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# Go back in time with pre-historic rock art



**Chetna Dua**

chetna.dua@hindustantimes.com

If you have only seen pre-historic art in your school textbooks, here's your chance to have a look at it up close. A month long festival in the city — the International Rock Art Festival — will take you back in time to the primitive era through a number of conferences, workshops and exhibitions about the ancient and now rare form of communication of rock art. "It mainly includes primitive style paintings of human figures and hunting scenes engraved on the cave walls," says Dr BL Malla, director of the festival.

The entire Mati Ghar, where the exhibition is taking place, is sporting a cave-like look for the festival. Inspired by the Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh, the cave, recreated with fibre glass and plaster, has primitive style paintings of human figures, animals, hunting and battle scenes, as well as processions. The exhibition will also display

paintings and photographs of engravings from different states across the country. While Bhimbetka rock shelters from Madhya Pradesh have been reconstructed with some exquisite paintings, the exhibition also showcases photographs of chortens (stupas) from Ladakh and the humped bull motif from Karnataka, thus providing a glimpse into the state of art in pre-historic times.

"The continuation of rock art can be found even today in Worli from Maharashtra, Lanjia Faora from Orissa and Rathwa Bhils from Gujarat. Artists from these places will also be giving a live performance on these art styles at a workshop here," says Achal Pandya, faculty member, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), which is organising the festival.

"We will also have a team of 20 young scholar guides especially trained to show the guests around and explain the details of the artworks," says Dipali Khanna, member-secretary, IGNCA.



## Watch it here...

**What:** International Rock Art Festival

**When:** Dec 7 to Jan 25

**Where:** Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, 1, Central Vista Mess, Janpath



**NEAREST METRO STATION:** Central Secretariat on the Yellow line



## What is Rock Art?

Rock art is an archeological term used to refer to human-made markings placed on natural stone. Such artworks are often divided into three forms: petroglyphs, which are carved into the rock surface, pictographs, which are painted onto the surface, and Earth figures engraved into the ground



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# Around Town

## IMMORTALISED IN ROCK

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts is organising an exhibition which focusses upon the ancient practice of Rock Art



ANUBHA SINGH

Art is timeless. Its imprints can be found at any place at any point in time. The pictorial depiction of human-made markings on natural stone, popularly known as rock art, is

the most ancient form of expression.

These rock art images are a source of cultural communication between the past and the present.

With a view to spread awareness and address the urgent need to preserve this art form, Indira Gandhi National Cen-



tre for the Arts along with Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is organising an International conference on rock art 2012 along with an exhibition and workshops.

'The exhibition is an initiative which will help in understanding the roots of rock art and the journey since then, helping people to relate their theoretical knowledge with practical. India is fortunate in possessing one of the three largest concentrations of this world heritage. The conference is relevant with respect to research and learn and develop documentation programme of rock art,' said Dipali Khanna, Member Secretary, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).

The theme of the conference will centre on the following themes: concept and methodology, interpreting rock art, documentation and conservation amongst many.

'Experts and scholars from India, France, Italy, Spain, Indonesia, Douth Africa, Australia, Poland, USA, Cuba, Peru, Bolivia, China and many other countries will address the issue and challenges for preservation of rock art,' added



Khanna. Rock art festival will feature an exhibition of Indian and global rock art from to synthesise people about the unique nature of rock art.

The exhibition partly will feature global rock art which will be divided in zones showing art forms of different continents. There are pieces rock arts related to pre-historic era ranging between 4,000 and 12,000 BC at display too.

The Indian wing will also exhibit various tribal art forms that shows continuity of the tradition of rock art. The art forms will include Saura (Odisha), Warli (Maharashtra) and Rathwa (Gujarat). During the workshop, the

rock art scholars and artists across the globe would demonstrate the journey of rock art, techniques and materials used for its depiction along with similarity and their differences in the art form across the countries.

'A cave like set up has been designed on the lines of Bhimbetka, an archaeological World Heritage site located in Raisen District in Madhya Pradesh to give a first hand experience and focus of the exhibition,' said Khanna.

**AT:** Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts C.V Mess Janpath  
**WHEN:** 7 December- 25 January  
**TIMINGS:** 10 am to 7 pm



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# *A glimpse of 'Rock Art' in modern age in the Capital*

**PBD BUREAU/PTI**

**NEW DELHI, DEC 5**

MADHUBANI wall paintings, motifs on table cloths or even a stylish modern saree can and now do flaunt imprints of the close-to-extinction ancient rock art form. What began as pictorial markings of prehistoric man on natural cave stone - one of the first forms of expression of mankind - rock art has now turned into an art form stud-

ied and preserved across nations globally.

Renowned scholars from 20 countries representing five continents are now set to congregate here to participate in an ambitious project by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), which seeks to protect and popularise "Rock Art."

First held in 1993, this is the second time IGNCA is holding an international exhibition of this type and the event from December 6- December 13 is



expected to feature live workshops, say organisers.

The event is been pegged as a source of cultural communication between the past and the present. "This art form is a relic of the past. It is a great living heritage and it shows

that the present lifestyle is a continuation of the past," according to Dipali Khanna, Member secretary, IGNCA.

Giving examples from present times such as Madhubani paintings, rock art imprints on table cloths

and sarees, she added that we never really left the origins of the rock art paintings.

The exhibition designed on the lines of Bhimbetka, an Archaeological World Heritage site located in Madhya Pradesh, has been set up inside a cave-like structure erected to provide a unique and natural experience to visitors.

Divided into zones, the exhibiton is set to show the art form related to pre-historic era in all the five conti-

nents. The Indian wing is set to exhibit various tribal art forms such as Saura (Odisha), Warli (Maharashtra) and Rathwa (Gujarat).

"It is need of the hour for various agencies to come forward and save the identity of one of the golden arts of history. IGNCA has taken up this ambitious plan to save and glorify the rock art," says B L Malla, Project Director, International Rock Art Festival.

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Financial World	New Delhi	6 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2012	06

## Glimpses of Rock Art are all around us

**MADHUBANI WALL** paintings, motifs on table cloths or even a stylish modern saree can and now do flaunt imprints of the close-to-extinction ancient rock art form. What began as pictorial markings of prehistoric man on natural cave stone — one of the first forms of expression of mankind — rock art has now turned into an art form studied and preserved across nations globally.

Renowned scholars from 20 countries representing five continents are now set to congregate in Delhi to participate in an ambitious project by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), which seeks to protect and popularise Rock Art. First held in 1993, this is the second time IGNCA is holding an international exhibition of this type and the event from 6-13 December is expected to feature live workshops. The event is been pegged as a source of cultural communication between the past and the present. "This art form is a relic of the past. It is a great living heritage and it shows that the present lifestyle is a continuation of the past," according to Dipali Khanna, Member Secretary, IGNCA.

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—PTI



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अमर उजाला

## रॉक आर्ट से रूबरू होगी दिल्ली

● अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। दुनिया प्रौद्योगिकी विकास तथा संचार के हाईटेक साधनों पर बात कर रही है। मगर इसके असल जड़ के बारे में किसी को पता नहीं है। प्राकृतिक चट्टानों पर मानव निर्मित चित्र व कृतियां ही प्राचीन काल में अभिव्यक्ति का सबसे सशक्त माध्यम थीं। इसकी छाप आज भी ऐसी जगह मौजूद है, जहां पहुंचना मुश्किल है। मगर इस रॉक आर्ट (पाषाण कला) को जानने का मौका आपको दिल्ली में मिलेगा।

दिल्ली में इंदिरा गांधी नेशनल सेंटर फॉर दी आर्ट्स (आईजीएनसीए) में रॉक आर्ट फेस्टिवल आयोजित हो रहा है। इसमें भारत समेत पांच महाद्वीपों (एशिया, दक्षिण अफ्रीका, ऑस्ट्रेलिया, यूरोप तथा अमेरिका) के 20 देशों के पाषाण कला के बारे

● पाषाण कला की चित्र व कृतियों की प्रदर्शनी में दिखेगा इतिहास

में जानने का मौका मिलेगा। इसके लिए बाकायदा चट्टानों की गुफा बनाई जाएगी। उसमें चट्टानों पर इस कला की प्रदर्शनी लगेगी। प्रदर्शनी 7 दिसंबर से शुरू होकर 25 जनवरी तक चलेगी।

प्रदर्शनी में उत्तर प्रदेश, उत्तराखंड, झारखंड, लद्दाख, ओडिसा व मध्य प्रदेश की आर्ट एक गुफा में देखने को मिलेगी। भारत में 1068 साइट ऐसी हैं जहां रॉक आर्ट हैं। ये आर्ट उन इलाकों में जहां पहुंचना मुश्किल है। आईजीएनसीए की सदस्य सचिव दिपाली खन्ना ने बताया कि भारत में इसके बारे में बहुत कम लोगों को पता है।

इंदिरा गांधी नेशनल सेंटर फॉर द आर्ट्स (आईजीएनसीए) में आयोजित रॉक आर्ट फेस्टिवल में बनी इमारत।

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### **‘रॉक आर्ट 2012’ में पाषाण कला का नजारा**

जासं, नई दिल्ली : राजधानी इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केंद्र में ‘रॉक आर्ट 2012’ नाम से अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रदर्शनी लगाई गई है। बुधवार को प्रदर्शनी का शुभारंभ हुआ। 13 दिसम्बर तक चलने वाली इस प्रदर्शनी में प्रस्तर की कलाकृतियां तो लगाई ही गई हैं, इसके साथ साथ यहां कार्यशालाओं का भी आयोजन किया जाएगा। प्रदर्शनी में लोगों को पाषाण काल की अनूठी कलाकृतियां देखने को मिल रही हैं, जो मानव के अतीत की याद दिलाती हैं।

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Rashtriya Sahara	New Delhi	6 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2012	08

## आज के कार्यक्रम

### चित्र व शिल्प प्रदर्शनी

- विभिन्न कलाकारों के चित्रों की प्रदर्शनी, विजुअल आर्ट गैलरी, आर्ट पस्पेक्टिव, एफ 213/डी, लाडों सराय, सुबह 11 से शाम 7 बजे तक। (30 दिसम्बर तक)
- एहसास शीर्षक से विभिन्न कलाकारों के चित्रों की प्रदर्शनी, डी-7, डिफेंस कॉलोनी, सुबह 10 से रात 8 बजे तक। (31 दिसम्बर तक)
- हिन्दी अकादमी की ओर से दो दिवसीय राष्ट्रीय अनुवाद सेतु कार्यक्रम का आयोजन, भारतीय विद्या भवन, कॉपरनिकस लेन, केजी मार्ग, सुबह 10.30 बजे से। (छह दिसम्बर तक)।
- रॉक आर्ट फेस्टिवल, इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केन्द्र, जनपथ, सुबह 9.30 बजे से सांय 5.00 बजे तक। (12 दिसम्बर तक)।



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The Pioneer	New Delhi	6 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2012	13

A rock art festival at IGNCA features drawings and etchings dating to prehistoric times. The project director, BL MALLA, talks to DIVYA KAUSHIK about Indian sites and some of the stories behind them



# Stone secrets

If you have travelled to Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Kerala or Karnataka you must have come across paintings and etchings on huge rocks.

There is usually no description to accompany them. You would have to be a specialist to know that some date back thousands of years and belong to Indian traditions rooted in the distant past.

Informed DR BL Malla, project director of the International Rock Art Festival at Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), "MP contains the largest concentration of rock art in India. The sad part is that most tourists, and even people in the region, know little about it. Created during pre-historic times, it throws light on lifestyles and traditions of those times."

**'Bhimbetka means 'sitting place for Bhima'. The rock shelters have paintings depicting lives of people who lived there. Some have animals and minute human figures drawn in linear patterns'**

He added, "Animal and human figures, geometric shapes and motifs that are now part of Madhubani and Warli art, were earlier rock art motifs."

Malla remarked that the more unique specimens in the area, are barely accessible.

The festival starting today has exhibition and workshops. Plaster of Paris and fibre rock art models from different Indian states are placed in Matighar-IGNCA's exhibition area.

The ground floor is divided into six sections. The first is a thematic area, recreating the ambi-



ence of rock shelters. The central region area features rock art from Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh.

After the central region, is a zone dedicated to Rajasthan and Gujarat.

In the South, is rock art from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The East comprises Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand. A special section has been created for the rock art from



Uttarkhand, Ladakh and Uttar Pradesh. The entrance area resembles Bhimbetka rock shelters in Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh.

They are an archaeological world heritage site, displaying earliest traces of human life.

"Bhimbetka means 'sitting place for Bhima', a Pandava sibling. The rock shelters and caves have paintings and etchings depicting lives and times of people who lived in caves. Some have huge, strange animals, with minute human figures drawn in linear patterns. Others have scenes of childbirth, communal dancing and rituals. Rocks also carry handprints. Some paintings use natural colours like red and green. They so strong, they have lasted a very long period," said Malla.

While rock art in the Central region focuses on figures, the kind in places like Jharkhand, have geometrical shapes.

Some are still used by local and tribal communities. Malla also explained that material and art differs with each region.

"During prehistoric times, humans had limited means to draw and paint. It is interesting to note that wherever art was done, it was in a way that it survived," he added.

Guided tours by scholars for visitors and students have been organised to. And there will be workshops with artists and tribal communities.

"Anyone can be part of workshops and learn about rock art. There will be Madhubani and Warli artists to talk about motifs," Malla remarked.

There is also an international rock art section with photographs of world famous rock art. The exhibition is on till January 25.