MARIE JULIA BOLLANSÉE

LOGY ARCHIVE

GEOLOGY ARCHIVE content:

The travellers,

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all carried stones from their homes, from the countries they live(d) in, their places of origin, from the cities they were born in, the countries abroad they go to for work, from their places of asylum or from their holiday spots...

Most of these stones crossed borders. For some it was easy, for others it was impossible. Stones that were confiscated at security checkpoints or that got lost along the way are here represented under the heading 'Absent Stones'.

On the following pages I briefly wrote down the stories of their journey.

In addition, each traveller made a photograph at the stone's place of origin. These photographs are collected further on in this publication.

Journeys

On the road in Brittany, France, the young man picked up a hiker. She directed him to a remote and quiet camp site near the sea in Locmariaquer. There he met a woman, a regular on that spot, who comes back once or twice a year. 'Why?' he asked her. She told him that she was 'made' there, that forty years ago her parents made love on this beach. This camping ground was the place where she came in the world, where she was conceived, where she 'jumped into being'. She keeps coming back to this starting point where her life actually began. He silently understood that she had mysterious and spiritual reasons to be there and asked her to pick out a stone on 'her' beach.

He fell in love with a girl on a solitary ramble through New Zealand. The girl followed him to Belgium and they got married. During the pregnancy of their first baby, the young mother became homesick for the country of the Maoris. She did not want to give birth to her child in little Belgium. So they moved. On the southern coast of New Zealand, in Waihöpai, he bought a stretch of land where he intends to build a house, singlehandedly.

He settled in Lima, Peru, in the city where his wife was born. He has to travel the world for his job. He travels on his own and leaves his wife and children at home. He carried a stone from his home when he visited his old parents in Belgium.

She went on a holiday to Lanzarote. She packed up a black volcanic stone in a cardboard box, weighed it, paid the bill, wrote my address on the box, and dropped it at the post office. The stone did not reach its destination.

The artist went to Morocco to research and prepare a future social artwork. She worked with local youngsters on a mobile exhibition that will travel around in trailers. From the Atlas Mountains she brought a little stone that she found in a back alley in Marrakesh.

They were enjoying their holidays on the Greek islands of Rhodes and Crete.

After travelling the world, the family settled in the village of Le Pouget in the South of France. In the fields nearby the house one can find an ancient dolmen. The weather is all year round warm and pleasant, so it is an excellent place to live. Their door is always open for friends from all over the world. Last summer, a friend from Alaska came to visit them. They took her on a trip to Lascaux and Bernifal to visit the precious prehistorical paintings and engravings in the caves.

In the Second World War, the man was deportated by the Nazis to the camp of Dachau. Later on he lived up to a very high age in a remote village in the South of France. His daughter brought me a stone from the home of her old father.

The writer went for one week to a sunny beach in northern France together with her son and his father. She spent her time reading, drinking coffee and red wine. Meanwhile the boy was having a wonderful time on the beach, flying his kite, building castles with sand, shells and stones.

After the girl finished secondary school, she went for a long stay to Bolivia and Peru. This would open her mind and broaden her horizon. In Sucre, Bolivia, she was hosted in a family with two kids, and in Cuzco, Peru, she lived in the big house of a grandmother amongst the entire family. On a trip through the country, she picked up the stones.

He and his companion went on a visit to Israel and they longed to stay there forever. It was impossible to bring the stone he had chosen at the Sea of Galilee.

A group of young friends went to a farm in northern France, where they practised an exercise in establishing a self-supporting community.

Work separates them for a period of time. He is working for a Belgian company in Turkey. She is a dedicated teacher in a school in Antwerp. She brought me a stone from her husbands temporary home in Istanbul.

Amongst all the places she travels to, Rome in Italy is the poet's favourite hometown. She dug up a cobblestone from the ancient Via Appia, the highway connecting Rome with the harbour of Brindisi in the South, and from there with the Roman overseas colonies.

On holiday in Nepal they made an adventurous trip in the Himalayas. She brought a stone from Durbar Square in Kathmandu, a brick from a temple that was destroyed by the 2015 earthquake.

He had his sculpture studio in Aarschot, Belgium, the town where he was born. But the artist turned into a lone wolf. He could not bear it any longer. He bought himself a house in the quiet village of Paris l'Hôpital in France, where he hid himself from the world.

Like many of his compatriots in Finland, the man is a cool and experienced sailor. He takes his family and friends on sailing trips around the European seas, from the far North to the deep South. He left his country when he was still young. He was working as a doctor in several developing countries in Africa. Now, getting a little older, he regularly goes back to his home and family in Finland.

After his beloved wife had passed away, the old man was living alone in his house in the woods of Schoten, Belgium. Many stones that they brought from their travels around Europe lie scattered in the overgrown garden surrounding the house.

She went to Ethiopia with a mission from Unicef: to map the famine and malnutrition in the rural areas. The stone she brought was blocked at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport. Too 'dangerous forbidden object' to transport.

The young couple searched for an Irish stone in the neighbourhood of Dublin, in Howth near the sea. The year after, they went back to Ireland, to Doolin near the sea. They took the ferry to visit Spike Island. Today the island is a tourist hotspot where people can find traces of a fortress and a prison, built on the foundations of a 7th-century Hibernian monastery.

On the beach of Cap Griz Nez at the North Sea in France the two teachers had some rest after a busy schoolyear.

They went on an adventurous trip to Laos and brought a stone from the banks of the Mekong River, and one from the ancient Hindu temple of Wat Phou in Champassak.

She and the artist drove to Chemnitz, Germany, the city that bore the name 'Karl-Marx-Stadt' at the time the Iron Curtain still split Europe and the city where you can still have a look at the massive sculpture of Marx's head. In collaboration with the local people, the artist created a street performance: 'Artificial Walk II'.

She was born on a farm in the tiny village of Pulderbos in northern Belgium. The farm is surrounded by meadows and there is a murmuring creek in the backyard. It was the family home for three generations. In the end the farm was sold but she keeps the floor tiles of the room where she was born in.

He dug a stone from the rocks on the coast in Brittany in France. He was born there, his father was a fisherman. When he met a Belgian girl, he settled with her in Antwerp, and they raised a family. Several times a year he returns to his roots and he builds a house and a garden on the mountain in Kerellou.

The final class of the Hibernia School went on a 'Grand Tour' to Italy. They carried a stone from each place on their itinerary. From Cerveteri, the Etruscan necropolis, they brought light tuff stone, from Rome a cobblestone from the banks of the Tiber. From Pompeii and Herculaneum they carried volcanic stones and sandstones from Cumae and Naples. Their last stop was Matera, the cave city that represented Jerusalem in ancient times in Pasolini's 'Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo'.

The Geology student brought a stone from Bagno Vignoni, the Tuscan village with the hot springs, where Andrej Tarkovsky shot his 'Nostalghia'. Analysing the matter he defined it to be a crystalline chalk stone with veins of calcite.

A terrible illness causes her so much pain that things have become heavy for her - she cannot carry a single stone anymore.

The couple walked the GR20 on Corsica carrying a stone from Monte Cinto.

On their way to a dance performance of their colleagues the Art student and his girlfriend picked up a concrete brick in a street under construction in Amsterdam.

Chartres, France: the spiritual centre where the Cathedral arose in medieval times was the destination of their biking tour. They carried with them a stone from the fields nearby.

The nurse, who takes daily care of sick people, often of people in the final days of their life, is aware that he needs something special to pep himself up. To that end he travels to the Reindeer People in Mongolia for a meeting with the shaman. It enables him to help people better. He brought along stones that possess healing powers.

They expected a baby boy. What name they would give him, the young parents found out on their pilgrimage to the tomb of Jim Morisson, on Père Lachaise in Paris.

She left Belgium where she was born and where she has a family. She wrote a novel on how she survived a terrible car crash and on the new life she built in South Africa.

He went back to the house his parents built in the village of Westmalle, Belgium. Although he is an independent grown-up man now, living his own life in the city, this old black house feels like a safe fortress in times of trouble and uncertainty.

Kathmandu in Nepal is the hometown of a bunch of young enthusiastic people. Life in the earthquake danger zone, and the exposure to huge social inequalities does not seem to affect their joy of living. The old and rich culture of the Himalayas has settled into their DNA. They must be the most friendly people on Earth. The first Kathmandu Triennale in 2017 would have been impossible without their enthusiasm.

She and her baby daughter ran from their home in Riga, Latvia, 25 years ago. She found a haven in Belgium. She is a specialist in massage, pedicure, manicure, all in a natural manner. Practising these skills she builds a flourishing beauty parlour in Antwerp. She brought a pink boulder from Bastejkalna Park in Old Riga, the park where as a teenager she used to hang out on the hill near the lake.

In Switzerland she prepared the trip. They sent her to Congo in Central Africa because there was an Ebola epidemic that broke out and that needed to be curbed. She brought me a stone from the Nyiragongo, the nonstop active volcano in Goma. Now and then it covers parts of the city with its streams of lava.

It was impossible to bring the white sandstone tile that she found near the Wailing Wall on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. She suspects it to be a tile from the graves behind the wall, or a piece from the Wall itself. The place where she found it, behind the Al Aqsa Mosque, beside the wall, is a crossroads of three religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Her travelcompanion found a stone on the beach in Haifa, Israel.

She joined the group of old friends of her late husband for a cultural trip to the South of Italy. They climbed Mount Vesuvius and she carried a lump of lava.

The 16-year-old boy went to El Gouna, Egypt, with a bunch of friends. He brought a stone from the desert.

She often goes back to her mother and her family who are living in her home-country, Hungary. She brought a stone from her aunt's garden in Solymár.

They did a camera job in Germany, and then realized they were half on the way to the picturesque city of Prague. So they drove on and spend some days in Czechia.

She walked along the river Drôme in France barefoot and dived for a stone.

The artist was born in Tokyo. She left her home in Japan for Paris to develop an artistic career there. Handling needle and thread she embroiders her precious and fragile body of work. She brought along a stone from her parents' garden in Tokyo.

The woman was born in Antwerp, and that's where she lives with her husband. But she needs a quiet place where she can meditate and where her husband can draw and paint. They found this spot at the foot of the Spanish Pyrenees in the village of Juseu. Their place of silence is lying close to a spring with healing water and in the vicinity of the first European Buddhist temple outside Tibet.

The man is an engineer and he led four companies in Bagdad, Iraq, ten years ago. He had to run for the 'militias', at that time a combination of IS and Taliban. So, the family left Bagdad. They ended up in Belgium. It seems to be difficult for a high-qualified engineer to find a job in Belgium. In anticipation of finding a proper job, he is doing an internship as a handyman in a nice school in Antwerp.

As a celebration for his thirtieth birthday, they made a trip to Venice. They brought a little stone from the cemetery on the Isola di San Michele.

Together they crossed the Atlantic Ocean in a sailing boat. She promised me to bring stones from the harbours where they moored: Gibraltar, ... But they are still at the sea.

He went to Mauritius, the remote island in the Indian Ocean. His job is to set up a new station for the diamond company he works for.

They went on a short holiday to Crete, together.

She drove on a lone trip with her dog and brought me a stone from Marnans in France.

She went on a studytrip to Barcelona, Spain, with her students.

She climbs mountains. She carried stones in her rucksack while climbing in Berdorf in Luxemburg and in Krappenfels in the Vosges in France. Her friends entered the Anialarra Cavern in France and from 700 meters deep, from a spot undiscovered so far, they took two little white stones.

The young man studies the Cold War. In that context he looks at the Iron Curtain, the boundary that divided Europe after World War II, into a Soviet-allied and a Western-allied part. So he followed the Iron Curtain in Germany, partly by bike. He brought me a stone from Langenleghsten in Schleswig-Holstein, the village where Michael Gartenschläger was shot by the Stasi on April 30, 1976. Gartenschläger was an activist who helped many people escape from the Eastern part.

She went to the North of Ethiopia on a mission with 'See and Smile'. This group of ophthalmologists, dentists and nurses provided eye surgery and dental surgery to the local people. They worked in the hospital of Freweyni and in neighbouring villages. She carried two lumps of black petrified lava from the Erta Ale volcano. At the airport of Mekele the security control detected 'batteries' in her luggage, as the lava probably contains the ore that is used in the manufacturing of electric devices.

The young couple went on holiday to Indonesia. Inbetween the visit of the most incredible temples at Prambanan and Borobudur, they made a ride by jeep on Mount Merapi. From this mountain of fire they brought a little black lava stone.

On a remote mountain in Auvergne in France, the man and his wife are planting a forest. The trees will grow slowly. In a hundred years the forest will have matured. Future people will enjoy its peace and shade, and pick up its medlars and its chestnuts.

8 - 100

The artist went to Greece to curate the Athens passage of the 'Bolero caravan'. This international art project on the move is a nomad exhibition that remains in the country where it is presented. A local newspaper is involved and the artworks are glued on walls in the city. So the exhibition will disappear through time like the memory of the passing caravan disappears. The stone she brought along looks like pink marble.

When she was eleven years old, she followed her mother to Antwerp, Belgium. She was born in Pavlograd in Ukraine. When she was six, she moved to Crimea, where her mother tried to build a better life, working as an artist, producing portraits for the tourists on Naberezhnaya. One tourist told her that Belgium is a country where it is easy to set up an artistic career. So mother and daughter moved to Antwerp. Her grandmother, who is still living in Pavlograd, sent her three stones. They came with a shuttle that regularly transports indispensable goods between families in Ukraine and Belgium.

Her family loves travelling. The parents and their three teenagers make big trips, every year to a new destination. She brought along stones from the Tuolumne River in Yosemite California where they went rafting, from the trip they made to the volcanoes in Timanfaya National Park on the isle of Lanzarote, and one from the bank of the Drina River in Bosnia where they were sleeping in huts on a survival camping trip.

They went on holiday to Marbella in southern Spain.

The explorer travelled to Congo. She wanted to collect memories of sailors. She picked up a little red-pink stone from the waters of the Congo River. It was near Kinshasa, where wild cataracts render the tremendous river unnavigable. The Belgian colonists transported the ivory and rubber they carried off from the heart of Africa over the Congo River. At the cataracts nearby Kinshasa, a caravan of human carriers would take over. 'Without a railway, the Congo isn't worth a penny,' reported Stanley once. So as an alternative for the gruelling caravan road through the jungle, a railway was built connecting Kinshasa and Matadi. From Matadi, the transport continued over the Congo River to the Atlantic coast, where ships would leave for the Antwerp harbour. At Matadi, she had conversations with former sailors on these so called 'Congo boats'. Their testimonies were recorded on a video that one can watch at the MAS in Antwerp now. One sailor told her about the ladies behind the windows at the Antwerp red light district: 'These white women were glowing in the dark'.

The young ones made a city trip to London to enjoy some sight-seeing and Christmas shopping. They went down to the River Thames and found a big lump of white chalk, polished by the flowing water. The guardian of the Tower bridge was rather suspicious about this stone in her rucksack but in the end she was laughing, and felt sorry for the girl who had to carry this weight all day long on her stroll through London.

The seventeen-year-old boy escaped his home in Jalalabad. He was chased away by agony after his father and brother were murdered. His journey out of Afghanistan was a dangerous and a horrible one. He was jailed and tortured by the Kurds for ransom. Freed, he walked many nights. Hidden under trucks he crossed borders. In the end the unaccompanied minor refugee made his way to Greece and from there to Belgium, where he was granted asylum. He earns his living as a roofing contractor. He gave me a piece of slate from the construction site in Mortsel where he is restoring the tower of the Holy Cross Church.

She brought along a little stone from Bahia, Ilha de Itaparica near to Salvador in Brazil. The stone was washed ashore, it is round, fragile and full of little pickles. It comes from an idyllic sunny, warm beach by the Atlantic Ocean, with palm trees, little lobsters and seaweed. In spite of the rampant tourism, the place remains quiet and peaceful because no traffic is passing. A man looking like João Valentão (the fisherman in the song by Dorival Caymmi) offers her a fresh coconut. There is no dream more beautiful than his land. So she stopped there.

Sophie lives in China. She is twelve years old. Her mother is Chinese, her father is Belgian. Her home is 'Garden in the sky', a complex in Shangai where all appartments have terraces with little gardens. Sophie collects stones from the pool down below in the park ever since she was a toddler, which she keeps in her room. Now she searched for a stone in her pool especially for this performance, a stone that will leave on a voyage to Belgium with her father.

They spent new year's Eve in Langtang Gumpa in the Himalayas, at an altitude of 3400 metres. From the village destroyed by the recent earthquake, they carried a granite stone in their rucksack to Shyapru Besi. On their trail, they met the Tamang People, who cultivate wheat; they manually mow and wallop it and grind it using water power from the mountain rivers. Yaks provide them with milk and cheese, and with wool to manufacture clothing. Finally they stayed for two days in Kyangin Gompa (a Buddhist monastery) and from high upon the Cherko Ri they caught a glimpse of Tibet.

She picked up a stone from a quarry at the side of the road when she was on her way to Duino in the North of Italy. You can call her trip a poetic pilgrimage, because the Duino Castle is the place where Rainer Maria Rilke wrote his 'Duino Elegies'. And maybe some of the magic still lingers on there.

She travelled to Kabul, Afghanistan, to speak at a symposium of the United Nations. She and her colleagues were working to solve the problem of malnutrition of the local people. At the airport, the security guards confiscated the stone she was carrying in her luggage. Carrying a stone in your luggage, they said, was forbidden - for safety reasons.

The wind, the beach and the silence of Cap Blanc Nez in France attracted the brandnew couple. They made their first camping trip in a van. And they carried a little lump of white chalk.

Her husband found a stone on the beach in Zuidzande, just across the Belgian border with the Netherlands. They were taking a breather on the first day of the new year. She tells me this stone is the keystone of the past year in which so many of their loved ones passed away. And then she reads me the poem 'Stone' by Vasalis. It opens up a different view on stones. If grief, human energy, could become petrified and static like a stone, if only the rigid impenetrable human soul could become stony matter, one could beat that rock until its tears would flow.

She had a quiet holiday at Rillé, a village in the Pays du Loire in France, together with her three beautiful little daughters and her husband. She brought a stone from her walks in the woods.

They longed to experience the jungle, walk through it and discover in reality the exotic animals they only had seen on National Geographic before. So therefore the young scientist and his girlfriend made a trip to Borneo. In his log I could read about the animals they met on their walks through the jungle, pigmy squirrels, bearcats, crocodiles, proboscis monkeys, flying lemurs and other sorts of monkeys, hammerhead worms and many more. He writes how they hid themselves under the roots of gigantic trees and how surprised he was about the extreme silence and the deep darkness in the jungle. I also could read about the encounters they had with the indigenous people. A young girl in Kuching was wondering where the tribes in Belgium were living, if there was no jungle in this country. Coming home their backpacks were stuffed with seeds and spices and exotic fruits. And they also brought along a little pink stone from the Mureh waterfalls, just across the border with Indonesian Borneo.

They went for a hike in the Sierra de las Nieves in Spain.

Originally the stone comes from the cliffs of Sligo in the North of Ireland. Carrying a stock of white chalk the artist travelled to Calcutta, India, where he made chalk drawings on all kinds of walls and other suitable surfaces. He kept a diary and made photographs. Weekly his e-journal was posted on the internet, so the audience could keep up with his activities, his conversations with people, his reflections and see his drawings.

Among his stock of drawing materials was also the Sligo chalk stone, a talisman from a friend who had been searching for the remains of drawings which the artist had made in Sligo some years before. With this chalk the artist drew one line, the length of a single footstep, in the street where he daily walked in the Calcutta Ballygunge district. This way in faraway India the initially white oval chalk from Sligo was flattened out.

The family crossed the South of Ethiopia with Kiflum in an old Toyota jeep. They picked up light volcanic pumice on their way through the Omo Valley.

Every year, the old lady goes on a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady in Scherpenheuvel.

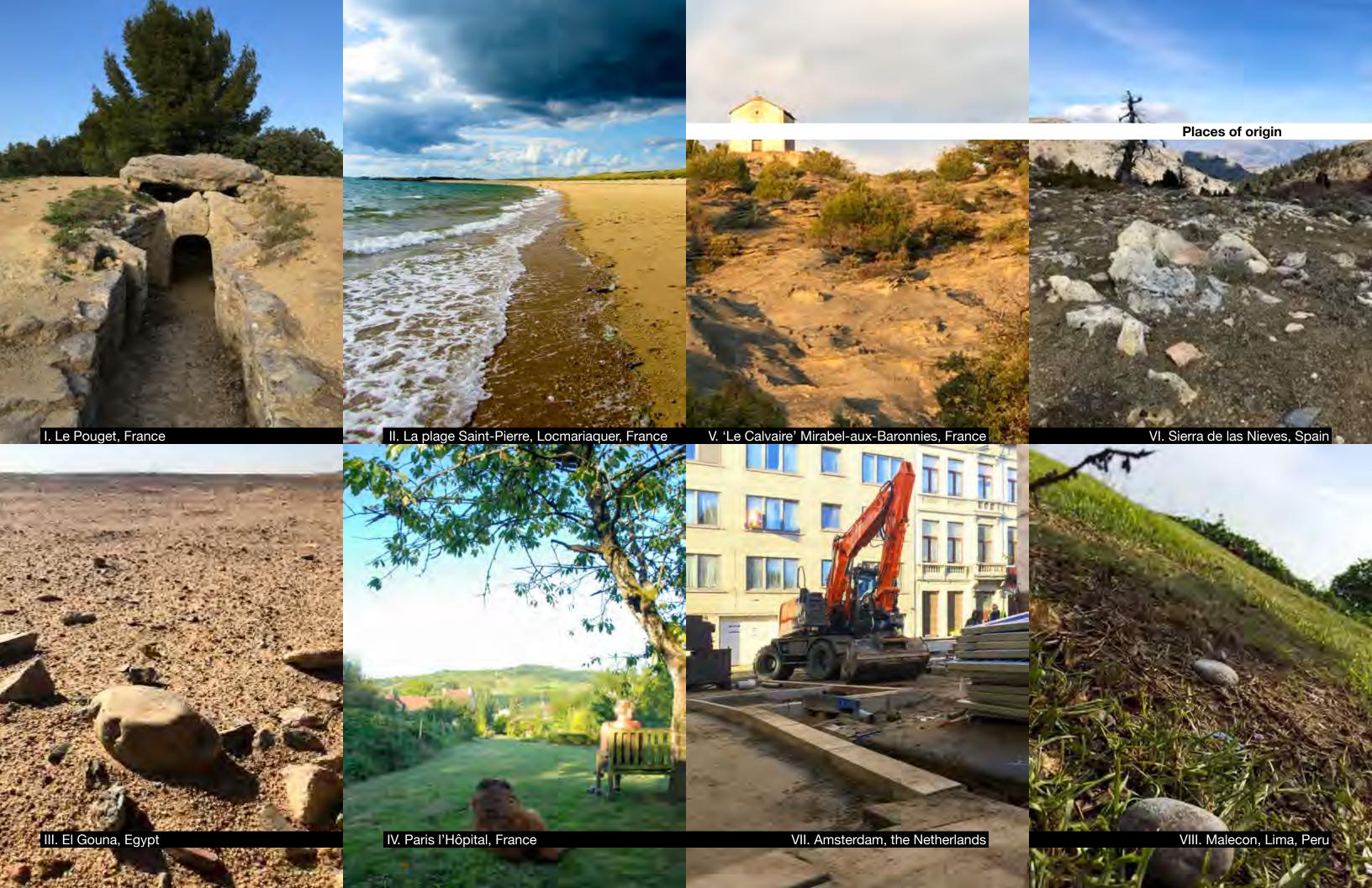
She took the night ferry from Naples to Stromboli. At sunrise the mythic island appeared on the horizon. In the evening she climbed the flanks of the volcano, up to a spot nearby the crater where she could observe the ongoing lava eruptions. Mount Stromboli rises out of the water as a natural lighthouse, guiding fishermen and sailors across the Tyrrhenian Sea.

At the Bhau Daji Lad Museum in Mumbai, India, the artist's work is presented in a group show. The exhibition is a real homecoming, as her roots are lying in India, and in former times the museum grounds belonged to her grandfather. She meets up with her mother and sister on this trip, and she brought me a stone from the family house in Pune.

She celebrated the 59th birthday of her best friend in Paris. Along the River Seine, under the Pont Sully she found a loose cobblestone in the pathway, picked it up and carried it home.

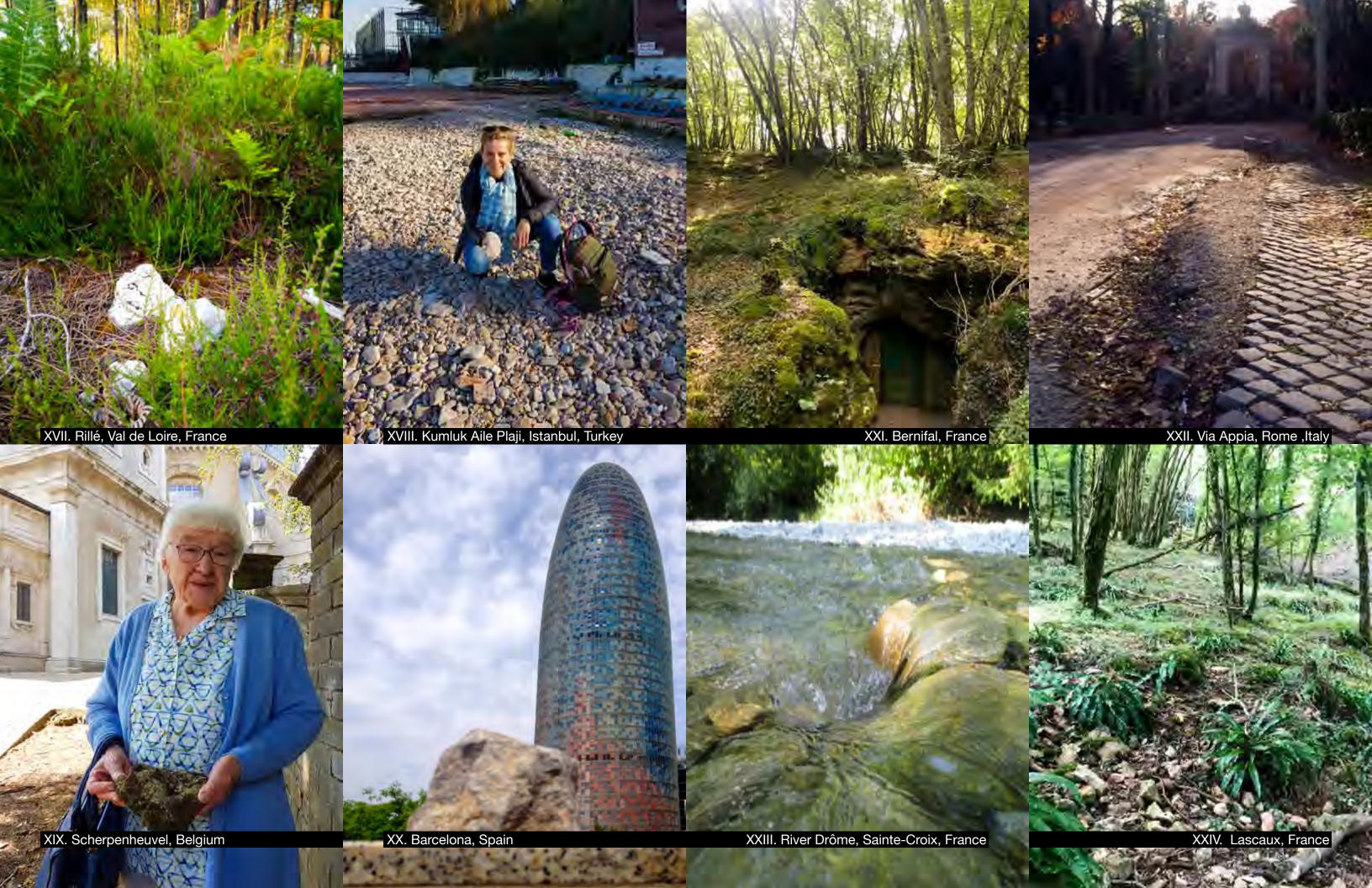
He left his hometown, Bethlehem in Palestine, to study medicine in Brussels. He started a specialisation in cardiology and intensive care and works in an emergency department as a doctor in ambulances. He was denied re-entrance to Palestine for three months this year. And his parents could not bring the stone, as it was confiscated at the border by the Israeli authorities.

Brother, sister and friend made a trip to Scotland in a van. They enjoyed the good compagnionship, camping in the wild and walking through unspoilt nature. Near a waterfall at the Fairy Pools on the Isle of Skye they picked up grey flat pebbles.



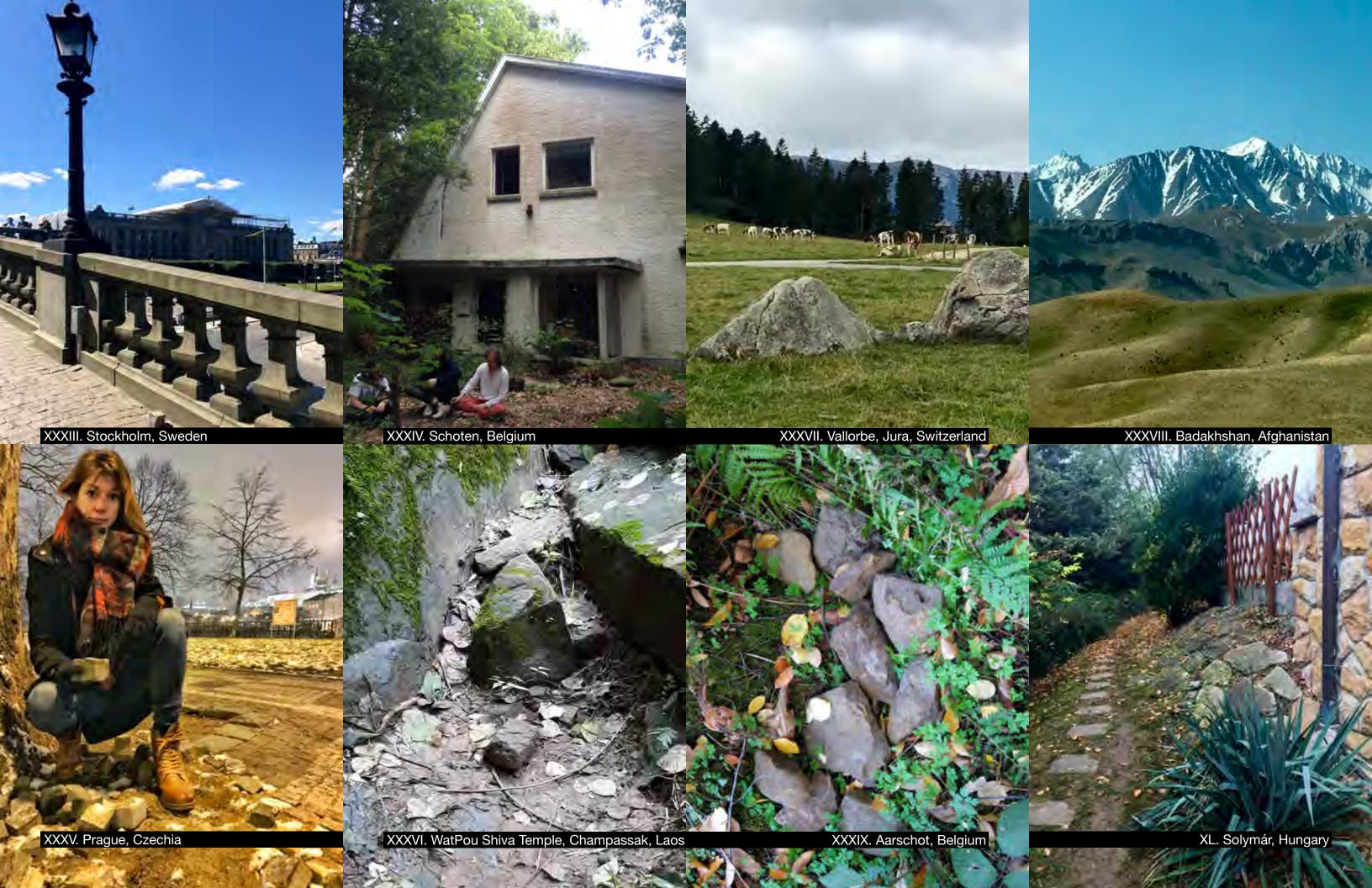




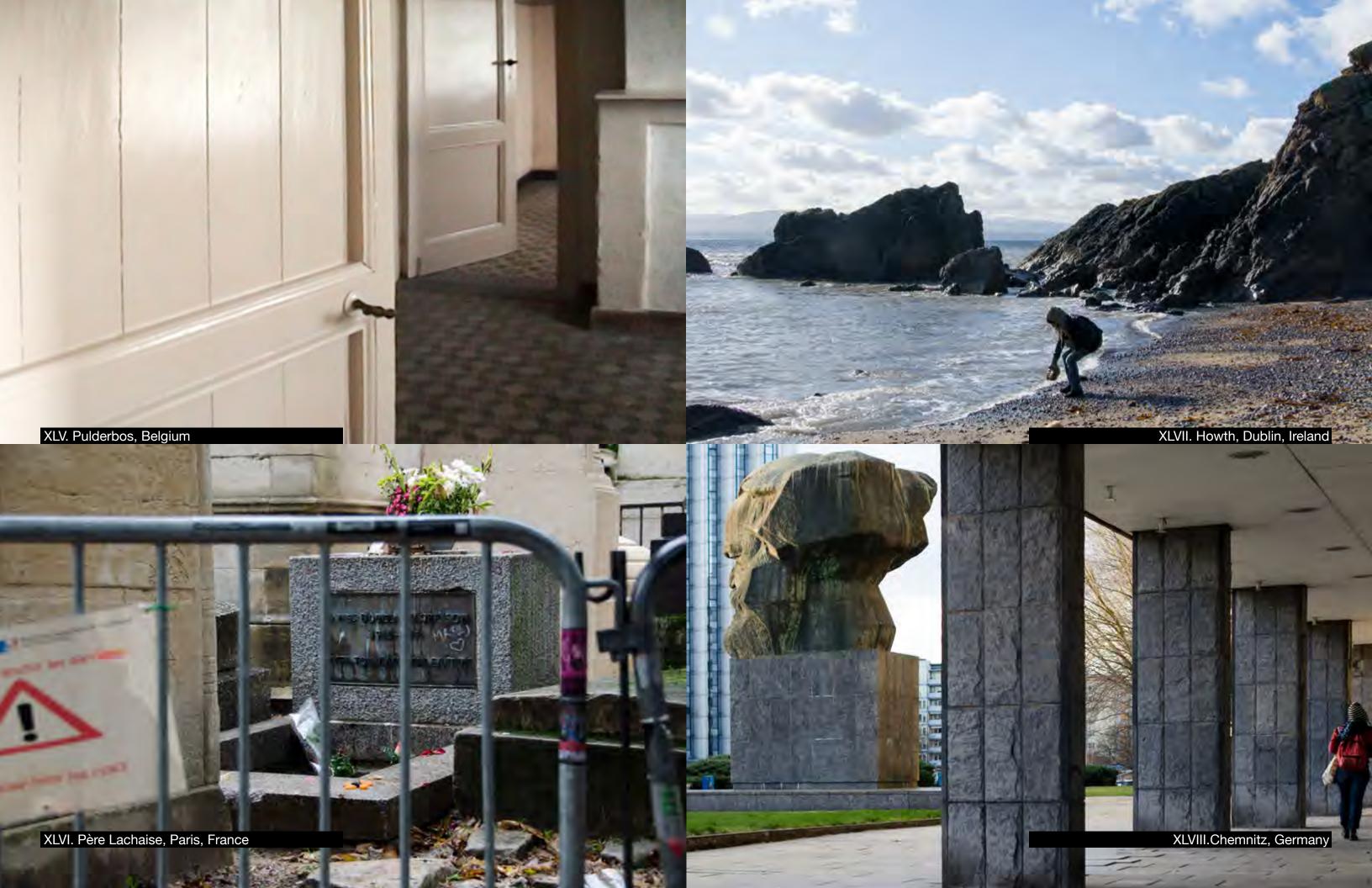




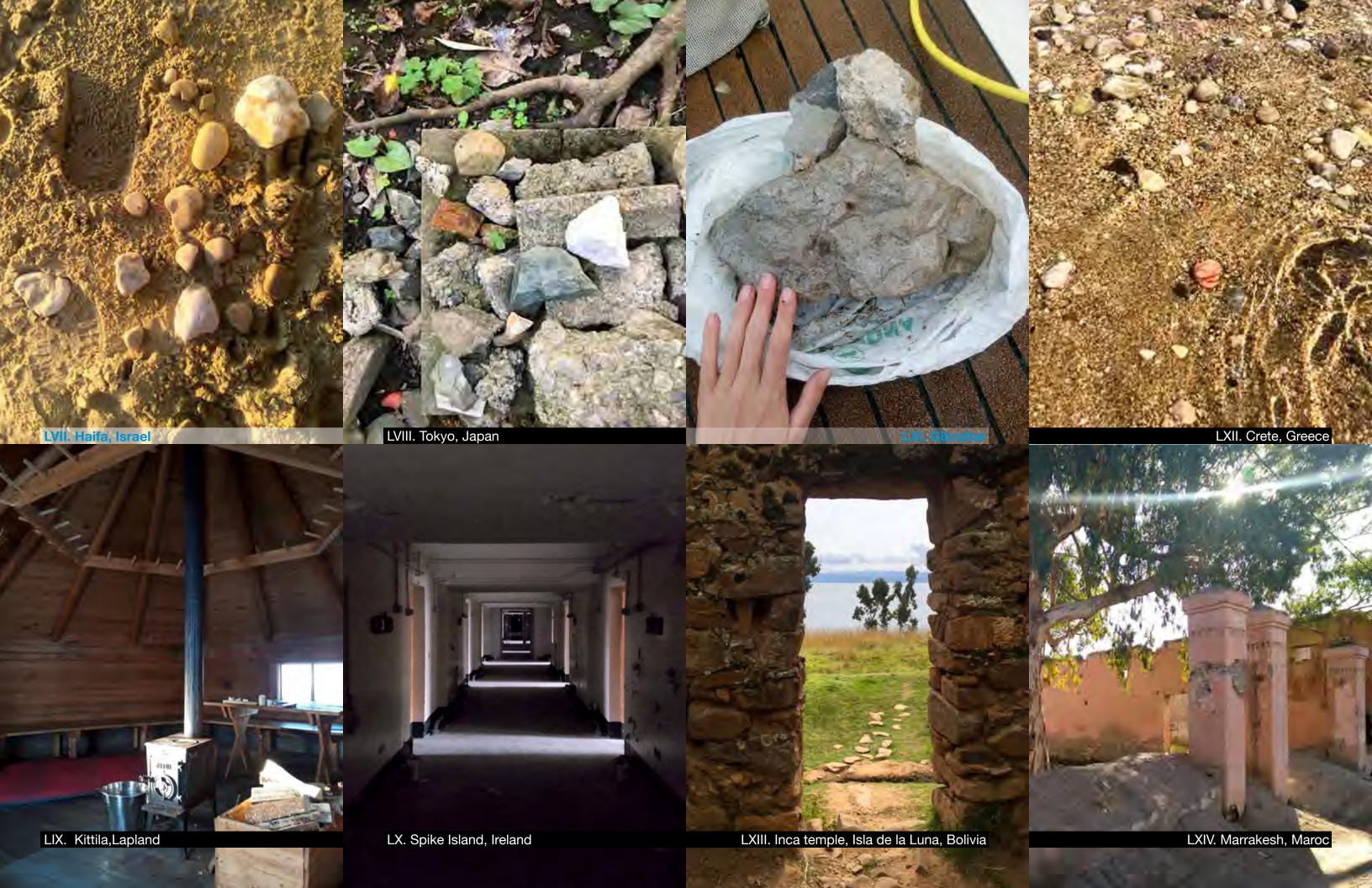


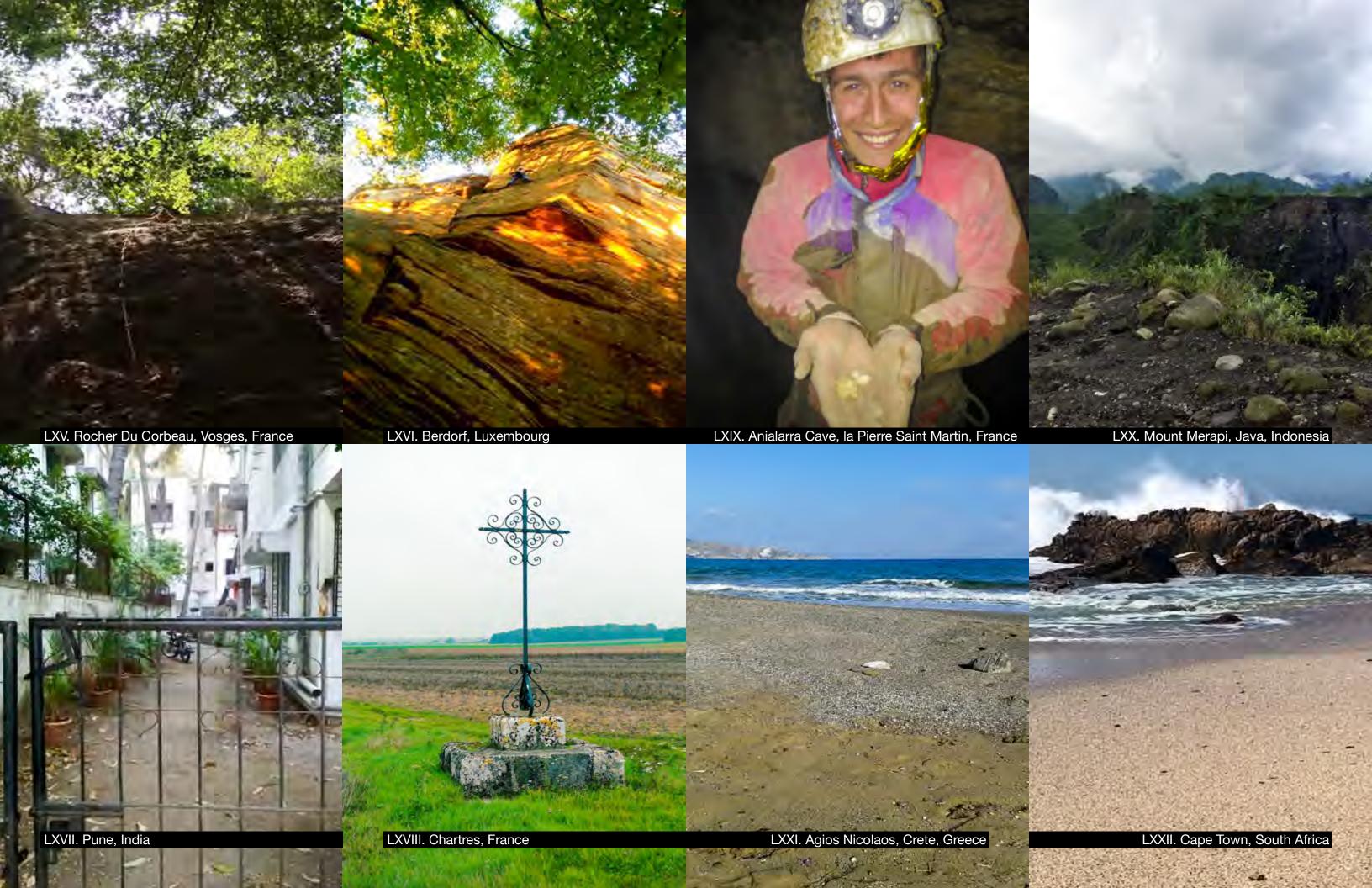










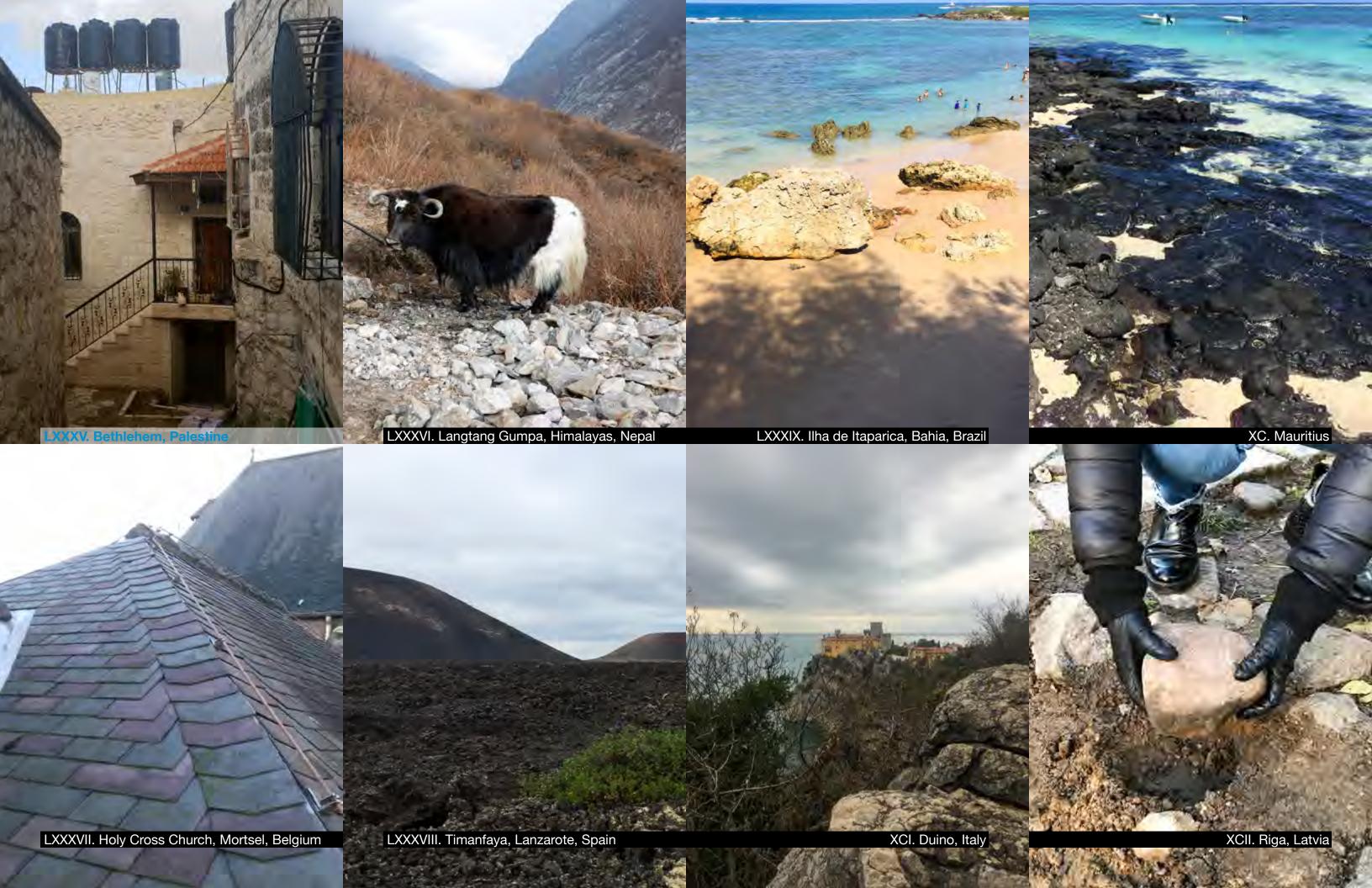


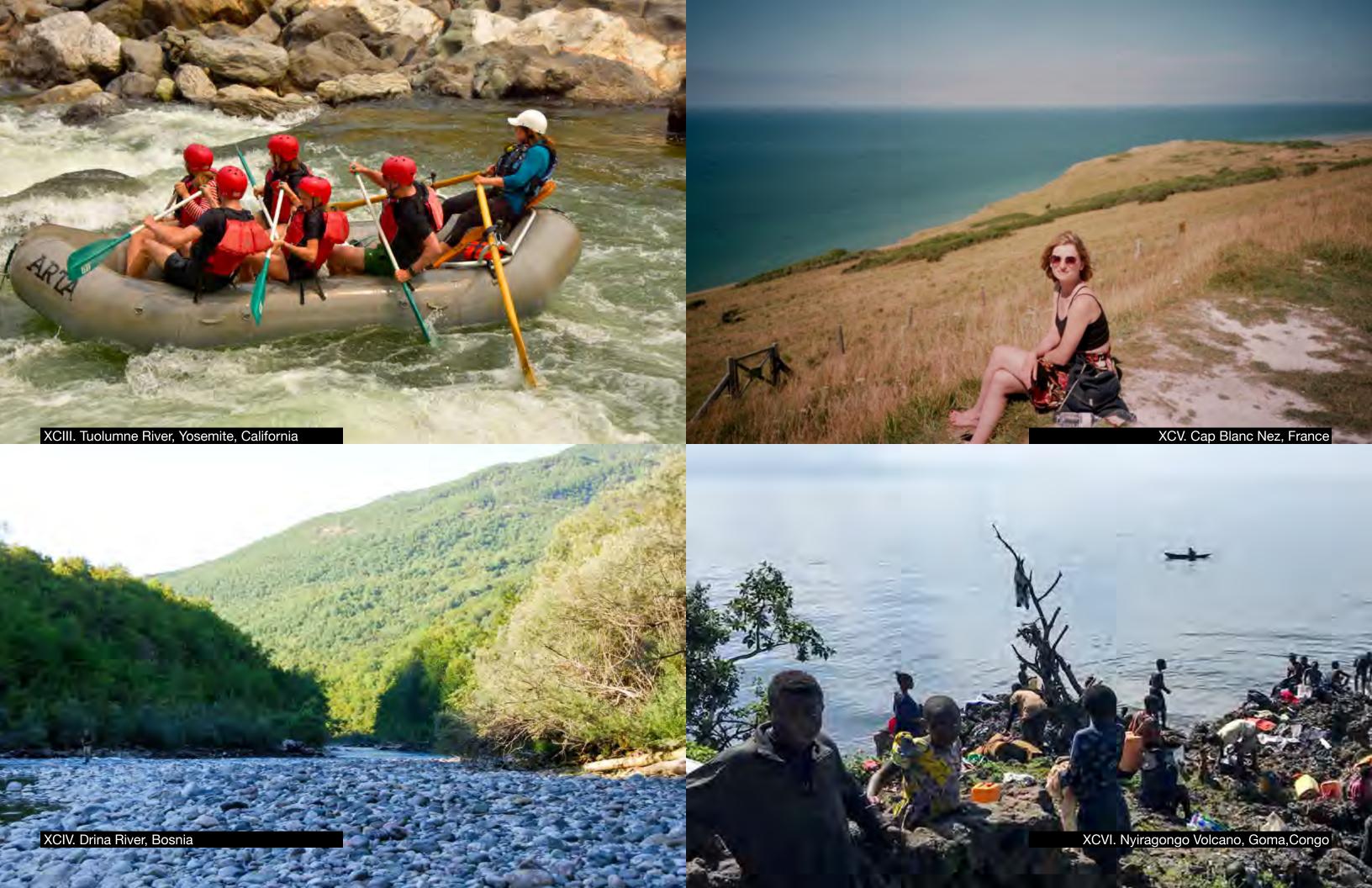


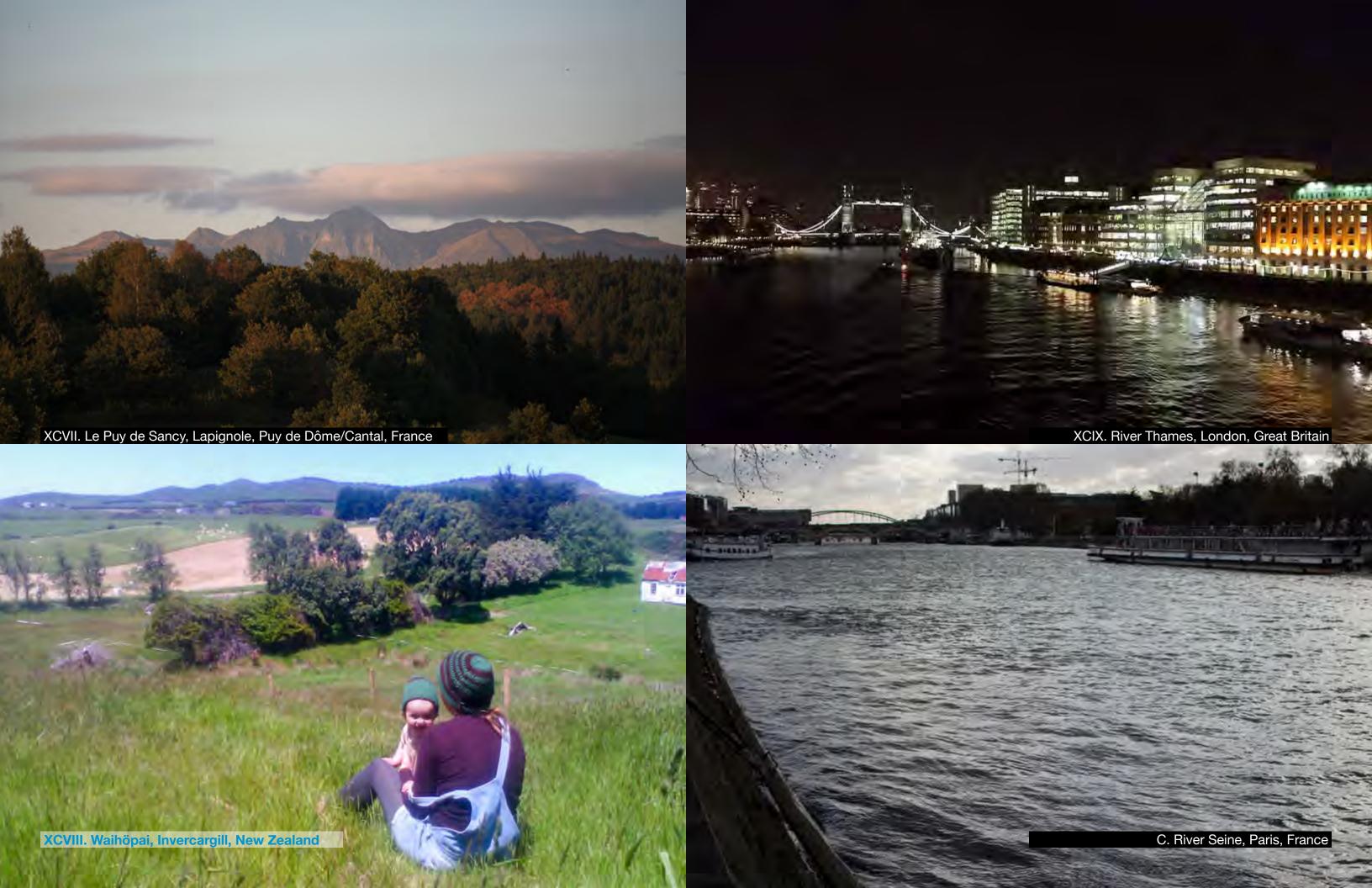


LXXVIII. Isola di San Michele, the municipal cemetery of Venice, Italy



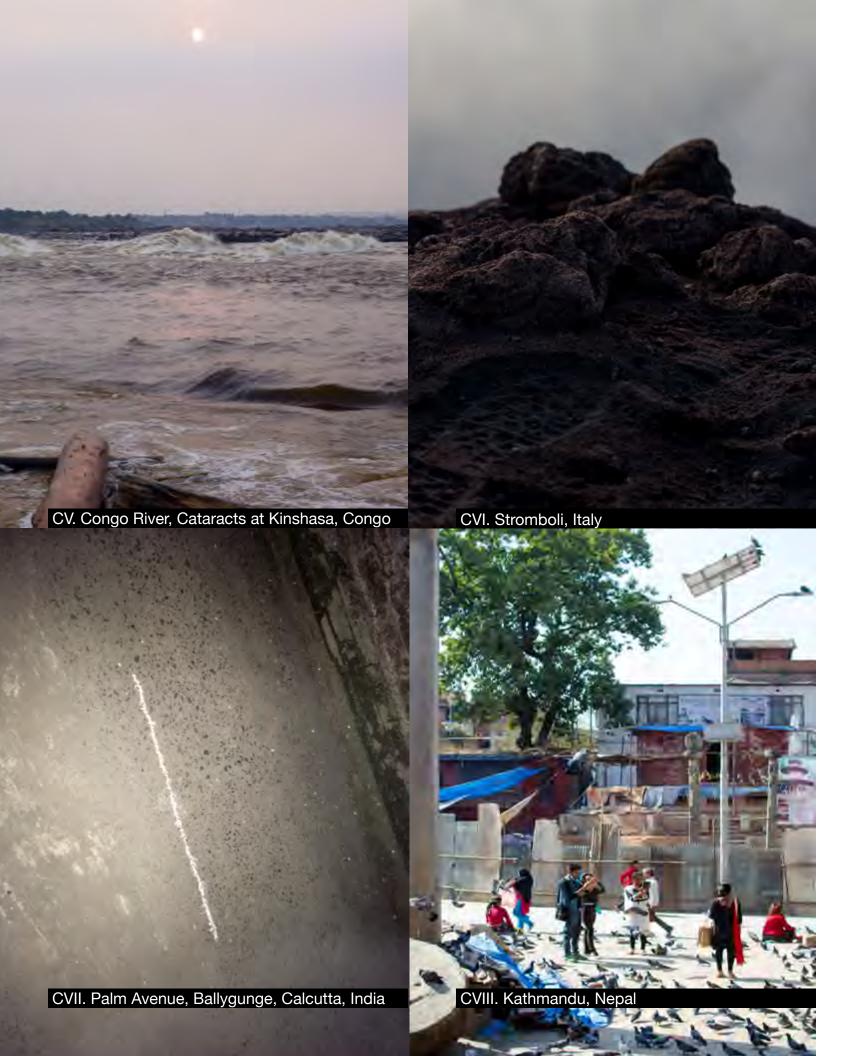
















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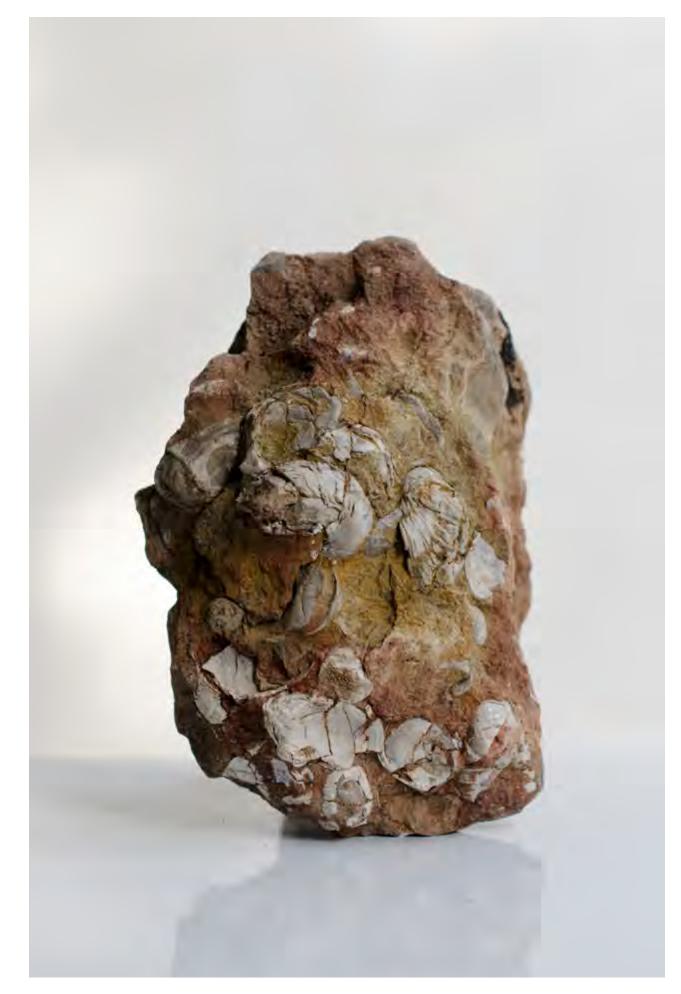




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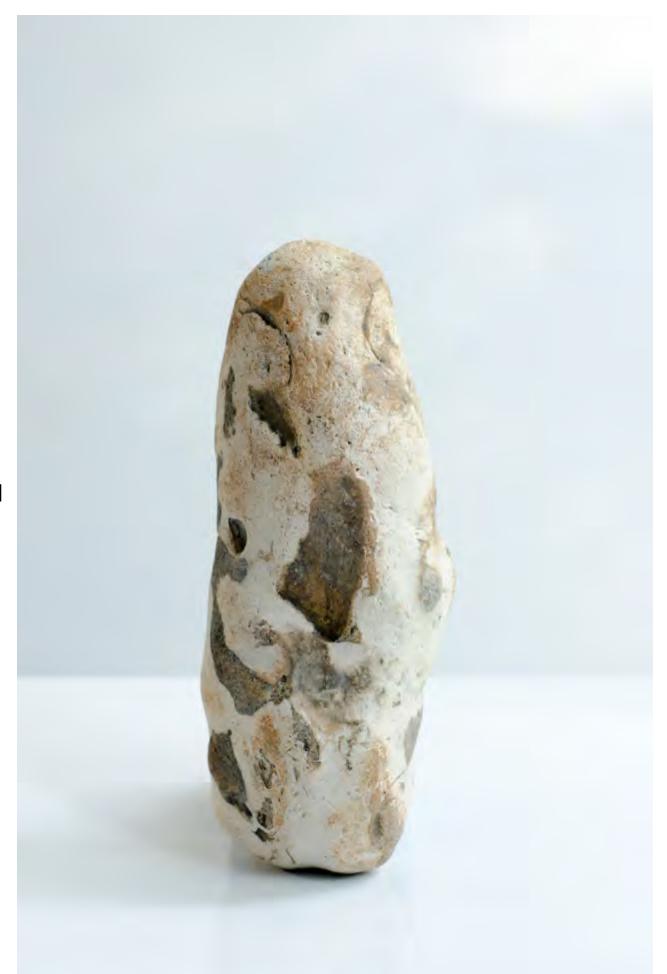


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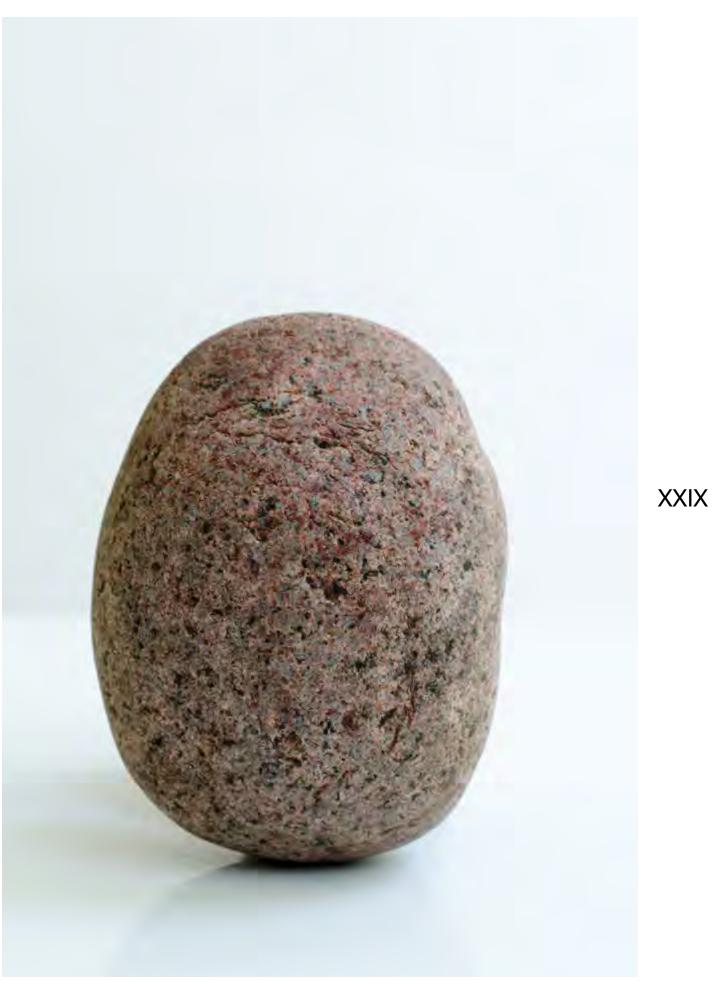
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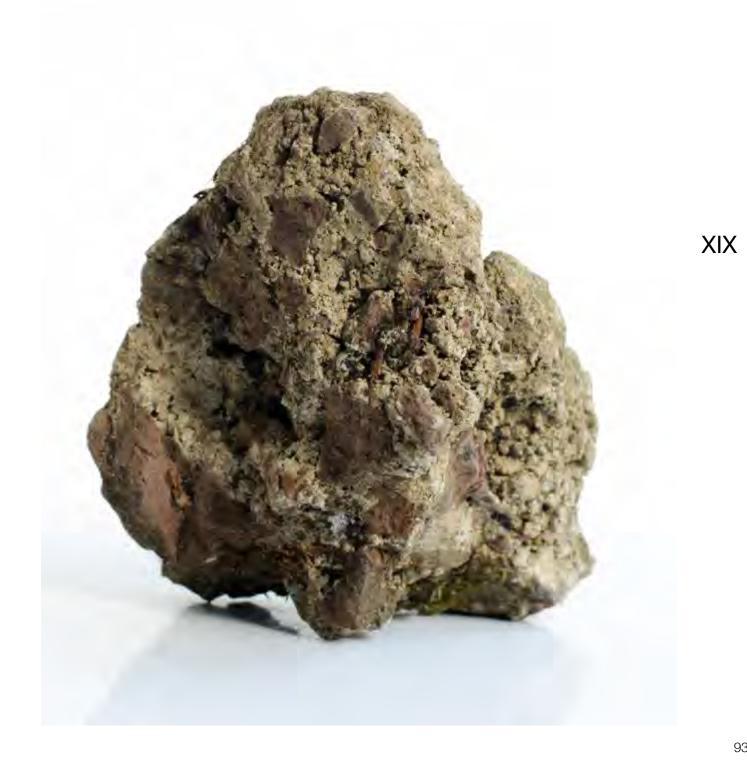




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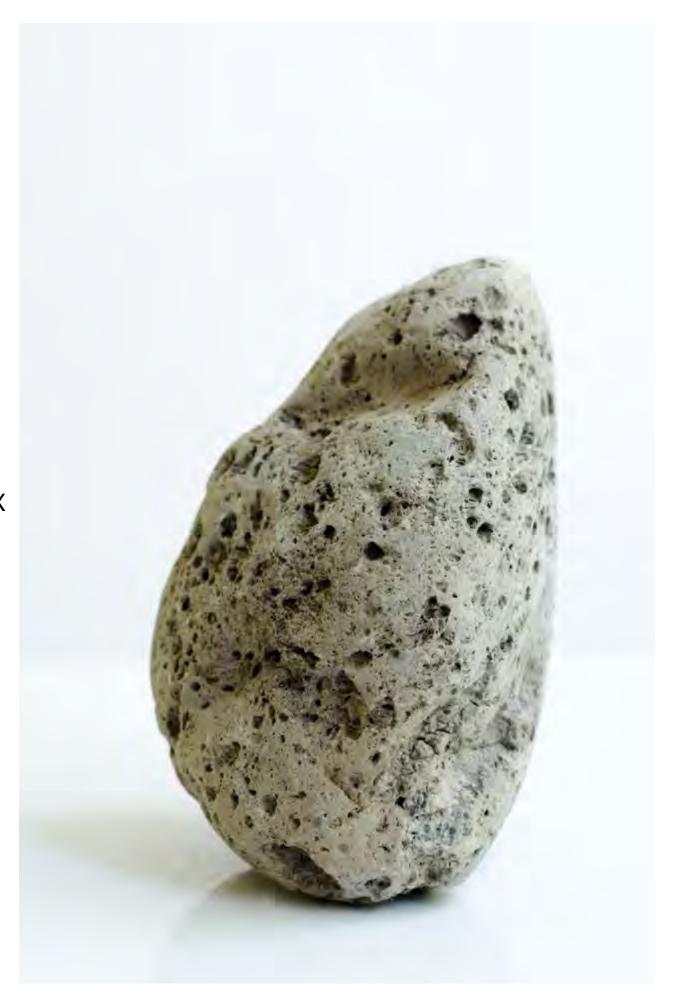


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LII





XXIV



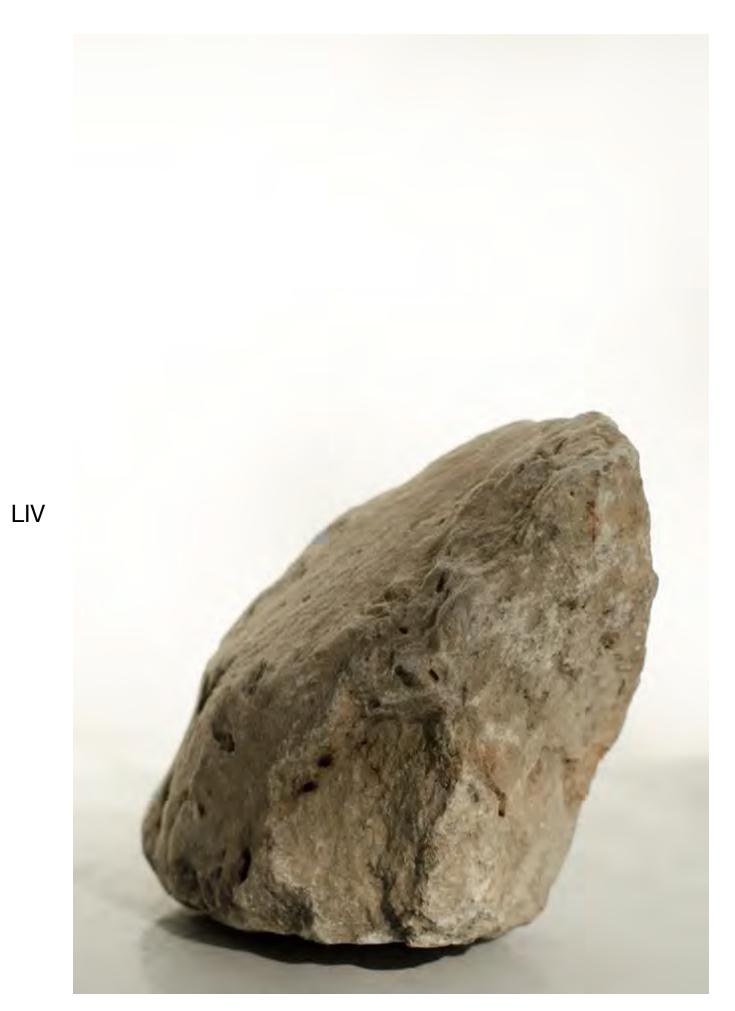


XXXIX





XVII





XLIII





X





XCII



LXXXIII



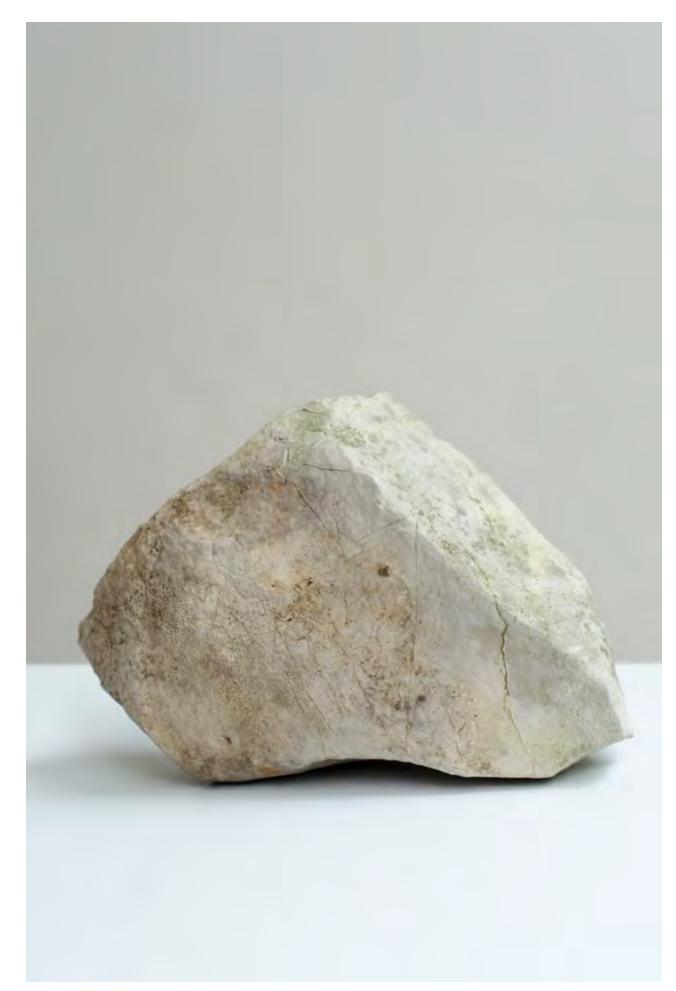
XL





LXXIX





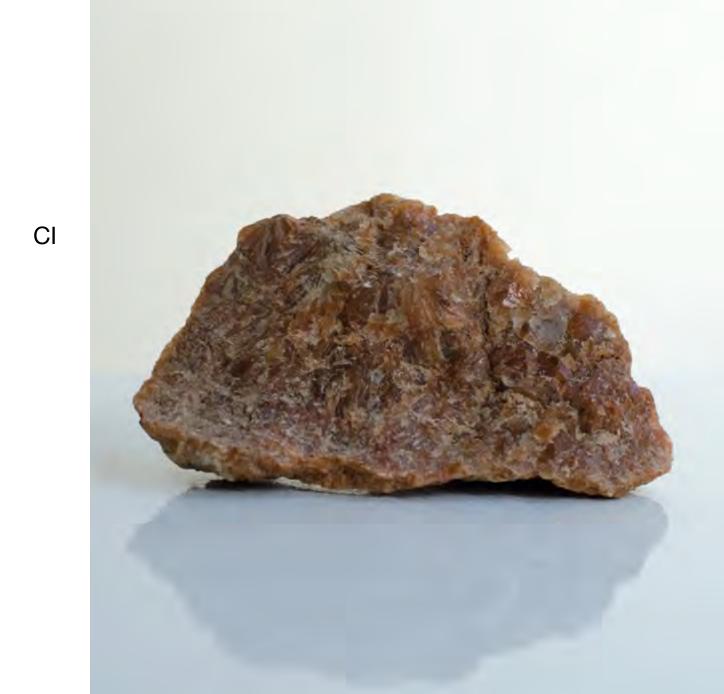
LXVII





LXXXI

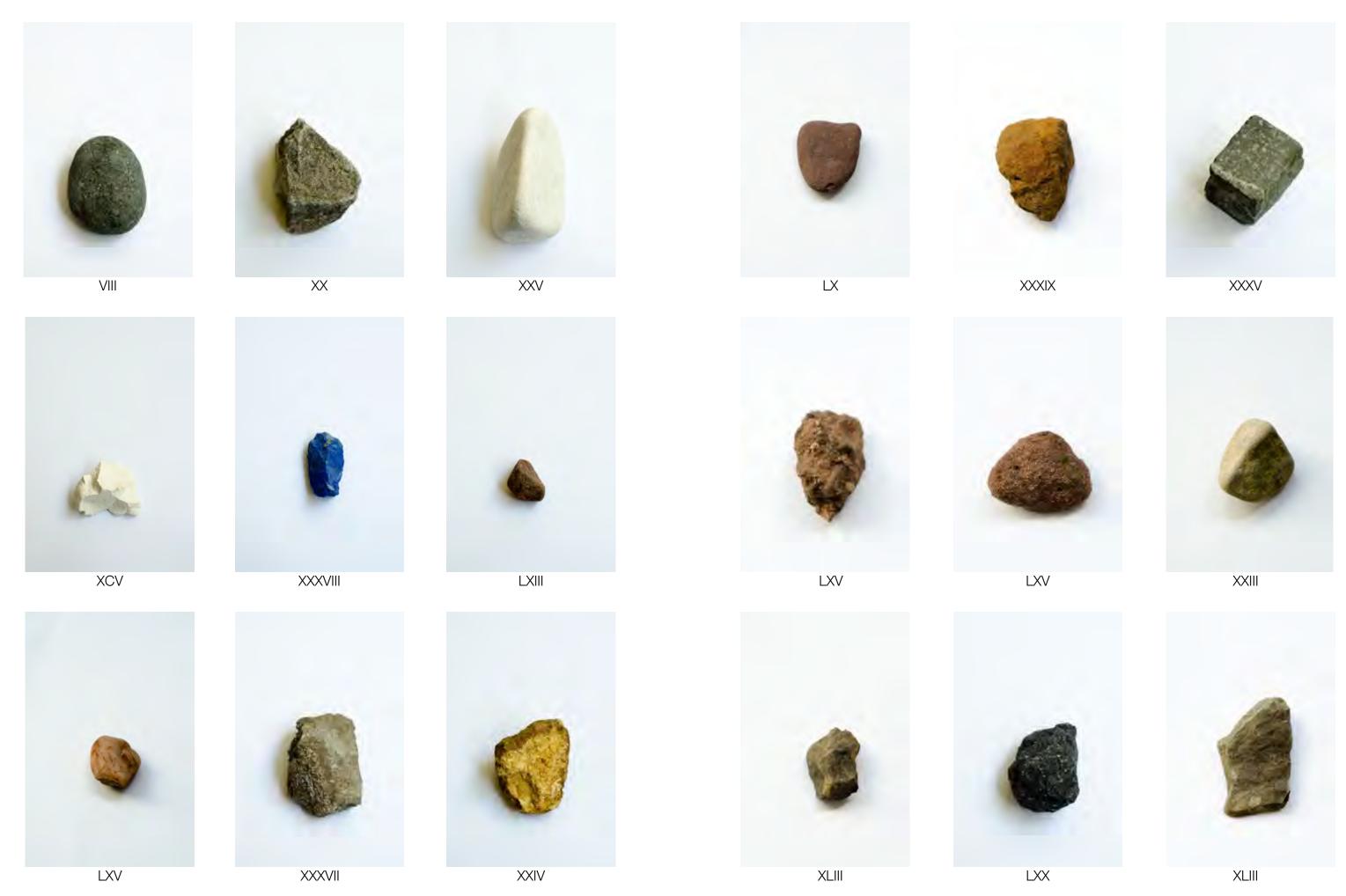






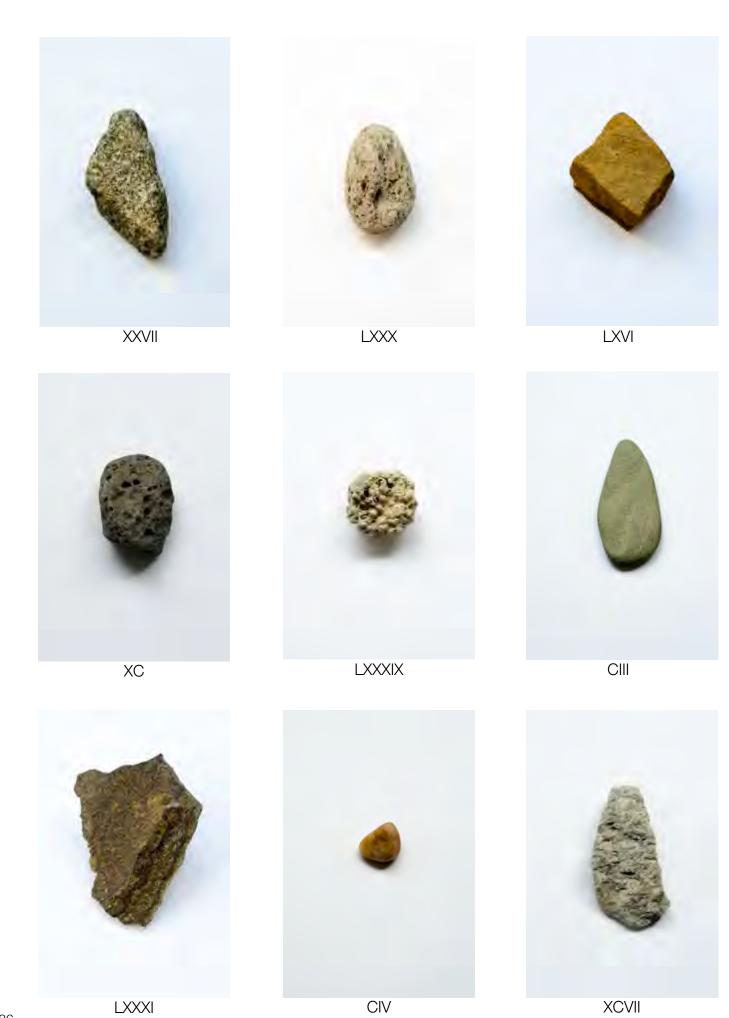












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Absent Stones from:

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Bagdad, Iraq
Bethlehem, Palestine
Galilee, Israel
Gibraltar
Haifa, Israel
Invercargill, New Zealand
Jerusalem, Israel / Palestine
Kabul, Afghanistan
Kathmandu, Nepal
Lanzarote, Spain
Shangai, China



All stones, Menhirs, Misfits and Absent Stones are marked with a code that links to their place of origin.

These stones from all around the world come together on the 19th of May 2019 in the performance **GEOLOGY** at S.M.A.K.



Jan Hoetplein 1, 9000 Gent (BE)

colophon

This publication is part of the performance GEOLOGY that took place on May 19, 2019 at S.M.A.K. on the occasion of '20 years of S.M.A.K. | HAPPENING' and the exhibition 'The Collection (1) | Highlights for a Future'.

credits

all photographs of places of origin, thanks to the travellers all photographs of Menhirs, Misfits and Absent Stones © Marie Julia Bollansée text, information given by the travellers, registered and written down by the artist text-editing, Walter Verschueren concept, graphic design, Marie Julia Bollansée printing, University Press

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Staff S.M.A.K.: Peter Aerts, Frances Berry, Tanja Boon, Charlotte Bouteligier, Dominique Cahay, Alexandr Caradjov, Tashina De Ketele, Filip De Poortere, Tineke De Rijck, Jens De Wulf, Anna Drijbooms, Simon Everaert, Annie Expeels, Berdien Floré, Martin Germann, Leen Goossens, Valérie Goossens, Rebecca Heremans, Bjorn Heyzak, Ann Hoste, Claudia Kramer, Carine Lafaut, Rohil Lal, Christine Maes, Sabine Mistiaen, Nadine Moerman, Eva Monsaert, Dirk Muylaert, Brice Muylle, Christoph Neerman, Ronny Opbrouck, Iris Paschalidis, Lien Roelandt, Doris Rogiers, Catherine Ruvffelaere, Aïcha Snoussi, Jeroen Staes, Benoit Strubbbe, Gilbert Thiery, Lander Thys, Marie Louise Van Baeveghem, Véronique Van Bever, Filip Van de Velde, Christa Van Den Berghe, Aline Van Nereaux, Hidde Van Schie, Ronny Vande Gehuchte, Annemie Vander Borght, Werner Vander Schueren, Evy Vanparys, Annelies Vantyghem, Eline Verbauwhede, Thibaut Verhoeven, Bart Verlinde, Geoffrey Vermeersch, Bea Verougstraete, Christian Volleman

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