



SAR

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Ralph Erskine

José Forjaz, architect, Maputo Mozambique

José Forjaz has since 1975 in Swaziland and Mozambique and as practicing architect done work in many countries in southern Africa.

For ten years he was a member of parliament and worked as Under-secretary of State for Building and planning and was government architect in Mozambique a country with two other architects. He worked with the many and sometimes almost unsurmountable economic, political and cultural problems of countries which can be counted as amongst those which most suffer from effects of deprivation, diversity of traditional regional cultures and of destructive international influences.

His ambition has been to ease the mingling of older cultural patterns with the potential advantages of new techniques, and working with extraordinary limited resources he has defended social and human values and with creativity achieved much artistic and architectural excellence. This has been demonstrated in such varied projects as water containers and rain protecting roofs for villagers using a minimum of cement and reinforcement with chicken wire or bamboo, in schools, a church centre and university buildings simply constructed of local timber, concrete blocks and corrugated sheeting, in a national monument of modest scale using a local stone and the creativity of indigenous artists.

He has with similar techniques designed housing for teachers as well as a reception-dwelling for the president of Mozambique.

Together with Gunnar Cederwall he has converted a cinema in Maputo for use as a Congress Hall and temporary Parliament Building for Mozambique, and is at present working with The Swedish Embassy there, and a Mozambique Embassy in Africa.

Since he considers the lack of capacity for sophisticated thinking to be one of the major problems of developing countries and many times has experienced the insufficiency, and in the long run the unsuitability of relying on international expertise he has founded and leads an architectural school in Maputo for Mozambique students.

Also here the problems are very considerable. The access to literature is minimal, and much of what little can be obtained must be translated into Portuguese, he must himself compose and write compendiums, young foreign teachers leave, etc, etc. Some secretarial help and simple duplicator would be invaluable.

Ralph Erskine architect and planner ab



despite the problems, both in his work and his life in Mozambique he has decided to remain there and continue to work where needs are so great.

Should he receive the stipendium it would be used in furthering and easing the persuit of the objectives and continuation of the work in which he is involved in Africa. At the same time he endeavours for his own satisfaction and for the furthering of his work to maintain contact with thoughts and developments in the western world and maintaining the north - south dialogue. This he feels to be essential prerequisite for a continued life in Mozambique.

It can surely be said that José Forjaz has in his life shown exceptional idealism combined with an extraordinary insight into the great problems of underdevelopment in the third world.

With great tenacity, technical and economic knowledge and artistic talent he has created functional, economic, ecological and beautiful architecture which is undeniable at the serious of the most underprivileged countries and people in Africa and the world.

It could surely be that he is a candidate who is worthy of serious consideration by the Swedish Architects Association and being suitable to reccomend to the jury of the Ralph Erskine Stipendium as their nomihee.

Ralph Erskine SAR

Gunnar Cederwall SAR