



**THE LAPIDIALS**  
*Present*  
**THE GALAXY OF  
STANDING STONES**

*Les LAPIDIALES - Association according to the 1901 law - Town hall - 17350 Port d'Envaux - France*

## FOREWORD



Yury Tkachenko and Tina Dusavitskaya

On the evening of July 15, 2009, a dozen of us under the half-moon around a table celebrate the departure of Indian sculptor from New Delhi, Tutu Pattnaik, who has been in residence at Port d'Envaux for two months. To replace him, Paora Toi Te Rangiuaia landed from New Zealand after three days of low cost journey around the planet.

The evening is sweet, we exchange as best we can with a lot of looks and gestures. There are four of us from Les Lapidiales who speak French, plus Russian sculptor Tina Dusavitskaya. She acts as an interpreter for her alter ego Yury Tkachenko. Both have been in residence for a month already. With us again, a Norwegian friend and his Austrian companion came back to see us during their vacation.

At dessert time, Yury gets up, a little solemn but amused eyes. With his deep voice, he speaks in Russian. Only Tina



Tutu Pattnaik

understands what he is saying but does not translate. Having finished his speech, Yury sits down again, looking serious.

In the silence that follows, Tutu Pattnaik gets up in turn and speaks to us in Hindi. His emotion is palpable, ours too. Then, Paora takes over in Maori. We do not understand his words any more, but he reveals a great depth accompanied by a communicative fraternity.

Everyone around the table realizes that without having concerted, the three sculptors have just let the soul of their people speak. As the interventions progressed, we had the impression that we were seeing the realization of the sweet utopia that we dreamed of when creating the Lapidiales in this

special evening:

To create a space of freedom open to all where, through sculpture and shared life, the imaginaries of the peoples of the earth meet and enrich each other.



Paora Toi Te Rangiuaia



## THE ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT

Les Lapidiales is an association under the 1901 law founded in 2000 by Alain Tenenbaum. It has around 250 members to date. In 2001, under the sponsorship and in the presence of the Senegalese sculptor Ousmane SOW, the Lapidiales invested the old Chabossières quarry in Port d'Envaux (17) to sculpt stone on the face of ashlar according to five themes, creating a realistic utopia based on exchange and sharing.

From the outset, resident sculptors have received a monthly allowance that allows them to worry only about their works. They co-opt each other, so that after fifteen years, the artists who have stayed at the Lapidiales have left around 80 monumental sculptures that more than 120,000 visitors in 2019 were able to see freely, because the entrance to the site is free, night and day. Each year, five to seven sculptors in residence are present between May and September. The audience can watch the artists at work and share their impressions with them.



*Œuvre de Sergey Milchenko (2010)*

In 2019, half of our resources come from grants from our institutional partners, namely: the Poitou-Charentes Region, the Departmental Council of Charente-Maritime, the CDC Cœur de Saintonge and the town hall of Port d'Envaux.

The Lapidiales association is self-financing up to 40% of its budget which, depending on the year, varies around € 100,000.

The creation in early 2014 of the LE CLUB LAPIDIALES endowment fund opened up our funding to private sponsorship. It contributes to the life of the Lapidiales for about 30% of the budget. After twenty years of mutual pleasure... our dream has taken shape.

**Over time, the collective work has progressed.**

Today, due to the modest size of the Chabossières site, the entire quarry has been sculpted.



The recognition of our artistic adventure coincided with the desire of the Departmental Council to highlight the geological, architectural and ethnological heritage of Charente-Maritime.

The "Pôle Nature de la Pierre de Crazannes" between the quarries of Crazannes, our remarkable neighbors, and the Lapidiales of Port d'Envaux is now making this ambition a reality.

We are establishing a bridge connecting the tradition of mining and stonework from ancient Roman times to contemporary sculpture and wish to strengthen the identity of the territory, its originality by offering visitors an alternative to frequenting the coast.

Hence the idea of the Les Lapidiales association: to extend this "Pôle Pierre" to the whole of the Charente-Maritime department and, later, beyond.

This is how the concept of **"The Galaxy of Standing Stones"** took shape.

## THE GALAXY OF STANDING STONES



Mathieu Harzo  
France 2015

Culture with a capital "C" does not belong to a small caste. In essence, it is shared or it dies. Better, it only exists to the extent that the greatest number are recognized in it. As the richness and diversity of the world's cultures come under the onslaught of the hegemonics of big business, triumphant technology and so-called contemporary art, almost every day a language disappears from the face of the planet.

We have the crazy ambition to participate - with our modest means - in the preservation of the universal heritage of humanity. This is why The Galaxy of Standing Stones concerns all the cultural players of the department and the region - professionals and amateurs alike - united around a unifying project that we see as a real tool for cultural links.

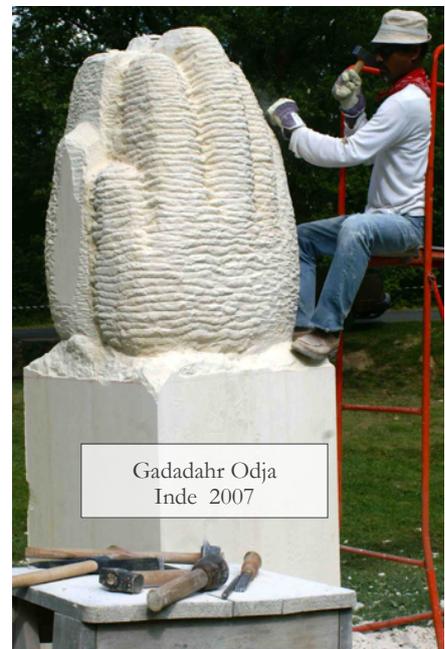
Each association, each choir, orchestra, dance or theater group, each independent artist, visual artist or musician will

be able to freely find their place and register, for as long as they wish, their own approach within this artistic and human movement.

From a field of 365 megaliths dedicated to the cultures of still living human societies, we propose to trace routes of raised stones spread over the entire territory, encouraging a new approach to its landscapes, a new look, at the same time. time than a better understanding of the peoples of our Earth.

We want to create a permanent event that will have no equivalent elsewhere in the world.

Taking advantage of the multiple skills gathered year after year around Lapidiales, we have imagined this extension of our artistic and cultural commitment. It is in line with our raison d'être: to marry the stone sculpture with other artistic expressions and to show the diversity of the cultures of the planet by offering the public the possibility of participating effectively in this adventure.



Gadadahr Odja  
Inde 2007

**The Galaxy of Standing Stones** claims to provide everyone with free access to the necessary knowledge of the other.



This is how we concretely imagine its establishment and operation throughout the territory:

## THE FIELD OF MEGALITHS



In the center, surrounding a small agora, five **Mother Stones** symbolize the five continents of planet Earth.

All around, as if proceeding from the mother stones, **360 megaliths** arranged in the shape of a galactic spiral: beyond the site, they will induce imaginary routes concretized by raised stones which, year after year, will mesh the whole department and later beyond .

Each stone, rough from the quarry, will measure approximately 2.3 m high by 0,8 m<sup>2</sup> base. All will be placed on 80 cm plinths to accentuate the difference in scale with the man looking at them. Moreover, like the fairy chimneys in Cappadocia, we "Cap" some of them with a large stone that will give them an anthropoid silhouette, well in line with the idea of culture which is characteristic of humanity.

Such a site is sure to attract large numbers of visitors.

**It should make a powerful contribution to rebalancing the tourist flow between the Atlantic coast and the interior of the country.**

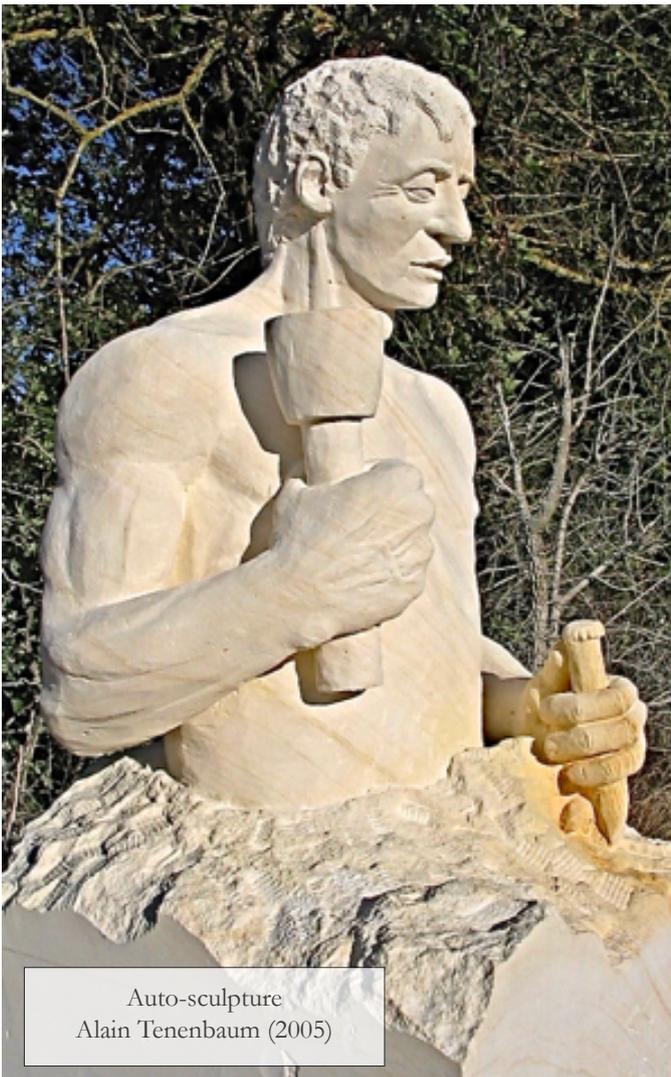
Initially, we will decline one culture per year. Later, if our means allow it, we can consider presenting several civilizations in parallel or making connections.

As at the Lapidiales, the stones of **The Galaxy of Standing Stones** will be worked in view of the visitors by sculptors in residence expressing the chosen cultures.

Thus will begin **the site-event**. It should last several decades ...

## SCULPTURE ON THE FIELD OF MEGALITHS

Each year, from May to September, the field of megaliths will host, according to the tradition established for eighteen years by Les Lapidiales, six to seven sculptors in residence. They will work by hand (especially to avoid nuisance from electric and pneumatic tools) for a month and a half or two (depending on the artist's project), in the presence of passing visitors.



Additional moments of meeting and dialogue will be organized for several times during their stay, as has been the case since the origin of the **Lapidiales**.

Each sculptor will be given a megalith whose waiting stone has been replaced by a work stone more suitable for sculpture. This megalith will be installed in the branch of the galaxy corresponding to the continent of the guest culture.

Each season will focus on a specific culture, taking up the principle of "**proclamations**" developed by **Unesco** for the defense of oral and intangible heritage. Several of the sculptors invited each year will therefore belong to the same culture and others, coming from other horizons, will however be able to design their work in reference to this one.

Thus, the old forms, resulting from the tradition of these cultures will be able to

work side by side with more contemporary creations emphasizing the current vitality of these cultures.

Finally, according to our means, we will organize an exhibition, conferences, shows, film screenings, even a conference allowing a more in-depth discovery of the culture presented and its artistic forms.



## IMAGINARY ITINERARIES

Extending the field of raised stones, the routes will tell our own culture in volume or graphically. Through an engraved text or a sculpted shape, each of these stones will resonate with the landscape.

Equipped with GPS for a good localization, the megaliths will also indicate such historical event or such geological particularity or again, such remarkable point of view. These large stones will link to a website where everyone can find complete documentation on the culture presented and / or on the site indicated.

**Setting up the *Routes* will involve more human investment than money. By proceeding as a first step, depending on the possible funding, with the installation of a dozen stones per year, the various partners will avoid committing "blindly" and will be able, at each stage, to control the use. budgets.**

An important part of the implementation period of the project will consist in raising the awareness of municipal, territorial, professional and associative leaders of the territory and the region in order to involve them closely in the development of **The Galaxy of Standing Stones**.

For example, we are thinking of offering the municipalities of the region the purchase of two megaliths. One serving as a sign of direct concern to them and the other relating to a civilization.

In the towns crossed by the routes, we will offer schools and colleges work to raise awareness of the culture on display. Artists, poets, musicians, visual artists or others (depending on the civilization of which will be discussed) will intervene in schools for three or four months to familiarize children (8 to 14 years seems the most appropriate age) to this culture.

Likewise, we will ask all associations wishing to explore the highlighted civilization which, depending on its area of interest or competence, will more particularly concern a particular artistic discipline, but not only.



*Gondole sur la lagune*  
Pablo Garelli (Argentine) (2012)

It could also be culinary practices, heating methods or agriculture as it is true that a civilization is not limited to a single discipline, even artistic. We will therefore offer workshops that combine sewing techniques, those of medicine, which again, those of cooking, architecture, hunting or even leisure and sports. In short, **The Galaxy of Standing Stones** can become a formidable breeding ground for cultures where everyone will have the opportunity to get to know their alter ego at the end of the world.



*Hommage à Manara*  
Sylvain Raus (France) - 2012



*Venise*  
Antonella Tiozzo (Italie) - 2012



*Valpolicello*  
Huynh Van Hoang (Laos) - 2012

## A UNIFYING PROJECT



*Soldat du Frioul*  
Alfredo Pecile (Argentina) - 2012

Each year, for a week, we will celebrate the chosen culture.

We will present the body of work of all those in the region who have participated in the discovery of the civilization in question. Around a high-level international conference bringing together historians, ethnologists, geographers, archaeologists, economists, etc., as the case may be, the objective will be to take stock of the state of civilization throughout the year.

Amateurs and professionals, young people and adults will rub shoulders there. They will offer the public the fruit of their work while confronting them with shows, films and exhibitions from the country or countries representing the chosen culture. Thus, in the same dynamic, links will be born between the particular identities of the inhabitants of our planet.

As an example of the unifying nature of the **The Galaxy of Standing Stones** project, a flagship event in the department such as "*Sites en Scènes*" could schedule one or more events inspired by the chosen culture each summer. The public of Charente-Maritime, already sensitized, would appreciate more the shows presented.

**To love, you have to know!**

## IN CONCLUSION

This presentation is intended to be as synthetic as possible, although the multiple components of this project would require more substantial developments, in particular on the symbolism and the role of the stones raised since the dawn of humanity.

It is also because of its wealth that the cost of **The Galaxy of Standing Stones** remains very low in relative value compared to all that it can provide, humanly and even materially. The **champ of megaliths** in any event, remain free of public access, its maintenance will only cost the intervention of the departmental Green Brigades four or five times a year.



Artistic activities and entertainment will depend on the budgets allocated each year by other possible partners (Nouvelle Aquitaine region, Charente-Maritime department, patrons, ministries of Culture, Foreign Affairs, Tourism, Cooperation, UNESCO, etc. ). Depending on resources and ambitions, they should quickly fall into a range varying between 150,000 and 250,000 €.

The free use by each participant (theatrical troupe, choir, orchestra, etc.) of the cultural tool that is **The Galaxy of Standing Stones**, will therefore cost nothing more than what the institutions already invest animation and dissemination of culture.

As a cultural and social link tool, **The Galaxy of Standing Stones** should therefore help optimize investments made elsewhere. The funding of artists working in schools may also be partially funded through specific external cooperation (private or institutional), varying according to the cultures chosen.

This network of standing stones will expand as and when the municipalities participate, to whom we will propose to "adopt" one or more stones.

The goal of walks, the raised stones will thus become the milestones for hiking routes and the opportunity for activities that will promote the appropriation by users of the multiple facets of the territory at the same time as those of a culture in danger of death.

## SOME MEGALITHS ALREADY SCULPTED

2012: Culture of Northern Italy



*Hommage à Giacometti*  
Jérôme Aussibal (France) - 2012



*Hommage aux carriers de Crazannes*  
Elena Saracino (Italie) - 2012

2013 : Cultures of l'Oceania



**Hiandjing Pagou Banehote**

*2 sculpture - France- 2013*

Thème : La culture Kanaque

## 2014: Arab-Andalusian culture



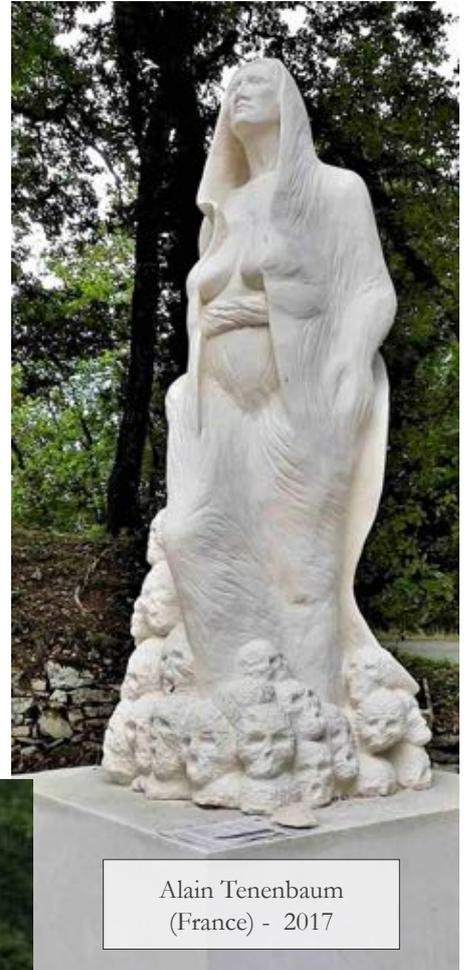
## 2015: Celtic culture



## 2016: Native American cultures of North America



## 2017: cultures of the Amerindians of Latin America





Thomas Petit  
(France) - 2017



Fabio Brenès  
(Costa-Rica) - 2017

## 2018: cultures of Southeast Asia





Tutu Pattnaik  
(Inde) - 2018



Huynh Van Hoang  
(Laos) - 2018



Alain Vandenbrouck  
(France) - 2018

## 2019: West African cultures



Ibou Niang  
(Sénégal) - 2019



Omar Pouye  
(Sénégal) - 2019



Philippe Stemmelen  
(France) - 2019



Issa Niang  
(Sénégal) - 2019



Babacar Niang  
(Sénégal) - 2019



Raphaëlle Duval  
(France)- 2019

## 2020: Six Sculptures offered to hospitals in the Charente Maritime department



Jürgen Lingl



Philippe Stemmelen



Robert Kéramsi



Nicolas Viry



Sylvie Berry



Michèle Caïric

## 2021: Cultures around the Caribbean Sea



Jesus Nonato Barron



Mathieu Harzo



François Piquet



Johanne de Azevedo



Aramis Justiz



Hervé Beuze