## **TOBEL** BEEFEETIONS IN STONE - from the inside out

BY CHRISTIANE AHLHELM

A DICTUM SAYS: "STONE IS THE COMPILED new sculptures. He finds them in quarries, HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE". TOBEL'S WORLD river beds, and in the mountains, and his IS THIS DENSE FORM OF ENERGY TO BE FOUND IN choice is determined by what he expects to THE HUGE BLOCKS OF STONE HE WORKS WITH. find underneath the surface. HIS PIECES OF ART ARE IN CONTRAST TO WHAT WE NORMALLY UNDERSTAND BY A SCULPTURE.

spirit of time. His works differ fundamentally and the character of his sculptures. His from the traditional and industrial stone sculptures are created to represent the interior carvings. TOBEL does not change the outer aspect of the stone, but starts changing the of years - the history of the stone - are made monolithic stone from the inside.

into a family with a long standing tradition for reveal the inner soul of the stone. To hew the art. His great-grandfather was a sculptor in stone is a very hard job, but nothing is as Munich, and his mother Lotte Koch is wellknown for her paintings and drawings.

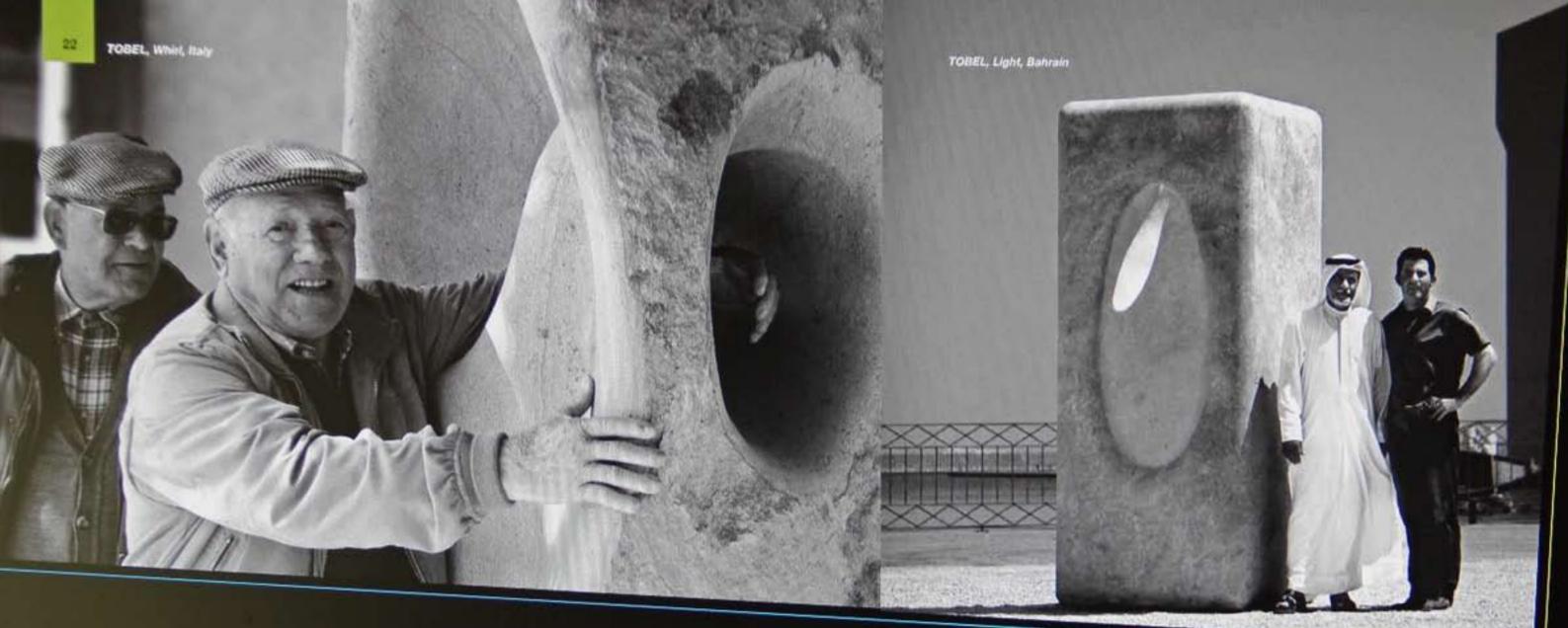
climbing in the Rocky Mountains of America preparatory work before starting to apply the and the high peaks of the Himalayas. The heavy tools. As mentioned before, sculptors physical strength he gained made his biceps in general convert the outside of the stone. grow but also helped him for today's work as a TOBEL is different; he is more fascinated by sculptor. Nature, and in particular stones and the interior life of the stone. TOBEL transforms rocks, have always fascinated TOBEL; and he the stone by excavations in form of caves, is constantly looking for stones which inspire spirals, passages and tubes. His preferred

TOBEL's search for elementary forms has its origin in the unhewn block of stone. This rough As a contemporary artist, he is opposed to the block of stone determines the size, proportions life of a stone block. Several hundred millions

TOBEL was born in 1968 in the City of Munich In his workshop he creates sculptures which sensitive as stone, one false hit, a crack and a fracture, and the whole concept is destroyed.

At a young age, TOBEL challenged himself by A lot of pain and attention has to be given to the







material is granite, since it is homogenous and free If we pursue the tracks of the spiral we can of cracks and veins. He proceeds slowly, centimeter by centimeter, with the help of diamond saws and From every cell of our body, in the double helix of pneumatic drills, hammers and chisels. One design he often uses is the spiral - round, oval, large and nebula, to the milky way itself, where our own solar small, with single or multiple curves.

TOBEL's decision to use three dimensional spirals eras, this elementary form has never ceased to stems from the counter-flow of the opposing directions in the spirals, which open up countless or religion. opportunities. The spiral is a geometrical figure which is unusual and yet mathematical. It occurs in nature: in a whirlpool, in a snail shell, in the point, and the age of the stone - several hundred artifice of a spider's web, or in a tornado.

understand that this form is present on every scale. the DNA, through the gigantic eddy of the spiral system spirals around the constellation Hercules. Since the dawn of history, through all times and amaze, in the realm of plants or engineering, in art

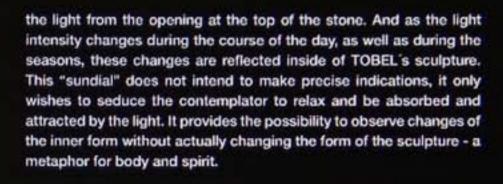
The vacuum, devoid of material, becomes the focal millions of years - becomes visible. We imagine the

spiral to continue its endless movement beyond the stone. It draws us into the center and origin of the world in ever decreasing circles. The outward movement describes ever increasing circles which eventually encompass the universe and puts it under its spell. The huge block of stone is only a tiny part of this infinite spiral.

The spiral respects the personality of the stone, and through the curls and curves the contemplator perceives another aspect. Spirals carved in stone become very interesting when they break through on the other side of the sculpture, thus capturing the light. Inspired by this light scheme TOBEL is now working more with forms which allow him to capture the light, and just calls these sculptures "Light".

It is impossible to make a stone lighter in weight, and it is not easily conceivable to make a stone shine and glow. And still TOBEL has succeeded to capture

TOBEL, Balance, Korea



TOBEL's strength as a sculptor is to be found in his talent to make the stone speak to us. He succeeds to give the natural stone a voice and to encourage it to dialogue in its own way. When TOBEL's hammer hits the stone he can tell if the stone has a resonance and responds to him. Then a slow dialogue starts between the colossus of stone and the sculptor. The sculpture represents infinity, and so do the designs which TOBEL has created: ancient, archaic motifs such as spirals, cells, circles, triangles or quadrangles.

Enterprises, communities and municipals are his main clients. They are mainly located in Asia, and in particular Korea and Taiwan. TOBEL's works can also be seen in Europe, Bahrain, and Turkey. This autumn he won the biennial prize in Argentina.

All those who are looking for stability and admire art which provides strength and peacefulness will love TOBEL'S contemporary witnesses of stone.

More sculptures, descriptions about his projects, and some videos can be seen on TOBEL's homepage: www.tobel.org