



# Rock Art 2018

San Diego's 43rd Annual Rock Art Symposium  
Presented by the San Diego Rock Art Association

**November 3, 2018**

San Diego Community College District  
Educational Cultural Complex Theatre  
4343 Ocean View Blvd, Room 159, San Diego, CA 92113

**8:00 REGISTRATION OPEN**

**9:00 MORNING SESSION**

## **Ladies and Cowboys: Historic Rock Art Depictions in the Southern California Desert**

Steven M. Freers, San Diego Rock Art Association

Several pictograph and petroglyph sites in southern California's upper and lower desert areas have depictions of anthropomorphs in apparent historic apparel. A relatively high concentration of these motifs occur in the region occupied by Desert Cahuilla. This year's SDRAA Rock Art Symposium logo reflects such a portrayal. Native American life ways and economies were changed forever due to the displacing and destructive influences of intruding settlers. Many native men found work as ranch hands, some becoming quite accomplished and reliable cowboys. This paper explores possible connections to the evolution of Native American life as represented by these rock art motifs during this disruptive and transformative period in our history.

## **Ojá Cuñurr: The Painted Rock of Guadalupe**

Ken Hedges, San Diego Rock Art Association

The field notes from J. P. Harrington's 1925–1926 fieldwork in northern Baja California contain intriguing notes about a rock painting site in Guadalupe, the small Mexican town on the road between Ensenada and Tecate. Referred to by Harrington as *La Piedra Pintada*, this painted boulder plays an important role in the history of the town, site of the last Dominican Mission in Baja California, a role that is reflected in the content of the paintings themselves. Sadly, the boulder was destroyed due to a lack of governmental oversight in flood control measures taken after the destructive impact of Hurricane Kathleen in 1976. This paper presents the only known documentation of this important site.

## **J. P. Harrington's Rock Art Notes for San Diego County**

Richard L. Carrico, Department of American Indian Studies, San Diego State University

Between 1923 and 1926 the noted anthropologist John Peabody Harrington crisscrossed San Diego and Imperial counties and Baja California with Kumeyaay, Luiseño, and Cahuilla consultants. In his search for place names, plant uses, and other data Harrington took notes on several rock art sites. In several instances he visited the sites and sketched and described them. This presentation revisits Harrington's notes and, in several cases, the sites themselves including the famous Mecca complex—a site photographed by Ken Hedges but otherwise unrecorded—and two sites in Baja California.

**10:10 – 10:40 MORNING BREAK**

**Photography of screens and images during presentations is not allowed.**

## **Results of the Archeoastronomic Observations at the Rockshelter *Hombre en el Cuadro*, 2014–2018**

Eduviges Davis Mullens, Meridian Archaeological Services, Imperial Beach, California

Located approximately 50 km east of Tecate in northern Baja California, the rockshelter known as *Hombre en el Cuadro* has been the subject of four years of archeoastronomic studies. Our results showed two equinox and two solstice solar alignments during the year, giving evidence to ancient knowledge of these important annual events by the indigenous Kumiai population of this region. The discovery of this year-round, four-event solar alignment is the first of its kind in the region; however, in order to solidify the results, further studies on additional sites in the Vallecitos Archaeological Zone will need to be conducted.

## **Great Mural Art as Processional Art: Part II**

Eve Ewing, San Diego, California

Last year at this Symposium in a paper titled “Great Mural Rock Art as Processional Art,” I gave several examples of processional compositions to illustrate how the art incorporates ascending natural cracks that appear to function as *axis mundi* spirit paths, perhaps providing spiritual access to the celestial realms of immortal ancestors and sources of rain. This paper looks at the processions themselves, starting with the premise that they are derived first from profane activities undertaken in the real world. The resulting processional art still mirrors those origins but appears to incorporate them into a mythic and symbolic parallel spiritual world.

## **DStretch Documentation of a Spectacular Polychrome Rockshelter**

Jon Harman, DStretch.com

The beautiful rockshelter El Chavalito in Baja California Sur, Mexico, is an important regional center near the southern limit of the Great Mural tradition. It contains hundreds of Great Mural paintings. The paintings are mostly in reds, but yellow, white, and black pigments are also used. The background rock varies from a light colored, mottled volcanic breccia to a light brown tuff covered in places with dark black organic stains and bright white mineral stains. The paint condition varies from faded and nearly invisible to bright. These conditions make documenting the paintings a challenge and give an excellent demonstration of DStretch techniques.

## **Artists Meet Across the Ages**

Elanie Moore, Idyllwild, California

As a 20th century artist reading the art of circa 5,000-year-old artists, I began a lifetime adventure. Here I present a glimpse at a small portion of that adventure. I have recorded many of the aboriginal artists’ images and their relationship to their environment through photography, field sketches, ink drawings, paintings, and respective research. They painted larger than life-sized images of anthropomorphs and zoomorphs directly onto the walls of rock overhangs in the canyons of the Sierra de San Francisco, Baja California Sur. Reading their art through my visual studies helps reveal some of their possible motives, messages, and spirit.

## **12:00 LUNCH BREAK**

## **1:30 AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **California Ground Figures—Then and Now**

Richard Colman, westernrockart.org

During the 1980s, Harry Casey flew a small airplane of over numerous geoglyphs and ground figures, taking photographs with his trusty Nikon F camera through a hole in the floor. Those photographs are now archived at the Imperial Valley Desert Museum in Ocotillo California. We follow in Harry’s footsteps, taking similar photographs 35 years later using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drones) and digital photography. During this presentation, both sets of photographs will be compared, seeking insights into how these cultural artifacts have fared over the intervening 35+ years.

## **Coyote Hole Canyon Surprises, Part 3**

John Michael Rafter, Pico Rivera, California

This is part three of my investigation in Coyote Hole Canyon. The canyon is located near Joshua Tree Village, California, just north of the north entrance to Joshua Tree National Park. The approximately 3,000-foot-long canyon stretches from south to north with rock art on its east and west sides on granitic boulders. Coyote Hole is the name of the natural tank at the south end of this narrow box canyon. The late Delcie Vuncannon of nearby Yucca Valley enlisted my help in investigating rock art in the canyon from 1993 to 1996. During that study I encountered several surprises involving its rock art. In 2016 and 2017 I reported on several rock art alignments, observed between 1993 and 1996, with significant solar events involving both direct and indirect observations, including unique sunlight and shadow interactions with rock art. Additional findings made between 2015 and 2017 and more recently this year revealed additional solar alignments. Many seem to hint of the concept of the female earth in union with the male sun announcing the first day(s) of spring. In all of my 40 years investigating archaeoastronomy sites, I have never seen so many alignment sites in one area as in Coyote Hole Canyon. And the reason for this may be just as surprising.

## **A Pristine Site in the Colorado Desert**

Mary Jespersen, Martín Jespersen, CASSP, and George Kline, BLM, Palm Springs

The McCoy Mountains are located in the Colorado Desert in eastern Riverside County. As a result of cultural resource studies for a number of solar developments, many sites have been documented. This report will address a new petroglyph site (CA-RIV-11746) that has been found in pristine condition. The uniqueness of this site is described and a comparison is made with other rock art sites known within the region. Recommendations for protecting, preserving, and maintaining the cultural materials found here are also discussed.

## **DStretch and “Grand Canyon Polychrome”**

Richard Jenkinson, Kanab, Utah

Grand Canyon Polychrome—now referred to as the Esplanade Style—is an Archaic rock art style found only in the western Grand Canyon and its northern tributaries. DStretch is especially helpful here because the artists used many colors and the multiple settings of DStretch bring out a wealth of details. My presentation will look at a variety of Esplanade Style images enhanced by the use of DStretch.

## **3:00 – 3:20 AFTERNOON BREAK**

## **Intimate Relations: Associations of Animal, Bird, Snake, and Plant Images with Spirit Figures in Barrier Canyon Style Rock Art**

David Sucec, BCS Project

At some Barrier Canyon style rock art sites, representations of bighorn sheep, deer, dogs, birds, snakes, and plants are seen in close association with spirit figures. Whether bird, snake, or quadruped, they are seen hovering over the heads, off the shoulders, or flanking certain figures. Some can also be seen moving toward and around spirit figures. In their apparent intimate association, these compositions differ significantly from the animal/anthropomorph compositions that are seen in other Utah rock art styles and exhibit a remarkable similarity to the images of some hunting-gathering cultures such as the Huichol and Inuit—with representations of shamans and associated zoomorphs identified as “spirit helpers.”

## **Perpetual Prayer: Metaphoric Fertility**

Bernard M. Jones, Jr., Tustin, California, and Christopher E. Drover, University of California, Irvine

Colorado Plateau rock art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries presents petroglyph imagery which can be interpreted in comparison with ethnographic Puebloan altar presentations. The entwined imagery of clouds, rain, lightning, serpents, wind, flowers, corn, breath, and feathers represent the fertility of life itself. The metamorphic interchange among these elements, when compared with contact period altars, suggests such rock art is a physical, perpetual prayer. Petroglyph supplications represent expected results as the intention of these panels, corresponding favorably with James Frazer’s “Law of Similarity” (1959).

## **Bison Dreamer Transformation in the Pictographs of Dry Wolf Caves, Montana**

Mavis Greer and John Greer, Greer Services Archeology, Casper, Wyoming

Two large abstract images in a small central Montana cave have no direct counterparts in Northwestern Plains rock art. However, these ambiguous maze/mask representations have bison headgear characteristics that compare with others throughout Montana and Wyoming. An examination of different methods of portraying bison head-dresses, bonnets, caps or hats, and masks within the region provides support that these are abstract portrayals of transformation from bison to human.

## **Acoustical Characteristics of Valcamonica Rock Art Sites**

Steven J. Waller, Archaeoacoustics

Valcamonica in Italy is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that contains one of the greatest collections of petroglyphs in the world. An initial study of the characteristics of major sites in the area revealed remarkable acoustical properties. The Camonica Valley acts like a giant megaphone to reflect, collect, and amplify sounds. The iconography depicts several types of sound-making subjects such as musical instruments. These Italian sites will be compared and contrasted with other recently visited open-air rock art sites including the Coa Valley in Portugal, the Dinwoody type site in Wyoming, and numerous rock art sites in California and Utah.

**Rock Art Papers, Volume 19** is available now at the low price of \$20 from our distributors, Sunbelt Publications. Drop by the Sunbelt table at the Symposium today or visit them at [www.sunbeltpub.com](http://www.sunbeltpub.com). Volume 19 contains 13 papers with 302 illustrations, most in color, presenting the results of research on pictographs and petroglyphs as presented at previous Rock Art Symposia. *Rock Art Papers, Volume 18*, is also available at the Sunbelt table.

### **With Thanks...**

We wish to thank our Symposium partner, The San Diego Community College District Educational Cultural Complex. We greatly appreciate the generous assistance of Jacqueline Sabanos and her staff—Anthony Vargas, Jenelle Castillejos, and Nathaniel Pitcher—for the use of the San Diego Community College District Educational Cultural Complex Theatre for this year’s Rock Art Symposium.

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**We will return next year for Rock Art 2019—visit [www.sdraa.org](http://www.sdraa.org) next summer for our announcement of next year’s Symposium.**

For details on Membership and Programs of the San Diego Rock Art Association, visit our website at

**[www.sdraa.org](http://www.sdraa.org)**

The San Diego Rock Art Association is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization



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