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Arts and drystone

land art

The expertise of drystone construction is recognized by UNESCO as part of the intangible heritage of humanity. It is generally considered an art.

Beyond this, due to the aesthetic intent of their creators, some drystone constructions can be considered works of art.

But what about the links between the arts and drystone?

As an instrument or material for music or sculpture, drystone is also a source of inspiration for literature, the visual arts, cinema, and the performing arts.

These two functions (material and source of inspiration) are not conflicting, as demonstrated by land art, architecture, and even painting.

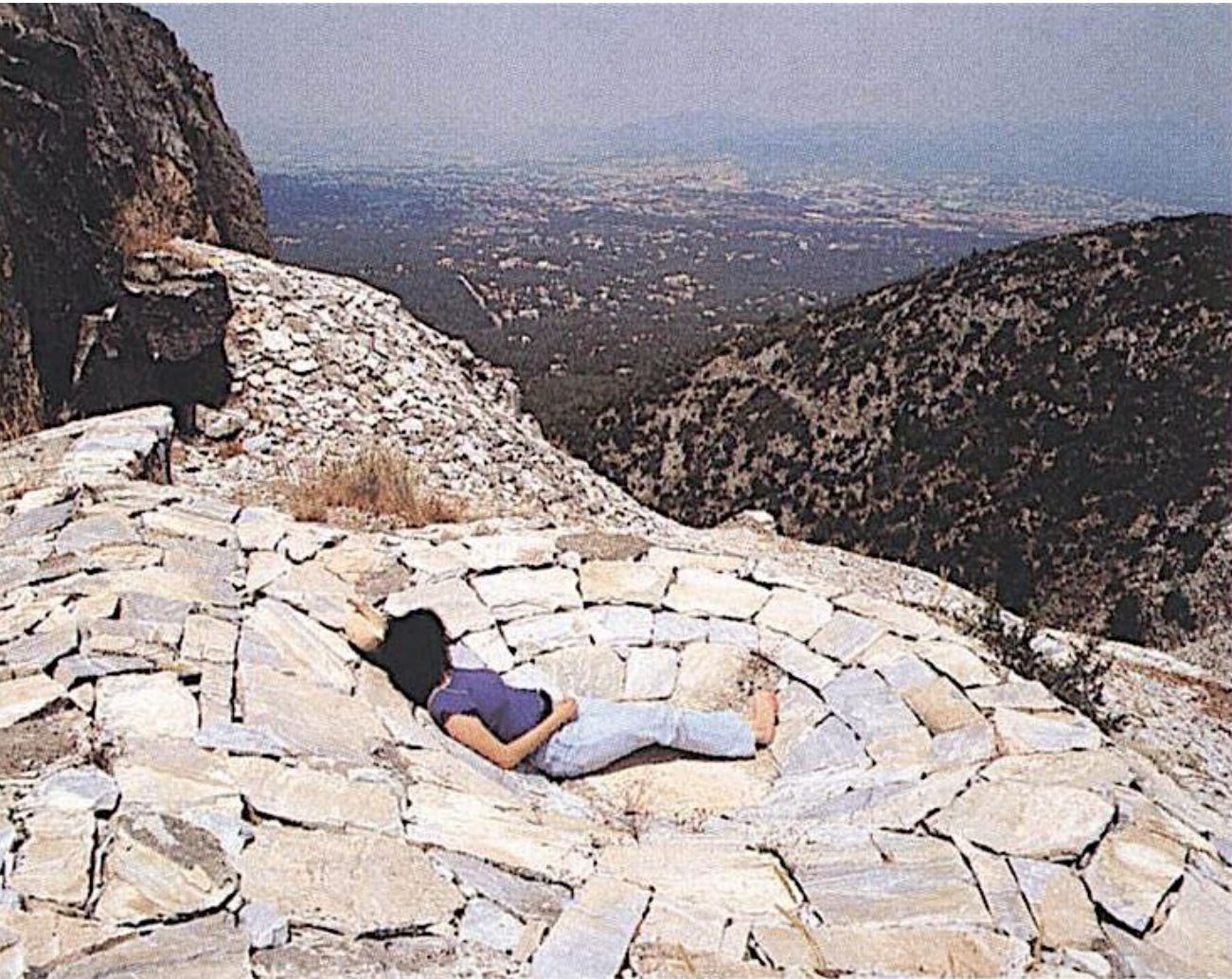
We offer a few examples on these two panels.

For sculpture as well as architecture, each of which deals with forms in its own way, drystone offers great plasticity if the creator rises to the challenge of stability constraints. But to some an extent, this is also the purpose of arte povera or land art.

We see that the boundaries between these arts are blurring, and it is sometimes difficult to classify a work into a specific category.

Regardless, dry stone stands out as an exceptional material for creating forms, whether lasting or ephemeral, whether they are isolated or integrated into the landscape.

Nella Golanda, Aspasia Kouzoupis (Greece)
Dionysos quarries 1995



Charles Jencks (USA)
Crawick Multiverse 2015



Alain Bernegger (France)
Ammonite sur branches 2020



Andy Goldsworthy (England) *Refuge* 2010



arte povera



Emmanuel Régent (France) *Valles marineris* 2012



Giuseppe Penone (Italy)
Essere Fiume 1998

Drystone, a raw and trivial material whose assembly gives it nobility, naturally has its place in arte povera. Penone perches it on trees or casts it on the ground, while Régent transmutes it into steel to highlight its structure. Pistoletto used it to give substance to his recurring symbol of the *Third Paradise* with the perfection of its assembly.



Michelangelo Pistoletto (Italy)
Terzo Paradiso 2007



sculpture



Timur Ersen (Turkey) *Abri éphémère* 2016



Here, Jaehyo Lee defies gravity, Timur Ersen and Anne-Lise Roussat-Noyerie leave their creation as a pile of stones to be carried away by the quarrymen of Bodrum who will sell the stones, while Parker infuses his slates with the lightness of movement.

There, Dijkstra and the architects of Encore heureux plant habitable monuments by the wayside to Compostela, while Antón García-Abril composes an airy wall with granite blocks.



Jaehyo Lee (Korea) *Tunnel* 1991



James Parker (Scotland)
DNA of a dancer



architecture

On the Way of St. James, *Super Cayrou* is a stopover refuge for pilgrims. Designed as a temporary home but also as a work of art in dialog with the landscape, this drystone construction is part of the *Windows on the Landscape* program, designed by Derrière le hublot, a « nationally accredited scene » in Quercy.



Pieter Dijkstra with **Encore heureux architectes** (France) *Super-Cayrou*



2022 execution by Vincent Caussanel with ABPS du Lot

The central office of SGAE (General Society of Authors and Publishers) in Santiago de Compostela, integrated into Vista Alegre Park, presents on the garden side the facade of a gallery assembling stones from the Mondariz quarry into a monumental sculpture. As the result of an architectural reflection on the separation of spaces, this wall also comes from sculpture and land art.



Ensamble studio (Spain) *Central office of SGAE* 2007



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music



Lithophone

The lithophone is arguably one of the oldest instruments. It is still used in its traditional forms and, increasingly, in contemporary musics.

Binh Phuoc district (Vietnam)



Stone harp



Páll Gudmundsson (Island)



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Marc Boegner (France)

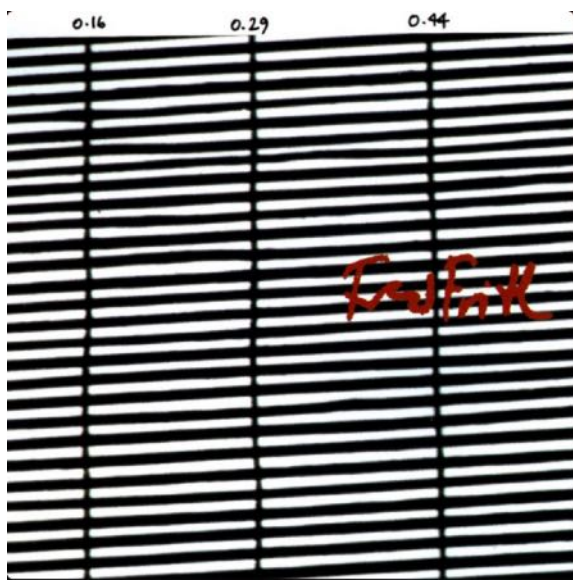


The current use of the lithophone takes different forms.

Today, drystone is also a source of inspiration for musicians like DJ BRAN (electro) or Fred Frith (free jazz).



DJ BRAN
Dry Stone Walling

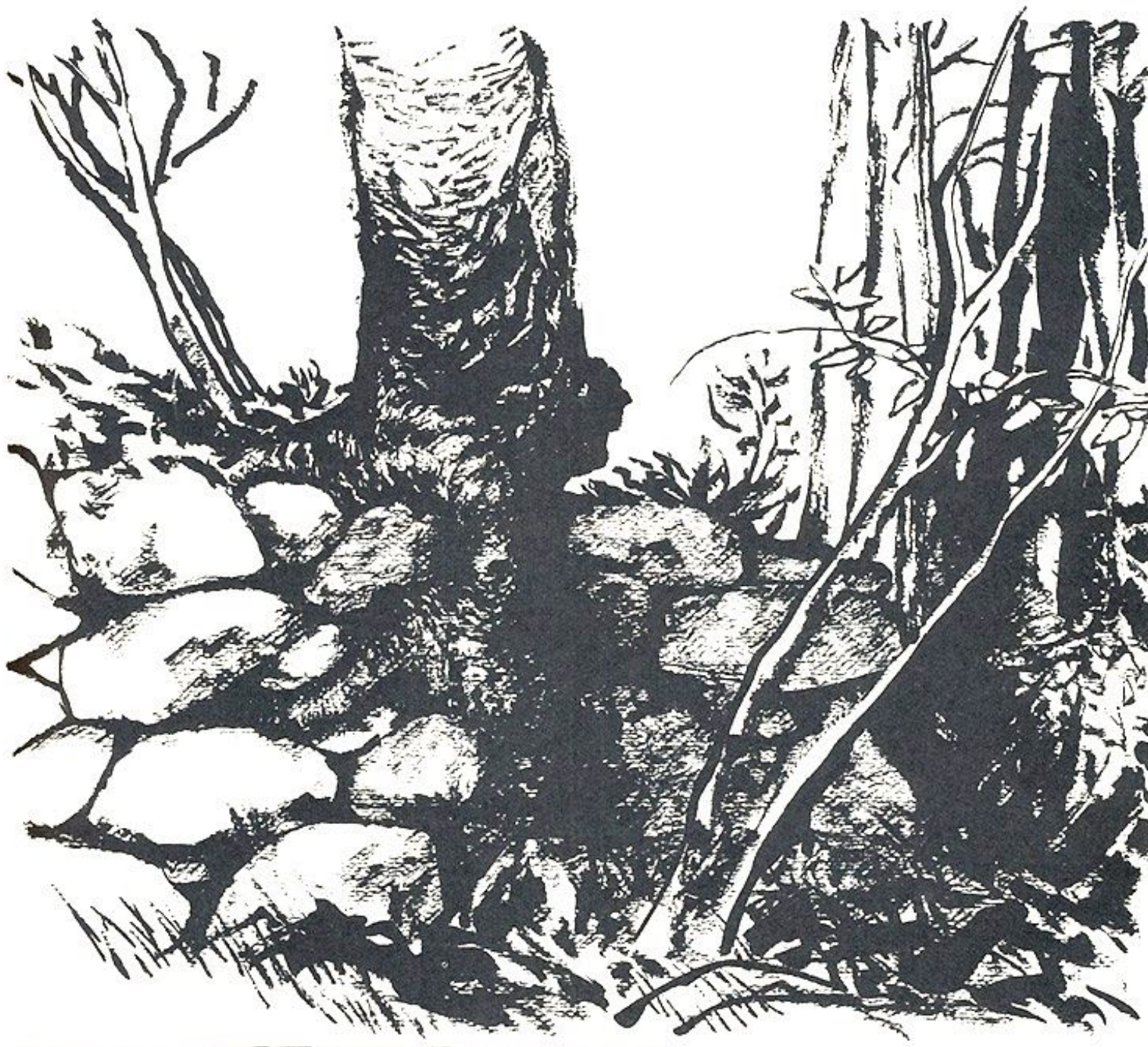


Fred Frith
Dry Stone I/
Dry Stone II



Comics are an effective medium for conveying the deep connections between human life, stones, and the landscape. Edmond Baudoin draws on his childhood for powerful and meaningful images.

comics



Edmond Baudoin (France) *Couma acò* 1991



(c) Baudoin - L'Association

literature

Drystone walling

There are those who say the art can't be taught; you're born with it or not, like second sight or a twin clutching your heel. I doubt that's true for I have seen walls where no wall should be halfway up Whernside or sinking into peat; and I think these are just apprentice work, twilight zones where craft and maker meet, uneven lines straggling towards the sea. A well-made wall still makes me think of you and how we fit together through the night, the herring fleet brought safely into port.

Duncan Chambers in *Poem of the North* 2018

Restanques

Dans les mains
De la parole
Chaque mot est une pierre
Choisie au hasard
Des érosions
Équilibre
Pour que toute l'eau de l'équinoxe
Passe lentement
Entre les mille interstices
De la restanque du langage.

Silvan Chabaud *Pierre Sèche* 2022

La montagne

...
Avec leurs mains dessus leurs têtes
Ils avaient monté des murettes
Jusqu'au sommet de la colline
Qu'importent les jours, les années
Ils avaient tous l'âme bien née
Noueuse comme un pied de vigne
...

Jean Ferrat 1964



movies

The first few minutes of this beautiful documentary about drystone in Kythnos are in themselves a magnificent visual and sound poem.



Yiannis Spiliopoulos
Stone Through Time
2022 (Greece)



If drystone constitutes a significant part of the scenery in Mediterranean films, it forms an important dramatic element in the melodrama of Wang Qan'an in Chinese Mongolia.

Wang Qan'an
Tuya de hun shi
2007 (China)



painting



Troubs *Chemin livre* à Bach (Lot, France)

During a stay in Quercy in May 2019, Troubs and Edmond Baudoin, illustrators and world travelers, walked the legendary route that leads to Santiago de Compostela.

Along their wanderings, they experienced and shared powerful moments with the inhabitants of this Causse region. They also met pilgrims and passing hikers.

These encounters inspired short stories that they painted on local stones, playing with the bumps and hollows to tell the story of the journey, life, and dreams.



Vincent Van Gogh
Champ clos avec soleil levant
painting (detail)



Alwyn Dempster Jones
Snow on a wall
(Wales) pastel and ink



In realistic paintings and photographs, one might wonder about the role of creation and that of description. Does beauty belong to the subject, to the artist's imagination, or to his or her gaze? The answer lies in the mind of the viewer.



Michael Morgan
Dry stone wall
(England) multiple



photograph



Renate Löbbecke
(Germany)
Zahurda

