

**MARBLE - SUGAR**

A project by Oli Bonzanigo

Marrakech Biennale 6  
Partner Project with Voice Gallery, Marrakech**MAGHREB // VERSILIA // MAGHREB**

2700 KG	=	2700 KG
سكّر // sskor // sucre // sugar		رخام // erreham // marbre // marble

**HISTORY**

(985 - 1001 // 1578 - 1593)

In Morocco, King Ahmed al Mansur (1578-1603) began promoting the commerce of sugar in the Sixteenth Century.

The King built the Sucrierie Ouled Messaou and Ida Ougourd near Mogador to process cane sugar, from where it was carried to the sea along the Oued Ksob, for exporting it through the Mediterranean sea.

The sugar reached the lands of Versilia in Italy, where the white gold was exchanged with white fine marble by weight.

The marble blocks were extracted from the mounts in Versilia and transported to the ports, where they were shipped to Tunis; from there they travelled along the Northern coasts of Africa, through the strait of Gibraltar to Mogador (Essaouira).

The marble was then picked up by caravans and transported to Marrakech, to build the Palais el Badi, by desire of the King Ahmed al-Mansur, after the Saadiens won the battle against the Portuguese of Alcacer Quibir (4<sup>th</sup> August 1578).

The marble and sugar were exchanged by weight.  
1 cubic meter of marble weights 2700 Kg.

**PRESENT**

(1437 // 2016)

Bank Al Maghreb, Marrakesh

Equal in weight, marble and sugar, an ancient trade, yet still today symbol of the ever-growing exchange channels between the North and the South Mediterranean, through Gibraltar.

In an age of substantial cultural and economical conflicts, MARBLE-SUGAR symbolizes dialoguing resources, fusing cultures, the ancient flow reaffirming itself today, in a fast-paced post-industrial scale.

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