



## Sculptor faces up to problem of pollution

**A** British sculptor has carved her latest work on a rockface in the hills of Tuscany to protest against the opening of a power station (Tom Kingston writes).

Emily Young, who has been lauded as Britain's best living stone sculptor, is carving the huge face of an Etruscan deity into an outcrop on the unspoilt Zancana River near Castel del Piano.

"The carving is a focus of the distress and anger shared by local administrators and

inhabitants," Young, 68, said. "A paradise like this is worthy of urgent protection, it is part of the patrimony of all humankind."

She has already worked with fishermen to combat illegal trawling off the Tuscan coast by dumping her trademark massive stone heads on the seabed to snag nets that devastate the seagrass on which fish feed.

Now she is taking aim at the geothermal power stations proliferating around Monte Amiata, which suck up thermal vapour from 3,000m underground to power



electricity generators. Local activists claim that heavy metals such as mercury are emitted when the vapour is released, pushing up cancer rates, while the

water table is lowered and river water is diverted to cool the operation.

Young is carving the face of Cautha, the goddess of dawn for the

Etruscans, who populated the area before the Romans did and considered Monte Amiata sacred.

"The carving from living rock symbolises

the desire of local people to defend the waters of the river from huge extraction plans," she said. "It's a tiny gesture but it's a poetic statement in the face of the outrageous destruction of the natural world."

A campaign against the power stations is already being waged by British expatriates in the area, including Charlotte Horton, who runs a guest house in a 1,000-year-old Tuscan castle. She said: "What Emily Young is doing is so important for bringing attention to these power stations, which generate as much carbon dioxide as a coal station."

Young said that she did not know whether carving her work into a rockface in Tuscany was legal, but one Italian resident, Elena Basile, who produces wine and olive oil and is backing her, shrugged off the concerns. "The river runs past my house and Emily's work is on my property," she said. "As far as I am concerned I can do what I want here."



Emily Young is carving protest pieces in Tuscany. Top left: with her stone angel at St Paul's Cathedral in London