

The Big Picture

Part 2



The Uffington White Horse

The **Uffington White Horse** is a [prehistoric hill figure](#), 360 feet long, formed from deep trenches filled with crushed white [chalk](#). The figure is situated on the upper slopes of [White Horse Hill](#) in the English [civil parish](#) of [Uffington](#). The hill forms a part of the scarp of the [Berkshire Downs](#) and overlooks the [Vale of White Horse](#) to the north. The best views of the figure are obtained from the air, or from directly across the Vale, particularly around the villages of [Great Coxwell](#), [Longcot](#) and [Fernham](#). The site is owned and managed by the [National Trust](#). [The Guardian](#) stated in 2003 that "for more than 3,000 years, the Uffington White Horse has been jealously guarded as a masterpiece of [minimalist art](#)." The Uffington Horse is by far the oldest of the white horse figures in Britain and is of an entirely different design from the others inspired by it.

<https://youtu.be/s6kNR8Mj0ZE>

Maintenance

Situated 170 metres to the north-east of the hillfort – and visible from a distance of several miles – is the striking chalk-cut figure of a horse.

The White Horse, which measures 111 meters from the tip of its tail to its ear, has been dated to the later Bronze Age or Iron Age, between 1740 and 210 BC. It may have been a territorial marker or a fertility symbol – its function is not certain.

Once every seven years from at least 1677 until the late 18th century a midsummer ‘scouring festival’ was held, during which local people cleaned the chalk outline of the horse and enjoyed a celebratory feast within the hillfort.









Djenne Mali



Mud Brick Architecture Mali



The Old Towns of Djenné include nearly 2,000 pre-[Islamic](#) mud houses that have been inhabited since the 3rd century B.C. The ancient town, which is also a market center and a link in the trans-Saharan gold trade, was placed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1988. Insecurity in the area from rebel groups is impeding crucial measures to adequately preserve the site.

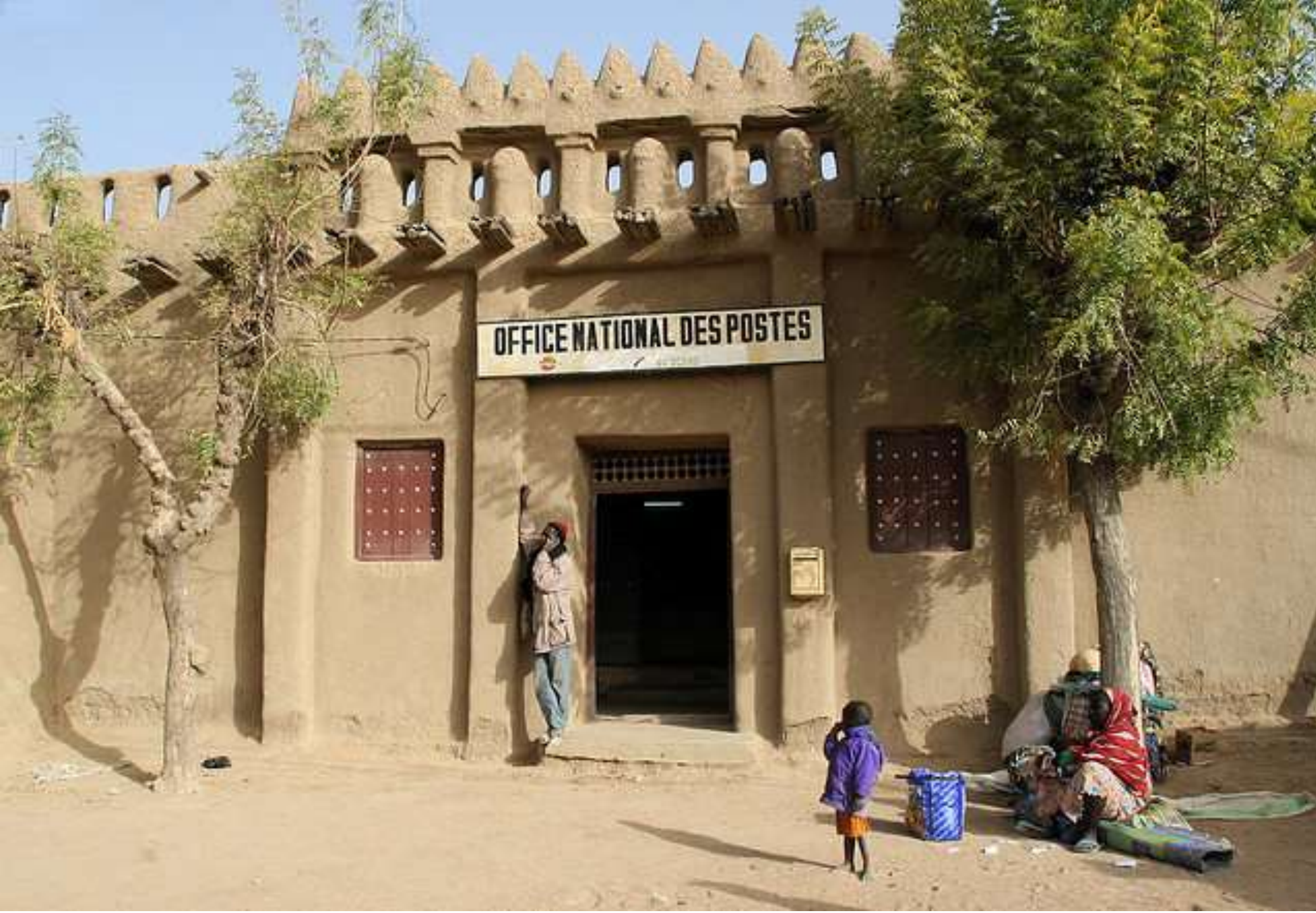
<https://abcnews.go.com/International/ancient-mud-brick-buildings-danger-instability-mali-unesco/story?id=40570394>



All houses are built with adobe, or sun-dried earth bricks, locally known as *ferey*, and plastered with mud. Pieces of wood are commonly inserted into the walls between each five courses of bricks in order to make the houses stronger. Ceramic pipes are used to drain rainwater from the roof in a way that keeps the water from damaging the walls.











The Mosque of Djenne

Djenné is one of the oldest continuously inhabited towns of Sub-Saharan Africa with the earliest settlement dating to the 3rd century BCE. Djenné is known for its remarkable earth architecture.

The **Great Mosque of Djenné** is a large banco or [adobe](#) building that is considered by many architects to be one of the greatest achievements of the [Sudano-Sahelian architectural style](#). The mosque is located in the city of [Djenné](#), [Mali](#), on the [flood plain](#) of the [Bani River](#). The first mosque on the site was built around the 13th century, but the current structure dates from 1907. As well as being the center of the community of Djenné, it is one of the most famous landmarks in Africa. Along with the "[Old Towns of Djenné](#)" it was designated a [World Heritage Site](#) by [UNESCO](#) in 1988.

<https://youtu.be/nO2FWMjckJo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mH2d5mNzbpk>

<https://youtu.be/XiHOqxo5tpc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiHOqxo5tpc&feature=youtu.be>

Some problems

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aghKLgfPQcs>









<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mH2d5mNzbpk>

Ifugao Philippines



Ifugao People



The Ifugao are possibly the oldest residents of the Philippine highlands; their origin attributed to Indonesian migration, dating back as early as 800-500 BC. The Spaniards were unable to transform their culture and values.

Their name is synonymous with the famous man-made Banaue Rice Terraces in northern Luzon, hailed as the "eighth wonder of the world", and attributed to their engineering knowledge and agricultural terracing.



BANAUE RICE TERRACES

IFUGAO, PHILIPPINES

Banaue Rice Terraces

The Banaue Rice Terraces were carved from the hillside by the Ifugao people about 2,000-3,000 years ago. The people dug them out with their bare hands and crude implements. Doing so they created steps in the hills where they could plant their rice. The terraces are considered to be one of the greatest engineering feats of mankind. If each one were connected end to end, then they would reach halfway across the globe or be 10 times as long as the Great Wall of China. It was not until 1995 that the Banaue Rice Terraces were declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The rice terraces are like stepping stones stretching towards the sky. Some of them reach almost 5,000 feet in altitude and cover about 4,000 square miles of land. They are now beginning to show signs of erosion, and some of the terraces need maintenance. Many of the Ifugaos' newer generations are migrating to nearby cities in search of better opportunities work opportunities as a result.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/world-heritage/philippine-rice-terraces/#close>

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/722/video/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYc3gQ8okzY>

<https://theculturetrip.com/asia/philippines/articles/the-breathtaking-ifugao-rice-terraces-of-the-philippine-cordilleras/>



























Agnes Denes (1931-

Agnes Denes is a Hungarian-born American [conceptual artist](#) based in [New York](#). She is known for works in a wide range of media—from poetry and philosophical writings to extremely detailed drawings, sculptures, and iconic [land art works](#), such as *Wheatfield—A Confrontation* (1982), a two-acre field of wheat in downtown Manhattan, commissioned by the Public Art Fund, and *Tree Mountain—A Living Time Capsule* (1992-96) in Ylojärvi, Finland.

- <https://theshed.org/program/6-agnes-denes-absolutes-and-intermediates>
- <http://www.agnesdenesstudio.com/works1.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYIt3FY0E4I>
- https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/qa/agnes-denes-interview-1-54574

Land art summary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STW0eZDsKVg>

Rice/Tree/Burial

As a pioneer of Land Art, Agnes Denes created Rice/Tree/Burial in 1968 in Sullivan County, New York. Acknowledged as the first site-specific performance piece with ecological concerns, it was enacted ten years later on an expanded scale at Artpark in Lewiston, New York. This performance piece involved planting rice seeds in a field in upstate New York, chaining surrounding trees and burying a time capsule filled with copies of her haiku. "It was about communication with the earth," Ms. Denes said, "and communicating with the future."

Wheatfield—A Confrontation

Wheatfield — A Confrontation 1982 [Manhattan](#), [Battery Park](#) City [landfill](#).

After months of preparations, in May 1982, a 2-acre wheat field was planted on a landfill in lower Manhattan, two blocks from Wall Street and the World Trade Center, facing the Statue of Liberty, sponsored by the [Public Art Fund](#). Two hundred truckloads of dirt were brought in and 285 furrows were dug by hand and cleared of rocks and garbage. The seeds were sown by hand and the furrows covered with soil. The field was maintained for four months, cleared of wheat smut, weeded, fertilized, and sprayed against mildew fungus, and an irrigation system was set up. The crop was harvested on August 16 and yielded over 1,000 pounds of healthy, golden wheat.¹



Preparing the Rice Field above the Niagara gorge at the U.S. and Canadian border
Rice/Tree/Burial Project, 1969-1979
 Artpark, Lewiston, New York
 © Agnes Denes



Grown Rice Field
Rice/Tree/Burial Project, 1969-1979
 Artpark, Lewiston, New York
 © Agnes Denes

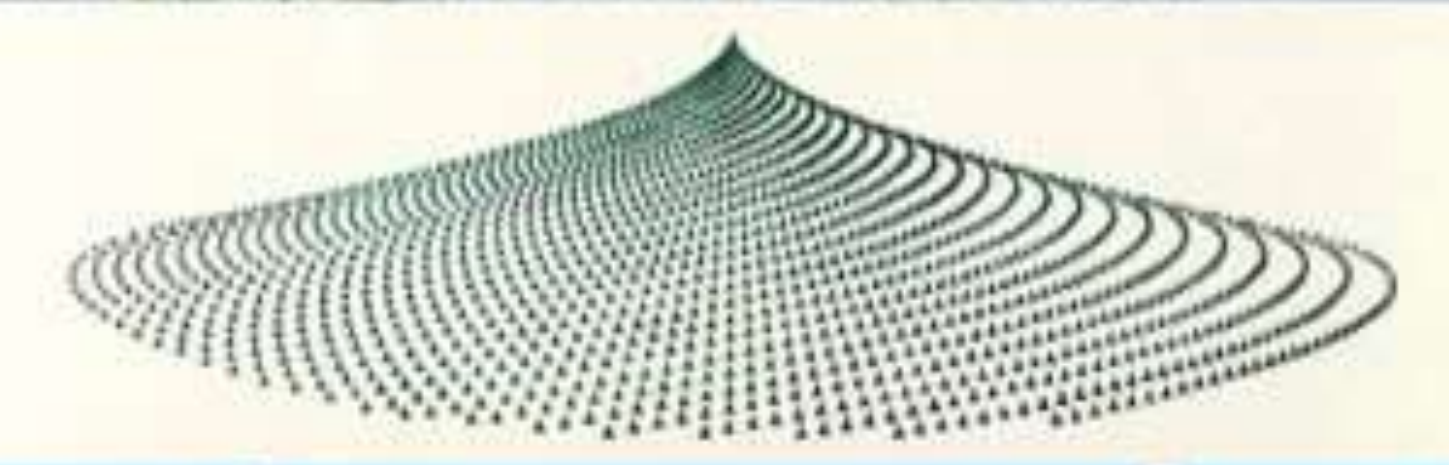






Tree Mountain—A Living Time Capsule

A monumental earthwork reclamation project and the first man-made virgin forest, situated in Ylöjärvi, Western Finland. The site was dedicated by the President of Finland upon its completion in 1996 and is legally protected for the next four hundred years.



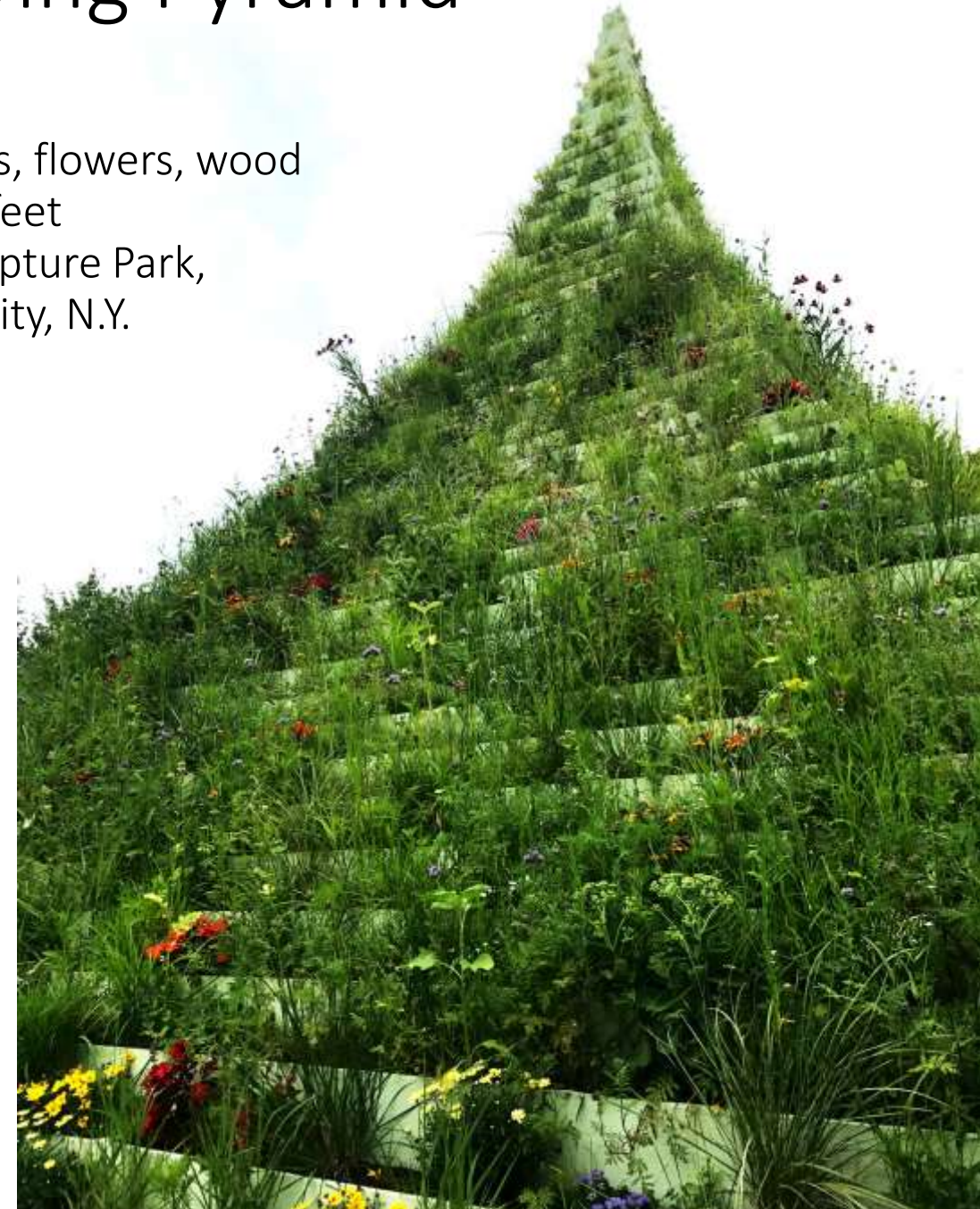






The Living Pyramid (2015)

Earth, grasses, flowers, wood
30 x 30 x 30 feet
Socrates Sculpture Park,
Long Island City, N.Y.







Assignment Suggestions

- Create a series of minimalist gesture drawings inspired by the Uffington White Horse (or something that suggests movement)
- Create an artwork inspired by the organic architecture of the Djenne Mosque. Create a sand castle and photograph it.
- Use corrugated cardboard to create a terraced sculpture inspired by the Banaue rice terraces (or the Maya Lin sculptures). Or create a painting/drawing/digital image inspired by them.
- Create an artwork or patterns using grains and photograph it.
- Create an artwork incorporating the mathematical forms of an Agnes Denes work.
- Play with juxtapositions—(e.g., the statue of liberty in a wheat field.)