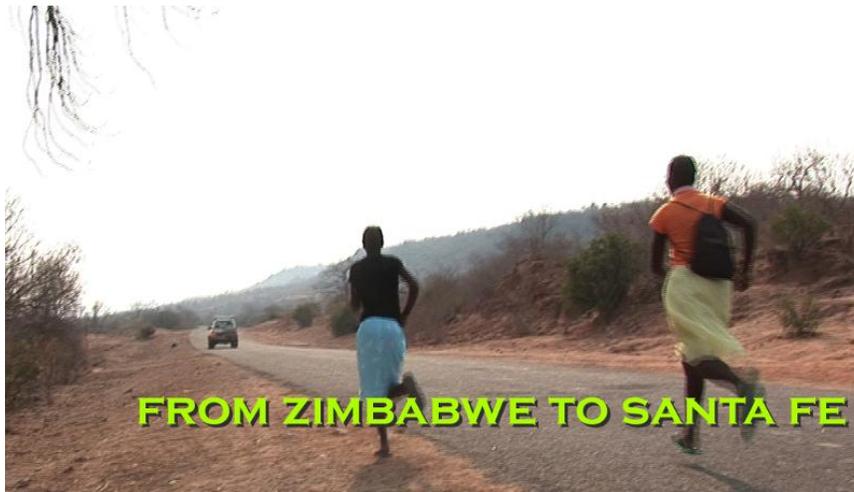


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You're receiving this email because you expressed an interest in the basket makers of Siansundu, Zimbabwe. This update brings you news of their continuing story and how their documentary film is progressing. Please [confirm](#) your continued interest in receiving email from us. To ensure that you continue to receive emails from us, add mccandless@cybermesa.com to your address book today.

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What's up

April 2011 Production Update

From Zimbabwe to Santa Fe, a 60-minute documentary film, follows two years in the lives of rural Zimbabwean folk artists, Matron from Siansundu and Gogo and Sindiso from Masendu, chronicling their harrowing journey toward the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market.

Barred from Masendu

In our two years of filming in Zim, the government has never interfered. This is partly because the film is sanctioned by the government and partly because our Zimbabwean producers know how to work the system. We rarely talk politics with locals. We travel throughout the country as freely as we would in the States.

It's easy to forget that an autocratic regime runs the country.

Imagine how shocked we were when, during our final days of filming in Zim this February, Johnson Moyo, our liaison with Masendu Ward (Gogo's & Sindiso's home), told us we were not welcome to film in Masendu as we had planned. The reason: a political rally was scheduled and white people wandering around could be dangerous.

You see, Masendu Ward is a stronghold for the ZANU-PF, the President's party. A political rally sponsored by the ZAPU, an opposition party, had been



Background information
about
From Zim
posted on website

News, pictures, videos are
frequently posted on



In This Udate

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[We love Katie](#)

[Birth & the f word](#)

GLOSSARY

SFIFAM

Santa Fe International
Folk Art Market

Gogo, Sindiso, Matron

Our story's heroines

Masendu

Gogo and Sindiso's village

scheduled during our days to shoot in Masendu. Our presence could create conflict within the community, endanger Gogo and Sindiso and possibly land us in jail.



at Gogo's homestead

Gogo and Sindiso's village

Siansundu
Matron's village

Zim
Zimbabwe

Old Man
Current leader of Zim

ROI
Return on Investment

Ironically, this incident emboldened me to ask folks what they saw for Zim's future. Most were shockingly candid. City dwellers, even cab drivers, willingly expressed their exasperation with the outrageous corruption, disintegrating infrastructures, unreliable electricity and 95% unemployment. Some felt the Tunisian solution was possible; some felt it not practical due to the violent tendencies of the of the Zim army, who many believe are really in control.



Ernerst

For those living in rural villages, like Matron's Siansundu, life is very basic. People do what they must to survive. Government is practically irrelevant because it provides absolutely nothing.

Men from rural areas migrate to the cities or South Africa to find jobs. I met Ernerst, our wonderful translator from Siansundu, in Bulawayo where he'd gone in January hoping to find a job. He now spends his days along with thousands of

men, standing in an endless line waiting all day for news of a possible job. It broke my heart seeing this proud, intelligent, talented young man among the thousands who've left home and family only to end up jobless and hungry on the city streets. I really wanted to photograph that human line, but, for the first time in two years, I was scared I'd be arrested.

Unexpected Endings

Filming concludes Feb 2011

We learn in **From Zim's...** final chapter how Matron, Gogo, Sindiso and their communities have changed as a result of reaching for opportunities beyond their traditional borders; physical, emotional and cultural. The richness of following two villages and three heroines lies in the diversity of responses. Everyone's final thoughts reflected the complexity of their journey toward prosperity. You'll have to see **From Zim...** to learn how it all worked out.

Although we weren't allowed to return to Masendu to film, Gogo and Sindiso hitched a ride into Plumtree, about an hours drive from Masendu, to tell us what's been happening. Not to give away too many plot points, but we learned that Gogo, in a surprise move, saved the day for Masendu's



basketmakers and truly earned the title of Heroine. Watch the tiny video about [the Amadlozi](#) to learn more about Gogo's and Sindiso's uncooperative spiritual ancestors.

in Plumtree



Matron

Across Zim, Matron and Siansundu's basket makers told us how their story had concluded. A small peek into Siansundu's ending - Matron used her basket money to buy much of what she'd wished for when we first interviewed her in 2009. The baskets of Siansundu are returning to SFIFAM this July and Matron can't wait to come to Santa Fe and meet her fans.

Her challenge - Getting her U.S. Visa.

Speaking of Matron's Visa

While in Zim, I went to the U.S. Embassy to find out how we could help Matron get her U.S. Visa for this year's SFIFAM. (The filming was done; the story was complete; now I could get involved.) **Summary:** The consular officers in Harare review over 6000 visa applicants a year. Zim has the highest exodus rate of any country in the world (most go to South Africa). The limited time Embassy consulars have for each applicant's interview forces them to make quick decisions about the probability of an applicant illegally staying in the U.S. Consulars are trained to assume each applicant will illegally stay in America, so it's the applicant's responsibility to convince the consular why s/he will return home to Zim. If the applicant doesn't immediately connect on a personal level, or the applicant doesn't answer a question the way a consular wants a question answered, there is a high probability that the applicant's Visa will be rejected.

Evidently, last year Matron didn't connect on a personal level. She spoke too much about her need to support her family rather than how she was selected by her community to represent them in Santa Fe and bring home their sales income. Matron's variety of support documents, including SFIFAM's invitation letter and Gov. Richardson's personal request, were mere incidentals to the process. What can we, as Matron's supporters - as supporters of all the SFIFAM artists facing the U.S. Visa conundrum- do?

Contact: Sec. Clinton, Michelle Obama, Rep. Ben Ray Lujan and Sen. Udall. See the sidebar for their contact info.

Tell them Matron and other SFIFAM artists aren't interested in staying in the States because they are community leaders with standing, families and responsibilities in homeland. They were chosen by their community to represent their community at SFIFAM because they are trusted leaders. Coming home with their community's folk art revenues and the business training

Lobby for Matron's U.S. Visa Approval



CONTACT

Sec Hillary Clinton
7th Floor
U.S. Dept of State
2201 C Street NW
Wash, DC 20520
202-647-5291

Michelle Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Wash, DC 20500
202-456-1414

Ambassador Charles Ray
172 Herbert Chitepo Ave
Harare, Zimbabwe
263-4-250-593/4/5

Rep Ben Ray Lujan
811 St. Michaels Dr.
Suite 104
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505.984.8950
[email](#)

Sen Tom Udall
120 South Federal Place
Suite 302
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-988-6511
[email](#)

SFIFAM provides is their primary goal.

Editor at keyboard Rough-cut screening set for July

The gifted Santa Fe filmmaker Katie Cook has taken on the mind-boggling task of editing **From Zim's...** rough-cut. Katie's unusual ability to draw out the essence of humanity from miles of raw footage, then organize it into an emotionally compelling experience, makes her the perfect editor. I came to know Katie two years ago when I was blown away by the power and precision-editing of her first documentary about a mobile spay and neuter clinic. How could a first time editor produce such a flawless documentary? Every edit Katie makes reflects her intense empathy for all things living. Her second documentary, *Mall Walkers*, recently played to enthusiastic audiences at the 2010 Duke City Doc Fest.



Katie

A rough-cut screening of **From Zim...** is scheduled for the first week in July which is Folk Art Week in Santa Fe. Details are being finalized. Don't miss your chance to be the first to see the first draft and provide feedback.

Fund the Birth Invest in Humanity

We need this baby born in early fall, so it can be submitted to premiere at one of the 2012 winter or spring film festivals. With the audience's feedback from July's rough-cut screening, we will start the final stages of labor.

The finish-cut stage is the most expensive stage of our process, demanding copious quantities of the **f** word: **FUNDING**. Yeah, \$50,000 for soundtrack, finish-cut editor, color, sound, subtitles, post-production facility.

In a world saturated with misunderstanding, hate and violence, little stories about the everyday lives from around the world have never been more important to bridge the cultural canyons that perpetuate global hostilities. Financial support from you is essential for us independent filmmakers to make these stories available to the world.

Come on! Dare to be part of the birthing!

You love our heroines, you understand the global significance of their story, you've witnessed the film's progress, you feel the film's potential, let's push together!

Big push, little push, tax deductible contribution, direct contribution, or investment

Thank you

Karen, Audrey, Betsy,
Al, Mike, Sally

for joining our three
heroines on the bumpy road
to prosperity.

Make
Direct Contributions to
ZIM2sf LLC
PO Box 440
Medanales, NM 87548

Make Tax-Deductible
Contributions to
From the Heart

>>>>>>

I **know** there are folks out there who'd love to invest a bit of time and creative energy as well as money to insure that **From Zim...** gets to market. An Executive Producer chair is calling for you. Call me at 505-670-6000, and we'll talk about your ROI.

Talumba,
Cristina McCandless
Producer/Director

Productions
thru website
or by mail:
1455 Mandalay Beach Rd.
Oxnard, Ca 93035-2845
805-984-0098

Move money away from fear and
toward love.

A little housekeeping

Please forward this Update to folks you know who are interested in stories about women's empowerment, economic development, folk art or Zimbabwe.

Please help us keep you updated by confirming your interest (**Press the blue "confirm" in the paragraph above the Newsletter**) or by officially joining the mailing list (**Press the box at the right**). Special recognition to those who find this Update's typos.

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