

Twenty  
Contemporary  
New Jersey  
Artists

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The  
Peat Marwick  
Montvale  
Art  
Collection

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## **Artists**

**Robert Anderson**

**Bennett Bean**

**Robert Birmelin**

**Joseph Chirchirillo**

**Robert Cooke**

**Eileen Doktorski**

**Mel Edwards**

**Clyde Espenschied**

**Grace Graupe-Pillard**

**Andre Haluska**

**Susan Eve Jahoda**

**Ben Jones**

**Joseph Maloney**

**Livio Saganic**

**Amy Stromsten**

**Byron Temple**

**Barbara Valenta**

**John Van Alstine**

**Kay Walkingstick**

**Mikhail Zakin**



Rarely are contemporary artists able to incorporate a believable sense of history in their work, but the slate sculptures of Livio Saganic offer a unique and sophisticated blending of the past with the present. Without referring to specific historic sites, Saganic's sculpture has the uncanny ability to nudge the eclectic subconscious into remembering images of prehistoric monoliths, Near Eastern ziggurats, Egyptian temples, and Mycenaean fortresses. Also largely influenced by the rock cut "troglodytes" of Saganic's native Yugoslavia, his pieces stand as universal archetypes for the whole of ancient architecture. The choice of slate itself has an enduring quality that enhances the historic integrity of his work. Certainly that is why the Egyptians chose that stone for their ever durable sculptures.

At the same time, though, Saganic's works are very much of this century. Spacially, they are as capricious as Escher environments, and only in the twentieth century does a sculptor have the freedom to employ such a geometric vocabulary to explore motifs suggestive

of architectural landscape. As the artist himself has said, "Sculpture is only beginning to come to terms with the fact that there is much to be learned from architecture."

The physical impenetrability of Saganic's work is very much linked to this earth, yet his sculpture also evokes a powerful metaphysical aura. When viewed from a distance, the tall cylindrical pieces have a totemic, anthropomorphic look, and those of the "*Trogle II*" series especially seem to be isolated silhouettes of individuals caped in mysterious dark shrouds. In contrast, though, the architectural passages of the works are hauntingly deserted; they express the isolation and aloneness so frequently encountered in American art, and in typical Hopperesque fashion, the sense of human presence is most strongly felt in its implied absence. One misses the inhabitants of these long-lost worlds. Saganic's metaphysics is also

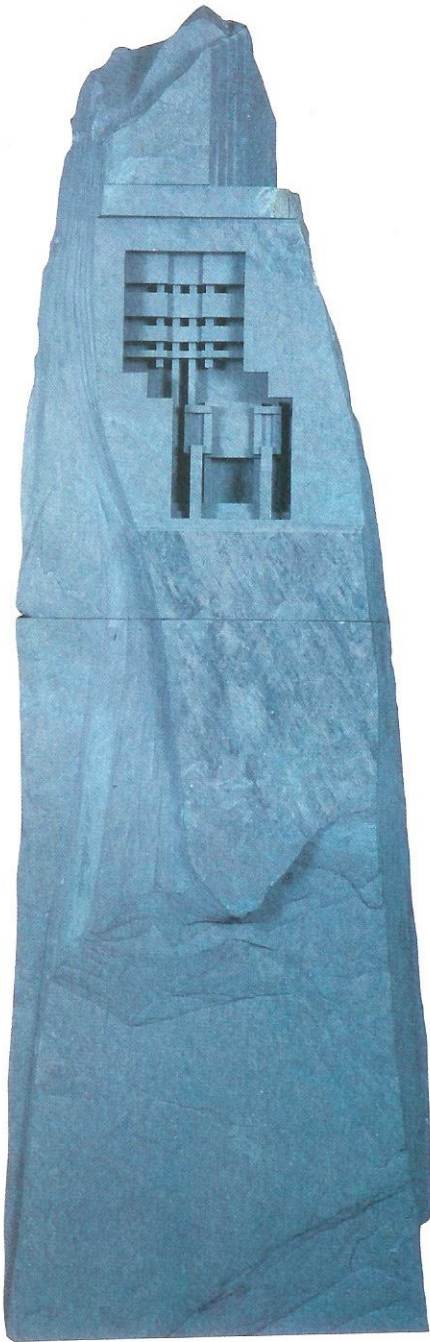
religious. Not only do many of his works evoke the image of hilltop monasteries, they also generate a spiritual calm and austerity.

Within the monumental stillness of the pieces, one can witness the transformation of uncut stone into pristine architectural elements. Perhaps this aspect of his work relates to his initial attraction to slate, when he witnessed the way the material reacted as it accidentally fell from a truck. Saganic's communion with slate is also a tribute to the human spirit's ability to triumph over the toughest forms of resistant physical matter.

Born in Yugoslavia in 1950, Livio Saganic received a bachelor of fine arts degree from Pratt Institute in 1974, and a master of fine arts degree from Yale University in 1976. Saganic's work has been reviewed in *The New York Times* and *Arts Magazine*. He has been the recipient of many awards and grants including a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts grant (both in 1980); the Creative Artists Public Service Program fellowship in 1982; and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award for Sculpture in 1979. His work is featured in a number of public and private collections including the Newark Museum, Chase Manhattan Bank, Exxon, Prudential Insurance Company of America, and United Technologies. Included among the galleries and museums where he has had solo exhibits are the SoHo Center for Visual Artists, the New Jersey State Museum, the University of North Carolina, and the Munson Gallery in New Haven, Connecticut. His work has also appeared in more than three dozen group exhibits.

## Livio Saganic





Trogie II (1982)  
82 x 26 x 7 inches  
Slate