

**Global Rock Art  
International IFRAO Congress  
National Park Serra di Capivara, Brazil  
29 June to 3 July 2009**

ADVERTISED SYMPOSIA

**1. Recent trends in world rock art research**

During recent years numerous developments have taken place in rock art research throughout the world, for example in the scientific development of a rock art discipline through IFRAO's development of a manual of rock art science, standard glossary, standard colour scale and Code of Ethics for the study, conservation and popularisation of the rock art heritage of humankind. Recent research on rock art throughout the globe has changed our perception about the abilities and cultural and cognitive development of early hominins, such as the proposal of the earliest figurative art in Europe being the creation of Neanderthals; that most of the palaeoart of Australia is Middle Palaeolithic; that iconic art is preceded by non-iconic art throughout the world, etc. Moreover, unambiguous evidence about the Lower Palaeolithic petroglyphs from excavations has come to light from central India. This is for the first time in the history of world archaeology that antiquity of rock art has been established to Lower Palaeolithic age. These evidences from different parts of the world have shattered all simplistic diffusion theories. Thus, many established myths are being replaced by a new vision of the human past. Many more such new evidences from many countries may be available about which we still know little. This symposium will provide a platform for all such groundbreaking new discoveries, ideas and achievements in different fields of the discipline of rock art research. It will provide an opportunity to present a comprehensive picture of global developments in rock art research and encourage constructive debate of them. We expect that it will be a stimulating and inspiring experience.

We invite research papers from scholars who have made such contributions in rock art research. You can send abstracts of your paper(s), of not more than two hundred words, to one of the following:

Dr Giriraj Kumar (India), *girirajrasi@yahoo.com*  
Robert G. Bednarik (Australia), *auraweb@hotmail.com*

**2. Involvement of children in palaeoart production**

The subject of authorship of rock art and portable palaeoart has been considered from a variety of perspectives, usually derived from the perceived motivation of the artists or the purported purpose of the palaeoart. This has led to many fruitless speculations, including a search for evidence of shamanism, religious explanations, totemism, supplication hypotheses, and many others. However, forensic studies have shown that there are a few forms of palaeoart evidence that permit empirical identification of the ages of the artists involved. These show consistently that in those cases that can be determined, children or adolescents seem to be the main agents. This is particularly evident in the Pleistocene art of Europe. It would then seem premature to suggest that all other forms of rock art must necessarily be the work of adults. We propose to conduct a symposium of research results that provide evidence capable of shedding light on this question. A particular focus on Pleistocene palaeoart forms may be of interest, but it would be hoped that similarly based reviews of other, more recent traditions can also be attracted for this symposium. The co-chairs invite the submission of papers addressing this topic from any researcher willing to contribute to this investigative direction. Please submit prospective titles of presentations, together with abstracts of approximately 100 words in one of the four languages of the Congress either to:

Robert G. Bednarik (Australia), *auraweb@hotmail.com*  
or to Professor Kevin Sharpe (United Kingdom), *ksharpe@ksharpe.com*

**3. Rock art and museum**

The name 'rock art' is traditionally attributed to all non-utilitarian anthropic markings on rock surfaces; the term 'art' is utilised *latu sensu*, without aesthetic implications, according to the Latin etymology that defines the human activity of producing artefacts, hence the derivation of the words artisan, artificer, artist. Rock art is today only the 'residue' of ancient cultural complexes, conserved over time, while songs, prayers, dances, gestures, votive offerings etc. are unrecoverable.

The keen interest in rock art derives from its relative rarity, as sites that externalise the cognitive dimension of man; the main problem facing us now is conservation, protection and communication. To identify the best procedures for a valid

protection it is necessary to plan monitoring with instruments recording the variability in the environmental parameters and the impact on the rock art monuments.

This symposium will critically consider the propriety and feasibility of treating rock art of the past as a source of knowledge for the contemporary interpreter, examine the possibility that such knowledge may be distorted by subjective ethnocentric perceptions, and explore the necessity of evolving museological models, which can present and conserve rock art without reflecting current prejudices and predilections. The symposium will also focus attention on the existing and pristine relation of the rock art landscapes with adjacent landscapes, humanised by local communities. An attempt will be made to assess the possibility of restoring the custodial interest, if any, of such communities in the rock art landscapes; and to recognise the constructive, constitutive and creative role of rock art and the associated folklore in the conservation and replenishment of such landscapes. The contributors may like to address the question of inter-institutional co-operation across the globe for a quest into appropriate ways of documenting and presenting rock art within a museum, for inciting aesthetic, technical, ecological, cultural and touristic interest of visitors, and for fulfilling convergent objectives of conservation, education, research or appreciation. Rock art museums, projects or institutions, in open air or indoors, as cultural interpretation of reality, are a form of cultural heritage conservation technique. Museology and museography of rock art should be sciences devoted to the survival of this spiritual legacy of humanity.

Professor Dario Seglie (Italy), *CeSMAP@cesmap.it*  
Robert G. Bednarik (Australia), *auraweb@hotmail.com*  
Dr Georges Dimitriadis (Greece), *giorgio.dimitriadis@cheapnet.it*

#### **4. Analytical rock art research**

The scientific study of rock art is not possible without the methodology of an archaeometry-like analytical branch of the discipline. In recent decades this specific field has gained considerable momentum and has gradually expanded its store of knowledge and routine methods. We hope that this development will be reflected in the presentations of this symposium. Such contributions could include reports about any analytical work with rock art, such as attempts of direct dating, digital image processing and manipulation, the identification of a variety of residues and inclusions in rock art, nano-stratigraphy of paints or patination skins, chemical analysis of paint residues and pigment sources, 'internal analysis' of marking sequences, discrimination of anthropic and non-anthropic rock markings, the technology of rock art production, colorimetry of patinae and paint residues, the application of methods of the forensic sciences, or any other topic related to the scientific analysis of rock art and rock art-related entities.

We invite contributions from any discipline that could conceivably help in enhancing the effectiveness of analytical efforts in rock art research. Contributors are invited to submit titles of their presentations, together with abstracts of up to 100 words, to one of the following:

Robert G. Bednarik (Australia), *auraweb@hotmail.com*  
Judith Trujillo (Colombia), *judithtrujillotellez@hotmail.com*

#### **Pleistocene Art of the World IFRAO Congress, Foix, France September 2010**

This major palaeoart congress will be held in the heartland of the Franco-Cantabrian cave art traditions, at the foot of the French Pyrenees. It is expected to become a major benchmark event in the discipline. It will be hosted by IFRAO in conjunction with French government authorities. Fieldtrip programs will include privileged visits to Palaeolithic cave art sites in France.

#### **CONGRESS RATIONALE**

The existence of Pleistocene rock art, first proposed by Marcelino de Sautuola in 1879, was slowly accepted in the late 19th century. Since then, investigation of this phenomenon has been largely focused on a small region of western Europe, which has yielded over 300 cave sites of the most exquisite Palaeolithic rock art. Over the subsequent century, an elaborate stylistic chronology of this corpus, featuring naturalistic animal depictions and semiotic motifs, was developed. It also became the template of Pleistocene rock art in guiding the search for such phenomena in other regions of the world, prompting many reports of such rock art as well as portable art from across Eurasia. Research in recent decades has suggested that most Pleistocene palaeoart of the world may not be figurative, and most may be of Middle rather than Upper Palaeolithic modes of production. New evidence suggests there appears to be almost no figurative graphic art of the Pleistocene outside of western Europe. Typically, graphic Pleistocene art of Asia and Australia seems to be non-figurative (with very few exceptions), and the corpus of Australian Pleistocene rock art,

which some assume to be the largest in the world, is entirely of Middle Palaeolithic traditions. Palaeoart of the final Pleistocene seems to occur in North America and may also yet be found in South America. Finally, India has yielded rock art even of the Lower Palaeolithic, and similarly ancient palaeoart may conceivably occur in Africa.

This scenario differs so significantly from the popular model of Pleistocene art that a congress should be dedicated to this subject, addressing questions of dating, of the definitions of palaeoart, and of regional distribution of evidence in each continent, re-evaluating the topic of the global phenomenon of Pleistocene palaeoart traditions. We invite contributions on all aspects of this subject.

### **Congress chairmen Jean Clottes, Giriraj Kumar and Robert Bednarik**

#### **FIRST SYMPOSIA PROPOSED:**

##### **Pleistocene art of Asia**

Recent discoveries and scientific investigations have yielded new evidence about the Pleistocene art of Asia, the most significant of it being produced by the multidisciplinary project 'Early Indian Petroglyphs: Scientific Investigations and Dating by an International Commission' (EIP Project). It has demonstrated the occurrence of numerous exfoliated petroglyphs, and the hammerstones used in making the rock art, in Lower Palaeolithic strata at central Indian sites. Other but much more recent evidence of Pleistocene art, always in the form of mobiliary palaeoart, has been reported sporadically from Siberia, China, Japan, Afghanistan, Israel and also India. Therefore, palaeoart has been in use for a great length of time in Asia, but relatively little evidence of it has been reported so far, especially in comparison to Europe. It is the purpose of this symposium to place the extraordinary finds from India within a pan-continental perspective, to disseminate new claims for Pleistocene palaeoart, and to consider the limited available data in the context of scientifically based models of the cognitive and cultural development of hominins. The 2010 IFRAO world congress on the global palaeoart of the Pleistocene offers a unique opportunity to consider these subjects in a comprehensive form.

Research papers on the above and related topics are invited from the international community of palaeoart researchers. Subjects of interest include rock art as well as mobiliary palaeoart of Pleistocene Asia; materials and techniques used in their production; find contexts and dating issues; what this corpus might tell us about the development of art-like practices in Asia; patterning in the way graphic evidence appears to present itself temporally and spatially; and how it might relate to Holocene palaeoart. Please send the titles of proposed contributions, together with abstracts of about 100 words, to one of the two chairmen of this symposium:

Dr Giriraj Kumar (India), e-mail: [girirajrasi@yahoo.com](mailto:girirajrasi@yahoo.com)

Robert G. Bednarik (Australia), e-mail: [auraweb@hotmail.com](mailto:auraweb@hotmail.com)

#### **Applications of forensic techniques to Pleistocene palaeoart investigations**

In recent years scientific investigations in palaeoart have increasingly been relying on methodologies and techniques borrowed from the field of forensics. For the most part, the pioneering researchers and scientists have operated on the margins of an ill-defined discipline. This symposium will provide an opportunity for these researchers and scientists to present their work and establish the preliminary foundation for a standardised methodology based in the applications of forensics techniques in the study of Pleistocene palaeoart. Submissions of papers are invited on a large range of subjects, and may include, but not be limited to, the following:

Reconstruction of the gestures and kinetic activities involved in the production of palaeoart

Aspects of behaviour at rock art sites deducible from empirical evidence

Analyses of macroscopic and microscopic traces of palaeoart production

Sequencing of behaviour traces at sites

Behaviour traces in the context of site properties

Empirical evidence and site taphonomy

Controlled replication experiments of palaeoart production

Analyses concerning the ages of palaeoartists

Analytical studies of the tools and materials used in palaeoart production

Other forensic studies of rock art sites or portable finds

Prospective contributors to this pioneering symposium are invited to submit the titles of their presentations, together with abstracts of approximately 100 words, either to:

Dr Yann-Pierre Montelle (New Zealand) or Robert G. Bednarik (Australia); e-mails [yann\\_montelle@mac.com](mailto:yann_montelle@mac.com) and [auraweb@hotmail.com](mailto:auraweb@hotmail.com)

### **Prehistoric art: signs, symbols, myth, ideology**

This symposium is an important occasion for bringing together new ideas, researches, opinions, theories, hypotheses and information on Pleistocene art, in connection with the study of *Homo's* metaphysics and ideology. The symposium provides the opportunity to discuss the role played by iconography and myth and the aid to the study coming from the traditional cultures of people still having a living heritage. In particular, the following aspects will hopefully be addressed:

New problems of archaeological documentation and excavation of art sites, also in connection with the palaeoanthropological data;  
Correlations, synchronism and diachronism, of palaeo-ethnocultural areas of different periods and places  
Iconography of Pleistocene art as a reflection of palaeo-ethnic traditions  
Ritual aspects and meaning; possible roles of Pleistocene art (religions, eco-social-cultural changes etc.)  
Hypothetic links between ancient literature, poetry, myth and Pleistocene art iconography  
The relations between native groups, art sites and their environment  
Problems in studying sites that are still 'cult places'

Submissions and suggestions are invited, to be addressed to one of the following chairmen:

Professor Dario Seglie, Centro Studi e Museo d'Arte Preistorica, Pinerolo (TO), Italy, [CeSMAP@cesmap.it](mailto:CeSMAP@cesmap.it)  
Professor Luiz Oosterbeek, Instituto Politécnico de Tomar, Portugal, [loost@ipt.pt](mailto:loost@ipt.pt)  
Professor Marcel Otte and Dr Laurence Remacle, Service de Préhistoire, Université de Liège, Belgium, [prehist@ulg.ac.be](mailto:prehist@ulg.ac.be)

Submissions of papers for the above symposia are encouraged. In addition to the above, symposium proposals are also invited on the following topics, and addressing any other subject directly related to the congress rationale:

Pleistocene art in Africa  
Pleistocene art in the Americas  
Pleistocene art in Europe  
Pleistocene art in Australia  
Defining palaeoart  
Dating palaeoart  
Taphonomy of Pleistocene art

Proposals for symposia of the 'Pleistocene Art of the World' (PAW) Congress of 2010 can be submitted to either of these addresses:

Dr Jean Clottes  
IFRAO President  
11, Rue du Fourcat  
09000 Foix,  
France  
E-mail: [j.clottes@wanadoo.fr](mailto:j.clottes@wanadoo.fr)

Robert G. Bednarik  
IFRAO Convener  
P.O. Box 216  
Caulfield South, VIC 3162  
Australia  
E-mail: [auraweb@hotmail.com](mailto:auraweb@hotmail.com)

The web-page of the 2010 IFRAO Congress is at <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/pawc/web/index.html>

**Archaeology and Rock Art — 25 years SIARB  
La Paz, Bolivia, June 2012**

Bolivian Rock Art Research Society (SIARB)  
National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF)  
International Federation of Rock Art Organisations (IFRAO)

**Introduction**

In the last twenty years, international meetings in South America contributed to the scientific study of rock art and the collaboration between scholars worldwide. Symposia or congresses were organised by the Bolivian Rock Art Research Society (SIARB) in Bolivia in 1988, 1989, 1991, 1997 and 2000. Other meetings took place in Jujuy (Argentina) in 2003, in Cusco (Peru) in 2004, and in Arica (Chile) in 2006. National archaeological congresses frequently include sessions dedicated to rock art studies.

SIARB wishes to continue the success of previous meetings and is making efforts to organise a new congress which will take place in June 2012. Matthias Strecker, General Secretary of SIARB, is in close contact with numerous colleagues and scientific institutions in South America and worldwide and has already received many letters of support from colleagues who wish to participate in this congress. Besides, the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations (IFRAO) is supporting this event, the annual meeting of IFRAO Representatives will be held during our congress.

**Organisation of the congress**

The general subject of the congress will be 'Archaeology and rock art'. The organisers believe that it is most appropriate to analyse the relation between archaeological investigations and rock art studies; the relation between archaeologists and rock art specialists; the way rock art sites may be integrated into a regional archaeological framework; regional chronologies including rock art traditions; the policies of surveying, recording, and preserving sites etc.

There will be up to twelve sessions during four days. Each session should have two or more chairpersons, preferably including a rock art specialist. There will also be a possibility to present exhibits (posters) and sell publications.

Official languages of the congress will be Spanish, Portuguese and English. However, in exceptional cases, a presentation may be in a different language as well.

Before and after the academic program there will be rock art excursions. The detailed excursion program will be defined later. We expect to be able to offer trips to archaeological and rock art sites in the Lake Titicaca region and in other parts of Bolivia, such as Santa Cruz and Tarija.

This congress will be organised by SIARB (see web-page: [www.siarb-bolivia.org](http://www.siarb-bolivia.org)) and the National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore, MUSEF, see web-page: <http://www.musef.org.bo/>) and will take place in the museum. We expect that some other institutions in La Paz will also support us, such as the Department of Anthropology-Archaeology of the UMSA University (Carrera de Antropología-Arqueología de la Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, UMSA).

The society has formed a committee in charge of preparing the congress. It consists of Lic. Freddy Taboada (SIARB President), Dr Claudia Rivera (SIARB) and Matthias Strecker (SIARB Secretary and Editor).

*Publication of congress papers*

As on previous occasions, SIARB will publish reports on the congress in its annual journal and will edit and publish at least one session in a volume of the series *Contribuciones al Estudio del Arte Rupestre Sudamericano*. Due to our economic limitations as a private scientific society, we cannot publish a large part of the transactions. However, we are in contact with colleagues and other institutions in the neighbouring countries and are confident to receive their support with the publication of other sessions. In this respect, chairpersons of the sessions will play an important part.

*Tentative schedule*

2008–2012: up-to-date information on the congress on web-page  
2010, June: last date for proposals of sessions  
2011, October: last date for proposals of papers (title and summary)  
2012, end of June: congress

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