

E L I Z A B E T H   T U R K





E L I Z A B E T H   T U R K

T E N S I O N S

September 17 – October 24, 2015

**Hirschl & Adler Modern**

The Crown Building

730 Fifth Avenue

New York, New York 10019

212.535.8810

[www.HirschlAndAdler.com](http://www.HirschlAndAdler.com)







## P R E F A C E

Hirschl & Adler Modern has been honored to represent Elizabeth Turk for the past fifteen years and to present her most ambitious projects. In *Collars* (2006), *Ribbons and Pinwheels* (2008), *Cages* (2012), and *Script* (2014), Turk pushed the limits of her medium with hand-carved forms that defy their materiality while speaking to larger conceptual and spiritual concerns.

*Tensions*, Turk's newest body of work, is a multi-media installation inspired by ideas initiated in her recent solo exhibition at the Laguna Art Museum. In *Tensions*, Turk moves her formal language forward into uncharted territory. By juxtaposing her signature hand-carved white and black marble sculptures with unworked "philosopher" stones and sections of a centuries-old redwood root system, she creates an environment that investigates the balance—and tension—between man-made and natural, material and concept.

Turk encourages us to consider how nature has shaped these materials long before the artist's manipulation of them into new forms. When viewed as components in a complex natural system, their singular beauty and inherent mystery is revealed. This body of work is less about individual sculptures standing alone, and more about the sum of their parts. Turk compels us to view works of art not only as objects to be coveted and collected, but also as expressions of the natural world and our evolving relation to it.

We congratulate Elizabeth for committing to her vision, breaking her own boundaries, and taking risks. We are all better for it. We wish to thank Dan Cameron for sharing his perspective on Elizabeth Turk's work. At Hirschl & Adler, special thanks are due to Chelsea Larson and Bill Blatz. As well, the artist wishes to thank her family, the Chiarini Family, Memo Memovich, Jose Pedrosa, Erik Risser, Erik Thienes, Phil Lui, Joe Worland and Tom Arbour.

*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 8, 2015*

Marble and Baja beach stones

2½ x 7 x 6½ in.

cat. 8

S H E L L E Y   F A R M E R

E L I Z A B E T H   F E L D

T E D   H O L L A N D



## MOMENTS WRITTEN IN STONE

DAN CAMERON

If the essence of art can be located in its capacity to communicate the wonderment of nature through other means, then the question of how best to represent the natural world becomes a self-perpetuating challenge. For most of the last century, nature has served, at various moments, as muse (Mondrian), subject (Burchfield), and model (Pollock), and among other artistic pinnacles attained in the 1960s, the movement of art out of the gallery and into the landscape in the form of Earthworks enabled artists to experience their creations for the first time as part of a direct interaction with nature. The experience of beauty in Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, Walter de Maria's *Lightning Field*, or James Turrell's *Roden Crater*, and the thoughtful contemplation of the landscapes in which they exist cannot be separated.

While little in the form of a break with precedent can be said to link Elizabeth Turk's recent sculptures with those 1960s-era experiments in what Rosalind Krauss defined as an "expanded field," both examples share an intent to give form to the implicit belief that nature provides the ultimate standard for measuring an artist's output—and potentially the ideal collaborator as well. In most of her new pieces, Turk has juxtaposed one or more "found" fragments of nature with marble forms that have been painstakingly tooled to evoke qualities and details that are enhanced, in turn, by their visual dialogue with the untouched elements. The sculpture *Home* (cat. 15) for instance, is comprised of two elements that each have a documented history extending to the 19th century: the root system of a redwood chopped down generations ago in northern California, and a

Elizabeth Turk in her studio  
with *Earth & Universe* —  
*Marble & Baja Beach Stone*





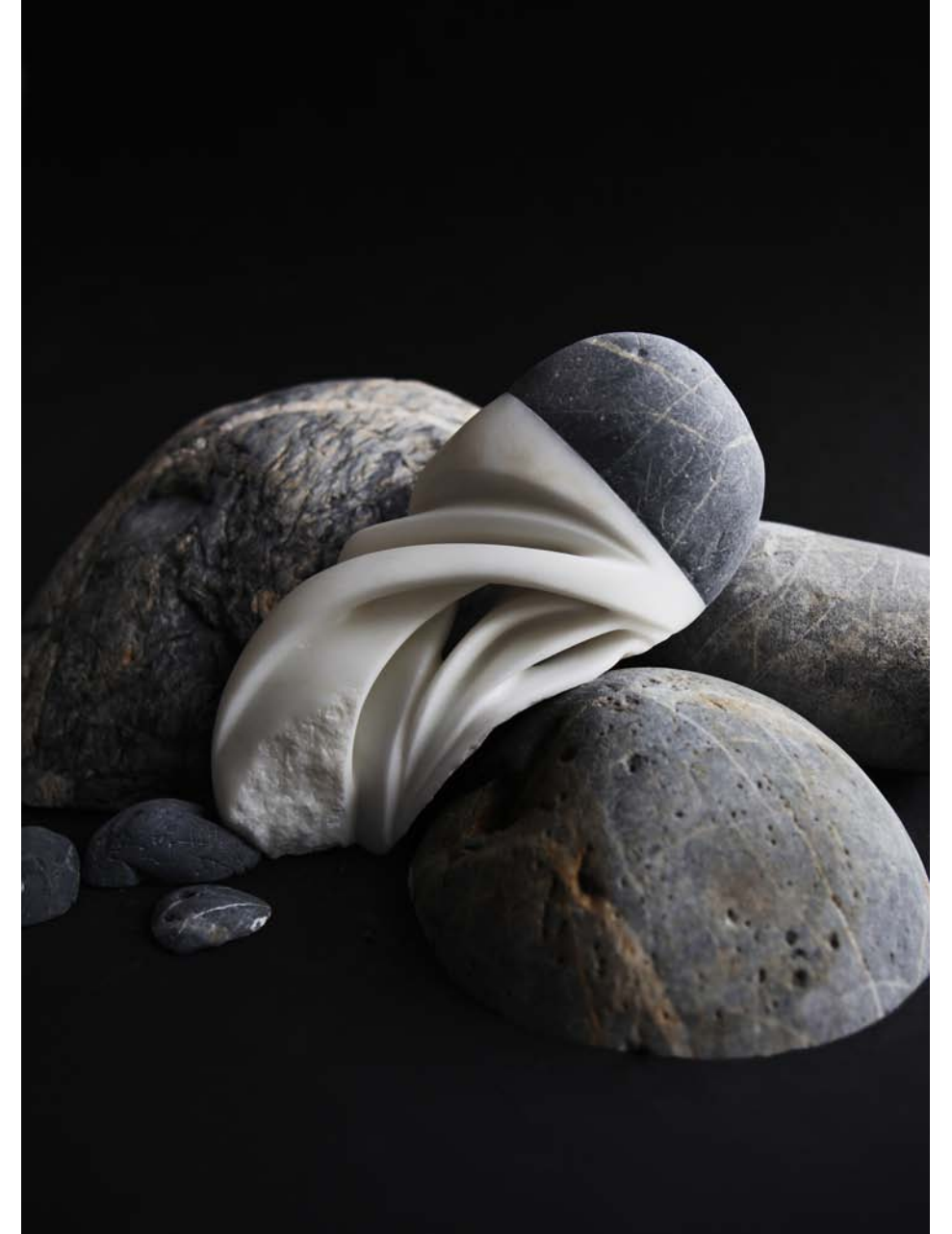


*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 4, 2015*

Marble and Baja beach stones

2½ x 4 x 9 in.

cat. 4



LEFT

*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 9, 2015*

Marble and Baja beach stones

4½ x 5 x 8½ in.

cat. 9

block of marble quarried from Marble, Colorado, around the same time. As with all her works, Turk has taken special care to ensure that the original dimensions of the stone are preserved, although unlike the redwood root system, this *material prima* has been painstakingly hollowed out, carved, and polished in its arduous transformation into an “abstract” form. In the case of *Suspended Meditation* (cat. 25), the original object has been partly carved to produce a seamless transition between what is found and what is made, but in this case Turk has borrowed a page from the Earthworks’ playbook and incorporated the finished product as a video installation, documenting the stone in the form of a live feed as it is suspended over a tidal bay in Newport Beach, California, near the artist’s studio.



*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 1, 2015*  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
1½ x 4 x 6 in.  
cat. 1

LEFT

*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 12, 2015*  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
10 x 11 x 18 in.  
cat. 12



Traditionally, working with marble requires an extreme physicality, most typically using hammer and chisel, chipping away at its exterior in gradual increments, followed by polish and then, if required, more force. Turk's method is just as physical, but more technologically savvy: scanning her stones, and then inverting the image in order to precisely cut the marble and expand the space in between its outer dimensions, she employs diamond-tipped electric and pneumatic grinders to slowly hollow out the stone, often leaving what seems to be only a tissue-thin membrane the define the essential shape. Technically, her overall goal is to catalyze the transformation of a solid rock into a hollow space of air, to make a block into a ribbon, and convert geological density into sinewy delicateness. The stone, in an unexpected turn, seems to become more of what it always was, revealing aspects of its characteristic texture, patterns and surface that would not be as noticeable prior to its transformation.





*Heaven & Earth 2, 2015*  
Ink and graphite on paper  
10 x 7 in.  
cat. 17



*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 13, 2015*  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
11½ x 18 x 10 in.  
cat. 13

RIGHT

*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 11, 2015*  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
9 x 8 x 7 in.  
cat. 11





*Marble & Idaho Green*  
*Quartzite 2, 2013*  
 Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
 with plinth  
 5½ x 17 x 41½ in.  
 cat. 22

Turk has described the countless hours of physical labor required to achieve such effects in terms of a “devotional” practice. Because of the remarkably singular nature of her tenacity in transforming marble, the visual juxtapositions enacted in the completed sculptural ensembles, between intensely worked abstract forms and found materials that seem largely untouched, it is not at all clear on first impression how such meetings are intended to be understood. The basket-cocoon shape of the marble in *Home* seems protective, even comforting, compared to the fragile root system of the redwood. The two elements are neither mirroring each other nor establishing an overt contrast. Instead, they invite viewers to consider the relationship between one thing that has visibly undergone arduous and time-intensive reshaping and refining, and another that is immeasurably complex and intricate, without having ever been modified by human hands. In a sense, Turk is submerging her own artistic ego by establishing an equality of meaning between a

*Marble & Idaho Green*  
*Quartzite 3, 2013*  
 Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
 with plinth  
 8 x 22 x 20 in.  
 cat. 23



*Marble & Idaho Green*  
*Quartzite 4, 2015*  
 Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
 with plinth  
 5½ x 17 x 22 in.  
 cat. 24





*Evaporated River*, 2015  
Limestone and Vermont  
black marble  
OVERALL: 40 x 204 x 180 in.

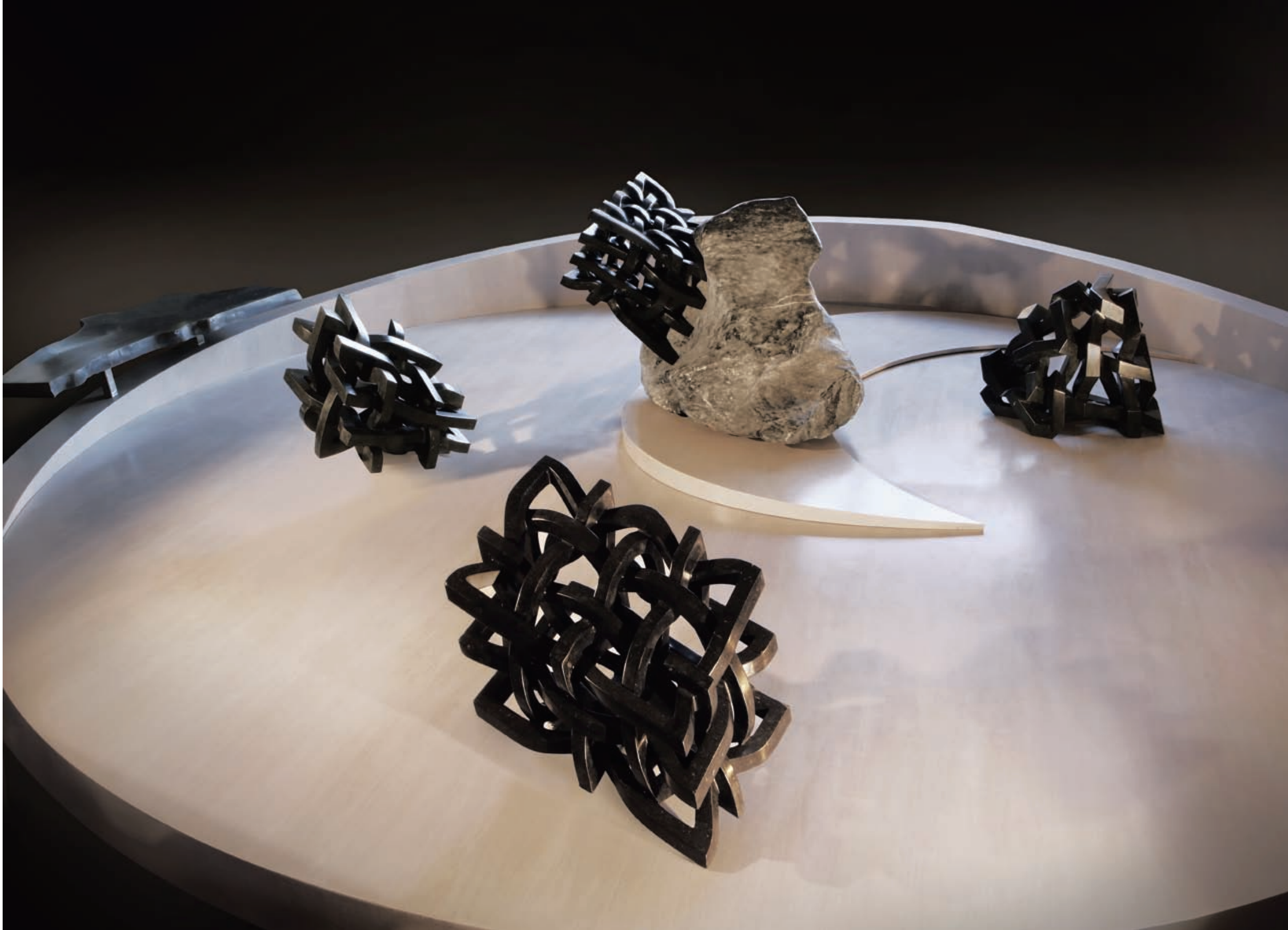
*Evaporated River:*  
*Vermont Black #1*, 2014  
22½ x 17½ x 16½ in.

*Evaporated River:*  
*Vermont Black #2*, 2014  
27 x 21 x 16 in.

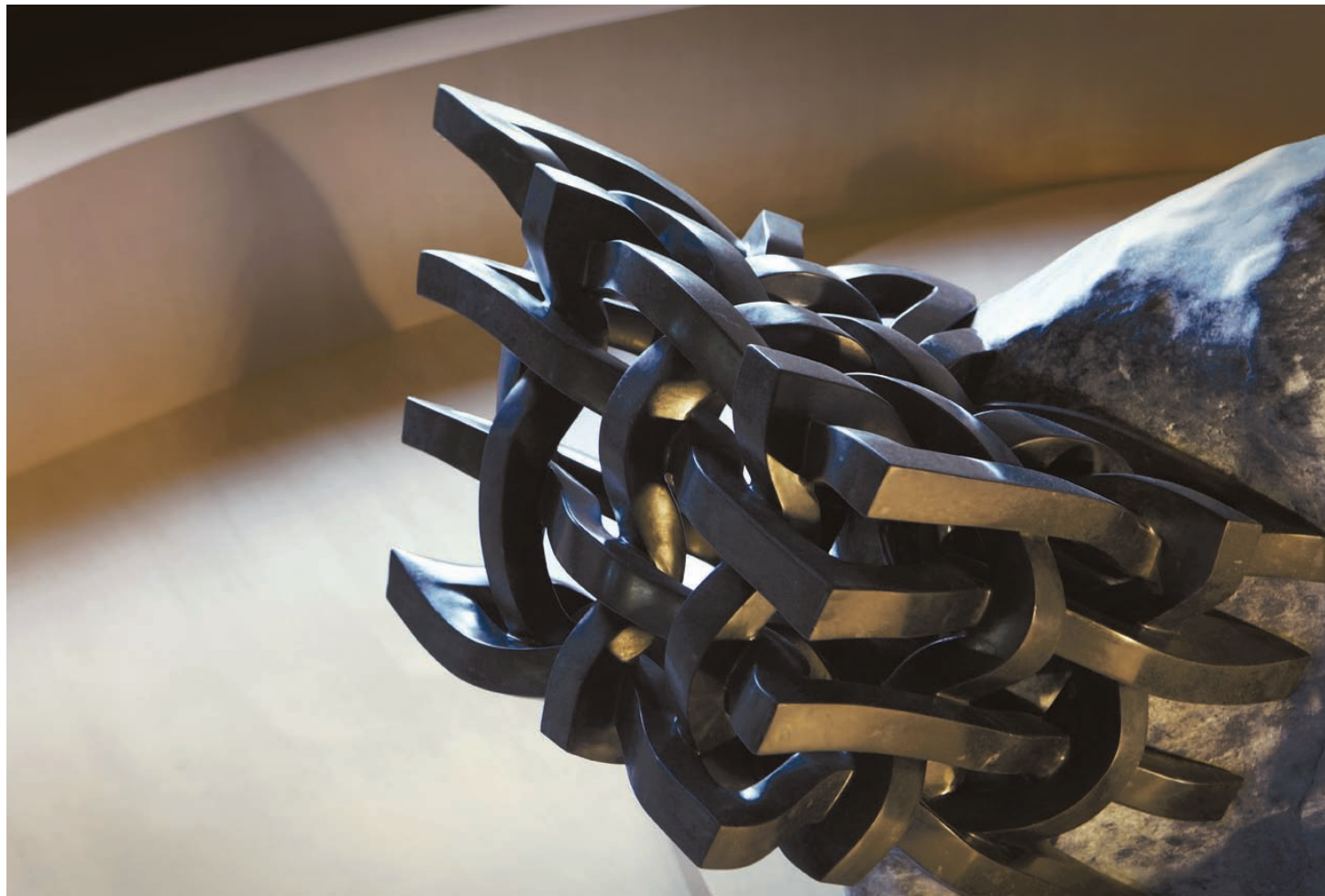
*Evaporated River:*  
*Vermont Black #3*, 2014  
10 x 28 x 18 in.

*Evaporated River:*  
*Vermont Black #4*, 2015  
29 x 21 x 21 in.

cats. 14a–d







*Evaporated River:*  
*Vermont Black #1, 2014*  
 Limestone and Vermont black marble  
 22½ x 17½ x 16½ in.  
 cat. 14a

RIGHT

*Evaporated River:*  
*Vermont Black #3, 2014*  
 Vermont black marble  
 10 x 28 x 18 in.  
 cat. 14c

product of sustained human intention, and the inherent beauty and perfection of a stump lost in a bog.

A philosopher's stone is an object formed by natural processes over millions of years, which is then brought inside the field of mindful perception as a vehicle for contemplating the fleeting aspects of our own transient passage through the world, and to reflect on our unlimited capacity for extracting clues about the meaning of existence from every possible source. A philosopher's stone does not become such by dint of a particular beauty, by its endurance or even its value as a geological specimen, but only through the intention of the individual who selects it and then invites us to share the process of appreciating its mere existence.







*Home* (detail), 2015



*Home*, 2015  
 Marble and Northern  
 California redwood  
 OVERALL: 36 x 67 x 120 in.  
 Marble: 37 x 33 x 36½ in.  
 Redwood root 1: 17 x 67 x 36 in.  
 Redwood root 2: 14 x 41 x 58 in.  
 cat. 15

Our lives, relative to that stone, last only an instant, but the age of the stone, relative to that of the universe, is not appreciably longer than our own. Turk has labored mightily to remind us that while a hundred consecutive human lives might not equal the life of a single redwood, our incessant quest for deeper significance as part of our complex interface with nature is what constitutes the essence of our tragic nobility as a species.

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Dan Cameron was Chief Curator at Orange County Museum of Art from 2012 to 2015, where he presented the 2013 California-Pacific Triennial, among other successful exhibitions. In 2006, Cameron founded Prospect New Orleans and directed the biennial until 2011, a period when he was also Director of Visual Arts at that city's Contemporary Arts Center. From 1995 to 2006, Cameron was Senior Curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York. As an independent curator, Cameron was Artistic Director for the 8th Istanbul Biennial in 2003, and co-curator of the 10th Taipei Biennial in 2006.

CATALOGUE



Marble & Baja Beach Stone 6, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
3 x 5 x 10 in.  
cat. 6



Marble & Baja Beach Stone 3, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
2½ x 4½ x 8 in.  
cat. 3

All dimensions in inches,  
height x width x depth

1  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 1, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
1½ x 4 x 6 in.  
Illustrated p. 9

2  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 2, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
2½ x 3 x 5 in.

3  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 3, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
2½ x 4½ x 8 in.  
Illustrated p. 20

4  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 4, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
2½ x 4 x 9 in.  
Illustrated p. 7

5  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 5, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
3½ x 4 x 9 in.  
Illustrated p. 24

6  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 6, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stone  
3 x 5 x 10 in.  
Illustrated p. 20

7  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 7, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
4½ x 4 x 9 in.

8  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 8, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
2½ x 7 x 6½ in.  
Illustrated p. 2

9  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 9, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
4½ x 5 x 8½ in.  
Illustrated p. 6

10  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 10, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
5 x 8 x 10½ in.  
Illustrated on cover

11  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 11, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
9 x 8 x 7 in.  
Illustrated p. 11

12  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 12, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
10 x 11 x 18 in.  
Illustrated p. 8

13  
Marble & Baja Beach Stone 13, 2015  
Marble and Baja beach stones  
11½ x 18 x 10 in.  
Illustrated p. 10

14  
Evaporated River, 2015  
Limestone and Vermont black marble  
OVERALL: 40 x 204 x 180 in.  
Illustrated pp. 14–15

14a  
Evaporated River:  
Vermont Black #1, 2014  
22½ x 17½ x 16½ in.  
Illustrated p. 16

14b  
Evaporated River:  
Vermont Black #2, 2014  
27 x 21 x 16 in.

14c  
Evaporated River:  
Vermont Black #3, 2014  
10 x 28 x 18 in.  
Illustrated p. 17

14d  
Evaporated River:  
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29 x 21 x 21 in.

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Home, 2015  
Marble and Northern California redwood  
OVERALL: 36 x 67 x 120 in.  
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Redwood root 2: 14 x 41 x 58 in.  
Illustrated p. 18



Heaven & Earth 4, 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
5 x 7 in.  
cat. 19

16  
Heaven & Earth 1, 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
10 x 7 in.

17  
Heaven & Earth 2, 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
10 x 7 in.  
Illustrated p. 10

18  
Heaven & Earth 3, 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
10 x 7 in.

19  
Heaven & Earth 4, 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
5 x 7 in.  
Illustrated p. 21

20  
Heaven & Earth 5, 2015  
Ink and graphite on paper  
5 x 7 in.

21  
Marble & Idaho Green  
Quartzite 1, 2012  
Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
with plinth  
6 x 11¼ x 23 in.

22  
Marble & Idaho Green  
Quartzite 2, 2013  
Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
with plinth  
5½ x 17 x 41½ in.  
Illustrated p. 12

23  
Marble & Idaho Green  
Quartzite 3, 2013  
Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
with plinth  
8 x 22 x 20 in.  
Illustrated p. 13

24  
Marble & Idaho Green  
Quartzite 4, 2015  
Marble and Idaho green quartzite  
with plinth  
5½ x 17 x 22 in.  
Illustrated p. 13

25  
Suspended Meditation, 2015  
Texas limestone and 24k gold leaf  
38 x 36 x 36 in.  
Illustrated p. 22

26  
Grounded Meditation, 2015  
Texas limestone  
19 x 26 x 12 in.





*Suspended Meditation*, 2015  
Texas limestone and 24k gold leaf  
38 x 36 x 36 in.  
cat. 25

ELIZABETH TURK

Born

1961 California

Education

1994 M.F.A., Rinehart School of Sculpture, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD  
1983 B.F.A., International Relations, Scripps College, Claremont, CA

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2015 *Tensions*, Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York, NY  
2014 *Elizabeth Turk: Sentient Forms*, Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA  
*Convergence: X-ray Mandalas*, SCAPE / Southern California Art Projects & Exhibitions, Corona del Mar, CA  
Masterpiece London, London, England (solo booth presentation)  
2013 *Elizabeth Turk: Wings*, The Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, OH  
2012 *Art Kabinett: Infinite Emptiness*, Hirschl & Adler Modern, Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, FL  
*Cages*, Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York, NY  
2008 *Ribbons and Pinwheels*, Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York, NY  
*Traces*, Bandini Art, Culver City, CA  
2007 The Lotos Club, New York, NY  
2006 *The Collars*, Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York, NY  
*Drawings*, Joie Lassiter Gallery, Charlotte, NC  
*Domestic Settings*, Galerie Lareuse, Washington, DC  
2004 *VantagePoint III: Elizabeth Turk, The Collars: Tracings of Thought*, Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, NC  
2003 *(Know) Fly Zone*, Installation, Santa Ana, CA  
2001 *A Memorial to Nature I, An Installation by Elizabeth Turk*, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara, CA  
1998 *Elizabeth Turk*, Hemphill Gallery, Washington, DC

Selected Group Exhibitions

2014 *Six Women*, Hostler Burrows, New York, NY  
2013 *Duets: Art in Conversation*, Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York, NY

*Alive—Moving Nature I Art and Nature*, Laguna Art Museum Collaborative, LCAD Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA  
2012 *Meticulosity*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA  
*Loose Canon*, LA Louver, Venice, CA  
2011 *Night Scented Stock*, Curated by Todd Levin, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, NY  
*Masterworks: The Best of Hirschl & Adler*, Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York, NY  
2010 Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC  
2008 *Modern Love: Gifts to the Collection from Heather and Tony Podesta*, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC  
*Looky See*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis School of Art, Los Angeles, CA  
*New Acquisitions*, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Scripps College, Claremont, CA  
*Celebrating Women Artists*, Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York, NY  
*Poetry & Works on Paper*, Joie Lassiter Gallery, Charlotte, NC  
2006 *Complicit*, University of Virginia Art Museum, Charlottesville, VA  
*Draw, Paper, Scissors*, Jeanne Patterson, Los Angeles, CA  
2004 *3 Solo Projects: Jane Mulfinger, Ross Rudel, Elizabeth Turk*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA  
2003 *Matter and Matrix*, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Scripps College, Claremont, CA  
*Going Public*, American Institute of Architecture, New York, NY  
2002 Japan Bank Building, Hiroshima, Japan, postcard collaboration with Koso Haranka and Kirara Kawauchi  
2000 *New York—Classicism—Now*, Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York, NY  
1998 *Objectivity: International Objects of Subjectivity*, Contemporary Art Center, Virginia Beach, VA  
1997 *From Here*, Baumgartner Gallery, Washington, DC  
*A Sculpture Show*, Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, MD  
1996 *Louise Bourgeois: Elizabeth Turk*, Baumgartner Gallery, Washington, DC  
*A Sculpture Show*, Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, MD  
*Fresh Out*, Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, MD  
*Superbia*, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, DC

Grants, Residencies, Awards, and Fellowships

2013 Lotos Award of Distinction, The Lotos Club, New York, NY  
2012 Helena Modjeska Award, Arts Orange County  
2011 Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship  
Featured speaker, TEDxAtlanta “Creativity”  
2010 John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship  
Barnett & Annalee Newman Foundation Fellowship  
2009 Lux Art Institute, Artist in Residence, Encinitas, CA  
Pilchuck, Artist in Residence, Seattle, WA  
2003 McColl Center for Visual Art, Artist in Residence, Charlotte, NC  
2002 Kyojima Artist in Residency Program, Tokyo, Japan  
Ensemble Studio Theater, Artist in Residence (Summer), New York, NY  
2001 California State Fullerton, Artist in Residence, Santa Ana, CA  
2000 Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant  
New York City Art Commission Award for Excellence in Design  
John Michael Kohler Arts & Industry Program, Artist in Residence, Sheboygan, WI  
1994 Amalie Rothschild Award

Selected Public Collections

Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Charlotte, NC  
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA  
Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC  
National Museum for Women in the Arts, Washington, DC  
Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Scripps College, Claremont, CA  
United States Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq  
Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC



*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 5, 2015*

Marble and Baja beach stones

3½ x 4 x 9 in.

cat. 5

D E S I G N

Elizabeth Finger

P H O T O G R A P H Y

Eric Stoner

*All photography © Elizabeth Turk*

P R I N T I N G

The Studley Press

C O V E R

*Marble & Baja Beach Stone 10, 2015*

Marble and Baja beach stones

5 x 8 x 10½ in.

cat. 10

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