



Museum of Stones: Ancient and Contemporary Art at The Noguchi Museum

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Museum of Stones looks at the various ways artists from across the world, and from different civilizations and cultures, have used rock and stone in their work. This engrossing new volume is also an important contribution to the study of influential Japanese American artist Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988), whose revolutionary ideas and use of stone still resonate today. Much of his work aimed to restore to stone some of the liveliness, transience and impressionability it exhibits in nature. Noguchi believed that rock and stone have a lifecycle that they should be allowed to experience in full, but he also recognized that they are the raw materials of technology, and that they should be used for that purpose, an ambivalence that shaped his work throughout his career.

As well as sculptures by Noguchi there are over fifty works by thirty major international artists, including Mel Bochner, Dove Bradshaw, Bruce Conner, Jimmie Durham, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Jochen Gerz, Janine Antoni, Gabriel Orozco, Bosco Sodi, Keith Sonnier, Stephanie Syjuco, Toshiko Takaezu, Lawrence Weiner, and Tarek Zaki. There are stones from the ancient fortifications of Jerusalem, rocks used by mathematicians (the Latin word calculus means a small pebble used for counting) and fifteen Chinese rock-related objects on loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, including scroll paintings dating from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Dakin Hart is senior curator at the Noguchi Museum.

Matt Kirsch is associate curator at the Noguchi Museum.

Joseph Scheier-Dolhberg is assistant curator of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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