

Robin Antar

Biography

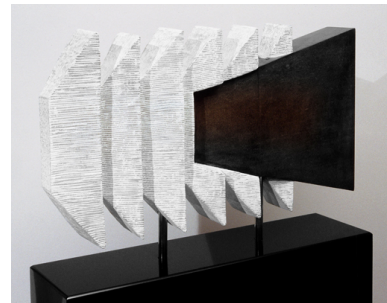


American sculptor Robin Antar was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey in 1957. She was uprooted from her surroundings when her family moved to Brooklyn, New York in 1973. The social landscape at her new high school was brutal for the newly-arrived teenager and Antar began learning to carve in stone as a means of survival, using art as her emotional lifeline.

Antar was completely devoted to her sculpture. She would work for hours in the school's studio, and then again at home in her parents' basement. Her father would have to go downstairs at 2 a.m. to remind her to go to sleep.

In 1976, Antar suddenly discovered she was blind in one eye – and had been since birth. The retrolental fibroplasia that had compromised the vision in her right eye soon became an integral tool among the techniques she used to create her art.

The early years of her artistic practice were spent in abstraction as she sculpted and painted her newly-discovered limits and explored how her sculptures, in particular, could evolve despite an absence of depth perception.



She created a series of pieces specifically on her experience with “unbalanced vision” which she perceives as an extraordinary gift. Images were visualized from the inside out, rather than the outside in, with the subject matter drawn from within her immediate line of vision. Aesthetic beauty and superficial thought were none of her concern as she focused on fundamental feelings and basic sensations, resulting in sculptures with an uncommon perspective, jarring color and anomalous form.

Antar had already paid her dues in sweat and stone dust by the time she received her BFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York in 1981. She set up a working studio in Brooklyn, creating abstract sculptures in a loose, intuitive style deeply rooted in emotions and personal experiences.

Themes surrounding marriage, motherhood, divorce and trauma found their way into her work. A series of stone *D-Knots* were carved in honor of her youngest child, David, representing his struggles with the trauma of child abuse and addiction. His death at the age of 26 resulted in one of Antar's most personal and powerful creations, *David's Knot in Flames*, carved from a 1,500-pound block of Turkish marble. The sculpture is permanently installed at Zucker Hillside Hospital in Glen Oaks, New York, where her son received treatment during his short life.

Other works such as *Conversations*, *Relationships* and *Meditation* reflect the process of releasing life's traumas and its importance to survival, healing and positive change.

In addition to her abstract works, Antar began exploring realism – a move that provided the ultimate challenge of creating ways to sculpt detailed



replicas of real-life objects despite the artist's vision impairment which confuses concave and convex forms in three-dimensions subjects.



Antar began work on her *Realism in Stone* series in 1998, creating her unique brand of hyper-realism inspired by everyday objects. She developed a special tinting process to stain the stone, a technique that allows her to duplicate the color of almost any product.

She immediately landed her first corporate commission for her realism series: carving a Skechers boot.

Antar's sculptures were so realistic, the U.S. government refused her request to copyright one of her works of art because it too closely resembled the product she chose to record in stone.

The September 11, 2001 attack on New York's Twin Towers forever changed the focus of Antar's work as the artist began to explore "What is America?" Inspired by popular culture, she brought Pop art to stone by carving iconic American food and designer clothing with meticulous detail. A bottle of Heinz ketchup, Oreo cookies and a giant hot dog on a bun with a bite taken out of it became lasting monuments to contemporary life.



Ballpark Frank and An American Classic by Robin Antar



One of her most powerfully symbolic works, *North Tower 9/11*, commemorates the September 11 attack: an 800-pound white marble sculpture of a crumpled bag with colorful M&M's spilling out of the top.

Antar's work in realism soon began garnering media attention. The *New York Daily News* called her "Brooklyn's answer to Andy Warhol" and she was recently named among the "best sculptors in the world" in London's luxury magazine, *Square Mile* and featured in the book, *100 Sculptors of Tomorrow*.

Her Pop art hyper-realism sculptures also caught the attention of Jeff Jaffe, owner of Pop International Galleries in New York City. Antar became the first female artist accepted on the roster of the Pop art and urban culture gallery that represents works by Andy Warhol and Rolling Stones musician Ronnie Wood, among others.

North Tower 9/11 by Robin Antar

As her sculptures continued to gain notoriety, Antar continued receiving commissions to carve replicas of products for national and international companies such as Dr. Martens, Stella Artois and Château Haut-Brion.



A new series began surfacing in 2016 as Antar began to explore America's political climate. A white *Make America Great Hat* was carved during Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign.

"The first time I saw him wear the hat was on the campaign trail - and it was white," Antar states. "At the time I created this piece, I knew this hat would become an American symbol."

Her current work-in-progress is a combination of realism and abstraction, representing the U.S. Constitution as a stone "knot" sculpture, entitled *The U.S. Constitution in a Knot*.

Make America Great Again by Robin Antar

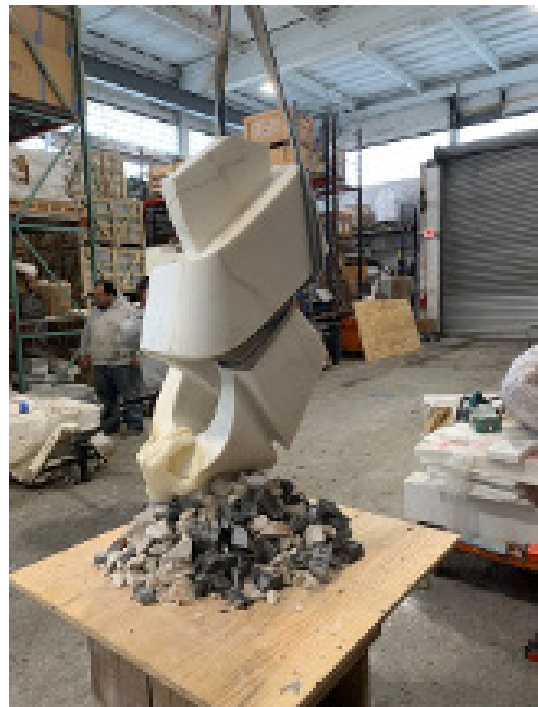
"This sculpture expresses all the craziness that is going on in our history, not as a political statement but as an observation of events and trends," Antar states.

All of Antar's current work is rooted in observation. "Whatever is going on, I express it in stone," Antar says. "It could come out as realism, as an abstract form, or as a combination of both. The style I use is one that best reflects the inspiration behind each piece."

Antar's sculptures have been exhibited in galleries and museums across the U.S., including Sotheby's, The National Arts Club, Nabisco Gallery, City Museum of St. Louis, Provincetown Art Museum and the MGM Grand and she has been an elected member of the prestigious Allied Artists of America.

Her work has appeared in *Food Network Magazine*, the *New York Post*, *Art Business News*, *Huffington Post*, *Sportswear International*, the *New York Daily News*, HGTV, Fox News, Today in New York and POP Culture Radio, among others.

Robin Antar continues to create out of her studio in Brooklyn, New York.



U.S. Constitution in a Knot by Robin Antar