



## KINDERGARTEN ZIMBABWE

### STUDIO ANNA HERINGER

LOCATION: Chasesyama, Zimbabwe

ARCHITECT: Studio Anna Heringer

PHOTO CREDIT: © Stefano Mori & Margarethe Holzer

YEAR: 2014

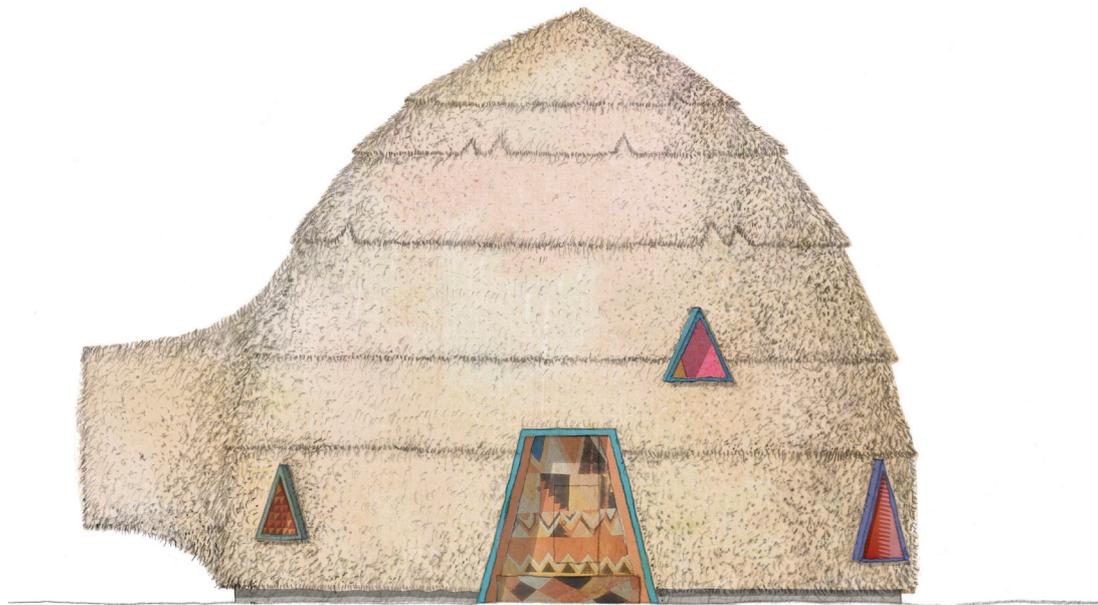
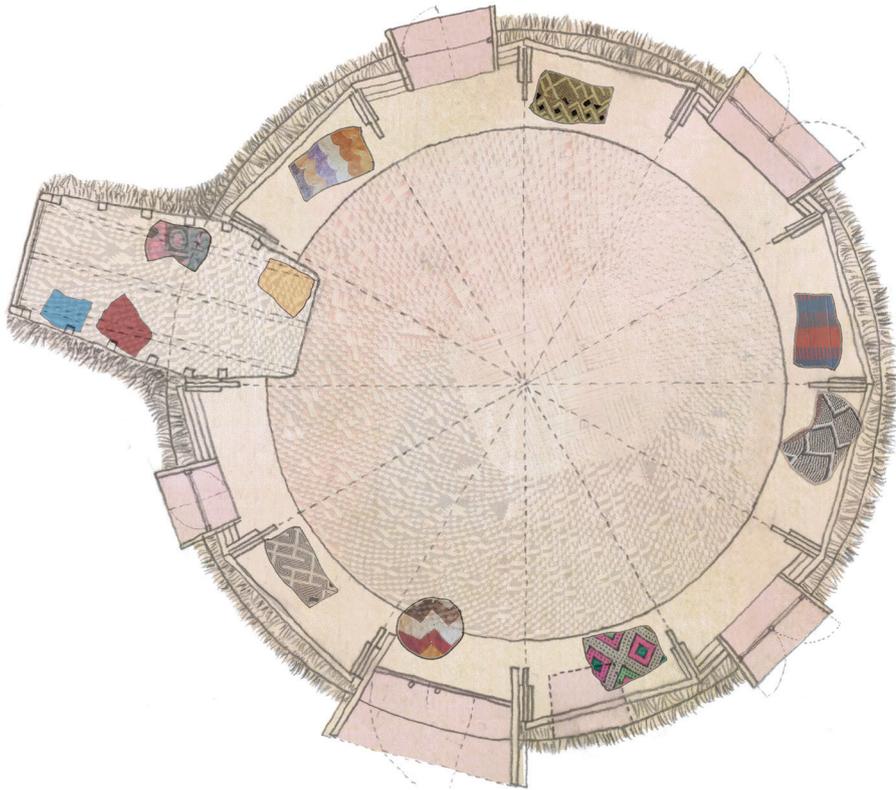
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The permaculture community PORET in Zimbabwe follows the philosophy of a holistic sustainability since 1996. With care, patience, time and seeds, and without any external help they transformed a very dry area into a little fertile paradise. Within their principles they reached as far as they could, but up till now they lacked building knowledge in the same holistic approach. The PORET-kindergarten will thus be the first one erected, acting as a pilot project, (re)generating local craftsmanship and building know-how. Furthermore it is the first kindergarten in the whole rural area of the Chimanimani District, a desolate region that houses about 200 families without any access to education.

The kindergarten is strongly integrated with the permaculture activities on site. The children will learn from the very beginning to take care of plants, to be gentle with the soil, to harvest water and to understand the needs of nature. Apart from this the community also facilitates the personal development of their inhabitants, therefore the two structures will be used as training and meeting spaces for the inhabitants of the surrounding villages as well.

Founded on a stone base, timber was chosen for the main structure, as Zimbabwe is known for its forestry and the community supports tree plantation. Once completed, the wood structure will be covered by thatching as there is a strong tradition of technically excellent and beautifully thatched roofs in the country. Furthermore the traditional way of cutting the grass for thatching reduces the regions fire hazard, meanwhile performing well in low rainfall area where the climate can be harsh. Our aim is thus to rebuild this knowledge since it is vital for the over-all housing condition.

As both the thatching and the stone work are labor intensive, the craftsmen are getting a good share of the building budget. With these local techniques the project aims to build with a process that reinforces solidarity and team spirit, skills and knowledge, self-confidence and dignity. Due to the contexts climate and local conditions buildings, unless built in glass and steel, will not last forever, but it is essential that the know-how to maintain and rebuild them is kept alive and traded on to the following generations. This is why we see this project primarily as a training in advanced building techniques with existing materials that can become the compost of the kindergarten field's one day.



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