

## LOVEMORE BONJISI



“You have to be strong outside as well as inside.”

(b) 1985 Ruwa, Zimbabwe

Known as the “Shona Michelangelo”, Lovemore Bonjisi’s career as a sculptor began at a tender age. He was only 12 and still at primary School in Ruwa when he picked up the tools and began learning how to sculpt under the guidance of his older brother Lameck, by then an internationally acclaimed sculptor. One of the sources of his inspiration was the legendary Nicholas Mukomberanwa, who in turn taught Lameck, who then passed on his knowledge to his younger brother.

Lovemore quickly developed his own style, and before long, art dealers began taking an interest in the 14-year-old. “ Basically I believe that the stone talks to me. The piece is waiting to be unveiled, like a rough diamond that needs expert cutting.” He sold his first work for Z\$8 to a Greek art dealer and still remembers the piece as an evocative face.

His older twin brothers Tafunga and Garikai are also accomplished sculptors and the Bonjisi family sculptures are eagerly sought-after by collectors in Europe and the United States. Lovemore participated in a sculpture workshop in the Czech Republic in 2006 and he has exhibited in galleries in South Africa, Australia, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain and Canada. He was voted ‘Most Promising Sculptor’ by the Alexander Gallery (Spain) in 2004.

Lovemore Bonjisi is an extremely versatile artist, with a style that ranges from the rigidly linear to the flowing organic lines of the human form and face. His family has exclusive access to a mine producing Cobalt stone, but in recent years he has been experimenting successfully with Saprolite, a softer milky-textured stone, and he prefers to use Springstone for his more monumental pieces.