



# Rock Art 2019

San Diego's 44th Annual Rock Art Symposium  
Presented by the San Diego Rock Art Association

**November 2, 2019**

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**

**Piedras Pintadas: DStretch Recording**

Gregory Erickson

**Prologue: The Original Record**

Ken Hedges and Diane Hamann

**Epilogue: Conservation and Protection**

Steve Freers

Following initial basic recording by Malcolm Rogers in the 1930s, the first formal recording of the Piedras Pintadas site was conducted by Ken Hedges and Diane Hamann in 1987. That report, considered complete at the time, forms the baseline for recent detailed recording by Gregory Erickson using DStretch enhancement of digital photography. This presentation presents the results of this landmark recording effort, documenting new panels and numerous newly discovered elements invisible to the naked eye, but revealed through the magic of DStretch. In the past few years the site has suffered multiple instances of spray paint graffiti and SDRAA has been involved in ongoing conservation, restoration, and monitoring to mitigate damage. This three-part presentation provides a brief summary of the original report and a summary overview of the subsequent conservation activities as adjuncts to Erickson's detailed report of his DStretch recording.

**Revealing An Old Romance at the Painted Rock**

Steve Freers

In 1917, long-time San Pasqual Valley resident Elizabeth Judson Roberts published a book of ethnographic "Indian Stories" based on retellings by her Kumeyaay acquaintances. These tales have been shown to possess significant factual underpinnings, as noted by Richard Carrico (2011) in his exploration of *'Awi Kuseyaay: The Ringing Rock of San Bernardo*. One story features a large pictograph boulder adjacent to the marital home of two Kumeyaay lovers who endure melodramatic trials and tribulations as well as a magical pictographic revelation. The actual pictograph was visited and photographed by Malcolm Rogers, whose work was later incorporated into Ken Hedges's 1970 Master's Thesis on Diegueño pictographs. The site is located on private property and is highly inaccessible. Recently, permission was granted to fully document the rock art and reconcile pertinent historical and tangible aspects of "The Romance of the Painted Rock" story.

**10:10 – 10:40 MORNING BREAK**

**Previously Unrecorded Pictographic Elements from Indian Creek, California**

Amy Marymor

The rock art of a remote set of painted caves located deep in Chumash territory was meticulously recorded and studied in 1979 and 1980 by Travis Hudson and Kathy Conti. They developed a style guide for the site and developed a detailed archaeoastronomical interpretation. Since that time the field of rock art studies has benefited from digital photography

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

and the ability to enhance images, especially with DStretch. This report will illustrate new observations of previously unreported elements from a visit in 2015, the most significant being that of yellow pigment in the main cave.

### **A Different View of Bedrock Mortars and Slicks**

John Rafter

When one sees a bedrock mortar or a grinding slick, an immediate assumption is that it is an artifact used for grinding grains or acorns for consumption and is thereby recorded as a utilitarian artifact. But as the author has noticed after seeing hundreds of grinding slicks and bedrock mortars over several decades across all of southern California, some are placed at odd locations that defy logic. Some are arranged in patterns or face certain directions that suggest they were used for something other than utilitarian functions. In particular, some show an intimate interaction with light and shadow patterns during a solstice or equinox event. Several may have involved the ancient tale of the Lone Woman of the Cave (Earthwoman), who was impregnated by the rays of the Sun on the first day of spring. Many more are suspect, so the investigation is ongoing.

### **Bear Track Petroglyphs at Church Rock (CA-SHA-39): Description, Interpretation, and Regional Discontinuities**

Eric Ritter

The Church Rock petroglyph/village site (CA-SHA-39), or Tsarau Heril, is the most elaborate rock art site among a handful in north-central California. Among its many images are dozens of what appear to be bear tracks or paws. Such rock art images are not found elsewhere within a distance of over 100 kilometers. These apparent late prehistoric pictures are described by form and style and interpreted based on local, regional, and continental historic and contemporary tribal knowledge and ritual/ceremonial association. These images are also examined with regard to their external origins, their relationship to anthropomorphism/personification, and their interplay with other figurative and non-figurative images to better understand their possible or ascribed function or functions and foundations.

### **A Unique California Indian Arborgraph**

Tom Blackburn

In 1846, an artist with the Fremont expedition recorded an arborgraph near the Kern River, and it may well be the only record of such an image in existence. It appears to depict vaqueros roping tule elk, but on stylistic grounds was clearly created by Native Californians. The seemingly unlikely subject matter is actually supported by historical documentation that will be discussed.

### **The Big Man of San José**

Ken Hedges

A major but highly weathered pictograph panel at San José de Tecate in northern Baja California is unique for the presence of a singular life-size anthropomorphic painting. Features of this figure and associated images on the same panel suggest supernatural aspects while several elements of the panel indicate a historic post-contact date for the rock art.

**12:00 LUNCH BREAK**

**1:30 AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **Precontact and Postcontact Rock Art at San Fernando de Velicatá, Baja California**

Richard L. Carrico

The only Franciscan mission site in Baja California, founded in 1769 by Junipero Serra on his way north to San Diego, began as a Jesuit settlement and later was turned over to the Dominican order. The mission, located in Cochimí territory, was sited there because of the abundance of water and a large indigenous population. Rock art in the form of both petroglyphs and pictographs was noted by anthropologist John Peabody Harrington in 1925, by Sauer and Meigs in 1927, and poorly described by Clem Meighan in 1978. Subsequently Ken Hedges reported on the contact period elements of the site in 2015 and this author included some elements of the site in a 2018 talk to the SDRAA. This presentation will revisit the previous research to include a more detailed discussion of the rock art panels, update ongoing research and excavation by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), and suggest that the historic components of the site date from circa 1769-1818.

### **A Leviathan in the Desert**

John Harman

Deep in a nearly impenetrable canyon of the Sierra de Guadalupe in Baja California Sur there is a rockshelter painted with images of humans, animals, and sea creatures. Floating above all these images is a huge whale—an orca! The painting is life-size—about 8 m long. It may be the largest pictograph of an animal in the world. The paintings are within the

Great Mural tradition but faded with age so that some are nearly invisible. I will use DStretch ([www.DStretch.com](http://www.DStretch.com)) to make the fantastic images found here visible. The life-size image (in red) of the orca is superimposed on older yellow paintings. Red painted human figures cover examples in yellow that are in a style similar to images found in San Borjitas. The superimpositions in San Borjitas indicate that the yellow figures are among the oldest Great Mural human figures. This site confirms the sequence seen in San Borjitas. Many typical Great Mural forms are present: human figures, deer, bighorn sheep, birds, mountain lions, turtles, and fish.

## **Along Chetco Trails: An Unrecorded Petroglyph Site in Southwestern Oregon**

Peter Merlin

Rock art sites, dating from as early as 7,000 years ago to as recently as the late 1800s, are among the most common archaeological remains in the state of Oregon. Most of these petroglyphs and pictographs are concentrated in the central and southeastern regions, particularly in the high desert and on the Columbia Plateau. By contrast, the coastal region west of the Cascade Range seems nearly devoid of rock art. According to official records, the southwesternmost known rock art site in Oregon is a collection of more than 60 petroglyph-bearing boulders discovered in 1974 along the Rogue River near Two Mile Creek. A serendipitous visit in January 2019, however, revealed a previously unrecorded site nearly 40 miles further south, on a branch of the Winchuck River within six miles of the coast in territory once occupied by the Chetco tribe.

## **Hawaiian Archaeoacoustics: Sound Phenomena at Rock Art Sites on Maui**

Steven Waller

Three rock art sites on the Hawaiian island of Maui were tested for acoustics, with positive results: 1) The Olowalu site on the west coast near Lahaina contains scores of petroglyphs pecked into a towering lava cliff face that gives strong echoes. 2) The Pu'u Maneoneo site on the southeast coast near Waiu Bay consists of dozens of polychrome pictographs painted along a lava rock face about 15 feet high that also gives good echoes. 3) The site of the "Rainbow Warrior" petroglyph is located far inland in Maui's central northwest Iao Valley near the foot of the sacred Iao Needle landmark. This single isolated petroglyph is carved on a large rock on the bank of a rushing river where the noise of the rapids flowing over the rocks is very loud. This soundscape is reminiscent of the "roaring rocks" of Scandinavia, which are rock art sites that have been found in association with noisy, running water (Goldhahn 2002). In summary, the acoustic results from all three Maui rock art sites are consistent with the archaeoacoustic theory that sound was an important factor for rock art site selection due to the cultural significance of sound phenomena.

### **2:40 – 3:00 AFTERNOON BREAK**

## **Archaeology in the Archives: Threads and Puzzle Pieces**

Anne Stoll, photography and digital processing by George Stoll

The results of an archival "dig" by us this past July, 2019, in the dusty drawers of the National Museum in downtown Harare, Zimbabwe, connect importantly with previous finds made at the British Museum in London. The surprising discovery in 2015 of digital scans of tracings made by the late Zimbabwean archaeologist Peter Garlake at seven San Bushman rock art sites provided important pieces of the rock art puzzle which we still use to conceptualize the complex images of Zimbabwe. Now this second archival "dig" in the Harare museum has proven equally fruitful. We found, among other wonders, stacks of original watercolor copies of rock art painted by various artists including, most remarkably, a drawer full of signed and dated originals created by the Abbe Henri Breuil over 70 years ago. Like the ancient San artists themselves, these copiers and their curators are now long gone. Without these perishable tracings and paper records, the fragile thread that connects Zimbabwe and the rest of the world to this unique artistic fluorescence is clearly endangered. We show examples of how we compare photographed, traced, and copied images to the actual paintings in order to facilitate the ongoing exploration of San rock art.

## **Pot Hunters, Border Patrol, and the Persistence of Place: Documenting a Hilltop in the Borderlands**

Margaret Berrier

The discovery and detention of a pot hunter near the border of Southwest New Mexico has led to a fascinating hilltop site. Several episodes of unusual petroglyph production and rock art features were documented. Tracings of photographs from the site reveal interesting details that are sometimes missed with photography alone. Having explored a large portion of the Jornada Mogollon regions of Southern New Mexico, Texas, and part of Northern Mexico, I am inspired to find a new piece of the puzzle. This documentation is part of a long-term project to update the Southern New Mexico rock art site information for the Bureau of Land Management and the state.

## **Chevelon Canyon, Arizona: Pictographs, Dry Caves, and Rockshelters**

Frederick L. Briuer

A survey of all archaeological sites in a section of Chevelon Canyon, Arizona, was conducted by the author in the summer of 1972. The purpose of the survey was to select two pairs of dry caves/rockshelters for excavation. In each pair was one cultural site, with a cultural assemblage, and nearby on the same slope, a noncultural site with no indication of human occupation. The cultural and noncultural plant and animal assemblages in these four sites were thoroughly compared. In the course of this survey of Chevelon Canyon, a spectacular multicolor pictograph cave site was discovered. The implications of cultural and noncultural plant and animal remains and the function of pictographs in dry caves will be discussed.

## **Colorado Plateau Archaic Figures and Figurines: Kin or Coincidence?**

David Sucec

During the reign of Dr. Jesse Jennings as Utah's leading archaeologist, several split-twig figurines were found in the 1960s during excavations at Cowboy and Walters caves near Canyonlands National Park in southern Utah. The figurines appear to be closely related to better-known twig figures from the Grand Canyon National Park area, about two hundred miles south. The BCS Project has made two brief probes into the area where the Grand Canyon split-twig figurines are found to see what images had been painted, drawn, or pecked there. Are there any similarities to the painted, drawn, or pecked Barrier Canyon style figure forms found in the Canyonlands National Park area analogous to those suggested by the figurines? This presentation will discuss the initial findings from a small number of sites in the Esplanade area of the Grand Canyon with a comparison to the Barrier Canyon style images.

**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.

### **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. San Diego Continuing Education commits to student success and community enrichment by providing accessible, equitable, and innovative quality education and support services to diverse adult learners in pursuit of lifelong learning, training, career advancement, and pathways to college. Visit their website at [www.sdce.edu/organization/campuses/ecc](http://www.sdce.edu/organization/campuses/ecc)

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