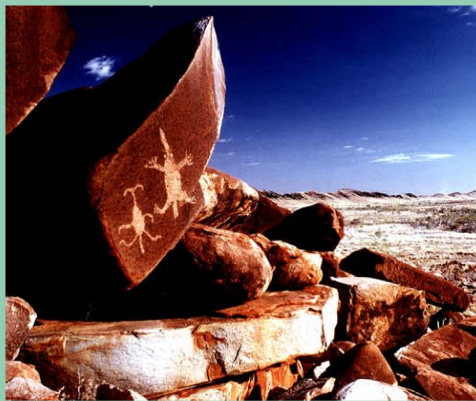
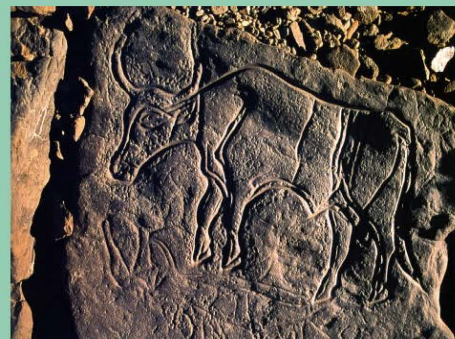


Rock art of the world is a fascinating saga of human endeavour to translate his aesthetic sensitivity into reality. From times immemorial the early man started to record the world around him and his activities for the life sustenance and to bring forth his progenies to flourish. He lived in the natural caves and shelters which he decorated with paintings and engravings; the subject matter that he could see in nature and life around him. This prehistoric art comes to signify the underlying philosophy and the worldview of the ancient people, and tells us about the soul of a community, its thoughts, beliefs and emotions. These records with high maturity as estimated by scholars perhaps date back to 40,000 years.



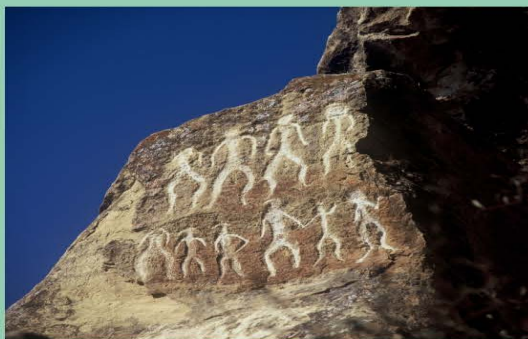
Animals petroglyphs, Pilbara, Western Australia

Rock art is known from almost all corners of the world, except Antarctica. Evidences are found from all the continents starting from the Old World i.e. Africa, Asia, Australia Europe, 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 Altai.



Domestic bull, Messak, Libya

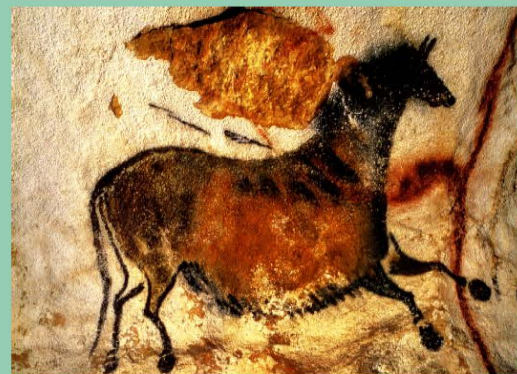
Major concentrations of petroglyphs are found from the arid regions of Saudi Arabia, Nagev Desert of Israel, etc. of West Asia. In South Asia, countries like India and Pakistan are rich in rock art heritage, so much so that Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh (India) has been inscribed by UNESCO as world heritage site. The quantity and quality of Indian rock art can vie 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. In the East and Southeast Asia, rock art sites are reported from Indonesia, Myanmar etc.



Gobustan, Azerbaijan

Several 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.

The subject matter of the rock art is also varied; starting from the simplest geometrical lines found in the Panaramittee tradition of Australia to complex



Lascaux Cave, Dordogne, France

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. Naturalistic representations of wild animals and hunting scenes are thus the most common subjects. Possessing 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 Plants and animals, 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 beliefs, 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.



Bhimlat, Bundi, Rajasthan

In South India, the rock art sites are distributed across the four States and the main concentrations are in the districts of Badami, Belgaum, Bagalkote, Gadag, Koppal, Kalburgi, Bellary, Chitrdurga, Bijapur, Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Shimoga in Karnataka and Villupuram, Vellore, Madurai, Krishnagiri, Nilgiri, Madurai, Dindigal, Coimbatore, Teni, Dharmapuri, Tirunelveli, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai in Tamilnadu and Adoni, Kalvakurtti, Warangal, Nandikotkur, Mahabubnagar, Uravakonda, Husnabad, Muddanur,



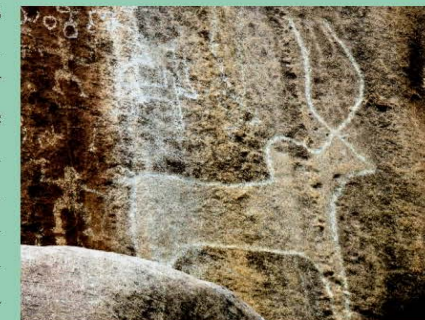
Edakkal, Wayanad, Kerala



Pandavulagutta, Warangal, Andhra Pradesh

Pradesh and Kollam, Wayanad, Kannur, Idukki, Palakkad, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.

It may be noted that a large number of rock art sites of Mesolithic, Neolithic-Chalcolithic, Iron Age Megalithic and Early historic period were brought to light by various scholars in the State of Karnataka. These sites are concentrated largely in North Karnataka. Almost all the rock art sites are located either on the bed of the open air boulders, hillocks or caves/rock shelters and are associated with the required resources like Stone, Water, Flora and fauna and environment. The rock art hillocks are either highly elevated with the occupation of larger area or running narrow strips (Halakundi) or scatter of big boulder (Kurugodu, Gudekote).



Kupgal, Bellary, Karnataka

The Rock Art of South India contains both -pictographs and petroglyphs. In Kerala and Tamilnadu both variety of rock art is found. Here geometrical motifs dominate the imagery, with few humans and animals figures. While on the other hand region of Karnataka is dominated by the occurrence of petroglyph representations of cattle. Pictographs rule the rock art of Andhra Pradesh, the majority of which are in either red or white. A wide range of wild fauna occur as red painted images, typically deer along with porcupine, tortoise, carnivores, anthropomorphs and geometric figures. Prehistoric rock arts of South India continued to be made through the historical period with the emergence of new style and forms.



Bhimbetka, Raisen, Madhya Pradesh

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



Lekhamonda, Sundergarh, Odisha

from a cross section of the society comprising, scholars, media persons, public servants, and general public, it was decided to take the exhibition to the other parts of the country as circulating/mobile exhibition to spread awareness among

school children, college and University students and general public. The exhibition was earlier hosted at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, (5th to 28th March, 2013) then in Srimanta Sankardeva Kalashetra (SSK), Guwahati (12th April to 3rd May, 2013), at Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar (18th May to 23rd June, 2013) and at Department of History, Pondicherry University, Puducherry (25th July to 25th August, 2013).

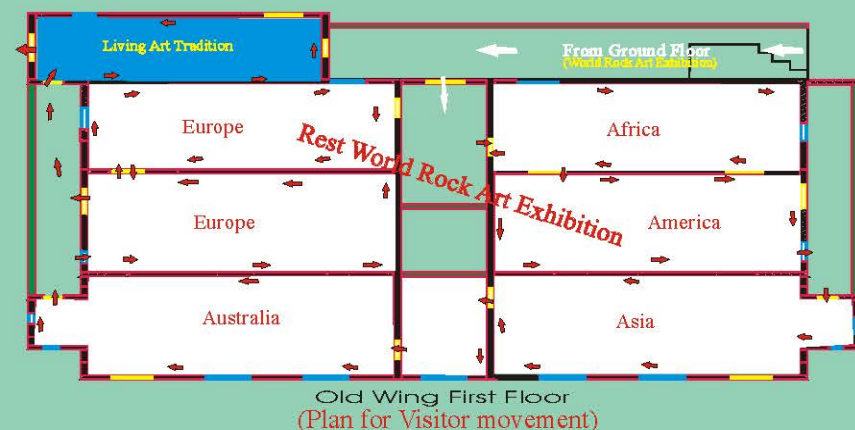
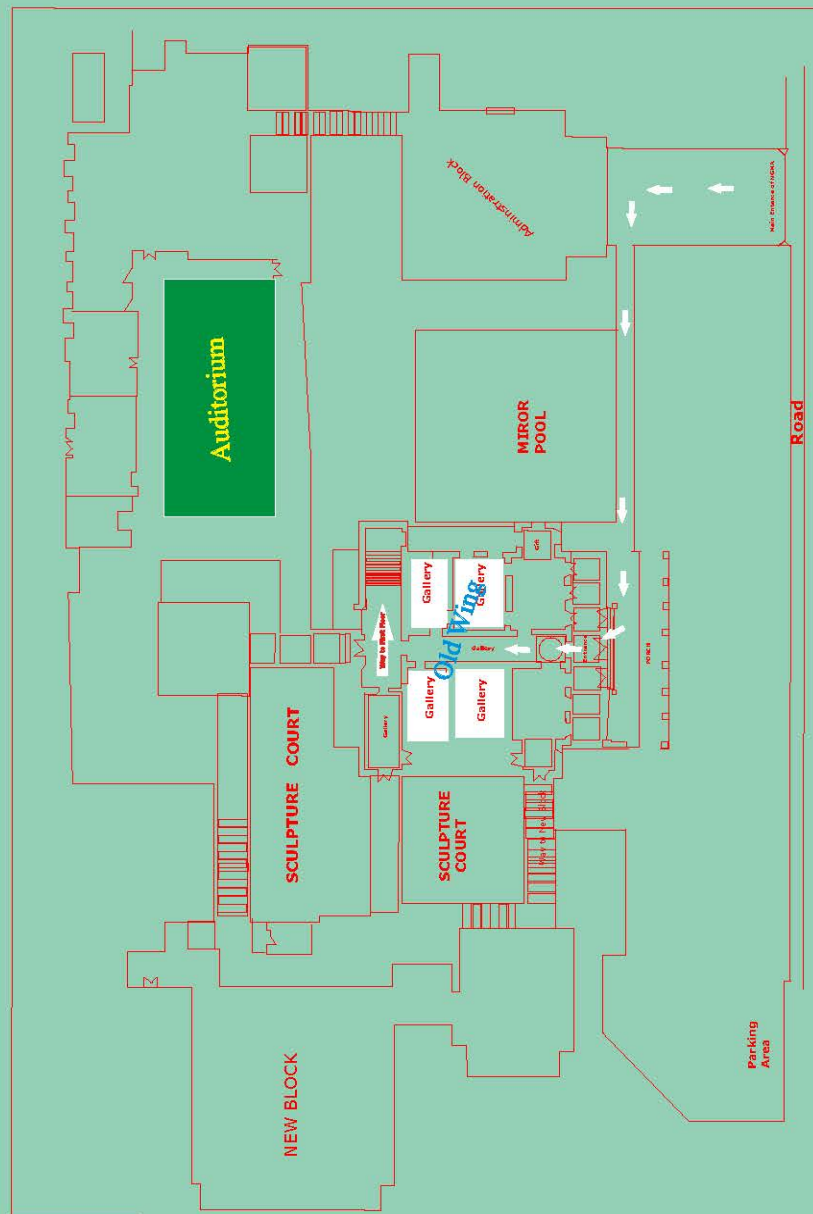
For the present exhibition, exhibits are chosen from five continents of the world - Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, North and South America. A representative collection of the significant and important traditions are displayed continent wise. This exhibition creates, for the viewer, a degree of experiential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



Khajuri Village, Rayagada, Odisha

give a glimpse of continuity of artistic traditions in Indian context.



The World of

Rock Art Exhibition

(3rd December, 2013 - 3rd January, 2014)

