



# THE WARRIORS

G U A R D I A N I   D E L   P A T R I M O N I O

A N T O N I O   S I G N O R I N I

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*“Everything started from a close encounter with our past; the one about which we have very little information; the one from which everything began.*

*Pure quartz spheroids, jasper almonds streaked with gold and purple and waxy leaves of translucent flint. Refined graffiti, evocative paintings, millstones, axes, blades aged by thousands of centuries: these are the drawings and objects that guaranteed the survival of the first human communities and allow us to remember them today.*

*The precious beauty of their chosen material, the research of symmetries, the creation of perfection in smooth convexity suggest that these unknown makers were growing a need that was going beyond the simple usefulness of tools. These forms of higher handicraft - evidence that archaic man migrated from the African plains to the Saudi Arabian desert - might reveal the original nucleus from which art stems. More than any other science, the study of prehistory grants an incredible access to imagination, contrasting with the objectivity of scientific data...”*

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“It is important to remember that art exists to be shared; it is for everyone. You cannot ever really own art because it is never just yours alone...”

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- A N T O N I O   S I G N O R I N I









Antonio Signorini is an Italian artist. His journey in life started under the wide skies of Tuscany, where he was born in 1971 and was immediately immersed in the strong history of this region. During his childhood he shared his father's passion for art. Together they visited museums, monuments and archaeological sites all around Europe and this triggered a life-long process of research into the essence of art where he has spent many long hours trying to understand its meaning and beauty.

Following the artistic tradition of the Renaissance artists whose work surrounded him in Florence, Rome and Milan, Signorini takes pride in giving body and volume to a simple line and transforming a flat surface into a tridimensional physical space.

In 1990, in Milan, his interest opened up to new horizons and Signorini began to experiment with artistic drawing by directing a production and design team, which allowed him to understand and experiment with contemporary materials and enabled him to foster a deep understanding of Italian fashion design.

From 2001 to 2003 his desire to improve his expressive techniques took him to Florence, where he increased his knowledge in bronze and ceramic sculpture as well as traditional techniques. He also pursued his investigation into the world's ancient civilizations and the study of the artistic revolution brought about by the Renaissance.

In 2004 he moved to London where he lived and worked for 15 years. It is there that his research found the most suitable context for him and he worked on a full project of historical and artistic evaluation of the city.

During this time he developed the practice of "structuralart" where he developed a method of working with architectural projects in cities all over the world - intervening at a structural level to ensure art is incorporated at all levels within the buildings he works with.

Today, Signorini lives in Dubai where he finds the coexistence of ancient remnants of civilizations and ultra-modern architectural complexes hugely inspirational. Working next to one of the world's most unique skylines and in a place that is still discovering its own history has given him the chance to draw a thread through history, archeology, artistic research and development of art pieces as well as continue to explore the flux between public and private urban spaces.









## A R T I S T   S T A T E M E N T

"All my work is driven by emotion and by faith. An artist should always have faith; we need faith in ourselves and our work to drive our lives forward and to push us to improve and to grow each day. For an artist, it is essential to be continuously updated with the latest developments, to study and to research.

Life is a journey. We can stay still and let our life run away or we can act and work and try to improve and do our best. It is very tough sometimes but we have to embrace this challenge. My artistic production is based on these principles.

What keeps me awake at night is thinking about passage from one state of being to another, or more generally, movement and how to capture it. In my work you will see movement through different layers of emotion. You may see my subjects emerging from the wall or seemingly in dynamic action. All this is driven by a feeling that nothing in our lives is certain or solid.

I always work from a sense of inspiration and I like to acknowledge my own weakness. However, I never give up and I never embrace a new project without thinking that it is a unique and totally original experience for me and that I must give it my all."

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## P R A C T I C E   &   T E C H N I Q U E S

Thanks to Signorini's wide ranging experience and his constant research he has invented and developed his own techniques and an individual approach towards the materials he uses. He has realized new alloys to give his pieces the specific aesthetics and the beauty that he desires; working with several metals to achieve unique textures and chromatic tones and surfaces.

Mixing fine marble powder with pigments and colours, he produces engravings that bring a new dimension to sculpture and also enhances his art pieces. In his paintings he mixes oils with acrylics on marble and fabrics. The use of his own techniques and of the new bronze alloys, allow him to create beautiful and archetypical works of magnificent universality.

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# T H E   W A R R I O R S

## G U A R D I A N I   D E L   P A T R I M O N I O

### H I S T O R Y   &   I N S P I R A T I O N

Antonio Signorini started an in-depth study of primitive art in 2003. In particular, he focused on the Libyan, Saudi and Iraqi caves and findings within them. Then, the discovery of new caves in Europe led Signorini to develop his research further and to work towards recreating the rupestrian drawings he saw in these caves into sculptural form - a modern day creation to connect people with their past.

As his research widened, Antonio became further acquainted with findings in the Mesopotamian region and this inspired him to create The Warriors, one of his most compelling collections.

This series is inspired, influenced, and dedicated to the Paleolithic prehistoric period.

The first warrior was inspired from drawings in the caves of Saharan Libya, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and regions within Algeria; the other warriors developed one after the other like a memory of his own past, like an ancient tale that was turning into life through his art connecting all humanity together.

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# T H E   W A R R I O R S

## G U A R D I A N I   D E L   P A T R I M O N I O

### A R T I S T   S T A T E M E N T

"Everything started from a close encounter with our past; the one about which we have very little information; the one from which everything began. Pure quartz spheroids, jasper almonds streaked with gold and purple and waxy leaves of translucent flint. Refined graffiti, evocative paintings, millstones, axes, blades aged by thousands of centuries: these are the drawings and objects that guaranteed the survival of the first human communities and allow us to remember them today.

The precious beauty of their chosen material, the research of symmetries, the creation of perfection in smooth convexity suggest that these unknown makers were growing a need that was going beyond the simple usefulness of tools. These forms of higher handicraft - evidence that archaic man migrated from the African plains to the Saudi Arabian desert - might reveal the original nucleus from which art stems.

More than any other science, the study of prehistory grants an incredible access to imagination, contrasting with the objectivity of scientific data. "During my research I became fascinated by 14,000-year-old drawings. They are abstract and real at the same time. In their purest simplicity they are also incredibly similar to drawings by children. Cave drawings are like the childhood of the world; we all start out drawing in the same way. For me, past and present do not exist. Life and art are not chronological.

Art is always contemporary because it inspires emotions that are always real. These drawings inspired me and I imagined what they would be like if they became sculpture and that is when the warrior project started in my mind. I saw my warriors running and moving in the desert, in the endless lands filled with running gazelles and animals. I imagined their spears and their bows and arrows ready to hunt and I connected myself with our ancient past as if it was my real present."





# T H E   W A R R I O R S

## G U A R D I A N I   D E L   P A T R I M O N I O

### C O L L E C T I O N   C H A R A C T E R I S T I C S

They are strong, modern and linear. Their clean lines create equilibrium and movement and they are all created in dynamic poses - running, hunting and posturing. Cut segments in the area of the eyes and the back create an angular feeling and missing sections at the hips create abstraction and a beautiful balance between two halves.

The spears and bow and arrows for the warriors have been created using advanced experimental archaeology methods that derive from the same processes used at the period. The artist sourced stone and antique wood from the region and made the objects using our understanding of processes from the past.

This collection has been created as a journey of the artist and as a metaphor for human life as a journey in itself.

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Bronze - Black Patina

1.5m-1.85m in height (base dependent)

100 - 150kg

(7) Seven Individual Works

Unique Pieces | Limited to 3 sets (21 total)

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"These masterpieces come from far away and go far away. They give shape to the first images that men have drawn on the cave walls and to those of men that will groove new galaxies with future inventions. They are the mirror of yesterday, today and tomorrow's worlds: they welcome, build, pray, think, remember, support, and grow: these are the gestures of humanity."

M A R I E L L A B O R R A C C I N O  
U N I V E R S I T Y O F S E C O N D R E N A I S S A N C E , M I L A N

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"Standing at life size and elevated on plinths, the seven bronze warrior figures ooze dynamism. Their limbs carry movement through their angular forms and although the place where their eyes should be is hollow, their connection with the viewer is certain. The hollowed segments in the eye area are repeated at the hips and on parts of the back. This creates uncertainty as well as balance and movement and also, allows for the viewer to experience each piece as a character. Without eyes or complete anatomy, the audience's mind fills in the missing blanks and the warriors also seem vulnerable as well as strong.'

A N N A S E A M A N  
A R T S W R I T E R A N D C U L T U R A L J O U R N A L I S T I N B R I T A I N  
A N D T H E U N I T E D A R A B E M I R A T E S



# T H E   E D E N   A N D   T H E   T O T E M :

## S E N S E   A N D   U N C O N S C I O U S   I N   T H E   S C U L P T U R E S

### O F   A N T O N I O   S I G N O R I N I

Books have a soul and art catalogues aspire to a longer lifespan than the restricted moments of the event to which they are connected. Our trip through the recent art works of Antonio Signorini starts from the shelves of a second-hand bookstore located in Turin. A bookstore characterized by extraordinary spaces, having taken over the location of the historical gallery "La Bussola" and inheriting the amazing ceiling drawn down by Carlo Mollino. Two steps away, the Egyptian Museum reminds us that Bernardino Drovetti, from Piedmont, was like Signorini, an investigator of deserts and depth, not only geological and archeological. For who believe in coincidences, we want to specify that the visit to the library had taken place only a few hours before I was starting to write about the masterpieces of the Tuscan sculptor.... ....Antonio Signorini's creation drives us from real caves and archeological sites to the labyrinthine concavities of the unconscious.

In literature or cinema, what is brought to light, awoken from a millenary slumber, is often bearer of misfortune: it can be read in Lovecraft, it can be found in the "Alien" saga; and what about the famous legend of the violated Egyptian tomb?

In art what happens is always the opposite and takes hint from the past. The most interesting thing is that it's a common practice also among the most distant poetics: it is customary among late medieval and Renaissance artists, of the baroque and neoclassic; of Alma Tadema or Pablo Picasso. What did Filippo Lippi or Raffaello think when, going down in the caves of Domus Aurea, stumbled across the grottescas? Were they rightly philological or they abandoned themselves to fantasy assigning those drawings to an unknown civilization? In '900, Picasso, Braque, Matisse, Brancusi and many others went down to further unknown depths. They explored the African heart of darkness looking for the light that would have accompanied them in the research of a revolutionary formal synthesis, able to subvert, at least apparently, the western standards....The totems, to paraphrase Freud, big collector of finds from non-European cultures, exorcise the taboo of the European artistic conventionality. But the descent into the depth of time, since then, brought with it the coexistence between archaic rigor and vision, between project and imagination, because in culture, tale and history, legend and epos coexist. The Surrealist group knew that already and what came from their sounding of the unconscious: Sebastian Matta and Wifredo Lam's worlds follow the pre-Columbian art, while Pollock was born from the automatic surrealist writing, grafted on ritual tradition of art practiced by the native Americans. So how many interlocutors has Signorini? For sure his research has to be inscribed in this constellation in which form and symbols are mingling: we can imagine a dialogue in that sense with Jung and Aby Warburg. In a circular cultural and chronological transversality, dominated by an eternal present.



The great sculptures made by Signorini were born on this frontier, where pure formal research and visionary evocation mingle. It is good to clarify, first of all, that he is an artist deeply rooted into the Tuscan sculptural culture. He has a deep knowledge of the techniques linked to metals (his patinas are amazing) and to minerals, able to change from molded materials to sculptures "per via di torre". This is made evident, during his research, by the pieces that have a stronger link with figuration, in which the human body, especially the face and the expressions, refer to an existentialist investigation: among the references, those common to any Italian artist, in his case the Florentine Renaissance, especially Donatello. But in those faces emerging from the walls (it's not clear if they are emerging or being swallowed by it), in the scream, in the tormented expressiveness of men and animals, flows the conscience of a cultured twentieth century, between Sartre, Artaud and Bacon, and also that of a probable irremediable loss of grace.

A radical change of registry can be found in the monumental bronzes inspired by the rock paintings of the North-African and Middle-Eastern deserts. The first, especially (we think about the exceptional ensemble of Tadrart Acaus, in South-western Libya dating back to 12 thousand B.C.) can be found in the dynamism of the figures revisited by Signorini. Men living when the Sahara was inhabited and especially when it wasn't a desert, creatures coming from fossil rivers, mingle into the third dimension of these massive warriors or hunters. The prehistoric iconography reincarnates into the technical magisterium, deep-rooted into the Mediterranean classicism. Formidable "ideogram", the warrior/hunter armed with lance provides the sculpture with a formal canon in which the stateliness of some postures gives way to the dynamism of synthetic forms in which it could be tempting to find futuristic echoes, if there wasn't an evident research of a more abstract and a pure harmony. It would be more correct to say that the warriors/hunters/shepherds of the desert, evoked by the sculpture-traveler, arise from the caves and come alive in humanoid morphology that are at the same time archaic and futuristic: a humanity with an essential mechanical perfect entomological anatomy, that presume the maximum rational in the exercise of forces, movements, weights and counterweights. Creatures whose acts (the rush, the moment that precedes the javelin flung, the rest) gets together in the rhythm of a ritual dance in which the threat always coexists with a Matisse grace. Sculptures in the form of signs: in this way the creatures of what is today the desert and long ago, probably, the Eden, claim their primary origins, imprinted or carved into the stone in a narration of rituals or in the execution of an action.

Today's savage touristic voyeurism, is threatening the survival of those proofs; arrogant and vandal graffiti pretend to interweave with the surviving traces of a world that has preceded us, ending up by cancelling its traces. It's like there was a systematic devastation of the most mysterious backdrops of history and of myths still in embryo, of the precious recesses of our unconscious. The violation of sacred and spiritual of which beauty is the bearer, always in the name of fundamentalism and fanaticism of various kinds, isn't by the way one of the most widespread evil today? Part of today's art is an active accomplice, when it founds a big part of it in the exercise of the parodistic revisitation of the past and of utopias, including the modernist one (with precious déco echoes in the case of Signorini). The Tuscan artist is placed on the other, opposite side, where also other artists like him, still consider the seed of the archetype to be fertile and they pass on that genetic code, without which mankind would see extinct most probably its imagination. His bronzes of Sahara armed with beauty will be its guardians.

FRANCO FANELLI  
THE ART NEWS PAPER, TURIN, ITALY





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G U A R D I A N I   D E L   P A T R I M O N I O











































A N T O N I O S I G N O R I N I . C O M

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