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## **GEOLOGY AND ART**

Starting from its Renaissance roots, geology found in art a fruitful means of expression. Since Leonardo da Vinci times, many artists have also been investigators from the geosphere, and many geologists have been prolific artists. This is not a simple relationship of inspiration, but of deep interdependence, as the science of geology has developed in unison with his art.

Although the relationship between art and geology (Geoart) is intimate and profound, it has rarely been investigated and so far a comprehensive outlook on geoartistic phenomena is lacking.

This preliminary study aims to tackle this subject by  
(a) exploring the relationship between geology and art,  
(b) updating the state of knowledge to 2013, and  
(c) offering an insight on styles and themes.

To this end, the role of geology in the art is analyzed through interviews with contemporary geological artists, together with a historical perspective on the subject.

The results show that many contemporary artists are inspired by geological objects such as fossils, minerals and rocks. This behaviour is explained by the conceptual charm of geological objects, but also by their aesthetical attractiveness. Indeed, the fascination for geological objects is explained by their fractal organization, which constitutes the line of continuity between the aesthetics of small geological objects (i.e. minerals, rocks, fossils) and those immense (i.e. mountains). Also for this reason, geological contemporary artists are not only professional geologists, but also include many non-geologists.

In the light of this survey, geological art is an emerging social and cultural phenomenon but with ancient roots, so vast and so little studied to encourage research and future applications.