

David F Wilson - Crafts & Makers

Creative Space

Contemporary use of **Stone in Urban Spaces**



WINSTON
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MEMORIAL
TRUST

'Art saved the craft'

Jared flynn The Stone Trust

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Wa la la la la la....

adapt or die

it's a process, it's a process, it's a process

Brad Pitt

Moneyball (2011 Sony Pictures)



Meet Tomas

Santa Fe, NM. I'm in a station wagon heading out of town riding shotgun to one of my stonemason heroes, Tomas Lipps - the de facto leader of the Stone tribe.

We're heading off into the hills through the dusty twisty lanes of the old Town. Expertly Tomas is managing to avoid knocking down any of the tourists that are swarming these back streets casually moseying between the galleries, cafe and bars. All very colourful and exciting.

This is my second day with him, we spent the first day chatting around all things stone, and viewing some projects in and around Santa Fe. Today however doesn't sound quite so exciting as we are off to see his stone stockpile, as he's certain he has a rock or two there that will be perfect for a new project he's taking me onwards to see.

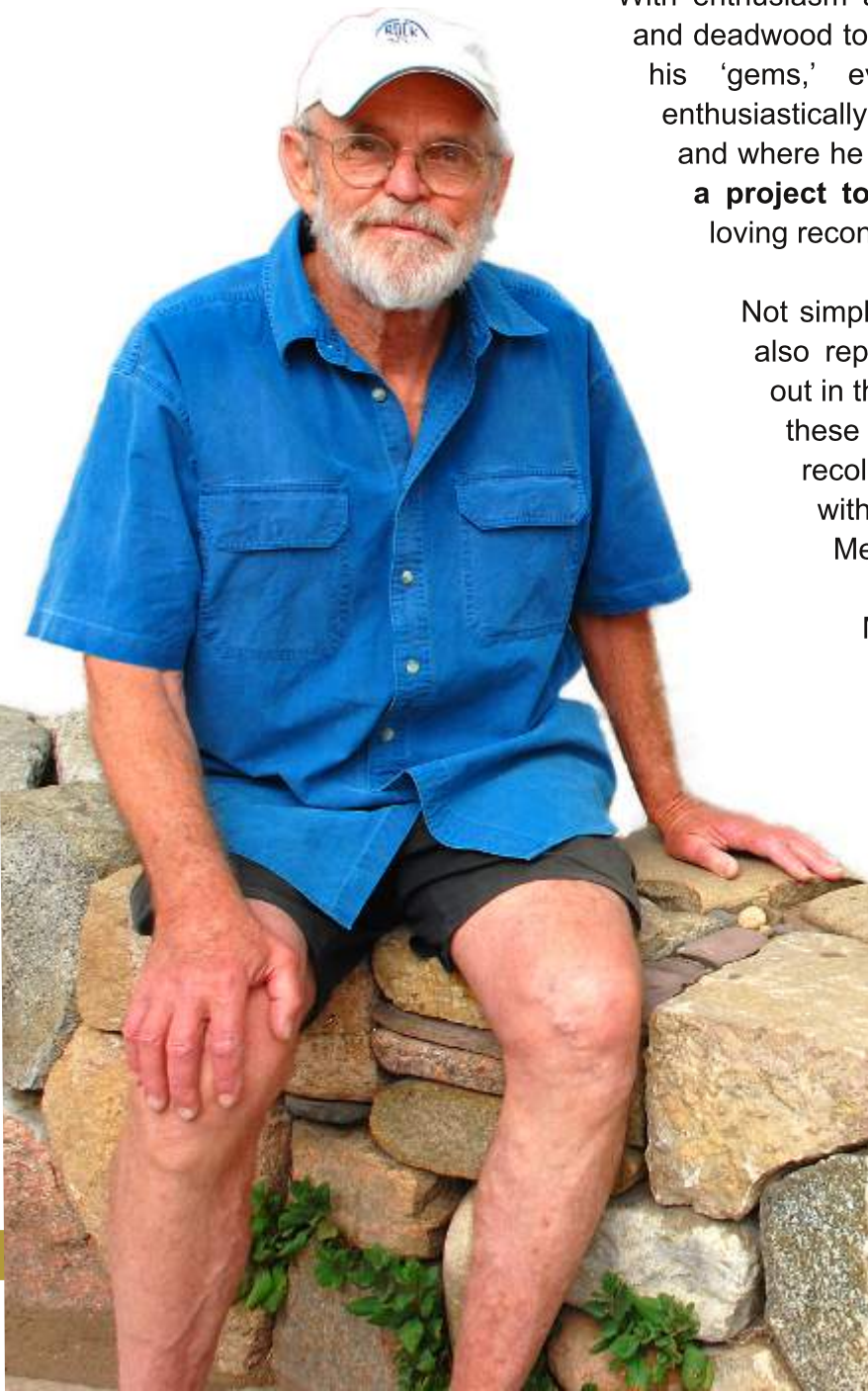
Arriving at a smallholding North of the City, all I saw was an area of overgrown brush, scrubby dense bushes abounded everywhere. It was obvious it hadn't functioned as a thriving yard for quite a while, Tomas however dived right into the thickets. Hidden within the scrub are 'his' stones.

With enthusiasm and energy he pulls back dry grass and deadwood to reveal them. He's lost in himself and his 'gems,' every new one he exposes he enthusiastically explains the rock type and the when and where he collected them. **'Boy I've got to find a project to use these.'** Tomas was absolutely loving reconnecting with his material.

Not simply just a pile of dusty old rocks these also represented memories. Of joyous days out in the landscape, long hard treks seeking these special ones. Eliciting wonderful recollections of a time and space shared with friends out in the wilds of New Mexico and the bordering States.

More importantly they symbolised something bigger and far stronger - potential. Potential for new ideas to be explored, new schemes to imagine, exciting plans to create. Who out-with members of the stone tribe can understand this thrill and see such greatness in inauspicious lumps of old rock.

*note to self - Tomas has enthusiasm and energy, Tomas is 80 - be like Tomas!



Acknowledgements

I first became aware of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust 30 years ago when I read the book Danziger's Travels. In the first few pages Nick Danziger describes his nervousness as he sat in the corridor of the Trust's offices waiting to undergo his Fellowship interview. Successfully gaining it he set off on the amazing adventures recorded in his book.

Reading the description of his experience then I couldn't have imagined that in 2016 I would be sitting in that corridor waiting to undergo my very own Fellowship interview. I was at least equally as nervous!

I wish to express my gratitude to the Trust for the opportunity it bestowed upon me and thank everyone there who gave advice and support.

Special thanks to my two references, Neil Kilpatrick and John Gray whose words helped get my application across the line convincing the Trust that I was deserving of the award.

I also wish to acknowledge the assistance I received from everyone who I met throughout my Fellowship travels. The warmth, kindness, and generous welcome I received along the way contributed so much to making my trip such a special time in my life. What an amazing bunch of people you all turned out to be.

There are two individuals in particular I would like to single out to thank, the first is Tomas Lipps. Everyone in the 'stone tribe' knows of Tomas and the contribution he has made advancing the trade and craft of stonework in the USA and Canada. Tomas was incredibly helpful to me in offering advice, suggesting connections and making recommendations of what to see and whom to meet. Tomas's encouragement, especially when I confronted him with my 'crazy' itinerary, is something for which I am incredibly grateful: ***"It's quite a challenge but you'll do it—you're young!"***

Secondly I'd like to offer thanks to Zach Johnson, who has just stood down as Chairman of the Stone Foundation. I first met Zach when he invited me to the Stone Foundation's Stonework Symposium in Kansas in May 2017. He is one of the warmest, fun people it's been my privilege to meet, his kind words on my own work and the conversations we shared on the future of stonework have provided me with added confidence that my Fellowship can ultimately achieve something to be proud of.

Finally special thanks to my wife Jane, who accompanied me to share this trip of a lifetime. Her continuing love and support helps me more than is possible to express in words. Being married to an artist/stone waller has not always been easy, she has never stopped believing in me and has borne a lot of life's problems as I lived out my dream. I never could have done any of this without her.

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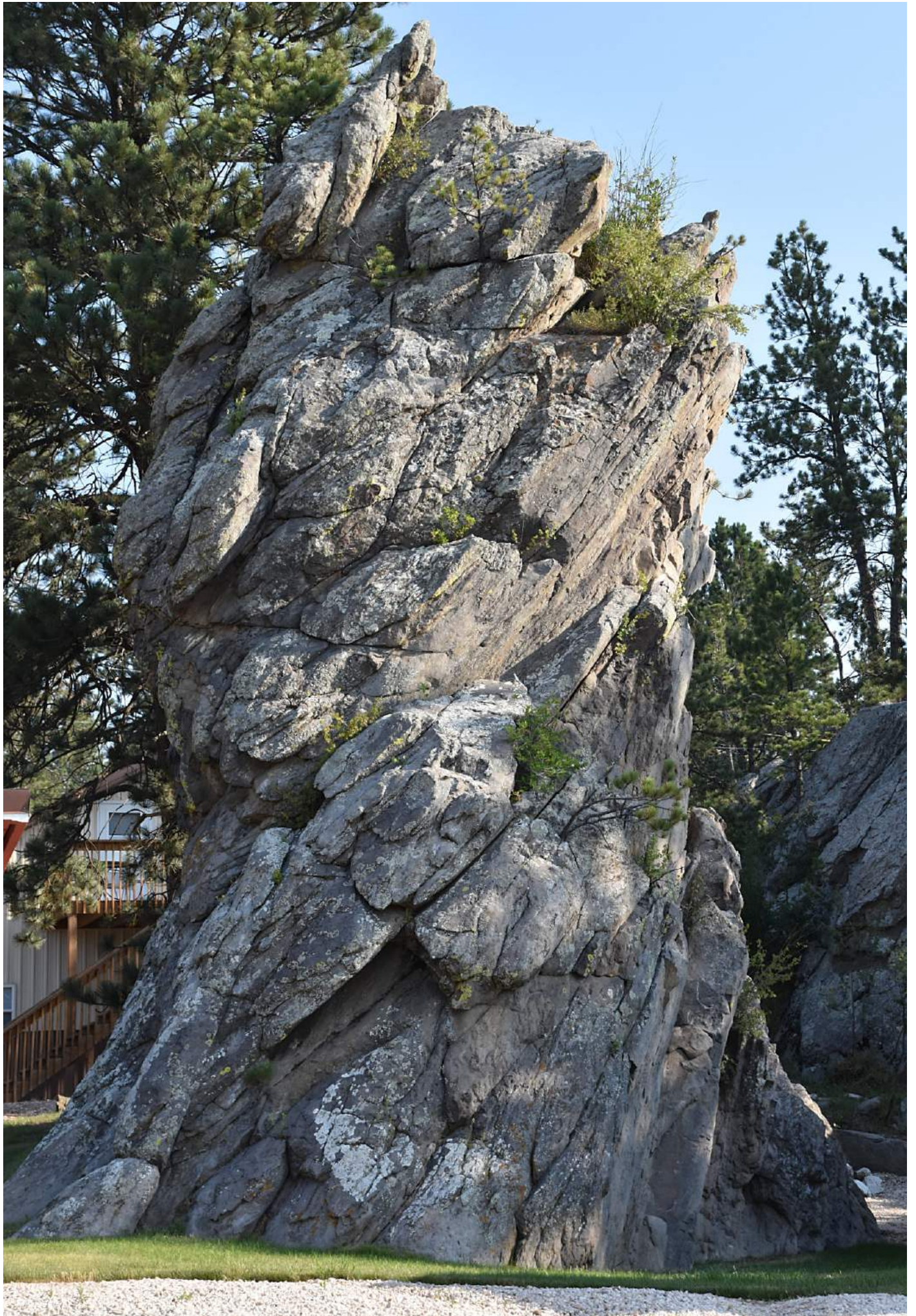
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Introduction

Creative Space - the contemporary use of stone in urban spaces

Isamu Noguchi the great Japanese American sculptor described his stoneworking as a dialogue between himself and *'the primary matter of the universe.'*

Ever since humans first started picking up and manipulating materials from the environment for their own needs they have been making a fundamental connection to an external truth that few of us can comprehend or understand. Central to the human condition is the mystery of our existence. As Noguchi identifies stones and rocks are elemental tangibles that connects us to this wider sweep of time and all that is out there and unknown.

Stoneworking has been an essential human skill for thousands of years. Wondrous examples exist in every part of the globe. Sadly across the last 100 years the practice of this craft has come under severe threat like at no other time in history. New processes and materials are superseding a once ubiquitous industry.

By its very nature stone is an organic and random material, final aesthetic beauty when touched by hand skills often belies the sheer physical and mental endeavour required to transform the raw material. Difficult to extract and move, awkward shapes and sizes, riddled with imperfections and flaws, dirty and dusty, requiring discipline and application to work, stone is when you consider it rationally not the perfect building medium. But I love it!

As an artist I have devoted my working career to my own dialogue with this most basic material. My own practice has been dedicated to creating works of craft/art for public spaces. Through chance and happenstance stoneworking has become my stock and trade. In the absence of formal training in the craft I have developed my own skills through experimentation and doing, I feel incredibly privileged to have had opportunities to explore my own creative space. Looking forward with a nod to the past has always been my approach.

The collapse of the industry has resulted in a loss of knowledge that has led to declining standards across many aspects of the trade. Real fears exist about the continuation of quality stoneworking as it heads into an uncertain future. Doubt and lack of consensus to the best way forward are evident concerns for the trade.

Into this conversation I now enter with my Fellowship Report. Over the years with my growing interest in the subject of stone I have learned of the inspiring work of other artists and craftworkers working with a contemporary aesthetic. Having returned from the USA & Canada my aim is to inspire through showing examples of these innovative practitioners work that stonework approached with creativity can be an incredibly exciting and rewarding vocation for those willing to take up the challenge.

'Creative space' as a concept is open to many interpretations, my ultimate hope and aim is that I can contribute to others in the UK being given the time and encouragement to develop theirs.



Stone, craft and surprise

Context of Travels

Think of an amazing building or structure created anywhere across the globe most likely it will be made from stone. Constructed with rock hewn directly from the earth's crust, this raw material was transformed through hand-craft by hardy skilful individuals into amazing creations that stand as some of the pinnacle achievements of collective human endeavour.

During the 20th century the use of stone greatly diminished. From being a principal building material it has now become the exception rather than the rule. With the contraction of the industry a lot of the knowledge and skills required to work it have, if not quite been lost, definitely came under severe pressure. The natural handover of craft from master to apprentice is all too rare now, as a widespread mode of training it is virtually broken. This loss of previously held expertise has led to the diminishment in the quality of work across many aspects of stonework practices.

With the widespread adoption of a modernist aesthetic, one that would be constructed with superior 'new' materials, stone went out of fashion for the first time since we all decided we wanted more than just a simple cave to offer us safety and protection. Too often Modernist design is watered down and done on the cheap; combine this with poor choice of materials and shoddy implementation the results have often proven detrimental to the built environment and society as a whole.

When I was undergoing my arts education these issues were at the forefront of public debate, most notably through the delightfully ignominious speech given by Prince Charles to the Royal Institute of Architects at Hampton Court Palace on the occasion of their 150th year Anniversary in 1984. His speech sparked a lot of controversy, it may even possibly be seen as some sort of turning point in architecture and urban planning, at any rate it certainly shone a spotlight on these issues like never before.

There was a growing body of evidence to prove direct causal links between architecture, our built environment and serious problems affecting communities throughout the UK. A quote from Sir Bob Geldof that comes from the book 'Lipstick Traces' by Greil Markus which outlines the emergence of punk makes the connection,

“We have architecture that is so banal and destructive to the human spirit that walking to work is in itself a depressing experience. The streets are shabby, tawdry and litter strewn. The concrete is rain-streaked and graffiti sprawled, stairwells of the social-engineering experiments are lined with filth, junkies & graffiti.”

Lamenting the demise of stone as the backdrop to our public spaces is not simple nostalgia. Stone provides us with a strong essential sense of place. It grounds us in an environment and provides a link back to nature and landscape. As urban living has become more prevalent keeping that connection is increasingly important.

Surprise! Surprise!

One of Modernism's goals' was the rejection of decoration, too often this has resulted in the elimination of detail as well. As a species we are an aesthetic animal that craves visual stimulus and searches out detail. It's something deep within us, possibly an evolutionary throw back, some essential skill to recognise and understand subtle differences in environment that would ensure our survival.

The idea of surprise has been marginalised in our built environment, across the previous Century, Towns and Cities have homogenised and become less visually stimulating. 'Surprise' to me equates to human creativity, both individual and collective. It brings much needed distinctiveness to public spaces. As a concept it strikes me as being essential, those that care should strongly rally against the forces that have no vision or understanding to provide it, *"because a life infused with surprise is better than a life that is not."*

More often than not this element of surprise was carved or constructed from stone. The creators' names are long forgotten but they live on through the work they left and the joy it still provides to viewers. What we choose to offer as 'surprise' says something true and lasting about who we are, what we believe in now. It marks our space in time and states proudly, we were once here and we mattered.

Not long after leaving Art College my uncle bought me a copy of *'Design and detail of the space between buildings'* by Elisabeth Beazley. Within the preface is the following quote. I have adopted it as my personal manifesto!

"Cities should be built for the convenience and satisfaction of those that live in it, and to the great surprise of strangers." San Savino, 16th Century



I stumbled into the world of stone after leaving Art College 30 years ago. Since then I have concentrated on making artworks for public spaces. Stone has become my medium of choice for a variety of reasons, it is very robust and ideal for many different situations and locations. In terms of creativity it is very flexible and offers a wide range of options to explore through shape, form, colour and texture. It provides clients with a high quality of finish and longevity that requires minimal maintenance.

Over my career I have used two distinct techniques, constructed artworks employing traditional dry stone walling methods and stone carving. Not every commission is the same, projects are completed utilising either of these techniques or through a combination of the two.

Mixing craft and art is problematic for some, my work sits somewhere in the middle and I see no reason for conflict between these two fields of practice. Craft celebrates technique and finish within a recognised and traditional set of parameters, some are of the opinion that is where the trade should end. Art places the emphasis upon the additional input of creative expression and a questioning and possible deconstruction of perceived traditions, in the belief that craft is only a starting point.

A lesson that has remained with me from Art College was the necessity not to dismiss craft. Art can be an easy target, it is best not to provide critics with an open goal by allowing one's work to be negatively judged due to poor technique. Respect will be gained if details are correct. As I have increased my skills and gained experience the craft has become more important to me; I want my stonework to be well constructed and carved within the best traditions of the trade.

When I first began working with stone it was just another medium that I as an artist could use to fulfill my creative vision. I had neither great knowledge of technique or an historical understanding of the craft, just a perception that as a material it had more life and an energy about it than any other. Now I have a greater understanding of its properties and possibilities. Stone in its many forms is a material that offers the artist many opportunities for creative input, its use limited only by the imagination and ingenuity of the maker.

Since my first fumbling efforts dabbling with the craft I have come to love the process of creating with it. Transforming a random pile of stones or a lumpy chunk of rock into something that will stand the test of time is an addictive process.

There is a marvellous joy in the act of bringing into physical form something that had previously only existed within one's own mind. The simple tasks involved have a timeless connection to a noble tradition, a shared physical experience with long departed members of the stone tribe. The effort and agonies experienced in the process quickly dissipate when tempered with the satisfaction and knowledge that is summed up in a quote by American Philosopher, William James:

"The greatest use of a life is to spend it on something that will outlast it."



Many of my projects are created over a period of time on an actual work site and I have come to value and enjoy the interaction between myself, the site, and the public. This process leads to a real sense of connection between what is being created and the community it is being created within. People are always fascinated to see stone being worked they appreciate the skill and effort involved. The who, what and why of the work sparks genuine interest and is something I really enjoy sharing, I want my projects to be as inclusive as possible.

Working in a space between two distinct worlds, that of art and stonework, and just outside the norms of the two, there are few within my close geographic area who share my aspirations, ideas and working practices. Like many creatives I have become accustomed to working in isolation. With the rise of social media the world has shrunk, connecting with others who create in a similar fashion has become very easy.

Over the last few years through Facebook and Twitter I have become aware that in the USA and Canada many artists and craft-workers are working with stone creatively and with similar sensibilities to my own. My travels were aimed at connecting with this wider group, to understand what inspires and motivates them and how they function creatively.

Gaining the Fellowship has given me the opportunity to consider some issues around current stone practice.

How is stone being used and interpreted by contemporary makers?

Does innovative creative practice offer lessons that could help arrest the decline in traditional skills and knowledge?

Are their new ideas or strategies that should be passed on to a new generation of practitioners, ensuring that elements of surprise within our built environment will continue to be made from stone and to a high level of quality?

The World Of Stone

The wide spread adoption of a modernist aesthetic combined with new industrial construction methods resulted in the decline of the stone industry. Across all aspects of it there has been a slow drain of knowledge. Important and long hard fought for skills are at a critical juncture like at no other time in history. Many countries now recognise that keeping these skills alive is important.

The stone industry is actually a whole set of different endeavours. Quarries start the supply chain, they extract the raw material from the earth then distribute it to wholesalers and suppliers who further process it ready for market. Along the line of production material is sorted by quality depending on the end usage. Historically premium material would be reserved for the architectural stone carvers and artistic stone sculptors, possessors of imagination and hand skills of the highest craftsmanship capable of producing 'life' from this most basic substance.

Blocks for construction would be produced in larger workshops by 'banker' masons who shaped it into components devised by the setting-out mason. In the past these masons came through a rigorous apprenticeship, having mastered their trade they could create any item required by an architect's design no matter how complex. Assembling these cut components together would be the trade of the master stone masons bringing form and order to a scheme, the final step in realising everyone's shared vision shaped and constructed out of stone.

Separate from this chain, is the dry stone waller, not for them the quality of material others have the pleasure to use. Their raw material is the left overs, the rubble, the spoil and in the absence of finance - only that which they are able to collect with their own hands and great effort directly from the land.

The work of this breed has developed into a distinct craft with its own set of rules and challenges. Of all the aspects of stonework it is this final group of craft-worker that I perhaps identify with most, but what wonders these artisans can create with the most basic and unpromising of material. There is a beautiful simplicity to the technique, it takes only a few days to learn but a lifetime to master.



Dry Stone Walling

'It's a dying art' is an often heard phrase. But these ancient skills are still being practised by dedicated enthusiasts across the world.

Putting stone upon stone, using gravity, friction and mass to get them to stay together has been a human endeavour since we gained the ability to think beyond the purely animal. From simple shelters that allowed us to escape the elements and increased our security from external threats to enclosures for food storage and protection of livestock, stone has been the most available and suitable material of choice. The skills required to construct these structures have remained essential and broadly unchanged.

How are those that still build dry stone walls adapting to changes in society?

Does it have a relevance within our modern world beyond that of its traditional usage?

Modern day dry stone walling came to dominate the landscape of the UK during the 18th Century with the imposition of the Enclosure Acts. In some parts of the Country they are an inescapable feature, seemingly as natural as the hills, trees and rivers, beside which they sit.

Their history symbolises a more complex story. They are a permanent mark of human politics, a stark reminder of a contentious past and the disputed land-laws that shaped Britain. This aspect of the UK's landownership issues divides opinion, what is not disputed is the catalysing effect they had in changing our countryside forever. A point in time when the lower classes were cast off the lands they had lived and worked for generations, initiating societal shift from the rural to the urban.

That the Enclosure Acts led to the creation of many of our dry stone walls is a historical fact. Perceived as part of the landscape they inspire strong feelings of nostalgia and wonder, representative of order and a lost rural idyll. Dry stone walls however, when you think about them in a political way, are symbols of exclusion and dispossession, powerful markers of social injustice, a problematic narrative that has been neglected and obscured by time. (see Mhairi Patterson's 'Set in Stone' PHD paper for a detailed outline of this history)

It was during the time of Enclosure that dry stone construction became a widely practiced trade and when the set of rules to define what constituted a real and proper wall were standardised. Width, height and methodologies were formalised to ensure that work was consistent and to an acceptable standard. Specifications were regulated and upheld by Enclosure Commissioners. Workers would be remunerated what the commissioners felt their work was worth, this was a qualitative as well as measured judgment. Assessments weren't always well received, being in the pay of the landowners, final reckoning frequently favoured their paymasters!

Dry stone construction is predominantly associated with the countryside and seen as a purely rural trade. Society is increasingly moving away from that rural past towards an urban future. Rapid decline in the practice of dry stone walling is one of the consequences of this fact. Traditional uses and markets for the skill have disappeared, the numbers practicing the craft have continued to fall.

We are at a point between the past and the future, where traditional and contemporary methodologies clash. Old and new are always in tension, especially so within the field of dry stone walling. The guidelines laid down at the time of Enclosure still dominate the craft today. Traditionalists strongly defend these standards as they see them as defining best practice of the craft. The post of Enclosure Commissioner was consigned to history long ago but the spirit lives on within those in the trade that see any transgression from historical standards as unacceptable, an attitude that in my opinion freezes the craft in the past.

The prevalent dominant style in the UK is a legacy of Enclosure, you do not have to look far abroad to see in terms of stone work that there are actually many different ways to build well with stone. The possible variety of styles is not widely reflected in current UK practice.





Chip off the old block

Traditional avenues for learning stone carving have declined, gone are the days when there were multitudes of workshops that facilitated the natural progression from apprentice to master. The opportunities now for anyone interested in learning these skills are minimal across the UK, with only one school currently dedicated to it. Even Art Colleges now no longer routinely offer stone carving as a core component of any sculpture course.

By no measure or definition can hands-on stonework in the UK be described as being in robust health as a profession. Those currently practicing are broadly speaking coming towards the end of their working careers. This creates a real problem and there is concern across all areas of the stone industry about the difficulty of convincing younger people to see stonework as a worthwhile career choice.

Current models of training and apprenticeships are focused towards equipping trainees with skills that are required for the Conservation and Heritage side of the market. Aimed at providing them with a career preserving and repairing the fabric of traditional stone buildings, this is seen as a way to protect the skills required.

But, is this the most exciting area of practice?

Will that aspect of craft attract our most talented and creative minds?





This must be one of those rare times in human history where a trade has been in a position that sees the focus of learning being regressive rather than contemporary and forward looking, hardly the most inspiring of messages to aim at the modern youngster contemplating a future in the craft.

The trade is in a difficult period; can further decline be arrested?

The present situation provides an opportunity for a period of reassessment. A space in time to creatively question and challenge current modes of practice, recruitment strategies and training opportunities. Now is when those concerned with the continuation of the skills should be exploring new methods of working better suited to the opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century. A perfect time for reflection, time to contemplate change, time that allows transition so that the craft can Janus like look forward to the future as well as back. This is a moment filled with potential and vitality, a unique opportunity to imagine new modes of practice contemplate new ideas and define high aspirations.

But what will inspire, engage and encourage younger generations?

What will attract their participation?



Positivity

Society is changing, everything is in flux. New technologies are redefining culture, posing new challenges, opening up new opportunities. Artificial Intelligence is almost upon us, what effect it will have on traditional employment models is difficult to foresee. Even wide spread education of the population geared towards gaining knowledge for the working life ahead is challenged by all learning increasingly being only a click away. There is growing recognition that current educational models have created gaps in vocational and practical skills, a fact that is contributing to some of the stress factors within communities across the Western World.

This situation is not a wholly negative one, as old ways of working disappear new possibilities develop. There is a resurgence in interest across all aspects of craft, a purely human endeavour that will never be threatened by machine and one that can provide a rewarding and satisfying life journey.

As old methodologies decline artists and makers are exploiting the resulting creative space, exploring the potential for innovative practice. Combining modern aesthetics with traditional craft techniques they are developing their own ways of working and what can be achieved.

Within the stone trade as new ideas have been played about with divisions have become apparent between traditionalists who favour craft as it has been defined by the last 250 years of practice and those that are using these traditional skills only as a starting point for their creative expression.

This tension between art and craft has generated a lot of negative noise around the trade over the last few years. Traditionalists are uncomfortable with anything outside their norms. Quick to criticise and point out errors they defend the trade from what they see as compromise and wish to preserve it to the highest standards. The way they express their stance is intimidating and has created an atmosphere that inhibits innovation.

It is less than constructive and may in fact discourage individuals from getting involved with a trade they might be considering. The resulting noise discourages creativity, a situation that undermines any development of the craft. If the trade is to thrive it needs to be more open to new ideas, variety of approach and experimentation.

Only by close questioning and analysis of current practice, teaching, and thinking around stonework can we protect it from becoming fixed and stuck. It should be allowed to develop and not be simply what traditionalists in their knowledge and experience deem it should be.

Within the stone world change is underway whether some like it or not. Those exploring new solutions offer a way forward for the craft. Showing the possibilities of exceptional work and informing a wider audience of the benefits of the craft will lead to a change in perception of what **it is** and what **it can be**.

The aim must be to inspire movers and shakers to reconsider stone as a contemporary design solution. To illustrate to the influential the continuing potential of it as a material. Increasing its use within modern schemes and developments is what will ensure the trade and skills continue in the long term to the positive benefit of us all.





Foundations & connections

The internet changed everything. I first became aware of an organisation in the USA called the Stone Foundation by stumbling across their website. Founded by stonemason Tomas Lipps in 1986 it was set up to connect, inform and celebrate Stone, Stonework and Stone Art.

Nothing existed in the USA aimed at those that had an interest in stonework. Tomas's vision was for an entity that could provide a focus for everyone whatever their connection or involvement in stone. The core message engaged me:

'THE STONE FOUNDATION is more than an organisation. We are a society, a community, a tribe. Our core constituency may be artisans, artists and contractors, but anyone involved with or interested in Stone, Stonework or Stone Art is invited to join us'

The Stone Foundation is a membership organisation for stone workers across the USA and Canada to connect in an open, welcoming, friendly, non-judgmental community. It provides a strong network of support that is reinforced through annual gatherings and their web portal. It also distributes STONEXUS Magazine, a high-quality glossy print publication and STONEZINE, its digital counterpart, both edited by Tomas and dedicated to all things stone.

The Stone Foundation provides training in some aspects of stonework this is done through localised events. Another of its main activities aims to connect the wider group by organising for its members the opportunity to convene at the annual Symposiums. These events are both educational and social. Stone artists and artisans from all over the country and abroad come together in an atmosphere of camaraderie to celebrate stonework by means of workshops, demonstrations, presentations, and discourse.

The first ground-breaking event was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 2000. The Foundation has since successfully put on 15 such gatherings in the USA and one on Mallorca in 2007.

The Symposiums usually feature the creation of a legacy project, a stone structure created within a public space by Stone Foundation members, displaying the skills and craft to a wider audience.



Now having gained charitable status in the US, it gives the stone tribe a national voice that advocates and promotes the use of stone in all its diversity. The Foundation's structure encourages networking and collaboration between its members. Foundation events are well attended and supported. It sets out to encourage and inform about the subject, raising awareness of the positive benefits that best practices of the trade can bring to a project. Over the last year or two it has undergone restructuring with the aim of continuing growth and developing new strategies for the benefit of all its members.

My initial application to the Trust was structured around attending the Stone Foundation's Stonework Symposium 2016 in California and then travelling onwards to continue my research. Due to unforeseen circumstances and a couple of cancellations my trip had to be amended.

In 2017, at the Stone Foundation's invitation, I participated in the Stonework Symposium in Cottonwood Falls, Kansas in May of that year (an event that enabled me to make a wealth of connections for my Fellowship travels).



Go west young man

These connections transformed my Fellowship into a massive road trip across the States from East to West & back again via Canada. It was a crazy itinerary and I had serious doubts about its achievability. Sharing my route with my proposed contacts I sensed that I wasn't the only one who thought so.

To meet up with everyone on my itinerary, fly/drive was the only option that fitted my budget. This would mean lots of time 'in the saddle' transiting between destinations, lost time that I feared should have been put to better use, this caused me a lot of consternation and soul searching prior to setting off. It turned out to be anything but dead time.

Driving long distances can be tedious but travelling through the ever-changing landscapes of the USA was anything but boring. It was an immersive and profoundly visceral experience, the journey was always engaging. Clocking up close to 10K miles, across 23 US States and dipping a toe into Canada, we literally skimmed over the country like a smooth pebble skips across still water.

As my trip progressed, the more stunningly different landscapes I experienced, the more stone artists I met, the more work I saw the more I came to realise and perceive the strong fundamental connection between their output and the surrounding landscape. Their work was created in direct response to and is a reflection of the natural environments within which they live and work.

This to me was one of the major revelations of my travels. I am convinced had I travelled by a different method, for instance, airport hopping between location I would not have had the same understanding or made the connection. Speed of travel, movement through landscape, meeting stone workers, viewing stonework, all merged into one powerful experience. All were interlinked, each a vital, equally important part of the bigger whole. In hindsight my crazy itinerary and mode of travel enhanced my appreciation of stone practice in the USA.



A lot of the work I saw used stone and rock in a much more natural raw state than it is in the UK. I'm convinced that landscape and environment are a major influence on this; it is the backdrop to their lives and seeps naturally into their work. Talking to the stone artists about this aspect of their work I also came to understand that it equally comes about as a consequence of how they source material.

Stone in the UK is brought to market primarily through specific merchants, they act as go-between quarry and stone worker. The majority of material is wanted for traditional building needs it is provided in units and sizes geared towards those requirements e.g., the client wants a traditional wall, the supplier delivers stones sourced and processed to general sizes to achieve that goal.



In the USA the market for that type of material is not quite so defined, it exists but our American & Canadian cousins in the absence of such easily sourced material can be a bit more resourceful and creative in gathering material for a project, subsequently this has a bearing on the results they produce.

Every stone worker I met spoke about the process of stone ‘harvesting.’ I’d never come across this term before. Without easy access to suppliers to cater for their needs it is much easier (and I suspect cheaper) to find their own sources. Most of them have developed a keen eye for searching out likely stone piles as they travel about the country. These can be old quarries, old collapsed buildings or walls, stone outcrops on pieces of land or rock piles from land clearances, (everyone assured me that permission was sought and compensation paid to the landowners prior to them collecting their material). This approach for sourcing material provides the artist access to stone and rock in a more ‘unfiltered’ natural way than through a supplier. In reality this results in a greater variety of stone types, sizes, colours and textures being used on a specific project.



The act of direct collecting gives space for creative contemplation of the stone, allowing the artist time to respond to the qualities inherent with the material found. Everyone I met has a passion for stone, they see wonder in it and are inspired by what nature provides. These artists react to their material, they feel no need to transform the material into a defined system nor do they want to exert the human energy to do so, they work with what they find, allowing the stone to retain its natural qualities. Their approach can be viewed as a collaboration between maker and material. Their work respects and celebrates its unworked state, this influences the forms they create. Paul Lindhard of Art City in Ventura put this most eloquently, saying : *“I work for the stone.”*



This was a bit of a personal epiphany. Stepping away from the UK I see that my own practice is carried out within a different tradition, one defined by the history and standards of Enclosure. Not being so led by tradition, the makers in the USA/Canada do not work within an atmosphere of such entrenched attitudes to stone and how it should be used. They are not as bound by perceived convention. This lack of a traditional imperative frees the USA and Canadian artists to express their personality, allowing them greater creative freedom.

Why stone = More

In many cultures stones and rocks have significance beyond the purely physical, stone has a resonance like no other material. Stone inspires love and devotion but why?

Jan Johnsen, one of the first connections I met on my travels gives an outline of this aspect of the material in her book 'The Spirit Of Stone.' Aimed at those contemplating the use of stone within their garden, Johnsen makes an articulate case for using stones and rocks, how they bring that something 'more' to a space, why they resonate, why they appeal and why they are far from an inert lifeless material. Therefore why it should be contemplated as the backbone and structure of any environment. When choosing or placing stone she appeals to her readers to *"listen to the wordless instruction of the rock."* Through examples she articulates the wonderful conversation, the emotional connection between the material and the human.

Spirit can be viewed as the higher component of the human psyche, the element that takes us beyond the animal and our own ego. Part of the inner-self connected to the 'real' person, tied to our intellect, emotions, passions & creativity, it is that which defines us as separate and unique within the natural world. The spirit can be seen as our life-force-energy; through it we experience, create and express ourselves. It is a 'key' that releases us from what Loren Eiseley calls our 'internal prison cell,' allowing us to ultimately connect ourselves into the wider world. This association between spirit and creativity is fundamental to the human condition. Stone for those 'willing to listen' provides a powerful link between human spirit, creativity and the wider natural environment.

This is a shift in my own thinking towards stone I have never approached it on a 'spiritual' level. I've come to recognize, however, that those qualities that mark stone and rock as something special are their 'trump card!' In these modern disconnected times this aspect of the material gives it a unique selling point.



Diversity of practice

One of the most surprising things that I found along my travels was that I came across more stonework than I had anticipated. It wasn't all of high quality. Gaps in knowledge are often filled with . . . lets call it enthusiasm. This is detrimental to the craft.

Fake stone was everywhere, from service stations to out of town leisure destinations. Used to bring a vernacular look to modern utilitarian architecture, these products are widely frowned upon across the stone world. They are sadly now a reality that will be difficult to return to its box. What it suggested to me, however, was that the aesthetic of stone still has great appeal and this gives the stone tribe something positive to build upon.

What is required is concerted effort to make powerful counter arguments for real stone, those of longevity and quality of finish against cost savings. In the absence of such strong counter arguments, these secondary products gain market share and become more acceptable, continually lowering the bar of what quality looks like. These products are available in the UK but have not been so widely adopted, there is a danger if the diminishment of the trade continues the situation evidenced in the built environment of the USA could become more prevalent here. Given the history of quality stonework throughout the UK this would be a major blow to the continuing production of cultural capital in natural stone.

My research project was aimed at looking at *“the contemporary use of stone and how traditional skills and modern creativity can make a positive contribution to our shared built environment.”* Discovering how other creatives employ the range of techniques of working stone into their practice could I feel offer some important lessons for developing the craft in the UK.



stone grounds us within an environment it humanises the space by connection

Andy Dufford Chevo Studios

Discovering such a diversity of practice and individuality of approaches 'across the pond' was incredibly exciting to see.

Everyone's work was different in nature and style, work produced was a reflection of personality, an important point illustrating that stonework as it is being practiced today is very much more art-form than utilitarian craft.

Like all true art forms, material is only a component and its limits are that of the maker's imagination. Their shared passion for the material was highly evident through the work they produced, great personal satisfaction was gained by the mix of physical endeavour and opportunity for creative expression.

Projects were inspirational especially those that pushed at the boundaries of traditional techniques. The stone artists challenged themselves and had obviously received client encouragement and freedom to express themselves.

Ambitious in terms of scale and delivery, projects showed that commissioners and artists understood that interesting, vibrant places can be created by positioning the skilful, imaginative use of stone at the heart of the design. Well-designed thoughtfully created environments ultimately provide an amenity that communities value.



What stone and a creative approach can bring to urban spaces

Across the span of my 6 weeks travel I experienced an eclectic array of projects. Graceland's boundary wall. Japanese castle ramparts being constructed for Rolex's headquarters in the Harwood district of Dallas. An Amphitheatre that overlooks the stunning views of the Grand Canyon South Rim. Quality was high and there was no typical approach or style. Each project exhibited unique attributes that enhanced space and contributed to the look and worth of the area within which it had to function.

One of stonework's main strengths is its inclusivity, it is for everyone. It can be clambered over, sat on or simply admired by the widest possible audience, one does not need to be aesthetically literate to appreciate it. The natural qualities of the material combined with human hand skills is fundamental to this appreciation.

In Denver I met up with one of the USA's premier artists working stone in the public sphere, Andy Dufford of Chevo Studio. Andy's philosophy to his work was ignited by time spent travelling in Europe when he was younger. Walking through the artful spaces of beautiful Cities, created with vision, imagination and skill was a transformative experience for him. It inspired him on his own creative journey to design meaningful public spaces.

Squares and plazas are designed to be part of the human condition, commissioned for utility they also are to be enjoyed as simple daily experience. They link different generations to 'place' in their timelessness. Enhancing the sense of shared community experience is central to what Andy aims to achieve through his work. Craft, material and respect for the end user are at the heart of his design philosophy.

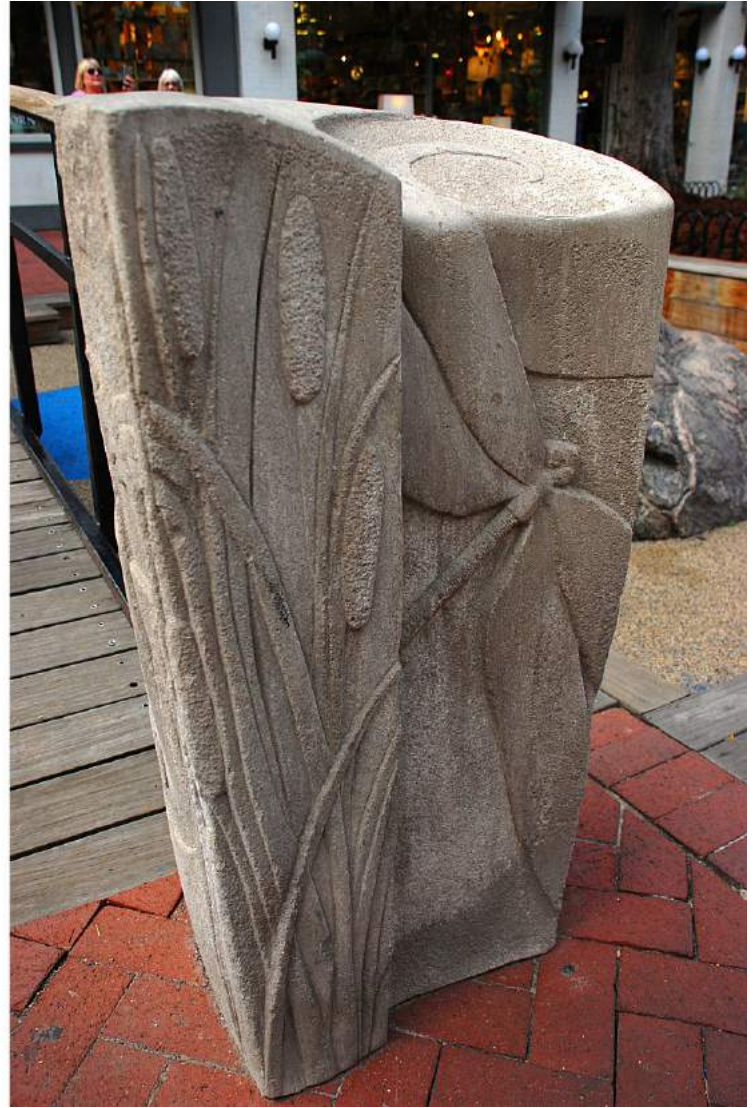
Budgets on large scale projects are always under pressure, detailing, artworks and landscaping are first on the list to go when monies are under scrutiny. One of Andy's projects was over budget and he and the Landscape architect were tasked by the client to make \$400k savings on the build. The Landscape architect dutifully set off on the task identifying parts of the project that could be omitted, Andy took a different approach.

Reporting back to the client, up first was the Landscape architect who tabled a spreadsheet of his proposed cuts (not surprisingly the artists input was top of the list!). Andy tackled the issue by gathering evidence of what the client's project would look like in a few short years if the original budget was not adhered to.

With photographs and weathered samples of cheaper materials he proved that rather than making savings the client was compromising the long term quality of the project for short term considerations, skimping would eventually be more costly in terms of maintenance and ongoing issues. The client, after considering all the options, stuck to the original budget, an interesting creative approach to a universal problem that artists encounter.







Trust and Displaying Skills

Public art brings creativity and a sense of place to public spaces. In the USA it is a well-supported aspect of urban design, more established and better funded than in the UK, it provides quality opportunities for artists and craftworkers to contribute their vision to Society. Bigger budgets enlarge the ambitions and the buy-in of funders giving creatives more scope to realise their imaginings; the wider community reaps the benefits.

There is a well established Percent for Art policy, typically funded by city, state or federal governments, that sets aside 1% of capital budgets for the commission, purchase, fabrication, and installation of public artworks. The positive 'soft' benefits it provides, such as aesthetic interest, cultural and historical interpretation are well known. Private developers are increasingly including and funding public art in their projects, coming to appreciate that its provision brings them tangible benefits. It adds distinctiveness to their sites which translates into marketing opportunities, provides a sales edge, increases a project's visibility and helps promote their brand identification.



These more tangible aspects of public projects are things the stonework community, artists and creatives would do well to understand. What they bring to a project has value beyond immediate costs of producing work. More knowledge about the qualities and benefits their efforts provide will allow them to argue more forcibly and confidently that they are an essential component to a successful outcome that will make their services an easier ‘sell’.

Having a clearer insight to commercial considerations could give the creative stone tribe a solid base from which to begin and plan a way forward. Skills need to be tailored and marketed to a more modern clientele. Being able to make a strong case for their services so developers can count cost benefits and see the upside to their inclusion is important.

Are current modes of training equipping the next generation of practitioners with the right set of skills to approach this market correctly?

Unlike Europe whose public spaces have developed organically over many centuries, the USA is a modern nation that has evolved within a much shorter timeline. The rapid expansion of urban life has led to many new challenges. Modernism was a reaction to societal change, the implementation of some of its ideals has not always been carried out with integrity resulting in negative consequences. Art was increasingly employed as a 'sticking plaster' to humanise spaces disfigured by developers and their architects (sadly a situation that still drives a lot of Public Art today).

As the adverse effects of modernist thought have become recognised and better understood, thinking has moved beyond simply 'plonking down' an artwork into a newly created space. Urban design as a professional discipline has developed since the mid 20th century, attempting to counter some of the unfortunate side effects population growth and modernism has inflicted on communities. Urban design is concerned with making connections between people and place in coherent and strategic ways. It has developed into a science that aims to balance the multitude of considerations and pressures created by modern communities. Public art is only one element in the successful creation of meaningful space, but an important one.

On my travels it was interesting to see some new concepts in urban planning influencing the design of these shared spaces. There is now a much better comprehension of how the spaces we inhabit are laid out and constructed and the influence that can have on behaviour. It is recognised now that thoughtful design can facilitate the enjoyment of a space and accommodate all the different requirements of the wide variety of ages and groups that will utilise these areas.



Public spaces are not purely the setting for retail or business venues, they are important hubs within communities that facilitates leisure and human interaction. Spaces should be well laid out for convenient use and include elements that encourage play and intrigue, important elements for adults as well as children, art is one component in the urban designers toolbox to create vibrant environments that people will want to spend time within.

Developing these spaces requires a team of stakeholders to be involved in their planning, delivery and continuing development. For the creative stoneworker it requires a set of skills beyond the purely practical. They should be able to work and contribute within a team setup. One reason Public art gets criticised is the perception that they are designed by committee and represent compromise. There was plenty evidence in the projects that I experienced that this was not the case and working within that area of practice did not inhibit creativity in any way, on the contrary projects were of a high standard of imagination and delivered with skill and precision.



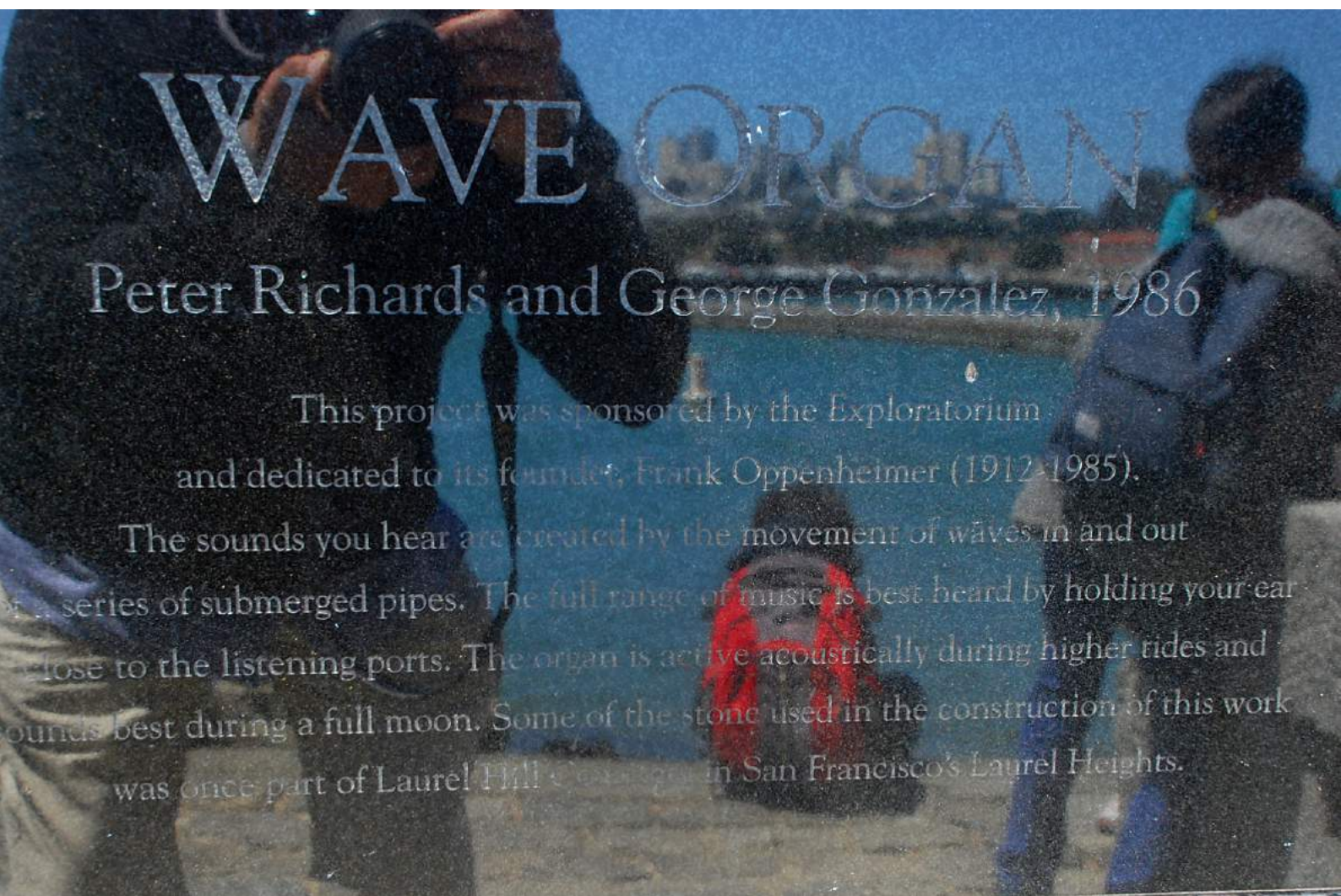
On the rocks

Public Art and stonework are a perfect fit. Artistic works within public spaces have to be robust and capable of withstanding the external stresses they will inevitably experience through their accessibility. Stone provides twin benefits in this regards, that of longevity with minimal maintenance, while providing creative freedom to the designer and maker.

Urban spaces where communities interact may be surrounded by soulless nondescript utilitarian buildings but they can be modern day oasis that should encourage leisure, play and relaxation. More often than not these spaces also have wider cultural significance. They provide a platform for communities to express some of their underlying principles, ambitions and concerns. Our shared spaces are the public face of a community that allows its members to celebrate many different aspects of what unites them, be that historical or cultural.

This is where the cultural capital of a community can be expressed vibrantly positive ways. Creatives are always evolving, reacting to cultural, societal and environmental issues. This stimulates their imagination and results in new ways of working and new solutions. They are an unstoppable force.

What impressed me on my travels was the variety of different scenarios where communities have given their trust to the creatives to bring definition to spaces they view as important. It came as no surprise that the material of choice was nearly always stone in one form or other. Its flexibility as a material cannot be underestimated, time and again I saw projects where it was applied to tell a deeper story. Like all good Public Art these interventions can be a key to understanding the history, concerns and ambitions of a specific place.







Public v private

Not all the stonework I saw was within urban environments. Several projects were created by the more individualistic drystone workers in private spaces for the enjoyment and pleasure of a few non-commercial clients. Life and vitality shone through the majority of these projects.

As has always been the case, wealthy patrons have commissioned artists and craftsmen to enhance their own environment; they recognise the qualities of these people and encourage them in their creativity by commissioning bespoke installations. Most of these projects were truly brilliant. Well-funded, well-crafted and well-maintained and free of the stress factors public projects face, they show the potential of the dry stone craft. I had however, a strong sense of melancholy that the works of these makers could not be appreciated by more people as they would be in a public space.

The majority of these private commissions were non-utilitarian and displayed a high level of creative input beyond any practical requirements. It has always been my belief in the vast amount of stonework that is carried out the makers are able to express their individuality and personality by ‘playing about’ with technique and form for their own satisfaction and pleasure. All the individuals I met were energised by being able to work in this manner and had clients that encouraged them to do so. It was a privilege to meet such engaged artists, I was impressed by how each one created work that was highly individual and distinctive.

Talking to the makers they all discussed the issue of negativity surrounding stonework, the pressure felt by being creative with the traditions of the craft. All had an awareness of the tension from external voices and expressed nervousness about the noise their type of work can elicit within the trade.

Most however had reached a point where they were confident in their own technique and craft skills. Conforming was far less important to them than being able to continue exploring their own potential through the material. Doubt and fear are emotions that all artists go through, training and experience teaches them to embrace risk. Getting into uncomfortable areas, between what is known and understood and what is still to be discovered, is often where the magic happens. It is somewhat a pity that anyone working within a stone environment should feel restricted in following their own ideas at any stage of their career.

Breaking with the past can be a painful process for some. It is incumbent on those who believe in the possibilities offered by the future to develop an atmosphere around the craft that is respectful of all viewpoints. Ideas and differences of technique can and should exist in harmony. For that to happen it must be accepted that stone built with traditional techniques is no longer purely a utilitarian craft.

It may be that negativity around the trade is indicative of something bigger, a lack of confidence in what it represents in a modern context, a symptom of a larger malaise infecting group thought, illustrative of the lack of consensus of the best way forward.

Can we imagine a coherent path forward for the craft that moves beyond these current tensions?

Social? media

Facebook and Twitter are not yet even 15 years old, they have become an everyday reality. Not all aspects of these platforms as we have come to learn are positive. For specific interest areas they are proving instrumental in shrinking down the world bringing people into sociable networks to share and celebrate a subject that connects them.

Social media has proven very beneficial for those interested in stone. Having easy access to the work of others is very stimulating and can be personally very rewarding if feedback is generous and positive. There is wide range of groups whose members can get together to display their own work and be inspired by the work of others, discuss techniques and receive advice.

Dykers and wallers can be a prickly bunch, posting work to these platforms is not for the faint-hearted. Imperfect work can elicit quick criticism with members vociferously arguing over minor details, for every positive there is a negative.

Pieter Schaafsma is a landscape architect, artist and stone enthusiast based in Flagstaff Arizona. He was one of the people I was keen to meet on my travels. Pieter set up the Facebook group, Custom Creative Stonework in response to the highly negative tone that had developed within some of the other groups dedicated to stone working. Within CCS Pieter has created a 'safe' space, which is not restricted to any specific technique where anyone, amateur or professional, with an interest in stone can get involved.

Members can post their efforts in an environment that is respectful and encouraging. Stone encompasses so many different styles, there is something to celebrate and enjoy in all approaches. He established the group with the aim of creating a positive space for enthusiasts to share their work and the work of others that they admire, a space devoid of the harsh criticism from self-proclaimed experts, a place to learn and grow and to further the Art of Stone.

With over 2000 members one of the successful features that Pieter has introduced into the group is 'Custom Stone Artist' of the month, an opportunity for someone within the group to showcase their work across a whole month. This concept achieves two important things, it gives that artist a great platform to share their projects from all stages of their career not just current projects. It also allows the wider community to get to know that person in more detail gaining an insight to their motivations, trials and successes.

The CCS group illustrates that from small beginnings ambitions can grow. It provides a very simple vehicle for Pieter to develop some of his other ideas for the advancement of stone to be explored and brought into being. Over the last few years Pieter has organised and held an annual Back West Festival of Stone Balancing, a hands-on event that has attracted some of the best stone balancers in the world to display their skills to a wider audience within a public setting.

These events have been important in helping Pieter to increase the profile of stonework within his city, slowly building support for what can be achieved by these types of events. With each completed successful Festival it becomes easier for Pieter to gain backing for future projects. As I was passing through Flagstaff, Pieter threw me right into the deep end of one of his ideas! When I was planning my trip I offered to undertake talks or workshops if something could be organised. Pieter took me at my word.

In conjunction with the board of the Willow Bend Environmental Centre Pieter organised for me to do a slideshow on my work followed by leading a public workshop to create a stone 'Peace Arch' he had designed. I've never done any teaching or put myself in that type of scenario before. Personally I like to know my material and be in control of my own process, I would be turning up cold to conduct an unfamiliar event. I was more than nervous!

It turned out to be a really enjoyable and memorable day, Pieter had advertised it well and there was a really encouraging turnout for my talk with approximately thirty people in attendance, many of whom stayed on to observe and get involved with constructing the arch. Temperatures were into the 90's, the stone wasn't perfect and all we were equipped with was eclectic collection of tools. None of that mattered everyone showed great enthusiasm and attacked the tasks set them with great determination. Across the day all participants had a go with hammer and chisel, shaping voussoirs (the wedged-shaped blocks of stone that make up an arch) gaining insight into the effort required to work stone.

Finally it was time to set the keystone and there was great anticipation (and not a little fear on my part) as we started to remove the wooden centre support, would it stand? To great cheers as the final pieces of wood came away the arch stood solid and proud, a lovely symbol of the efforts and teamwork exerted in its creation. It still stands today in the grounds of the Willow Bend Centre a lasting reminder of that day and those involved in the project.

It was a fun experience that I'm sure all involved will long remember, it showed the strength of this type of event and proved that with a little effort positive results can be achieved. Currently Pieter has ambitions to develop his Back West Celebration events, to make new connections with other organisations like the Stone Foundation with the aim of attracting more artists and craftsmen to undertake workshops and projects within Flagstaff.



Proximity—Creativity feeds creativity

Competition and rivalry are powerful drivers of human effort. These forces can be viewed as a negative aspect of the human psyche, they are an everyday reality within any profession. The positive flip side to these baser natural feelings is the act of being inspired by the work of others. The importance of these elemental emotions to developing ideas and skills I encountered on my travels in what I call ‘creative hubs.’ Locations where practitioners can network and produce work in close proximity to one another. Having access to material, space and time actively encouraged the creative exploration of stone’s possibilities.

There are two hubs I visited that illustrated the beneficial effects of being able to respond to the work of others either through competition or inspiration. Art City Studios in Ventura, a cross between a garden, stone-yard and studio complex was set up by Paul Lindhard over 20 years ago as a venue to create and display his own work. His wider vision was for it to become a communal space where other artists, sculptors and makers could work side by side, creating with an ‘artistically supportive atmosphere.’ Described by the LA Times as ‘A Crucible for Artistic Energy,’ it is a stone enthusiasts paradise sitting on the western edge of the town of Ventura, a pebble’s throw from the Californian coast.

Stone sculpture is the main focus of the work undertaken at Art City, it is the base for about 12 different artists. Packed with raw stone blocks haphazardly interspersed between palm trees, it functions as an open air studio for sculptors producing work in a wide range of styles, techniques and scale. Walking around the studios with Paul was one of the highlights of my trip.

We arrived in Ventura late on a Friday night, and witnessed a concrete floor being laid for a new shared gallery space for the studio sculptors. We arranged to come back for a longer look round the next morning. Saturdays are open to the public and there’s a much quieter feel to the place. Logistically stone working poses more than a few challenges, Paul set the studios up to be a facility where sculptors could benefit from the opportunities provided by space and access to shared equipment. The sheer diversity of stone, its type, colour, form, texture on display was impressive. All members of the stone tribe enjoy seeing stone in its raw state all that latent potential, such a variety within one space was incredibly exciting.



Paul has a great knowledge of stone sources, both commercial and natural. For a month every year he heads off to gather and harvest stone to be brought back to Art City. The evidence of his trips can be seen throughout the studio complex. Raw natural blocks and blocks transformed by the touch of the human hand abound. What is sculpted by human action and what is sculpted by nature are almost indistinguishable here. Discussing his working method Paul explained that being surrounded by a plentiful supply of material was central to his design process. His approach is intuitive. Sometimes he responds quite quickly to what a specific stone suggests to him, other blocks take more time to get to know and understand. Only by living with them, walking by them everyday, occasionally having to move them out of the way, can he get to the point where imagination and inspiration came into focus.

Easy access to material, allied to time and freedom to respond is crucial to what he produces as an artist. His approach is totally different from my own way of working. Not having such free availability to a wide range of stone my approach is much tighter and design-based, emerging from ideas explored in the pages of my sketchbook. I then attempt to find material to manifest that idea. Paul's more direct relationship and connection with his material combined with his contemporary artistic sensibility produces wonderful results that could be viewed as a collaboration between him and the material, an approach that I found totally inspiring. Being able to work with that sensibility depends on having material to respond to and an open mindset that can hear what the stone is 'saying to you.' Not everyone is lucky to have that ability or the opportunity to approach work that way. Through Art City Studios Paul has provided the correct environment for that form of magic to happen for him and others.



The other creative hub I visited was a further 500 miles north of Ventura, up California's Highway 1, which hugs the Pacific Coast, a stunning drive through some of the most beautiful countryside in the USA. Set amongst the native redwood forest in the hills above the small town of Gualala (pronounced wa-la-la) is Peter Mullins' Stonezone, possibly the closest thing to Nirvana for a stone enthusiast.

After retiring from industry Peter moved out of the city to establish this as his own little corner of Mendocino County. Since then he has busied himself clearing the underbrush on his land to bring light and air into and around the towering redwoods he is lucky to have on his property. This cleared space has given him the opportunity to indulge his passion for stone.

Not a mason or artist himself Peter has always had more than casual interest in stone that has developed into a healthy and fulfilling obsession. Since he attended one of the Stone Foundation's Symposia in Ventura he has connected with and commissioned work from a wide variety of stoneworkers. Over the intervening years Peter has invited a rotating crew of Stone Foundation artists and artisans to create stone art on his property.

Providing them with space, time, creative freedom, food, lodging and of course stone his Stonezone has developed into an extraordinary experimental laboratory for the art and techniques of stoneworking. Walking through his densely wooded property is an exploration through the imagination and creativity of those whose work sits so naturally within this place. It also constitutes a paean to Peter's love for stone in all its forms.

Work created specifically for the site is the result of a collaborative process between owner, site and craftworkers. Peter will identify a space that he feels offers potential as a possible location of a work that will either sit well within that space or enhance the experience or view of that point on his land. Discussions around the space are an important element within the process of designing the work, with Peter as patron having an active role in defining the nature of the element to be constructed.

This results in an eclectic mix of projects being created, some are seating areas for communal gatherings, others enhance the transition from one space to another, stand-alone sculptural works are positioned at specific points. It is an inspiring journey moving through these spaces, at every turn there is something new and interesting to discover. The works display a wide variety of approaches, techniques and stone types and illustrate the individuality and personality of the makers. The high level of craftsmanship and creativity is a powerful refutation to the traditionalists who hold that playing about with technique diminishes the craft.

What Peter has achieved with his Stonezone is unique within the world of stonework. He has created the opportunity for some of the world's best stone artists and artisans to explore the potential of stone and creative stonework.

By providing an environment that places skill and imagination at the heart of practice his Stonezone taps into those two human motivational factors, competition and inspiration. The results are a source of great enjoyment and satisfaction to Peter personally and an inspiration to the wider stone tribe. It proves that creativity feeds creativity and that does not necessarily lead to any loss in quality.

Traditionalists hate change, they fear that diluting tested and proven methods diminishes craft, there is evidence that skills have been lost but this is not due to anyone experimenting with technique. My belief is that there is a powerful counter argument, that when traditional methodologies are approached with creative and imaginative input standards are actually raised. Creative results encourage and inspire other artists and craftworkers to stretch their own abilities. Emulation leads to innovation, a path that leads directly towards excellence.



I was lucky on my travels to spend some time in the company of master stone waller Dan Snow. We enjoyed a meal and a few glasses of wine with him and a few other guests. Among them was Jared Flynn, a fellow board member of Dan's in the Vermont based Stone Trust.

Jared was passionate about the work and aims of the Trust, the preservation of the craft of dry stone walling. He was especially insistent about technicalities and believed that everything about the craft revolved around the importance of 'structure.' I was therefore a bit nervous about asking him for his opinion on the debate between art and craft. Jared then came out with a statement that I so wish I had thought of first, his opinion was that despite his emphasis on fundamentals he recognised that *"Art saved the Craft."*

A beautifully simple assessment of where we are at now, a flag to follow for the future?



Where to now?

Conclusions

Across my Fellowship travels I experienced a wide body of inspiring examples of stonework achieved by makers and designers in the USA and Canada. In the absence of a strong defining tradition that expects specific results they are exploring the technique and material with innovation and contemporary sensibility. They are proving that stone is still full of potential for creative input. Sadly there was also ample evidence that within urban environments inferior fake materials are gaining in popularity for more mundane aesthetic applications.

Far from being a ubiquitous widely practiced trade, stone is becoming a more high-end bespoke product that requires artistry and craftsmanship of the highest standard to make it stand out from the generally poor quality work that seems to be becoming the norm. This is not a fully negative situation. The current state of the trade offers those willing to dedicate themselves to learning the craft a highly rewarding and personally satisfying career.

Mastery of the craft will equip those committed practitioners with unique skills that they can take into the market place. Skills that are in demand and for which they will be able to charge a premium price.

Urban design and architecture has moved on from some of the worst excesses of Modernism and brutalist architecture, stakeholders now have a better understanding that well-planned, thoughtful, high quality projects provide tangible benefits that can be balanced against heightened costs.

Developers recognise that considering the human element within their schemes at an early stage and keeping these issues in mind throughout the design stage can lead to successful conclusions. Schemes will be more attractive to end users and therefore more saleable, helping them increase the positivity of their brand, a win/win situation.

Stone has nothing to prove in terms of durability and flexibility within the built urban environment. The challenge for the stone industry today is for it to prove that stone is still a relevant contemporary material and design solution. To do this it needs to break off from some of the old formal techniques and embrace new ideas, new technologies and new concepts in contemporary design practice. Designers and artisans need to demonstrate that stonework is open to creative interpretation and can be used in imaginative, exciting, modern ways. Where and when it is used with skill and creativity stone adds something unique to urban spaces. It grounds those spaces within a wider environment, connecting it back to landscape and bringing a much needed element and sought-after connection to our humanity.

Loss of the skills and knowledge within the trade is a fundamental risk to its continuation. What strategies offer the best chance that these skills and knowledge can continue to be learned and mastered by future generations?

Do current educational and training schemes dedicated towards traditional, heritage and conservation fields of practice attract the most talented and creative minds to view stone as something worthy of consideration as a future career?

Modernism broke the mould. The break from past ideologies and practices has been anything but harmonious but new ideas flourish and creatives and designers are adjusting parameters, exploring new methodologies and producing new interesting results that reflect our times and ourselves.

Perceived wisdom and engrained practices inhibits change and restricts development of practice. Throughout my Fellowship travels I experienced many exemplary projects which illustrated that stonework due to a lesser degree of traditional practice than in the UK, was being interpreted through creative thought into installations that provided a great variety of 'soft' benefits for the wider society.

The world is truly global now. No longer do towns and cities exhibit the distinctiveness that they would have done a century ago. Public art and urban design are two components that Communities can exploit to create spaces that are ***'convenient for those that live in it, and to the great surprise of strangers.'*** Our shared spaces are where we can show to others and ourselves what is important. Stone is still one of the best materials to use to demonstrate what we value in terms of the history and culture of 'our' place.



What measures can we put in place to ensure that the knowledge and skill to work stone will thrive in the UK?

Changing the narrative

Recommendations

As an individual artist my practice has largely been out-with a structured support system; some artists have galleries and agents, artisans are employed in crews, communal workshops or are independent contractors. Connecting locally with other artists is difficult as few share my experience or understand the area of practice within which I work. It has often felt a lonely path.

Social media has connected me to the wider stone community. Traveling on my Fellowship, getting to meet so many amazing stone artists and craftworkers was tremendously rewarding. To meet others who instantly knew, understood, empathised or just simply ‘got’ me and my work was one of the real joys of my trip. This experience taught me a lot and has given me some ideas for the continuing development of the craft and art of stonework in the UK.

There is a fundamental need to look forward not back. Old ways have never been the most inspiring. Humans have always and continue to seek out the new. Entrenched and outdated thinking is restricting development, new strategies should be explored to ensure that skills and knowledge required to work stone can continue. The aim must be for it to flourish and move forward.

How best to encourage this?

My travels showed me the importance of ‘network,’ the power of the group. Nothing like the Stone Foundation exists within the UK. Tomas Lipps, its founder is one of the most engaged and impressive people I have met in my life. What he has set in place for developing a modern open community dedicated to the preservation and celebration of all things stone is a concept I fully support. My hope is that through the Winston Churchill Fellowship I can pay tribute to his legacy, and contribute to the further realisation of his vision.

While on my trip I connected with Tomas and Zach Johnson, then the Stone Foundation Chairman, with them I discussed the possibility of developing a UK branch of the Stone Foundation. They enthusiastically agreed that making stronger connections within the stone worlds of the USA, Canada & the UK could prove beneficial to all countries.

There are various groups focusing on specific areas of practice, such as the DSWA towards Dry Stone Walling but no association that would appeal to the wider stone community and the multitude of disciplines being undertaken. The UK could benefit from a body that is more relevant to current practice and dedicated to contemporary creative sensibilities. Since my return further discussions around this possibility have taken place and there is general support within the Stone Foundation’s board to explore this avenue. How that will look is open for debate and further investigation.

The Stone Foundation offers something unique at the present time, a communal entity that individuals involved with and or interested in the trade and craft can rally around. Starting an association from scratch in this country is a possibility and may yet prove to be the best way, but as the Stone Foundation already has a network, activities and publications in place it seems an appropriate first step to consider linking up with this established international organisation.

The stone community globally is actually quite small, the issues faced are common and not bound by national borders, there would be strength for this international community to act as a single body, sharing best practice, exchanging knowledge, addressing challenges and developing solutions for the wider membership. The aim of setting up a UK branch would be to draw together all those that had an interest with stone in any capacity, sculptors, lettercarvers, masons, suppliers, enthusiasts, etc.

Stone still has a lot to offer communities, stakeholders and craftworkers in terms of suitability, sustainability, flexibility and longevity for many different locations and situations. The Stone Foundation represents a respected established voice for promotion and advocacy, a professional vehicle for the wider stone community to gather around. It is not perfect, they are going through change but that is a natural part of process that leads to the strengthening and consolidation of its mandate. Developing ties between the UK and USA stone communities could make the Stone Foundation a stronger more powerful Association.



There are many challenges for anyone wanting to achieve their creative vision in stone. Stone has become an unknown quantity for some structural engineers and architects, a situation that can cause stakeholders to shy away from its use. Problems anticipated by these professional consultants at the design stage can scupper at an early stage innovative stone schemes imagined by creatives. The design professionals' lack of knowledge and inexperience in using stone can result in other more inappropriate materials being used instead, exacerbating the problem of stone being marginalised as a design solution.

The Stone Foundation could act as a catalyst within the industry to address that type of issue. It should aim to draw into its core these types of services, seeking out individuals with expertise in the material and make professional connections to benefit members with their know-how. Centralising knowledge that members could access and learn from would be a helpful addition to current practice.

Real benefits could be achieved in the UK by providing a process or group to actively connect the spectrum of professions associated with the use of stone. Linking all involved in the supply chain would allow the exchange of new ideas, enable best practice to be shared and create an environment for mutual learning.

Chief among the Stone Foundation's activities has been a series of annual gatherings called Stonework Symposia. The group's first activities were stonemasonry workshops. The First Stonework Symposium in 2000 was a catalyst for the founding of an international membership organization dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of stonework and stone art.

These gatherings bring interested persons together, create opportunities for making connections, establishing relationships, witnessing demonstrations and presentations, sharing knowledge and experience, enjoying camaraderie and building something. As part of the process of developing a SF/UK branch, the organization of a Symposium in the UK would be an important move to promote the art and craft of stonework.



International Stonework Symposium 202? could be organised as the inaugural event of the Stone Foundation UK as Stonework Symposium 2000 was for the original Stone Foundation, a great opportunity to raise the profile of this new entity and its mission statement to an international audience. The Stone Foundation has already held one Symposium in Europe, in Mallorca, Spain in 2007, it was well attended by stoneworkers from the USA and Canada as well as Europe.

My vision for the event would be to build a major legacy project in some suitable UK location. The imagined design would be of the highest quality, innovative and contemporary yet respectful of tradition. Inviting the best stone artists and craftworkers from around the world to take part in a Master Class event would show to a wider audience the excitement, vitality, creativity and skill levels still being practiced.

Perth, Scotland, my home City, had been in the bidding for UK City of Culture 2020 when I was planning my Fellowship travels. Tentative talks took place around tying in the Symposium as part of that bid, an idea that had gained a level of support from the bid team.

The Stone Foundation also sees this as an opportunity worth investigating. It already has several members who live and work in the UK and the publication and promotion of this report will enable us to attract the attention of others who might be drawn to the project. If an exciting location is found and a strong attractive concept developed it could have a wide and influential international impact.

The creation of an entity dedicated to advancing the contemporary creative practice of stonework is a process that would bring others into the debate. It would be the start of a shared journey that would evolve dependent on the level of support for the concept and the personalities of those that could be encouraged to get involved. Bringing the diverse strands of UK stonework together within one association is an important aspiration, but one that will take some time and commitment to accomplish.

As a trade body it will mostly appeal to ‘makers’ but hopefully also to design professionals. As momentum for the idea grows, so too will its aims and achievements, Time alone will show what tangible benefits can come forth from putting such an association in place. There is an established network to utilize for exploring the options around the creation of a UK branch.

This report is dedicated to furthering such an act.



Forming UK branch of Stone Foundation

(or similar organization, but why reinvent the wheel?)

Setting up a UK branch would require the development of a strategic plan.
My thoughts are that these would be:

Publication of WCMT report announces its ideas and suggestions, eliciting feedback on its contents from interested parties

Dissemination of the report through talks, articles and social media to grow support for a new UK Stone Association

Liaise, consult, assess backing for concept

Gather together a small group to clarify, challenge ideas

Develop a short-term strategy to engage others—small opening event—practical and theoretical event to introduce concept to wider group.

Plan a national seminar with invited guests that would attract an audience.

Form a temporary Committee and move towards formal creation of an association

Creativity and innovative practice to be core fundamental principles.

Establish connections with industry and design professionals not just artists and artisans.





Time to reboot

The basic premise of my argument is that we are at a crucial point in time for the stone trade. I believe that traditional working practices and entrenched thinking are inhibiting innovation. Scepticism towards creativity and art allied to traditional craft is a barrier to change. There is a necessity to address these issues.

What actions could initiate and encourage new ideas to flourish?

Shifting the narrative away from the traditional is crucial. Reclaiming stone as an exciting contemporary design solution requires others to be shown its potential. Much of the literature relating to stonework references the past and promotes a very traditional story. Most available books focus on techniques and established ways for these to be employed. What is required is to make a much wider audience appreciate stonework for its possibilities and relevancy to modern society rather than its nostalgic value.

British design has always had a global influence. The UK is revered the world over as a centre for innovation and quality. As our economy changed towards growing the service sector, education and training shifted away from manufacturing. There is a recognition that the balance between service and manufacturing needs to be brought into equilibrium. The **March of the Makers** as a concept ties into the current zeitgeist that is seeing a resurgence and interest across all sectors of manufacturing and crafts.

Stonework is a highly visual as well as tactile medium. One way to renew thinking would be to produce a high quality book focusing on the trade in all its diversity and how it is being reinterpreted by contemporary makers and designers. Illustrating its value to our urban spaces could have a lot of impact. I have discussed the merits of this approach with many of the folks I met on my travels.

There is a great story to tell around the current practice of the craft, how it is being adapted by creatives to suit their own needs and how their interventions provide positive benefits to communities. The makers that I met through my Fellowship and the work they have made was/is inspirational.

I was excited to see the creative ways in which others have responded to urban situations with imagination and skill. Every individual was highly intelligent and engaged. Sharing their stories, motivations and philosophy with new audiences would be a great step towards renewing of the narrative. Inspirational makers could be asked to contribute to the book, allowing them to express their passion for the material and giving them an ideal opportunity to explain in detail their working practices, experiences, challenges and success.

Makers and craftworkers need no convincing of the merits of their crafts. The belief and commitment they have for it is the driving force that motivates them to create—even when market conditions make survival difficult. The group that needs to be persuaded and will most influence change is the ‘movers and shakers’ of the world, clients and the stakeholders of projects. The ability of any individual to influence change within a field of endeavour is limited by their level of standing and the measure of respect they command within their area of interest. A book is an ideal promotional tool around which to develop a strategy of disseminating a new narrative and the act of it being published will validate its premise.

Parallel to a book project, options could and should be explored towards turning the concept into a television programme. BBC4 or Sky Arts would be obvious partners to pitch the idea to. These two institutions are always on the look out for strong innovative suggestions to investigate.

Something 'new' is developing around stonework. Exploring how creatives are moving on from traditional practice provides a solid through-line that touches on many other important topics: land politics; the continuing shift from rural towards urban living; the impact on hand-skills and craft knowledge by technology and modern manufacturing; the effect of urban design on human interactions as well as the communities that benefit from the consequences.

Gaining support for these projects is something I hope to achieve through the WCMT Fellowship. They would provide an opportunity to spread the word that stone is no longer only associated with the past.



Training

If encouraged, change within the market place is possible, equipping future makers and craft-workers with the skills to react to those opportunities is another essential challenge to consider. As outlined earlier the passing of knowledge from master to apprentice model is to all intents and purposes broken; it still occurs but most often informally. Various schemes across the country aim to address this skills deficit but are generally focused towards the heritage and conservation market. Sculpture courses have also shifted any emphasis away from providing students with the practical skills of working stone.

Dry stone walling continues to be taught through the auspices of the DSWA which offers a highly regarded 'certification' programme. Aimed at guiding professional development towards becoming a Master Craftsman, however their mandate is very specific and traditionally focused

Progressing through Art School during the 80's as I did, there was often frustration expressed by the lack of formal lessons or teaching given by the lecturers, who at times seemed to be mythical figures glimpsed or encountered only fleetingly. Now that my student days have receded into distant memory I better understand the true worth of the lessons gained from this system and the essential qualities it provided. I've come to acknowledge and ultimately to see how very privileged we were to have been able to develop through that process.

Traditional craft teaching is based upon the apprentice slowly gaining knowledge from the master. A natural consequence of this method is that the ego of the teacher inhibits the 'persona' of the student. Craft celebrates technique and finish within a recognised and traditional set of parameters. They learn what the teacher knows and work towards perfecting transmitted skills. By a process of osmosis the apprentice is moulded into a version of the master.

Art education is the antithesis of craft training. It provides students 'free space' to play, experiment and explore. Art is human expression, everyone is unique and individual experience shared through creative thought is the goal. Everything about art education is geared towards encouraging individuality and personality, putting the students into a position where they have to discover and draw out of themselves the potential they each have within them. By being forced to develop their own methodologies they develop a flexibility of thought that is actively discouraged within those undertaking the more structured craft training. By 'learning through doing' art college students have time to grow. Self motivation is an essential discipline for any kind of progress to be made, you alone ultimately decide whether you failed or succeeded.

This 'free' approach is the ultimate gift students are given through an Arts Degree, something I have come to value enormously. A downside to this inherent freedom is that there can be a perceived lack of craft contained in the work. Boundaries between the two are always murky; some craftworkers are just as much artists as those with more formal artistic training. Equally some artists are tremendously gifted in their craft.

In the stone world, as tradition fades, craft and art seem to be in conflict. As we imagine a brighter future for the trade, can the dichotomy between the two be addressed? Can we imagine and develop policies that will enable future practitioners to focus on fundamental issues more important than the current state of navel gazing going on around the trade?

How best to maintain standards of workmanship while actively encouraging the continuing development of the craft and future practitioners? This space between an outdated past and an uncertain future is the perfect time for us to contemplate these issues. We need to be imaginative and creative in our thinking. Exploration and debate should be applied toward developing a strategic plan of how stone training will look in the next 50 years.

An interesting research paper investigating the possibilities of new models for the teaching of architecture was recently published. Titled *Learning by Designing: Investigating New Didactic Methods to Learning Architectural Design*, it was published by the Turkish Online Journal of Education. It looks at how architecture in Italy is currently taught and questions previously accepted doctrinal methods. The transmission of knowledge was heavily dependent upon the taste and cultural background of the teacher. Students were passive receivers of information ultimately adapting to the vision of the teacher (much like the craft-training model).

Giuseppe Fallacara, visiting Professor at New York Institute of Technology and his team have undertaken experiments with new teaching methodologies that place students pro-actively into learning situations. Real world concepts are developed where students have to react quickly to uncertain scenarios. Confronted by risk they have to manage stress by reacting creatively to the demands being placed upon them. They are forced to quickly develop problem-solving skills. Knowledge and information need to be processed rapidly and solutions found. Through this process the students acquire essential abilities that will be a key part of their job. Defined as 'experimental learning,' what is being investigated is a model not too dissimilar from the Art Institution model. Students become more directly involved in their own process of acquiring knowledge. What it proves is that nothing is fixed. New modes of teaching and learning can be developed and there are precedents out there that could, and should, be considered, analysed and adapted to the teaching of the art and the craft of working stone.

Moving forward I would like to advocate for a new type of training course, one that combines the best aspects of craft and art training methods. A University standard course that develops the intellectual, creative and practical qualities of the trainees, all within a contemporary design framework. Such a course would be unique. Attracting the most talented and creative youths to consider building a career around an aspect of stone practice should be central to its mission. Focused recruitment through inspirational examples will lead to a high quality of candidates getting involved, better people in, better results out.

Quality leads to quality

The apprentice in theory should ultimately be better than the master, as he or she benefits from all that the Master has learned through experience. The apprentice is the latest recipient of a long lineage of such experience.

It is a curious quirk of human development that knowledge and skills in the working of stone have actually regressed in recent history. The trade and craft of stonework are not what they once were, there is a shift away from the traditional roles. Training should better reflect current sensibilities and modern market requirements than it now does. Stone artisans working at a high level have a lot of different demands placed upon them as they negotiate their way through the delivery of a project. They need to display an adaptability of skills to the ever-changing scenarios they face in their day-to-day running of their business. Most will develop these skills through the natural learning cycle of success and failure.

Developing a course around all the different skill sets a student may require could produce candidates that are capable of contributing great things to the wider society. Current stone practice is segueing into many different disciplines. It is rare today to find an artisan who only works within one specific area of production. Most remain flexible and responsive to the needs of any given project, this can involve them in a whole range of tasks; conceptual design, art, sculpture, urban design, landscaping design and plant selection, structural and statutory issues, client stakeholder professional liaisons, etc. These skills are often hard-won but they could and should be taught.

As they prepare for their professional careers students should be cognizant and equipped for the challenges they will face. Spanning the gap between learning and practice, technicalities of craft and business should be understood, if not entirely mastered. Creative, innovative individuals capable of producing quality results will always be in demand, getting them prepared as well and as quickly as possible will best set them up for a long, interesting and fulfilling career. Not only allowing but encouraging them to discover their own creativity should be the course's 'raison d'être'.



Ambitious though this idea may be, dreaming big, imagining new realities is exactly what the Winston Churchill Fellowship is about. One final recommendation that I have could, if brought to reality, amalgamate the thoughts and ideas I've expressed within this report.

In the UK there is currently no entity dedicated to contemporary stone practice. Peter Mullin's 'Stonezone' in Northern California and Paul Lindhard's Art City Studios offer a teasing glimpse of what that could look like and what benefits could be realised. The potential for a 'national centre for stonework'—whose sole focus is to provide a space for stone artists and craftworkers to work, play, experiment and explore the creative possibilities of the material, is very exciting to contemplate. It could become the base for a prospective UK branch of the Stone Foundation and the location of a Stonework Training Centre, a research and information hub, open air gallery and visitor centre all rolled into one central facility. A creative space, focused on the best innovative practices available, where suppliers, designers, makers could interact, share and learn at the forefront of contemporary design. Where the creative possibilities of combining new technologies, digital software and human hand-skills could be investigated, explored and promoted. Making connections with industry and other design disciplines would open up the prospect of new professional opportunities and new ideas spreading out into real life situations.

As a centre of excellence, a repository of knowledge, a hub for learning and space for professional networking such an institution could have a lasting and continuing legacy that would help restore stone to its rightful place as the most appropriate material of choice for our shared built environment.



We find ourselves in curiously uncertain times. Brexit is the future. It is a divisive reality and all aspects of UK Society will feel its effects. Only time will tell if these effects are negative or positive. For the indigenous stone industry, breaking away from Europe could have a positive effect. Commissioned by Historic Environment Scotland in 2016, the British Geological Survey Scotland's Building Stone Industry: a Review makes fascinating reading. One pertinent commentary it makes on the current state of stone as a commercial commodity in Scotland is this: 85% of stone used in the country is currently imported.

There are many contributing factors to this situation but one worthy of contemplation moving forward is the previous negative impact of the European Union Procurement Directive '2014/24/EU On Public Contracts. This policy, intended to ensure fair competition within EU member States, precludes and makes it illegal during the procurement phase of a project to actively specify 'local or indigenous stone.' The result of which is that Scottish Stone is virtually never specified for new public construction projects!

If leaving the EU allows the stone industry to claw back some percentage of market share, it will provide some hope for the future. A healthier stone industry will lead to more favourable conditions for the continuation of the craft and trade. An uncertain future, perhaps, but possibly some cause for optimism regarding the use of indigenous stone.

Gaining the WCMT Fellowship has provided me the time to step away from my own practice, an opportunity to raise my head from the stones at hand to look around at the work of others—to speak directly with them, to learn from them, to view their work in situ and explore the space between art and craft. This was my chance to explore, to assess, to determine and understand what motivates us artists and artisans to create and communicate through the medium of stone.

It has inspired me to attempt to transform this opportunity into a tangible contribution that will help develop and ensure the continuation of the skills, craft and material for the present and future generations. That is my passion now.



'Travel to learn—return to inspire', that is the command from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust. My belief is this: if others could see the amazing results that practitioners currently working with stone are achieving with a more creative and open approach, then they will be impressed and inspired to imagine and to create their own works from the material that still has so much potential for creativity, the very ground on which we stand—**Stone**.



My crazy itinerary

Enormous thanks to everyone who helped me or gave their time to make my Fellowship a success, especially those that opened up their homes to two travellers who arrived as strangers but left as friends.

The Stone Foundation
Dan Snow,
David Kemley
Suminori Awata
Tomas Lipps & Mimi
Zach Johnson
John Engelland & Sherri
Pieter & Keith Schaafsma

Greg Tonozzi
Kevin Carmen
Paul Lindhard
Peter Mullins
Edwin Hamilton
John & Mary Shaw-Rimington
John Scott
DSWA



Brian Post
 Eric Landman
 Doug bell
 Jan Johnsen & Rafael Algarin
 Andy Dufford
 The Staff at Willow Bend Environmental
 Centre
 Topher Delaney

John Gray
 Neil Kilpatrick
 WCMT
 Chuck Eblacker
 Jared Flynn
 Tad Richards

List of illustrations

page no.	artist	location	description
front cover	David F Wilson	Willow Bend Environmental Centre Flagstaff AZ	Peace Arch' designed by Pieter Schaffsma - created as part of public workshop
inside page	Andy Goldsworthy	Storm King Art Centre	Running Wall
	Lots of people	Gracelands, Memphis, TN	Boundary Wall at Elvis Presley's Mansion transformed into a symbol of love and devotion, who wouldn't want their work to achieve that
TOC	nature	Old quarry stock yard Marble, CO	A long discarded marble block slowly being reclaimed back into the landscape
Introduction	nature	Custer, SD	A rocky granite outcrop, part of the Black Hills Forest Park
0	Suminori Awata	New Rolex Headquarters, Dallas TX	Detail of the Japanese style ramparts being built on the base street level in the Harwood District
2	Masayuki Agase	Rapid City, SD	Detail of 'Passage of Wind and Water' Main Street Square
4	Andy Duffird	Denver, CO	Vortex fountain, West Crescent Plaza
5	Chuck Eblacker	Harley School Rochester	Outdoor learning space
7	John Shaw- Rimmington	Private Garden, Port Hope, Canada	Rubble' Helix
top 8	Edwin Hamilton	Petaluma, CA	carved shell sketches
bottom 8	Tom Otterness	Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester	Detailing on stonework that acts as a backdrop to 'Creation Myth'
top 9	?	Stonezone, Gualala	A spot to contemplate the future of stonework, including carved stone cushions
bottom 9	Lawrence Halprin	Levi Strauss Plaza, San Francisco	Natural granite blocks and mature planting creates an oasis within the heart of the city
11	Jared Flynn	Christmas tree Farm, Dummerston, VT	a pair of stone Christmas trees built as permanent landmark features, how many generations will enjoy special times playing around these
12	Topher Delaney	Nema Plaza, San Francisco	Promised Land' a stand out creative stone project in Downtown SF
13	Stone Foundation	central Plaza, Santa Fe, NM	Multilingual Corner of the Lithosphere' carved at SF 2013 Symposium this pillar stands as a permanent marker of the founding of the Stone Foundation
14	Stone Foundation	Main Street, Cottonwood Falls, KS	Zach Johnson, (right) oversees the installation of the keystone block into the legacy project built by Stone Foundation members at Symposium 2017
15	nature	North Pacific Ocean, CA	Time & erosion is an awesome sculptor
16	Tomas Lipps	central Plaza, Santa Fe, NM	Fountainhead Rock Place' - A stone masterpiece that sadly the City have failed to maintain.
17	Edwin Hamilton	Private Development, Jenner, CA	Stunning Gateway pillars
18	Paul Lindhard	Art City Studios, destined for Stonezone, Gualala	What makes someone hand over fortunes of money for a work of art? Investment or something more profound? This was the single piece of stonework that I most coveted on my trip. If I was lucky to have untold riches, I'd pay whatever to have this, it is a Modern American Masterpiece!
19	nature	Timber Cove Inn, CA	Difficult to fail in Landscaping Design strategically placing a finely weathered boulder

20,21	Andy Dufford	Central Boulevard Park Bridge, Denver, CO	Series of 16 carved Limestone, 'Geodes'
22	Tomas Lipps	central Plaza, Santa Fe, NM	Detail of intricate stone walling that forms part of a seating area around 'Fountain Rock Place'
23	Andy Dufford	West Crescent Plaza, Denver, CO	Stone 'Sentinels'? form interesting markers within this vibrant contemporary plaza
24,25	?	Pearl Street, Boulder, CO	carved stone pillars mark the ends of little pedestrian bridge in the Main Shopping Street. Part pedestrian shopping street, entertainment hub, playpark, Pearl Street is an exciting example of the possibilities to combine Community, commerce & leisure
26	?	Boulder, CO	Simple poem upon stone monolith
top 27	?	Boulder, CO	Pearl Street, space for children to play is integral to the streetscape
bottom 27	Andy Dufford	West Crescent Plaza, Denver, CO	Granite Spiral Fountain, no 'Keep Off' signs required
28,29	Peter Richards & George Gonzales,	San Francisco Bay	A stone & sound sculpture combining reclaimed material, creativity and wave action. An enchanting spot to take in the view or have a beer or two.
30	John Scott	Private Garden, Cramahe, Canada	Why have a soggy patch of grass when you could have..
33	David F Wilson, Pieter Schaffsma & friends	Willow Bend Environmental Centre Flagstaff AZ	Participants observe as the first stone is placed in the creation of the 'Peace Arch'
34	?	Art City Studios, Ventura, CA	Part Garden, stone yard, sculpture studio, a space all stone enthusiasts would enjoy exploring
35	Paul Lindhard	Art City Studios, Ventura, CA	Paul passionately sharing his love of stone
37	John Shaw-Rimington	Stonezone, Gualala	Dry stone walls become the sculpturally sublime
38	Paul Lindhard	Stonezone, Gualala	Nestled within a group of Redwoods stands one of Paul's dry stack, limestone towers, natural, appropriate perfect within its setting
40	Masayuki Agase	Rapid City, SD	Detail of 'Passage of Wind and Water' Main Street Square
42	Stone Foundation	Father Serra Cross Park, Ventura, CA	Legacy project by Stone Foundation members, Symposium 2010. These features stood strong despite being engulfed by the recent wildfire that decimated the area
43	Stone Foundation	Main Street, Cottonwood Falls, KS	Happy participants at Symposium 2017
44,45	mix	Art City Studios, Ventura, CA	everything is art, offcuts & waste combine to form an attractive welcoming wall to the Studios
46	Dan Snow	Private Land, Dummerston, VT	granite stone 'Jenga' - anyone up to the challenge?
48	Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates	Teardrop Park, Lower Manhattan, NYC	Stone slabs are the backbone of this green oasis deep in the heart of the City, a wonderfully creative inspirational mix of stonework & landscaping that provides the surrounding community a space for quality leisure time
51	?	Kansas City Museum of Contemporary Art	The texture of these Limestone blocks demand your touch
52	Tom Otterness	Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester	<i>'I believe in love'</i> so sings Bono in U2's 1988 song, God Part II, so too it seems does Mr Otterness. Rarely the subject of contemporary art 'Love' is definitely in the air for the subject of this controversial artists piece in Rochester, even if she has to sculpt the object of her desires with her own hands
53	Topher Delaney	Nema Plaza, San Francisco	'Promised Land' - an American phrase rich with meaning, some get there some don't. Cartography, personal and natural underpin the narrative of this work