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## **Art museums. A perfect context for outreach activities on stones**

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Natural stones have, among many other applications, an important use in sculpture, both as the main material and as the suitable base where to mount the artistic piece. Many pieces of art can be admired in museums around the world standing on beautiful stones. However, in very few cases the stones are referred to with the correct name. In general, they are all labelled as marble, but many other natural stones are appropriate, and in fact are chosen, as pedestals. To illustrate this, and only as an example, we have used for this work the observations made at the museum of Art Nouveau and Art Decó *Casa Lis*, in Salamanca, Spain. This is a very prestigious museum where a superb collection of Art Decó sculptures can be admired. Among them, many Chryselephantines, sculptures made of ivory, bronze and other materials, dated from the European Nineteenth Century art, are placed on bases of natural stone. Our work consisted in identifying, as accurate as possible, these stone platforms. In the case of *Casa Lis*, most of the natural stones used as pedestals are related to onyx, but there are many other stones, from serpentinite to travertine to other unrecognized materials. The final aim of this work was to correct the labels accompanying the sculptures at the exhibition, with the proper name of the stone whenever possible. And as much as possible, we tried to identify the origin of the stone. This fact is related to the history of the sculpture but also to the main target of this work: to disseminate the importance of natural stones among the general public.

