

STONEZINE 10

THE DIGITAL COUNTERPART TO STONEXUS MAGAZINE





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TO STONEXUS MAGAZINE

Editor: Tomas Lipps

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photos by Tom Parish

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Cover photo by Tom Parish: A dug-out root cellar in Kansas.
above: Detail from The Tower of Babel by Pieter Bruegel.
left: Balanced stones by Piero Cosimo.



Re the (non)Symposium announced in STONEXUS XV. . .

You are owed an explanation:

The California Symposium in January 2016 was a success but its organizers were exhausted and this time last year there was no talk of the next Symposium. Taking a year off was suggested.

I was not alone in feeling that the annual gathering should happen annually, so I explored the possibility of returning the Symposium to Mallorca where, in 2007, I organized one of the best Symposiums ever. The groundwork, after all, was already done. I contacted a Mallorcan friend and dry stone waller there and we began to set something up.

A bit of history: in 2014, after fourteen years of managing the Stone Foundation, organizing its activities, and putting out its publications, I turned it over to ten or so friends and colleagues who I trusted to guide it on its path forward.

But I retained ownership of the magazine(s) as Stonexus Productions LLC. Then, last year, the Stone Foundation attained 501c3 non-profit corporate status and it entered into an agreement with Stonexus to purchase enough magazines to send to its members as a membership benefit.

Fine, but the work of organizing the Symposium would be done by myself and my partner—and if the Stone Foundation, in addition to paying for magazines to distribute to its members, were also to pay me for organizing the Symposium, its non-profit status would be jeopardized. So the event became a Stonexus Production—organized for the benefit of Stone Foundation.

Unfortunately the partnership altered when the local governmental bureaucracy became involved and assumed control. Let's just say that things didn't work out thereafter. Very disappointing. I'm know I'm not the only one who was looking forward to that event.

Fortunately, Stone Foundation administrators have been at work planning the Flint Hills Stonework Symposium in Kansas in May. This will be a Stone Foundation gathering in the traditional spirit—congenial, informative and interesting. I'm definitely going and I hope to see you there. . .

Tomas Lipps

FLINT HILLS STONEWORK SYMPOSIUM 2017 May 4-8
Presented by the Stone Foundation
Dry Stone Walling Workshop April 30-May 4
Architectural Fabrication Workshop April 30-May 4
Letter Carving Workshop May 2-4
Relief Carving Workshop May 1-4
Cottonwood Falls, Kansas

<https://www.stonefoundation.org/flint-hills-symposium---workshops.html>

THE EUROPEAN STONE FESTIVAL May 19-21
(Held in a different city in Europe each year.)
Kiskunfélegyháza, Hungary
<http://www.stonespecialist.com/news/events/european-stone-festival-moves-hungary-2017>

TRULLO RESTORATION PROJECT May 28–June 11
with Thea Alvin in Ceglie Messapica, Puglia, Italy
<http://www.archistrati.com/education/2017trulloworkshop/>

STONE CONSERVATION FIELD SCHOOL June 10–30
Presented by Willowbank School
at the Sainte-Marie Among The Hurons National Historic Site
<http://willowbank.ca/wpdir/willowbank-stone-conservation-field-school-sainte-marie-among-hurons/>

INTERMEDIATE DRY STONE WALLING WORKSHOP June 19-30
Salem Creek Dry Stone Bridge Workshop, Brighton Ontario
Presented by Dry Stone Walling Across Canada
<http://www.dswa.ca/>

17th ANNUAL SAX STONECARVING WORKSHOPS
Summer Session One, June 24-30
Summer Session 2, August 12-18
Rinconada, NM
<http://www.saxstonecarving.com/workshop.html>

TIR CONAILL STONE FESTIVAL June 23-25
Presented by the Dry Stone Wall Association of Ireland
Glencolmcille, Co. Donegal, Ireland
Details to come at: <http://www.dswai.ie/training>

ANNOUNCEMENTS 2017

BACKWEST CELEBRATION
OF STONE BALANCING
Sept. 22-24, Flagstaff, AZ
www.flagstaffartscouncil.org

30th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL STONE CARVING SYMPOSIUM July 8-15
Presented by the Northwest Stone Sculptors Association
Camp Pilgrim Firs, Port Orchard, WA
<http://www.nwssa.org/symposia/pilgrim-firs-symposium>

STONEMASONRY WORKSHOP July
A two-week workshop in Santa Fe, NM
For info: stonexus@earthlink.net

CANADIAN STONE CARVING FESTIVAL July 21-23
Presented by the Smith & Barber-Sculpture Atelier
Sparks Street Outdoor Mall, Ottawa Ontario
<http://canadianstonecarvingfestival.com/about/>

DRYSTONE FESTIVAL August 19th-20th
At Upper Canada Stone, Shanty Bay, ON
<https://uppercanadastone.com/upper-canada-drystone-festival/>

WAZA TO KOKORO—Hands and Heart August 25–September 5
The Use of Stone in the Japanese Tea Garden, Portland, Oregon
<http://www.japanesegarden.org/thecenter>

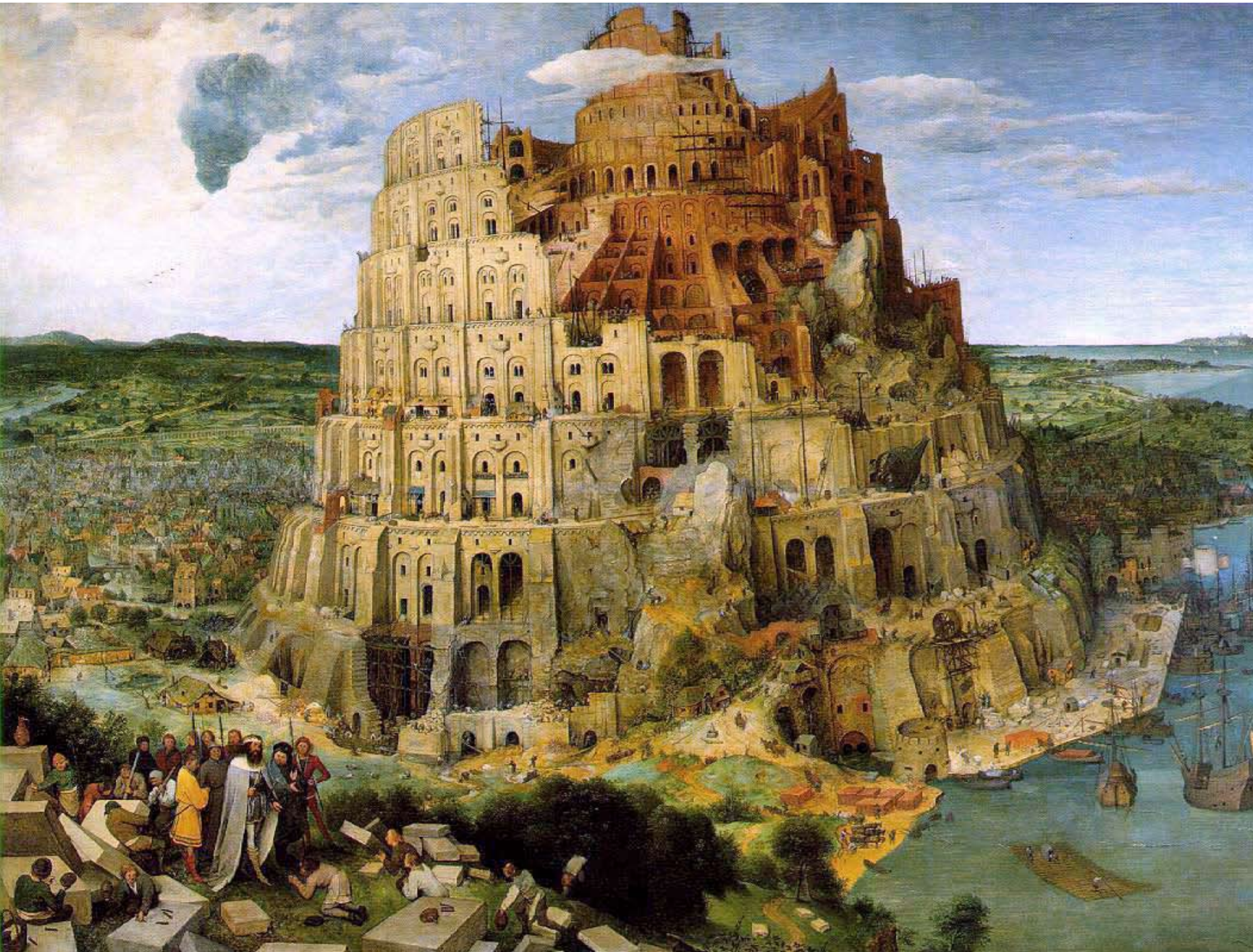
FEILE na gCLOCH September 16-17
Dry Stone Walling and Carving Workshops
Inis Oirr, Aran Islands, Co. Galway, Ireland
Details to come at: <http://www.dswai.ie/training>

DRY STONE FESTIVAL 2017 Sept 29-Oct 1
Presented by Dry Stone Canada
St. Mark's Anglican Church, village of Barriefield (Kingston, Ontario)
<http://drystonecanada.com/2017-festival-st-marks-barriefield-ontario/>

THE CARVING STUDIO AND SCULPTURE CENTER
is holding several Stone Carving and Sculpture Workshops
throughout the summer and fall in West Rutland VT.
<https://carvingstudio.org/events/category/workshops/>

THE STONE TRUST of Vermont will be holding more than 20 dry stone
walling workshops between now and October. For information:
<https://thestonetrust.org/workshop/upcoming-workshops/>





BABEL TOR

The biblical Tower of Babel had a historical origin: the ziggurat of the Babylonian god Marduk (in Sumerian, the *Etemenanki* or “house of the foundation of heaven on earth”).

The ziggurat was a massive terraced temple structure and the Israelites, during their era of captivity in Babylon, would have been well aware of it and referred to it in the book of Genesis.

It was square, as pyramidal ziggurats tended to be, and not round like the Roman Colosseum which Bruegel had seen and sketched during his time in Rome in the mid-sixteenth century and it was there that he made the first of three paintings on the subject.

Bruegel was a keen observer of human activity and this, the third painting, is an active work site, albeit one that is inhabited, and it is shown in minute detail. Workmen are busy everywhere on, within and around this massive accretion of material and the painter provides an authentic depiction of this community of builders, their tools, techniques and machinery.

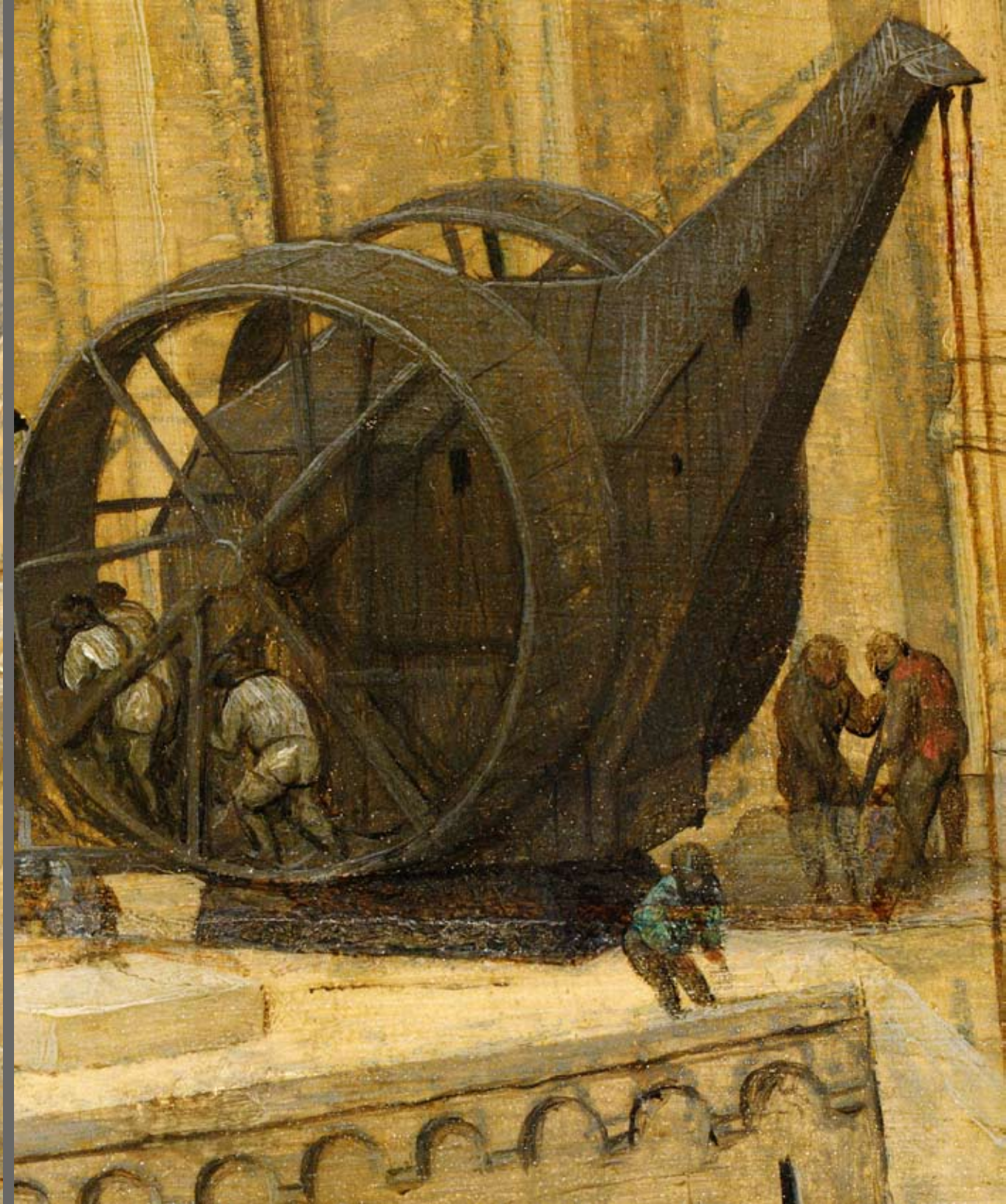
A spiraling gargantuan structure is in the act of being grafted onto an enormous rock outcropping. Some parts of the structure are complete, other parts are in various stages of construction and some have already attained a ruinous state. Men are at work at the apex, above the clouds, as well as in the foundation.

Thanks to the high-resolution images available at Wikimedia Commons we can examine the painting in detail and see the workmen at their tasks.

The final image in this series depicts a visit by the king to the masons' yard. It is interesting that while some stonecutters make obeisance, others continue chiseling away. Note the stonecutter's lunch in a basket and the flagon of wine on top of a stone.

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Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Tower of Babel, 1563. Oil on oak panel, 114×155 cm. Vienna, Austria Kunsthistorisches Museum. The third of three paintings on the same subject





Lithophones

were played throughout Africa: in South Africa, Nigeria, Togo, the Sudan, Ethiopia and the Serengeti.

Numerous rock gongs have been found on islands and elsewhere in the watershed of the Fourth Cataract region of the Upper Nile in the Sudan. These are large boulders that display evidence—cup marks—of being repeatedly struck. In some cases groupings of these gongs proliferate in locales that would accommodate a large gathering of people.

A study made of hundreds of rocks above the Fourth Cataract of the Upper Nile with cup marks created by repetitive percussion revealed something interesting: “. . .while some produce metallic, bell-like sounds when struck, others only emit dull thuds. . .(they are) sound-making devices because they all show physical traces in the form of loose or dense percussion zones, or. . .cup marks with gently curving sides and edges. Although **any rock featuring such wear marks may be regarded as a sound-making device, or lithophone**, only those that produce sustained sounds can be described as rock gongs.¹

This merits a reconsideration of the role of the *cup-and-ring* marked boulders—so prevalent in northern, western and southern Europe—in Neolithic ‘society.’ Were the stones lithophones as well as graphic expression? Were the markings accomplished as a sonic, rhythmic, communal act, a tribal tattoo—deepening and enlarging upon forms begun by predecessors?



¹ The Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, *Archaeology and acoustics of rock gongs above the Fourth Nile Cataract, Sudan: a preliminary report*. Cornelia Kleinitz, Rupert Till and Brenda Baker.

Iain Morley, *The Prehistory of Music: Human Evolution, Archaeology, and the Origins of Musicality*, Darwin College Research Report.

above and right: hajjar en-nugara (rock drum, granite-gneiss) Dar en-Njoum, Sudan, Upper Nile. A local resident remembers when, as a child, he took part in communal drumming on this rock. He said that the entire village participated, children and adults, each with a hammer-stone. Some drummed while others sang and danced.

left: Cup-and-ring glyphs, Chatton Park Hill. Northumberland, England



Caves in France and Spain

that are notable for the masterful paintings by 'early man' also contained lithophones—there is evidence of stalactites and stalagmites there having been struck repeatedly in certain places to produce sounds.

In Luray, Virginia, USA an extensive (3.5 acres) cavern complex was discovered in 1878 and awareness of the acoustical properties of the limestone stalactites came shortly thereafter.

In 1880 co-discoverer "Andrew Campbell led a tour of the Luray Caverns for a group sent by the Smithsonian Institute. According to a summary of the report incorporated into the earliest printed guides to Luray Caverns, Campbell surprised the group by playing a tune on a formation, probably the one that came to be known as The Organ. By the early 20th century, performances of folk tunes, hymns and other well-known pieces were a regular part of guided tours."¹

In the mid 50s, mathematician, electrical engineer and organist Leland W. Sprinkle visited the caverns and envisioned a huge, high-tech lithophone. He approached the owner with a proposal to turn the caverns into an immense musical instrument, an organ whose keyboard would electrically activate rubber mallets positioned to gently strike stalactites tuned to concert pitch. The owner is reported to have said, "Sure, why not?" and for the next three years the engineer worked to realize his dream, utilizing 5 miles of wiring in the process.

Recordings made by Sprinkle and, later, professional organist Monte Maxwell are sold in the Cavern's gift shop as are those of Paul Malmström (shown in the photo) and James Spectrum, the artist collective known as Pepe Deluxé.

As heard here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkvvcN6rt-I>



An English anomaly. . .

Ancient lithophones are not generally associated with European prehistory—although some believe that stone circles such as Stonehenge, the Ring of Brodgar and Callanish were lithophonic groupings. Prehistoric ‘ringing rocks’ bearing marks of having been persistently ‘sounded’ have been found throughout Ireland, Scotland and Scandinavia. There are as well the multitudinous boulders in western Europe that were percussively tattooed with cup-and -ring marks and the lithophonic stalactites and stalagmites in the painted caves mentioned on the previous page—but the stones had been quiet for quite some time.

Then in 1781, in England’s Lake District, one Peter Crosthwaite, an eccentric local character became aware of the acoustical properties of the stones of *Skiddaw*, a mountain near the town of Keswick in the county of Cumbria, northern England.

Before settling in Keswick Crosthwaite had commanded a gun-boat in the South China Sea protecting ships of the British East India Company from pirates. There he would have visited China and Vietnam, two countries noted for their traditional use of lithophones.

Possessed of a fertile imagination (an inventor, he had constructed an aeolian harp among several other things), he decided to create a lithophone. He collected specimens of a metamorphic rock, *hornfels*, from the Greta River and tuned them to create an instrument with a scale spanning two octaves. He then installed this in the *Chamber of Curiosities*, a museum he established in Keswick. It is likely that he was inspired by Vietnamese lithophones because what he produced resembled the ones played there.

Whether or not the musical seed that Crosthwaite planted in northern England was of Asian origin, it took root and, for a time, lithic music flourished there.

In the early 1800s, local stonemason and musician Joseph Richardson spent 13 years obsessively focused on constructing a ‘stone harmonicon,’ neglecting his livelihood and reducing his family to poverty.

But he finally succeeded in producing an instrument that encompassed seven octaves (the Crosthwaite instrument, remember, spanned only two) and with a family troupe composed of himself and his three sons he travelled around England and the Continent, even performing for Queen Victoria more than once (in their second performance they added an array of steel bells; it is said that Her Majesty did not approve).

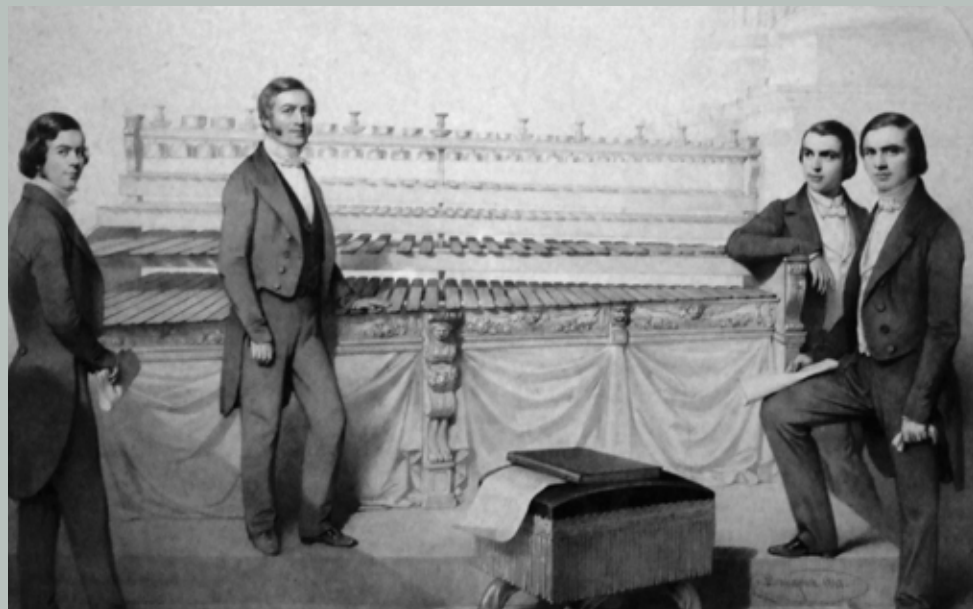
Others in the region were inspired to emulate Crosthwaite and the Richardsons, exploiting the lithophone concept and the special acoustic properties of the local stone.

In the 1830s Keswick naturalist William Greenip made a lithophone from slate (also in the Keswick Museum collection) and another local stonemason, William Bowe, collected stones and made a set. Three brothers named Harrison from Ulverston in southern Cumbria made and performed on a large Skiddaw lithophone. A Mr. Arthur Nelson built one and performed upon it and the Abraham brothers of Keswick, better known as photographers and rock climbers (the Lake District was one of three places where rock climbing as a sport began) were inspired to collect stones (58 of them) and make their own set.

In the early 1880s Daniel Till, also of Keswick, constructed a set with which he and his family toured, not only in England and on the Continent, but in the USA where several family members eventually settled. Their harmonicon is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Art in New York.

In the neighboring Yorkshire Dales lived Richard Alderson—better known as Neddy Dick (1845-1926). “*He wer a queer un. He wer brought up to farming but his mind wer always running on music.*” Neddy accidentally discovered the tuneful sounds of the local limestone and was inspired to build his own peculiar percussion instrument. He collected stones from the River Swale and from local dry-stone walls and mounted them in rows on a donkey cart which he took on local entertainment tours.

below, left to right: The Richardson Rock, Bell & Steel Band, the Till Family Rock Band, and Neddy Dick.



miscellanae. . .



Walls of the dry-dock for the RMS Titanic in Belfast, Northern Ireland photo: David Smith

CANADIAN IMAGERY

The carvings surrounding the ceremonial entrance to the Centre Block are magnificent pieces of sculpture designed by the first Dominion Sculptor, Cleophas Soucy, and his assistant, Coeur de Lion McCarthy under the direction of Alan Keefer, a noted architect for the Department of Public Works. The intricate designs around the door were carved between 1937 and 1938 by a team of six carvers, along with Soucy and McCarthy. The work garnered much attention from the media when it began in the summer of 1937.

The entrance has a distinctive Gothic character in keeping with the building. Heraldic devices, mythical beasts, animals and floral motifs abound. While the themes may fit within a traditional Gothic program, it is the subject of the carvings that gives the main entrance its distinctive Canadian flavor, as the Dominion Sculptor stated at the time.

The inner narrow band of carving, or frieze, depicts various birds, trees and flowers of Canada, a theme found throughout the entry. The coats of arms of Quebec and Ontario flank each other at the tops of the arch and are surmounted by a royal crown. All of the provincial arms are shown on a background of maple leaves, pine cones and other Canadian flora.

The archway is flanked by on either side by a 1.8 meter high beast shown standing erect; a unicorn is on the east side and a lion on the west. Known as 'supporters' in heraldry, these two beasts are found on the Arms of Canada as well as those of the United Kingdom. The Lion carries a Union flag and supports the Royal Arms, while the unicorn carries the Royal Flag of France and supports the Arms of Canada. These two guardians anchor the archway.



Any doubt of the Canadian character of the entrance will soon be dispelled when one looks up from the ground at the apex of the entry to the Centre Block. It is a study in contrasts, as sitting high above the heraldic devices—the mythical unicorn and stately lion—is a single beaver supporting a shield. The design on the shield is different than most in that it carries images of five flowers representing the European cultures that played a prominent role in early Canada. A Tudor rose represents the English, a *fleur de lis* the French, a thistle the Scots, a shamrock the Irish, and a leek the Welsh.





“That’s the one I like best, but everyone else seems to like the other one.”

from the New Yorker, Magazine, April 3, 2017