

STONE IN THE GARDEN









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Huge limestone blocks are superposed, in a very natural way, to assemble real landscapes from where the water dazzlingly gushes forth. 4 NATURE TAMED

Worked to achieve a flexible tonal quality extending the minimalist theme, two limestones unite and blend their shades in a very natural garden. 6 STONES SKIMMING THE WATER

Walking on water or how to add a touch of magic to your garden.

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Opposite the rough concrete, stone forms a bond with nature and imbues a garden's contemporary minimalism with spiritual enrichment.





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The rough stones mingle with the restoration work and offer a multitude of ways to create timeless aquatic landscapes. 14 SUBTLE TRANSPARENCIES

The slate emerges differently through water and brings age-old know-how to life.

**Stone** is a jewel case for water. Like the effects of shade and light, the wet and the dry fleetingly but alluringly pervade our perception of these two elements readily united in their primary juxtaposition.

Even before the exuberant vegetation or the flitting bee, water is life in the garden : it shimmers, flows, dances, murmurs, laps, in short, it can't keep still and immediately catches your eye. The stone encases the twinkling water, changes colour, highlights its features with unsuspected shades : it guides it, catches it unexpectedly at the edge of a precipice, gathers it as it falls or cradles it in the sun.

The natural shapes of stone blocks loosened from the quarry face, or the lines of the neatly dressed stones matching the landscape designer's wishes, enclose it differently but such diversity is a source of renewed pleasures.

The projects presented in this notebook illustrate some of the sober or bolder, natural or contemporary ways of integrating stone and water into a garden. And the diversity of the stones extracted from the quarries of Wallonia allows for a good many variations on this theme ...

## A surprising and exotic landscape

### STONE WATERFALL

In this residential district, with its whitewashed brick houses, classicism reigns supreme. Stone does however manage to unsettle this sober landscape to create a jungle, quite naturally, in one of its gardens.



The property had just added two additional, slightly marshy, plots of land, when Jean Delogne took an intrusive role to unify the whole and create a new garden. Water, stone and plant life are the very essence of the garden for this landscape designer from Brussels, trained in Japan. Working in the great oriental landscape tradition, he creates many tableaux that develop as you walk through the garden, deemphasising transitions, to achieve a subtle interplay of shots and reverse shots. Massive stone, the rock that breaks away in large blocks when the quarry layer is struck, is his favourite material.

This garden is organised around two ponds and a path that travels along their banks, passing through changing but always tropically inspired surroundings. Cyclopean blocks were used to create a waterfall separating the two ponds by a height of almost four metres. A path of broad flat stones passes alongside, moves away, disappears and then finds the water again through perspectives surprising the eye. As for the vegetation, it has recovered its rights and overruns the slightest cracks in the stone : the water that runs along the faces and splashes the flagstones incites ferns, mosses and a few hardy plants to cling to those rocks, as if they had always been there.

PRIVATE GARDEN, WATERLOO, DESIGNED BY JEAN DELOGNE, CELIA

#### STONE

The designer has chosen blue limestone crust for all the blocks and flagstones. The crust is the outer layer of a deposit more or less associated with textural change caused by a different adjoining substratum. That corresponds to a sort of geological shear in the formation of the subsoil rock. Just as resistant as inside the bed under consideration, the stone nonetheless offers a striking surface effect giving it the appearance of a natural rock outcrop.



### TECHNIQUE



A Broad rough thin flagstones are used for the paths. On the edge of the pond, they are simply laid on gabions generally used as retaining structures for banks, just beneath the water level. In the shade of a wooded cover, they pass over a slight waterfall. These flagstones are also used for the bridge that spans the upper pond upstream and covers the water inlet: the view is clear from that point but it is not possible to see either the lower pond or the waterfall. **B** The blocks of the waterfall were laid one on the other without joints, held by their own weight. The whole rests on a concrete foundation. The projection of the large slab that creates the waterfall was decided on site according to the way the other stones were arranged. The top of the waterfall structure is formed by two huge flat slabs on which it is easy to walk. Blocks flank this waterfall and make it easy to climb.



1 blocks of blue limestone crust

2 flagstones of blue limestone crust

3 gabions4 puddled clay

5 water inlet6 upper pond

7 lower pond8 path along the bank

# Contrasting lines for a mischievous stream

# NATURE TAMED

In this remote corner of the countryside, water is everywhere, wild and sometimes untameable as winter draws to a close. A certain amount of domestication was unavoidable to be able to enjoy the garden. New aquatic pathways were added and today the stone gives them a very natural look.



At the outset, this valley bottom, which seems almost apart from the world, lived at the tempo of an erratic watercourse with many loops and bends, irrigating vast wetlands. The landscape designer, Philippe Renac, chose to drain the site by restoring monks, creating new streams together with two ponds that tame the rising spring waters. The intention, in doing so, was to open vistas and landscape a natural garden. Natural stone – used in big blocks – and judicious planting made it possible to rapidly integrate these new layouts into the required surroundings. The owner's desire to be able to restore a natural environment without anyone suspecting the actual work carried out, was fully satisfied.

Near the house, a more sophisticated setting integrates a terrace where a few steps take you down to a wooden platform on the edge of a pond. A fairly sloping stream flows alongside the terrace and then the stairs, clears a few little falls before finding its calm near the ornamental pond. There too, stone is widely used to design the banks, make a ford and a bridge that span the stream and outline the waterfalls. The sometimes very bulky blocks are today overgrown by lush vegetation. Old blue limestone kerbs were reused for the ford, echoing the materials used for the terrace surface : mainly old dressed stones and flagstones. The plants provided the colour that was lacking.

PRIVATE GARDEN, CHIMAY, DESIGNED BY PHILIPPE RENAC, PLANTCONSULT

### TECHNIQUE

The streams and the ponds were dug out and made watertight using puddled clay. Next, limestone blocks from the Lompret quarry, often weighing over a tonne, were transported from nearby to landscape the bed of the watercourse. The low wooden walls surrounding the terrace, which can be reached directly from the house, are covered with sandblasted blue limestone wall facing.

The layout of the stream on the lower level terrace is composed of a polyester shell moulded on the spot and ensuring general overall watertightness. Limestone blocks, fairly flat on their lower face, are bedded in the stabilised sand in the bottom of the shell: they delimit several pools, allow the water to slide over them and so create pleasant waterfalls. Polyester joints make the entire arrangement watertight and prevent water from getting under the blocks and eroding the stabilised layer.

Other, often imposing blocks shape the contours of the bank : they are laid on a tamped sand or stabilised sand bed. Laying the blocks requires a good eye for aesthetics and judicious attention to their layout. Earth fills the gaps and plants are then inserted.





If the layout is completed before the garden is planted, thought should be given to the upkeep since water follows its own pathways which are not always those we had imagined. Repair work is sometimes needed over time owing to the weight of the stones, ground movements or diminishing tightness. Access must therefore be considered for sufficiently heavy appliances to raise stones weighing more than a tonne. Prior thinking should be given to access possibilities.

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1 polyester shell 4-5 mm thick

- 2 Lompret limestone blocks
- 3 stabilised sand
- 4 dark grey topcoat
- 5 concrete
- 6 actual ground
- 7 sandblasted blue limestone wall cover
- 8 low wall covered with wood
- 9 water



# Instilling spirit into a confined space

# STONES SKIMMING THE WATER

A TABLE IN

Walking on the water's surface is a game, a sometimes risky pleasure connecting the garden to a world of childhood dreams and surprises, but also to a metaphor of wild and unforeseeable nature.



In this quiet and restful town garden, water has come and lapped the outside walls of the house. Alongside a new veranda, the landscape designer, Michel Pauwels, has installed an ecological pond purified by plants. This L-shaped pond also rests against an outdoor terrace ideal for lunch in the sun.

The very geometrical shapes of the pond are formed by a concrete casing. They allow a skilful interplay of shapes between the flagstones used for the terrace and the same sized stones laid on the water. In that way, the boundary between earth and water is no longer visible and is instrumental in visually extending the terrace but also the pond.

The flagstones laid in the pond appear to float and add a touch of magic to that space.

PRIVATE GARDEN, LEUVEN, DESIGNED BY MICHEL PAUWELS

### TECHNIQUE

Square-shaped flagstones were chosen. The grassy joints of the terrace continue through similar spaces in the pond and so the general pattern retains a unity essential for the desired effect. The levels of the stone are the same everywhere. In the pond, each flagstone is underpinned by a fine metal structure fixed to the bottom and supporting the bonded flagstone. It has subsequently been coated with a product ensuring overall tightness. The narrowness of the base means that it is barely visible under the slight surface ripples. The water is purified by plants and slight bubbling provides aeration. The crystal clear water creates a stunning optical effect.



#### STONE

The blue limestone used here comes from recovered flagstones. Some were previously engraved. Nowadays, the engraving has faded but it does confer a note of mystery to the overall effect.



### Other fixing systems

In another private garden located on the edge of a vast pond, Michel Pauwels has created an aquatic space. Along a wall formed of rough flagstones which catches the water overflowing from an upper pond, a passage composed of stones floating on the water leads to a terrace. This very geometrically shaped pathway creates diversity and enlivens the watery surface by inducing a contrasting effect. Emphasised by the plants that purify the water and the wood of the terrace, it contributes a more human touch to this fairly rough stone and concrete setting.

PRIVATE GARDEN, KEERBERGEN, DESIGNED BY MICHEL PAUWELS











As for Francis Broos, he chose to extend the entrance to the house through a passage skimming the surface of the water of a pond bordering the main façade.

PRIVATE GARDEN, WESTERLO, DESIGNED BY FRANCIS BROOS



# Nature tempered to reflect a captivating sky

# A COBBLESTONE BEACH

The contemporary architecture blends imperceptibly with the simplicity and purity of the lines connecting the house to the garden. Stone is therefore the essential link between today's materials and nature reduced to its simplest elements.



Raised in relation to the street, the house stands on a hillock where the rear façade is hemmed in by the existing relief.

Patrick Verbruggen has designed and created a pond encased between two concrete walls to restore light to the northward facing ground-floor rooms and readjust this level to adapt access to the first-floor terrace. On the garden side, the lawn seems to stretch and dive towards this sky mirror, nowadays a duckweed paradise, and splash the high grey walls with colour.

The connection to the house is through a terrace of small cobblestones laid level with the runoff of the pond. The beach idea is almost there since a shower recess has been installed close to what might have also been designed as a swimming pool.

To avoid the feeling of being shut in, a paved path runs along the concrete walls and makes it possible to reach the lawn and the entire garden. The stone that catches the light and the joints overgrown with moss already form the link with the garden.

PRIVATE GARDEN, STERREBEEK, DESIGNED BY PATRICK VERBRUGGEN

#### STONE

Two forms of blue limestone are used: crust re-cut for 4 cm thick flagstones and  $10 \times 10 \times 10$  cm cleaved cobblestones. Near the house, the risers and the wall coping of the stairs leading down to the cellar are also made of flamed blue limestone.

#### TECHNIQUE

The pond is very shallow (40 cm) and two steel webs form its walls, covered with a liner. Drainage has been provided, on the lawn side, beneath a thick layer of gravel laid all along the pond, because there is a risk of surplus water running onto the lawn during bad weather. The cobblestones are simply laid on stabilised sand and jointed by leaving sand on the surface over approximately 2 cm, which is enough to attract some mosses.

- 1 flagstone of blue limestone crust
- 2 blue limestone cobblestones



waterproof mortar
steel angle iron
drainage

7 stabilised sand
8 concrete
9 liner



### A beach that goes down into the water

In the Chevetogne Provincial Estate, where surprises are a regular feature, a cobblestone beach offers the opportunity to get your feet wet if you don't take care. The pond made of concrete has been placed beneath the water level and filled with large sandstone blocks. The surrounding ground, paved to form a cobblestone mosaic, links up with the pond by running down beneath the surface. For the intrepid among you, it is possible to cross the pond ... at your own risk !





PROVINCIAL ESTATE, CHEVETOGNE, DESIGNED BY BENOÎT FONDU, FONDU LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

### Cyclopean stones



The integration of large blocks into the composition of an ornamental pond may reflect on site the particular way in which the stone is worked : a very natural rendering is simply a hint of the landscape designer's creative skill **1**, more complex stonework transcends the idea of Nature in a symbolic approach to water **2**. In the Japanese garden of the Albert-Kahn Museum **3**, water, materialising human life flowing through time, runs along a few high walls expressing the difficulties encountered when man reaches adulthood.



1 PARC DE FONTENAILLE (F), DESIGNED BY JEAN DELOGNE, CELIA

2 PRIVATE GARDEN, SCHOTEN, DESIGNED BY WIRTZ INTERNATIONAL S.A.

ALBERT KAHN GARDENS, BOULOGNE-BILLANCOURT (F), DESIGNED BY FUMIAKI TAKANO



### Murmuring

The water stairway is an uncommon composition in gardens, even though it has its rightful place : it may be majestic, as in the Parc André-Citroën 4, where the particular feature of its slate steps is that they are not parallel, or more discreet, like a brook accompanying the walk with the crystalline sound of its waterfalls **5**.



4 PARC ANDRÉ CITROËN, PARIS (F), DESIGNED BY GILLES CLÉMENT, ALLAIN PROVOST

5 DESIGNED BY DENIS DUJARDIN

### Babbling or lapping

The sight of water is a subject of musing. Slate offers water a comforting shelter **7**. Slate, on the contrary, provides a bold impetus to one of the theme gardens of Terra Botanica devoted to acid soils **6**.

In the middle of a restored square farmyard, a pond brightens up a space that has become too vast and is now deserted by farming. Its old cobblestones have been reused, accompanied by blue limestone crust **8**.







6 TERRA BOTANICA, ANGERS (F), DESIGNED BY THIERRY HUAU

Z LE CREUX DE LA MAIN, GARDEN FESTIVAL, CHAUMONT-SUR-LOIRE (F), DESIGNED BY SEMIS PUBLICS

8 PRIVATE GARDEN, ITTRE, DESIGNED BY JEAN DELOGNE, CELIA



### Visible or invisible

In one of her famous strokes of creative genius, the world-renowned plantswoman, Helen Dillon, transformed her lawn into a pool recalling the shallow pools she had seen at the Alhambra, in other climes **9**.

Water cannot be seen but there is a hint of its presence between high stone-faced walls supporting lawn and plants 10.



9 PRIVATE GARDEN, DUBLIN (IR), DESIGNED BY HELEN DILLON

10 ISLANDS, BLOOM FESTIVAL, DUBLIN (IR), DESIGNED BY ANNE HAMILTON

# A creation barely perceptible in the surroundings

# FRESHWATER

Living in a mill means wanting to play with water, hearing it lapping in the wind, streaming over the spillway, rushing down the millrace, splashing the walls where the cracking sound of the wooden paddlewheel could be heard in former times.



The stream was already there, crossing the meadow, just upstream from the mill, at the foot of a fairly steep and rocky face. The intention was to bring the garden close to nature at its most powerful with a soothing transition nearer to the house. To enhance this presence of water, Benoît Saint Amand designed a new pool crossing the garden in a setting featuring large stone blocks and waving grass. Stone is used to underscore the landscape in the downstream part of the pond, closest to the mill, so creating a transition with the upstream stretch of pond and its abundant plant life. Today, those blocks are an integral part of the landscape design and indigenous plant life has found its natural habitat here and there.

In this space, the advantage of working with water and stone comes from the use of these very natural blocks that link up with the nearby sections of rocks, but also with the old flagstones used for the narrow passage above the sluice gate overlooking the spillway. This very sober reinterpretation puts new life into the passing water – the mill wheel no longer exists – and connects it once again in a contemporary way to the dwelling.

> PRIVATE GARDEN, BIOUL, DESIGNED BY BENOÎT SAINT AMAND



- 1 sandstone blocks
- 2 waterproof concrete foundation
- 3 puddled clay
- 4 blue limestone flagstone
- 5 fishway
- 6 lower millrace
- 7 upper pond
- 8 stream
- 9 intermediate pool
- 10 spillway
- 11 raised passage
- 12 guard rail

#### STONE

from the Arbre region. Old blue limestone flagstones, with various finishes, have been re-laid to create the passage above the sluice gate. The floor of the adjoining terrace is covered with large blue limestone flagstones and so provides a contemporary aspect to the overall layout.

### TECHNIQUE

The blocks were laid on a light bed of stabilised sand especially for those that fix, as it were, the level of the pond. Downstream from the ornamental pond, a broad, flat stone was set on a series of blocks and acts as a spillway. The water slides over it then clears a few little falls before reaching the level of the former sluice gate of the mill. There, a stairway brings it down on to the bottom level of the millrace and then the stream. The technique is a simple one but works were needed at the beginning to adjust the required levels.



### Stone rediscovers nature

Today, many pond layouts, whether they are big or small, with pools of still or stagnant water, want to rediscover their true nature and give the impression that they have always been there. Stone is therefore the only material that very rapidly plays lively duos with the surrounding plant life. And all stones can harmonise to achieve the desired effect: sandstone and Meuse limestone, quartzite, slate, schistose sandstone, Fontenoille sandy limestone. The closeness of the quarry to the site is often the factor that dictates the choice of stones, to minimise costs and blend in with the surroundings.







3 PRIVATE GARDEN, AUDERGHEM, DESIGNED BY BERNARD CAPELLE, LANDSCAPE DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

4 PRIVATE GARDEN, UCIMONT, DESIGNED BY HUGHES FERNET, BOUILLON BLANC

1 PRIVATE GARDEN, LASNE, DESIGNED BY JEAN DELOGNE, CELIA

2 PRIVATE GARDEN, CHIMAY, DESIGNED BY PHILIPPE RENAC, PLANTCONSULT





# Stone hides at the bottom of the water

# SUBTLE TRANSPARENCIES

Laid out along the hillside, overlooking the wonderful landscape of the Ourthe valley, the garden nestles snugly in the hollow of nature's most generous offerings. As an extension to the house, a long and slender channel steers your eyes to the surrounding woods.



As a reflection of the sky and its moods, water is never very far away in the gardens of Serge Delsemme who loves to work with its transparencies, the possible interplay of superimposed impressions, the fantasy of the ambiances created in that way. In this garden that flirts playfully with the different levels, a long channel is placed on a break in the slope and gives life to a vast lawn. A Calder mobile is reflected in the water in striking harmony with the tempo of the rustling foliage.

This channel surprises but not because of its very slender lines or its outside materials – concrete – but rather because of the stone, slate rubble stone laid on the bottom. In the water, the rubble stones create a new world that drifts into sight as you draw near to the surface. As in a huge aquarium, your eyes detect the brightly coloured carps and your gaze lingers on immaculate water lilies. The nearby wood filters the vacillating light and shade. As for the wind, it blurs or highlights the almost geometrical pattern of the rubble stones, perfectly adjusted at the bottom of the channel.

PRIVATE GARDEN, CHAUDFONTAINE, DESIGNED BY SERGE DELSEMME

### TECHNIQUE

The slate rubble stones are meticulously aligned in the bottom of the pool and are wedged against each other, without mortar. The thicknesses are fairly close and the lengths are less so, which outlines a sort of stone jigsaw. The water is not stagnant, without giving the impression of flowing and the aeration system maintains its wonderful transparency. This technique is reminiscent of a traditional way of metalling stream bottoms, which can still be seen in the Vielsalm and Houffalize regions.

#### STONE

Slate lends itself perfectly to this because of its remarkably aminated layers making it easy to cleave and split into specific sizes. The rubble stones are not very thick but very long. Slate was used for making vine posts in former times. It is resistant when placed in water.





6 actual ground



### Variation

The pool can be made with almost invisible steel walls: this principle strengthens the natural aspect of the stretch of water even if the edges remain straight in these pictures.

> PRIVATE GARDEN, CHAUDFONTAINE, DESIGNED BY SERGE DELSEMME



### Traditional technique

Different, more or less aesthetic stabilisation techniques are used to prevent the water of a stream from eroding its banks too rapidly. The stone facing technique is a simple way to assemble roughly hewn stones, perpendicular to the direction of the current. In this way, water no longer manages to loosen the stones and overall stability is significantly improved. The resulting wall makes you think of drystone walls and perfectly integrates into the surrounding landscape. The stones end up hosting very attractive water-edge vegetation : yellow iris, sedges and even ferns above the water level. The bottom of the bed can be assembled in this way and is to be found in the project by Serge Delsemme (p.14).

### STONE

### TECHNIQUE

The stones are set edgewise in two layers lying on a concrete foundation. The lower layer is formed of the tallest rubble stones (facing rubble): their thickness varies between 6 and 15 cm – three-quarters of the stones are the thickest – their height can vary up to 1 m. Everything depends on the depth of the stream or pond. The small stones are going to be used to wedge the biggest ones so that no stone can be removed by hand. For better stability, the big stones are set in the foundation concrete. Once the first layer has been set, the rear is packed to a height slightly above the water level with dry concrete, to a depth of at least 15 cm. The upper layer is set in the same way, taking care to see that the top of the wall is perfectly even. The rear is then filled with earth and planted.

#### This technique is still applied today in regions where slate is widespread, as in the Salm, Sûre and Ourthe valleys. It is actually a stone that lends itself well to such layouts since it is easily cleaved into thin rubble stones. It is advisable to make sure to use slate that is frost resistant and stones that are free from flaws that might limit their resistance over time.



### Glossary

### Bond / Bonding

The bond is any of various arrangements of building materials that holds them together and enhances their qualities. It is one of the essential elements of the character of the building, emphasising the structures and often the function at a first glance.

### Crust

Weathered surface of a layer of rock. The thickness of these surface alterations may vary according to the natural stone under consideration and the deposit.

### Facing rubble stone

Thin rubble stone, applied to the surface of a concrete wall.

### Fishway / Fish ladder

A row of ascending pools or weirs connected by short falls to allow fish to pass a man-made obstacle on a watercourse.

### Flagstone / Paving slabs

Slabs for paving whose nominal width exceeds 15 cm and is generally equal to at least twice the thickness. See standard EN1341.

### Gabion

A metal wire container filled with heavy stones that do not deteriorate A gabion is used to stabilise.

### Monk

A hydraulic structure such as a small dam or sluice on a watercourse used to fix the upstream water height.

### Perré

Stone pitching or facing that protects the approaches to a bridge or a bank and prevents water from deteriorating them.

### **Puddled clay**

Thick layer of pure clay that is impervious to water and used to line a pond. Its use requires special know-how.

### **Rough block**

Piece of rock, of any shape, extracted from the bed or mass. The mass density of the stones of Wallonia is approximately between 2,600 and 2,750 kg/m<sup>3</sup>.

### Rough slabs

Stones cleaved or split at the quarry.

### Top coat/Gel coat

Finishing material applied on a watertight membrane (liner) to give it a colour finish. It contains paraffin to obtain the required finish appearance and ensure overall tightness of the liner. The proportion used is 400 to 500 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

### Waterproof

Material not penetrable by water and therefore making a surface covering watertight and impervious.

Our thanks to the garden owners and project designers who spared us a little of their time and agreed to be published.

### Dominique Guerrier Dubarle is an

agricultural engineer, specialising in the history of gardens and landscape. Sensitive to the constantly renewed work of yesterday's and today's designers, she shares her personal way of seeing recent achievements that highlight stone, her favourite material.

### Cristina Marchi is a building

archaeologist, specialising in heritage, its know-how and in heightening awareness about history and architecture. She is attentive to the "stone people" revealed through words and pictures to create wanted or unexpected links.

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For 20 years, **PIERRES et MARBRES de WALLONIE** has been disseminating accurate and detailed information about all the facets of natural stone in Wallonia: history, products, traditional and contemporary uses, technical expertise, documentation, restoration.

The **STONE IN THE GARDEN** notebooks are intended to be practical discovery tools for garden architects and landscape designers but also for the simple garden lover. Many and varied ways of incorporating natural stone into our surroundings are proposed, drawing on projects created by Belgian designers and presented in a detailed manner.

This notebook is devoted to the use of natural stone in landscape creations enhancing the use of **WATER**. It is the fruit of attentive meetings, warm visits and lingering looks at the gardens surrounding us and presents achievements chosen for their originality or their classicism, their simplicity or a specific construction detail. Works of landscape designers who like to share their creative outbursts of their experiences, they invite us, above all, to step in and enjoy garden tales.

#### THE STONE NOTEBOOKS

This collection includes notebooks devoted to the garden, to public space and to architecture drawing on specific transversa themes.

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STONE AND PUBLIC SPACE SURFACES 1 ...

STONE AND ARCHITECTURE WALLS 1 ...



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