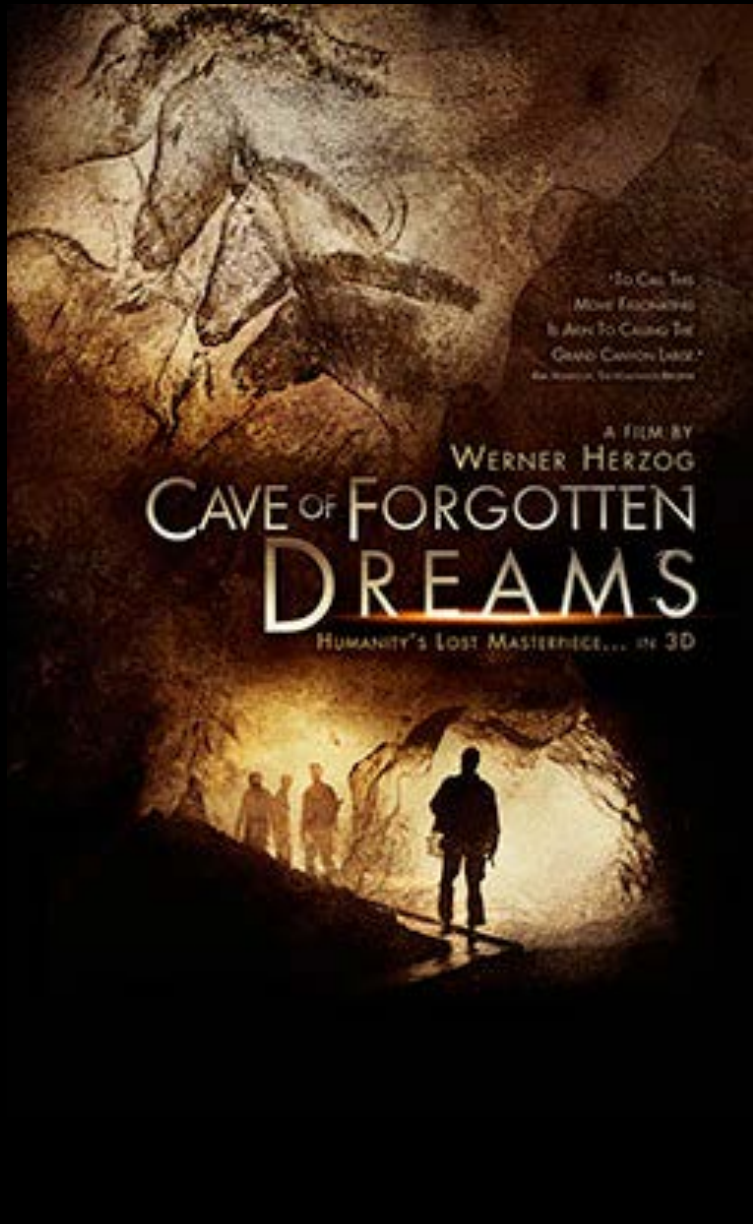
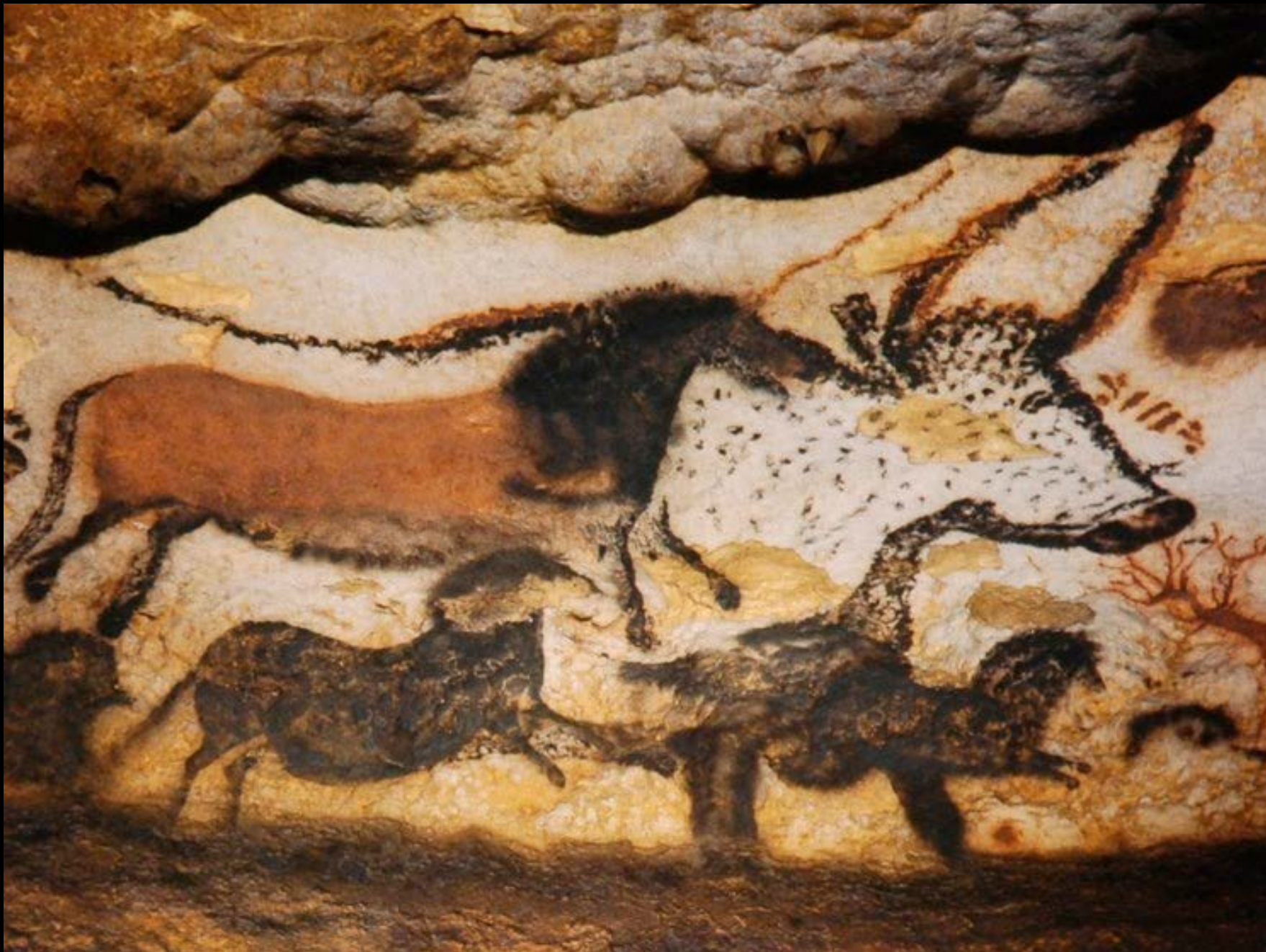


AHST 2331-001 (21626)
Understanding Art
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
Spring 2020

Tuesday 01/21/20
Quiz #1 and Discussion



Werner Herzog (b. 1942-) German writer, director, producer – has made 68 films (features, documentaries, shorts, etc.)



Cave Paintings, Lascaux Cave,
Lascaux France, c. 17,000 BCE –
up to 20,000 years old

Parietal Art: archeological term
for cave paintings; “parietal”
means “of or relating to the
walls of a part or cavity”

virtual reality

immersion

● Major Paleolithic caves in France and Spain



How old is “art”?

Is it as old as humans? Does it precede homo sapiens?

Or is ‘art’ a modern concept imposed on deep time and the deep past?



Nasher Sculpture Center

- Objects dating from 300,000 years ago or earlier as evidence of the earliest forms of artistic intention
- The handaxe as the first sculpture our prehistoric ancestors conceived
- Figure stones, naturally occurring stones possess evident shapes and patterns, including geometric forms, animals, and especially faces.
- Prehistoric people recognized these shapes, and augmented their mimetic qualities through additional carving.

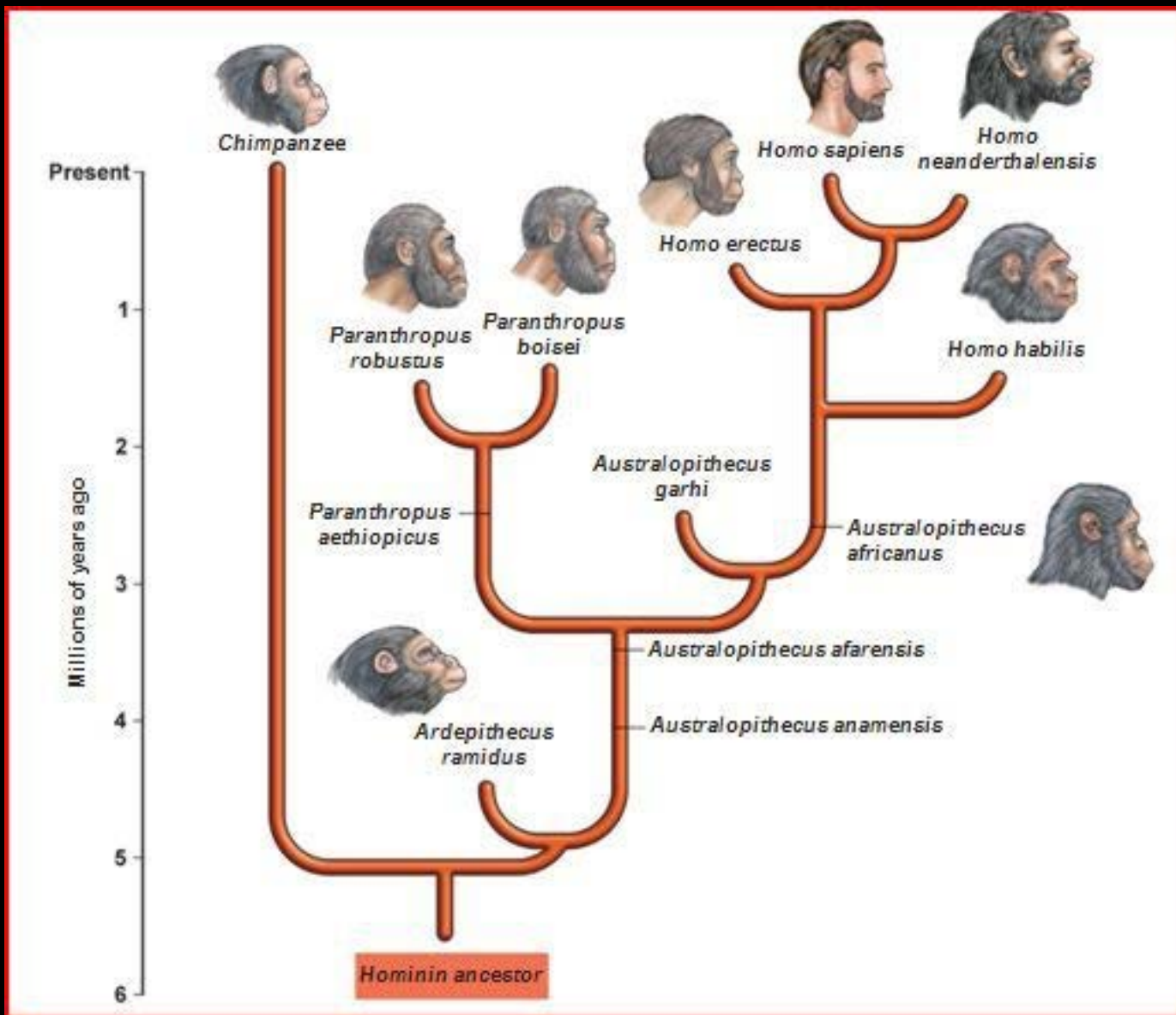
First Sculpture



Handaxe to Figure Stone

The Paleolithic Era

- The Paleolithic Era (Old Stone Age) began when hominids first made tools.
- These tools were used to make their lives easier.



ART REVIEW

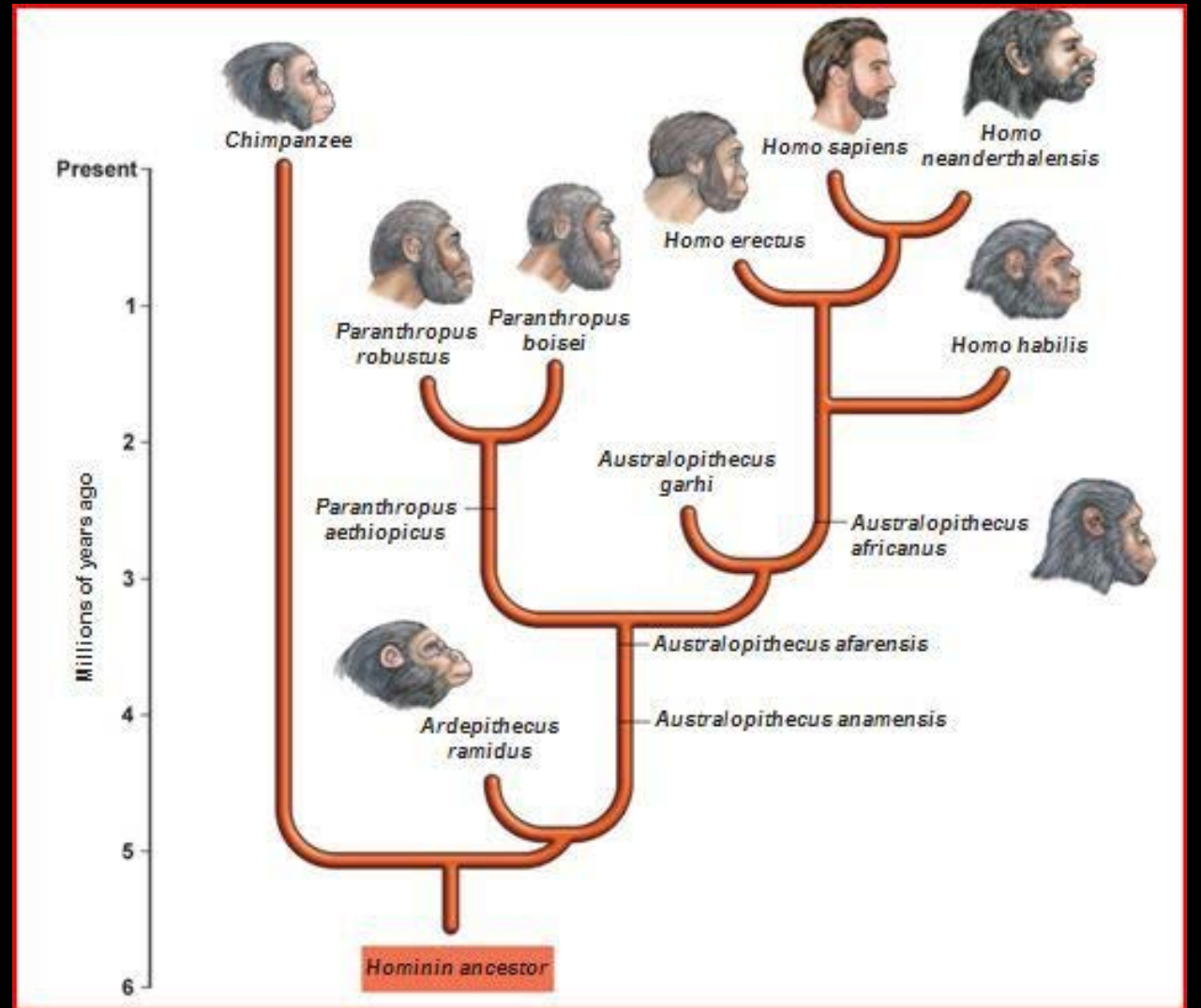
Was Australopithecus an Artist?



A hand ax from Niger, included in the Nasher Sculpture Center's new exhibition "First Sculpture." Brandon Thibodeaux for The New York Times

By Jason Farago

Feb. 1, 2018



Australopithecus: a fossil bipedal primate with both ape-like and human characteristics, found in Pliocene and Lower Pleistocene deposits (c. 4 million to 1 million years old) in Africa.

Australopithecus is the genus or group name. It is derived from the Latin word 'australo' meaning 'southern' and the Greek word 'pithecus' meaning 'ape'.

Deep Time

How do we reconcile the time of individual human consciousness (80-90 years) with the age of planet earth (4.5 billion years)?

TIME LINE OF STONE AGE

2.5 MILLION YEARS

1 5000 YEARS AGO

1 1000 YEARS AGO

PALEOLITHIC

MESOLITHIC

NEOLITHIC

OR

OR

OR

OLD STONE AGE

MIDDLE STONE AGE

NEW STONE AGE

IN THE PALEOLITHIC AGE, HUMAN USED STONES FOR HUNTING WHICH WAS FOUND IN NATURE AND ALREADY HAD CUTTING EDGE. THEY USED TREE BRANCHES, LEAVES AND STONES TO MAKE SHELTER FOR LIVING. THEY ATE PLANTS AND MEAT, GATHERED BERRIES. THEY MAY HAVE EATEN FLESH OF DEAD ANIMALS LEFT BEHIND BY OTHER LARGER PREDATORS. THEY USED FIRE BY RUBBING STONES TOGETHER AND ROASTED MEET.

IN THE MESOLITHIC AGE, HUMAN STARTED TO SHARPEN THEIR STONE TOOLS FOR HUNTING AND LOOKED FOR STONES (SUCH AS FLINT) THAT WAS HARDER AND COULD BE SHARPENED EASILY. THEY STARTED TO SETTLE IN ONE PLACE BUT STILL REMAIN HUNTER AND GATHERER OF MEET, FISH, BERRIES, NUTS AND FRUITS.

DURING THE NEOLITHIC AGE, GROUP OF HUNTERS LEARNED ABOUT AGRICULTURE. AT FIRST THEY COLLECTED WILD CROPS AND DOMESTICATED WILD ANIMALS. BY 10,000 YEARS AGO THEY STARTED TO PRODUCE GRAINS, FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FROM SEEDS. THEY MADE PLOW OUT OF ANTLERS, STONE AND WOOD AND STARTED TO CULTIVATE THE LAND WITH THE HELP OF HERDED ANIMALS. THEY USED STONE MORTARS AND PESTLES TO GRIND CEREALS AND GRAINS.

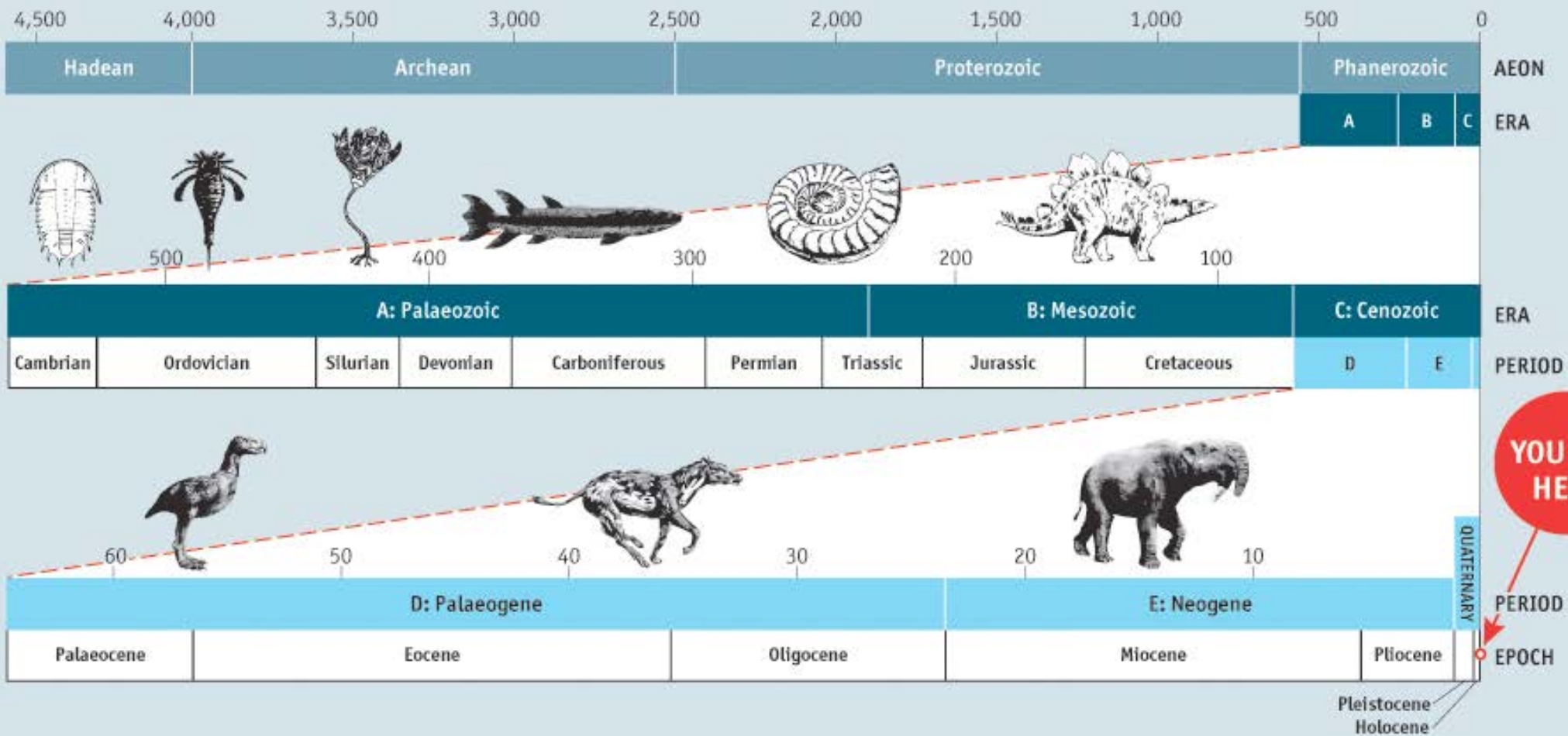
The Paleolithic Era

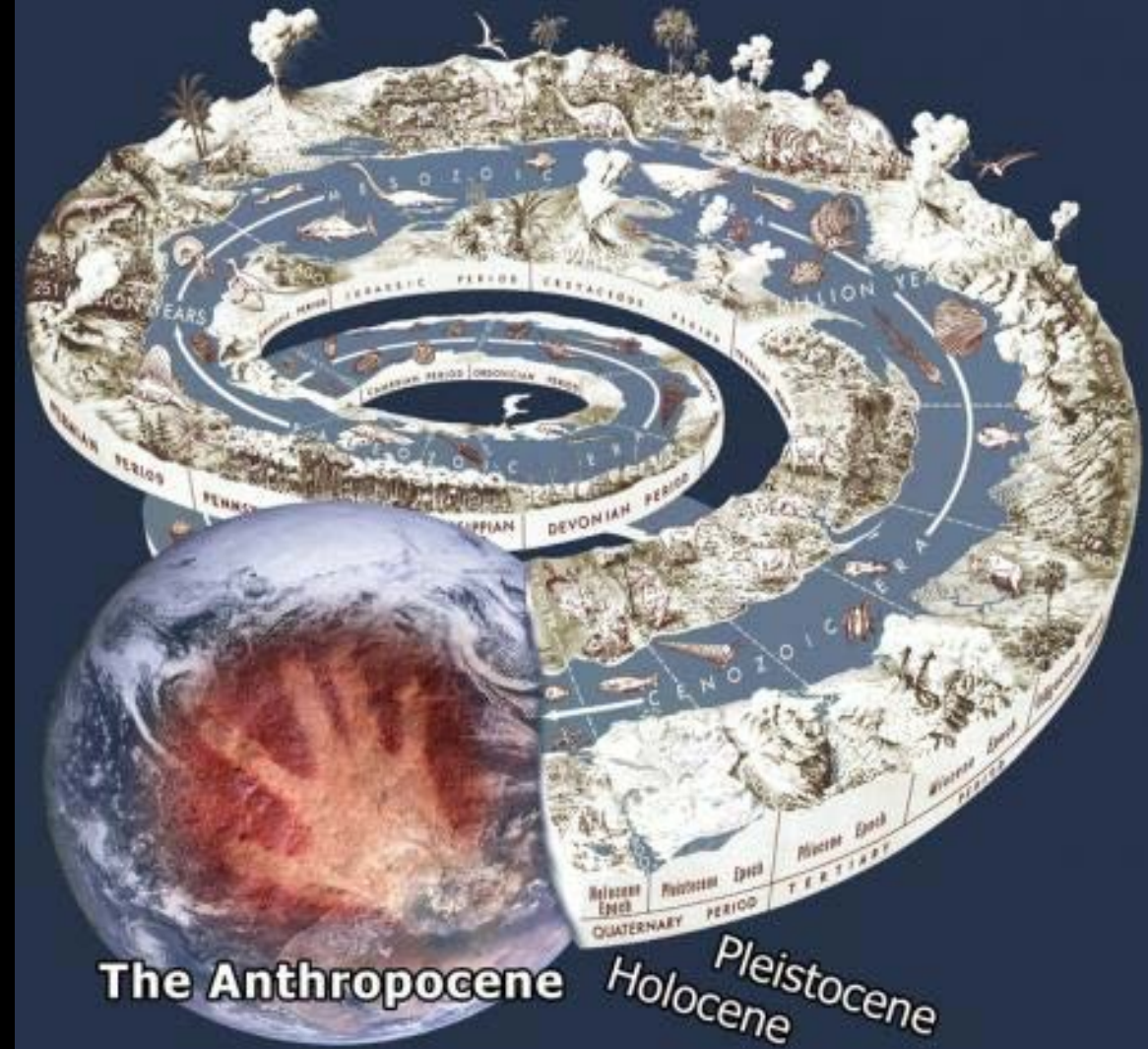
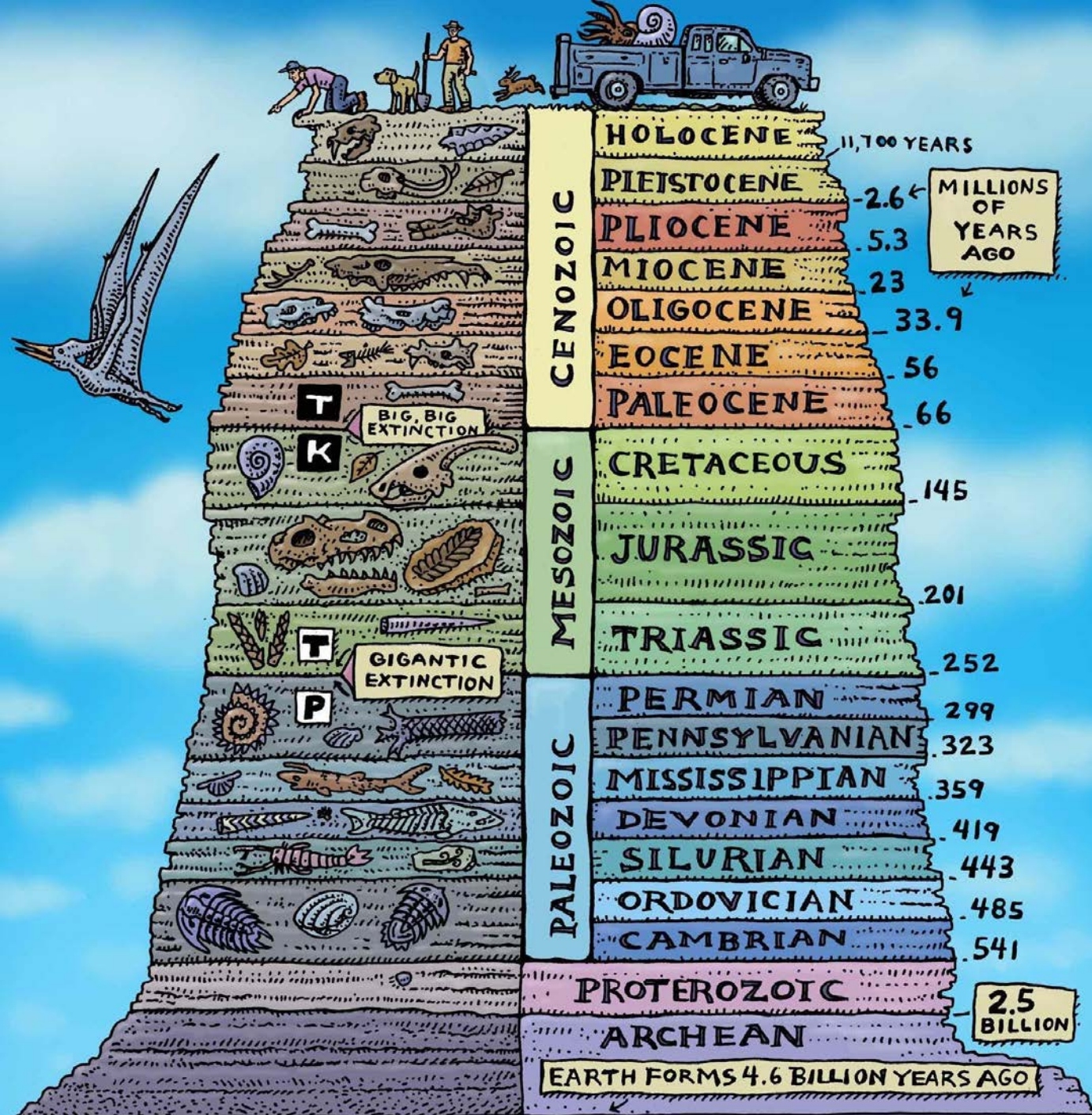
- The Paleolithic Era (Old Stone Age) began when hominids first made tools.
- These tools were used to make their lives easier.



A geological timeline of the Earth

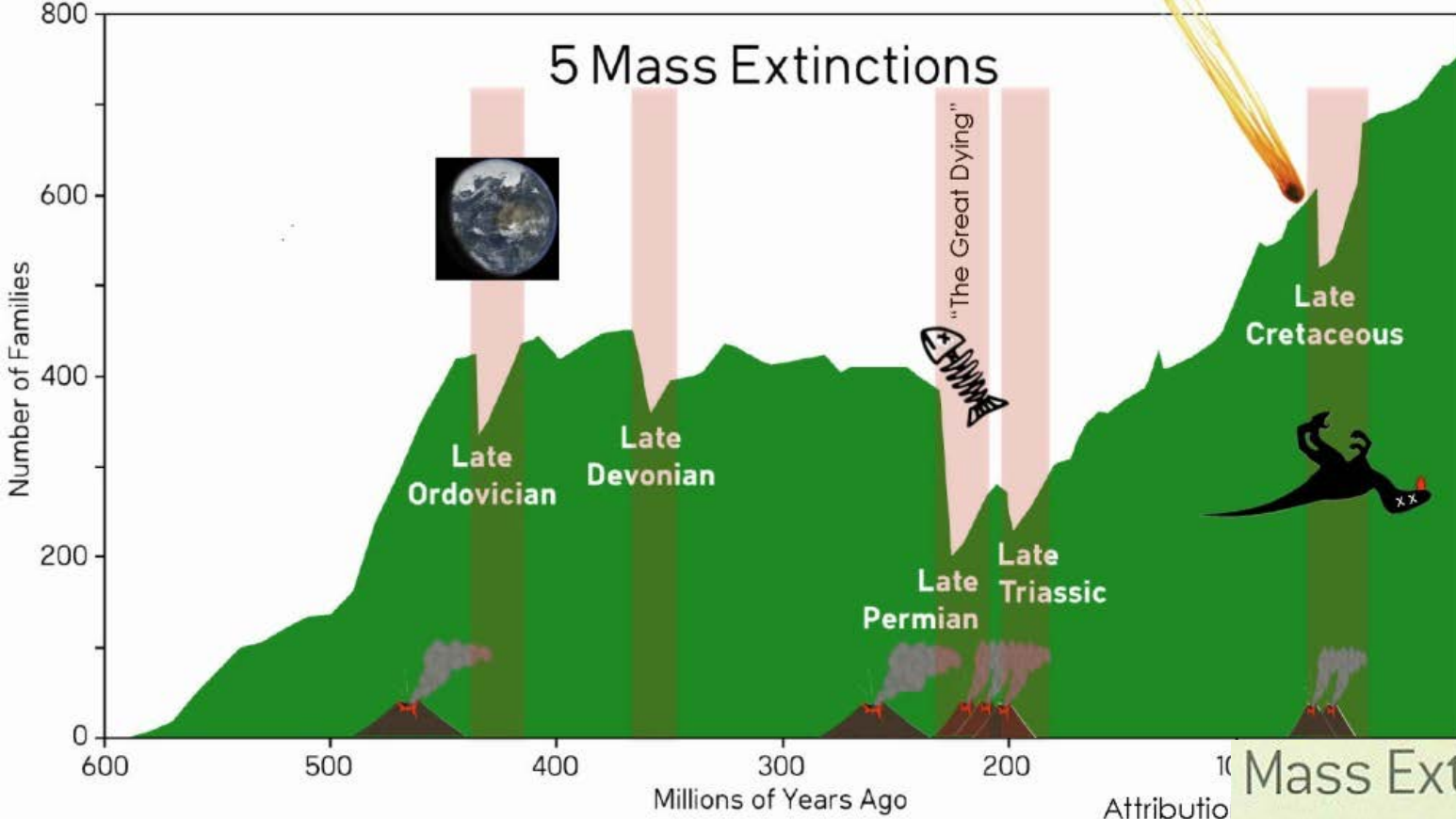
MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO





Anthropocene: relating to or denoting the current geological age, viewed as the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment.

Anthropocene: relating to or denoting the current geological age, viewed as the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment.



Mass Extinctions Past—and Present?

TIMELINE OF EXTINCTION marks the five most widespread die-offs in the fossil history of life on Earth.

END ORDOVICIAN

DURATION: 10 million years (my)
 MARINE GENERA OBSERVED EXTINGUISHED: 60%
 CALCULATED MARINE SPECIES EXTINGUISHED: 85%
 SUSPECTED CAUSE: Dramatic fluctuations in sea level



LATE DEVONIAN

DURATION: <3 my
 MARINE GENERA OBSERVED EXTINGUISHED: 57%
 CALCULATED MARINE SPECIES EXTINGUISHED: 83%
 SUSPECTED CAUSES: Impact, global cooling, loss of oxygen in oceans

END PERMIAN

DURATION: Unknown
 MARINE GENERA OBSERVED EXTINGUISHED: 82%
 CALCULATED MARINE SPECIES EXTINGUISHED: 95%
 SUSPECTED CAUSES: Dramatic fluctuations in climate or sea level, asteroid or comet impacts, severe volcanic activity



Phytosaur teeth



END TRIASSIC

DURATION: 3 to 4 my
 MARINE GENERA OBSERVED EXTINGUISHED: 53%
 CALCULATED MARINE SPECIES EXTINGUISHED: 80%
 SUSPECTED CAUSES: Severe volcanism, global warming

END CRETACEOUS

DURATION: <1 my
 MARINE GENERA OBSERVED EXTINGUISHED: 47%
 CALCULATED MARINE SPECIES EXTINGUISHED: 76%
 SUSPECTED CAUSES: Impact, severe volcanism

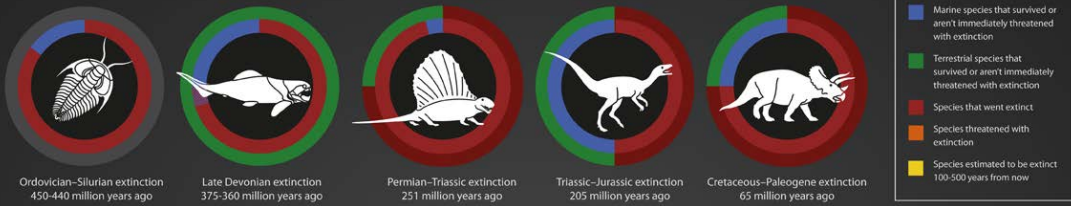


Millions of years ago



Made by Renée Kools

WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A 6TH MASS EXTINCTION



A mass extinction is the extinction of a large number of species within a relatively short period of geological time.

The Earth has known five great mass extinctions in the past that each wiped off 50 to 85% of the species that were alive at that time. Some of these events were preceded by a huge disaster, such as a meteorite hitting the surface of the Earth or a supervolcano erupting, while others were caused by the shifting of the continents.

But the sixth mass extinction isn't like the ones that killed the dinosaurs; this one is entirely man-made. If we continue the precedent we have set up to this point, this extinction event could be the fastest and one of the most devastating ones we have seen, yet.

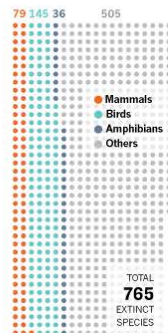


Life under threat

Thousands of species are currently deemed to be threatened, but the true number of species at risk of extinction may be much higher. Estimates suggest that between 500 and 36,000 species might be disappearing each year. The best data are for well-studied groups—mammals, birds and amphibians. Much less is known about threats to other groups, such as insects and fish.

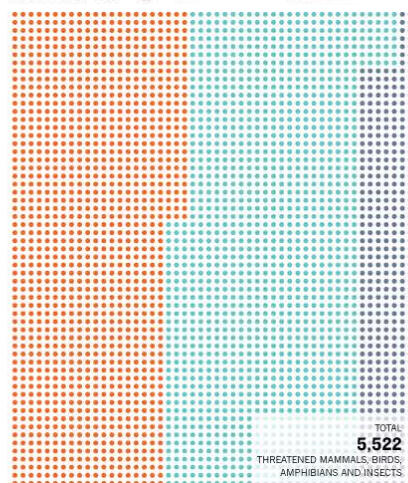
ALREADY EXTINCT

TOTAL DOCUMENTED SINCE 1500



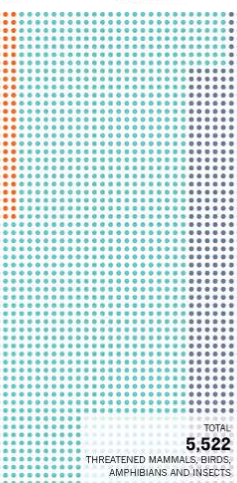
Mammals
1,199
THREATENED SPECIES
26% of described species

CURRENTLY THREATENED



Birds
1,373
THREATENED SPECIES
13% of described species

CURRENTLY THREATENED



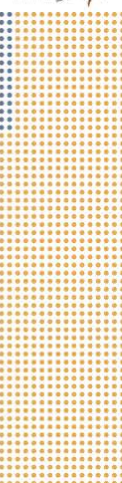
Amphibians
1,957
THREATENED SPECIES
41% of described species

CURRENTLY THREATENED



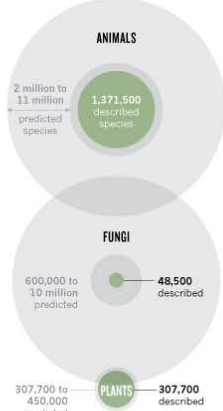
Insects
993
THREATENED SPECIES
Only 0.9% of roughly 1 million described have been evaluated. Number of living species may exceed 5 million

CURRENTLY THREATENED



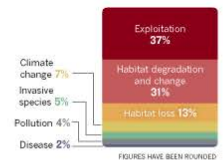
How many species are there?

Estimates of the number of species of animals, fungi and plants vary significantly. That uncertainty clouds understanding of how many species are threatened and how many are going extinct.



Main threats

Hunting, fishing and other forms of exploitation are a major factor in declines in animal populations, according to the Living Planet Index. Habitat degradation and loss are also dominant threats. Climate change is expected to become a bigger factor over time.



March towards mass extinction

Mass extinctions—loss of 75% of existing species—have happened 5 times in the planet's history. If there are 5 million animal species and they are disappearing at rate of 0.72% per year (the upper end of estimates), a sixth mass extinction could happen by the year 2200. At the low end of the estimated range, a mass extinction would not happen for thousands of years.

BY RICHARD MONASTERSKY | GRAPHIC BY SW INFOGRAPHIC

EXTINCTIONS PER WEEK



PHOTO CREDITS: B. Janssen and N. Americano; Joel Sartore/National Geographic Creative; S. Dammers; Life on wheels/Wikny; R. Sumner; Joel Sartore/National Geographic Creative/Getty

SOURCES: Already Extinct, Currently Threatened, IUCN Red List. How many species are there? S. Pimm et al. Science 344, 1246752 (2014); B. R. Scheffers et al. Trends Ecol. Evol. 27, 501-510 (2012); IUCN Red List. March towards mass extinction; Pimm et al.; C. Mora et al. Science 341, 237 (2013). Main threats: WWF Living Planet Report 2014.

http://www.nature.com/polopoly_fs/7.22289.1418214566!/image/nature-life-under-threat-graphic-11dec14.png_gen/derivatives/fullsize/nature-life-under-threat-graphic-11dec14.png

WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A 6TH MASS EXTINCTION



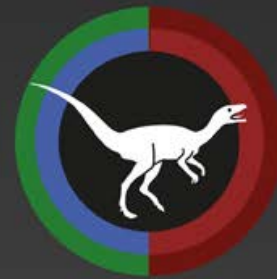
Ordovician-Silurian extinction
450-440 million years ago



Late Devonian extinction
375-360 million years ago



Permian-Triassic extinction
251 million years ago



Triassic-Jurassic extinction
205 million years ago



Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction
65 million years ago



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

A mass extinction is the extinction of a large number of species within a relatively short period of geological time.

The Earth has known five great mass extinctions in the past that each wiped off 50 to 85% of the species that were alive at that time. Some of these events were preceded by a huge disaster, such as a meteorite hitting the surface of the Earth or a supervolcano erupting, while others were caused by the shifting of the continents.

But the sixth mass extinction isn't like the ones that killed the dinosaurs; this one is entirely man-made. If we continue the precedent we have set up to this point, this extinction event could be the fastest and one of the most devastating ones we have seen, yet.



Ecosystems are fragile. Every animal, insect and plant species fulfills one or more invaluable roles to sustain the ecosystem it lives in. If one of those species goes extinct, the ecosystem needs time to adjust and restore. If several species go extinct in rapid succession, the consequences could be dire.



Ecosystems are valuable, and they provide us with resources and "services" free of charge. For instance, the total economic value of pollination by insects worldwide was estimated to be \$200 billion in 2005.

We depend on ecosystems to survive.

The environment provides us with clean air, fresh water, ores and fuel. It provides us with the fertile soil we need to build our crops. It regulates climates and functions as a natural buffer against floods and storms.

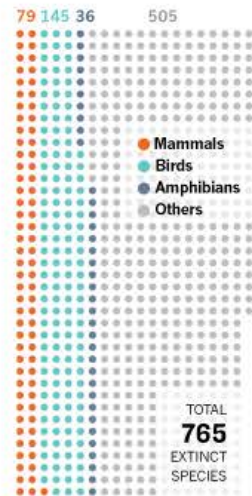


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BY RICHARD MONASTERSKY | GRAPHIC BY SW INFOGRAPHIC

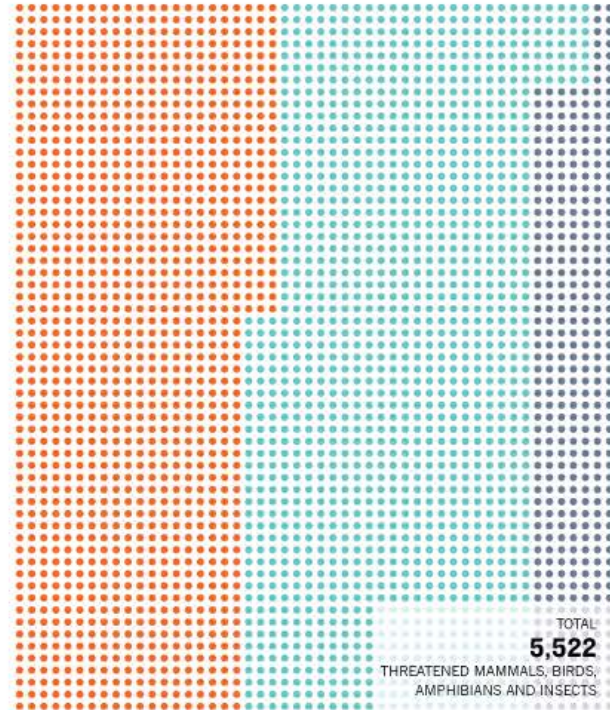
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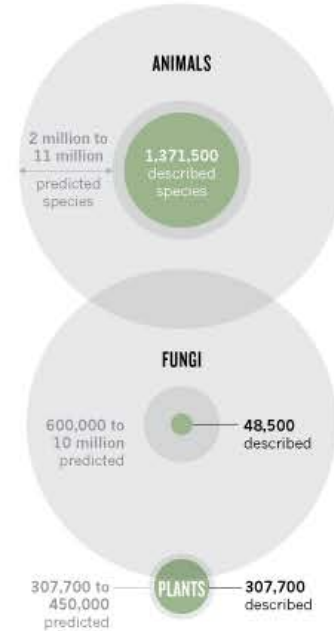


Insects
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(Only 0.5% of roughly 1 million described have been evaluated. Number of living species may exceed 5 million)



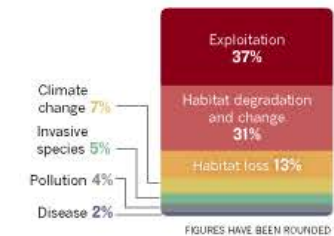
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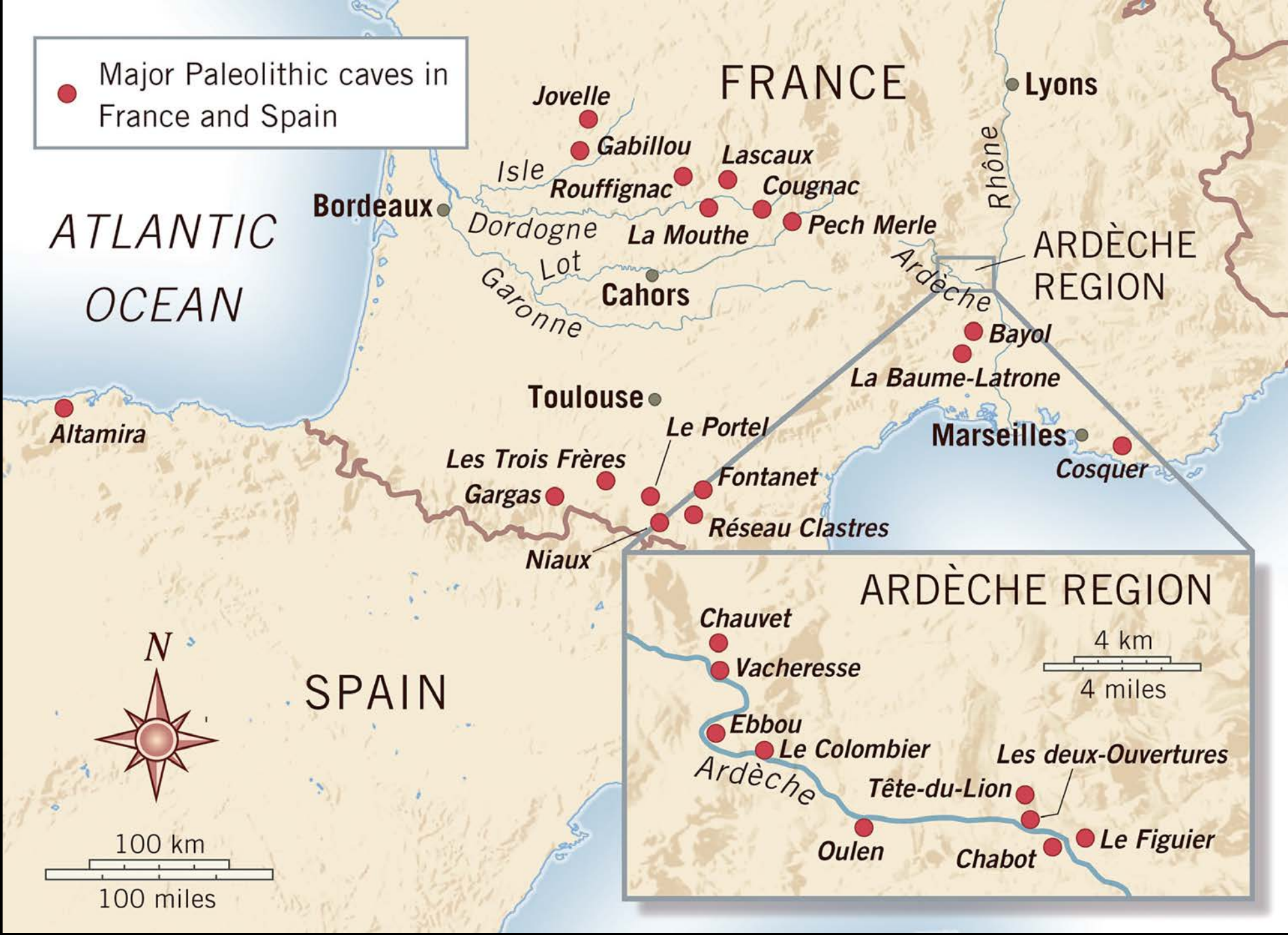
EXTINCTIONS PER WEEK

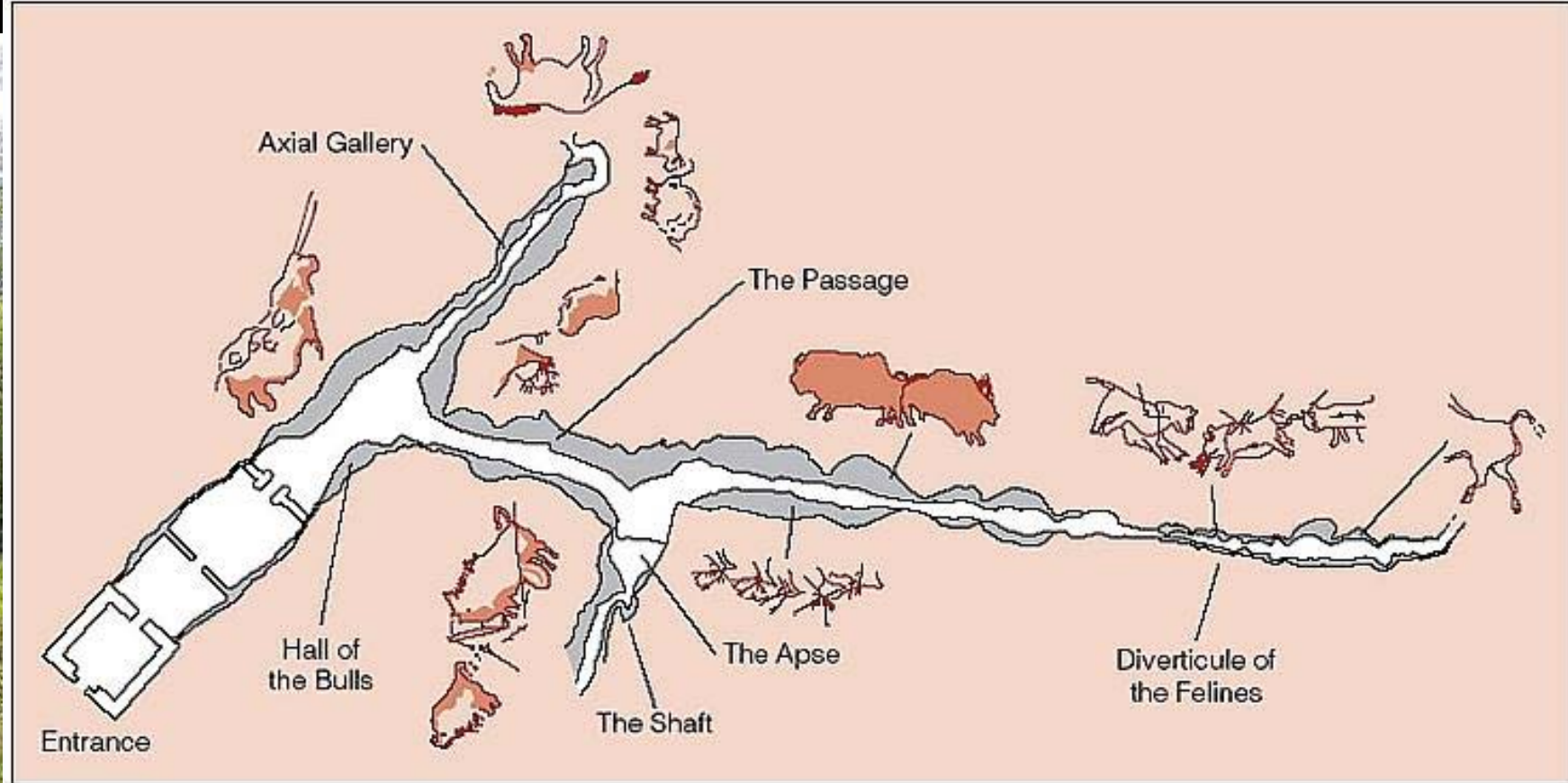


PHOTO CREDITS: *B. polionotus* and *N. americanus*: Joel Sartore/National Geographic Creative; *S. demissus*: Life on White/Alamy; *B. orientalis*: Joel Sartore/National Geographic Creative/Getty.

SOURCES: Already Extinct, Currently Threatened: IUCN Red List. How many species are there?: S. L. Pimm et al. *Science* **344**, 1246752 (2014); B. R. Scheffers et al. *Trends Ecol. Evol.* **27**, 501–510 (2012); IUCN Red List. March towards mass extinction: Pimm et al.; C. Mora et al. *Science* **341**, 237 (2013). Main threats: WWF Living Planet Report 2014.

● Major Paleolithic caves in France and Spain



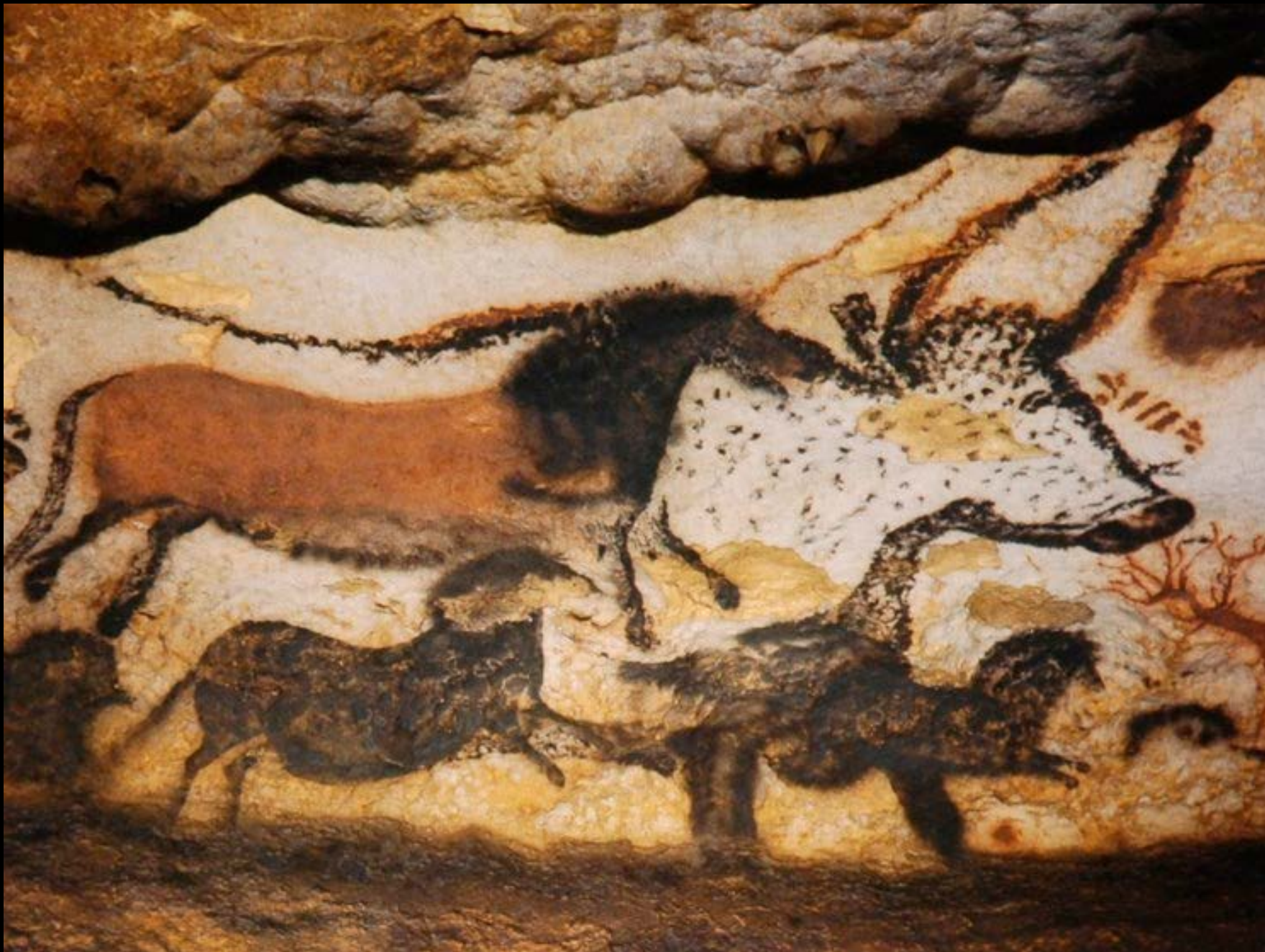




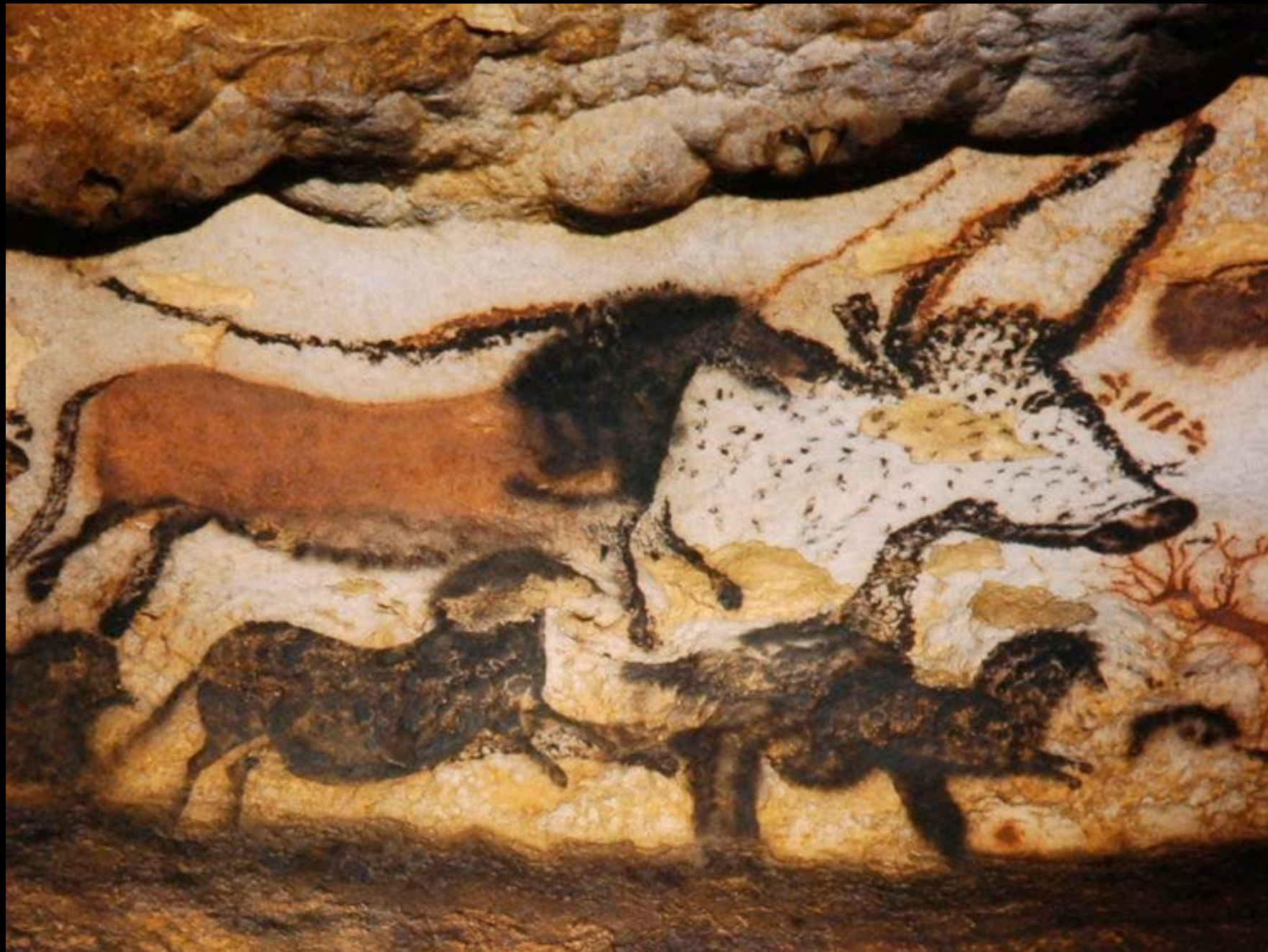
Left: Entrance to Lascaux I

Center and Right: The entrance to Lascaux II, which mimics the entrance to Lascaux.

- On September 12, 1940, the entrance to the Lascaux Cave was discovered by 18 year old Marcel Ravidat.
- The cave complex was opened to the public in 1948.
- By 1955, carbon dioxide, heat, humidity, and other contaminants produced by 1,200 visitors per day had visibly damaged the paintings.
- The cave was closed to the public in 1963, the paintings were restored to their original state and a monitoring system on a daily basis was introduced
- Lascaux II, a replica of the original, was opened in 1983.



- Lascaux is the setting of a complex of caves in southwestern France.
- It is famous renowned for its over 600 excellently detailed parietal wall paintings, that decorate the interior walls and ceilings of the cave in impressive compositions.
- Upper Paleolithic art (10,000-40,000 years old)
- primarily large animals, typical local and contemporary fauna that corresponds with the fossil record.
- woolly mammoths still roamed across Europe and people survived by hunting them and other large game.



Cave Paintings, Lascaux Cave,
Lascaux France, c. 17,000 BCE

Parietal Art: archeological term
for cave paintings; “parietal”
means “of or relating to the
walls of a part or cavity”

virtual reality

immersion



Hall of Bulls

IMMERSION

IMMERSIVE
SPACE

IMMERSIVE
EXPERIENCE



Lascaux, Hall of Bulls



Chauvet, Pont d'Arc, Panel of Horses

In these Paleolithic cave paintings, images of animals abound, even more so than images of humans. What does this say about the relationship stone age humans had with animals? How are we different from them? How are we similar? A way to get at these questions is to think about our own renderings in a would-be cave. What would you paint an image of in a cave? What are the things most important to you?



Several views of an oil lamp (a deer fat lamp),
found in the sediments in the floor of the Shaft at
Lascaux cave



Techné

Etymology

Techne (Greek root of technology)

- 1 activities, skills of craftsman
- 2 arts of mind, fine arts

“the bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful”

Our word "technology" comes from the Greek *technikon*, which is related to the word *techne*. In the sense of "technique," *techne* refers to *both* manufacturing (the techniques of shoemakers and printers, for example) and to the arts (the techniques of poets and graphic designers, for example). *Techne* is part of *poeisis*, or poetry and/or crafting.

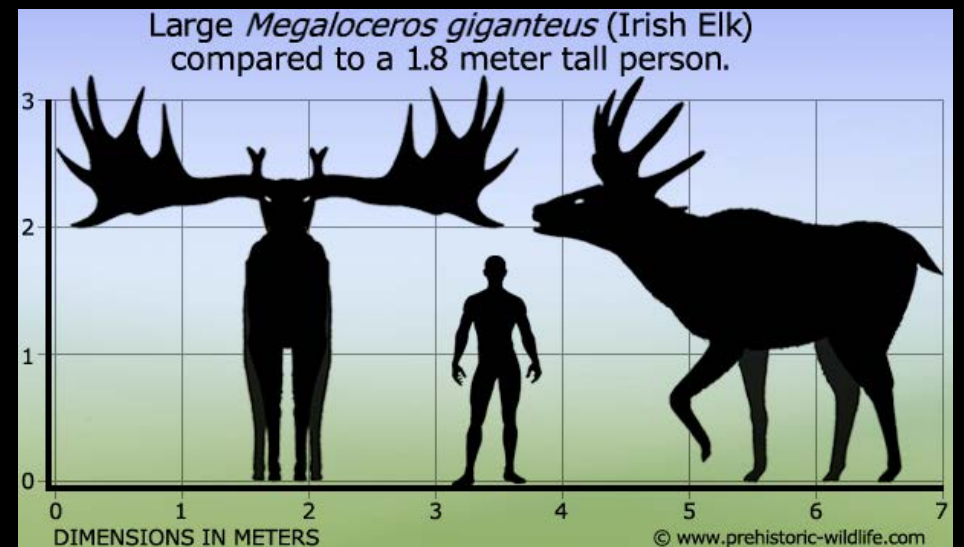




The Unicorn, in the Hall of the Bulls; left, from afar, right close up. -- Perhaps referencing a woolly rhinoceros



Megaloceros in Axial Gallery





The right wall of the Axial Gallery

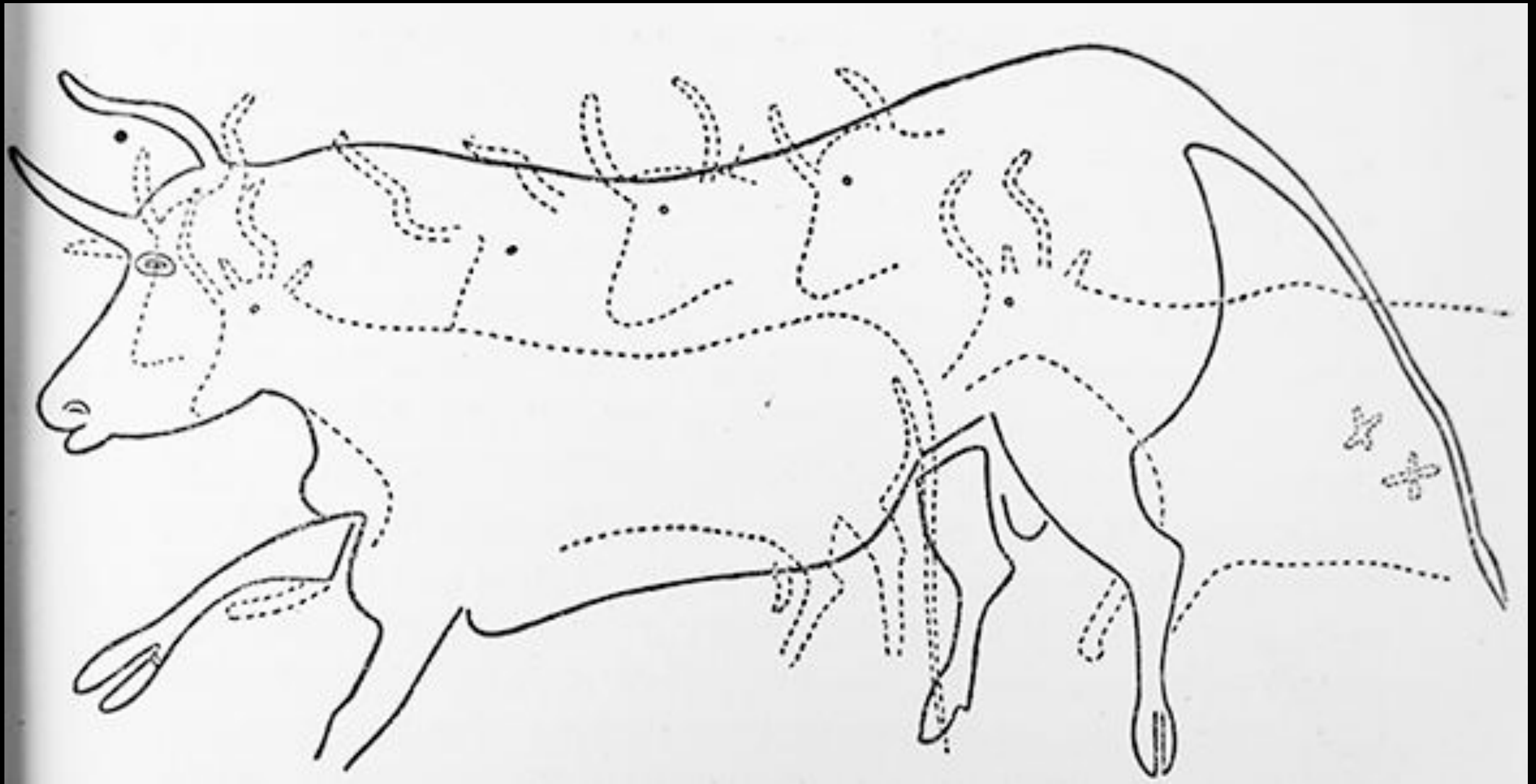


View into the axial gallery



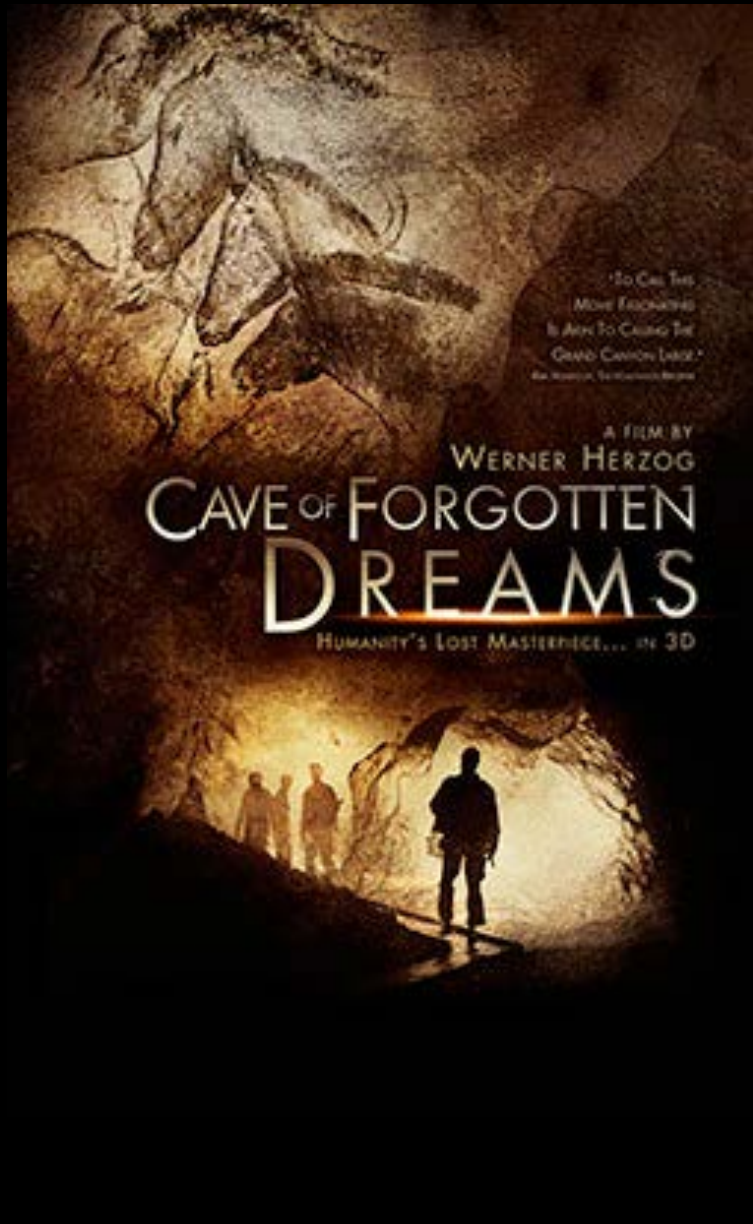


The Great Black Bull



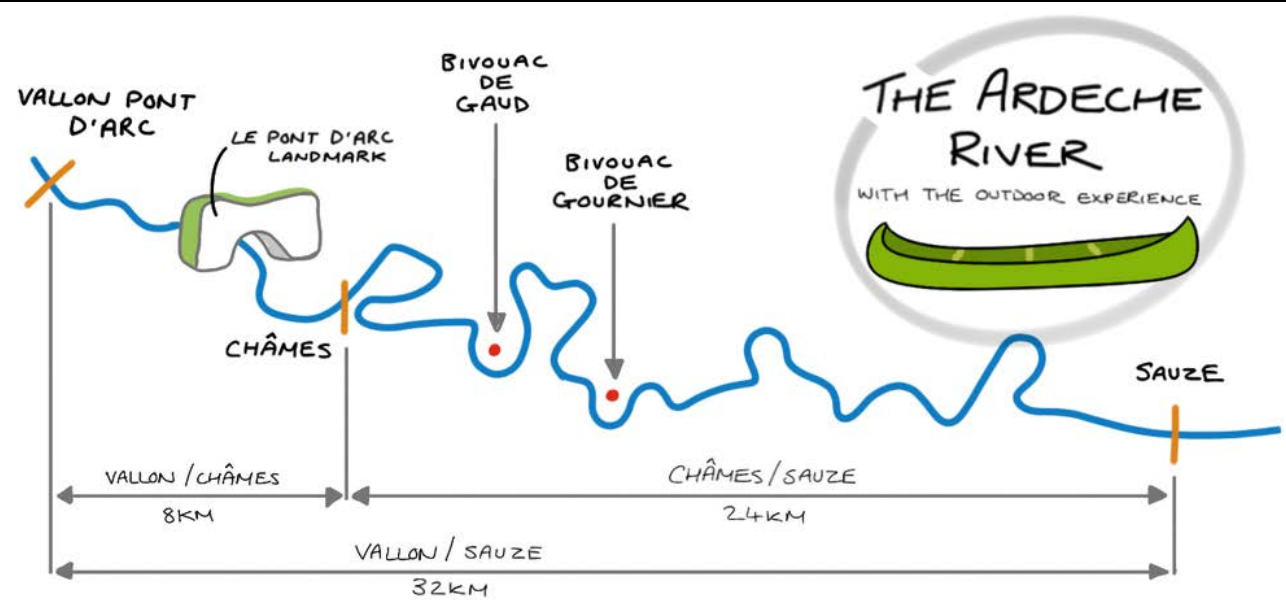
Superimposed paintings on the Great Black Bull.

PALIMPSEST



Werner Herzog (b. 1942-) German writer, director, producer – has made 68 films (features, documentaries, shorts, etc.)

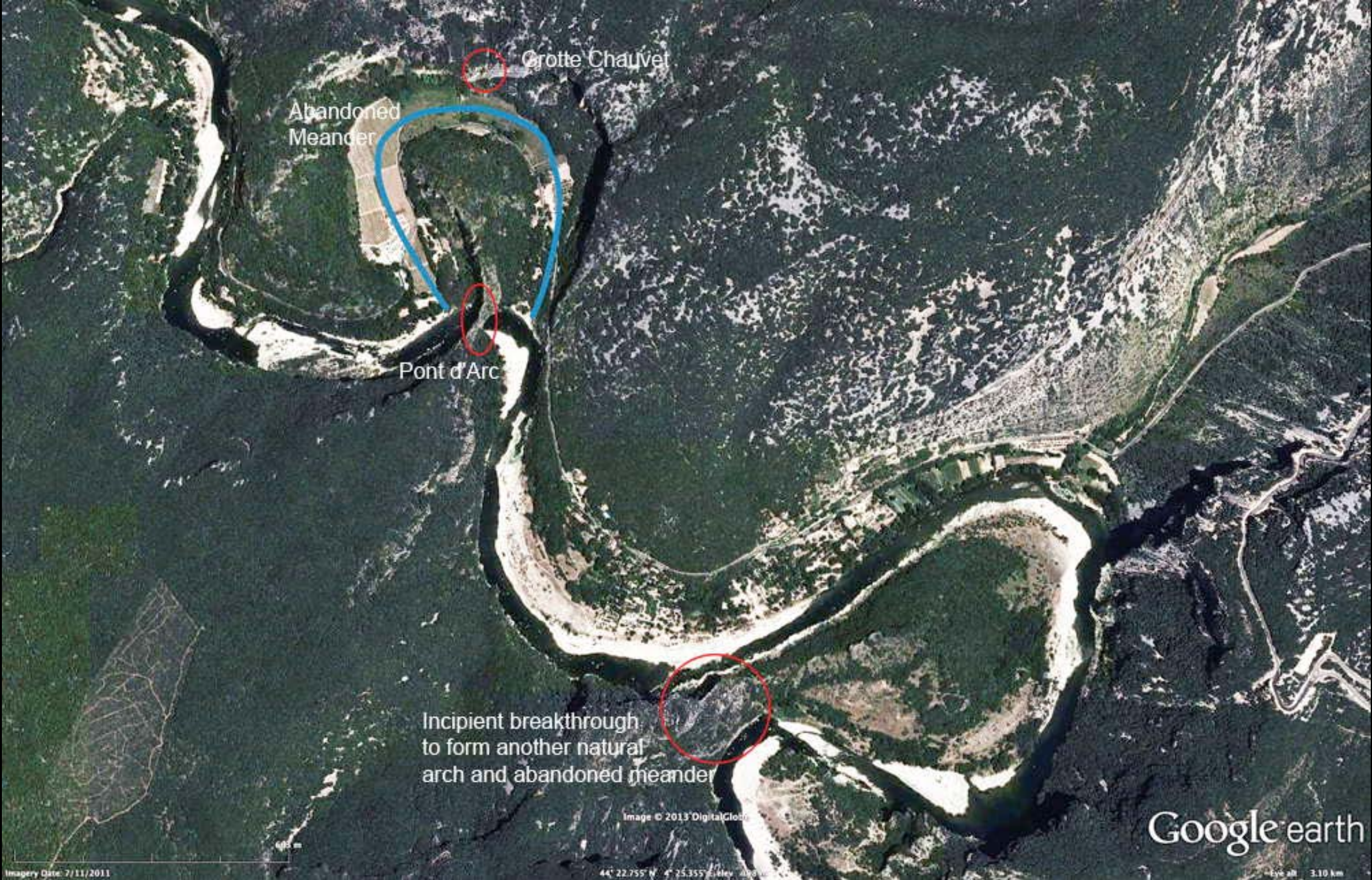
Chauvet Pont d'Arc





Ardèche:
Pont d'Arc

The arch, carved
out by the
Ardèche River, is
60 m/197 ft
wide and 54 m/
177 ft high.



Abandoned Meander

Grotte Chauvet

Pont d'Arc

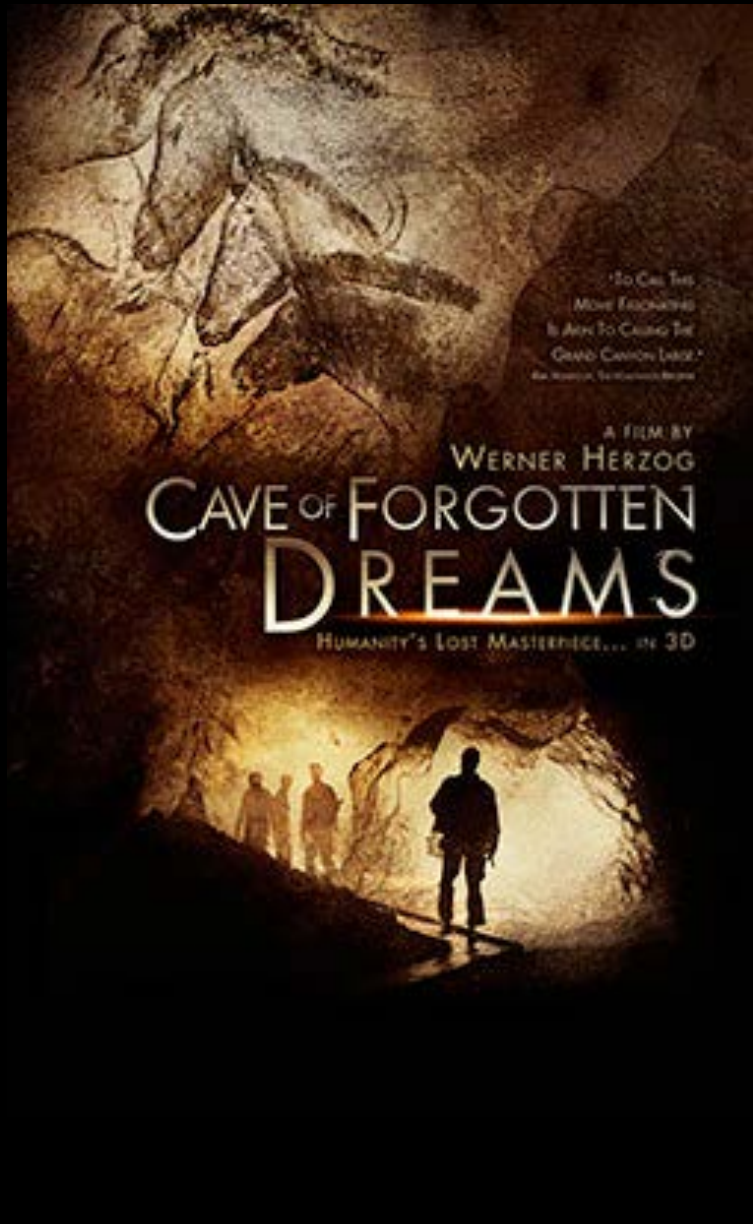
Incipient breakthrough to form another natural arch and abandoned meander

Google earth

Imagery Date: 7/11/2011

Image © 2011 DigitalGlobe
44° 22.755' N, 4° 25.355' E, elev. 490

Eye alt 3.10 km



Werner Herzog (b. 1942-) German writer, director, producer – has made 68 films (features, documentaries, shorts, etc.)



Aguirre, the Wrath of God (1972)
fiction feature film



Fitzcarraldo (1982)
fiction feature film



Grizzly Man (2005)
documentary



Fitzcarraldo (1982) fiction feature film; nature as sublime, incommensurable, and romantic;
Joseph Conrad-esque/Conradian



Caspar David Friedrich,
Wanderer above the Sea
Fog, c. 1818, German
Romanticism

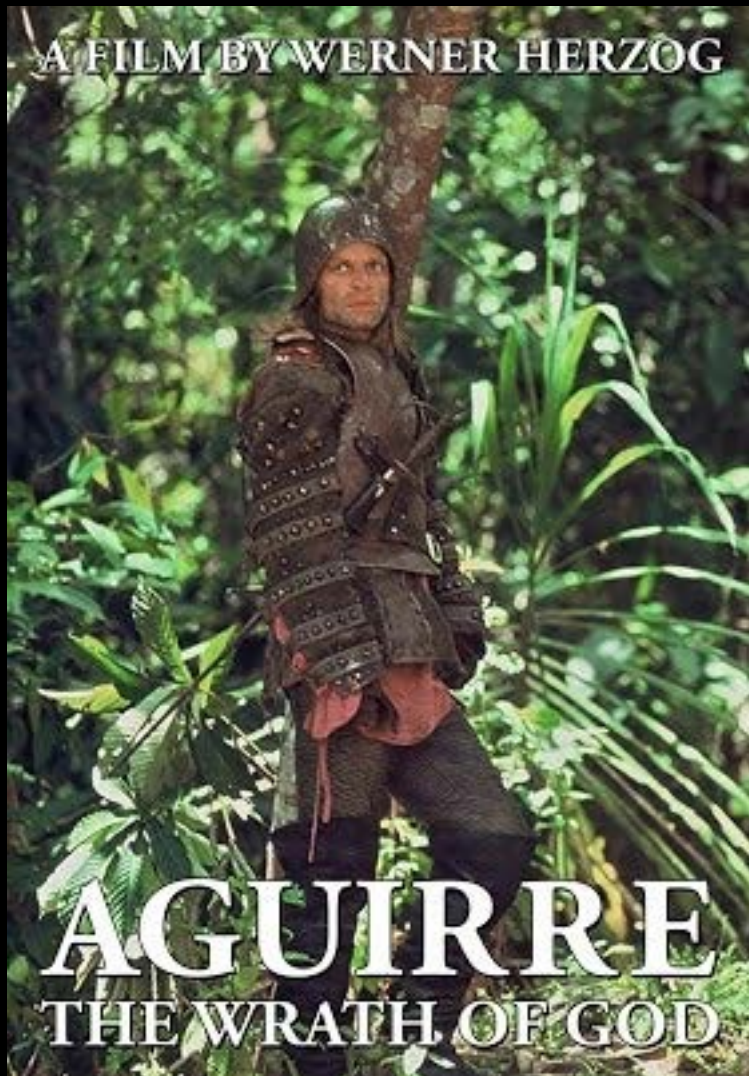


Caspar David Friedrich, *The Abbey in the Oakwood*, 1809-10



Caspar David Friedrich, *The Sea of Ice*, 1823-24

- Romanticism
- Sublime
- Incommensurable nature



Aguirre: The Wrath of God (West Germany: Werner Herzog, 1972)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrokMa1QIKo>

How is Werner Herzog's *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* sublime? An example of romanticism? A pondering of the incommensurable?



How is Werner Herzog's *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*
aesthetic?

aesthetic:

adjective

concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty

noun aesthetic; plural noun: aesthetics

a set of principles underlying and guiding the work of a particular
artist or artistic movement. Ex: "Cubist aesthetics"

Etymology of aesthetic

The word “aesthetic” comes from the Greek *aisthētikos*, from *aisthēta* ‘perceptible things,’ from *aisthesthai* ‘perceive.’

Perception and the five senses at Chauvet

How do the five senses come into play in Herzog’s *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*?



Sight
Panel of Horses



Sound



Sound

- Experimental archeologist playing flute
- Accompanying 'frenzied' modern classical music

Touch?



Touch

Left: red dots in the shape of a bison made with the palm of a hand
Above: detail of calcite striations

Smell?



Smell

master perfumer Maurice
Maurin 'smelling' for other
caves



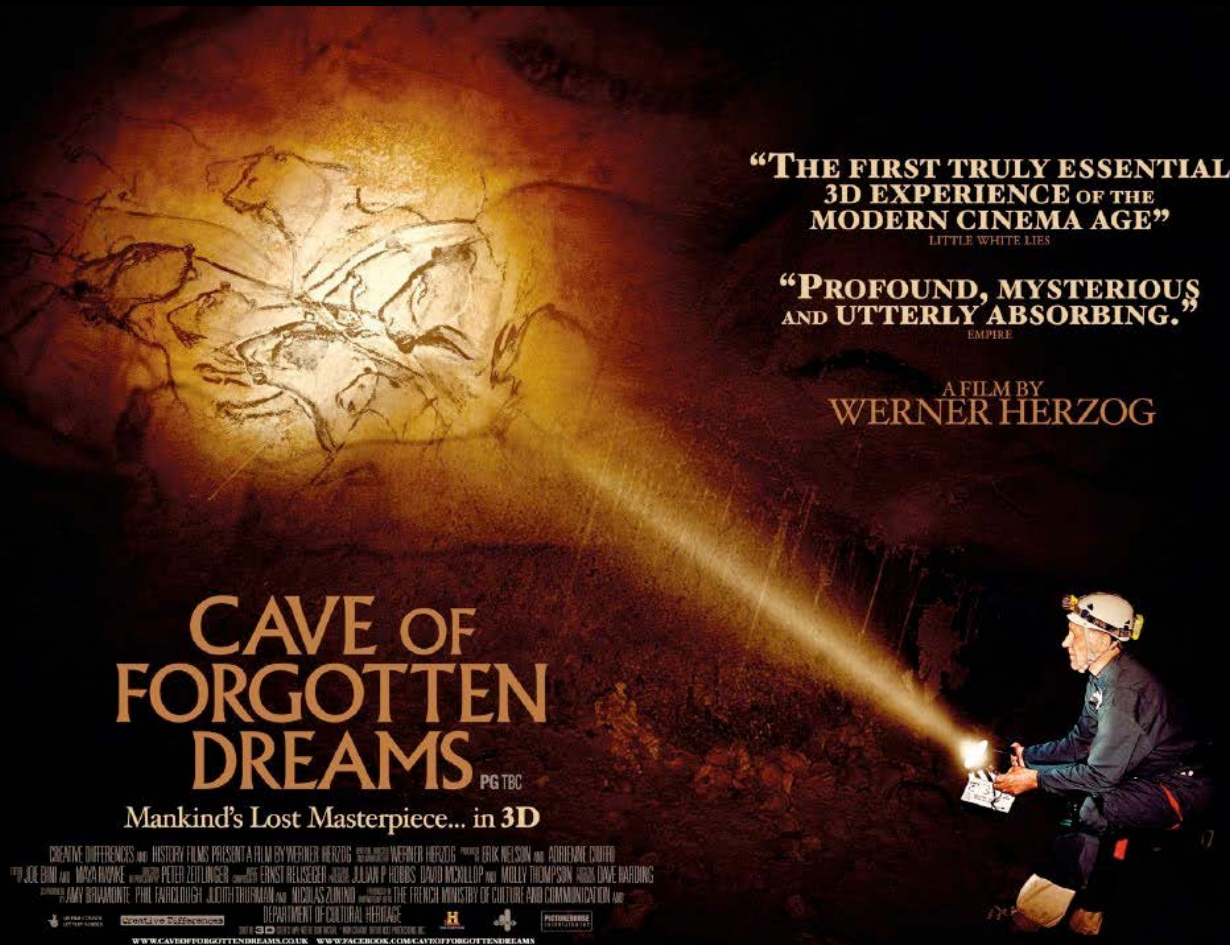
Taste?

Taste?

noun

1. the sensation of flavor perceived in the mouth and throat on contact with a substance. "The wine had a fruity taste."
2. a person's liking for particular flavors
3. the ability to discern what is of good quality or of a high aesthetic standard. "She has good taste."

- Herzog's aesthetics
- Herzog's taste
- A 'taste' for Herzog



Oliver Grau

Virtual Art

From Illusion to Immersion

What is virtual art according to Grau?

“...a hermetically closed-off image space of illusion” (5)

It is immersive.

What does Oliver Grau mean by “information society” in the following sentence from page 3 of your reading and how are we to understand an “image one can enter into”?

“With the advent of new techniques of generating, distributing, and presenting images, the computer has transformed the image and now suggests that it is possible to ‘enter’ it. Thus, it has laid the foundations for virtual reality as a core medium of the emerging ‘information society’.” (3)

For Grau, does virtual art have a history?

“In many quarters, virtual reality is viewed as a totally new phenomenon. However, a central argument of this book is that the idea of installing an observer in a *hermetically closed-off image space of illusion* did not make its first appearance with the technical invention of computer-aided virtual realities. On the contrary, virtual reality forms part of the core relationship of humans to images. It is grounded in art traditions, which have received scant attention up to now, that, the course of history suffered ruptures and discontinuities, were subject to the specific media of their epoch, and used to transport content of highly disparate nature. Yet the idea goes back at least as far as the classical world, and it now reappears in the immersion strategies of present-day virtual art.” (4-5)

What does Oliver Grau mean by
“the science of the image”?

“In virtual reality, a panoramic view is joined by sensorimotor exploration of an image space that gives the impression of a “living” environment. Interactive media have changed our idea of the image into one of a multisensory interactive space of experience with a time frame. In a virtual space, the parameters of time and space can be modified at will, allowing the space to be used for modeling and experiment. The possibility of access to such spaces and communication worldwide via data networks, together with the technique of telepresence, opens up a range of new options. Images of the natural world are merged with artificial images in ‘mixed realities,’ where it is often impossible to distinguish between original and simulacrum.” (7)

- History
- Relativization
- Virtual reality
- Immersion

“The rapidly spreading virtual techniques have acquired influence over many and diverse areas of scientific disciplines, the majority of which lie outside the sphere of art. ... I attempt to trace at least in part the long and complex tradition of this image concept and to sketch its vitality and almost revolutionary character that is emerging through the potential of interaction with and evolution of images. It is imperative to leave aside approaches that are technology-centered and, instead, situate the artistic images of virtual reality within the history of art and the media... Regarded historically, it is possible to relativize the phenomenon of virtual reality and determine what makes it unique.” (11)

“The attempt to understand why we create these representations inevitably touches on some of the most profound questions of human psychology. We do so, in part, because we seem to have a built-in impulse to create world replicas, an impulse that is manifested, among other ways, in daydreams, where we construct our own versions of reality, using the insubstantial images of the world's first virtual reality computer, the mind. We even create picture narratives spontaneously and without conscious intention, during sleep, in the form of dreams. In imitation worlds such as stories or dramas, we have merely externalized these creations of the imagination, and given them an objective and more elaborate form.”

-- Ken Sanes, <http://www.transparencynow.com/lascaux.htm>



Hall of Bulls



The right wall of the Axial Gallery



View into the axial gallery



The Passageway, or the Passage, connects the Hall of the Bulls to the Nave and the Apse. It has a high density of images which are often difficult to interpret. There are several hundred engraved figures, and some painted ones, 385 in all. The images which could be identified included horses, bison, ibex, aurochs, deer, and various signs including a hook, a cross, and a quadrangular sign.

Photo and text:

<http://www.lascaux.culture.fr/>

After reading Grau and Sanes, can we better understand what Werner Herzog means by “the cave of forgotten dreams”?