

Ben Buonaiuto

Artist Bio

I was born at a very young age. It happens to us all, and it could have been anywhere right? Fate smiled and I landed, wet and screaming, in an artist's collective in upstate New York. Crazy luck! After a few idyllic years there, our family took a long, wild hitchhiking adventure around South America, before finally settling in Santa Fe, NM. The child of professional sculptors, I grew up squishing and eating clay in their studio and on road trips doing arts/crafts shows.

Time moved slowly at first. I learned a thing or two about this and that. Eventually stumbling into adulthood, I took a career in the arts more seriously. An enthusiastic autodidact, I wallowed in technique. Various bodies of work came and went. I sculpted clay and carved stone. I hand-bound books and welded kinetic art. Parenthood, with its urge to nest, led to a 15 year career as a stone mason, an ancient and venerable craft, and a more grounded way of life. As time passed I grew older. Now settling into my 5th decade (and realizing that stone masonry is for younger men) I've heard the call to return to my roots in the arts world. Having grown so close with stone, this has meant swapping my big chisels for tiny ones and learning to carve marble. It has meant learning to cast molten bronze with the excitement of a kid and cool head of a grownup. It has meant learning to sculpt clay like I mean it.

Artist Statement

I've worked with stone for over 30 years, and it's been an honor. Stones are the very bones of our planet, and will be sitting here patiently when the sun explodes. I've recently begun to cast metal as well. Metals are the elemental building blocks of stone, its marrow. I can't help but sculpt the human face. To coax a subtle expression out of jagged rock and molten metal is deeply satisfying. This traditional subject feel almost as ancient as the stone itself, an homage to the very origins of artwork. The first thing a child draws is the human face. My subject matter comes from many places. I've plucked dream imagery from a mid-day nap on the couch (with my dusty boots on), as well as conjuring up characters from my personal history. People from our present cultural moment speak with special urgency.



Octopus, 16 x 10 x 9 inches, Colorado yule marble, \$7,500.