



# ANDREAS BUISMAN

Andreas Buisman is a world renowned rock sculptor. In this interview he tells us why he is flying in from overseas to visit Walcha.

**W**here do you live?  
I live in Vienna, work on an old little farm close to the Czech border half way between Vienna and Prague.  
I also regularly visit Australia twice a year for some six weeks and work, mostly in rural NSW, and Victoria. I touch base with good friends, often clients that have become friends in Tumut/Adelong, the Monaro, the far south coast, the northern rivers and lately in the tablelands of Walcha.

**> What brings you to Walcha?**

I will arrive in Walcha on Steven King's birthday, the 25th of January and continue to work for a show at the Walcha Gallery of Arts on the 19th of February.

I will also do some commissions in that time around Walcha. And last but surely not least we will install "the citizens" in the center of town.

This is a group of 10 basalt-pillars I was commissioned to polish for Walcha's Open Air Gallery and am excited to finally see them in place!

I have made a lot of friends in the area and really enjoy their company.

**> Tell us more about Steven King?**

Steven was born in Bingara and is a very well known sculpturer. He is renowned for his works called Sculpture By The Sea.

He lives and works on his sheep and cattle farm in Walcha. He studied at the Sydney College of the Arts where he gained a Diploma in Visual Arts with a printmaking major. He has gradually moved into making figurative sculptures using fallen timber from his farm.

Steven has been instrumental in the creation of Walcha's "Open Air Gallery" where there are more than 40 pieces of public art installed.

Steven is a regular exhibitor at the Walcha Gallery of Art, the work offers examples of his response to working in rural Australia and how man and nature interconnect.

**> How did you become interested in granite sculpturing?**

I started out working in applied arts - for example designed tables with granite tops. My studio/farm in the Waldviertel in Austria and lies in a geologically similar area to the Australian great divide – a weathered age old granite

table land with similar boulders - only more often covered in thick vegetation.

So there is a granite industry there, and it was obvious for me to try working the material.

**> Describe some of your art and where you gain your inspiration from?**

I love rocks, and I guess in a way most of us do. Everybody takes rocks from certain place, travels or holidays, back home.

For example, I especially love these big boulders you find in the great dividing range and the western slopes. These naturally formed giants have always inspired me.

In my work I don't change or form the boulders I work with. I'll polish, clean and transform them for the spectator. I consider myself a servant to those boulders – formed millions of years ago. That's why I could never give them "names".

It is very important to interact with my work by touching and feeling the rock's smoothness and roughness, coolness and heat. Children particularly are often irresistibly drawn to cuddle, play with and even climb the sculptures – what bigger compliment could I ask for?

When you exhibit in Australia it is most likely that you do this close to water: the coast, lakes or rivers ... This inspired me to add those wave-like forms into my sculpture.

But my true love in this continent is the outback!

The vastness the horizon the skies! Both my wife Sandra who was posted at the Austrian embassy in Canberra for 5 years and I truly fell in love with it.

We travel the country in an old year 75 kingswood, and I believe I do understand this country better than a lot of Aussies.

More and more photography has become a important part of my work.

The twelve apostles are a project I have started five years ago. I polished 12 rocks from New South Wales and took them travelling. In cars and planes and trains and boats, the rocks have been sighted and I took pictures all over the world. From the Australian outback to New Zealand, Hawaii to Canada, the United States and Europe.

The best 12 photos made it into an exhibition and are being sighted beside the actual sculpture. A limited series of these photos will be on sale.

This is what I will introduce in the Walcha Gallery of Arts. The inaugural show was held in Vienna in 2007 and was

opened by the Australian ambassador in Vienna. It is an intercontinental project and I have made a lot of good friends through it.

A catalogue goes with the show, of course not only the rocks travel, but also the photo-show. The rocks will continue to travel, so in some years to come we will see photos of those little basalts in front of patagonian glaciers, the Siberian tiger, Tibet or ... you name it ...

**> What materials do you work with?**

Hard rock, granite and in Australia of course there is a lot of basalt and quartzite.

**> Does your art take you abroad often?**

Naturally! There are rocks all over this world, and therefore I polish them all over the world. I did and still do travel Australia and New Zealand a lot, it is perfect to have a second season to work in when it's winter in Europe. And the 12 apostles or some of them are always accompanying us!

**> Your plans for the future?**

In September I will have Walcha artists Steven King and Julia Griffin over in Austria and work and exhibit together with them ... I am looking forward to that and hope I can pay back some of the hospitality and support I received from them!

**> Thank you Andreas.**

