



QUARRIES AS SPACE AND RESOURCE

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Today, reusing and adapting existing spatial resources is regarded around the world as an important contribution to sustainable development. As a result, new challenges are emerging on the margins of classic building tasks due to the changing opinions on whether to preserve or demolish. Xu Tiantian's projects in the quarries of Jinyun combine aspects of landscape planning, interior design, artistic installations, and social planning with an economic revitalization of the rural area. In this way, a ruined and exploited landscape becomes the starting point for a new sustainable coexistence linked to a narrative about the history of the site.





Subterranean Space

Natural caves, in which early humans sought shelter from the climate, are regarded as the archetype of enclosed space. To this day, there are inhabited caves all over the world: in Matera, Italy, in Coober Pedy, Australia, and in Spain, Tunisia, and Turkey. The Yaodong buildings dug into the loess in Shanxi Province in China still bear witness to this ecologically sensitive form of dwelling. In all cases, it is a sort of subtractive architecture since rocks or earth had to be removed to create the space. The quarries of Jinyun, in contrast, are not caves that were once used as dwellings, because the spaces were created incidentally by the quarrying of the stone.



The rock in the mountains was regarded as a store of material and the quarry was exploited using simple technology for over 1,000 years, with the stones used locally for building houses. The negative spaces that were created when the rock was extracted resulted from the manual labor and how the stonemasons dug into the mountain. The traces the craftsmen left on the rock faces are a testimony to the history of the location and are now being cast in a new light, like archaeological excavations. This history with its traces of human exploitation becomes the starting point for a sustainable future that offers the local population a new perspective.









