

# Obituary: Peter Barstow Rockwell (1937–2020)

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Image



By Jerry Podany and Thomas Roby

Peter Rockwell, a sculptor and the youngest of three sons of artist Norman Rockwell, died at his home in Danvers, Massachusetts on Thursday, February 6, 2020. Although predominantly known as an artist who worked in stone, Peter was also a renowned expert and scholar in the historical techniques of stone sculpting from antiquity to the modern era.

He lived most of his professional life in Rome where he maintained a studio and taught at various schools, including the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro where he lectured on stone carving and sculpting techniques. Peter also taught for the ICCROM/UNESCO/GCI stone conservation courses in Venice and then in Rome, which included field trips to Carrara where he had apprenticed and worked. He was a frequent consultant on conservation projects, such as the Column of Trajan in the 1980s during which he was responsible for documenting the ancient stone carving and finishing techniques. Peter consulted internationally on issues related to the material art history of sculpture from India to Europe (especially Italy) and the USA.

All who were fortunate enough to attend any of his many lectures and classes will attest to his enthusiasm, insight, breadth of knowledge, and humor. His contributions added significantly to the profession's understanding of how stone cutters and sculptors achieved their end products. Peter's input, including *The Art of Stoneworking: A Reference Guide*, *The Complete Marble Sleuth* (also authored by Stanley Rosenfeld and Heather Hanley), and *The Unfinished: The Stone Carvers at Work in the Indian Subcontinent* (co-authored with Vidya Dehelia), will continue to prove invaluable to conservators around the world.

He is survived by his daughter and three sons. Peter's wife of many years, Cynthia, worked for ICCROM in Rome and developed a specialization in translating works about restoration including Cesare Brandi's important *Theory of Restoration*, published by Nardini Editore in 2005. Cynthia died in 2013.

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