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Citywide: Zimbabwe art for sale at bakery locations

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When Lewis & Clark College professor Dick Adams took his sociology class to Zimbabwe 15 years ago, he didn't plan to go into the business of selling art. But several trips and several years later, the rural women of Weya -- most of whom are left to tend farms and take care of their families while their husbands work in cities -- were asking him to find a market for their artwork, a way to supplement their income.

"I started this project on a shoestring budget," says Adams, who founded and funded the Zimbabwe Artists Project after he was offered a university buyout in 1999. "Our first year, we made \$20,000 with donations and sales; last year, we made \$130,000. It's amazing how much we've grown."

Through the holidays, the project is exhibiting more than 100 tapestries, appliqués, embroideries and board paintings at all six **Grand Central Bakery** locations in Portland. Each piece is accompanied by a biography and photograph of the artist, a story within the work.

"We need to sell art because we need to sell art to sustain these women," Adams says. "But this project is also about the commitment to making a human connection through that art."

The Zimbabwe Artists Project shows work in galleries and exhibits throughout the country, from New Orleans to Juneau, Alaska. All proceeds from the Grand Central exhibits will go back into the project, which also provides the artists with health care in their home country.

Details: <http://zimbabweartistsproject.org>

--Jessica Machado

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