



### **Michael Wilding: Sculptor**

**Michael Wilding** was born in 1953 and educated in Europe. As a student he studied figurative painting, and planned to go into the fine arts. This dream was sidetracked for thirty years when he decided on a career in music and acting. As a musician, playing saxophone and flute, he played in bands in London and Los Angeles. As an actor, he appeared in films, a soap opera, and off-Broadway productions in New York. The need to create has always been an essential part of who he is.

Wilding moved to New Mexico almost twenty years ago, with the idea of getting back to his original desire to make fine art. He discovered stone sculpture in 2001 and has not looked back. Through sculpture, all of his passions come together; art, music, and performance. "I listen to jazz or rock and roll while literally dancing around the stone, applying the chisel. I think there is a huge correlation between sculpting and music," he says. Lyric and rhythmic, his abstract pieces radiate energy,

giving back the joy he feels in his work. Although initially he did not consider showing his art professionally, he realized that "having the work out there in the world is part of the creative process. One creates energy with a piece of work, and cannot hold onto it."

Wilding describes his artistic process as "discovering it along the way". Once he starts, he does not spend much time contemplating his decisions in the moment. Fascinated with light and planes,

he follows the lines he uncovers by allowing the inherent qualities of the stone to guide his hand, and his thoughts. He is filled with wonder regarding the sedimentary life in limestone and the ability of Carrara marble to hold the light. "Each stone has a different dynamic. Working with marble is slower than with limestone, so the resulting piece takes longer to unfold, and there are different considerations along the way."

Recently, the artist crossed into a daring new dimension by applying color to his limestone pieces. "I wanted color to permeate the stone, not just cover it, giving the existing shape an additional response." He experimented with various pigments and waxes before selecting a material used to stain concrete. "Although I knew there was a distinct possibility that I could ruin the thing, I dove in. It had been gray. I made it blue. It leapt out of itself."

Next is a series of bronzes on one of the pieces, something he has wanted to do for a long time. Bronze will seal the deal, and make manifest another of Wilding's dreams.

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