in 2001 and in 2004 when they were invited to perform at the Aberdeen Youth Festival in Scotland. The group has also managed to perform in South Africa, Botswana, Scotland, the United States of America, Cote d'Ivoire, and Taiwan.

In 2000 the group won a National Aids Council sponsored drama competition and went on to represent Zimbabwe at the International Aids conference in Durban, South Africa. In 2011, the group won the Chibuku Neshamwari provincial finals and came second in the national finals. In the same year, Umkhathi won their first National Arts Merit Awards (Nama) Outstanding Dance group award.

In 2019 the Group launched the Bulawayo Child Fest after realising that the city of Bulawayo had no festival that catered for young audiences. The annual performing arts festival provides a platform for artists to showcase artistic works created for young audiences mostly theatre, dance, poetry and music. The initiative also identifies and honour the raw talent found in abundance in Bulawayo. Bulawayo child Feld has thus become an arts development programme meant to nurture rural children where practitioners visit schools in and around the city teaching children how to sing, dance and play the drums among other skills to empower them.

Matesu Dube and Umkhathi Theatre works, have stood the test of time and have established themselves as one of the leading Arts ensembles in the city. The group is also a training and mentorship hub where hundreds of young people have been trained in various arts disciplines. Its rigorous junior policy has also ensured its continued endurance as artists come and go but the group remains strong and focused.

Musaemura Bonas Zimunya

Literary Arts

Zimunya was born on 14 November 1949 in Mutare. In 1973 he was expelled from the University of Rhodesia and went into exile in the United Kingdom where he studied at the University of Kent, Canterbury. He attained a Bachelor's degree in 1978 and a Master's degree in 1979. His Master's dissertation was later published as *Those Years of Drought and Hunger: The Birth of African Fiction in English in Zimbabwe*.

In 1980, he returned to newly independent Zimbabwe where he took a University of Zimbabwe position as a professor of English. In 1992 he received a Fulbright scholarship to the Pratt Institute in New York and in 1999 he joined Virginia Tech in the USA as Director of Black Studies.

Zimunya began publishing poems when he was still at school. He broke into print gradually in the 1970s in periodicals like *Two-Tone* and *Chirimo*. Later, he appeared more emphatically in group anthologies like including Kizito Muchemwa's *Zimbabwean Poetry in English* in 1978 and Gwinyambira in 1979. In 1981 he co-edited with Mudereri Khadani, *And Now the Poets Speak*. His first collection *Thought Tracks* was published in 1982 the same year he produced *Kingfisher, Jikinya, and other poems*.

In 1985 he published *Country Dawns and City Lights*. Zimunya co-authored and edited *Chakarira Chindunduma* in 1985 while in 1987 he co-authored *Samora!* These were followed by *Birthright* (1989), *The Fate of Vultures* (1989), *Perfect Poise* (1994), *Selected Poems of Zimunya* which was published in the Serbian language, and English in 1995 as a collection that contained both the lyricism of his earlier work and the cynical perspective of the critic.

In 1993 Zimunya published his only collection of short stories, *Nightshift*. The prolific writer has been a subject of many academic articles including like Veit-Wild's *Patterns of Poetry* (1988) and *Teachers, Preachers and Non-Believers* (1992), and many journal articles.

Musaemura Zimunya is undoubtedly one of Zimbabwe's leading poets as he is the most anthologized of all poets. He writes poetry both in English and the Shona languages and is also a prominent scholar of Zimbabwean literature. His poems over the decades reflect on the physical beauty of his country, his people's struggles against settler-occupation and racism, the meaning of African myths and traditions, and the meaning of freedom to the individual. Zimunya is highly regarded as a pioneer in the development of modern African poetry with his work being read at universities across the globe. Zimunya has played an instrumental role, administratively with the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF), Zimbabwe Writers Union (ZIWU) and Zimbabwe Writers Association (ZIWA).

Nakai Matema

Film Producer

Born in 1970, Nakai Matema is a film producer with experience spanning over two decades. Currently, she works with the Zimbabwe International Film Festival Trust as the Trust's Producer and has also held the position of Acting Executive Trust Director for a year. Nakai has always been involved with the film business in various capacities ever since she graduated from the Harare Polytechnic years back. Her achievements as a film producer have been locally recognized through awards at the National Arts Merit Awards, NAMA.

Internationally, invitations to film festivals around the world to talk about working in film under extraordinary circumstances bear testimony to her blossoming career. She started her career as an assistant to the Festival Coordinator on the first Southern African Film Festival (SAFF) in 1993. The turning point in her professional film career commenced when she volunteered to participate in this festival that widened her conceptualization of the film industry while gaining invaluable experience. Nakai thrived as a producer under the pioneering ZIFFT project - Short Film Project (SFP) where many of the leading crop of filmmakers had their first hand at film making. Nakai has worked in film production locally and internationally. She continues to work and influence film making - as film director and producer at the Zimbabwe Film and Festival Trust.

After a stint at SAFF, she landed a coordinator's post at the Zimbabwe Film and Television Allied Workers Union (ZIFTAWU) that introduced her to the Zimbabwean film community replete with its challenges. The experience jolted her to be more determined in building robust film institutions, a zeal that also manifested in her at the Zimbabwe International Film Festival Trust. In pursuit of quenching her thirst for film production, Nakai enrolled for a short course in filmmaking at the UNESCO Film and Television Training Project in Harare. The project was run by the well respected Mozambican, Pedro Pimento who imparted a wealth of knowledge on Nakai and other film producers. On completing the course in 1994, Nakai joined Zimmedia, a small independent film and video production outfit founded by Simon Bright in 1987. While there, she worked in various coordinating roles for a number of the company's film projects that included: Tree Seeds (Documentary), SADC Music Festival (Music compilation video), and Dance for Peace (Documentary). It was during this period that Nakai worked on a Liberation War feature film -Flame.

Since 2001 Nakai has worked on many film productions, making her one of the most important producers of her generation. She continues to inspire many young filmmakers under impossible circumstances. Models of filmmaking developed by her and others during this era will inspire many, not just in Zimbabwe but around the world. She boasts of an avalanche of film productions under her belt and her iconic stature in the industry, particularly amongst female practitioners remains motivational.

Nicholas Zakaria

Musician

Born in 1956 to parents of Malawian extraction in the Mazowe area, Nicholas Zakaria was endowed with innate musical skills that manifested at an early age hitherto. Nicholas' father, Maluva Chekani, was a musician and it was he who influenced Nicholas to become an accomplished musician. By the age of eight, Nicholas could already play the guitar with the aplomb of a veteran. At age 14, he formed his band christened the Green Mangoes and cut short his pursuit of secondary education. Consumed with the passion for music, he left his place of birth Mazowe for Harare, initially settling in Dzivaresekwa, where he soon found himself in the company of other musicians such as Shepherd Chinyani. Together they formed Vhuka Boys, just before independence. Versatile and oozing with dexterity, Nicholas Zakaria aka Senior Lecturer currently fronts a sungura outfit Khiama Boys.

The moniker Senior Lecturer emanates from his coaching and mentorship of equally renowned musicians Alick Macheso and the late System Tazvida. Displaying selflessness, Madzibaba Nicholas as he is also affectionately known owing to his apostolic religious beliefs strongly believes in nurturing talented and upcoming sungura musicians. The phenomenal growth of sungura as a musical genre in Zimbabwe is credited to a certain degree to his mentorship and nurturing initiatives. Nicholas remains as the man behind the rise of sungura musicians in the mould of Alick Macheso and System Tazvida including an avalanche of other young ones. He has 27 complete music albums to his credit to date.

His perseverance in music witnessed his latest music album Inzwa Unzwe being nominated in the Best Sungura Album 2020 under the Zimbabwe Music Awards. Held in high esteem for creating one of the most distinct and celebrated sungura sounds in Zimbabwe, Nicholas remains a doyen of local arts, music in particular. He has been in the music industry for many decades and his influence in sungura as a genre reverberates across this music subsector. As evidenced by the nomination of his 27th album for best sungura album, Nicholas is still soldiering on in the highly competitive music industry, proving that he is still a force to reckon with.

Nkululeko Innocent Dube
Writer, Director, Choreographer

Nkululeko Innocent Dube is the brains behind Inkululeko Yabatsha School of Arts (IYASA) who quit the teaching profession to venture into arts full-time. A teacher by profession, Nkululeko started the group as a dance/drama initiative at Mpopoma High School in Bulawayo and turned it into a professional platform for young people involved in the arts.

Dube founded Iyasa to support and promote the best interests of young musicians, dancers, actors and poets. Iyasa pioneered the sub-genre where dance is accompanied by contemporary music through a sound system. The group has since developed to become a resource centre for most established and upcoming artists, especially actors, poets, musicians, singers and dancers.

He also established **Isiphiwo Sami** talent search as a vehicle for training scholars and teachers in secondary schools in theatre and other art genres.

Dube has led IYASA to several local and international awards including three National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) in the Best Dance Group category, the NAMA Video of The Year award, NAMA People's Choice Dance Group award and the Zimbabwe Music Awards (ZIMA) Best Dance Group category. In 2016 he scooped an award for Best Music in the production “Mein Bauenhof” (My Farm House) at the Austrian Stells awards with IYASA. The musical portrayed the differences and similarities of children growing up in a farmhouse in Europe and Africa.

While Iyasa has become popular in Zimbabwe for Dance, it also delves into theatre where Dube’s theatre productions make use of various art forms such as dance and music, which add more flavour to his work, making it stand out even more. He has also pioneered in collaborative productions including the production ‘Black & White Ain’t No Colours’, a collaboration between a German theatre group and Iyasa. He has utilised such collaborations to broaden cultural freedom digging deeper into various aspects of people’s cultures and building bridges among people from different nationalities and belief systems.

With Iyasa Nkululeko has nurtured various talented artists including Sandra Ndebele, Nomathamsanqa “Nkwali” Mkhwananzi, Roben Mlauzi and Futurelove Sibanda.

Dube is a true living legend as he introduced the concept of accompanying dance with contemporary music and nostalgic urban costumes while Iyasa has become an incubation hub, where he has developed and nurtured Artists who have become household names outside the confines of the group.

Phathisa Nyathi

Writer/Historian

Born in Kezi, Matobo district in Matabeleland South in 1951, Nyathi's writing career began in 1988 with the publication of **Ngilecala** a short story published by the Literature Bureau which was followed in 1990 by the play **Kunzima Malokazana** and **Vulingqondo** a Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) Ndebele revision book. **Igugu Lika Mthwakazi** a history of the Ndebele from 1820 -1893 was published in 1994 with its sequel **Madoda Lolani Incukuthu** following in 1996 covering the 1896 Ndebele resistance to colonialism. Its sequel was **Uchuku Olungelandiswe** published in 1999 c dealing with Ndebele history during the colonial period.

The veteran writer has produced most of his works in IsiNdebele with a view that it enables constant development of the language to achieve a rich cultural heritage for future generations. His publications **Material Culture of AmaNdebele** (2000) and **The Traditional Ceremonies of AmaNdebele** (2003) have been Nyathi's contribution to the preservation of Ndebele art and Culture with his publications.

Nyathi's passion for Zimbabwean arts and culture have seen him take up various responsibilities in arts and other organisations. These include Secretary-General, Zimbabwe Writers Union (1989-19990, Deputy Director, Mthwakazi Actors and Writers Association (MAWA) Chairman of the Bulawayo Branches of the Zimbabwe Academic and Non-Fiction Authors Association (ZANA) and the Zimbabwe Writers Union (ZWU); Committee Member, Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee of Zimbabwe (2009). He has also sat on the boards of various Arts related institutions including the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF 1989-1998), the Zimbabwe Book Development Council (ZBDC), Mambo Press Editorial Advisory Board, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings (ZBH) and Intwasa Arts Festival KoBulawayo

In 2018 Nyathi was a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) for his contribution to the Cultural and Creative Sector in Zimbabwe. He has championed local storytelling and cultural presentations. He has sought to document the history of prominent Zimbabweans from Matabeleland whose different contributions to the history and development of Zimbabwe had remained largely untold. In 1998 he published **In Search of Freedom: Masotsha Ndlovu** a biography of one of the country's national heroes. He followed this with **Alvord Mabhena: The Man and His Roots** (2000) chronicling the life of the former long-serving General Manager of the National Railways of Zimbabwe. In 2020 he completed a biography on Rebecca Mabhena nee Dlodlo, the widow of prominent nationalist and national hero Welshman Mabhena. He also published a moving account on the life of Stanford Sithole aka Dumisani Tembo/ Dakamela, a Zipra guerrilla and another on the life of Dauti Salatiel Mabusa, a captivating story of a prominent businessman and farmer who was detained and imprisoned multiple times during the liberation struggle

In 2010 Nyathi founded Amagugu International Heritage Centre (AIHC) in Bulawayo to promote the documentation, preservation and promotion of indigenous cultural heritage. The centre provides a venue and organises a variety of cultural, educational and recreational programmes for the public to learn and appreciate different facets of indigenous heritage, history and cultural context. The centre is a culmination of a lifetime of work in research, preservation and promoting Zimbabwean Art and Cultural practices.

In a writing career spanning over 30 years, Nyathi has become the leading voice in the preservation of Zimbabwean Arts and culture. His thrust on Ndebele history, cultural practices and biographies of prominent personalities makes him a legend His work transcends cultural boundaries and seeks to create a reservoir of knowledge for future generations on the origins of the state and its leading practices and traditional figures.

Paul Chidyausiku

Writer

Born in 1927, Paul Chidyausiku is one of the revered pioneers of the literary arts genre in Zimbabwe. Indeed, he is the epitome of excellence in the art of writing. He wrote the first Shona play *Ndakambokuyambira* to be published in 1968. At the time it was published, the play was his fifth book. He was also a journalist and worked for Moto Magazine as an editor. Chidyausiku went to an Agricultural College and taught Agriculture for many years before he went back to school to train as a journalist at the London School of Journalism in England.

He worked for Mambo Press as an Editor for Moto Magazine. Chidyausiku moved on to the Literature Bureau as an Editorial Officer. He next moved on to the Ministry of Information as Assistant Director, Branch of Foreign Services. He was later invited to join Zimbabwe Newspapers to pioneer a newspaper in Shona called Kwayedza. He was one of the first few Shona writers to be published in Zimbabwe in the 1950s.

He has had nine books published in Shona – one of which is a collection of Shona poems which won him an award, and one in English – *Broken Roots*. Some of his poems in English were included in anthologies like *Voices from Africa* published in England, *A Century of Poetry in Southern Africa*, an anthology in Australia, one in Namibia and two in Zimbabwe. His writings are deep-rooted in Shona Traditions as demonstrated by his reverence for an African mother. A novelist, playwright, poet and journalist, he is known in Zimbabwe for his excellent Shona novels, plays and poetry, some of which received awards. Indeed, Paul is a pioneering figure in terms of writing. What makes him stand out is his love of writing in his language – Shona.

Over the years he has written numerous books predominantly in the Shona language like *Karumekangu* (1970), Longman Zimbabwe, *Kuyaruka Kwomukomana* (1991), Mambo Press, Gweru, *Kuyaruka Kwomusikana* (1991), Mambo Press, Gweru, *Kuziva Mbuya Huudzwa: Kurera Nokurumura* (1967), Mambo Press, Gweru amongst others.

Paul remains an influential figure in the literary arts whose writings play a pivotal role in perpetuating the Zimbabwean way of life and the role of the African woman (mother) in the family set up. He uses the art of writing in conveying critical messages that build the home, community and ultimately the nation. His books will always be a source of valuable information and inspiration. They inform, entertain and educate, all at the same time.

Rashid Joguee

Visual Artist

The late Rashid Joguee was born in Bulawayo. He started painting at the age of nineteen and between 1973 - 1976 Study of textile design at Mzilikazi Art and Craft Centre and he continued his training between 1976 - 1978 Studying applied arts and design at the Bulawayo Technical Collage.

Joguee was famous for his colourful abstract and expressionist compositions; He uses watercolour, acrylic, and also carves stone. He is Zimbabwe's most independent and original artists, who works in a variety of styles and techniques in which, mood and visual apparitions of nature, cities, and people are captured in line, pattern, symbol and gesture. Famous for these spontaneous colourful compositions, Joguee's idiosyncratic works transcend the attention of market forces and shun commercialism.

Joguee had over forty-eight exhibitions in Zimbabwe, as well as exhibitions in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, England, USA, Denmark, and Sweden. In 2013 he represented Zimbabwe at the Venice Biennale. In the 1992 he received the Presidential Award of Excellence for his contribution and outstanding dedication to the development of the visual arts in Zimbabwe. In 2006 he received the Intwasa Festival Award.

Joguee conducted numerous workshops in Murewa, Cyrene and Marondera in Zimbabwe and Thapong in Botswana. He has held numerous solo exhibitions in Zimbabwe including "Retrospective Exhibition of Rashid Joguee's Work," National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo (2012) in 2012. "**Rashid Joguee**", National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo (2001), "**Colour Fields & Inner Landscapes**", Gallery Delta, Harare (1992), "**Rashid Joguee and Richard Jack**", Gallery Delta, Harare (1990), "**Rashid Joguee and Berry Bickle**", Avenue Nine Gallery, Bulawayo (1989) and "**Rashid Joguee and Stephen Williams**", Gallery Delta, Harare, (1978).

He had been part of other numerous exhibitions where he entered his work in Group Exhibitions including "Colour Africa" in Munich Germany (2011), "**34 Years Plus: The Gallery Delta Benefit Exhibition**", (2009), "**Transitions. Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Collection of Robert Loder of the Triangle Trust, The Brunei Gallery, School of Oriental an African Studies**", London, England (2005), "**Harare Biennale**", National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare (2004) "**4th International Artists Residency at the Godown Art Centre**:", Nairobi (2003), "**Kunst in Zimbabwe**, Iwalewa-Haus, Bayreuth, Germany (2001), "**African contemporary art. Sculptures and paintings from Zimbabwe and Uganda** ", Art Transit, Berlin, German(1995) and "**Contemporary Art from Southern Africa: Art from the Frontline**", Glasgow Art Gallery, London, England (1990).

He's works have also been featured in numerous publications including Murray and Barbara's Transitions. Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe 1960 – 2004, "Notes on my Involvement in Art Making in Southern Africa over Two Decades" by Robert Loder and "Changing Seasons", notes from a meeting with Rashid Joguee by Voti Thebe.

Joguee had been active in the arts for over 3 decades and was considered one of the god fathers of contemporary art in Zimbabwe. He has taught at Mzilikazi Arts and Craft Centre as well as Founders High school in Bulawayo imparting knowledge and grooming young talent in the city.

Shimmer Chinodya

Writer

Belonging to a rare class of exceptional writers, Shimmer Chinodya is a novelist born in 1964 in the City of Gweru. He can be classified as an elder in the literary arts genre. Shimmer studied at Mambo Primary School. He was expelled from Goromonzi High School after demonstrating against Ian Smith's government. He graduated from the University of Zimbabwe, and the University of Iowa, with an MA in creative writing, in 1985. His political consciousness had a bearing on his writings that are pregnant with latent meanings and expressions. He won the 1990 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the Africa region. Most of his novels were prescribed to be set books (worthy to be studied in high schools) by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education such as *Harvest of Thorns* (which won the Commonwealth Writer's Award for the Best Book in Africa in 1990). Besides, some of his accolades include the following: National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) Outstanding Book for Strife (2007) and the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa. Some of his writings were even studied in tertiary institutions. Chinodya also wrote the script of the award-winning film, *Everyone's Child*.

The Noma Award for Publishing in Africa arguably remains one of the outstanding awards that he scooped in his literary arts colourful journey. *Dew in the Morning*, *Harvest of Thorns*, *Child of War* amongst others, are some of the outstanding books penned by this iconic figure in the literary arts genre. Like other earlier educated writers, he became a teacher from 1981–83, and subsequently a curriculum developer under the Ministry of Education. In 1985, he graduated with a Masters Degree in Creative Writing from the University of Iowa in the United States of America (USA). Between 1995 and 1997, Shimmer Chinodya was at the University of St Lawrence in the USA where he was a Distinguished Visiting Professor.

His call as a prolific writer came early in his life. Shimmer began to write short stories after he had completed his primary education. He wrote his first novel, *Dew in the Morning* when he was just 18; the novel was however published in 1982. Since then, Chinodya began to bask in glory publishing novels, ranging from children's storybooks, secondary school textbooks (Step Ahead: New Secondary School English Coursebook 1-4) and numerous poems in different anthologies. Two of his novels were translated into German is *Harvest of Thorns and Strife*. *Harvest of Thorns* was presented as a play during the Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA) 2013 edition. His peers in writing include late iconic heroes like Chenjerai Hove Dambudzo Marechera and Charles Mungoshi. Several anthologies also contain his writings like *Soho Square* (1990), *Writer's Territory* (1999) and *Tenderfoots* 2001.

The story of the development of literary arts in Zimbabwe can never be complete without the name Shimmer Chinodya. Like his peers alluded to above, he is a rousing figure in the art of writing.

Stella Rambisai Chiweshe

Musician

Stella Chiweshe is undoubtedly Zimbabwe's Queen of mbira and one of the country's foremost cultural export. Accompanying her swooping vocals on mbira, Stella Chiweshe has taken the traditional Zimbabwean Shona music to the international stage. Born on the 8th July in 1946 in Mujumi Village in Mhondoro, Stella was taught to play the mbira by her mother's uncle in the 1960s at a time when it was forbidden for a woman to play the instrument. Her recording career started with the release of the single "Kasahwa" which achieved gold status after clinching a recording deal with Teal records. In 1979 she formed her own "Earthquake Band" to promote her recordings which were being poorly marketed by the record company.

After Independence, she joined the National Dance Company of Zimbabwe as a Mbira soloist, actress and dancer. With this group, she performed in Mozambique, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, India, China and Korea. In 1986 she introduced marimba for Mbira music thus pioneering in this field combining mbira with marimba traditional instruments and she took the combination to the international stage. Her career spanning 40 includes being part of the 1987 **Beat Apartheid Road Festival** in Germany, while between 1992-93 she toured Greece, Turkey and throughout Europe. In 1994 she played solo in front of more than 10,000 people at the **Womad Festival** in North America. In 1998 she was part of the Global Divas" tour in the United States of America. In 1999 she featured in a collaboration project with the **Dimensions Dance Theatre** in Oakland (USA) as well as performing at the **World Music Festival** (Hungary), Kalaka Festival (Slovenia). In 2006 she had Solo concerts in England, Italy, Germany and participated at the WOMAD festival in Caceres/Spain.

Among a host of other Awards, Mbuya Stella Chiweshe won the 1993 **Billboard Music Award** for the Adult/Alternative/World Music Album of the Year for "Kumusha". She was awarded the **National Arts Merit Award** (NAMA) in 2006 for being the most outstanding female artist in Zimbabwe. In 2020 she was awarded the **NAMA Lifetime Achievement Award** in recognition of her contribution to the Zimbabwean music sector and her innovativeness that has won her music wide acclaim. Mbuya Stella Chiweshe is therefore a true legend of the Zimbabwe Cultural and Creative Sector carrying the tag of being the brand ambassador of the Zimbabwean culture recognising her hard work in spreading the Zimbabwean culture across the globe-spanning over 4 decades.

Stephen Chigorimbo

Director

Born in 1951, Stephen Chigorimbo began film making in 1974 after landing a part alongside Christopher Lee in the movie *Dracula*. He quickly found himself behind the camera and rose through the ranks while undergoing professional training as an actor, assistant director and coordinator in the film industry. A renowned scriptwriter and director, Stephen has produced over 100 documentaries, feature films and television programmes. As a writer and film director, he rose to fame with a popular Zimbabwean soap opera *Studio 263* in which he effectively played the role of John Huni. In recognition of his sterling work in the cultural and creative industries, he was once appointed to serve on the Board of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe. A founder member of *Sithengi*, he also served at FEPACI as Regional Secretary from 2006 to 2013.

Locally, Stephen is extremely famous for featuring in Zimbabwe's groundbreaking and first-ever television soap opera, *Studio 263* that premiered in September 2002 and became very well-liked by the country's populace. Also, he is celebrated by many people as an icon, a director, scriptwriter and actor par-excellence not only in the Zimbabwean film industry but regionally, continentally and internationally as well.

Stephen Chigorimbo was one of the assistant directors for a movie called "*Cry Freedom*" which featured international actors such as Denzel Washington. Featuring in a movie called "*Odium*" in 2014 which was directed by ex-mate at *Studio 263* Ben Mahaka who played the role of Tom Mbambo was another milestone in his continuing illustrious career in the film industry. Stephen also featured in two prominent movies - "*King Solomon's Mines*" directed by actress Sharon Stone and the "*Forbidden Fruit*" in 2013.

His phenomenal rise to fame in the local movie industry happened when he featured in *Studio 263* as John Huni, a central figure in the movie who influenced the flow of every episode. It was in this production where he worked with the likes of Anne Nhira and Tatenda Mavetera who later became influential figures in the local film industry. *Studio 263* was a launchpad for most actors' careers, yet Chigorimbo was marking a third decade in the arts industry when he joined the soap.

The film industry in Zimbabwe owes its growth and development to iconic gurus in the mould of Stephen Chigorimbo. Many practitioners today draw inspiration from his outstanding and groundbreaking works in the film sector.

Susan Chenjerai

Actress

Belonging to that golden generation of theatre practitioners who practised what was then known as sketches (skits) that usually spiced musical performances, Susan Chenjerai was, before abandoning the arts arena an actor and musician par excellence. She is well known for portraying the famous “Mai Rwizi” character that entertained people through music and acting in the drama series *Mhuri yaVaMukadota*. The character Mai Rwizi in the Mukadota comedy series was very popular for family viewing even to this day. The comedy series remains classic even today. A veteran of the showbiz sphere from the early 1950s, Susan Chenjerai during her heydays exhibited that rare talent in both music and acting (drama).

She joined Safirio Madzikatire aka Mukadota's band Safe Brothers in 1969. Before joining the Safe Brothers she was part of the Bantu Actors in 1951 and with Marandellas Bush Babies in 1958. She also worked with big names such as the Wagon Wheels, a band where she met Oliver Mtukudzi before working with Mukadota. From the early 1950s up until she retired from the acting/music scene she was at the peak of her trade, particularly acting. The character Mai Rwizi left an everlasting mark in the minds of drama/theatre consumers around the nation. With the aplomb of a veteran that she was during her acting and music career, Susan Chenjerai portrayed the character Mai Rwizi who was Mukadota's wife with exceptional finesse. The character Mai Rwizi was portrayed in *Mhuri yekwaMataka* and later, *Mhuri yaVaMukadota*, two drama productions that were extremely popular with audiences and are proving to be immortal even to this day.

Since the time she retired from the arts, Susan is revered in the arts sector as one of the first female actresses to foray into the music jungle where she worked with big names such as the Wagon Wheels, a band where she met superstar Oliver “Tuku” Mtukudzi before working with the late comedian Safirio Madzikatire as earlier alluded to above. The fact that she worked with late legends like Dr Oliver Mtukudzi and Safirio Madzikatire speaks volumes about the aesthetic that she is endowed with. By venturing into the male-dominated musical/acting sphere then, replete with patriarchic leanings, she displayed utter resolve and determination to pursue her passion in music and later acting whatever consequences coming from society. During her active years in the performing arts genre, women were highly discouraged to venture into music let alone acting. The arts, music and acting, in particular, were generically regarded as areas for people of loose morals, women in particular. She rode the storm and in the process paved the way for other women artists who are emulating her in the highly competitive music and acting arena.

Her role in arts development was recognized through the NAMA award that was bestowed on her, a lifetime achievement in the art of acting in particular. The development of music and acting in Zimbabwe can never be narrated without mentioning Susan Chenjerai aka Mai Rwizi. That revered character Mai Rwizi remains even today highly educational and informative in-so-far-as it relates to the role of the female folk in a family set-up, a black family in particular.

Susan Hains
Theatre

Susan Hains grew up in Harare where in her youth she studied dance and acting. She went on to study acting at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London and then worked in the industry in the United Kingdom.

She pursued interest and skill working in film and TV as a Make-up Artist and on Continuity. She continued to work in these roles in the Zimbabwean film industry. More importantly, she dedicated a larger portion of her life, from the mid-1970s to the present day, supporting and coaching young acting talent in Zimbabwe.

Her support grew to include the support and coaching of scriptwriters and directors. In her role as Chairperson of the National Theatre Organization of Zimbabwe, she was able to extend this work to embrace and include all Zimbabweans. In this role, she facilitated the contribution from a wide range of artists and experts to develop and decolonize Zimbabwean Theatre making it more inclusive.

Susan was instrumental in the creation of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe Act which saw the establishment of the NACZ from the ashes of the National Arts Foundation. The arts Council Act mandated the new body to foster, develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in Zimbabwe.

She assisted many artists to work in this field to establish a strong and diverse voice that represents the Zimbabwean Society. Her influence and support can be found somewhere at the base and foundation of many of Zimbabwe's successful, actors, writers, and directors.

She has had a life-long commitment to the Arts and her role includes nurturing theatre producers, directors and administrators who have become the backbone of the industry in Zimbabwe today.

Sylvester Mubayi

Visual Artist

Belonging to the internationally acclaimed class of the first generation stone sculptors, Sylvester Mubayi was born in 1942. He joined the Tengenenge Sculpture Community in 1967 as one of its first members and later worked at the Workshop School founded by Frank McEwen in Vukutu. He has also served as an artist in residence at the Chapungu Sculpture Park. Mubayi currently lives and works in Chitungwiza; his sculptures are inspired by stories of spirits and the supernatural. The National Gallery of Zimbabwe held a retrospective of his life's work in August 2008 to much acclaim.

Sylvester Mubayi is a venerated old man, one of the first generation of Zimbabwean stone sculptors to achieve international exposure and acclaim. Like most first-generation stone sculptors of his time, their works were/are heavily influenced by highly cherished values and beliefs, and as an elder, he teaches and advises the younger members of his community through metaphor and storytelling – and his sculptures always tell a story as well.

Sylvester is one of the last surviving links to the early days of modern Zimbabwean stone sculpting. His ability to pay attention to detail echoes in all his artworks resulting in him being singled out as one of the finest artists to emerge in Zimbabwe in terms of stone sculpting. Way back in 1969, he scooped the Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Award subsequently bagging other accolades and recognitions from the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. The period 1967 up to 1990 witnessed Sylvester blossoming into a national and international icon through his regular participation in high profile exhibitions, most of them hosted by the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. The spectacular exhibitions that he participated in include *Solo Exhibition*, Somerset, UK, *Custom and Legend: A Culture in Stone*, Kew Gardens, London and *Sculpture Contemporaine des Shona d'Afrique*, Musée Rodin, Paris amongst others. Sylvester was also included as one of the top ten sculptors in the world by The Guardian in 1991.

The 1980s saw him being a major participant in most of the group and solo exhibitions hosted by the Chapungu Sculpture Park and Matombo Gallery, aesthetic spaces run by Roy Guthrie and the late Roy Cook respectively. He travelled a long artistic beginning at Tengenenge spanning decades. 2017 witnessed this revered artist making history by being the first artist from the older generation to attend and participate in the 57th Venice Biennale. His attendance and participation was facilitated by the National Gallery of Zimbabwe.

With his best works being flaunted in a number of world museums, galleries and public places and universities, including private collections, Sylvester symbolizes the development of stone sculpting and how this form of art that is uniquely Zimbabwean penetrated the world market. Together with others of his ilk (both living and dead), they are the epitome of Zimbabwean stone sculpting art and their footprints will forever remain embossed on the international art scene, particularly stone carving.

Tapfuma Gutsa

Visual Artist

Born in 1956, Tapfuma Gutsa is one of the visual artists who received formal training in sculpting. Domiciled in Harare, he studied sculpture with others like Cornelius Manguma at the Driefontein Mission School. Exceptional exploits during his study of sculpture saw him becoming the first black Zimbabwean recipient of a British Council award. The scholarship allowed him to study in London from 1982 until 1985, where he received a diploma in sculpture from the City and Guilds of London School of Art. In essence, unlike self-taught visual arts practitioners, he is a formally trained sculptor and this explains the uniqueness of aesthetic works.

Tapfuma Gutsa is unusual among Zimbabwean stone sculptors for the breadth of materials he uses in his artworks; his sculptures incorporate metal, paper, wood, and other foreign materials. His winning sculpture at the Nedlaw exhibition, 1987, comprised smouldering grass engulfing a wooden bird. Wood sculpting is also in his blood. Besides mentoring Dominic Benhura, he also played a pivotal role in nurturing other visual artists like Fabian Madamombe. At one point he once worked at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Harare holding a senior post but he is predominantly an artist rather than an arts administrator hence his decision to concentrate on creation rather than arts administration.

In 2007, he was one of the eleven international artists commissioned by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, to produce works for an exhibition titled 'Uncomfortable Truths: The Shadow of Slave Trading on Contemporary Art'. This was a direct result of his outstanding artworks with an international appeal that led to his selection.

As exemplified by the numerous art exhibitions, workshops and residence programmes that he has held and participated in, Tapfuma Gutsa is an internationally acclaimed visual artist. Examples inter alia include the following, Xayamaca Workshop Crystal Springs, Jamaica, and Contemporary Stone Sculpture from Zimbabwe. Others are Yorkshire Sculpture Park UK, Artist's Residency at Delfina Studios London, England and Contemporary African Art, Studio Museum, Harlem New York City, USA. Also, he participated in regional programmes like Ujamaa Art Workshop Exhibition and the Center for Brazilian Studies Maputo, Mozambique. Such programmes cover national ones too like Pachipamwe/ZIM-Sculpture Workshop Shurugwi, Zimbabwe and the President's Award of Honor, Zimbabwe Heritage Exhibition amongst others.

Tapfuma Gutsa's contribution to the development of the visual arts sector in Zimbabwe is being felt far and wide. He has a passion for creating and enjoying harmony between nature and visual art creations. Also, he cherishes unearthing creativity from marginalized and usually remote communities of Zimbabwe. Gutsa continues to play a critical role in the development and growth of the visual arts sector, particularly through his zeal in imparting valuable knowledge and skills to young and upcoming visual artists. Dominic Benhura and others remain living examples of products of his mentorship and coaching initiatives.

Thomas Mapfumo

Musician

Since joining his first band, the Zutu Brothers, as a singer at the age of 16 Thomas Tafienyika Mapfumo has grown to become one of Zimbabwe's most popular musicians famed for Chimurenga Music a sub-genre of traditional protest music that he created and popularized.

Born in 1945 in Marondera Thomas created his first band, the Hallelujah Chicken Run Band 1972 and introduced the innovation of adapting traditional Shona music to modern rock instrumentation. Working with guitarist Joshua Dube he began to transcribe the sounds of the chief instrument of traditional Shona music, the mbira to the electric guitar and began singing primarily in the Shona language.

The Rhodesian regime took his drawing on the native musical tradition and singing in his native language as a political statement. His lyrics became overtly political, supporting the revolution that was developing in the rural areas. His songs openly called for the violent overthrow of the government, with lyrics like "Mothers, send your sons to the war" and "Hokoyo!", which means "Watch out!" The government banned the record from the state-controlled radio and threw him into a prison camp without charges in 1979. Large demonstrations in protest of his arrest and an inability to trump up charges against him forced the government to release him after three months.

At independence, Mapfumo performed at the celebratory concert which also featured Bob Marley and went on to release a string of songs celebrating the country's independence. Thomas transformed his revolutionary music to social and political commentary on post-independence Zimbabwe. His 1989 Album Corruption was in response to the Willowvale Motor Industries scandal the biggest post-independence scandal which claimed the scalps of some cabinet ministers.

Having settled in Oregon in the United States of America, Thomas Mapfumo has continued to tour internationally and occasionally Zimbabwe his country of birth where he performs in front of sell-out crowds. His music continues to provide commentary about the situation in Zimbabwe. Thomas is a true living legend of Zimbabwean music with over 30 albums and numerous singles to his name released after independence. His chimurenga style of music influenced other Zimbabwean musicians, including the Bhundu Boys, Stella Chiweshe, Jonah Sithole, Pio Farai Macheke and many others. He has mentored and taught many young musicians and has taken and popularized.

Tsitsi Dangarembga
Film Producer/Writer

A pioneering female artist in the area of filmmaking, playwriting and authoring novels, Tsitsi Dangarembga was born in 1959 in Mutoko. Her debut novel, *Nervous Conditions* (1988), which was the first to be published in English by a Black woman from Zimbabwe, was named by the BBC in 2018 as one of the top 100 books that have shaped the world. In 2020, her novel *This Mournable Body* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize.

In 1989, Dangarembga went to Germany to study film production inclusive of directing at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin. She produced several films while in Berlin, including a documentary aired on German television. In 1992, she founded Nyerai Films, a production company based in Harare. She wrote the story for the 1993 film *Neria*, which became the highest-grossing film in Zimbabwean history. Her 1996 film *Everyone's Child*, the first feature film directed by a black Zimbabwean woman, was shown internationally, including at the Dublin International Film Festival.

In 2002, she founded the International Images Film Festival. Her 2005 film *Kare Kare Zvako* won the Short Film Award and Golden Dhow at the Zanzibar International Film Festival, and the African Short Film Award at the Milan Film Festival. Her 2006 film *Peretera Maneta* received the UNESCO Children's and Human Rights Award and won the Zanzibar International Film Festival. She is the executive director of the organization Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe and the founding director of the Women's Film Festival Trust. Over the years Tsitsi produced more than 20 films inclusive of the following productions, *High Hopes*, *At the Water*, *Peretera Maneta*, *I Want a Wedding Dress* amongst many others.

While studying Psychology at the University of Zimbabwe, she joined the university drama club and wrote and directed several of the plays the group performed. She also became involved with the theatre group Zambuko, during which she participated in the production of two plays, *Katshaa* and *Mavambo*.

Tsitsi remains inspirational to many filmmakers, particularly of the womenfolk. She ventured into filmmaking when the industry was overly dominated by men. Her experience in racial discrimination and white supremacy that she experienced in the United Kingdom shaped her determination in breaking male domination in the art of film making. Internationally and locally, the Zimbabwean literary arts can never be navigated without encountering the name Tsitsi Dangarembga. Her literary works remain iconic and very influential to many young female writers. She ably demonstrates her prowess as a novelist as well as a playwright is evidenced by the following works, *She No Longer Weeps*, *Lost of the Soil*, all plays of immense reputation amongst others and iconic novels like *Nervous Conditions* and *The Mournable Body*, just as examples.

Zexie Manatsa
Singer/songwriter

Zimbabwean music legend, singer, songwriter, and bass player. He is known for his several hits released while fronting the Green Arrows. Zexie was born on 1 January 1944. And he launched his musical career in 1959 in Mhangura, Zimbabwe, at the age of 17 with his young brothers performing covers as Mambo Jazz Band.

He formed the Green Arrows Band in 1968 after relocating to Bulawayo, for which he provided lead vocals and played bass and they played cover versions of popular songs. In 1972, the Green Arrows began writing their songs to mass appeal. South African saxophonist West Nkosi, who was also a consultant for Gallo Records, discovered the band and became their producer in the 70s. The resulting album, "*Chipo Chiroorwa*", sold so well and the band moved to the capital city of Harare.

Zex released many tracks which have proved to be all-time hits such as "*Bambo Mwakwatila*", "*Vaparidzi Vawanda*", "*Mwana Waenda*", "*Chechule Anavala Bottom*", and "*Chimwamuna Chamimba*". Their track "*Musango Mune Hangaiwa*" stayed at number one in Zimbabwe's pop charts for a staggering 17 weeks

In 1979, Manatsa made history when he got married to his long-time partner, Stella where he chose Rufaro Stadium as the venue for the wedding, and fans would pay \$1 each to witness the ceremony. On August 25, 1979, Rufaro Stadium was full to the brim with excited fans who had come to witness the amazing "Wedding of the Year".

Manatsa's low, raspy lead vocals and bass playing defined the group's sound, while his brother Stanley played the lead guitar. Manatsa remained popular in the post-independence era, producing hits such as *Chivaraidze* and the swooning *Tii Hobvu*. Zexie is with no doubt the father of pre-and post-independence Zimbabwean music as he was instrumental in playing traditional music as evidenced by his hits such as *Madzangara Dzimu*, *Nyoka Yendara*, *Mudzimu Ndiringe*, and *Tsuro*, songs which had pro-liberation innuendos. Many guerillas had used his house as a base and he had become a marked man by the Smith regime for singing pro-liberation songs.

Zex inspired many musicians of his era such as Oliver Mtukudzi (Late), James Chimombe (Late), Lovemore Majaivana, Tinei Chikupo, Leonard Dembo (Late), Thomas Mapfumo, and Simon Chimbetu (Late). While working in Bulawayo in the 1960s, Zexie encouraged the inclusion of musical skills at Jairos Jiri Centre and through his efforts, the first Jairos Jiri Band known as the Sunrise Kwela Kings was formed. Zex thus played a key role in giving guidance and support for success to many top Zimbabwe.