

**Expressing geology by art: from Leonardo to
Geopark Naturtejo merchandising**

BAUCON, Andrea ⁽¹⁾ and NETO deCARVALHO,
Carlos ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional. Geology and
Paleontology Office, Centro Cultural Raiano. Av. Joaquim
Morão 6060-101 Idanha-a-Nova, Portugal,
andrea_geologia@libero.it

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Abstract: Since Leonardo times, art has been a
passionate way to express Geology. In fact, as
evidenced by numerous examples of „Geological Art”,
the artistic language presents Geology with a warm and
emotional look. In Visual Arts Leonardo is one of the

most representative artist dealing with Geology, but he was not the only Naturalist to cover Earth Sciences: fossils and minerals were widely described and depicted by Gesner, Agricola and Aldrovandi. Notwithstanding the importance of the Naturalists, Geology and Art are connected since Paleolithic times while vertebrate fossils are represented by Mesopotamic and Greek-Roman cultures and Portuguese popular religion.

In more recent times, Earth Scientists themselves inspired works of art: Spitzberg's „geologist" is a Romantic masterpiece. The geologists of the 18th-19th century were frequently pictured (i.e. Bone Wars watercolours) and their discoveries inspired outstanding lithographies, like the primeval landscapes of Riou and Harder.

The career of many palaeontologists started with the evocative paintings of Moraveç and Burian, pillars of contemporary „Geological Art", which nowadays is very diversified: we have visionary sights (i.e. Troll, McClabby), realistic ones (i.e. Bakker, Martin, Carr) and even humoristic approaches. In fact the geologist and artist Ortolani is the author of the character „RatMan", nowadays ruling the Italian comic scenes.

Geological Art is not only Visual Art: many musicians took inspiration from Geology, covering very assorted genres, going from blues (i.e. „Devonian Blues" by Troll) and classic ones („Burgess Shale" by Steiger, „Earthquake Quartet" by Michael) to heavy metal („Trilobite" by Mastodon). Fossils shape and stratigraphic sequences have been sonified by Ekdale („Palaeontological sonification"), Montanari and Rossetti („Geofonia", „Dance with Earth").

The examples show how Art can communicate Geology appealingly: therefore, strongly visual (and audio) elements have been proposed for the

merchandising of the Geopark Naturtejo. Walking along the line of continuity between Science and Art is an emotional way to express the geology of the Geopark.



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