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Guides to

Gardens by the Bay

Sculptures

by Daniela C. Zappi & Yan Szu Ong

Editors of the series: Daniela C. Zappi & Arthur Voo



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Contents

Acknowledgements	02	Bronze gifts	44
Foreword	03	Magnificent bull	44
Sculpture at Gardens by the Bay	04	Giant snail	45
Organization of this book	13	Commissioned works	47
Southeast Asia crafts	15	Ants on trees	49
Buaya crocodile seats	16	Lion, Tiger and Leopard benches	50
Masks and shields	17	Dragonfly riders	51
Mama Gaya crocodile	19	Perching dragonfly	52
Eastern cowboys	20	Cut out dragonflies	53
Totems and horse	21	Fountain fish	55
Upright totems	23	Trio of kingfishers	57
Bifurcate totems	24	Buffaloes crossing the river	59
Boats and sailors	25	Chinese stonework	61
Mosaic crocodile	26	Diaspora (离乡)	62
Pale crocodiles	27	Tiger	63
Tamil terracotta	29	Resting Budai	65
Gifted horses and elephants	29	Plum blossom series	67
Chapungu sculptures	31	Guardian lions	68
Simba	33	Water buffaloes	69
Multiple maternity and Ladies heads	35	Fish series	71
Parting...	36	Dralion series	72
Warriors	37	Lotus series	73
Bird figures	38	Faces of stone series	75
Big eagle	39	Young British Artists (YBA)	77
Mother and Son	40	Planet	77
Big hug	41	Bibliography	78
Chinese Lychee woodcraft	42		
Lion doors	42		
The Eagle has landed	43		

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I would also like to thank Mr Jun-ichi Inada for helping us to make the most of our sculptures by placing them artfully and harmoniously around the Gardens, as well as Mr Eng Siak Loy, who generously shared information regarding his commissioned pieces. Dr Elsie Yu, the artist who designed the lovely Dragonfly Riders, had very kindly provided information, valuable insight and images pertaining to the sculptures.

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this book to my former colleague and permanent friend, Selvi Chakrapani, who was the first person at Gardens by the Bay to come up with the idea of a sculpture trail and was extremely supportive of this project, showing boundless enthusiasm for the sculptures and artefacts around the Gardens.





Foreword

Gardens by the Bay has been cited as a work of art comprising science, technology and the environment. If this is indeed the case, then the numerous pieces of sculptured wood, stone and metal carefully placed throughout the premises of the Gardens' 54-hectare grounds must have contributed to the aesthetic ambience.

These natural or man-made forms of art had been accumulated over a short but intense acquisition period during the development of the Bay South Gardens from 2007 to 2013. Hopefully, the art acquisition is still ongoing. The bulk of the art pieces were purchased with a limited budget eked out from the development budget, but some of the most significant pieces were donated by members of the public and corporate communities of Singapore. Notably, several commissioned eponymous pieces produced by two local artists have become instant icons in the Gardens.

Being tasked with realising what began as a daydream, and having always felt that art in a garden is sound to music, I naturally kept an eye out for what would add cultural interest and humanity to the realm of nature and plant life that we were creating. The pieces from China are made from construction material, and were serendipitous takeaways from plant acquisition trips made to Xiamen, Shandong, Shanghai and Guangdong. Quite often, these art pieces began as something that caught the corner of an eye while searching for some particular item like a tree, or a rock or some paving material. Vigorous negotiation would ensue, usually accompanied by some furtive head-shaking, eye-rolling and sighing on the part of accompanying staff. After a successful transaction, a mental piece clicks in place in the landscape envisioned in the mind's eye. This was how a significant collection of stonework by an exceptional sculptor from China was discovered and brought back to Singapore. A trip to that frontier of artistic inspiration, Bali, resulted in the purchase of some wonderful tree-trunks, which in turn inspired the commissioning of art forms to embellish the works of nature. Native art work in wood, stone and clay were also serendipitous acquisitions that bring so much human dimension and scale to the Gardens.

Most gratifying were the magnificent metal sculptures that art-loving members of our community gifted us with. They have helped to define and place our Gardens on the map as a venue for art.

In this publication, Dr. Zappi has once again produced a piece of work that transcends its basic functional purpose. In her inimitable style, she not only informs, but interests her readers in the subject which she illuminates with luscious images. Her contribution will add greatly to your enjoyment of our Gardens by the Bay.

Kiat W Tan

Dr. Kiat W. Tan.
Chief Executive Officer,
Gardens by the Bay



Sculpture at Gardens by the Bay

Branded as the latest horticultural oasis, Gardens by the Bay is a fabulous garden organized around two main themes: Plants and Planet, and Plants and People. The Cloud Forest cooled conservatory and the World of Plants themed gardens are heavily influenced by the theme of Plants and Planet, while the Flower Dome and the Heritage Gardens respond to the theme of Plants and People. This amazing and diverse landscape is home to many sculptures that complement different aspects of the horticulture and contribute to the ambience of the Gardens. Many engaging works of art, ranging from commissioned pieces, traditional and contemporary stonework and regional crafts share a space with stunning natural rocks, petrified trees and other artefacts.

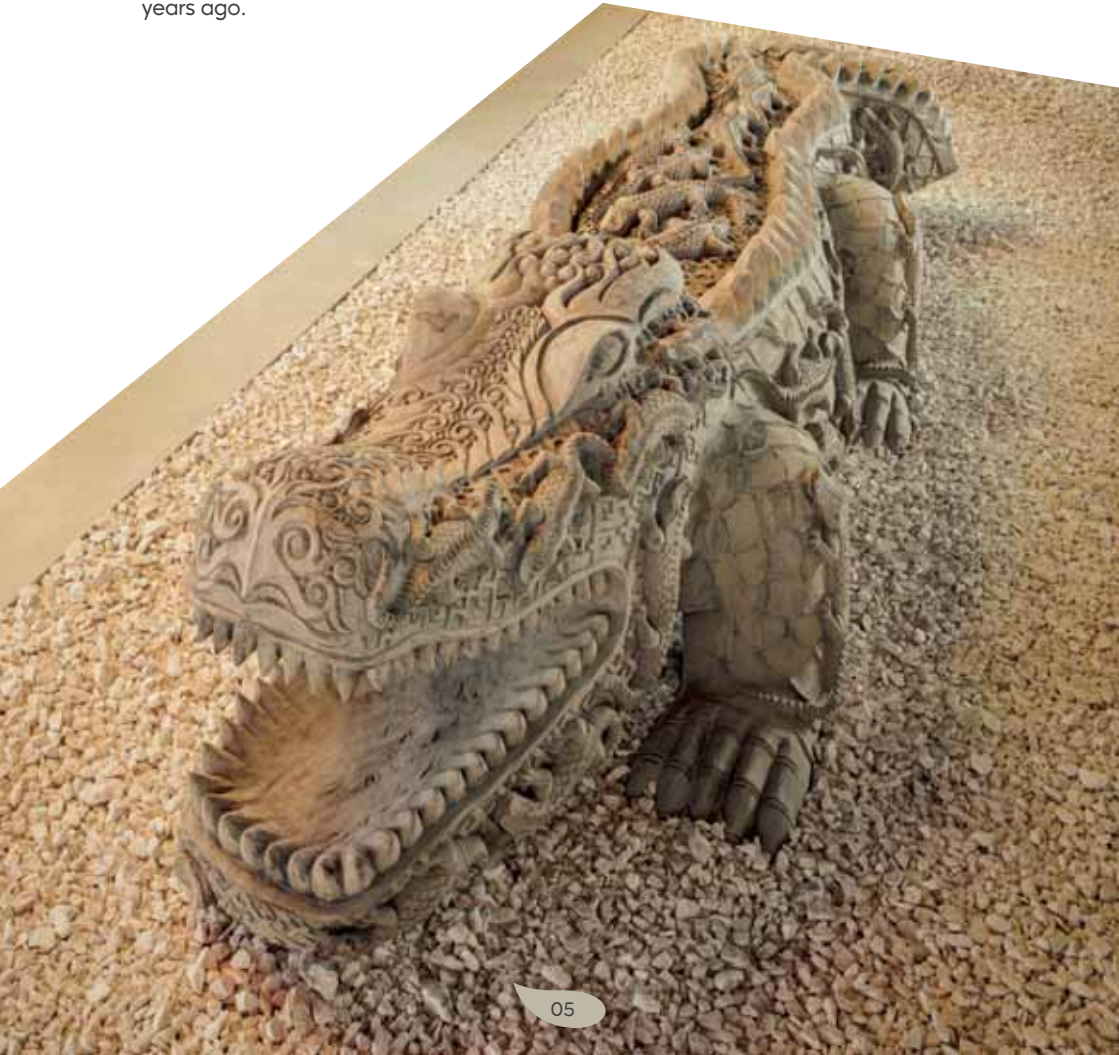


Nestled amongst the horticultural splendour, the sculptures inspire appreciation of art in nature. Gardens by the Bay's sculptures, which came from all over the world, aspire to awaken visitor's interest and curiosity through the stories they tell. The natural world is a pervading theme of our sculptures. Using these sculptures, we attempt to demonstrate the intricate connections between nature and humanity, and it is our hope that they will enrich the visitor's experience in the Gardens.

Carefully placed throughout the grounds, some sculptures are aesthetic statements, while others act as a link to Singapore's diverse cultural heritage. Functional sculptures are used as garden amenities, such as benches and tables, and even receptacles for water and plants. The Garden Sculpture programme aims to connect the stories behind the sculptures and to foster the appreciation of art in Gardens by the Bay.

Arrival and canopy

Visitors embarking on their journey through the Gardens from the main entrance at Marina Gardens Drive will approach the three supertrees in the Golden Garden, where the golden foliage and yellow to orange flowers flank restaurants and facilities and guides visitors towards the Canopy, where they visitor can then access the cooled conservatories. Throughout the Canopy area, decorative and functional sculptures and artefacts have been carefully selected and placed to welcome, entertain and excite adults and children alike. Commissioned pieces such as the metallic ants sculptures share the space with traditional crafted crocodiles and other tribal art pieces from Southeast Asia. In addition to the mentioned sculptures, you will be able to see fossilized or petrified trees from China dating back to 200 million years ago.







Conservatories

The cooled conservatories offer visitors a range of ecological experiences. In the Flower Dome, one can travel through a desert comprising plants from drylands from all over the world and visit several countries with a Mediterranean climate at the same time. Inside the Cloud Forest, be wowed by a man-made mountain covered in vertical greenery, complete with a waterfall which gives the conservatory the moisture and mistiness that are characteristics of natural cloud forests, and discover the Lost World, a little oasis at the mountain peak where carnivorous plants dwell alongside orchids. To enhance the visual experience, many sculptures crafted by various ethnic groups showcasing the diverse cultures from around the world have been strategically placed in both glasshouses. These sculptures provided a continuous human connection with people from other parts of the world. For example, several sculptures representing the Timor Leste animist culture can be seen peering out from behind the cloud forest mist, and the Chapungu sculptures from Zimbabwe, aptly located near the Baobabs and the South African garden in the Flower Dome.



Supertree Grove and The Meadow

The Supertree Grove is a magnificent attractive vibrant space located centrally in the Gardens. which has also become one of the defining characteristics of the Gardens' architecture. The Supertree Grove is home to a cluster of iconic Supertrees, including the tallest Supertree with a height of 50 metres and the OCBC Skyway, which overlook the entire Gardens. The meandering palm avenues approaching the Supertrees offer visitors a scenic stroll and pathways leading to other parts of the Gardens. The northern access to the Supertree Grove is an excellent spot to display a pair of traditional guardian lions to welcome visitors to the Gardens. If you pay close attention to the surroundings, you will also be pleasantly surprised to discover an eclectic mix of stunning rocks and stones, petrified wood and less conventional sculptures that have been artfully placed amongst the lush greenery.

At the confluence of the roads linking the Supertree Grove, Heritage Gardens, World of Plants and Dragonfly Lake lies The Meadow, where the impressive bronze sculpture *Planet*, kindly sponsored by Imelda and Putra Masagung, is housed within a courtyard-styled lawn. You will be able to notice similarities between the lawn with its variegated white foliage and sweetly scented white flowers that complement the theme of *Planet*, and the Colonial Heritage Garden, with its characteristic black and ivory theme as seen on the verandas. Our unusual, multi-trunked African Oil Palms (*Elaeis guineensis*) are also on display at the far edge of the garden. The lawn at the Meadow can be accessed from Bayfront MRT station by a charming bridge that spans across the Dragonfly Lake.

Heritage Gardens

Designed to celebrate and showcase the connection between plants and people that are at the heart of Singapore's culture, landscape architects from Grant Associates and the horticulture team from Gardens by the Bay have paired their skills and knowledge to make full use of the landscape, bold design, colours, as well as the careful placement of art around the gardens to recreate unique spaces reminiscent of the past living environments of the local cultural groups in Singapore. Located along a man-made elevated ground known as the West Mound, with stunning views of Marina Bay Sands and the Singapore Flyer on one side and the imposing Supertree Grove on the other, the Heritage Gardens makes bold use of contrasting planting to tell of the story of Singapore's fusion of cultures (Zappi 2013).





Dragonfly Lake and Promenade

The water flowing in the waterways that surround the gardens are pumped in from the Marina Reservoir through an inlet along the waterfront promenade near Satay by the Bay. Aquatic landscapes like the Dragonfly Lake and Promenade areas provide the Gardens an added sense of peace and tranquillity, and are further complemented by sculptures dotting the area which celebrate nature and in particular our site mascot, the dragonfly.

This interesting insect needs clean water to be able to feed and reproduce (its larvae, or nymphs, are water-borne). Coincidentally, the first character of the dragonfly's name in Chinese is a pun for 'pure' (Bartholomew 2006).

Visitors arriving from Bay Front MRT station can access the Dragonfly Lake from the side of a fragrant boardwalk known as the Scented Walk, while members of the public who access the Gardens via the Marina Bay Sands' Lions Bridge can enjoy a breath taking view of the Gardens from an elevated platform. Visitors can then enter the Gardens by crossing the lovely Dragonfly Bridge, where the stainless steel sculpture, *Dragonfly Riders* can be observed in all their glory.

Kingfisher Lake and surroundings

A more natural-looking set of lakes and surrounding landscape within Bay South Gardens include the Kingfisher Lake, Duck Pond, Frog Pond and Victoria Lily Pond. They can be found between the Cloud Forest conservatory and the Marina Barrage. Situated near the food and beverage outlets at Satay by the Bay, the Kingfisher Lake is an area ideal for relaxation and enjoyment of nature. You will notice that fruit trees from all over the world, as well as some Southeast Asian plants that are typical of the seaside and lowland flooded forests have been planted in the surroundings of the Kingfisher Lake. While these plantings are meant to encourage wildlife such as kingfishers, yellow bitterns and whistling ducks to settle and thrive in the area, the sculptures in the vicinity, such as the *Kingfisher trio* and the *Buffaloes crossing the river*, add a different dimension to enhance the visitor's aesthetic experience. The Far East Organization Children's Garden, located near the Kingfisher Lake, is also equipped with sculptures like the Fountain Fish, which were designed exclusively for the Gardens. Such sculptures are a refreshing addition to our collection and their functional role also complement the topiary structures, providing fun and water to the children playing in the garden.



Southeast Asia crafts



Bronze gifts



Chinese Lychee woodcraft



Chinese stonework



Young British Artists (YBA)



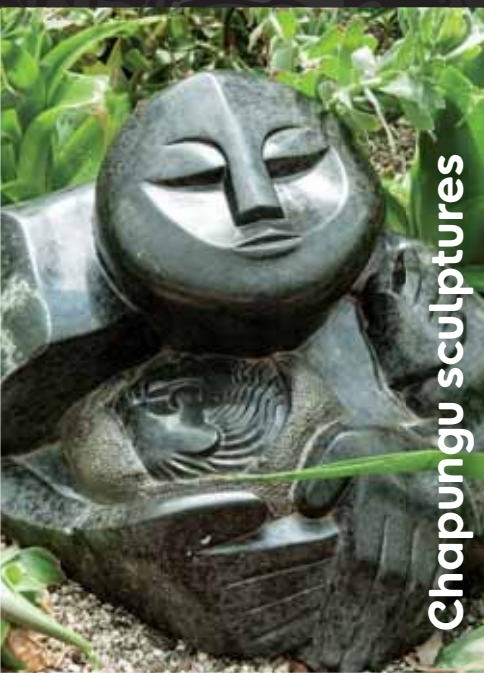


Commissioned
works



Organization of this book

For ease of reference, the sculptures in this book are grouped according to their origin and type into the following categories: Southeast Asia crafts, Tamil terracotta, Chapungu sculptures, Bronze gifts, Commissioned works, Chinese stonework and Young British Artists. While we know the sculptor's name for a good number of our artworks, there are some pieces where the artist is unknown. This is usually the case with regional crafts, which are often produced to certain traditional specifications as a collaborative effort by several artisans.



Chapungu sculptures



Tamil terracotta





Southeast Asia crafts

Mostly comprising wood carvings with the exception of the Totems and horse pieces displayed outdoors at the promenade, our collection of Southeast Asia crafts is an eclectic mix of crafts depicting natural themes. Tribal art pieces like the crocodiles, powerful masks and amusing human figures tell stories of myths and reality reflecting the relationship between man and his environment.

The original Animist religion that predominated in Southeast Asia area prior to colonization and interaction with the Occident is centred around the belief that all natural elements, which include not only living things but also inanimate objects like rocks, have souls, and is considered the oldest religion in the world (Murray 2008). Animists believe that offerings made to these spirits will bring them the graces or favour of the gods. And it is worth mentioning that Animistic beliefs had to be respected and taken into consideration when preparing the materials such as wood that were to be used in the production of these art pieces: offerings were made to the spirit of the tree when it was about to be felled, especially if the resulting carving was destined to be placed in a temple or shrine (Avé 2008).

Nowadays most East Timorese people have converted to Christianity, and the role of such hand-crafted figurines has become more ambiguous. While most people still acknowledge that the sculptures are part of their heritage, few continue to actively practise animism or revere the figurines that represent their human ancestors and the natural world.



Buaya crocodile seats

Location : Canopy
Material : stained, polished wood
Origin : Bali, Indonesia
Dimensions : 2 pieces 4.2 m long x 1.1 m wide

Useful and full of character, the solid, dark crocodile wooden benches at the Canopy share the space with ancient petrified or fossilized trees. The crocodile benches are decorated with vigorous arabesques and frills, in line with the strong local hand-carving traditions of Indonesia and Malaysia. They are well-liked by our visitors; it is a regular sight to see many people taking photographs while sitting at these benches.



Masks and shields

Location : Staircase at the Canopy
Material : Stained and painted wood incrustated with shells and plant fibres
Origin : New Guinea
Dimensions : 7 pieces up to 2.9 m tall x 80 cm wide

Surrounding the staircase between the Flower Dome and the Cloud Forest, you can see several examples of Ceremonial Shields and Savi Masks that originated from the Sepik River basin in Papua New Guinea, which is home to the Iatmul people, an ethnic community in this area. The carved wood figures, as well as the fierce-looking painted masks are believed to protect against black magic in the Iatmul world. Easily identified by their protruding tongues and large eyes, these masks represent aggressive spirits that ward off enemies of the clan. Savis are supernatural beings that are considered the most powerful spirits in the local culture. In addition to their dexterous carving and block painting skills, the artisans also chose to incorporate natural objects, such as sea-shells and animal hair to enhance the protective powers of their creations.

Traditionally, the ceremonial shields have similar protective properties as the masks, and may carry the spirit of animals killed by the warrior. However, the carving on the shield does not 'come alive' until it goes through and completes the smoking, painting and engraving ceremonies, through which the shield is finally considered to be 'born' (Gillison 202) and thus able to protect its owner. These showy, colourful artefacts are not for taking into battle, but they have an important role as display ornaments in homes of the Iatmul people. The artefacts are believed to ward off evil spirits of the dead enemy villagers. Creative and unique in details, the rhythmic designs of these masks and shields are absolutely fascinating examples of primitive art.





Mama Gaya crocodile

Location : The Canopy
Material : Untreated Rain Tree
(*Samanea saman*) wood
Origin : East Timor
Dimensions : 1 pieces 4.1 m long
x 1.1 m wide

This large wooden crocodile is called "Mama Gaya", meaning the mother's power or strength, and is carved from a single tree trunk of a Rain Tree (*Samanea saman*) by a Timorese sculptor. The menacing image of a large crocodile with its mouth open wide is softened by the presence of numerous baby crocodiles on its back, which imbues the sculpture with a gentler maternal quality. The crocodile is the most important symbol of Timor, stemming from the legend that tells of the transformation of the reptile into the island, with the ridges of its back forming the mountains that run from east to west. To this day, crocodiles still abound in Timorese sea and rivers.

The strong animist tradition in the region has at its centre the belief that there is a soul in all natural elements, and animists believe that these entities had to be placated by offerings in order to obtain graces or favours.

For a full image of this sculpture see page 5.



Eastern cowboys

Location : Flower Dome, Succulent Garden
Material : Weathered wood
Origin : East Timor
Dimensions : 4 pieces up to 2.5 m long x 1.8 m tall

The sculptures of Eastern cowboy riders that are displayed amongst the cacti and succulents in the Flower Dome are a reminder of the historical importance of horses as a traditional means of transport in the steep mountains of Timor Leste.

The East Timorese wooden carvings of horse-riders traditionally depict warriors or aristocrats riding on a small breed of horse often referred to as the 'Timor pony'. Horses were once so numerous in these islands that they were traded with other parts of Indonesia and even exported to places as far as Australia (Museum and Art Gallery Northern Territory, 2008).

The rich carvings of the sculptures include symmetric patterns, spirals and intertwined frogs! If you observe carefully, you may also notice that some of the riders, carved to represent ancestors or deceased relatives, are shown playing flutes, perhaps as a reminder of the ceremonies and rituals employed for their passing into the other world. On the side the horse that is placed far to the left in the Succulent Garden you may spot a fertility goddess figure lifts her arms to support her snake-like, curled up hair.

Check our other wooden sculptures from Timor Leste in the Cloud Forest, such as the totems (pages 22-24).

Location : Waterfront Promenade
Material : Sandstone
Origin : East Timor
Dimensions : 3 pieces up to 3.8 m tall x 1.6 m wide

Coming from the same region as the Eastern cowboy sculptures in the Flower Dome and the totems in the Cloud Forest, these imposing totems at the Promenade are made of stone, which is a less common material for Timorese regional crafts. The animist influence and cultural meaning of these pieces are similar to those of the wooden totem carvings found in the Flower Dome and in the Cloud Forest. They represent depictions of ancestors or deceased members of the family and are worshipped by the locals.

These imposing statues give pride of place to a horse, the significance of which was explained in the section introducing the Eastern Cowboy sculptures found in the Flower Dome (page 20). Human figurines depicting ancestors are featured atop the multi-branched, leaf-like structures that complement our special, unbranched Screwpine (*Pandanus tectorius*) plants, one of which has ranked, rather than spiralled leaves. The main body of each sculpture is ornamented with frills and bear scenes in low relief, which probably serve as a record of traditional activities, such as farming, or the history of certain families and individuals. Notice how the sculptures show images of a bull or buffalo skull, meditative postures, human figures with linking arms suggesting agreements or family links, and a battle atop horses at the bottom of one of the totems.

Totems and horse







Upright totems

Location : Cloud Forest: The Falls
and Lost World
Material : Weathered wood
Origin : East Timor
Dimensions : 5 pieces up to 5 m tall
x 40 cm wide

The totems displayed in the Cloud Forest are figurines intended to commemorate family ancestors and were traditionally either placed outside homes or used to mark the graves of deceased relatives. Because they were exposed to the elements for long periods of time, the surface of some of our statues are beautifully weathered. The decay of the wood over time is also symbolic for the Eastern Timorese, and represents the soul of the deceased gradually departing this world. The role of the statue was to ensure a smooth transition of the dead from the world of the living to the realm of spirits, as symbolised by the gradual disintegration of the wood.

Commodities like food, wine, tobacco and betel nuts were offered by the Eastern Timorese to these statues as a way of paying homage to their ancestors. When seeking advice or approval from the ancestors, animals were often sacrificed. Animals may also be attributed ancestor status by the Timorese people, suggesting a strong and deliberate link between the human and the natural world. The totems also draw on the animals' characteristics (such as strength, beauty, or even a perceived ability to resurrect) and relating them to the ancestor's qualities.

The placing of a hornbill on the top of a few of the totems may draw on the belief that the hornbill represented the dominant male element, and that its protective powers might weaken an enemy. Other belief is that this lucky bird brings welcome rain when it cries out as it flies (Avé 2008), perhaps a sign that it was time to sow seeds. Amongst other noticeable motifs, we see the swastika, which is, according to Campbell (2000) a very common symbol that appeared for the first time during the High Neolithic period in pottery (4500-3500 B.C.) in Eastern Europe. This symbol gradually became known throughout the East and West in the following millennia, and eventually became one of the important representations of Buddha's meditation.



Bifurcate totems

Location : Cloud Forest, The Falls and Lost World
Material : Weathered wood
Origin : East Timor
Dimensions : 8 pieces up to 4 m tall x 1.2 m wide

Mysteriously bifurcated figures are made using the natural forking of branches to represent perhaps a genealogical family tree. The figures of birds are placed at the extremities of the pieces because the Timorese believe that these birds are powerful spirits that help the deceased to successfully enter afterlife. The chosen attire of the persons depicted in the totems includes ceremonial hats, shields, and other pieces of clothing that indicate and maintain the social status of the deceased upon his arrival to the 'other side'. Look out for the upright totems in the same conservatory (page 23), the Eastern cowboys (page 20) in the Flower Dome and the sandstone totems (page 21) found in the Promenade for more examples of East Timorese art.

Location : Cloud Forest, Lost World
Material : Stained and painted wood
Origin : Papua New Guinea
Dimensions : 2 pieces 1.8 m long x 35 cm wide

The source of the waterfall at the 35-metre tall 'mountain' in the Cloud Forest is a placid pool, where islands of carnivorous plants and lush orchids share the lagoon with two boats manned by bizarre occupants: a man at the prow, a dog or civet-looking animal in the middle, and the woman at the stern. The curious vessels have crocodile-shaped prows which can also be found on real boats of the Asmat Tribe (West Papua/Irian Jaya), and the motif of sailing with the dogs is a recurring one within local tribal art (Asmat Art at Univ. St. Tomas 2013). The outside of the vessel is decorated with intricate brown and white swirling patterns, while the inside of the vessel and its sailors are stained black. In real life, the inhabitants of the islands took great pride in carving their own canoes from single tree trunks. The portrayal of their ancestors in the canoes is likely to serve similar purposes as the riding noblemen and totem sculptures from East Timor, see Eastern cowboys (page 20) for more details.

Boats and sailors





Mosaic crocodile

Location : Cloud Forest, Secret Garden
Material : Stained, polished wood
Origin : Papua New Guinea
Dimensions : 1 pieces 3.8 m long x 50 cm wide

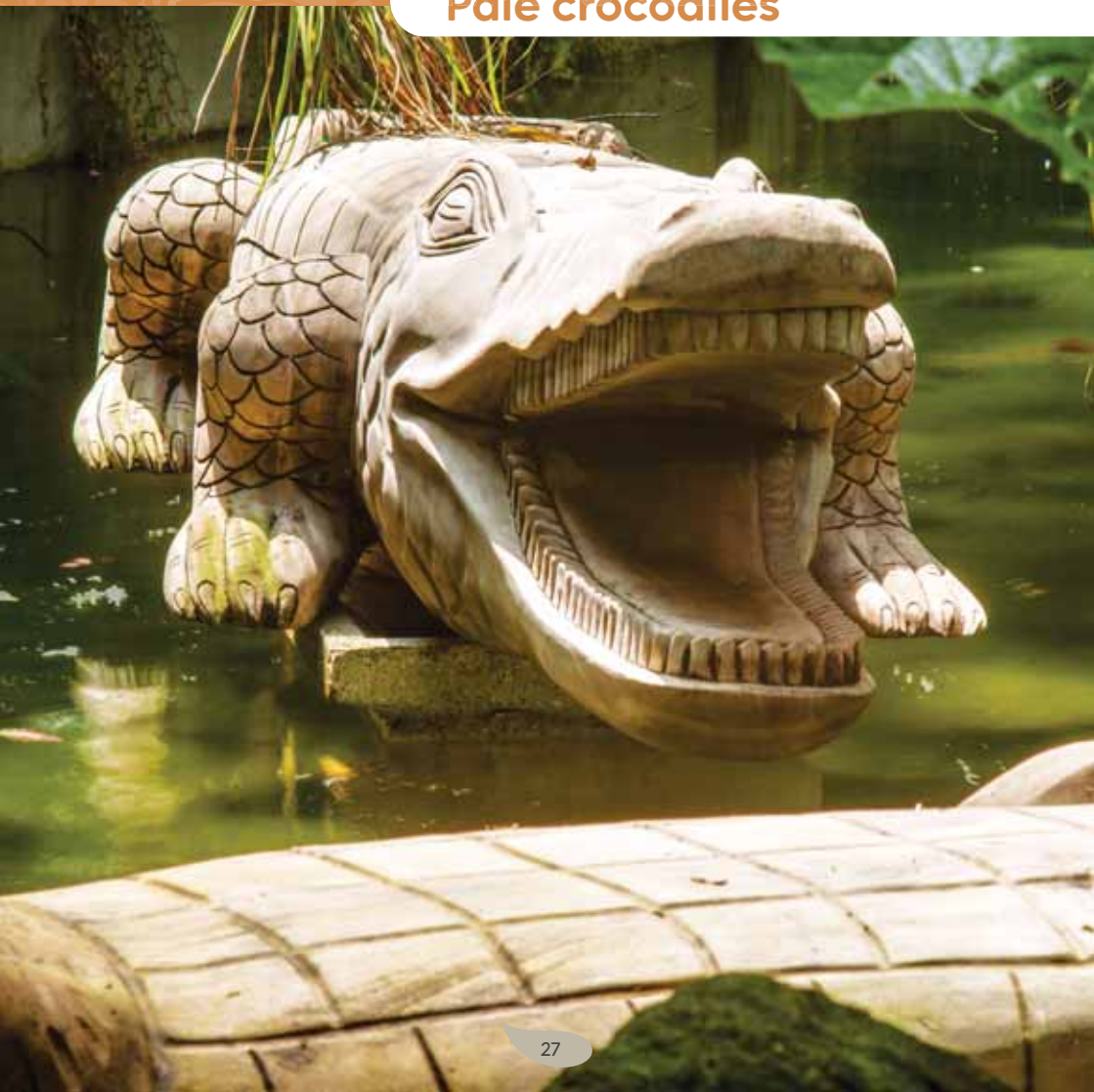
As mentioned in the earlier pages, the animist tradition invests animals, plants and even natural inanimate objects like rocks with souls, while its followers believe that these entities have to be placated by offerings in order to obtain graces or favours. Crocodiles are amongst the most powerful creatures within the Animist religion, which was once common throughout Southeast Asia. The figure of the crocodile is central to the animist beliefs of many tribal people across Southeast Asia, where it is revered and often qualified as the 'great grandfather', 'king of ancestors' or 'king of the waters'.

The narrow bird motif placed on top of the upper jaw and forehead of the crocodile is typical of Asmat (West Papua/Irian Jaya) tribal carving and can also be observed on some of the pieces in our painted masks collection (page 17).

Location : Cloud Forest, Secret Garden
Material : Untreated wood
Origin : Philippines
Dimensions : 3 pieces 3 m long x 60 cm wide

Our collection of three pale brown crocodile sculptures is strategically placed around the pool formed by the Secret Garden waterfall, in a play of water and lush foliage. Unlike the Mosaic crocodile [page 26] from Papua New Guinea, these pale crocodile sculptures have two rows of neat, uniform teeth and dolphin-shaped heads. The Filipino woodcraft tradition was culturally very important since the Neolithic era, between 10 and 3 thousand years B.C. Unfortunately, thousands of Filipino woodcraft pieces were destroyed by Spanish colonizers when they introduced Catholicism in the Philippines and the crafting of new carved sculptures was severely impacted by the change of focus of the local culture.

Pale crocodiles





Tamil terracotta

Gifted horses and elephants



Location : Indian Garden
Material : Terracotta
Origin : Southern India, Tamil Nadu
Dimensions : 2 elephants and 8 horses up to 1.8 m long x 1.8 m tall

The Indian Heritage Garden, inspired by the theme of 'Reflection of Devotion' showcases the role of plants in Indian spirituality. Elephants and horses are examples of the terracotta pottery from Tamil Nadu that is made for use as offerings to Ayyanar (in Tamil - ஐயனார்), a guardian deity of rural villages. In this particular tradition, oversized horses are often represented as the mounts of the gods (American Museum of Natural History, 2013), and there are no ordained priests, apart from terracotta artists that have worked in the temples for generations and perform the ceremonial rites. Very evocative detail resides in the initial stages of the manufacturing of each sculpture. For example, a handful of earth from the floor of the shrine is incorporated in the clay before starting to model, making each piece sacred and linking it to the local shrine. Smaller versions of the terracotta sculptures are also made, such as the horses and elephant sculptures you see in the Gardens. These are thanksgiving offers to the temple by families who obtained graces from Ayyanar, such as healing of illnesses of family members or for curing livestock from sickness or diseases. Families pray and, once their prayers are answered, they dedicate offerings which are ordered from the temple priest-sculptor. The sculptor does not get paid much for making these statues. Instead, he works almost solely to gain prestige as a successful intermediary between men and gods.





Chapungu sculptures

Chapungu is a metaphor for the Bateleur Eagle (*Terathopius ecaudatus*), a powerful bird of prey that flies for extended periods of time and over long distances. The Bateleur Eagle can be identified by its black feathers which contrast with the white underneath of its wings, and can be found south of the Sahara in the open vegetation of central and southern Africa. The Shona people from Zimbabwe believe that the bird is a good omen and a symbol of good fortune. Chapungu is the name that was subsequently adopted by contemporary African stone art movement from Zimbabwe that started in the late 1950s. Many of its striking pieces have since been exhibited worldwide, to temporary and permanent exhibitions in several major parks and botanical gardens around the world.

Contemporary Zimbabwean stone sculpture portrays mostly people and wildlife. Sculptors in this artistic community specialise in different types of stone, such as jet black springstone or greenish, mellow opalstone. During the 1980's, champions of stone sculpture such as Frank McEwen, director of the Rhodes National Gallery (nowadays National Gallery of Zimbabwe), and Tom Blomefield, a former tobacco farmer, had taken an interest in this art form and organized enormously successful exhibitions (Burla 2012).

Political instability in Zimbabwe from 2000 onwards slowed down the promotion and marketing of Zimbabwean stone art. Nevertheless, it had attracted many locals to become stone sculptors, which is seen as one of the only means to improve livelihood in a troubled country.

Under the umbrella of Chapungu stone sculpture, the diverse styles achieved and perfected by each artist bring endless interest to the public, ranging from touching family scenes to powerful, avant garde and stylized pieces of graceful and even humorous interpretations of the world around us. Each sculpture is a vehicle for the artist to express his/her own ideas and passions.





Simba

Location : Baobab and Bottle
Trees area in the Flower
Dome
Material : Springstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Dimensions : 1 piece 1.5 m long,
1.2 m tall

Amongst African Baobab Trees (*Adansonia digitata*), you will find the delightful side view of a lion smiling at visitors with its human-like face. The animal's body is minutely chipped to give texture to its hide, while its mane takes full advantage of the oxidised, reddish tones of the outer part of the rock. The lion's face, with human-looking dreamy eyes and full lips, is sculpted with concave cheeks on polished stone, making maximum use of its smooth, shiny surface.



Multiple maternity and Ladies heads

Location : South African garden in the Flower Dome
Material : Springstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Donated by : Mr Kwee Swie Teng
Dimensions : 4 pieces up to 1.6 m tall, 60 cm wide

The Multiple maternity sculpture is made up of three women figurines, each carrying a child. Depicting the bond between mother and child and a celebration of motherhood in many generations, this sculpture makes excellent use of the different colours of the stone, such as reserving the rusty, rough-looking part of the uncarved stone for the hair of the standing female figure. This uplifting sculpture is an allusion to the large number of children in African rural families and suggests a multiplication of joy and hope through the loving upbringing of children in the family.

Impressive in proportions, the Ladies' heads sculptures highlight the overwhelming beauty of African women. Some of the carving techniques in this sculpture are similar to the ones found in Simba (page 33), such as the unusual three-dimensional carvings of the faces where the cheekbones are sunken as opposed to the protruding eyelids, nose and mouth. The necks are deliberately thick and elongated, which is reminiscent of the works by Italian artist Amedeo Modigliani's (1884 - 1920), known for his characteristic elongation of forms. These artistic features work together to give a creative and stylized re-interpretation of the human face.



Parting

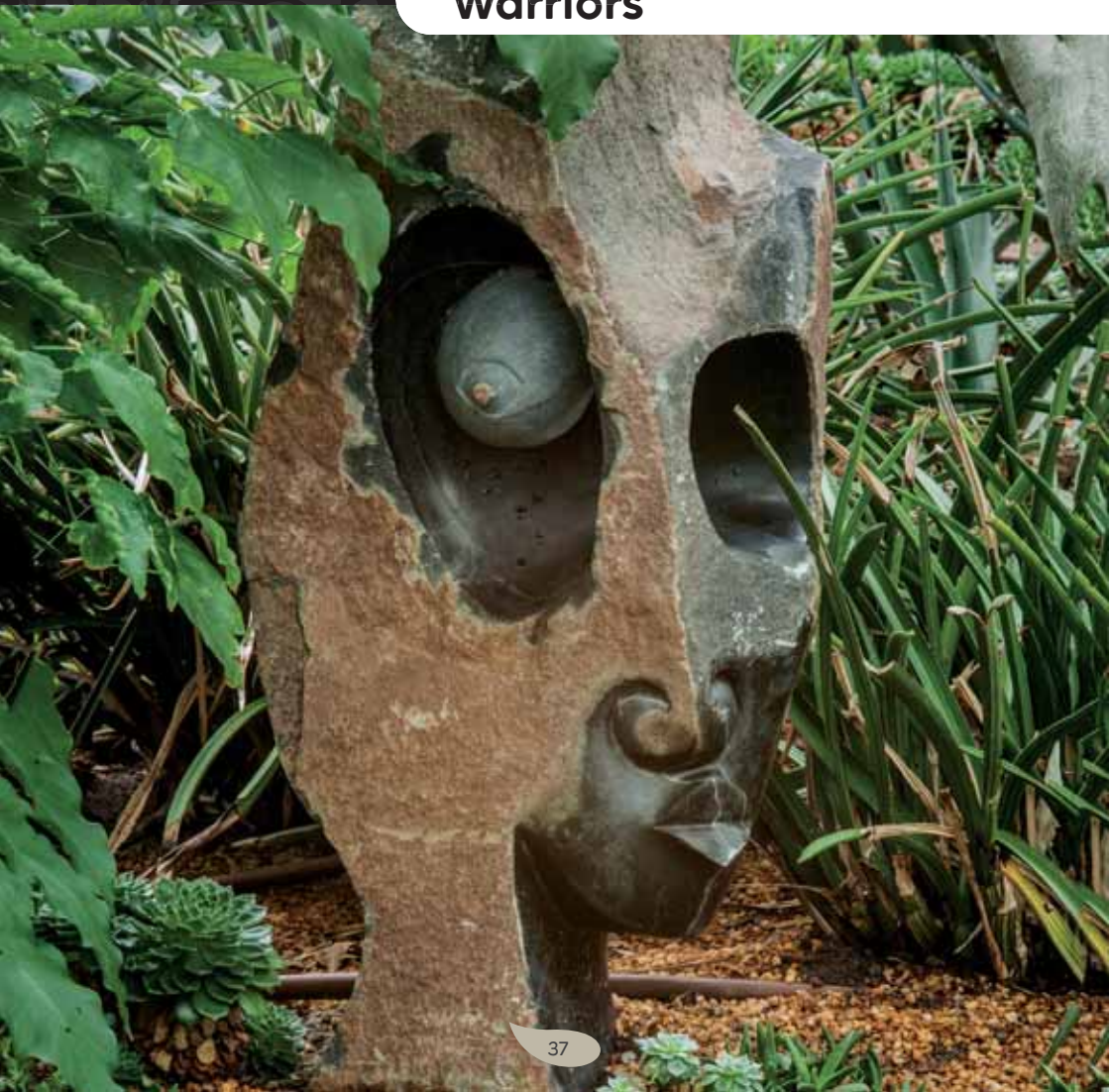
Author : Colleen Madamombe (1964-2009)
Location : Baobab and Bottle Trees area in the Flower Dome
Material : Springstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Dimensions : 1 double piece up to 1.3 m tall, 1 m wide

Two lady villagers made of partly polished springstone can be seen strolling under a Baobab. Springstone is one of the hardest stones used for stone carving in Zimbabwe, and its name originated from the fact that the sculptor's chisel will spring away while carving a sculpture from this stone. The generous proportions of the village ladies and the Baobab tree are meant to have an amusing visual impact. The sculpture also reveals the Zimbabwean's idea of beauty. In times of food scarcity, plumpness is highly desired and considered a form of beauty as this demonstrates one's wealth and ability to afford food. Notice also the clever detail achieved by the sculptor who used the pink rock's vein for one of the ladies' palm, as well as the contrast between the rough, richly ornamented surface of the ladies' dresses and the lustrous, polished surface of the exposed skin.

Location : Baobab and Bottle Trees area in the Flower Dome
Material : Springstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Donated by : Mr Kwee Swie Teng
Dimensions : 5 pieces up to 90 cm tall, 30 cm wide

This collection of sculptures showcases the profile of several human heads with hollowed eyes at the children's stone garden display, which is located at the Baobab and Bottle Trees Garden. The heads have strong resemblance to the Cubist movement created by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso (1881 – 1973). On the other hand, the sharp, angular appearance of the Warrior sculptures resemble the famed sculptures that face the sea on the coast of Easter Island. Their cleverly hollowed eyes also provide a different perspective to observe our rich display of succulent plants.

Warriors





Bird figures

Author : Gerald Takawira (1964 – 2004)
Location : Baobab and Bottle Trees area in the Flower Dome
Material : Mixture of opalstone and springstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Donated by : Mr Kwee Swie Teng
Dimensions : 6 pieces up to 90 cm tall, 1 m wide

At the upper edge of the Baobab and Bottle Trees beds, a group of adorable bird sculptures roost near the large specimens of Cardón Cactus (*Pachycereus pecten-aboriginum*). Interestingly, one of the birds' heads forms the base for another figurine, that of a female head, which is visible from the back view. Another piece sports a carving of a totem on the stone, forming a central figure while a bird peeps over on the left of the stone sculpture. One of the sculptures also gives an illusion of a 'beak-to-beak' mirror image of two birds.

Author : Gerald Takawira (1964 – 2004)
Location : Arrivals, Golden Garden
Material : Opalstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Donated by : Mr Kwee Swie Teng
Dimensions : 1 piece 3.1 m long, 70 cm tall

The Big Eagle sculpture is found at the Golden Garden, under the goldenshowers of the Yellow Flame (*Peltophorum pterocarpum*) and Yellow Poinciana (*Peltophorum dubium*), as well as the welcoming, dense foliage of African Baobabs (*Adansonia digitata*). With its heavy frame, this opalstone piece shows the front view of the eagle with outstretched wings. Following the design of the smaller bird sculptures in the Flower Dome (page 38), the eagle's body and feathers are characterised by the rough, reddish patina that had formed over the rock, while its beak has been polished to a lustrous green.

Big eagle





Mother and Son

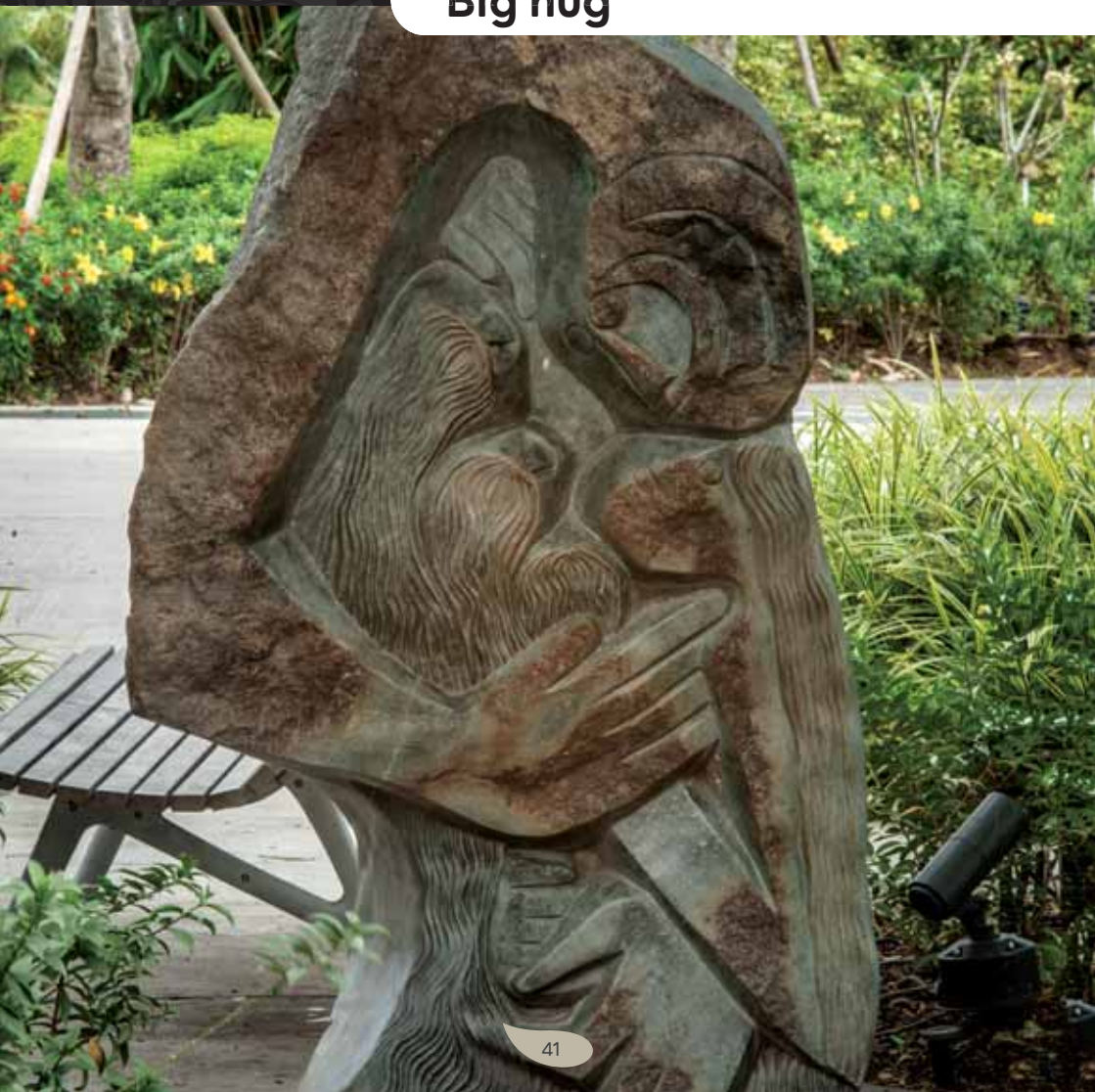
Location : Arrivals, Golden Garden
Material : Opalstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Donated by : Mr Kwee Swie Teng
Dimensions : 1 piece 1.4 m tall, 45 cm wide

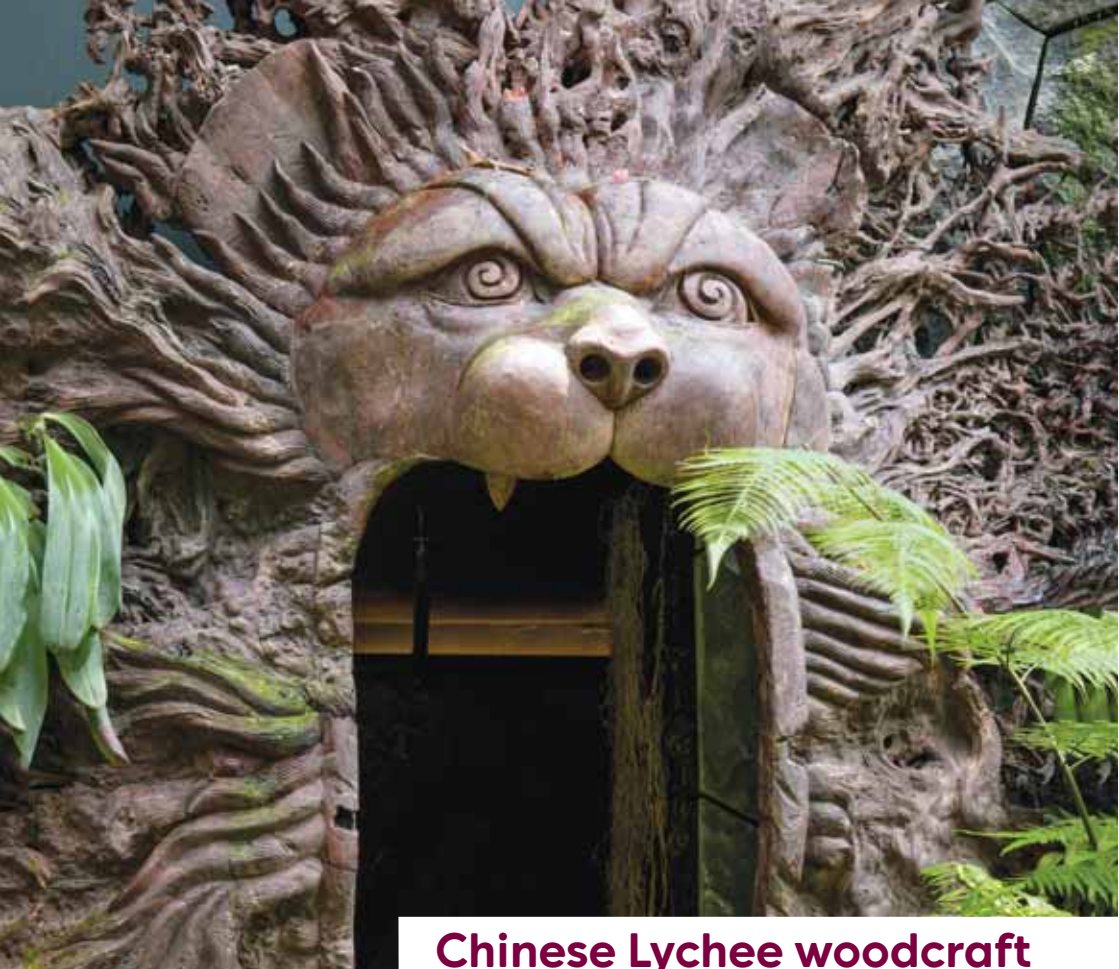
Located behind the Big Eagle sculpture, this piece shows a doting mother gazing at her eager son in a sculpture that mixes full shapes with low relief, as can be seen from the mother's head and her arms that appear behind her head. The projection of the mother's image with an overall shallow depth contrasts with the three-dimensional look of the son to create an interesting effect, and they face each other giving the impression of movement and denoting mutual devotion.

Author : Nicholas Mukomberanwa (1940-2002)
Location : Arrivals, Golden Garden
Material : Opalstone
Origin : Zimbabwe
Donated by : Mr Kwee Swie Teng
Dimensions : 1 piece 1.7 m tall, 80 cm wide

Big hug is a low-relief sculpture depicting the strength of a man who sweeps up a bevy of ladies with his strong arm. The feeling of protection prevails over possession, as the tenderness of the women's faces reflect the calm of the man's moon-shaped face at the top of the sculpture. The flow of the ladies' hair is reminiscent of water, and gives the sculpture an added sense of graceful movement.

Big hug





Chinese Lychee woodcraft Lion doors

- Location : Cloud Forest, entry and exit of the Secret Garden
Material : stained, polished Lychee (*Litchi sinensis*) wood
Artist : designed by Eng Siak Loy
Origin : The wood was obtained in China, but the sculpture was Commissioned for Gardens by the Bay, Singapore, carved in Bali, Indonesia
Dimensions : 2 pieces, 3 m tall, 2.2 m wide

Adding charm to the Secret Garden, this pair of lion doorways were carved from tree stumps and the roots of very old Lychee trees. The solid tree stump was used to make the lion's face, and the artist had also cleverly taken advantage of the intricate pattern of the roots to depict the lion's soft, radiating mane. Despite the fact that lions are not native to China, they were often brought into the country as presents to the emperor (Bartholomew 2006) and play an important role in the local mythology. Their Chinese name for lion resembles the words for generations, master and thoughts, hence their symbolism of strength, protection and leadership. The exit gate is placed in such a way that it provide photo opportunities for visitors to bid farewell to the Cloud Forest conservatory in style.

Location : Flower Dome, far end of the Baobabs and Bottle Tree garden
Material : stained, polished Lychee (*Litchi sinensis*) wood
Origin : Southern China
Dimensions : 1 piece, 1.8 m tall, 2.2 m wide.

Cleverly crafted from polished and varnished Lychee tree roots, this commanding eagle sculpture is supported by a plain tree stump. The eagle has a reputation as a fierce hunter in the sky, and its name also resembles the Chinese word for 'hero' (Bartholomew 2006). The eagle surveys the Flower Dome from its vantage point, overlooking the changing display of the Flower Field and the Mediterranean gardens. It brings to mind the real fishing eagle that can be seen circling the Flower Dome in sunny afternoons.

The Eagle has landed





Bronze gifts

Magnificent bull

Gardens by the Bay is grateful to our generous donors, many of whom are also interested in art and have gifted the Gardens with many beautiful art pieces. The contemporary bronze sculptures which we will discuss in this section also serve to help us in re-telling stories related to the natural world.

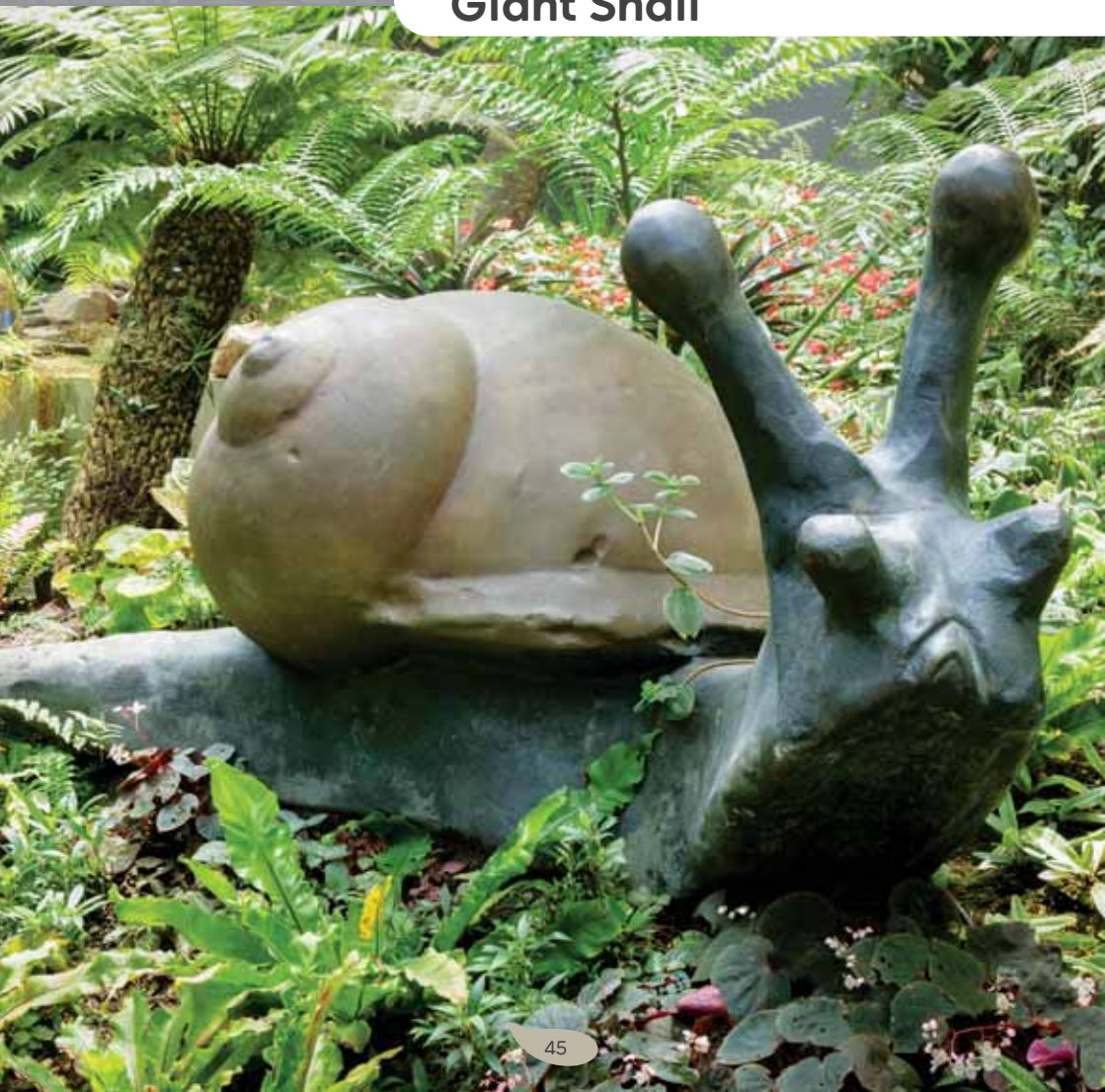
Location : Arrivals, Golden Garden
Material : Bronze
Artist : Walter Matia
Origin : US
Donated by : Merrill Lynch Bank
Dimensions : 1 piece, 3.6 m tall, 3 m long

Sited at the Arrival main entrance area of the Gardens, this powerful bronze cast bull by renowned American sculptor Walter Matia (b. 1953) displays a vigour that aptly depicts Singapore's bullish economy. The artist's passion about natural history serves as inspiration for his impressive art pieces. In his own words, Matia says that he uses his visual experience to represent nature by "selecting shapes and organizing the masses, lines and negative spaces into sculpture", rather than documenting it.

Location : Cloud Forest, Secret Garden
Material : Bronze
Artist : Will Wilson
Origin : Australia
Donated by : Mr John Tan Jiew Hoe
Dimensions : 1.2 m tall, 2.8 m long

The humidity and shade of the Secret Garden suggests the presence of mysterious creatures. Excellently captured by contemporary Australian artist Will Wilson, a bronze cast of an oversized snail stands amongst the lush greenery and multi-coloured Begonia leaves in the shady and humid Secret Garden. Nearby several limestone snails by Wang Rong Hai (王荣海) dot the shady garden and provide a nice contrast to the giant bronze snail. Luckily these are not living molluscs that eat plants!

Giant Snail





Commissioned works



In addition to being a world-class tourist destination, Gardens by the Bay has always aspired to become a national garden for all Singaporeans to own and enjoy. With this vision in mind, the Gardens worked with a few local artists to create unique art pieces that bring variety to the collection of sculptures at Gardens by the Bay. . . Many of these commissioned works help to enhance the identity of the Gardens, reinforcing some of the key messages that the Gardens hopes to convey. Some contribute a fun element into the environment, while others have functional features. These sculptures have been integrated into our landscape, further promoting the love and respect for nature that is at the heart of our Gardens, and also creating photo opportunities and talking points for visitors.





Ants on trees

- Location : Arrivals, Canopy
Material : Stainless steel – plain and painted with 2k car paint
Artist : Eng Siak Loy
Origin : Commissioned for Gardens by the Bay, Singapore, manufactured in Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 3 trees up to 3.5 m tall, 2 m wide, ants up to 70 cm long, 60 cm tall

Climbing all over our Peek-a-boo trees made from the hollow trunks of Toog Trees (*Bishofia javanica*), these curious ants give an impression being hard at work, and are a favourite amongst children. The pieces were designed and sited by renowned local artist Eng Siak Loy (b. 1954) and are meant to stimulate curiosity and reconnect our urbanized lifestyle with nature by featuring larger-than-life, fun-looking wildlife sculptures in prominent parts of the Gardens.

Location : Canopy, lower ground, by the escalators
Material : African Mahogany (*Khaya senegalensis*) wood from trees that were formerly planted in the Marina City Park that preceded Gardens by the Bay.
Artist : Eng Siak Loy
Origin : Commissioned for Gardens by the Bay, Singapore, manufactured in China
Dimensions : 3 benches up to 1 m tall, 2.8 m long

Sleek big cats carved from recycled African Mahogany tree trunks were designed by local artist Eng Siak Loy (b. 1954). Historically, in the 13th century Malay Annals, a literary work that chronicles the genealogies of local rulers over in the Malay Archipelago during a period of 600 years, the ruler of Palembang was shipwrecked and washed ashore to an island, where he saw a creature which he believed was a lion. Thus the island was named "Singa Pura" (meaning "Lion City"). Since then, the lion has become an informal symbol of Singapore, despite the fact that lions are native to Africa and cannot be found in Singapore. On the other hand, tigers and leopards were once common in the local rainforest, with the last tiger of Singapore killed in Choa Chu Kang in the 1930s.

A flat fish bench by the same artist can be seen next to the Supertree Grove aquarium.

Lion, Tiger and Leopard benches





Dragonfly riders

- Location : Dragonfly Lake
Material : Stainless steel, art glass
Artist : Dr Elsie Yu
Origin : Commissioned for Gardens by the Bay, Singapore,
manufactured in China
Dimensions : 2 pieces up to 5 m tall, 3m wide

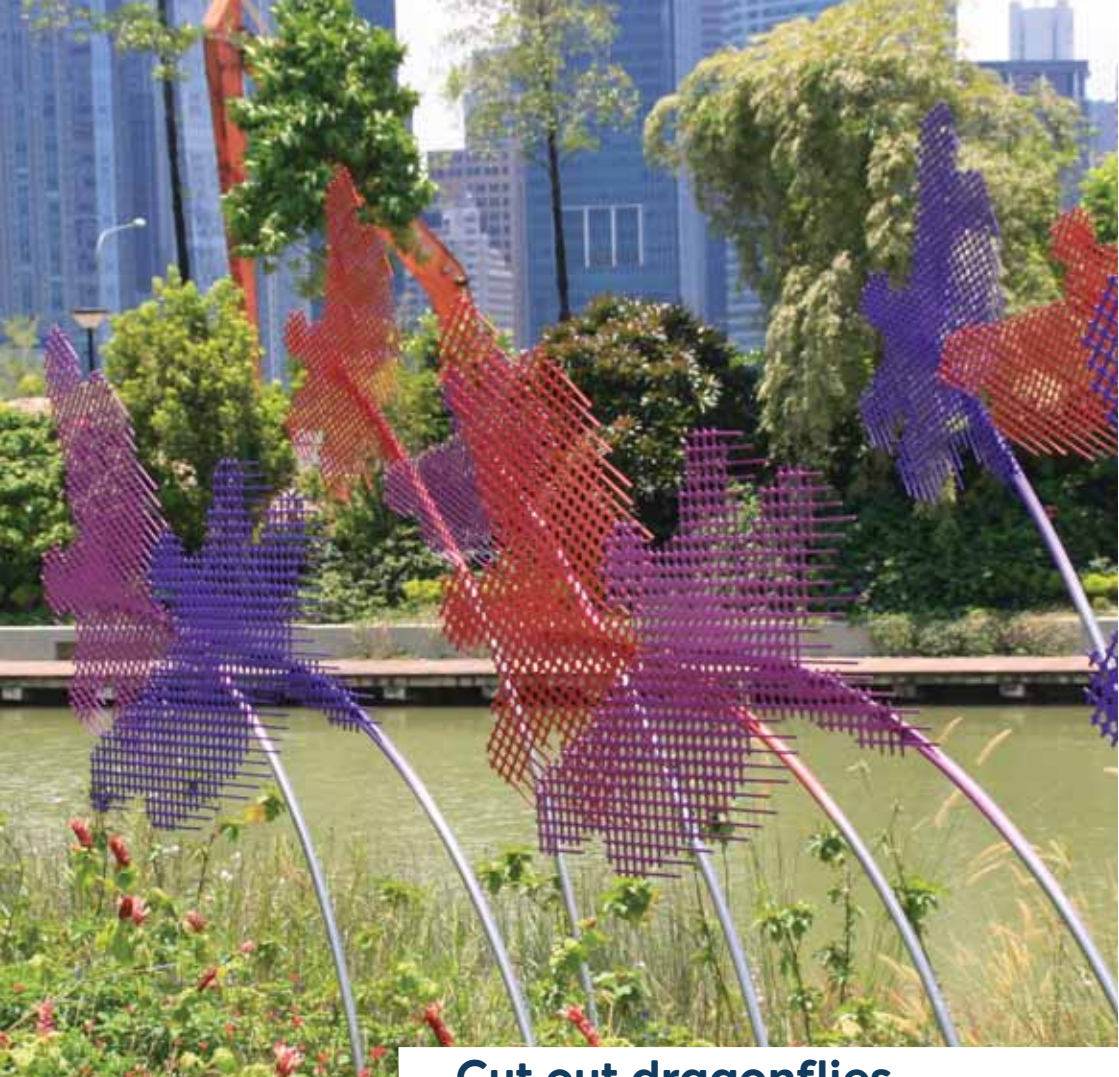
A landmark feature within the tranquil Dragonfly Lake, these magnificent giant dragonflies measure 5m by 6m, and have sculptures of children riding on their backs. The laser cutting technique used on the wings of the dragonflies has provided the lace pattern that encases colourful a glass material, giving a mesh-looking, fascinating abstract effect. The eyes of the dragonflies, blue in one sculpture and red in the other, are made of mouth-blown glass with gold flecks embedded in them. Aiming to project human warmth into the grandiose Gardens, the young riders also serve as a reminder of the joys of childhood. The journey these children are undertaking aims to trigger the imagination of the public through a contest involving youngsters and many artistic media, such as animations, poetry, story books, music and dance etc., providing a new platform to nurture art and design in local education.

Location : Dragonfly Lake
Material : Stainelss steel
Artist : Eng Siak Loy
Origin : Commissioned for Gardens by the Bay, Singapore,
manufactured in Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 1 piece, 4.2 m tall, 3.2m wide

Another interpretation of our Gardens' symbol, the dragonfly, is depicted here in a perching position, which is often adopted by the insect when resting or on the lookout for prey. The dragonfly's metallic filigreed wings lends a light, delicate quality to the sculpture, while at the same time staying remarkably faithful to how the insect looks like in real life. On sunny days, the sculpture becomes a dazzling, lifelike dragonfly as the sunlight filters through its latticed wings.

Perching dragonfly





Cut out dragonflies

Location : Dragonfly Lake, Meadow end
Material : Painted stainless steel
Artist : Eng Siak Loy
Origin : Commissioned for Gardens by the Bay, Singapore,
manufactured in Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 9 pieces up to 1.2 m long, 1.5 m wide

A much more stylised interpretation of the Garden's symbol, this piece of work comprises a cluster of two-dimensional, stainless steel dragonflies in bright hues of orange, magenta and violet. These sculptures are placed amongst the aquatic plants at the margins of the Dragonfly Lake. The flat, cut-out dragonfly patterns are suspended by slim, arched stainless steel supports, creating an intriguing overlapping effect as they are slightly superimposed. These modern dragonflies add a dash of colour to the landscape, bringing a new focus to that section of the lake.



Fountain fish



- Location : Far East Organization
Children's Garden
- Material : White marble
- Artist : Eng Siak Loy
- Origin : Commissioned for
Gardens by the Bay,
Singapore,
manufactured in Fujian,
China
- Dimensions : 17 pieces, the targets
1 m tall, 1.4 m long

This collection of cute-looking fountain fish is a delightful addition to the East Organisation Children's Garden. With their bulbous bodies adorned with circular patterns, protruding eyes and pouting mouths, this shoal of fun, rounded, hooped, scalloped fish promises to excite and refresh the little ones after a hard day of play!





Trio of kingfishers

Location : Kingfisher Lake
Material : Stainless steel
Artist : Eng Siak Loy
Origin : Commissioned for
Gardens by the Bay,
Singapore,
manufactured in
Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 3 pieces up to 2.5 m
long, 2.8 m wide

Comprising two kingfisher sculptures in a perching stance and one in a flight position, this Trio of kingfishers is given pride of place at the Kingfisher Lake, one of the more tranquil and relaxing spots in the Gardens featuring natural water features. These large, impressive kingfisher sculptures are not only location markers, they are a sight to behold with their metallic feathers which catch the changing light on the lake surface. Nine species of kingfisher have been recorded so far in Singapore, three of them, the White-throated Kingfisher, the Collared Kingfisher and the Common Kingfisher are a familiar and welcome sight at our Gardens.





Buffaloes crossing the river

Location : Kingfisher Lake
Material : Grey granite
Artist : Eng Siak Loy
Origin : Commissioned for
Gardens by the Bay,
Singapore,
manufactured in Fujian,
China
Dimensions : 11 pieces up to 2.4 m
long, 1.1 m wide.

Resembling stepping stones, this collection of nine granite water buffaloes is placed in the Kingfisher Lake to resemble a herd of water buffaloes crossing a river, and is reminiscent of countryside living in Southeast Asia. The trees and shrubs that surround these sculptures are representative of the vegetation that can be found in native lowland, riverine areas around the Southeast Asia region. Floating water plants like the Water Lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) and the Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) also bob around the heads of these placid buffaloes as they make their way across the calm waters of the Kingfisher Lake.



A close-up photograph of a stone wall, likely part of a traditional Chinese garden. The wall is constructed from large, irregular stones with a rough, textured surface. The stones are arranged in horizontal layers, with some showing signs of weathering and discoloration. A green plant stem with small, pointed leaves is visible in the lower right foreground, partially obscuring the stone. The overall tone is earthy and natural.

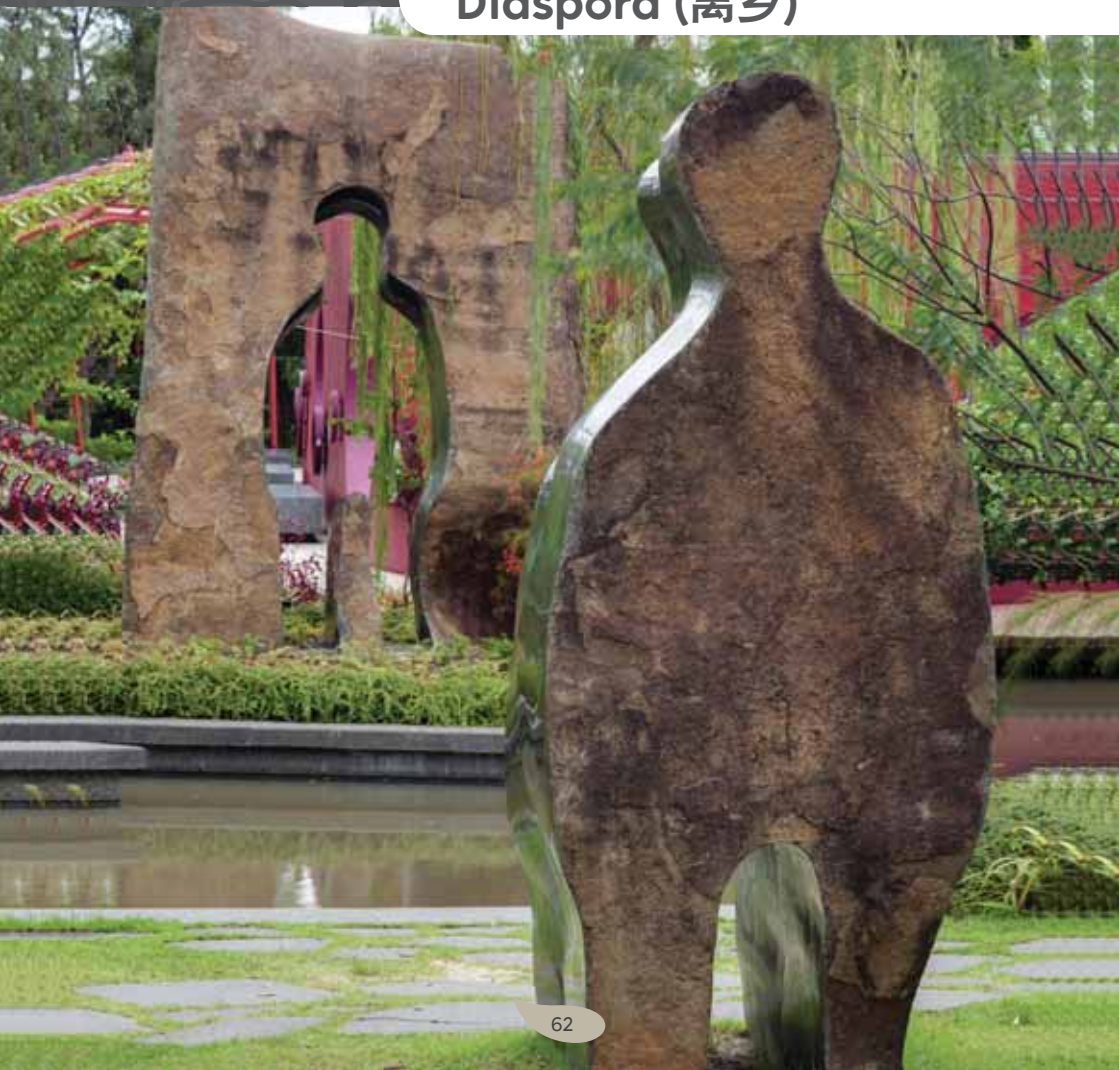
Chinese stonework

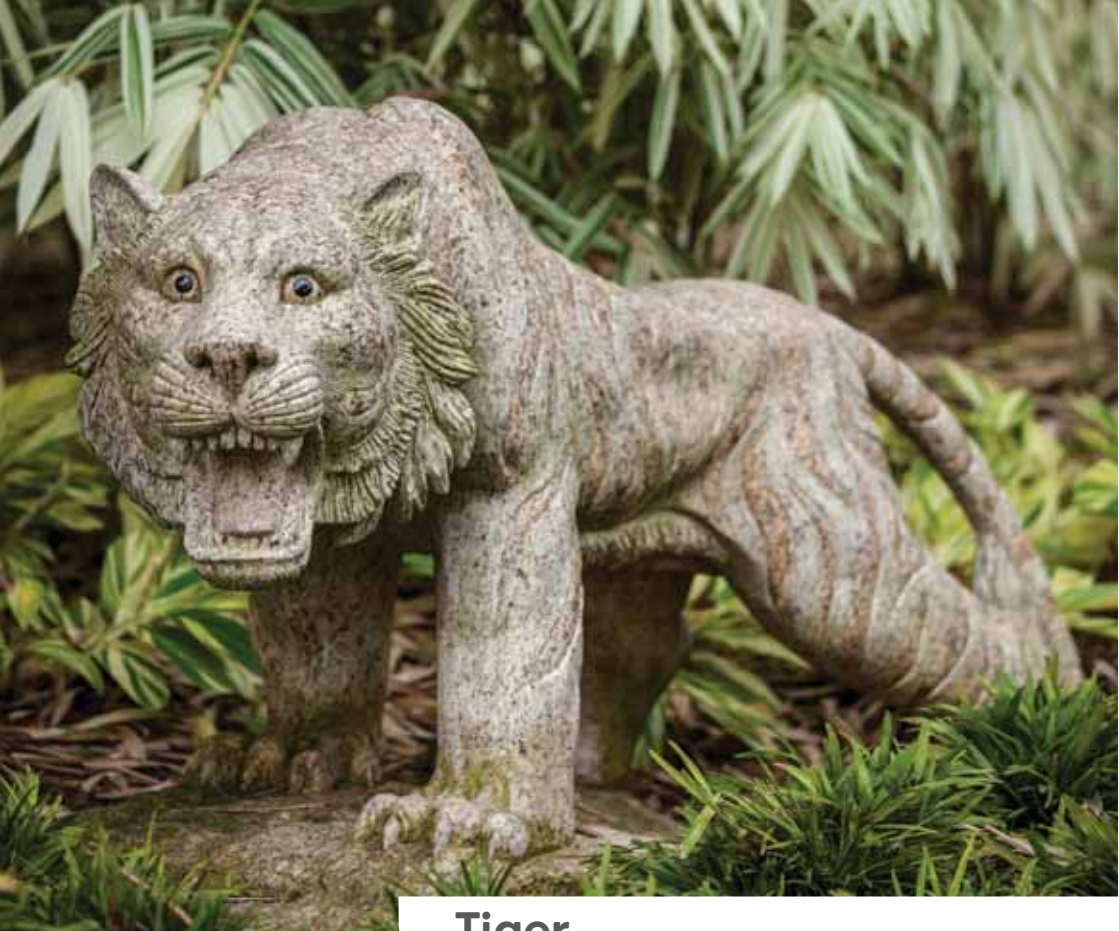
Stonework from China makes up a large proportion of our sculpture collection and can be found in many parts of the Gardens. Resilient and able to withstand the harsh tropical outdoor conditions, many of our pieces come under the craft category and do not have a named sculptor. However, some of the more outstanding pieces in our collection are the works of a sculptor by the name of Wang Rong Hai (王荣海), an established Chinese artist from Huian, Fujian Province, who has a strong interest in exploring the use of different rocks, using the grain and colour of the rock to create pieces with different textures and moods. Wang Rong Hai is a master of two very different artistic styles: not only has he produced traditional Chinese art works such as the Guardian Lions sculptures, he has also ventured into more creative pieces where he considers and incorporates much of the material's raw, organic forms in the design and concept of the final sculpture. Take a stroll through our garden and indulge in a visual treat offered by these Chinese stone carvings!

Location : Heritage Garden
Material : Springstone
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 2 complementing pieces up to 3.5 m tall, 1.8 m wide

You will encounter a modern piece of sculpture as you depart from the Chinese Garden and travel towards the Malay Garden. Named *Diaspora*, or *Li Xiang* (离乡), which means "to leave one's native place", this two-piece sculpture pays homage to early Chinese immigrants who had journeyed to Singapore from various Chinese provinces in search of a better life. The first piece with a hollow centre shaped with an outline of a man is placed in front of a pond which represents the ocean, while the second piece representing the cut-out human figure is placed a distance away, as if it is approaching the Malay Garden. The material used for *Diaspora* is a type of marble known as springstone. For this sculpture, the stone surface was left rough and gray around the edges, while the hollow areas on the inside of the stone and the outlines of the man's figure were polished to a beautifully shiny, dark texture.

Diaspora (离乡)





Tiger

Location : Supertree Groove
Material : Pink granite, raw and polished
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 1 piece, 1.3 m tall, 1.6 m long

Against a backdrop of yellow and green Bamboo (*Bambusa vulgaris* 'Vittata') leaves, a ferocious tiger with expressive painted eyes awaits you. To give texture to the tiger's striped pelt, the craftsman had created alternating polished and rough sections of granite on the flanks of the animal. In traditional Chinese mythology, the tiger is one of the most powerful beasts that ward off evil (Bartholomew 2006) and so it is often featured on amulets and lucky charms. During the 'Duanwu' festival, on the fifth day of the fifth month of the Lunar year, Chinese commemorate the death of the patriot-poet Qu Yuan, who had drowned himself in Miluo River (in today's Hunan Province) to protest against a corrupt government. Legend has it that dumplings were thrown into the river by the people so that the fish would not devour Qu Yuan's body. It was part of the tradition that children would wear tiger outfits and houses were decorated with prints of tigers and the five noxious creatures in ancient Chinese beliefs (centipedes, scorpions, snakes, toads and spiders/lizards) to counter this ominous day. Today, the Duanwu or Dragon Boat Festival is celebrated with Dragon Boat competitions and the eating of dumplings across the region.





Resting Budai

Location : Heritage Garden
Material : Granite
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 1 piece, 1.2 m tall,
2 m wide

Walking from the Indian Garden to the Chinese Garden, you will notice a sculpture of a laughing Budai resting under a Bodhi Tree (*Ficus religiosa*), which is the same species of tree where the Buddha, Siddharta Gautama, is believed to have attained enlightenment. Different from the Buddha, Budai is a deity from Chinese folklore and is also nicknamed the Laughing Buddha, as he is always shown smiling or laughing. The name Budai (or Pu tai) means "cloth sack" in Chinese, and is derived from the bag that he was depicted to carry, which was filled with sweets that were given out to children. According to scholars (Budai, 2013), Budai was an eccentric and fat Zen monk with a protruding belly and is regarded as an incarnation of Maitreya (the future Buddha), carrying the message that the good life is within reach in the present world, through self-mastery, maintaining a happy demeanor, purposeful endeavour, profound commitment to bettering the welfare of others and enlightened awareness. This sack nowadays can be taken as symbol of wealth - when filled with gold - or simply of happiness, health, and other positive ideals. Situated aptly between the Indian and Chinese gardens, the Resting Budai symbolises the journey of Buddhism to China from its beginnings in India.





Plum blossom series

Location	: Heritage Garden, Chinese
Material	: Black granite with white veins
Artist	: Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin	: Xiamen, China
Dimensions	: 3 pieces up to 1.1 m tall, 1 m wide

At the Chinese Garden, the key theme is a reflection of literature (Koh Buck Song, 2012). This garden seeks to portray how traditional Chinese garden culture is aligned with nature, achieving balance and harmony through imitating nature using water features, rocks and pruned plants. Natural objects are often imbued with symbolic meanings in Chinese culture, for instance, plants are usually associated with characteristics such as beauty and resilience, and are presented in a rather loose, informal context, and natural landscapes are often preferred over formally designed gardens. For instance, during the Song Dynasty period, rocks that looked like animals or had unusual shapes were popular and often featured as garden centrepieces. The art of incorporating the initial rocks' features and characteristics as part of the final artwork has been perfected by sculptor Wang Rong Hai (王荣海), who has shown his mastery of the technique in this set of plum blossom sculptures. The black rock's veins become the branches and the paler parts of the rock are used for the blossoms and leaves of the traditionally symbolic flowers. In Chinese art, the orchid, the bamboo, the chrysanthemum and the plum blossom are known as the "Four Gentlemen" of flowers, and are significant floral motifs lauded for their elegant beauty and symbolic significance. Try and find some of these themes in the rocks here. You will notice that there are five petals on each plum blossom. For the Chinese, the petals represent five blessings: old age, wealth, health, virtuousness and a peaceful death (Bartholomew 2006).

Location : Supertree Grove
Material : Pale, fine grained granite
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 2 pairs up to 3 m tall, 1m wide

The sculptor Wang Rong Hai was trained in Chinese classic sculpture, and the two pairs of guardian lions especially placed to welcome visitors at both ends of the Supertree Grove are a prime example of traditional Chinese sculpture. Chinese guardian lions are always presented in pairs, with the male to the right, its right paw playing with a ball that represents power, and the female on the left, with a cub under her left paw, symbolising the cycle of life. According to Daoist (or Taoist) philosophy, the paired lions are also a representation of yin (female) and yang (male), which are the two contrasting and fundamental elements of the 'Way'. While the male lion guards the entrance, the female lion protects the inside of the dwelling.

Guardian lions





Water buffaloes

Location : Between Dragonfly Lake and Silver Garden
Material : Granite
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 2 pieces 1.8 m tall, 2.5 m long

Situated in the Southeast Asia region, Singapore is one of the countries with the highest annual rainfall, and the reed-beds of the Dragonfly Lake were designed to filter and purify the rain water run-off from the conservatories and open spaces during the our impressive downpours. These terraces resemble paddy fields and are a joy to gaze at, with the bullrushes and sedges moving with the wind. Carved from single pieces of granite, sculptures representing restless water buffaloes that plough the muddy paddy fields across South Asia and China look very appropriate when located amongst the temporarily flooded reed beds. Festivals celebrating the buffalo in connection with the rice-paddy ploughing activities take place in many Southeast Asian Countries.

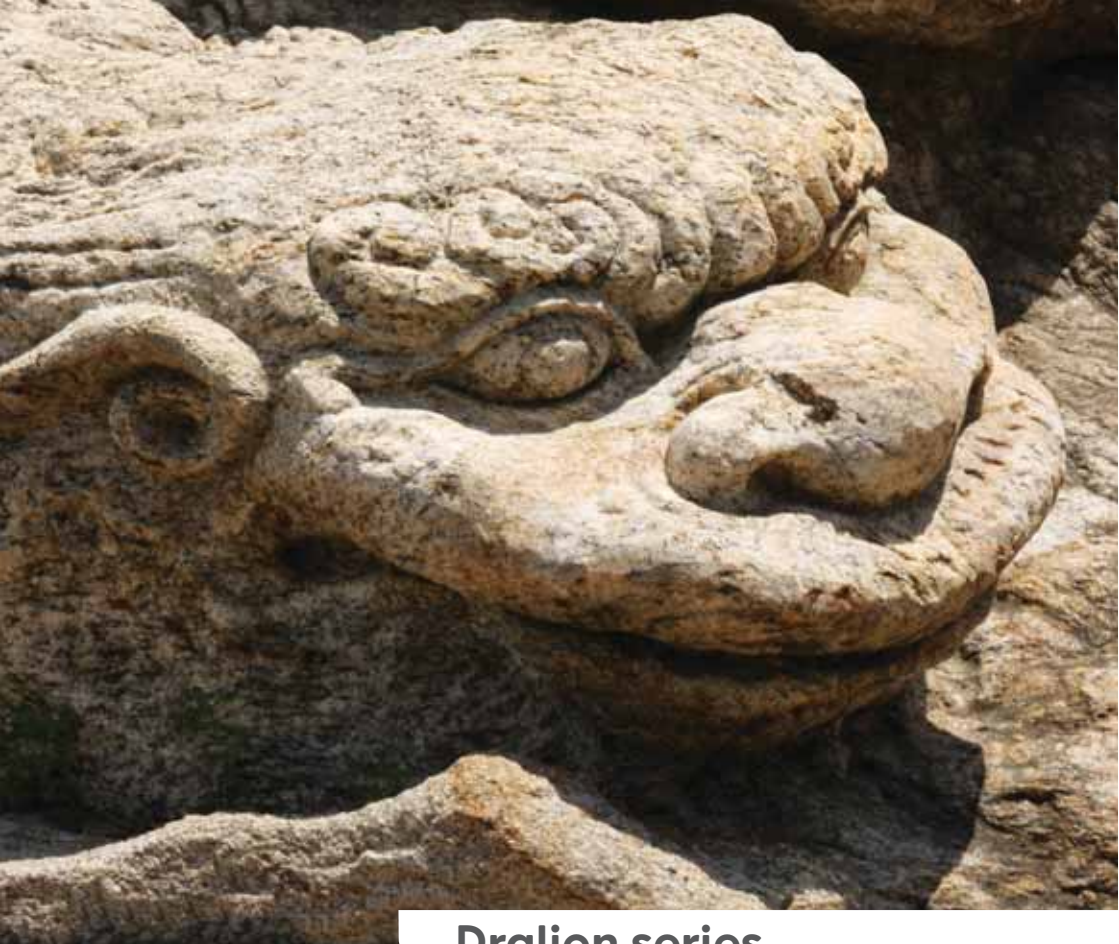


Fish series



Location : Supertree Grove,
Koi Carp Pond
Material : Granite and sandstone
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 7 pieces up to 1.2 m tall,
2 m long

The low relief sculptures in the Fish Series is aptly situated among the calm waters of the Koi Carp Pond. The appearance of the sculptures resembles fossils, complemented by the odd remnant of sea-shells encrusted on the surface. The numerous and overlapping fish carved on the rocks' surface convey a sense of strong fluid movement and abundance. According to a Chinese legend, a carp that is brave and strong enough to swim up the Yellow River against the current and leap the falls at Dragon's Gate will be transformed into a dragon (Perkins, 1999). The Chinese character for fish (鱼) sounds similar to the one used for abundance or surplus (余). Hence, fish are considered lucky animals and feature as a central motif in Chinese New Year celebrations.



Dralion series

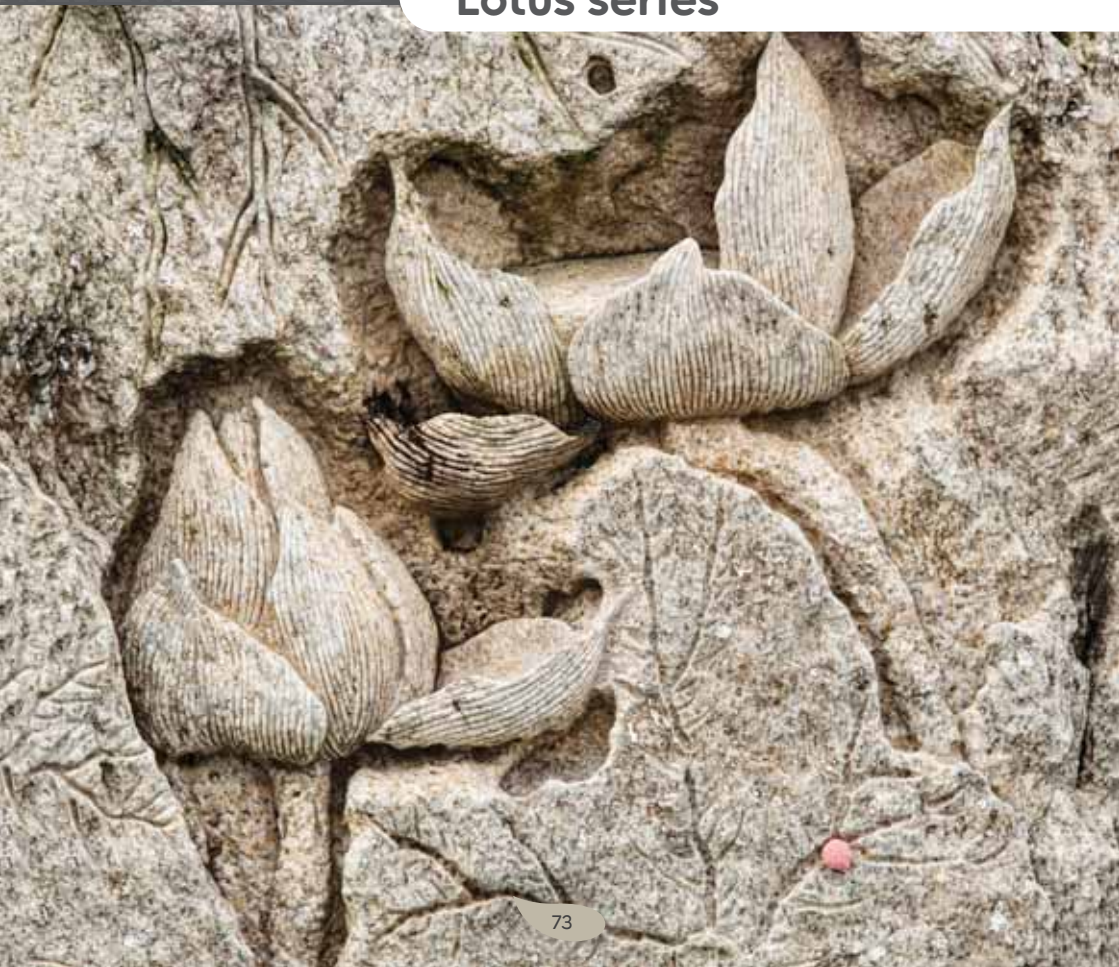
Location : Supertree Grove
Material : Pale granite
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 5 pieces up to 1.7 m tall, 2 m long

The Dralion is a portmanteau word made up of dragon and lion. Although these pieces of sculptures are created by the same artist who had produced the impressive and intricate Guardian Lions, the forms in the Dralion series are much more organic, in the sense that much of the original shapes of the stones had been preserved, suggesting that the sculptor could have envisaged the composition of the various animal forms from the natural shape of the stones. The deliberate presentation of the sculptures in much of the stone's natural and unchiselled state is a playful move on the part of the artist. In leaving part of the stone intact, the work gives only a partial view of the dralion, which requires the engagement of the viewer's imagination to spot the remaining parts of the creatures' bodies. This encourages interactivity between the art work and the viewer. Here a face, there a tail or grasping claws - are they dragons, lizards, elves or turtles? These playful shapes seem to change as you view them from different angles, suggesting a sense of continuous transformation.

Location : Dragonfly Lake, Scented Walk
Material : Granite
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 6 pieces up to 2 m long, 1.4 m tall

These interesting pieces of rock in the Lotus series feature low relief carvings of various parts of Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) plants, including the curiously-shaped fruits, web-like leaf-veins, and the lotus blossom with its multiple petals. The lotus is held in high regard in Chinese culture. Thanks to its water repellent leaves and petals, the lotus plant is able to rise high and clean above the water even though it grows from the muddy bottom of a lake. This attribute of the lotus has been taken as a symbol of purity, resilience and detachment by the Chinese, and might also explain why this plant is often closely associated to images of Buddhism or enlightened beings. Bartholomew (2006) states that all parts of this plant bear auspicious meanings. In his famous short prose essay entitled "On Loving the Lotus", Chinese philosopher and cosmologist Zhou Dunyi compares the lotus with other traditionally well-loved flowers such as the chrysanthemum, the plum and the peony, and re-positions the lotus as the 'gentleman among flowers', praising the lotus for its pure fragrance and upright, clean image.

Lotus series







Faces of stone series

Location : Supertree Grove
Material : Pink marble, granite
Artist : Wang Rong Hai (王荣海)
Origin : Xiamen, China
Dimensions : 5 pieces up to 1.2 m tall,
1 m wide

Between the Supertree Grove and the concrete staircase that leads to the Chinese Garden, there are several pieces of stones carved with faces. Among them is an impressive sculpture carved from a rose-coloured stone that reveals a head of a benevolent bodhi-sattva emerging from among the petals of a Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) flower bud. As you reach the nearby Supertrees, you will also be able to find a dark polished rock from which only the head and shoulders of a peaceful, ancient gentleman are visible. Finally, as one climbs the staircase to reach the Chinese Garden, already on the stairs, the heads of Guan Yu, a brave ancient Chinese warrior, and a reclining ancient Chinese deity (see page 60) with a flowing beard gaze out from the stones.



Young British Artists (YBA) Planet



Location : Supertree Grove
Material : White painted bronze,
stainless steel
Artist : Marc Quinn
Origin : United Kingdom
Gifted by : Mr & Mrs Putra
Masagung
Dimensions : one piece, 4 m tall,
9.2 m long

With a weight of seven tonnes, this impressive bronze cast sculpture is 9 m long and 3 m tall, and portrays an oversized but exact reproduction of the artist's own son Lucas as a baby. What is interesting about this sculpture is that its complete weight is masterfully balanced on the infant's right hand, and because of this, the whole sculpture appears to be floating in the air. Created in 2008, the sculpture was exhibited for the first time at the Beyond Limits exhibition of contemporary sculpture at Chatsworth House, then later at the 2012 The Littoral Zone at the Musée Océanographique in Monaco. *Planet* is set to remain on permanent display at Gardens by the Bay, following its unveiling in early 2013. Quinn (b. 1964) is an internationally-acclaimed British artist who explores the relationship between art and science, the human body and the perception of beauty, among other things. His work addresses theme of human influences on nature, the changing human body, issues of life and death and identity. He uses an assortment of materials and techniques to portray the estranged relationship people have with their bodies, highlighting conflicts between what is considered natural and the cultural pressures that people experience (Quinn 2013). *Planet* is part of a trilogy based on the early years of his son, which also includes *Lucas* (2001) and *Innoscence* (2004).

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