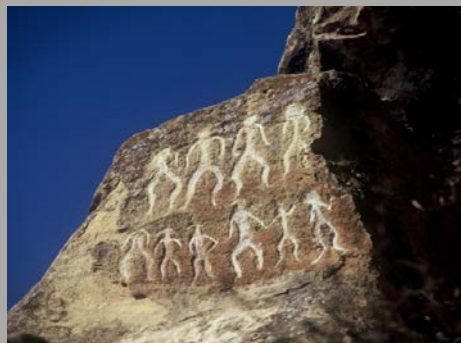


Rock art of the world is a fascinating saga of human endeavour to translate his aesthetic sensitivity into reality. This prehistoric art comes to signify the underlying philosophies and the worldview of the ancient people, and tells us about the soul of a community, its thoughts, beliefs and emotions. From time immemorial the early man lived in the natural caves started to record his world around him with paintings and engravings. Several styles of techniques are employed to execute rock art; like shallow carvings, deep carvings, scraping, pecking, finger fluting and polishing in case of petroglyphs (engravings) while in pictographs, paintings and stenciling are the major techniques. Styles of execution are also diverse in nature. These records with high maturity as estimated by scholars perhaps go back to 30,000 years which we could well be presumed their much earlier existence.



Gobustan, Azerbaijan



Lascaux Cave, Dordogne, France

Rock art is known from all the continents starting from the Old World i.e. Africa, Europe and Asia to the New World i.e. Australia and North and South America. Asia is the largest continent of the world and has diverse art heritage. The huge area can be divided into five regions Central, West, East, South and Southeast Asia. In Central Asia the two most important rock art zones are Tamgaly of Kazakhstan and Altal.

Major concentrations of petroglyphs are found from the arid regions of Saudi Arabia, Nagev Desert of Israel, etc. of West Asia. In South Asia, countries like India and Pakistan are rich in rock art heritage, so much so that Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh (India) has been



Domestic bull, Messak, Libya

inscribed by UNESCO as world heritage site. The quantity and quality of Indian rock art can vice with the art of any of the other country. In the East Asia, China and Japan are two important countries with rich concentration of rock art. At Southeast Asia, rock art sites are reported from Indonesia, Myanmar etc.



Animals petroglyphs, Pilbara, Western Australia

brute- power might be the most desired concern to the early men and as such representations of therianthropes (Half human and half animal features) are commonly found from the Palaeolithic period of Europe to the South African Bushman painting. After the introduction of domestication of animal the complexity of human life style in material culture as well as in social life was well evidenced in the diverse nature of depictions. The Anthropomorphic figures of the Coso range, California, the shamanistic representations of Texas, representations of the ancestral beings from Australia, depictions of the Bushman myths from Southern Africa are the reflections of the religious belief, myths and customs of early man. In this great diversity of the rock art heritage instances of the universality of human mind is also mirrored in the depictions of Cupules and Hand prints found almost in all the corners of the world.



Pandavulagutta, Warangal, Andhra Pradesh

The subject matter of the rock art is also varied from the simplest geometrical lines found in the Panaramittee tradition of Australia to complex geometrical designs executed by the Chumash people of California. Animals are the most favoured subjects of the early men as they were their source of life sustenance. Possessing



Lekhamonda, Sundergarh, Odisha

art sites, because of the favourable geomorphological situation. Western part of Orissa is an extension of the Chhotanagpur plateau and the Chhatishgarh basin. The geomorphological set up of this area is comparable to the geomorphological set up of the rock art sites of Central India, which accounts for more than one third of the country's rock art heritage. Although there are a large number of rock shelters in these geological formations, rock art is found in only a few of them.



Bema, Leh, Jammu & Kashmir

The subject matter of the rock art of odisha is by and large non-thematic and what is seen is a host of intricate and enigmatic geometric and non-geometric patterns made of a host of spiral lines, cross hatches, zigzag lines. In Central India such motifs are used for filling the body of human and animal figures where as in Odisha they are independent patterns.



Bhimbetka, Raisen, Madhya Pradesh

For the present exhibition, exhibits are chosen from five continents of the world - Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, North and South America. A representative collection of the significant and important traditions are displayed continent wise. This exhibition creates, for the viewer, a degree of experiential contact with prehistoric art. It provides the basis



Kupgal, Bellary, Karnataka

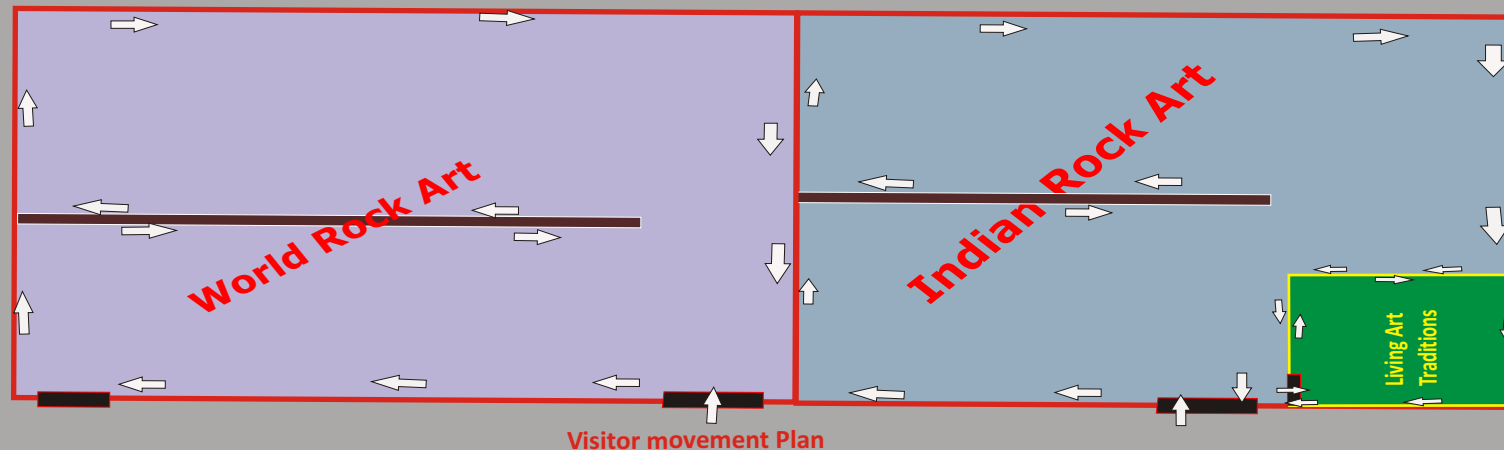
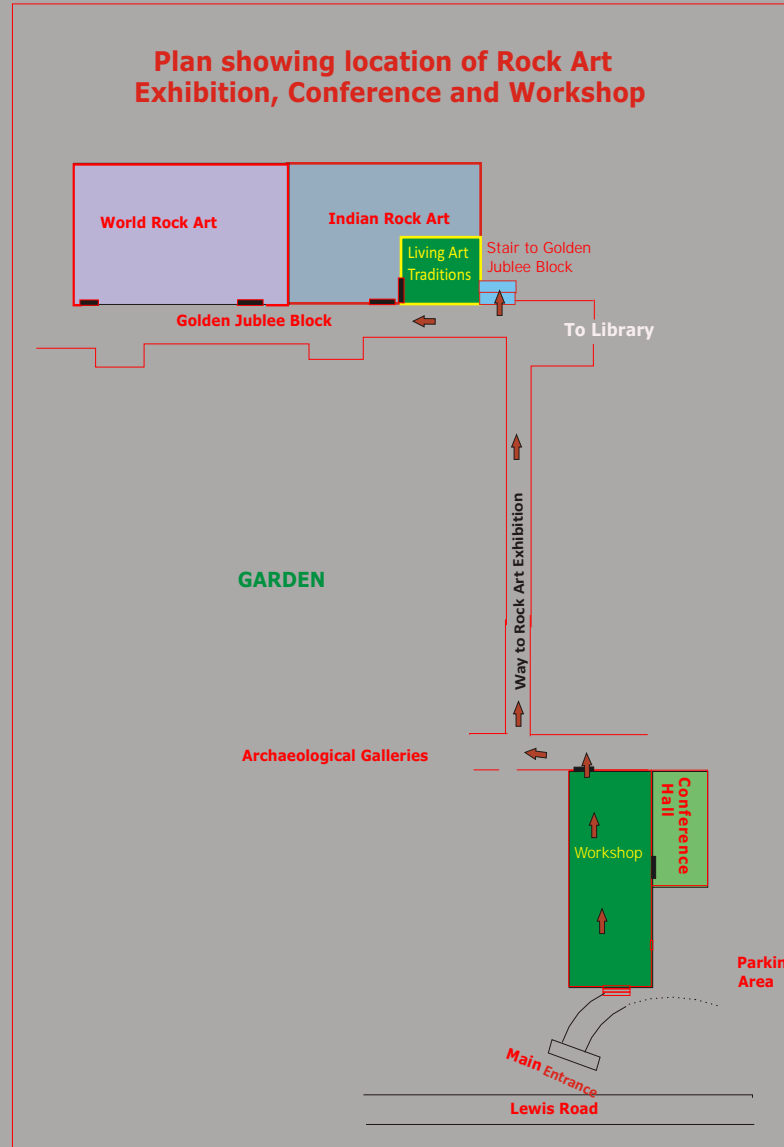
for entering into the changing aspects of the living arts of man. It is believed that man's awareness of the world around came through his primeval sense of sight and sound. These two senses have stimulated artists' expressions visual and aural in the prehistoric past as well as in the contemporary cultures. The present exhibition also showcases the 'living art traditions' of three communities- the Lanjia-Sauras of Odisha, the Rathwa-Bhils of Gujarat and the Warlis of Maharashtra just to give a glimpse of continuity of artistic traditions in Indian context.

Infact, the present exposition *'The world of Rock Art'* is culled out from the *Exhibition on Rock Art* organised during the International Event of Rock Art, at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi from 6th December, 2012 to 23rd January, 2013.



Khajuri Village, Rayagada, Odisha

After getting good responses, it was decided to take the exhibition to the other part of the country for the awareness of school children, college and University students as well as for general masses. The same exhibition was held at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, from 5th to 28th March, 2013. Then in Srimanta Sankardeva Kala Kshetra (SSK), Guwahati from 12th April to 3rd May, 2013.



The World of

Rock Art
Exhibition

(18th May- 23rd June, 2013)
(On the occasion of International Museum Day)



Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

In Collaboration with

Odisha State Museum, Bhubneswar

