



Tjintjana

Lupane Womens' Centre's visit to Denmark Sept/Oct 2015



The visit to Denmark September 2015 is the closure of the program Ingebethukurv.

This programme has run over 3 years with 3 workshops held at Lupane Women's centre introducing new designs and techniques using local materials.

This final activity included a 2- week stay in Denmark running workshops with 5 different Danish basketry weavers and artistes, a full day with Danish students learning from the Zimbabwean weavers including singing and dancing and sharing.

The program offered several visits to potential outlets for the Lupane basketry with active dialogue and exchange on issues concerning deadlines, quality control and transport.

The range of baskets in the Ingcebethu programme is now called **Tjintjana** meaning exchange in the Ndebele language.



Lupane Women's Centre in Denmark 2015

Hildigard Mufukare manager of LWC, Khaya Sibanda marketing Manager LWC, Sylvia Nyathi Board member of LWC, Buhle Matwasa, Shylet Nyathi, Grace Sibanda and Saziso Sola from Lupane Womens' Centre, masterweavers from LWC , Zimbabwe Frances Potter from The New Basket Workshop , South Africa Yinon Tubi , photographer and film maker, Israel Ane Lyngsgård and Eva Seidenfaden, organizers, designers and instructors from Baskets4life, Denmark were the new players during this 2 week stay at Vissinggaard and in Copenhagen.

The first day's programme included a visit to Fru Skov's local high-end kitchenware shop and then Brædstrup Humanitær Forening, which had kindly agreed to provide a coat to each of the Zimbabweans and a pair of shoes – so they could cope with the cold weather.

The visit to the kitchen shop was fascinating and Fru Skov (Mrs Forest) was keen to buy a number of baskets for stock for her shop. As it turns out she would spend a lot of time with Khaya during this trip and bought a lot of baskets as well as placing a good order.

There is a press clipping from the visit to Fru Skov – as well as several postings on the Fru Skov facebook page.





At the recycling depot, we were all delighted to find a place full of amazing things that had affordable prices.

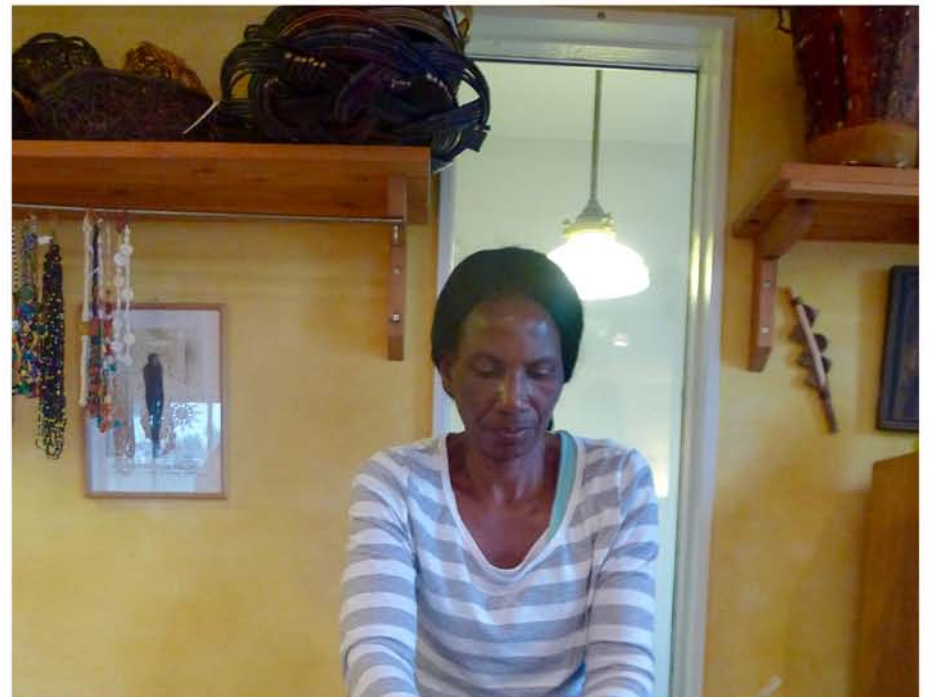
Lupane's representatives were pleased with the warm coats and also determined to come back here for a longer time to shop for treasures to take home.



Ane lives in a building that was a communal dairy – it has been skillfully and beautifully converted to include three residences as well as Ane’s studio and guest rooms. Over the road is her vegetable garden. The view out is across fields. It is a wonderful spot and the studio with its accompanying rooms is spacious and comfy. While the weavers made light shades from rush Ane has imported from England – Khaya and I carried on through the budget and the costing and pricing spreadsheets.

Maren, Ane daughter cooked lunch for us

Lotte, a designer friend of Ane’s has given us knitted scarves and hats, which she designed.



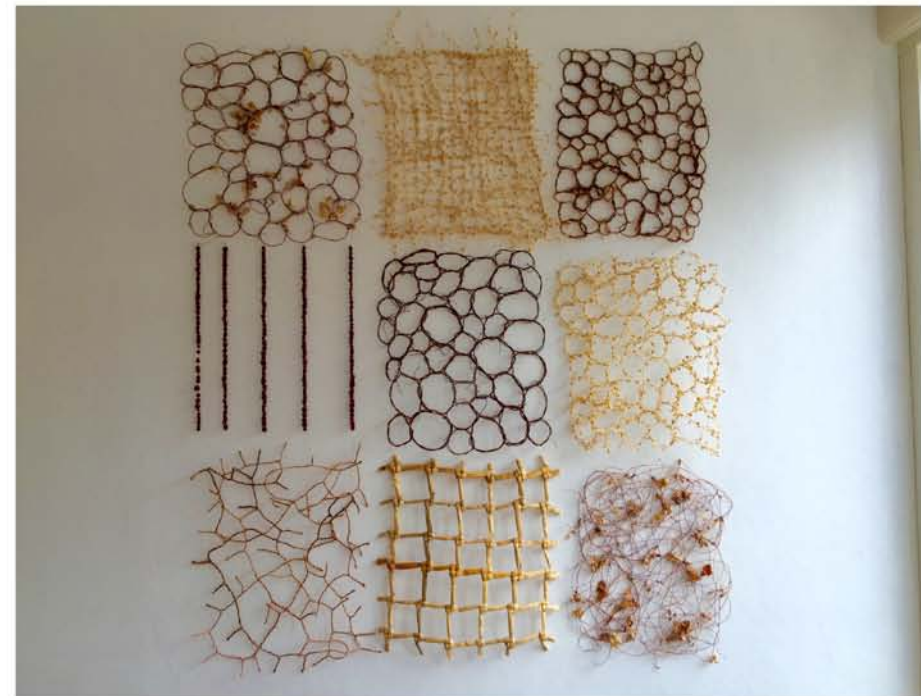


Moesgaard Museum is an archaeological and anthropological museum with a museum shop that Ane has already persuaded to carry LWC products.

The museum had arranged that the weavers could sit in a space right in the middle of this fantastic piece of modern architecture and weave as visitors pour in to see the final days of an exhibition of the terracotta warriors



Visit to the amazing house and collection of a member of Baskets4Life – the wonderful Dorte Tilma. Dorte welcomed us to her extraordinary collection of things, including baskets, that she had made herself. And baskets made out of so many and improbable materials. We were bewitched by her creativity in all things. She took us along with her magic when she put out a collection of things/weaving materials, seeds, threads/buttons and sticks and encouraged us to make new and improbable objects. Dorte's imagination is vast and how she uses materials, recycling everything fascinated us. It made us alive to creativity and how so many things can be used. Khaya left her price sheets and endless marketing emails to make a lovely piece that looks a bit like the map of Africa. The professional weavers quickly piled into the materials and came up with new, fun things.





A WONDERFUL DAY OF SHARING IN THE VISSINGGAARD MUSEUM.

About 30 people arrived at 10 o'clock to the museum where tea and coffee and Mrs Skov's good buns welcomed the visitors who mostly came from far away.

The weavers had made a huge display of Lupane baskets for sale, and the visitors started immediately to pile up their shopping. There was a terrific sale that day and Khaya was more than busy!

All the women from Zimbabwe then came to the museum singing and welcoming the students.

Hildegard talked about Lupane Women's centre and the students got the option of working with the weavers in 2 different techniques – one before lunch, one after.

Shylett taught coiling using illala, Buhle taught coiling using sisal , Grace taught the porcupine technique, Saziso taught the square start, Sylvia taught coiling using illala

During the short breaks we danced and sang, and Khaya sold baskets.



In the evening at the end of the long and wonderful day – we ate dinner of roast chicken breasts and chocolate cake in the Museum and guests/basket students/visitors left. Eva tells me later there was a wonderful feed back from the visitors all saying how exceptional and special the day had been in all respects.



Three cars headed off to the north to the studio of Anna Mette Hjørnholm near Hjerm. She is a teacher of basketry and taught ALL of us willow basketry on a frame. We all piled in including those of us who don't weave – meaning myself and Khaya and Yinon. Anne Mette has a beautiful studio filled with exquisite work – her own baskets are something . The baskets are whimsical and some are totally useless for anything basketry. ...just for looking at and appreciating for their exquisite beauty.





Next stop was the beach! All the way to the red lighthouse at Bovbjerg. And then all the way down the steep cliff to the beach on Denmark's west coast. We collected seawater and stones and drank the hot cocoa Eva and Ane had brought together with Danish pastries. Unbelievably thoughtful of them to create this whole experience. We sat on the beach against the cliff and admired the beautiful weather and the sea. This was a very special visit – for most of us it was the very first time they had seen the sea. Ane made a small short film of some of the women walking on the beach singing and using stones to create the percussion.





We drove to Elizabeth Borch's place house in Ulfborg where she showed us her garden and vegetable garden and how her alternative energy works. Elizabeth is a retired doctor with tireless energy and huge creative talent. She kindly hosted us to a wonderful dinner of chicken stew and a huge green salad from her garden. This was followed by chocolate cake and coffee. We were all impressed by how Elizabeth uses her own craft in her house.



Then off to Copenhagen. First to see the delights in African Touch. We were shown around by very knowledgeable staff that talked about how the stock is chosen for the store and of the shop's aesthetic. Khaya showed them examples of the stock she had with her and discussed some of the pricing. The ownership from Zimbabwe and in fact already carry some Lupane products. From African Touch we walked to the bookshop Tranquebar, a bookshop with art and travel books and many other things run by two women, Vibeke and Tina. They offered us a beautiful tea and invited us to look around the shop. Tina agreed to see the baskets that Khaya has on Friday morning.

In the evening we ate a beautiful supper at Nynne's house. Nynne and Nina had prepared a delicious meal and they sat with the weavers at their table and swapped stories. The Zimbabweans appeared relaxed and happy. Eva and Bent's oldest daughter Silja came to the house to meet us all. What beautiful girls they both are!

Nynne and Nina joined the singing before we all left for our respective beds.

Ane stayed in her son's flat, Eva and Frances stayed in the flat of a friend - lent to Eva for the two nights we were in Copenhagen. Yinon was in another friend's flat while the Zimbabweans stayed at the Generator Hotel as part of the experience of being in Copenhagen and Denmark.



We set off for Marie Skinbjerg's shop Kurvemageren in Lyngby High Street. Hildigard, Yinon, Saziso and I went by train. Marie's shop was started by her parents and sells lots and lots of baskets as well as offering a repair service for chairs that need new wicker/rattan. Marie is a good businesswoman and explains what she needs from her basket suppliers. Mostly to be able to shop from them on the Internet and to have hassle free shipping. She buys a lot from Malaysia and from bigger buyers who bring in from the east. She does not buy one-offs and high designer baskets, as that is not her market. On the top story of her shop is a small compact apartment where her mother lives. She settles us all in there and then pulls out a huge array of catalogues and invited us to go through them cutting out what impresses and sticking them into folders which should be used for reference in future.

We were invited to a fabulous restaurant nearby for lunch, Meyers Spisehus. There we were treated to typical Danish open sandwiches. This was accompanied by wonderful juices and all followed by the best carrot cake ever and coffee. Management was thanked with baskets from Lupane and lots of singing in the restaurant.

Bursting, we staggered back to Marie's for first a meeting with the all of us and then a lesson in how to start a weave with eight pieces of material to get the eight-sided platter.







Then began the drive back to Vissinggaard and a trip to the Brædstrup Humanitær Forening before it closed for gifts to take home. A last visit to Fru Skov with the remaining baskets was also included in the trip. There is even a call from a Brædstrup boutique owner who had offered scarves.

By the evening we were all pretty tired but satisfied with a great trip to Copenhagen and lots of shopping in Brædstrup. Now to get everything back into the suitcases – amazing! The luggage allowance on the way back is double – two bags of 23kgs each. Which is just as well – because aside for purchases, there have been wonderful clothes from so many sources including Liechtenstein and Ane and friends.



After our last breakfast as a group, we sit down in the long dining room to our last meeting in Denmark as part of the Ingcebethukurv/Tjinjana programme. It really has come to an end – this trip that was planned for so long.

Hildigard opens the meeting by leading the singing followed by a prayer. Sylvia, as chair, says that she hopes this first trip to Europe by Lupane Women's Centre. She says "We know we learned a lot in this programme. The women who are here are representative of Lupane Women's Centre. Our home is important and it is important how LWC and its members will benefit from this. "

Outline of interview with Saziso Sola in Denmark on Thursday 1st October 2015.

Yinon Tubi filmed the interview, which took place in Marie Skinbjerg's shop Kurvemageren in Lyngby high street. She explained that she tries to form groups and teach them to weave. She talked of the Danish weavers she met at Eva's place on Saturday and how she learned the lacing technique in Denmark.

Before she came to Denmark she had no picture in her mind except that she thought Denmark was a poor country – but that in fact is a rich, very rich country. When she gets back to Zimbabwe she will focus on her things and her commitment to do stuff with the other members of LWC together. I will put baskets in my own house and make lampshades and artistic stuff – I will use this to decorate my own house.

I learned many things here – I learned people can co operate together. That women like to weave. At the workshop at Eva's I saw men and women came to learn how to weave. I had the experience of teaching Danish people and the way they came and asked how to do things.

The sea – since I was born I never saw the sea. Now I have played by the sea – I have taken sand and stones and water to show my children – sand and water of the sea. I will show them the sand and the water and the Burkina weave.

Yinon – why do Eva and Ane take you to meet many people?

Saziso – I think Eva and Ane are good women and they cooperate well together. They want every woman to share. I saw something in the exchange of cultures. Now I can share the Burkina weave and the lace weave and what we learned at Anna Mette's workshop..

What will you give back?

When they visit Lupane I will give a chicken. I will invite them to see my house and my children.

Other impressions?
I hear and see many things – how they move in their cars – on different roads – not like in Zimbabwe.

Yinon: – what about Dorte's house?

Saziso: – I have learned you can use many materials. From the magazines I have looked at I see many things and these impress me. I have cut out and will keep these and will do it.

I am glad I came to Denmark – it will be added to the list of Lupane and of what I have learned.

Everything here has been good to me.





Going back to Zimbabwe with maximum luggage allowance!



The small quotes on the morning teabags gave us a daily mantra.



During the whole visit in Denmark Yinon Tubi from Israel covered all the activities by filming.

He was present every moment and hopefully will end up with a serious, beautiful, colorful, inspirational and meaningful documentary about the women from LWC in Zimbabwe as well as in Denmark.

Frances has made a full diary of the whole trip including outlines of the different interviews. Only small parts of the diary has been copied in this documentary, but the diary has been printed in its full version.

Ane has a bank of small videos and Eva has the full collection of photos taken on the trip taken by the whole team.

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LWC at Vissinggard 2015