



RHODESWORKS
design studio

Maher Headstone

I was well into my forties before I discovered the profoundly moving privilege of carving a family headstone. I have always held that a little of the “soul of the artisan” becomes imbued with the creation of any work of art. We see this everyday when a home-cooked meal, made with intention, outshines the most expensive restaurant experience since the cook and the perspective audience is anonymous. As we prepare the food, or in this case, work the stone, we are thinking of those for whom the work

is created and that consciousness invariably affects the outcome.

While carving this piece, my mind drifted over this proud woman’s life and the stories that had been shared. Although I started the commission for her family, I finished by carving for her; so deeply connected to her life had I become. My experience was not sad, as I anticipated, but rather full of hidden richness as I built, stroke by stroke, closure to her life. Once the headstone was finished, I felt I had

participated in her life; an emotionally rich and satisfying experience to create something so intimate of such importance to those she left behind.

Man has always turned to stone to mark, with our most durable expression, those whose lives’ we wish would never end. The Maher Headstone commission taught me why this ancient tradition continues to provide meaning for those of us left behind.

