A blessing in stone

The Bulgarian sculptor Sasho Diskov arrived late to Symposium I but, when accommodated with Wondabyne sandstone he set to work.

Moved by the sight of a massive Aboriginal rock carving, Sasho’s sculpture combines Aboriginal and Bulgarian beliefs and techniques depicting two hands giving a blessing from Bulgaria to the people of Australia.

On the back of the sculpture are embedded six bronze wedges creating an interaction between good and evil.

Located in Kibble Park, Gosford.

COMPOSITION
by Aleksandar (Sasho) Diakov (Bulgaria)

Two international art events carved history from stone

The International Sculpture Symposium movement began in 1959 where sculptors from different countries came together to produce permanent public artwork from local stone.

In 1987 the perseverance of Central Coast sculptor Lawrence Beck succeeded in bringing together sculptors from all over the world for Australia’s first ever International Sculpture Symposium.

A legacy left to the Australian people

For this historic event, the picturesque hamlet of Wondabyne, with its tranquil water, views was chosen for the work to take place. Beautiful sandstone was donated from Gosford Quarries and the sculptures were handed over to the people of Australia as a bicentennial gift from the artists. It was a great success and a second international symposium was held at Mt Penang in 1988, again under the leadership of Lawrence Beck.

To ensure their safety and public accessibility, these magnificent sculptures were relocated to the lovely Mt Penang Gardens and Parklands where they are visited and enjoyed by thousands of people a year.

Each sculpture is unique, influenced by the environment and the cultural heritage of the artists. Common themes emerge from the collective work – nature, mother earth, the womb as a force to mold and form, man’s relationship to nature and partnerships between human beings.

Lawrence Beck may be Australia’s best-known sculptor. He founded both Australian Symposia and the first Georgian-Basque Symposium in France (1991). His work can be found in Spain, Mexico, Georgia, New Guinea, Japan, France and Nepal.
SYMPOSIUM I
MT PENANG GARDENS

Under the direction of organiser and artist Lawrence Beck, a dozen sculptors from across Australia, Papua New Guinea, Bulgaria, Nepal and France were invited to transform sandstone blocks into stunning and unique pieces of art.

ABORIGINAL PONDERING
THE FUTURE 1788 by Peter Kaczer (Sofá, Bulgaria)
An aboriginal looking towards the sea at approaching European ships and pondering the future 2 centuries ago. The piece also speaks about the pagan winter festival, where children wear masks to frighten off the bad winter spirits.

SYMPHONY II
MT PENANG PARKLANDS

A gain led by Lawrence Beck, twelve sculptors from Australia, Japan, Bulgaria, Mexico, Georgia and Burma produced permanent public artwork from local Wondabyne sandstone donated by the Gosford Quarries.

RELATIONSHIPS
by Serendiva Wallen (Coffs Harbour, Australia)
Two people connected but looking in different directions. The base is one person, connected to the earth. She's all come from the earth, our father, mother medium for life. The earth has no form but contains all forms of life.

ETERNITY
by Jose Gregorietschit (Tbilisi, Georgia)
In this sculpture composition, the sense of maternity is explained by conditional and associative plastic language, giving the idea of eternity of life on earth.

RISING HERO
by Naree Kaaj Shaka (Punakha, Nepal)
The depiction of the artist’s god Buddha acknowledges that all spiritual forces reside in the head, be it human or that of a deity. The work talks about a world where people live tolerantly together in peaceful existence.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE & PEACE
by Tanka Kaji Shaka (Punakha, Nepal)
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THE GUARDIAN LION
by Dan Latch (Sydney, Australia)
The piece reflects the basic communication of the sculptors’ camp where artists would raise their hands to their mouth and ‘coo-ad’ requests to others.

THE BRIDE
by Nan Hin (Rangoon, Burma)
The stone became a portrait of a real bride – so rare to be found in real life.

THE ORIGIN OF THE TRIBE
by Navee Saumambil (Sydney, Australia)
The sculpture represents the cycle of life from conception to death, when the mind becomes a spirit force again.

THE SPIRIT WHALE
by Awastri Axonabba (Sepik River, Papua New Guinea)
Reflecting the tribal images of his New Guinea Highlands community, the artist’s ancestor spirit Way-Wo is represented by the big face looking at the water. At the bottom left corner, facing the path is the sculptor’s sign – his tribal signature.

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THE ANGEL OF PEACE
by Christiane Giraud (Avignon, France)
The piece speaks of peace and cultural friendship exchanged by the sculptors of Symposium I. According to Mahayana Buddhism teachings, the Mahâ Buddha will come and all countries will cooperate in creating an equal world.

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SUNWOMAN/ MOONMAN
by Bruce Coppinger (Maitland, Australia)
Here, the complimentary forces of Aboriginal legends Suneman and Moonman are revealed. One side is left rough while the other's large sweeping form has drama, formal interplay and soft emotional dialogue.

HEADED
by Herson (Mexico City, Mexico)
Heresia believes the opinion of the sculptor is not important. “Think what you will about the piece. People have the capacity to imagine.

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