

## WALTER MARIGA



“ The subject matter comes from my head, but also from the shape of the stone. I only carve in the hardest stones, like my father before me”.

(b) 1973, Nyanga, Zimbabwe

Walter Mariga is the eldest son of Joram Mariga, a First Generation stone sculptor and widely revered as the ‘father’ of the Shona stone sculpture movement.

The Mariga family comes from Nyanga, a beautiful mountainous region in the east of Zimbabwe near the border with Mozambique and an area blessed with a range of highly coloured Serpentinite stone.

Walter explains that there was no need for him to go to art school as his father was an exceptional mentor and tutored him in the art of sculpting from the time he was 12 years old. At 17 he was carving full time, and at 21 he began exhibiting his work internationally through the Chapungu Sculpture Gallery in Harare. In 1994 Walter was selected to participate in a sculpting workshop organised by the Japanese government, and he had the good fortune to work alongside one of Japan’s master sculptors, Masaji Asaga, working in granite, which is the hardest and most difficult stone to master.

Walter Mariga’s sculptures range from the figurative, to the emotionally expressive, to the purely abstract. “The subject comes from my head and also from the stone; I would chip a little bit and it would develop this way and that”. All of his sculptures contain a message or commentary about society.

One of the distinctive features of Walter Mariga’s personal style is his insistence on using only the hardest and most durable of stones. He frequently carves in Leopard Rock, Lepidolite and Verdite. It takes great skill to work these stones and only the finest sculptors are prepared to tackle them. Walter’s sculptures are eagerly sought after by gallerists and collectors in the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Holland, Japan and Canada.