

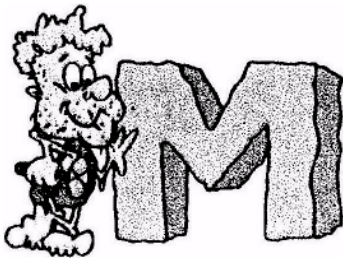
Texture on Stone

Creating Interest

Montoya Sculpture
Supply since 1973

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- Texture adds interest.
- Use your multi-point chisel and bush hammers to add texture.
- Make highly polished areas shine more by finding ways to place unpolished areas nearby.
- Always wear safety gear. Protect your health and eyes.
- New stone arrives monthly. We maintain a large selection.
- If you need stone larger than 400lbs let us know and we will have it put into our next shipment

Your pallet is composed of the tools you use to create texture and thus reflect light differently. Explore textures and finishes to bring the observer in closer.

TEXTURE ON STONE, CREATING INTEREST

By Jeff Halverson

A lot of the stone sculpture I see here at Montoya comes in completely polished. The stone available for sculpture is very beautiful, full of colors, and veining and a high polish works well on it. But texture creates interest and brings the viewer in closer.



Over the years I have been encouraging visitors and students to explore texture in their stone sculptures. Texture creates interest through light and color. During February and March of 2003 we had Kennedy Musekiwa of Zimbabwe here to teach Shona Sculpture. He also exhibited about 40 of his works (see them at Sandawanagallery.com). It's obvious that one of the traits that make Shona Sculpture so interesting is the use of textures. It's very common to find even small Shona Sculptures with four and five textures.

Texturing requires consideration and can take additional effort. The sculptor must be selective in the use of textures depending on the color and hardness of the stone. Let's explore some of the textures available to the stone sculptor.

NATURAL STONE FINISH - This case makes use of the natural exposed face of the stone, I donated a work to the Adam Walsh Foundation that depicted a fish coming out of the wall of the reef. The fish was highly polished but I left the natural face of the stone to represent the reef. One of Kennedy's works incorporated the natural stone to form the headdress on a sitting woman. It provides a good contrast against any of the worked textures. The trick here is planning your work so that the natural face of the stone ends up with the right relationship to the rest of the work.

HEAVY FROSTING (BUSH HAMMER) - Creating a sort of pulverized surface on the stone provides contrast particularly on darker colored stones.

Explore Your Creative Potential

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Using a 16-point or 25-point bush hammer with appropriate force will crush the outer stone structure and provide a frosted look. Allow enough "additional" stone in the area requiring heavy frosting. Larger areas or harder stone may require a carbide-tipped frosting chisel and pneumatic hammer.

LIGHT FROSTING - This technique allows some of the structure of the original stone to remain. Apply the frosting technique lightly and more spaced. Use a pick hammer to get into the tighter areas. Use a metal shield to protect areas from misdirected blows.

PICKING - On softer stones the pick end of some bush hammers is used to create a picked or freckled appearance. This could be used on a light or high polished area to attract attention. For harder stones just look at how Auguste Rodin used the point chisel to pick away at the stone and leave heavy markings to attract attention and provide contrast to high polish areas.

POINTED TOOTH RAKE - A chisel with three to nine points can be used effectively to take down areas roughed out by a single point chisel. Those same chisels can be used to create the flow of hair, the fall of cloth, or the action of water. On darker hard stone a great finish is to sand and polish the high side of this finish leaving the valleys rough. This creates a light and dark contrast that accentuates the direction of the rake.

FLAT TOOTH RAKE - This finish is created much the same as the POINTED TOOTH RAKE but the flat tooth creates a wide flat valley. The high side is usually not as well defined but the effect is interesting. This technique is most effective on softer stones. Use a wide enough chisel, as you do not want to have to keep overlapping areas and take down too much stone.

DETAILING - I define this texture as something perhaps not as harsh or deep as the other textures. The uniform and systematic application of scratches on a high polish, such as a plaid pattern, or across an open stone book to signify words or sentences. The piping around the edge of a dress on a bust adds interest. The light swirling motion of a multi-point chisel can signify locks of hair.

LIGHT SANDING UNPOLISHED - This texture is achieved through the use of a rasp or riffler and sanding to about a 220 or 320 grit finish. You will get a smooth enough finish but it probably will not reflect light.

LIGHT SANDING POLISHED - This texture is achieved through the use of a rasp or riffler, sanding to 220 or 320 grit and polishing. It takes some work as different stones will absorb the polish at different rates and create different finishes. The final texture will be somewhat smooth and will have a wet look when polished.

SAND BLASTING - I mention this because it is a technique used on harder stones, like granite, to create the LIGHT SANDING texture mentioned above.

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HIGH POLISH WITH LIGHT FROSTING - This texture is created by sanding the stone between 1200 and 1500 grit (up to 3500 grit with harder stones), and giving it a high polish. Once the stone is polished a very light frosting with a bush hammer will create an interesting contrast particularly on darker stones. The contrast is seen as the high polish areas reflect light in the field of the non-reflective bushed areas

HIGH POLISH - The ubiquitous high polish is achieved through the careful use of finer grits of wet/dry sand paper or diamond pads. Soapstone usually has a limit of 600 grit. Alabaster can be sanded to 1500 grit. Marble can be sanded to 3500 grit and you can use oxalic acid and tin oxide. The reason these different stones have these limits is that the stone structures are not tight enough or hard enough to be worked by the smaller particle sizes on the paper or diamond pad. You basically start stripping the exposed surface and are rubbing it against itself as it comes off easily and forms a cushion between the stone and the paper. After sanding to the appropriate level and dried, you can use cloth or fabric-polishing wheels (disks) attached to a drill or slow speed angle grinder (which is one of the reasons you should buy a *variable speed angle grinder* and not a single speed one). Use the cloth disks with alabaster or marble compound. Once the surface is prepared you can polish it to a high light-reflecting shine.

Most of the books I have seen on stone sculpture don't go into much regarding texture. One of the books we stock that address texture in some detail is *Sculpture In Stone* by Cami and Santamera, page 90.

The different textures available create interest because they reflect light differently and the "add" color to the stone. Texture can draw your eye to a particular place on the sculpture or it can help hide areas. Too many or improperly placed textures can be visually confusing and distract from the sculpture's overall appearance. But when you want to create hair on a head, bark on a tree, or cloth over the skin, try a texture. Don't restrict textures to the classical forms, look for opportunities in abstract works also.

A parting thought. Be sure and use a good polishing fluid and a non-yellowing wax to seal and protect that hard-earned high polish.

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