

What does he make?

Pieter Boudens is the founder of lettercarving in Belgium. He was inspired by his father who was a calligraphist. Boudens went to Germany for his studies and did internships in France. He also worked in Cambridge for a year so his style is a mix of all styles of lettercarving.

Who is his target audience?

Pieter has a wide range of works. One by one they are unique and with a special purpose. There are tombstones, birthstones, housenumbers, poetry stones, free works, and lots of unfinished pieces in his studio. He is an impulsive man.

Those tombstones are his biggest livelihood but they are not easy to make. It's normal for something like this to weigh on someone emotionally, especially when it's about a deceased child. So he went to bed with heavy thoughts, and that's not healthy. A psychiatrist was called in, who told him that the family comes to him for something beautiful. Pieter also always has compassion for his clients. He then also takes into account the fact that some do not have a lot of money. What a hero!

Rome and lettercarving

Rome is the city of lettercarving. The Romans were real masters of it. The place is a real treasure trove in terms of lettercarving. Many street signs have been carved, as well as many proverbs, nameplates, etc



Picture:
Pieter Boudens carving letters in a tombstone.



Picture: Pieter Boudens in his art studio.

Popularity in Belgium

In Belgium, lettercarving is still fairly popular, but there is certainly still plenty of demand in the job market for new carvers. It is a profession for both creative girls and boys.

Popularity In the world

In Germany lettercarving is a tradition. In the United Kingdom there is one in every village. But in Australia there is not a single one and in America there are only three professional ones. So there's definitely a lot of future in lettercarving.

What does the profession entail?

With lettercarving you do more than just carving letters. You make people happy by creating something beautiful, such as a beautiful tombstone as a last memento, but also birthstones, sayings, house numbers and nameplates.

Because Pieter Boudens is the founder of lettercarving in Belgium, his style is a mix of different styles with a personal touch. Each lettercarver has their own unique style.

How does he proceed?

First of all, you need a nice, good quality stone. He goes and gets it personally in the North of France. Once at home, he does a good brainstorming session, because he needs to get a carte-blanche from his customers.

The numbers and letters are carefully drawn on with pencil in parallel, no computer work! With a hammer and pencil-shaped chisel, small taps are applied to the sheet. Approximately, making a tombstone can take two to three weeks at eight hours a day!

Master for many

Boudens wanted to pass on the art of lettercarving to other artists. At the age of 19, he started his art independently and also trained apprentices in the process. As a result, he is very well known as the founder of the lettercarving art.

He tried to teach his students to find their own calligraphy style. Not every person has the same handwriting so it is obvious not the same in style of carving. You also notice his influence as Bruges is considered the city of lettercarving in Belgium. The 40 years of experience is nicely visible. But of course he makes an occasional mistake. What he does then is, sanding away a layer so he can start again. You won't notice anything.



Picture: Carving of Pieter Boudens with the text 'la vita e bella'.

