



PC 111121/14

SA INFO = 325-787

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Michael Zondi

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With Kumalo, Zondi was the first Black sculptor to represent South Africa at an international exhibition held at Vienna in 1966. Born on the 10th March 1926 in the Greytown district, Natal. Zondi spent his childhood at Emtulwa, a Swedish Lutheran Mission at New Hanover, Natal. He was educated at various schools in the Natal midlands including Dundee. From 1945 to 1949 he ran his own carpentry shop at Edendale. During this time at the age of 25 he started wood-carving, which is still his chief medium.

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cartoon Zondi working at his carpentry shop at Edendale.

2. He has continued to enlarge his knowledge with remarkable perserverance. From 1956-1961 he served as instructor at the Edendale Vocational training school. In 1961 he left Edendale and made a venture into architecture by designing and executing the beautiful chapel at the Appelsbosch Mission hospital in Natal. Zondi is married and has six children and still resides in Natal toeday.

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cartoon - Zondi working on the chapel at Appelsbosch Mission.

3. As he never received any art training Zondi spontaneously developed his own very personal and sincere style, for which his medium woodcarving is most suited. Life was his teacher. The motivating force of his creativity arises from an innate urge to express and interpret human experience and life through the human face and figure. His approach pivots on 2 major factors; his profound love for his fellowman in his day to day plight and his never faltering belief in and respect for the dignity of all human beings. Technically Zondi is uncomplicated with a direct but well developed style. In 1961 he won a bronze medal at the Republic Day Art Exhibition and has since scored a number of successes. He represented SA at the Venice Biennale in 1966. His work is contained in many private and public collections in SA the UK, the USA, Canada, Sweden, Germany and Holland. He has carved crucifixes for several churches in Sweden and SA among st them a life sized crucifix in Blackwood for the Hospital Chapel at Appelsbosch Natal.

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cartoon - Zondi working on one of his sculptures

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examples of his work are in 'Contemporary African Art in South Africa' by E.J. de Jager.

*He has recently exhibit in Paris - Oct - Nov '76  
MR Bell  
Sept '77  
14 Black Artists*