

PHOTOGRAPHY

## Platinum Hits and History Built in Rock

Photography Exhibitions of Elliott Erwitz, Domingo Milella and Wayne Lawrence

By WILLIAM MEYERS

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*Domingo Milella*

**Tracy Williams**

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Through Dec. 21



Domingo Milella's "Tomb of King Midas, Turkey" (2011). Domingo Milella/Tracy Williams, Ltd., New York

Ancient History was a required course at Classical High School (Providence, R.I.) when I was there in the early 1950s. A valuable course, it taught me that great civilizations crumble and fall: the Sumerians, Assyrians, Mesopotamians, Phoenicians and so many more, all gone. Domingo Milella, an Italian, has captured some of that transience in pictures from sites around the Mediterranean; a few pictures from Mexico play on the same theme. There is a very large print of the "Tomb of King Midas, Turkey" (2011), which is carved into a rock formation. A man stands in front of the Phrygian tomb to take a picture with his cellphone; Mr. Milella's photo links civilizations separated by three millennia. The cellphone will be ancient someday, too.

Rock formations in a picture from "Uchisar, Turkey" (2007) are punctured with windows and entrances indicating they once served as habitations or, maybe, burial chambers. A village begins right above them and occupies the rest of the slope, as the archaic and contemporary collide. There is construction rubble in the foreground of "Cheops and Chephren, Egypt" (2009), a modern apartment project in the middle, and two pyramids in the distance. The rock inscription in "Hattussa, hieroglyphs, Turkey" (2011) tells of the Hittites, an ancient civilization long gone. In "Castelmezzano, Italy," "Castellaneta, Italy," and "Pietrapertosa, Italy" (all 2010) villages of indeterminate age cling precariously to picturesque mountains, as life holds on to the turf it occupies.