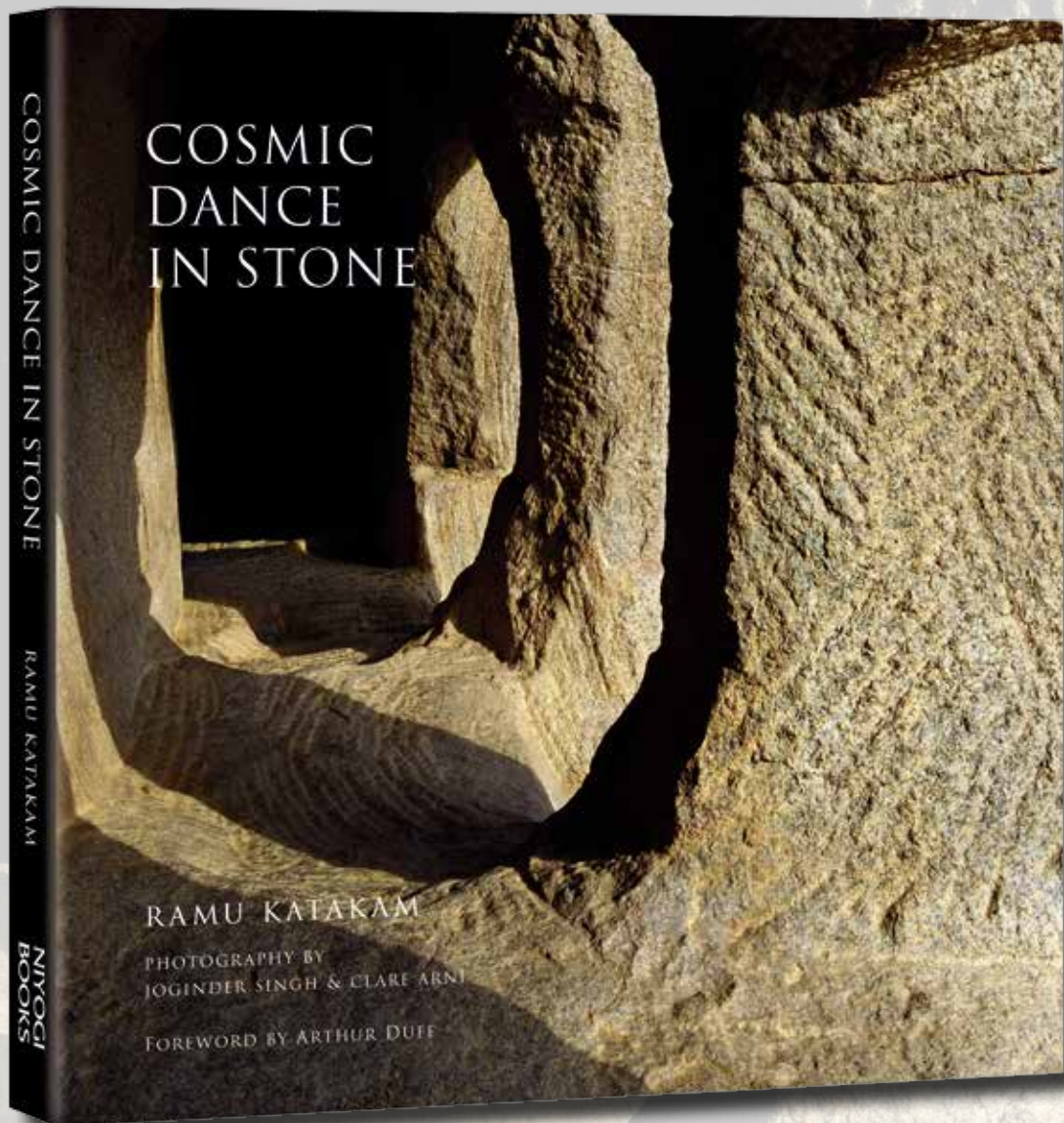


ISBN: 978-93-85285-54-7

ARCHITECTURE / HERITAGE
₹3,000 / £45 / \$60 HB



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COSMIC DANCE IN STONE

by
Ramu Katakam

ARCHITECTURE / HERITAGE

₹3,000 / £45 / \$60 HB

ISBN: 978-93-85285-54-7

Size: 290 x 290mm

228pp, 150gsm Art Paper (Matt)

All colour, 169 photographs

Hardback with dust jacket

The intention of this book is to explore, through photographs and illustrations, the architectural spaces that were conceived to transcend space and time. Historians have traced their origins as also the rulers who helped build them while photographers have presented them in beautiful imagery. It was necessary, however, to understand the architectural nuances of these fine monuments, and the quality of light and space the designers were trying to achieve. It was also the discovery of James Fergusson's original version of *Illustrations of the Rock-cut Temples of India*, published in 1845. He captured in his lithographs the essence of such architecture and maintains that *there is an expression of grandeur, and of quasi eternity, in a temple cut in the rock, which is far greater than can be produced by any structural building of the same dimensions*. In *Cosmic Dance in Stone*, there is an attempt to rediscover the quest for eternity and the relationship with the cosmos through the creation of stone structures that give a glimpse of a world beyond this one. The designers, artists, and craftsmen of a bygone age manifested qualities in a building that are rarely seen today.



Ramu Katakam has been a practising architect for the last 40 years. Starting with a private practice, he subsequently turned to research on the traditional

buildings of India, further exploring themes like lightness and being in the buildings he designed. One of his houses was shortlisted for the Aga Khan award for architecture in 2007 and two others (the Dilli Haat and the Syrian Orthodox church in Delhi) have been described in the latest edition of Sir Banister Fletcher's encyclopaedia of world architecture.

Citing the primordial nature of stone, the book shows how designers of the past devised structures that could transcend space and time and help us apprehend the nature of our existence.

The author also chronicles the work of contemporary sculptors Isamu Noguchi and Himmat Shah, whose creations suggest the perennial quality of the material

Spectacular compositions by architectural photographers Joginder Singh and Clare Arni transform *Cosmic Dance in Stone* into a visual delight.

