

Out of Africa SCULPTURE BY BART WALTER





Having known Bart Walter for over 25 years, I have seen his career blossom and grow. I was first drawn to Bart's work because of his unique talent for capturing the essence of the animals he sculpts. In fact, my request for a chimpanzee became Bart's first bronze commission. Whether chimpanzees, elephants or giraffes, his sculptures are full of movement and life. They capture the spirit of the animal, and convey that spirit to the viewer, who can sense the life in Bart's subjects, frozen in a moment of time.

Good art, like Bart's, can inspire people and help them to understand that we are all part of the animal kingdom, not separate from it. Whether looking at a charging gorilla, running guinea fowl, or roaring lions, one understands the power, grace and spirit of the animals Bart portrays, bringing them to life for us all to see and appreciate.

Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE
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Out of Africa

SCULPTURE BY BART WALTER

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Stanford in Washington Art Gallery, Washington, DC

For over thirty years, Bart Walter has captured the spirit of wildlife, from the plains of North America to the grasslands of Africa, through his world-renowned sculptures. By combining a biologist's eye and a sculptor's understanding of his medium, Mr. Walter continues the tradition of previous animaliers with life-like depictions of the animals he has observed.

Since early childhood, Mr. Walter has had an interest in nature. On weekends, he would escape from Baltimore to Maryland's Eastern Shore. His visits to the outdoors inspired an interest in bird carving. By his mid-twenties, he was competing nationally and recognized as one of the country's best bird carvers. This talent was just the beginning of what would become his life's work.

In 1986, two events changed the future of Mr. Walter's career. First, he met Dr. Jane Goodall, who admired the care and detail of his carvings and asked that he sculpt a chimpanzee. Subsequently, Mr. Walter's wife, Lynn, suggested that they take their first African safari. Upon seeing the wide diversity of African wildlife, Mr. Walter realized the wealth of animals that could be depicted. He decided to leave bird carving to become a bronze sculptor. Two years later, he completed "Outlook," Goodall's requested chimpanzee.

Ten years after his career shift, Walter tried sculpting while on safari using a moldable epoxy. His first experiment with this new technique came during a two-week trip to Botswana. He was so encouraged by the results that a year later, he returned to Africa with Lynn and their two daughters, nine-year-old Katie and seven-year-old Becky, on a two-month working safari to Kenya. These working safaris repeated every other year from 1997-2007, resulting in many of his most acclaimed pieces.

Sculpting *en plein air*, Mr. Walter works with his subjects directly in front of him. In order to create a maquette, or a small working model, of what he intends to sculpt, Mr. Walter brings wire, plywood, aluminum foil, and wax into the field. It can take several days to finish a single maquette, as animals can either be difficult to locate or residing in a low-visibility area. Walter has worked extensively using this method in Kenya, Rwanda, Botswana, and Uganda, as well as in Manitoba, Canada, Montana, and Wyoming.

Once the model is complete and he has returned home, Mr. Walter decides to either cast a bronze sculpture using the maquette as-is, or enlarge the model to create a larger work. He then uses the lost wax casting process, which involves making an additional wax model from a mold of the wax sculpture to ultimately generate the completed bronze sculpture.

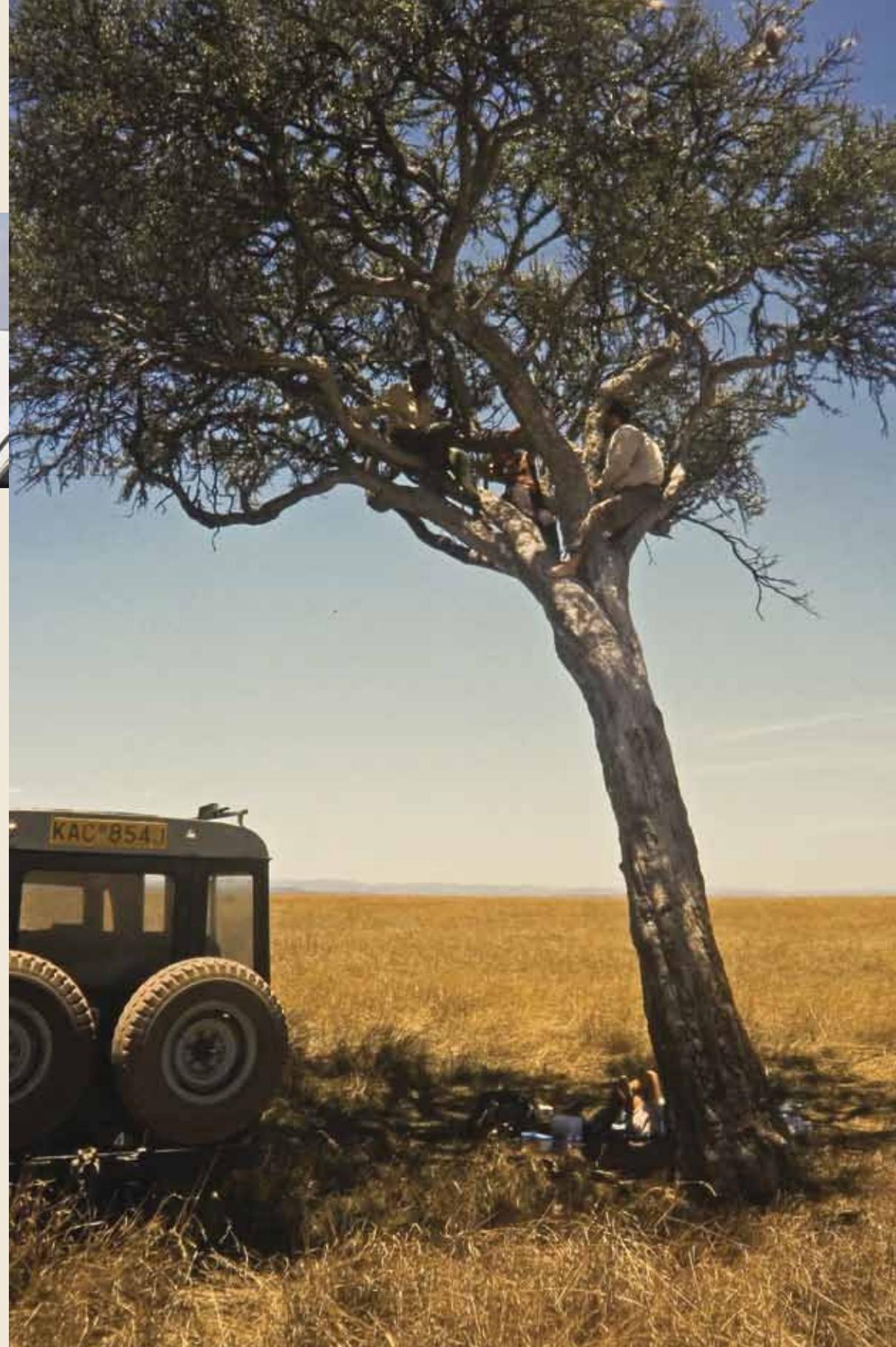
More than twenty-five years have elapsed since Mr. Walter's first safari and his work can be found in a number of large public installations around America. A group of five life-size elk, known as "Wapiti Trail", graces the front entrance to the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Life-size lions, ostriches, cheetahs, a gorilla, and even a polar bear are located throughout the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. "The Gathering", a group of seven life-size chimpanzees, toured with Dr. Goodall's Reason for Hope lecture series in the late 1990s and is now at the National Zoo in Washington, DC.



As a sculptor, my goal in the field is to observe with clear eyes, interpret what I witness and record the results. In order to do the best job possible, I decided to sculpt directly from life. This simple decision to travel and work in the field has resonated throughout my life, taking me and my family across the Atlantic to Africa six times. My wife, Lynn, and our two daughters have spent nearly a year together in the African bush. Africa is now an integral part of who I am: the myriad smells, sights and sounds continue to make strong designs in the warp and weft forming the fabric of my life.

—Bart Walter

Bart sketching Bat Eared Foxes, Maasai Mara, Kenya (above); Walter family, Lynn, Katie, Becky and Bart, 2007 (left); Walter family taking a lunch break under a lone Acacia tree, 1999 (right).





Mara Masters
2012

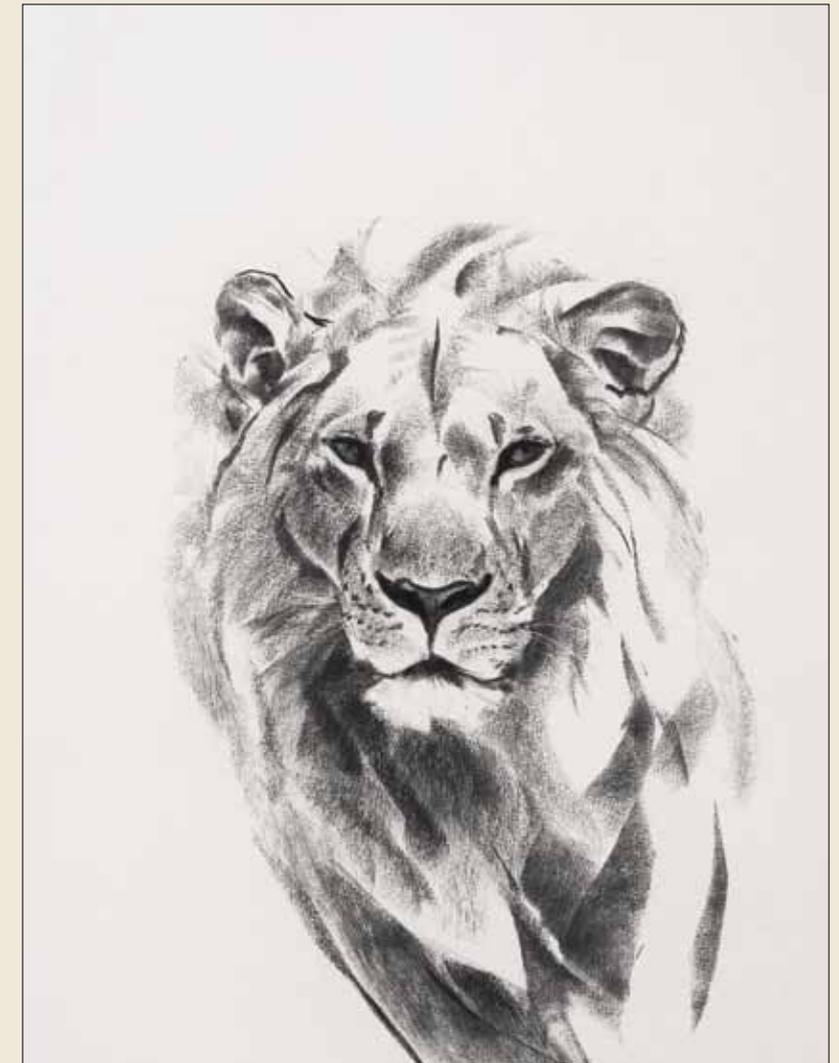
In still evening air, the roaring of lions at close range leaves unforgettable whole body memories. You literally feel sound waves with your skin as the air around you reverberates with their calls.

For many years I dreamed of capturing these intense declarations of territory and showcasing the amazingly close, and often overlooked, bonds between brothers. What I needed was a powerful and compelling composition to help communicate my message. Finally, the image of an asymmetrically balanced rock entered my thoughts and the rest of the design seemed to sculpt itself.

—Bart Walter



Bwana Kubwa
2007



Greeting
2001



In the afternoon we explored the long grass opposite camp hoping for lions. After a long search we were rewarded with felines enjoying the cool temperature and playing in the grass. Seven females, eight cubs and one adult male awoke, greeted one another, stalked each other and generally had a relaxed good time.

Journal entry, July 31, 2005



Giraffe Trio
2011



Giraffe are truly improbable beasts, with an ungainly elegance unique to their species. In this sculpture I wanted to compress three figures into a single design, to create a unified composition. This was a wonderful challenge: in changing the position of a single leg, the perception of balance and movement in the entire composition was alternately lost and regained until eventually a unified balance could be found.

—Bart Walter



Kibale Chimp

2002



Going was slow through extremely dense undergrowth, so I sculpted as I went—trying hard to hold the images of chimps in my head. When the chimps finally stopped moving, I simply sat down where I was and kept sculpting....I noticed that ants were streaming from the trunk of a dead tree just behind me. I had ignored their climbing and occasional bites until now, but this was getting serious so I got up and moved.

Luckily, by now the chimps were more visible and we followed. Wax in hand, I sculpted as we moved. As I sculpted the face, we were standing only a few yards from a small group of resting males. This time, my only interruption came as one of the large males tickled and chased a youngster round and round a small tree. They played contentedly for some time and after the tension and intense fighting of the morning, it was wonderful to see.

Journal entry, Oct. 23, 2001,
Kibale Forest, Uganda



Mother & Child II (left)

2002

Striding Youth (right)

2002



In Uganda's Kibale Forest, I was privileged to follow chimpanzees each day from long before dawn until they settled down to construct their evening nests. My mission was to sculpt, sketch and observe how they moved together as a group and how they kept in contact with each other. Immediately upon my return to the States, I created the individuals known collectively as "The Troupe".

—Bart Walter

Agile & Swift
2004

Cheetah (left)
Gazelles (right)



Wentai
2002

In the afternoon, Wentai Kepera came to model for a portrait study. I was a bit nervous as he struck a pose for me, but had no time to dwell on it, for a life-size wax portrait in one go is an all-consuming affair..... In order to see Mr. Kepera's face and my sculpture at eye level, I had to squat or go down on my knees. I was tired, I was wet, but as dusk fell the sculpture was finished - or at least close. Wentai has a wonderful face with skin stretched tight over bone and muscle. The shape of his head is quite wonderful as well and that was what I concentrated on for most of the sculpture.

Journal entry, September 21, 2001



Running Guinea Fowl
2002



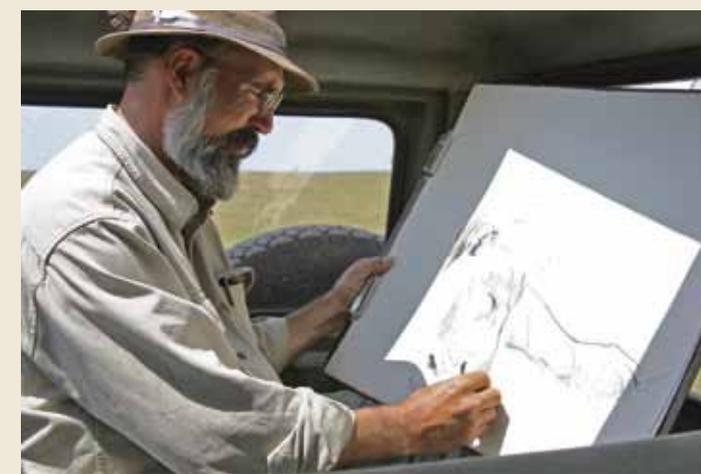
As we passed a low dense bush not 100 meters from our breakfast site, 20 or so guineas emerged running. They were shy and moved immediately into the shelter of Whistling thorn acacias. We followed and observed for half an hour or so but gave up when they entered a particularly rocky area. Back in camp, I tried to put down in wax what I had just seen. Two Guinea Fowl emerged completely and then finally, a third. They are loose and gestural, but since they are running it seems appropriate.

Together, the three disc-like forms tilt and lunge forward, giving a good sense of movement. I was not at all sure the composition would work, but I am pleased to see that it does appear to.
Journal entry, October 1, 2001



As I was finishing I noticed a great deal of quiet conversation in a mélange of French, Kisrwandan and Swahili. I could make little out of it except the words for photograph and earth repeated over and over. Finally the tracker beside me, who spoke a bit of English, said the men wanted to know if I was making photographs out of earth. I looked at the dark brown sculpture in my hands and nodded yes. He then asked if this was how I took home my memories. I smiled inwardly and said "Yes, Absolutely." This man could not have asked a better or more perceptive question. Each sculpture or drawing I make in the field represents a memory that I then take home and share with others.

— Bart Walter, from a personal correspondence



Face Off
Wax Maquettes
2004 (left) and 2010 (right)



Bat-Eared Fox Study (bottom)
2005



Bat-eared Foxes are wonderfully strange creatures. With a short little muzzle, long legs and immense ears they dine mainly on insects which are located with an acute sense of hearing. Normally shy, we have been incredibly lucky this trip to locate a pair which tolerates our close approach.

Journal entry, July 30, 2005

Elephant Trio
Wax Maquette
2001



At lunchtime I worked on the elephant sculpture I wanted to work on all morning. I finished the wire armature and added aluminum foil (all too noisy for an elephant's sensitive hearing). We all went out at 4:30 and promptly found elephants again—our 2nd group from the morning. They gave the family a good show by relaxedly approaching the vehicle, testing the air and almost brushing the land cruiser as they

passed. For my part, I was adding wax to my sculpture like a mad-man, trying to record what I was seeing. Unfortunately, clouds were forming overhead, the temperature was dropping and my wax was extremely stiff. It is hard not to smile though after spending a day in the company of elephants.

Journal entry, Sept. 19, 2001

It was as if I were on fire. I sculpted every waking moment when not eating and this included time in the vehicle coming and going from game rich areas—this included working after sunset when I had to hold the sculptures up out of the vehicle and against the western sky in order to continue by silhouette.

I should have felt tired..... in truth I enjoyed the challenge and intensity immensely. I sculpted a walking giraffe, a pair of warthogs, finished a group of lions greeting, sculpted a leaping wildebeest, a group of 5 resting elephants and then finally with my last bit of wax I made a study of 2 migrating wildebeest. It had been my intention to sculpt 3-5 wildebeest but I quite literally ran out of wax, aluminum wire, aluminum foil and hose clamps all at once. In short, as of this afternoon I can sculpt no more. My hands are the only part of me that greets this news with enthusiasm. I've seen so many incredible sights, done so many incredible things—it is difficult to stop.

Journal entry, October 8, 1999

Journals (top)

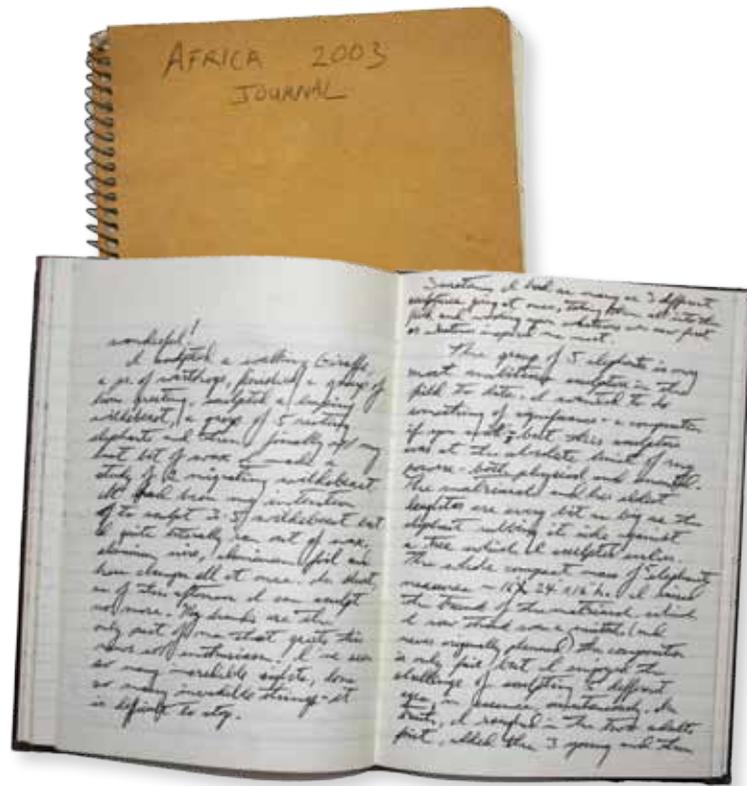
Field Sketches:

Cheetah Sitting, 2005 (right)

Elephant, 2004

Lion Walking, 2007

Three Birds, 2005



Exhibition Checklist

SCULPTURE

Agile & Swift 2004

Stainless Steel with bronze patina
Cheetah: 12 x 23 x 20 inches
Gazelles: 26 ½ x 19 ½ x 18 ½ inches

Cape Buffalo Maquette 2002

Bronze Maquette, edition of 10
10 x 16 x 10 inches

Greeting 2001

Lioness & Cubs
Bronze Maquette, edition of 8
9 x 12 x 9 inches

Giraffe Trio 2011

Bronze, edition of 6
34 x 18 x 18 inches

Ishmael 1995

Bronze, edition of 8
48 x 25 x 37 inches

Kibale Chim 2002

Bronze Maquette, edition of 10
15 x 7 x 5 inches

Mara Masters 2012

Bronze Maquette, edition of 8
11 x 15 x 7 inches

Mother and Child II 2002

Bronze, edition number of 3
30 x 34 x 26 inches

Striding Youth 2002

Bronze, edition number of 3
22 x 34 x 18 inches

Mountain Silverback Maquette 2001

Bronze Maquette, edition of 10
12 x 6 x 5 inches

Running Guinea Fowl 2002

Bronze Maquette, edition of 6
10 x 25½ x 11 inches

Wentai 2002

Bronze Maquette, edition of 8
10 x 7 x 8 inches

WAXES

Elephant Trio 2001 (individuals)

2011 (trio)
Wax Maquettes
16 x 20 x 17½ inches

Face Off 2004 (left), 2010 (right)

Wax Maquette
9 x 26 x 14½ inches

Resting Cheetah Study 1999

Wax Maquette
8 x 13½ x 6½ inches

Running Ostrich Trio Maquette 2000

One Stainless Steel Maquette, 2000
Two Wax Maquettes, 2006
11½ x 8½ x 20 inches

Secretary Bird 2007

Wax Maquette
10 x 9 x 13 inches

Wildebeests 1999

Wax Maquettes:
Two Walking Wildebeests
7 x 14 x 9 inches

One Wildebeest Leaping 1999

9 x 9 x 9 inches

One Wildebeest with Head Down 1997

7 x 9½ x 10 inches

FRAMED CHARCOAL DRAWINGS

Afternoon Field Study II 2007, Field Study

Charcoal drawing on paper
30 ¾ x 34 ½ inches framed

Bat-Eared Fox 2007, Field Study

Ink on paper
13 x 15 inches framed

Bwana Kubwa 2007

Charcoal drawing on paper
44 ¼ x 36 ¼ inches framed

Elephant Approach II c. 2007, Field Study

Charcoal drawing on paper
29 x 31 ⅞ inches framed

Ostrich on the Mara 2007, Field Study

Charcoal drawing on paper
28 ½ x 25 ¼ inches framed

Sleeping King I 2005, Field Study

Charcoal drawing on paper
35 ¼ x 36 ¾ inches framed

Sleeping Rhino 2001, Field Study

Charcoal drawing on paper
32 x 36 inches framed

Solitary Chim 2001, Field Study

Charcoal drawing on paper
36 x 40 inches framed

For more information please visit Bart Walter's website: www.bartwalter.com.

FIELD SKETCHES

Bat-Eared Fox Study 2005

charcoal and ink on paper
5 ½ x 8 ½ inches

Elephant 2004

charcoal and ink on paper
5 ½ x 8 ½ inches

Profile of Lion's Head 2007

ink on paper
5 ⅝ x 8 ¾ inches

Lion Walking 2007

Ink and charcoal on paper
5 ½ x 8 ½ inches

Cheetah Sitting 2005

Ink on paper
8 ½ x 5 13/16 inches

Close up Profile of Lion's Head 2007

Ink on paper
5 ½ x 8 15/16 inches

Three Birds 2005

Ink on paper
5 ½ x 8 ½ inches



Photography Credits

Inside front cover: *Mara Morning*, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Page 2:** Bart sketching Bat Eared Foxes, Maasai Mara, Kenya, Photo by Lynn Walter; Walter Family: Lynn, Katie, Becky and Bart, 2007, Photo by Tari Wabakula. **Page 3:** Walter Family: Lunch break under a lone Acacia tree, 1999, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Page 6:** Rough night: Young male lion with new scars, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Page 7:** Giraffe seeking shade, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Page 8:** Bart sculpting Kibale Chim, Kibale Forest, Uganda, Photo by Michel Krief. **Page 9:** Chimps in the Garden, Westminster, Maryland, Photo by Bart Walter; *The Troupe* in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Photo by Lynn Walter.

Page 12: Bart sculpting *Wentai*, Maasai Mara, Kenya, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Page 14:** Bart sculpting *Mountain Silverback Maquette* with curious juvenile observing, Virunga Mountains, Rwanda, Photo by Frank Keesling. **Page 15:** Bart sketching *Afternoon Field Study*, Maasai Mara, Kenya, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Page 17:** Bart sculpting an elephant study, Maasai Mara, Kenya, Photo by Lynn Walter. **Inside back cover:** Seven year old Becky walks across the African plains with a Maasai morani (warrior), Photo by Bart Walter.

All other sculpture and drawing studio photographs by Bart Walter.

Political animals are not the only subjects of study at Stanford in Washington this election season. Bart Walter's stunning bronze cast sculptures reveal the diversity and dignity of African wildlife, reminding us of our obligation to preserve the ecosystem we share with them. "Out of Africa" reflects Stanford's commitment to tackling the challenges of sustainable development and sound environmental policy across the globe through research and education.

Adrienne Jamieson
MaryLou and George Boone Centennial Director,
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Stanford in Washington Art Gallery
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