

# Stone Sculpture Artist Preserves The Beauty of Passing Sensory Experiences

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"I hope that my work is timeless in that it speaks to life's experiences," says stone sculpture artist Mark Yale Harris.



## Stone Sculpture Artist

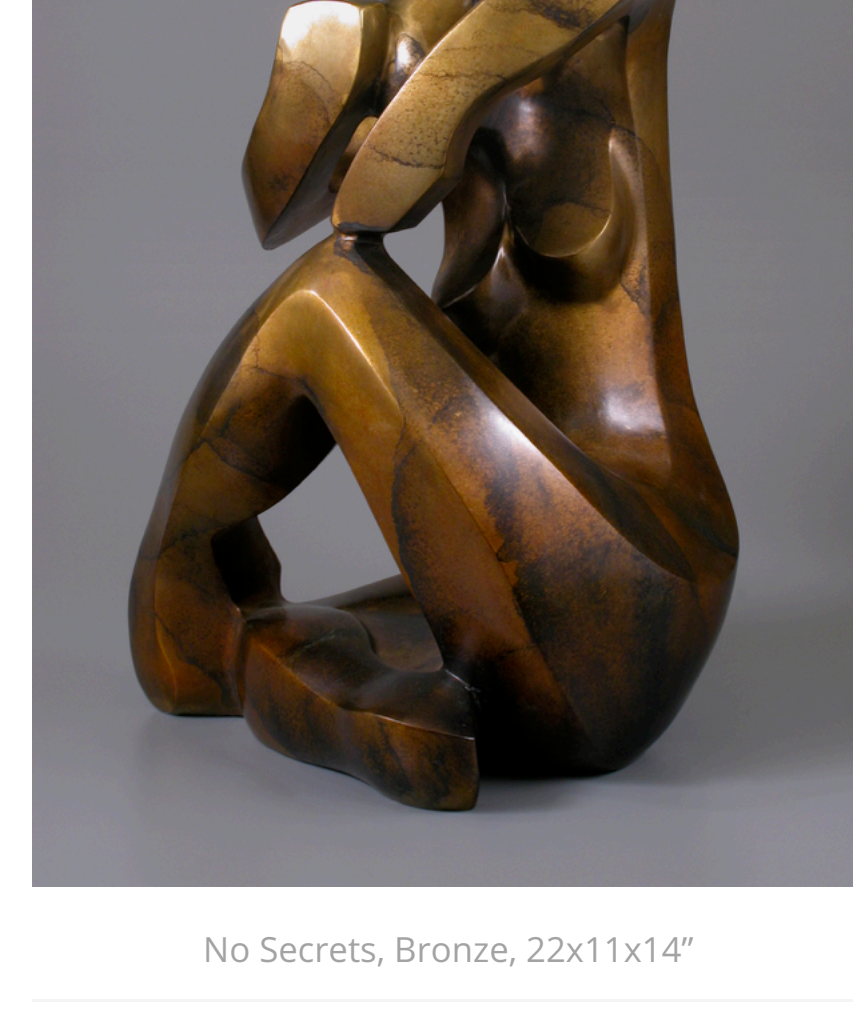
ARTWORK OF MARK YALE HARRIS

Mark Yale Harris is a stone sculpture artist from Buffalo, New York. He was originally an entrepreneur who graduated from Ohio State University, receiving his business degree. But he ended up transitioning to his true passion in his sixties and has had a thriving art career for over 20 years now.

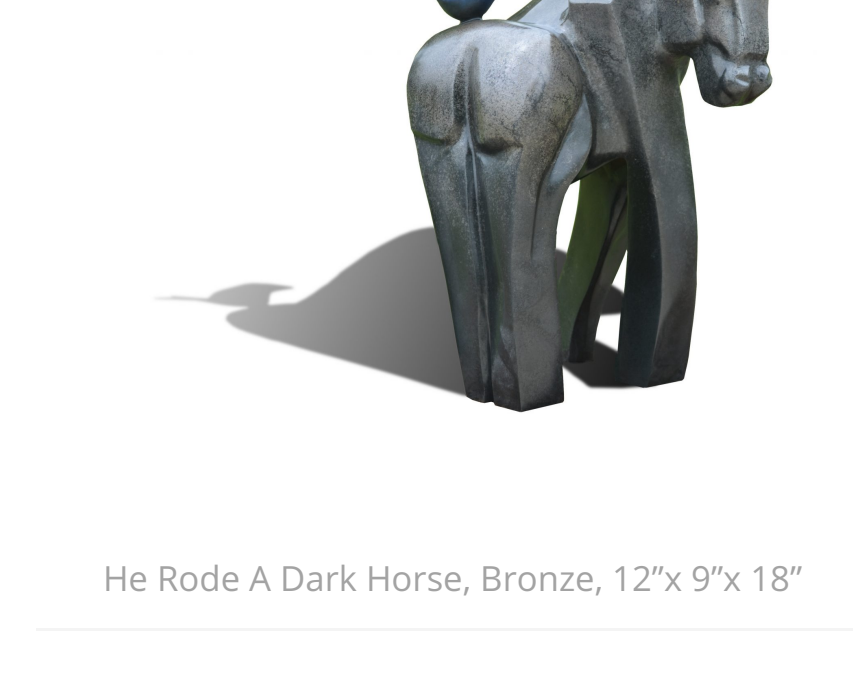
Inspired by the Southwest region he now calls home, Mark accessed the invaluable experience of his learning journey to create an evolving body of work in alabaster, marble, limestone, and bronze, often combining different elements to bring forth a duality through creation. While the total of his life experiences influenced his artistic choices, Mark recounts that he also spent time thinking about concepts and ideas that were part of him and sought to put these intangible forms.

## Journey to Becoming a Stone Sculpture Artist

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No Secrets, Bronze, 22x11x14"

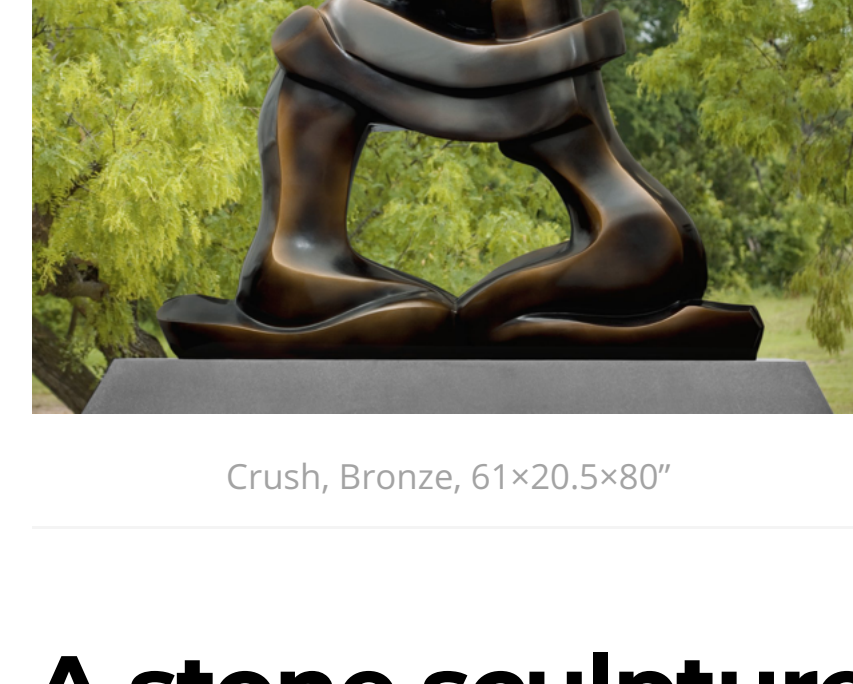


He Rode A Dark Horse, Bronze, 12"x 9"x 18"

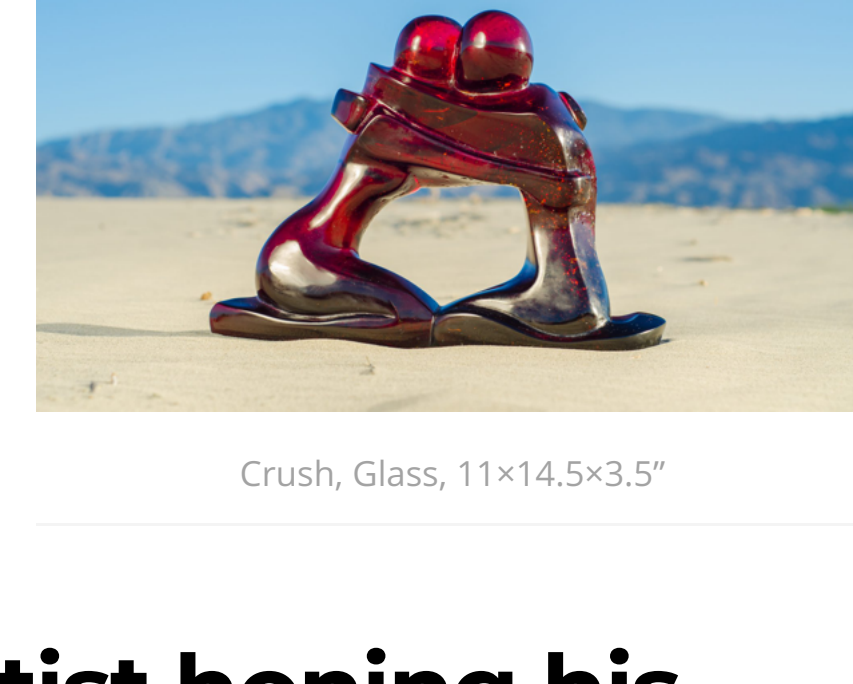
## An artistic passion that burned beneath the surface

Mark was a child of parents who lived through the Great Depression. While he tremendously enjoyed making art when young, his parents' practicality about job security won out over pursuing artistic endeavors. He put himself through Ohio State and received his business degree, becoming an entrepreneur. He spent many years in the area of sustainable urban development (specifically real estate and hotels), co-founding the Red Roof Inns chain and founding Amerisuites.

"My passion for art in those years was sustained as a collector," says Mark, "as well as in the creativity and imagination needed to be successful in business ventures. In my sixties, flourishing in business but no longer wholly fulfilled professionally, I sold my business interests and transitioned to a career in art. I then moved to Santa Fe, and, with the help of incredible mentors, I began to learn to sculpt and to meet this new and exciting challenge."



Crush, Bronze, 61x20.5x80"



Crush, Glass, 11x14.5x3.5"

## A stone sculpture artist honing his burgeoning artistic skills

Mark had many mentors supervise and inspire his work. He says he was fortunate to have a mentor whom he had long admired to assist with honing his "burgeoning" artistic skills, sculptor Bill Prokopiou (Aleut, 1944-1999). In the spirit of the nation's most recognized Native American artist, Allan Houser (Chiricahua Apache, 1915-1994), Prokopiou and sculptor Doug Hyde (Nez Perce) took him under their wings and generously shared their immense knowledge, talent, and vision. "As part of my art practice, I consider it important to continue learning."



Chaos, Bronze, 22x10x10"

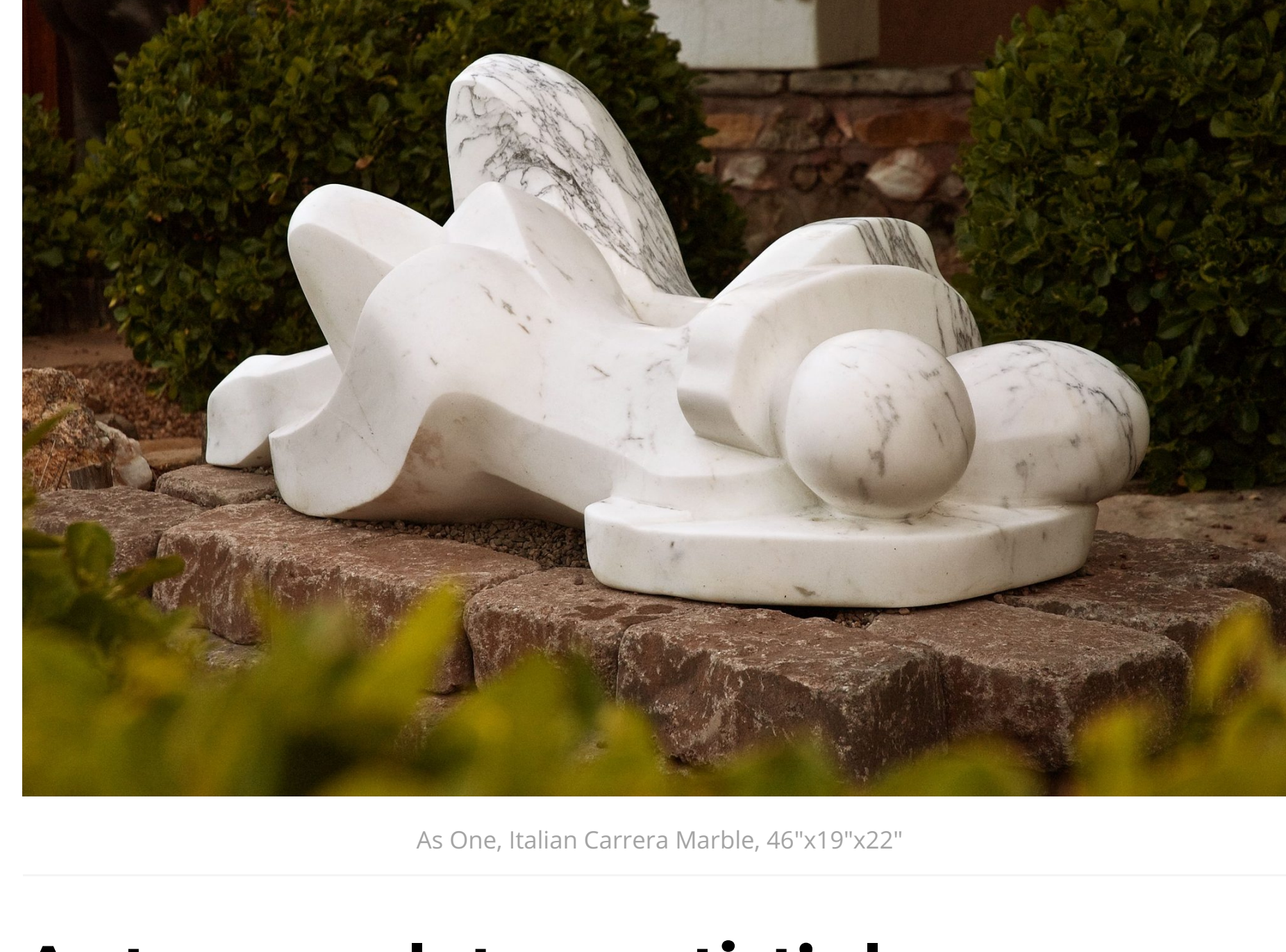
## Using VR technology to create stone sculptures

Mark's latest exciting foray is in the use of Virtual Reality (VR) programs to create sculptures. Last year, he was introduced to it at CREATE Center for the Arts in Palm Desert, California. Despite his admittedly limited computer skills and no experience with gaming technology, Mark plowed through his steep learning curve and was blown away by the potential of VR.

According to him, it is different to craft a piece you cannot touch, that has no physical reality while you are in the creating stage. But the software allows for the feel of the tool's pressure on the virtual clay as you work. "I believe that my experienced eye, steady hand, and years of trial and error in stonework allow me to sense how I need to handle the tools to create smooth and jagged lines and the sense of different textures, so the printed piece has the physical characteristics I intend."

**"I was intrigued about using Oculus and the 3D creating program Medium for sculpture."**

Thus far Mark's been printing small sculptures that become maquettes for further development in stone or bronze. Moreover, he continues to work on refining his technique before attempting a full-scale sculpture using VR. The file-sharing application lends itself to work with others working from different physical locations connected online. As a result, he envisions possibly working collaboratively in the future. "I wanted to share my enthusiasm about working in VR," he says. "So, I recently hosted a series of workshops in Colorado."



As One, Italian Carrera Marble, 46"x19"x22"

## A stone sculpture artist's legacy

Mark said he hopes his work lives on as a testament to universal connection, underscoring the relationship to nature. He makes art to preserve and distill the beauty of a passing sensory experience. "How would I like people to remember me? They will see me in my work, my nonverbal view of life – the duality of mankind's nature. A hard, aggressive side represented by rigid, angular lines, and the soft side visible as curves and soft forms. My work is an ongoing portrayal of myself, my behavior, adventure, exploration, risk-taking, and non-acceptance of the status quo."



Me Upon My Horse

## Advice to young artists

"Follow your passion AND learn the business side of art. No one will discover you. You have to create yourself."

To see Mark's latest sculptures, [visit Saatchi Art >](#)

Happy art hunting!

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