

Anton Smit

SCULPTOR

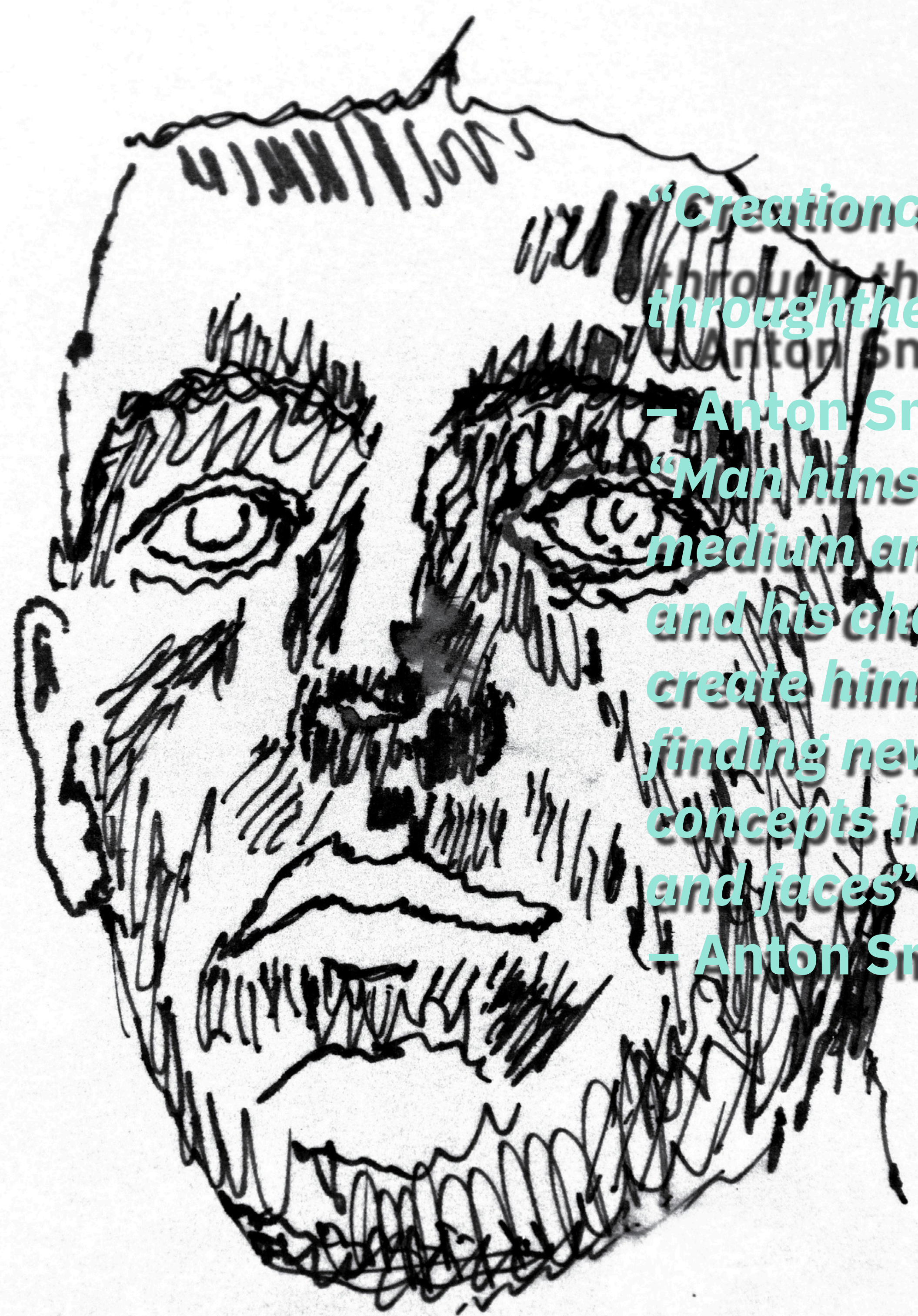


“His works, often monumental in size but never without grace and harmony, reveal a complete mastery of his media and materials. Whether it be in stone, bronze, cement, resin or metal, they reflect subtle nuances of colour and shades. His graceful forms, especially his stylish human faces and figures, give the impression of lightness and flight. The forces of his imagination are almost tangible and pervade the spaces surrounding his sculptures. Inspiration and dedication vibrate from all his work.”

– Pieter W. van Heerden,
Director of the Association of Arts, Pretoria

The Life and Times of a South African Sculptor

“What distinguishes the creative person is his persistence and determination to excel.” – Rhoma Ochse
“There are two places you need to go often: the place that heals you and the place that inspires you.” – Anton Smit



“Creation continues incessantly through the medium of man.”

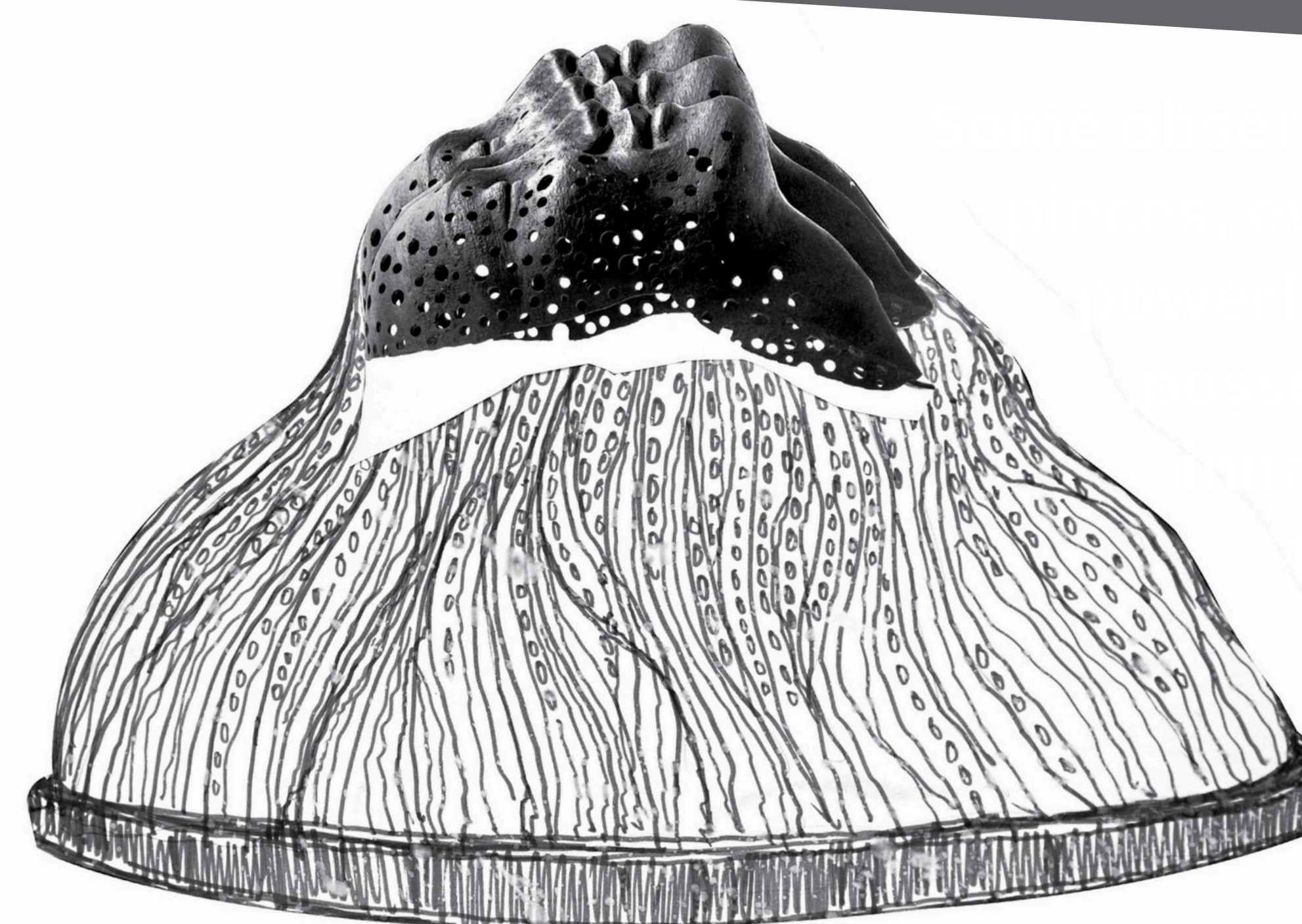
Anton Smit

“Man himself then is mouthpiece, medium and meaning all in one, and his challenge as an artist is to create himself over and over again, finding new connotations and new concepts in given shapes, figures and faces”.

– Anton Smit

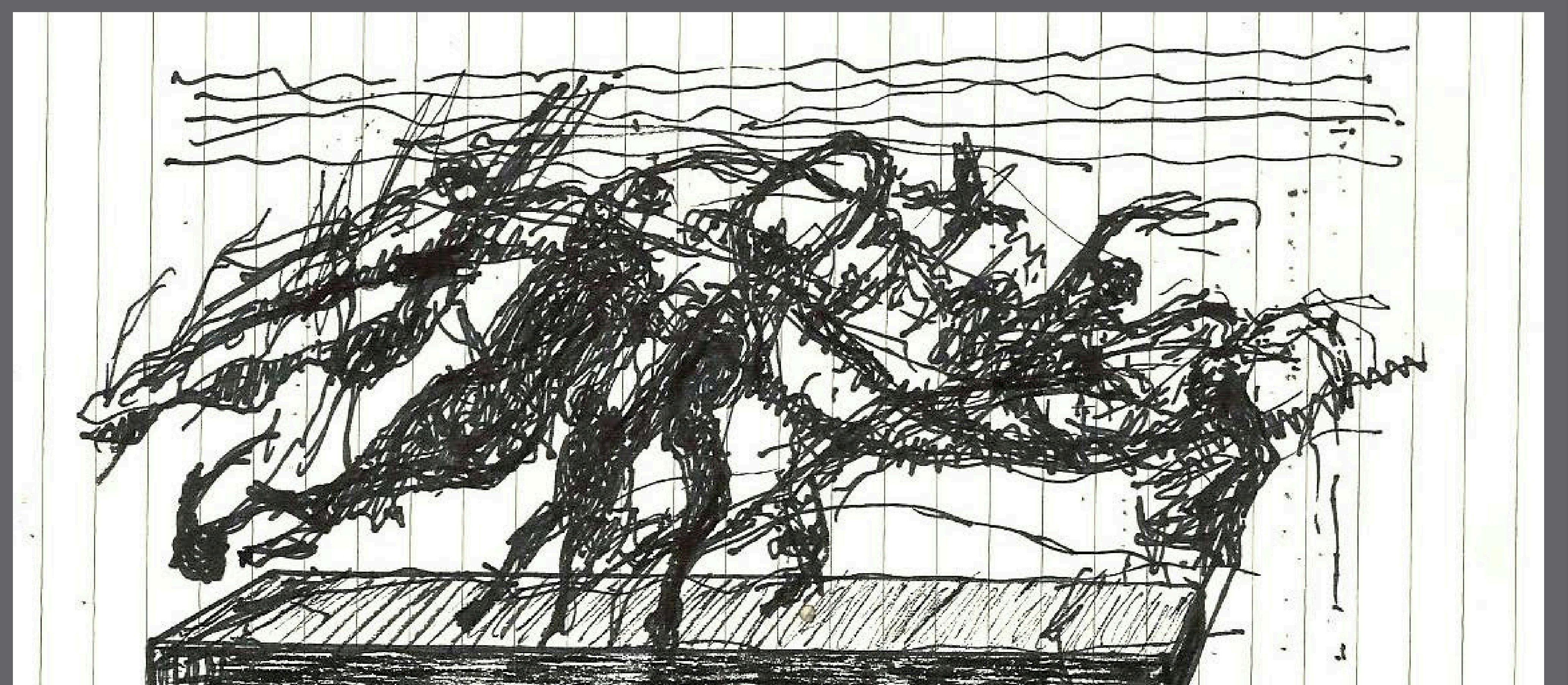
“Anton forms his own language through sculpture, the manifestation of his passion for expression and his profound faith.”

– Kathleen Thomas, Art Curator



have noted that this is why so many of his most abstract ones, manage to communicate and emotionally, and why his work has such a raw, earthy power that feels so African. His body of work comprises human figures, nudes, impressive masks, hands, angels, floating and stretching figures, warriors as well as abstract works.

Anton likes to imbue his work with an illusion of movement or gesture; bodies curling up or limbs reaching out to the onlooker, inspirational “action figures” projecting tremendous emotion, a call to movement. Mainly, he works with bronze, resin, metal and stone, and also creates a unique iron and polymer cast mixture, which combines metal with several other mediums.



HISTORY | EXHIBITIONS | HIGHLIGHTS

1970

1980

1990

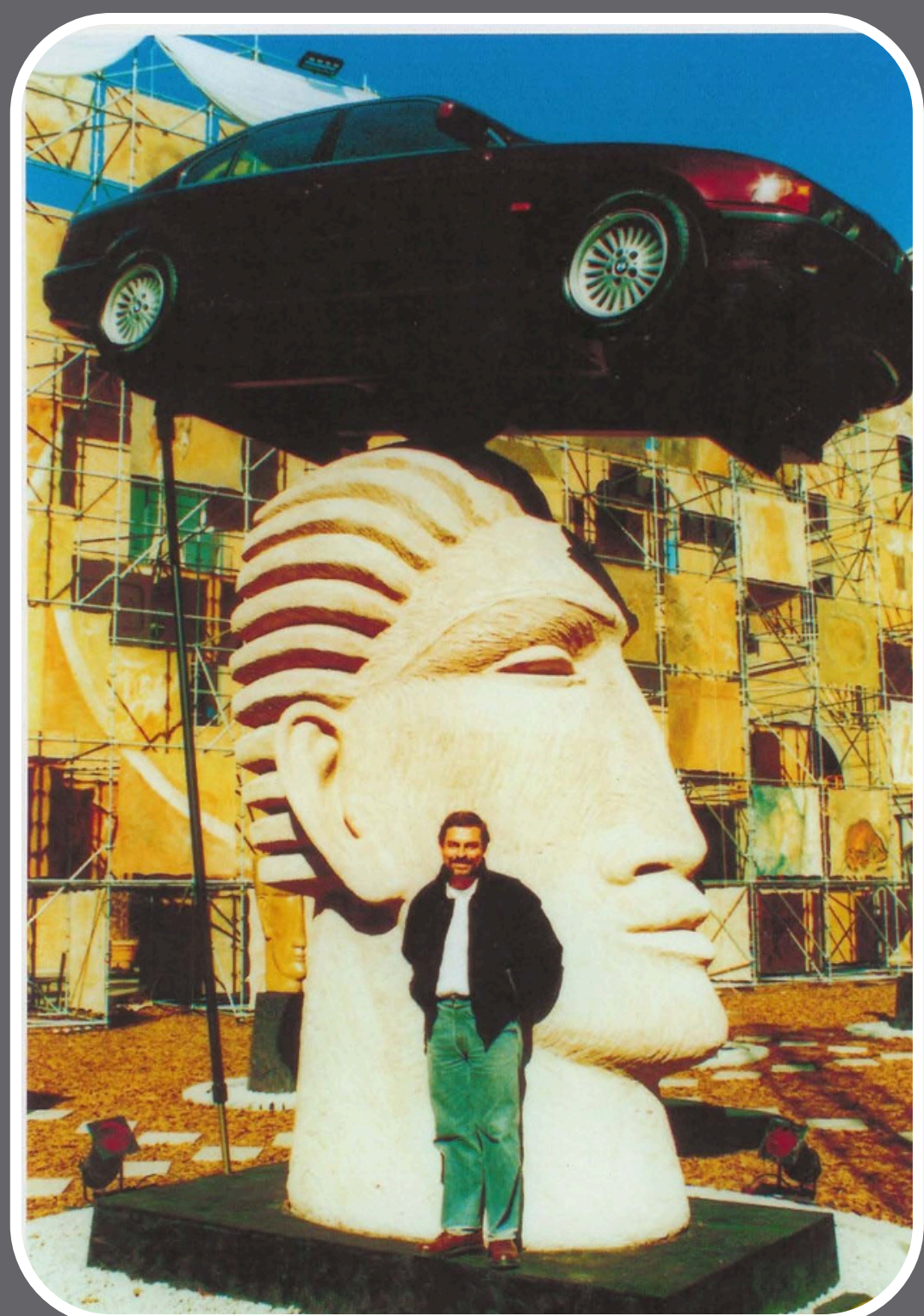
2000

2010

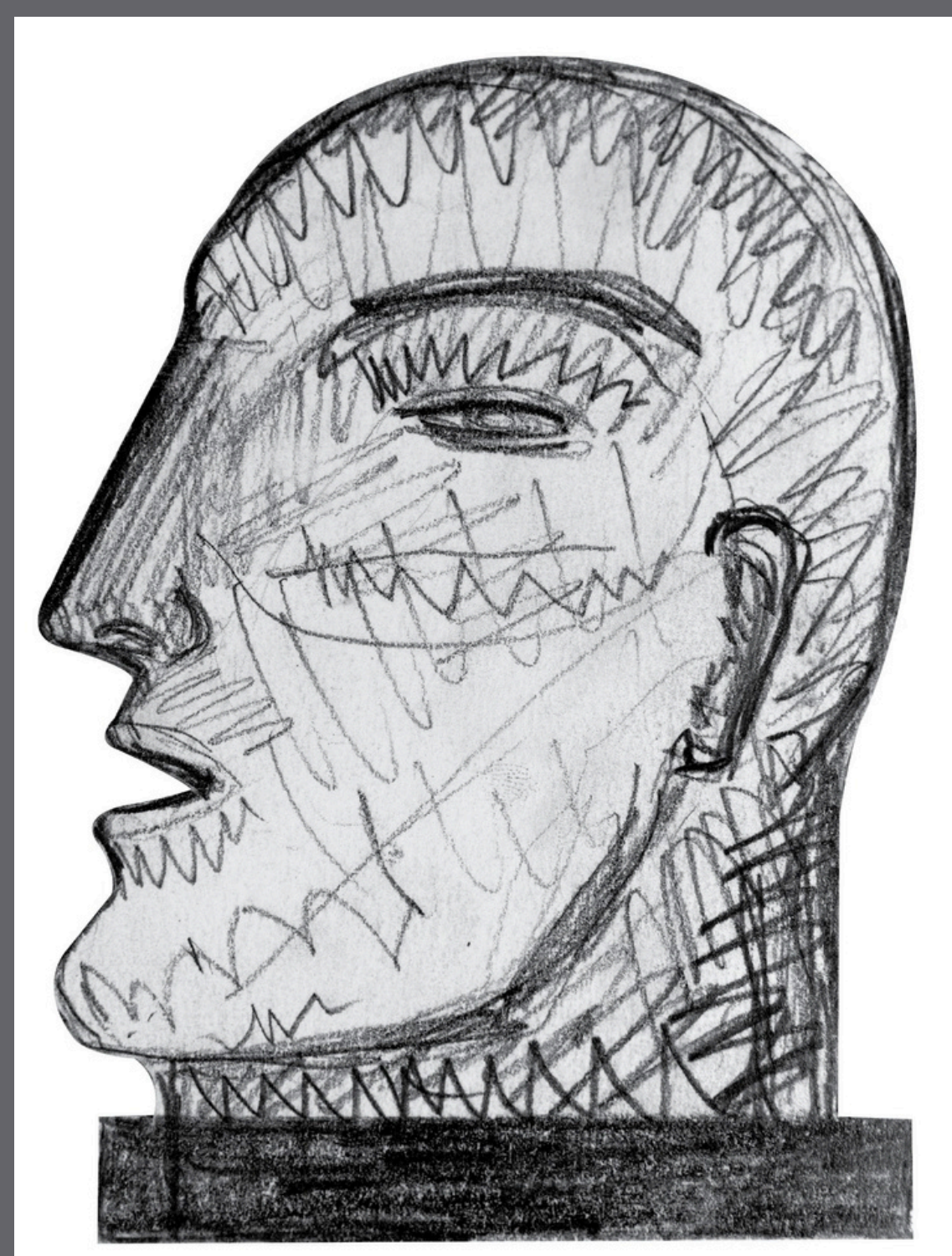
2020



Anton achieved his first artistic breakthrough in **1977**, receiving special mention in the South African Art Association's New Signatures competition in Pretoria. Two years later, he had a great boost when he won first prize in the New Signatures competition. He was the "Artist of the Month" in **1982** at the Pretoria Art Museum, followed in **1987** by his first one-man exhibition in the Beuster Skolimowski Gallery in Pretoria, and another one-man exhibition at the SAAA in **1989**.



Since then, he held numerous exhibitions of his sculptures throughout South Africa, in Witrivier, Nelspruit, Pietersburg, Polokwane, Johannesburg, Potchefstroom, Durban and Cape Town, as well as in leading galleries such as the Crake, Kraft, Olivetti, Michaelatos, Beuster Skolimowski, Everard Read and many others. His work has been exhibited in Rome and Milan, Italy. The M-Net Head Office bought large sculptures, and he completed commissioned works for BMW's head office in Midrand.



Anton Rupert bought one of Smit's works for the Rembrandt Foundation. A collection of his work was exhibited during the inauguration of President Nelson Mandela at the Union Buildings in Pretoria in **1994**. Nobel laureate Desmond Tutu and ex-minister Pik Botha also bought some of his sculptures. Anton Smit's work has been shown and lauded internationally in places as diverse as Rome and Milan in Italy (**1991**), the Sweeguan Art Gallery in Singapore (**1993**), Bonn and Wolfsburg in Germany (**1994**), the SA Embassy in Bonn (**1998**), Amsterdam (**2004**) and Cologne (**2014**).



In **2000**, work was commissioned by the University of Pretoria. In **2001**, his works were purchased by the Rembrandt Foundation in Stellenbosch, and a large work was commissioned by MNT Developers for the Boardwalk Meander.

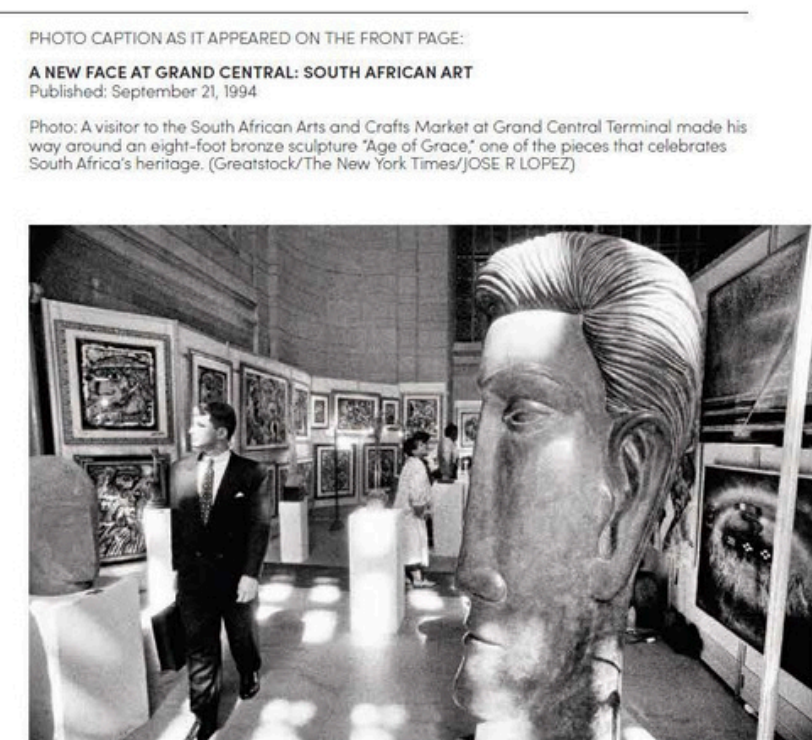
In **2003**, Smit opened his own sculpture garden at the spectacular Anton Smit Sculpture Park by the Bronkhorstspuit Dam. In the same year, he created the enormous Sandstone Head (2 x 3 metres) for a European art collector.



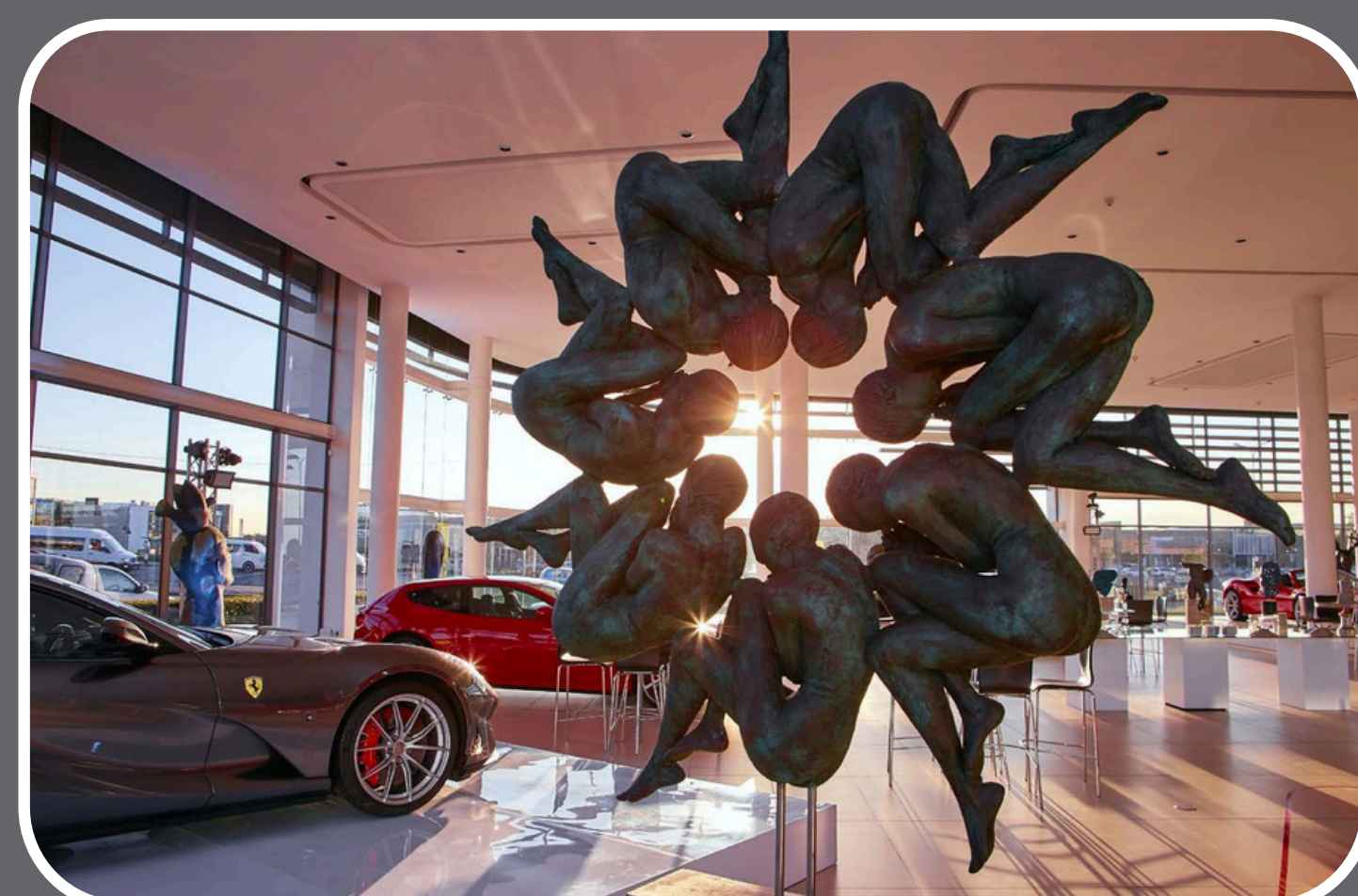
Anton Smit Studio: Where he oversees a workforce of 35 dedicated people.
"We are like family." – Anton Smit

1994

The New York Times



In **1994**, he put 35 sculptures on exhibition in New York at the Grand Central Station as part of the Strengthening the Link initiative to boost trade between South Africa and the United States, organised by SATOUR in conjunction with the Department of Trade and Industry, represented by former president Nelson Mandela. He considers one of the highlights of his career The Age of Grace, an eight-foot tall bronze sculpture at the Grand Central Station, which celebrated South African heritage and was displayed on the front page of The New York Times.



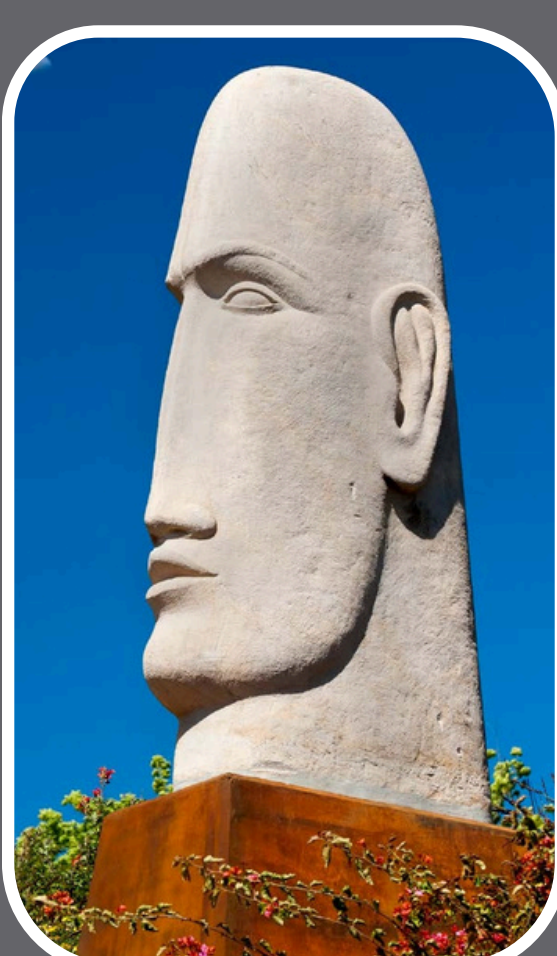
SYNERGY, FERRARI FINE ARTS EXHIBITION

The synergy between Ferrari and Anton Smit was introduced and endorsed in **2018** by Scuderia South Africa's COO, Jan Ungerer. His personal interest in and admiration for Anton's work gave rise to the inaugural Ferrari Fine Arts Exhibition, featuring Anton Smit.

"Each of our Ferrari models is a work of art. Similarly, Anton Smit's sculptures and collections represent power, emotion and design excellence, as do our products."

The collaboration with Anton Smit has allowed us to showcase the uniqueness and exclusivity of both masterpieces in our market. Anton's work is captivating and larger than life. Those who have an appreciation for superior craftsmanship and luxury supercars will share the same appreciation for these exceptional fine art pieces."

– Jan Ungerer, COO Scuderia South Africa



DELAIRE GRAFF ESTATE

"Anton's striking sandstone work **'Passover'** is one of only a small number of pieces I commissioned specifically for Delaire Graff Estate. Initially, Anton worked on the sculpture in situ at the quarry, crafting it from a solid piece of sandstone weighing over five tons. Without question, this demonstrates his ingenuity, dedication and passion; qualities reflected throughout every piece he creates. **'Passover'** is now positioned alongside the driveway that leads to the Estate, set against the dramatic backdrop of the Simonsberg Mountain Range. I believe that collecting art is a true passion, and this is one piece I truly love."

– Laurence Graff OBE, Chairman of Graff Diamonds, Delaire Graff Estate, Stellenbosch



COLOSSAL EXHIBITION, BELGIUM

"Colossal" is a vivacious story of a community rising up from the ashes, a collection of mixed individual emotions. "Colossal" is an elaboration of people trying to transcend in difficult circumstances whilst holding on to their values of honour and faith, hoping to be "Colossal" again.

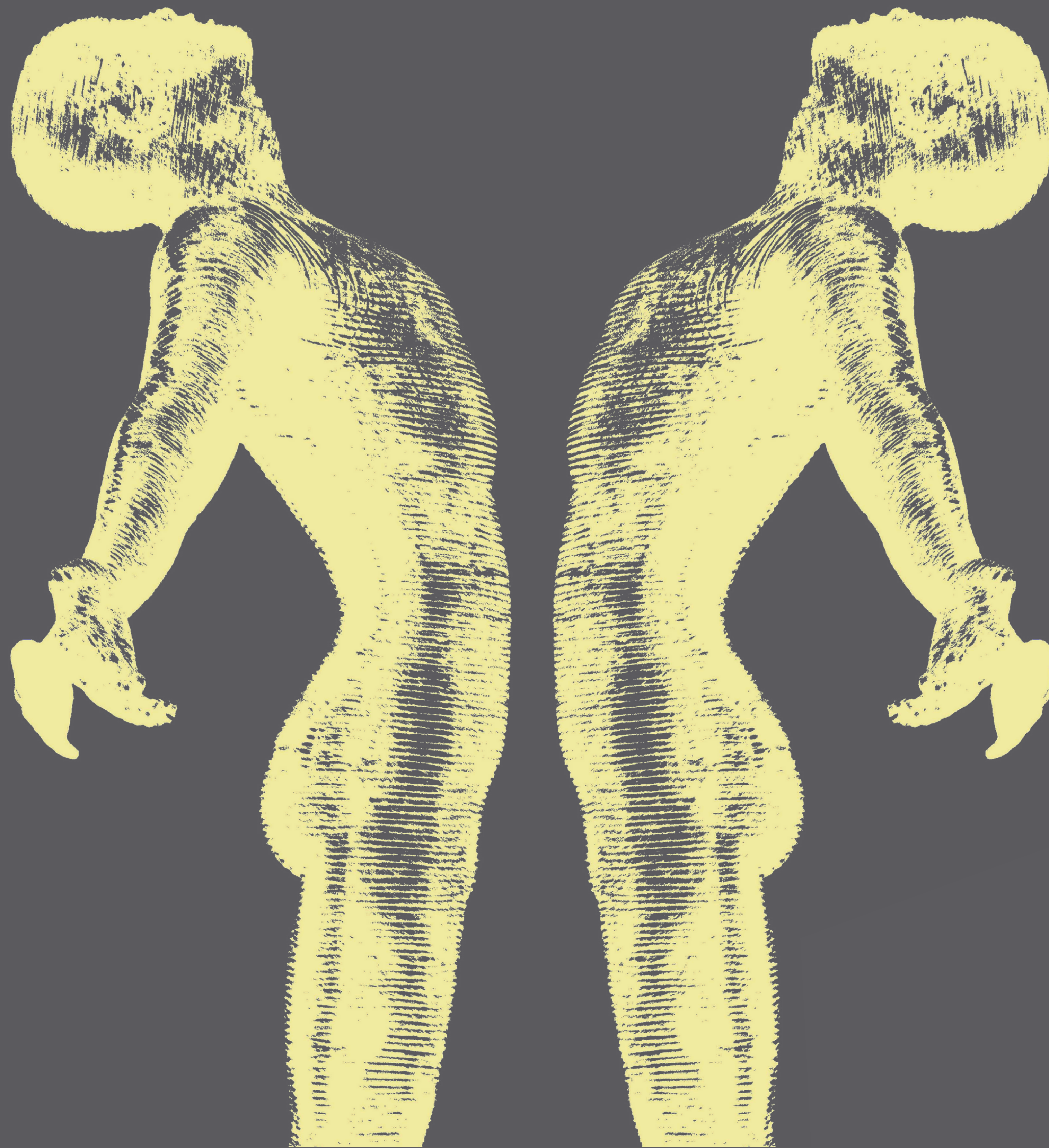
In this respect, Anton Smit's work can be seamlessly transposed to the cultural heritage of the city of Genk. A city with a history, undergoing many social and economic changes throughout recent decades, Genk evolved from a rural village to a multicultural mining town, rising up twice after economic setbacks. A story of social growth, human suffering and the ability to learn from the hard times.

FAITH 7,5M

Official inauguration of the "Faith" sculpture in Thor Park, Genk. "Faith", a monumental statue created by South African artist Anton Smit, measures 7,5 metres and welcomes visitors at the local former mining area. It symbolises human strength and the power to believe in a better future.

PROJECTS

CREATING THE ICONIC FAITH SCULPTURE



“My work is driven by faith; the spiritual essence of every piece is an answer to that inner call.” – Anton Smit

World-renowned sculptor Anton Smit has used his faith as a driving force for his creative abilities, as showcased by many of his sculptures. Each sculpture features poetry and evokes different themes of suffering, reconciliation, glory and sublimation. Many of his works, even the most abstract pieces, manage to communicate powerfully and emotionally. His works embrace towering human figures, impressive heads, masks, as well as floating and stretching figures. Anton likes to inject his works with movement or gesture.

Faith

I lift my eyes to You,
to You whose throne is in heaven.
In complete submission to God.
– Anton Smit

Faith was conceptualised in 2007 as a universal sculpture, thinking about how mankind should be striving for pure Faith. First made as a life-size sculpture, Smit thought Faith would make a bigger impact in public spaces, so he started making it in many different sizes.

The 7-metre Faith sculpture was originally made of steel and GRP, with a joining system of flanges and pipes that lock together automatically. Bronze versions were later casted.

- The 7m Faith sculpture can be viewed at the Anton Smit Sculpture Park, Bronkhorstspuitdam, as well as Hermanus, Genk (Belgium) and Norway.

I surrender to you God... all my weight...
my height... my depth... my thoughts...
experiences and feelings...
all my hopes and expectations.

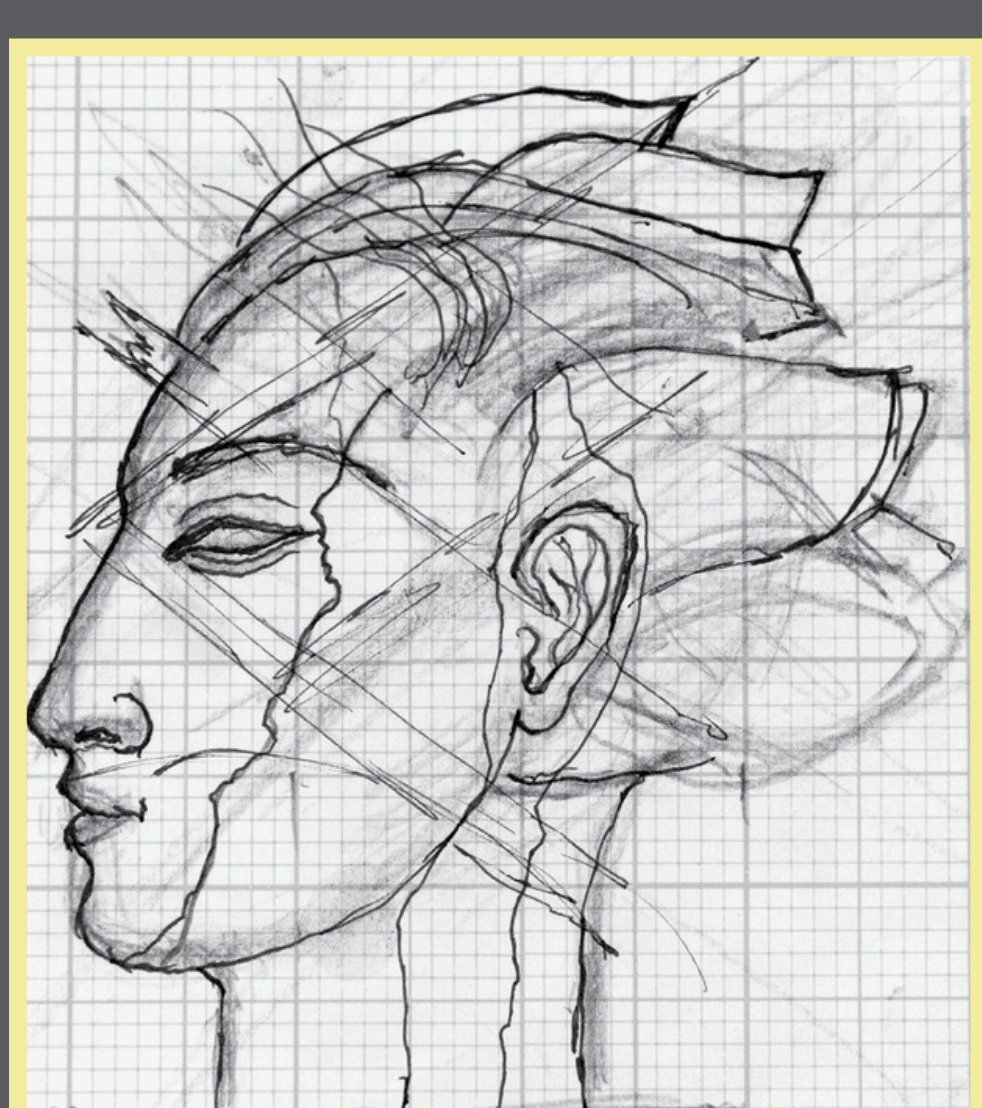
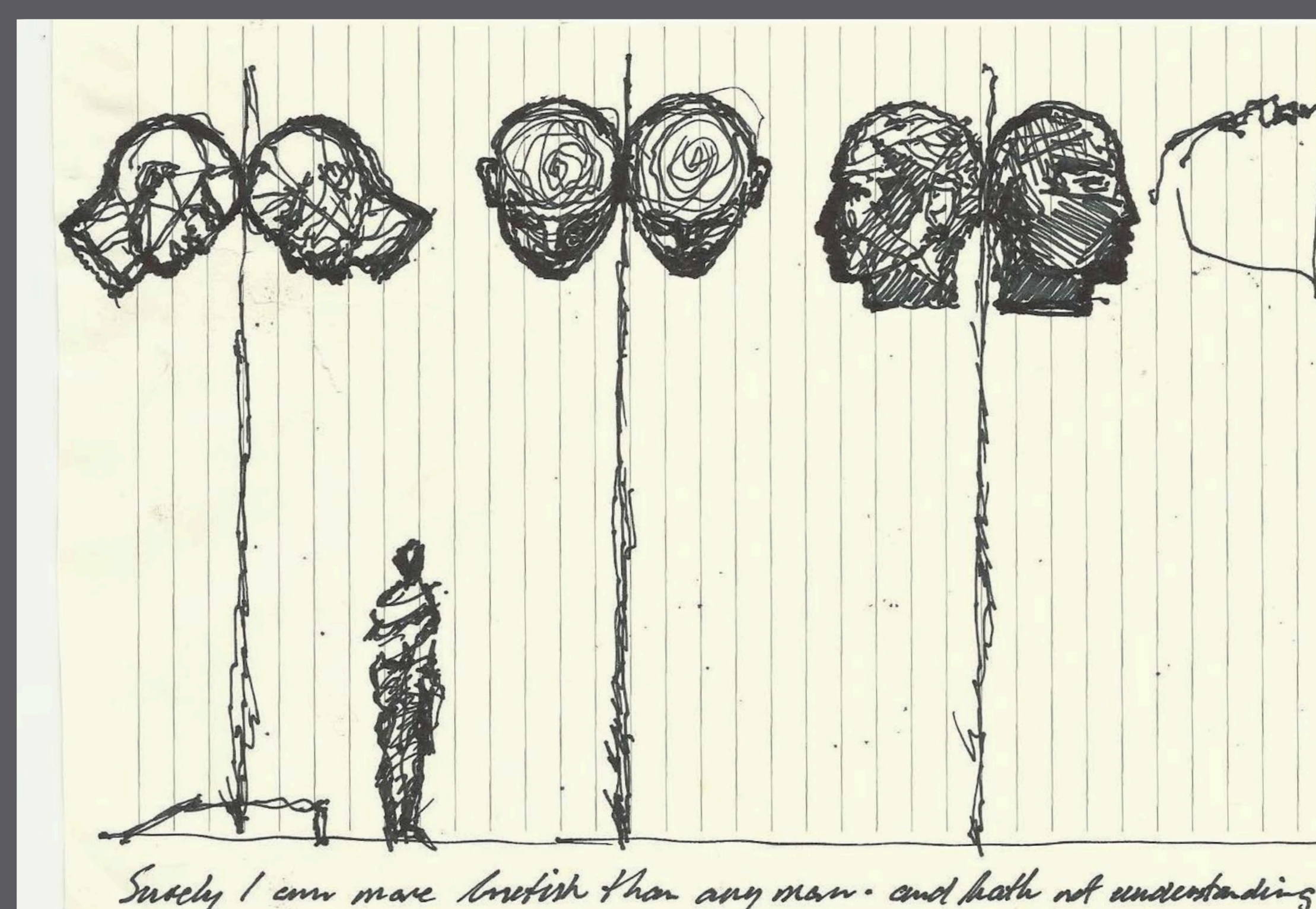
I surrender to my Creator... my past, my present,
my future... I surrender to you Lord all my
weaknesses... Make me faithful to you... make
me free in spirit and Your witness!

- Jerkoo Manduric, 2023

EVOLUTION OF THE MASK SERIES



“ I nailed life down with my eyes,
hostility of masks and men.
The soul side-slipped into shadow.”
– Roelien Smit



Through processes of separation, fragmentation and layering, I begin to reimagine the relationship between place and memory in all its porousness and fragility. – Anton Smit

Anton Smit

ARTIST, POET, PHILANTROPIST

MAN EMULATES AND ASSIMILATES NATURE, PRODUCING POETRY IN WORD AND FORM. – **ANTON SMIT**

Spokenverse, the echoes of emotive lyrics and the rasping of sculptures in progress are customary sounds emitted from his studio. Larger than life, Anton Smit is the embodiment

of poetry, an apt term for this sculptor, derived from the term for “making.” Anton forms his own language through sculpture, the manifestation of his passion for expression and his profound faith.

The elegant lines of the human form speak of the artist’s search for the fundamental character of the creation of humankind through divine meditation.

This work investigates the landscape of the soul. Having a fleeting glimpse of eternity. It leaves you breathless. Weightless – falling into the remains of love. The dimness of our reflection in the mirror of the universe leaves us gasping for immortality, as we sink into the abyss of the self.
– **Anton Smit**



The liberating ring where name and image meet in widening ripples, uncurling calamity of the air, in the persistence of weightlessness.
– **Anton Smit**



Distant silver storm crackling sea suicide locked into suffering clinging to a crucifix and walking upon water.
– **Anton Smit**



A line between empowered and defeat, of real honesty, and if you want, silence. A moment of free-fall and endless ending ours, there to be chosen.

– M Sallinger



TO INSPIRE, YOU MUST BE INSPIRED. ANTON AND ROELIEN SMIT’S SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.

Leadership is not about control but service. It’s not about power but empowerment.

It takes an entire community of people to provide for and interact positively with children, for those children to gain trust and to grow in a safer, healthier environment. Both Anton and Roelien believe in our children and the future of our country. We believe we can make a difference through art. 10% of the proceeds of our sculpture sales goes to the **Ubuhle Christian School**. We support education and provide funds to supply food to children from nearby disadvantaged communities, giving hope in creating a better future.

ANTON AND ROELIEN ALSO SUPPORTS:

Mad Foundation (education and leadership), Lunchbox Foundation, Cape Wine Auction, Cancer Association, Imibala Children’s Fund, Second Chance Foundation, CMR, Arc Rehabilitation, Art for Conservation.

“It takes a village to raise a child” – this beautiful proverb explains the work of the **Ubuhle Christian School** so well. “A school very close to our hearts,” says Roelien.

UBUHLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



RAPTURE

QUANTUM LEAP INTO THE FUTURE

PHYSICAL TRANSCENDENTALISM

The work of art aspires to proceed from a realm of indeterminacy of chance, of dream which has significance for life but superior to it – a realm of super-reality.

ARTIST’S MANIFESTO FOR NEW SCULPTURES

NEW FUTURISM

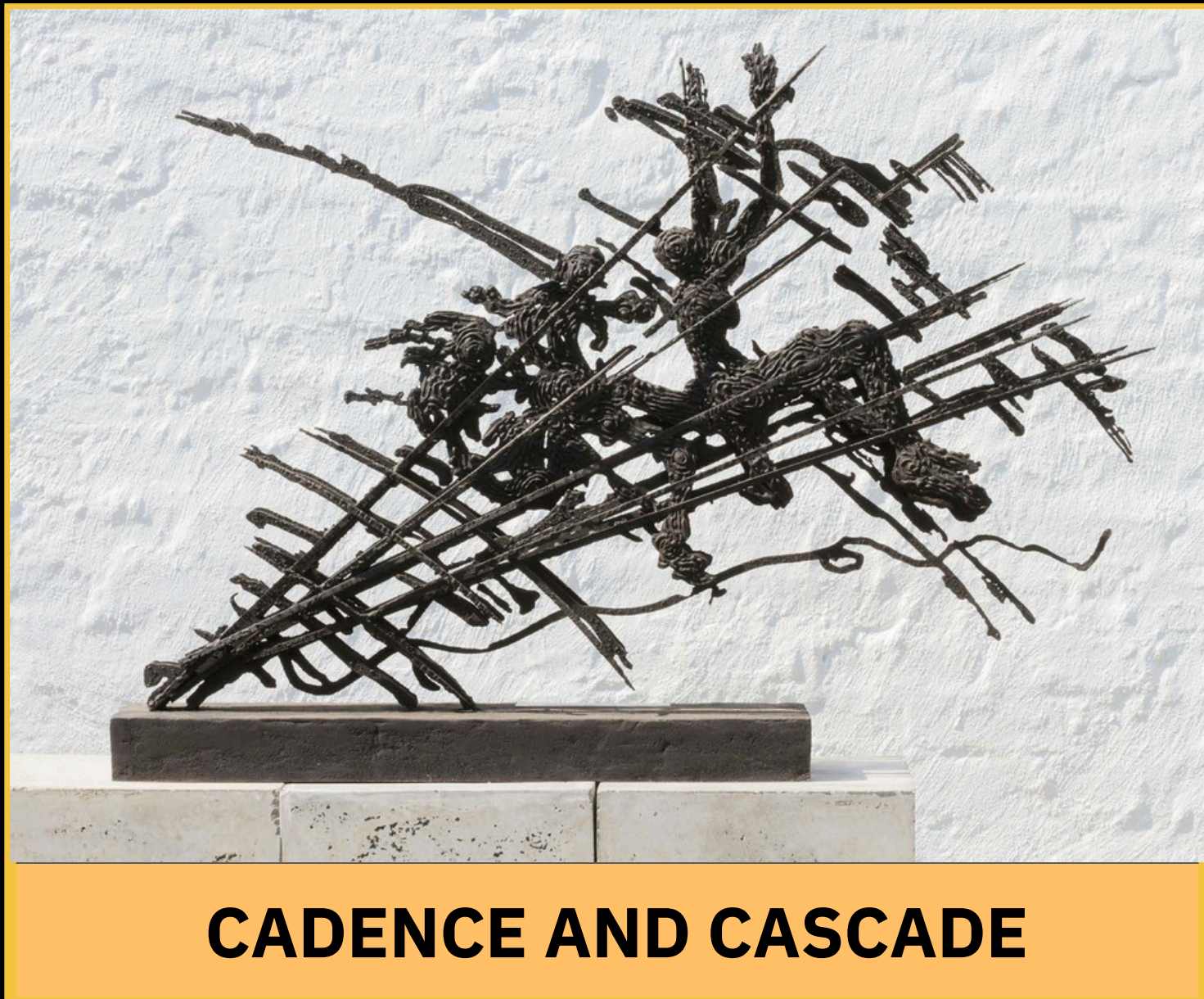
There can be no renewal of art if the essence is not renewed.
The vision and concept of line and mass that form the sculpture.
To renew the art of sculpture, we must start from the nucleus of the object we want to create in order to discover new forms that link it invisibly to the apparent plastic infinite. This new plastic art will then be a translation into material of those atmospheric planes that link and intersect things. This physical transcendentalism of sculpture must give life to objects by a system of interpenetration. Objects do not exist in isolation – they cut through and divide the surrounding space in an arabesque of directional curves. The divisionist technique endeavours to penetrate the object and represent movement.

The expression of submergence is indicitive of a new phase I am entering. A descent into the wall of creativity, to explore new ideas. The beginning of a journey outside space and time. When you have a fleeting glimpse of eternity, it leaves you breathless, weightless – falling into the remains of love. The dimness of our reflection in the mirror of the universe leaves us gasping for immortality as we sink into the abyss of the self.
– Anton Smit

A flash of the persistent brightness
A feast of brethren claiming all I own!
Tarnished metals, fragmented beings, fallen buildings
I gallop through garrisons empty of soldiers
A flash of that persistent brightness
Expands and engulfs the universe
The sentinel bird looks over my head
and invariably – the angel inhabits my soul...
The angel inhabits my soul
– Anton Smit



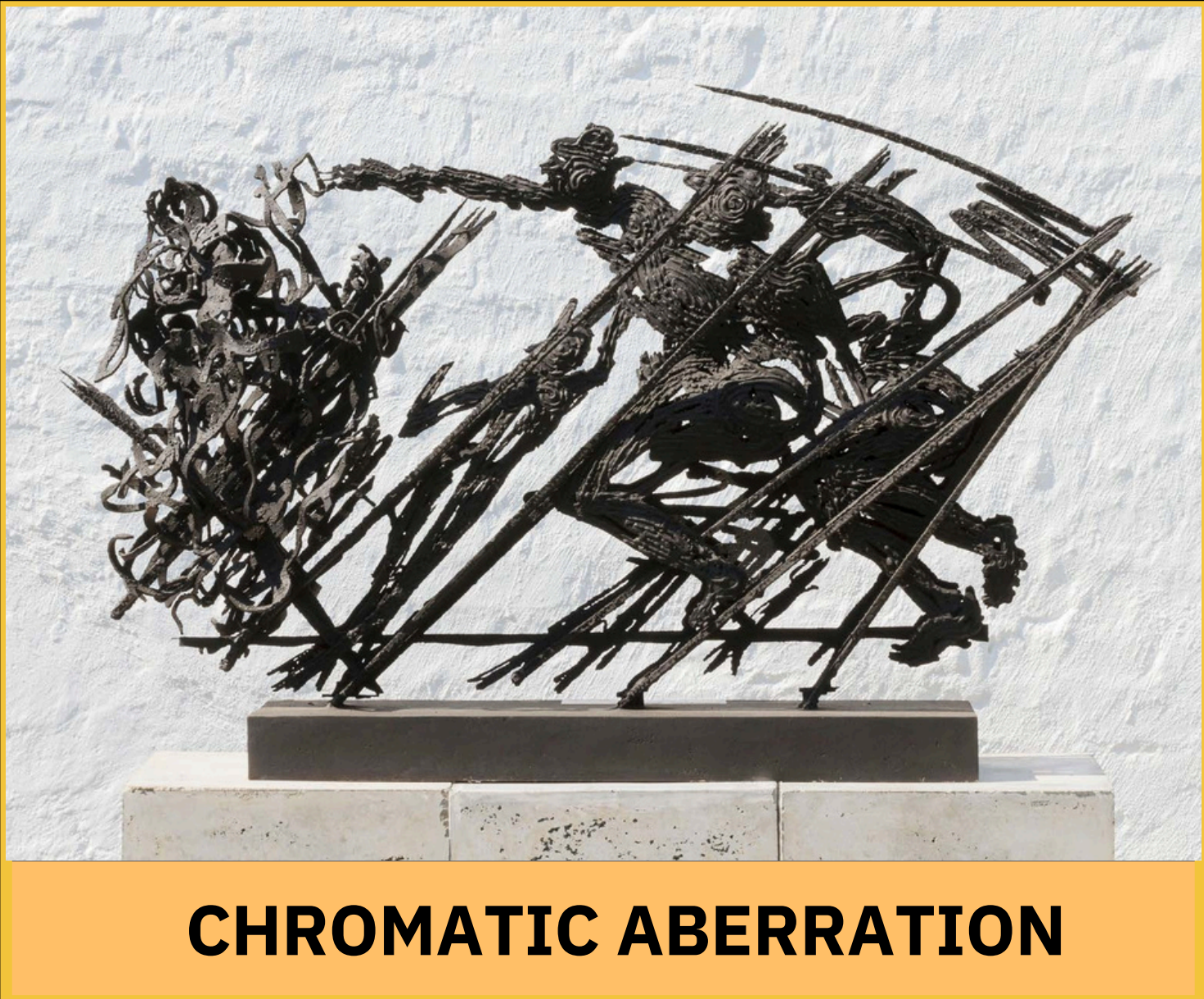
RIDERS ON THE STORM



CADENCE AND CASCADE



RAPTURE



CHROMATIC ABERRATION



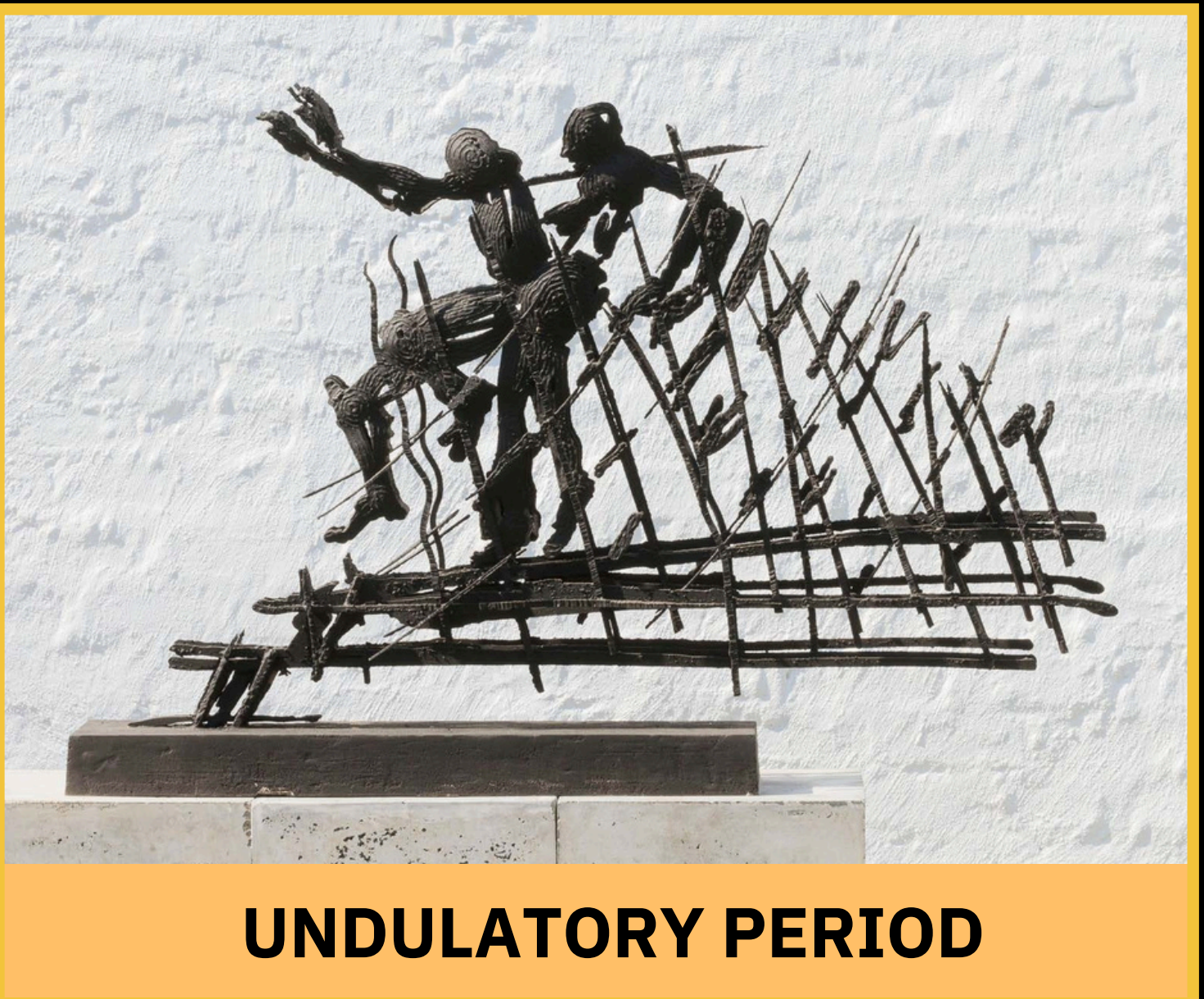
PANTOMIME TRANSFORMATION



METRONOME



QUANTUM LEAP



UNDULATORY PERIOD