

Design Resource

Soft Stone Carving - Hampi

The Skillful Crafts of Stone

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Lija M. G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/soft-stone-carving-hampi>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details



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Introduction

Walking through the market side of Hampi (Hospet) one of the historical place of India where lot of artisans sit around the market area's to make, display and sell their handmade works. The soft stone carver has his small outlet on the road side with a small table with his finished products side to which he has his little working space. This stone carving is done mostly with the soft stone which is given impact with the help of a palm or a human palm shaped cushion's.

Hampi was the former capital of the Vijayanagar Empire which is located at the banks of the river Tungabhadra, it is largely known for the existing monuments. It is surrounded by the Tungabhadra on one side and by the invulnerable hills on the other sides. As per the craftsmen this tradition is handed over to them only from their ancestors since various generations. Hampi is located at the Bellary District of Karnataka in India and also known as the former capital of the Vijayanagar Empire.



Small idol of lord Ganesha carved out of soft stone.



Carved idol of an elephant used as a showpiece.

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Some carved figures are painted with black to give them a bright rich look.

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The stone's nature is soft enough to be carved without the pressure of hammer on the chisel.



Figure of lord Ganesha carved on a sphered shape stone which can be used as a paper weight or as a showpiece.



A carved idol depicting lord Ganesha holding a laptop.



Small-carved idol of Nandi.

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Various types of idols and showpieces are carved out of the soft tone.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw materials required for the carving on the soft stone:

- Soft Stone: It is generally preferred for carving out the idols.
- Chisels: Different types of chisels like flat, pointed, claw and toothed are generally preferred to remove out the stone materials.
- Round Files: It is used to sculpt the uneven surface on the surface of the stone.
- Sandpaper: It is used to remove small quantity of materials or to make the surface smoother.
- Marker: Chalk / Charcoal is used to mark the layouts before carving.
- Human Palm Sized Cushions: It is used to give an impact to the stone carving.
- Measuring Tape: It is used to give the depth to which the Idol can be carved out.
- Riffers/ Rasps: It is used for the last shaping of the stone surface.



Small chisel and pointed chisels are used to give shape and carve required design out of the stone.

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Small idol of lord Ganesha carved out of soft stone.

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Big flat chisels are used to cut the stone to the required size and shape.



Big and small flat chisel used to give the desired shape to the stone.

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Customized palm cushion made of cloth and rubber sheet, which is used, as a hammer to hammer the chisel while carving.

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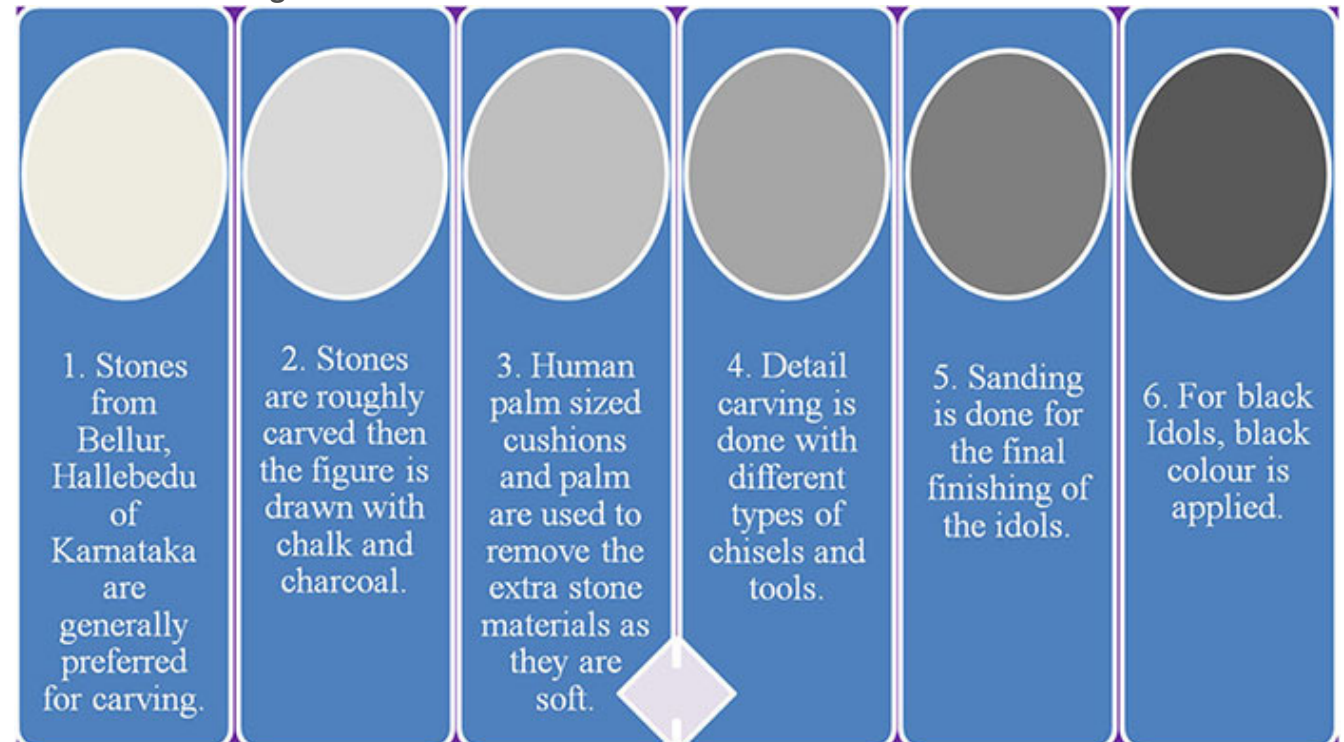
Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/soft-stone-carving-hampi/making-process>

Making Process

For the carving out on the stones, the craftsmen prefers the soft stones that are especially available in the Bellur and Hallebedu regions of the state of Karnataka that has the traditional carvings. Soft stones are generally preferred by this craftsmen as he comments the best intricate and fine carving to be done on them. Stones are roughly carved out and then drawn with a chalk/ charcoal to figure out the intricate works to be done on them. The outer surfaces are strike out first and then removed portion by portion such that the core part of the stone doesn't get broken away while striking.

The craftsmen generally prefers Human palm sized cushions to chisel out the extra stone materials instead of a hammer. Even in some cases he uses his palm to give an impact to the stone as he refers that it is a soft stone. After the stone material is roughly chiseled out, on the base shape of the idol detailed carving is done. As the detail carving is completed, sandpaper is used to remove the layer of stone materials for the final finishing of the idols. In some cases black colour is applied to give a difference, but only done on the customer's request (preference).

Flow Chart of Making Process:

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Edges of the chisels are sharpened before carving.



Required size of stone is cut out from the big piece or block of stone.



Stone is begun to chisel to give the desired shape.

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Initially the rough edges are chiseled and a proper shape is given to the stone.



Using the chisel artisan marks the areas to be chiseled.



A basic shape is begun to carve using small sized chisel.

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Once a basic shape is given more chiseling is done to obtain the precise shape of the idol.

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Edges and curves of the idol are chiseled to give accurate shape.



Back part of the idol is scraped out to keep plain surface.



Front figure of the idol is mildly scraped to give a perfect shape.



With flay chisel the rough edges are scraped and smoothen.

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After acquiring the desired shape facial expressions and other designs are chiseled using pointed chisel.

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Products

The products are generally of Ganesh Idols more often, of the smaller sizes in large numbers with the cost from Rs. 300, bigger ones of about Rs. 400 and above. Statutes of Nandi, Elephant, Shivalingam, black coloured Elephants, idols similar to Buddha are made by the craftsmen. Also this craftsmen makes Idols out of the marbles as per his design inspirations.



Soft stone carved into an idol of Lord Ganesha.



Another carved piece of Ganesha with a smooth finishing.

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Idol of Nandi carved and chiseled with few designs.



Carved piece of an elephant used as a showpiece.

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Carved pieces of elephants painted with black color giving the product a rich look.



Idols depicting lord Buddha.

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Shiva linga carved out of soft stone.



Carving of god made on a spheroid shaped soft stone used as a showpiece.

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Contact Details

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You can get in touch with

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