

# Chapter 1: The Stone Age



## STONE AGE:

## 1. PALEOLITHIC

## 2,500,000 - 8,000 BCE

- 195,000 – Anatomically modern humans
- 40-35,000 – First works of art

## 2. Mesolithic (in Europe)

## c. 8000 – 2700 BCE

### 3. NEOLITHIC

## 8,000-3000 BCE – Near East

## 4,000-1500 BCE – Europe

Paleo = old (Greek)

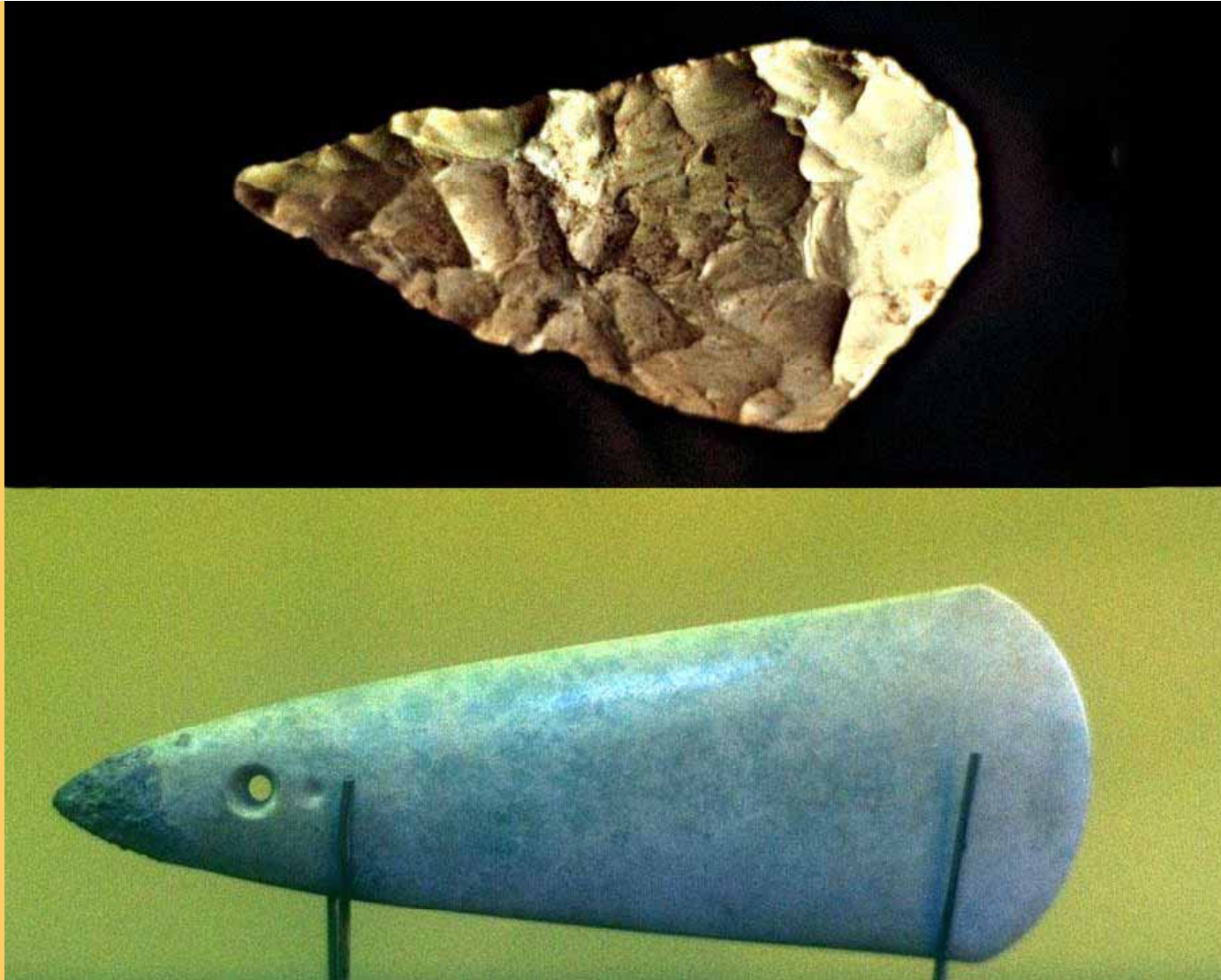
Mesos = middle

Neo = new

Lithos = stone



**Cutting and punching tools.** 24,000 BCE. Dordogne. France. Silex



### **Comparison of Axes**

T: Paleolithic, 400,000 BCE. France. B: Neolithic, 4000 BCE. France

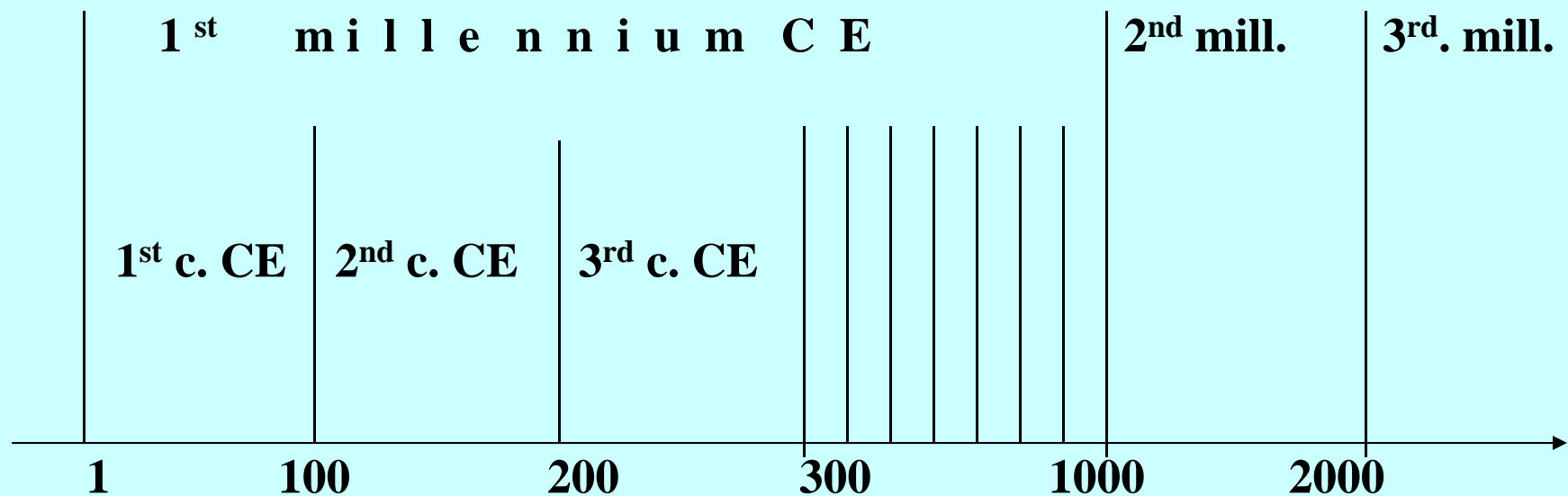
**Century= 100 years**

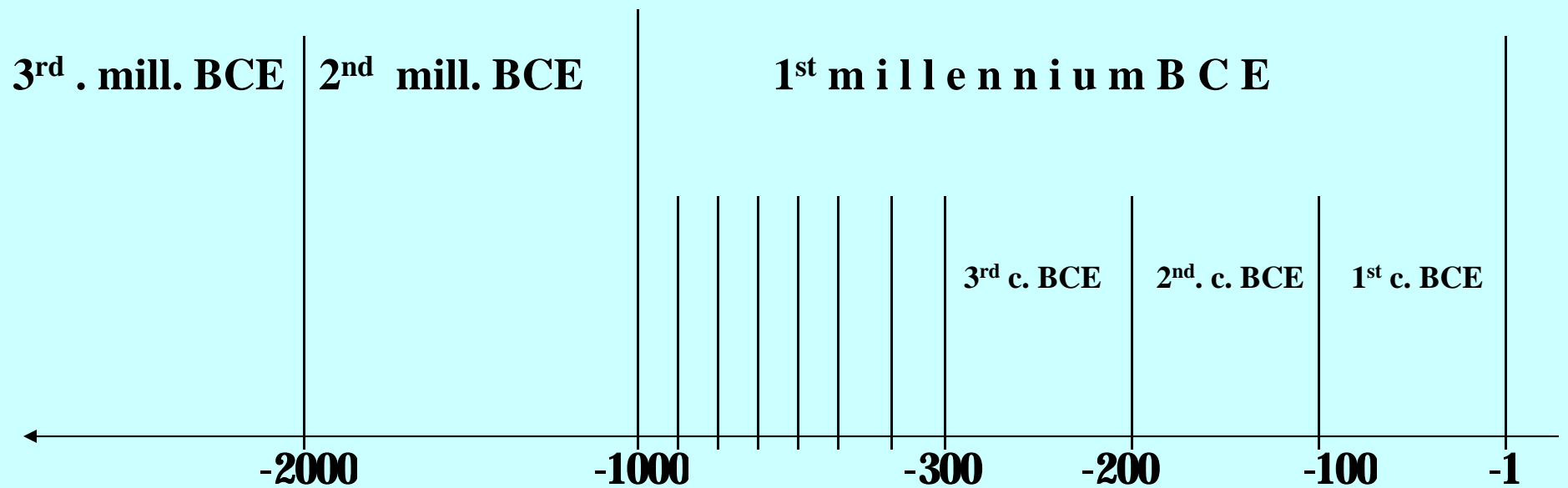
**Millennium= 1000 years**

**CE= Common Era (AD)**

**BCE= Before Common Era (BC)**

**ca.=circa=about**



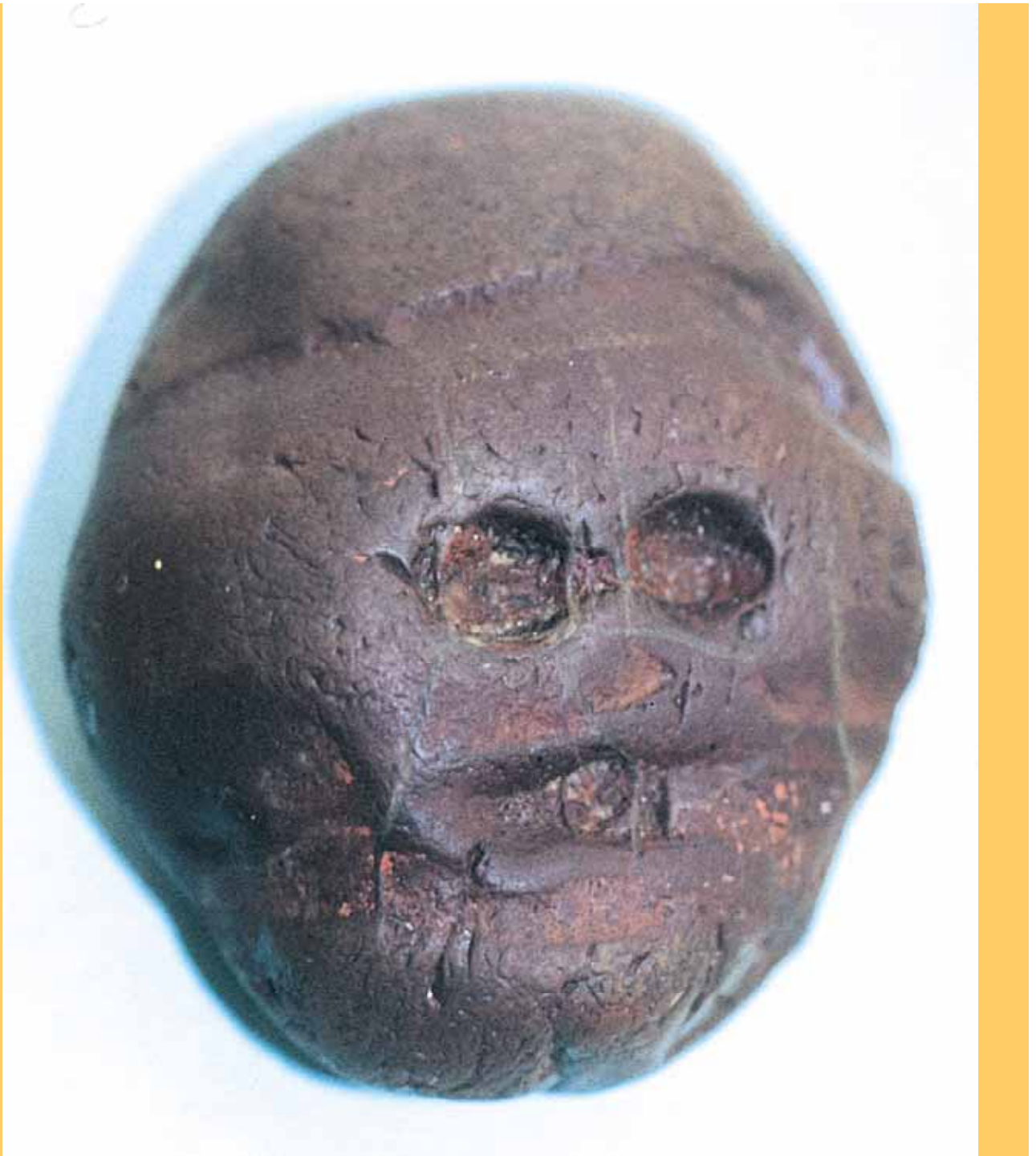


Year	Century	Millennium
1542 CE	16 <sup>th</sup> c.	2nd mill.
583 BCE	6 <sup>th</sup> c. BCE	1 <sup>st</sup> mill. BCE
1013 CE		
5700 BCE		
100 CE		
2006 CE		
2 BCE		
1750 BCE		
2306 BCE		
258 CE		
	Early 7 <sup>th</sup> c. BCE	
		Late 1 <sup>st</sup> mill CE



Is this a work of art?

**Waterworn pebble  
resembling a human face,**  
from Makapansgat, South  
Africa, ca. 3,000,000 BCE.  
Reddish brown jasperite,  
approx. 2 3/8" wide.







Red ochre stone from Blombos Cave, South Africa (crayon with tally marks?), 75, 000 BCE

Shell Beads from Blombos Cave.  
Use-wear, indicates the shells having being strung and worn



# **Paleolithic (Representational) Art**

## **c. 40,000-8000 BCE**

# **Paleolithic Sculpture**

**Representation:** the presenting again – in different and substitute form – of something observed.

**40-35,000 BCE – first works of art**



**Woolly Mammoth Figurine from Germany.**

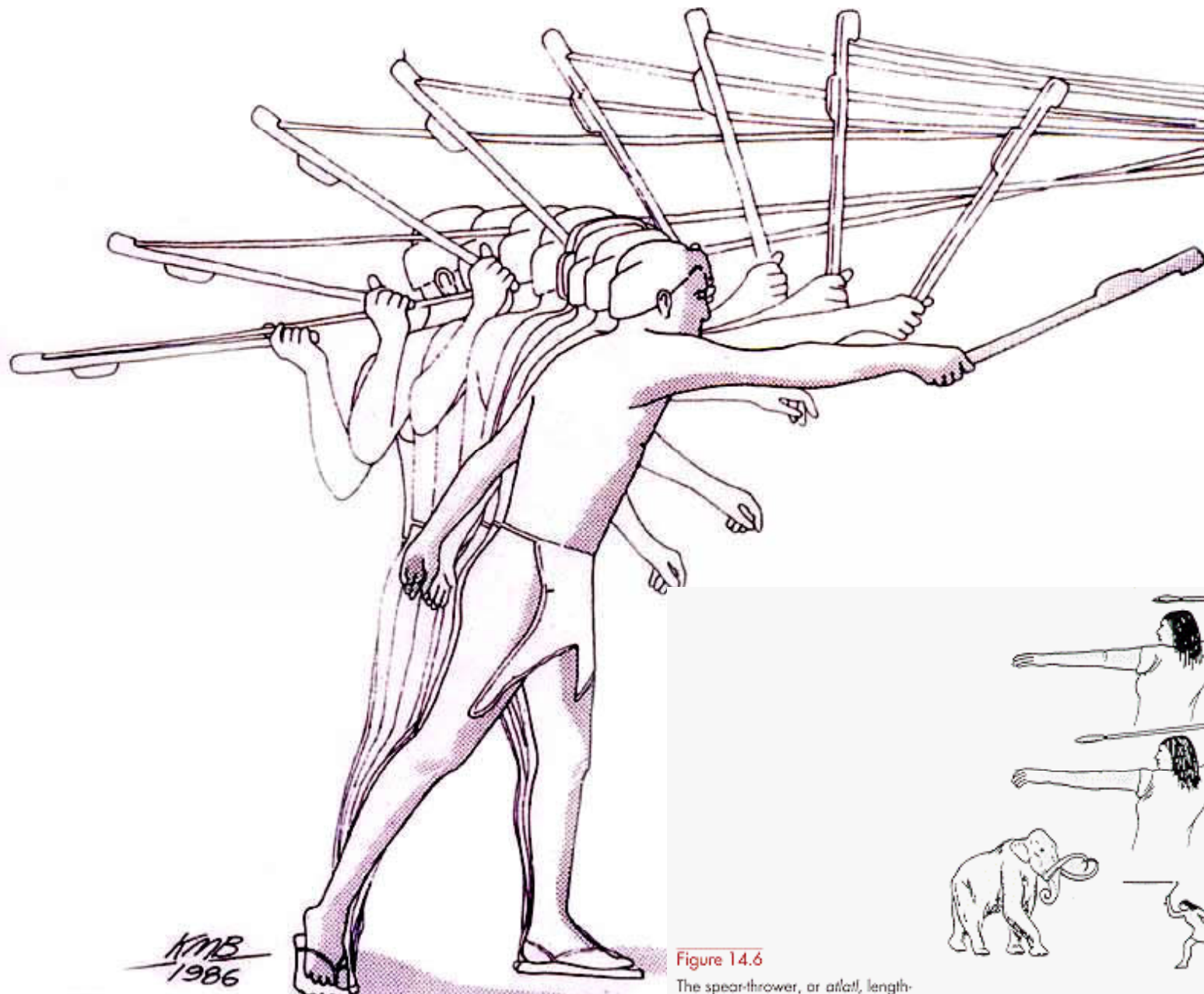
3.7 cm (1.5 inch) long. 35,000 BCE

(It is believed to be the oldest ivory carving ever found. )



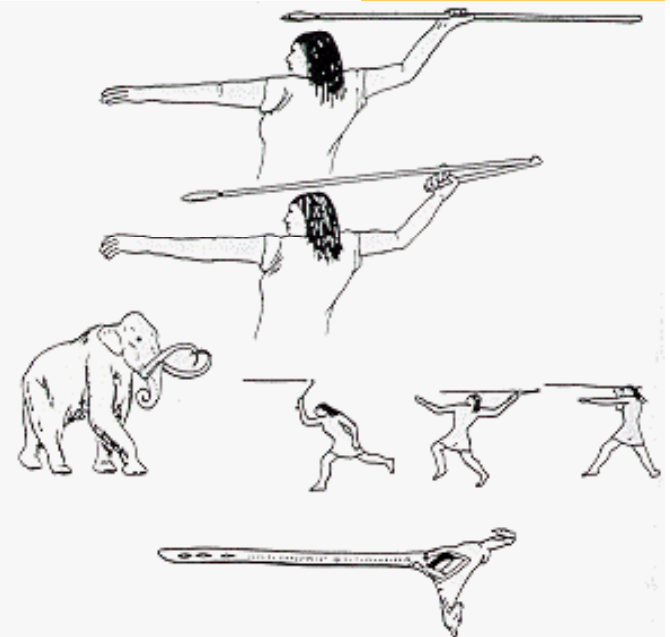


**Bison with turned head**, fragmentary spearthrower, from La Madeleine, Dordogne, France, ca. 12,000 BCE. Reindeer horn. 4" long



**Figure 14.6**

The spear-thrower, or atlatl, lengthens the arm and permits the spear to be thrown with more force over a longer distance. [Figure courtesy of Richard Klein.]





## Freestanding Sculpture

A type of sculpture that is surrounded on all sides by space. Also called sculpture in-the-round.

### ***Venus of Willendorf***

from Willendorf

Austria, ca. 28,000–25,000 BCE

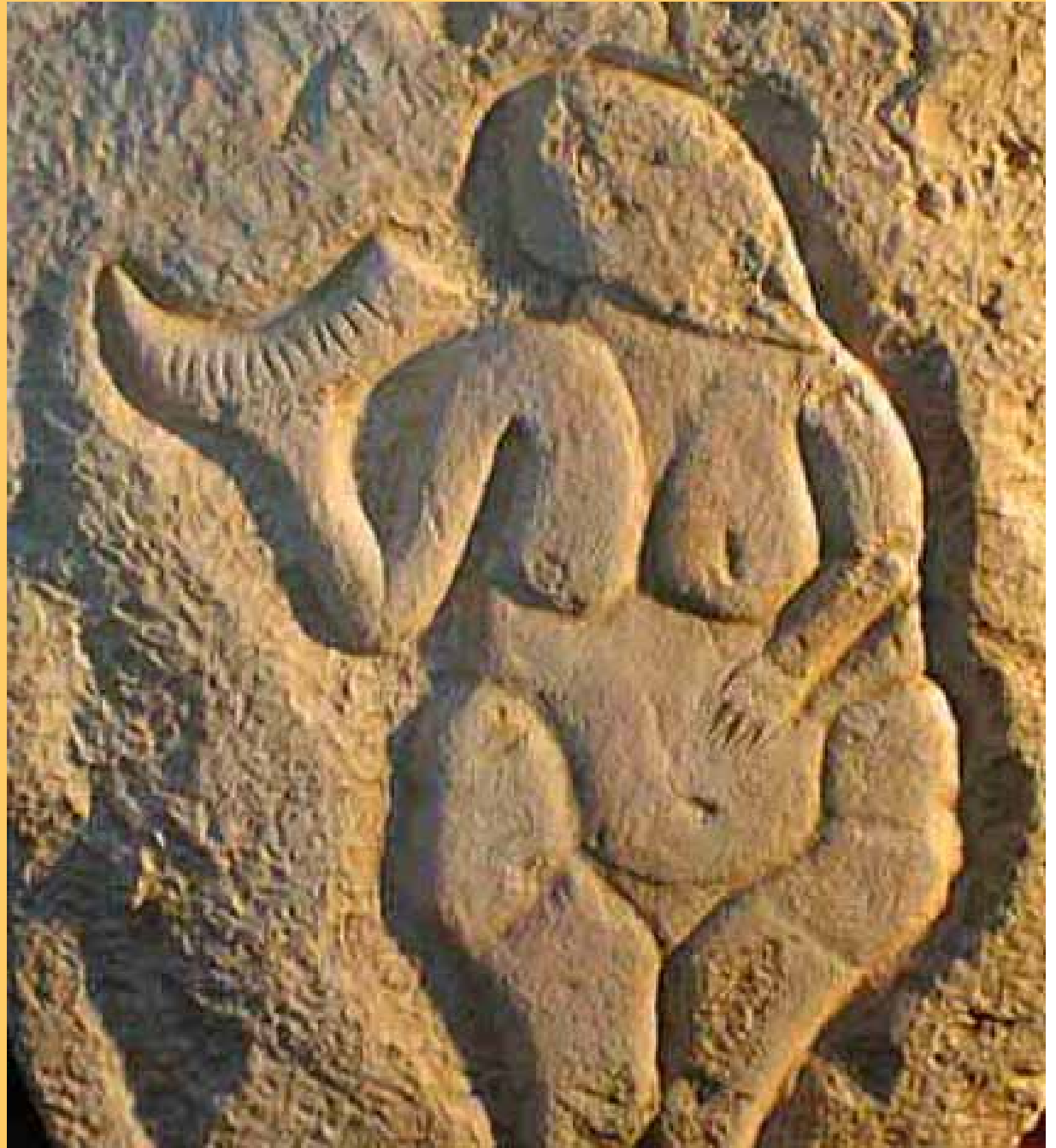
Limestone, approx. 4 1/4" high





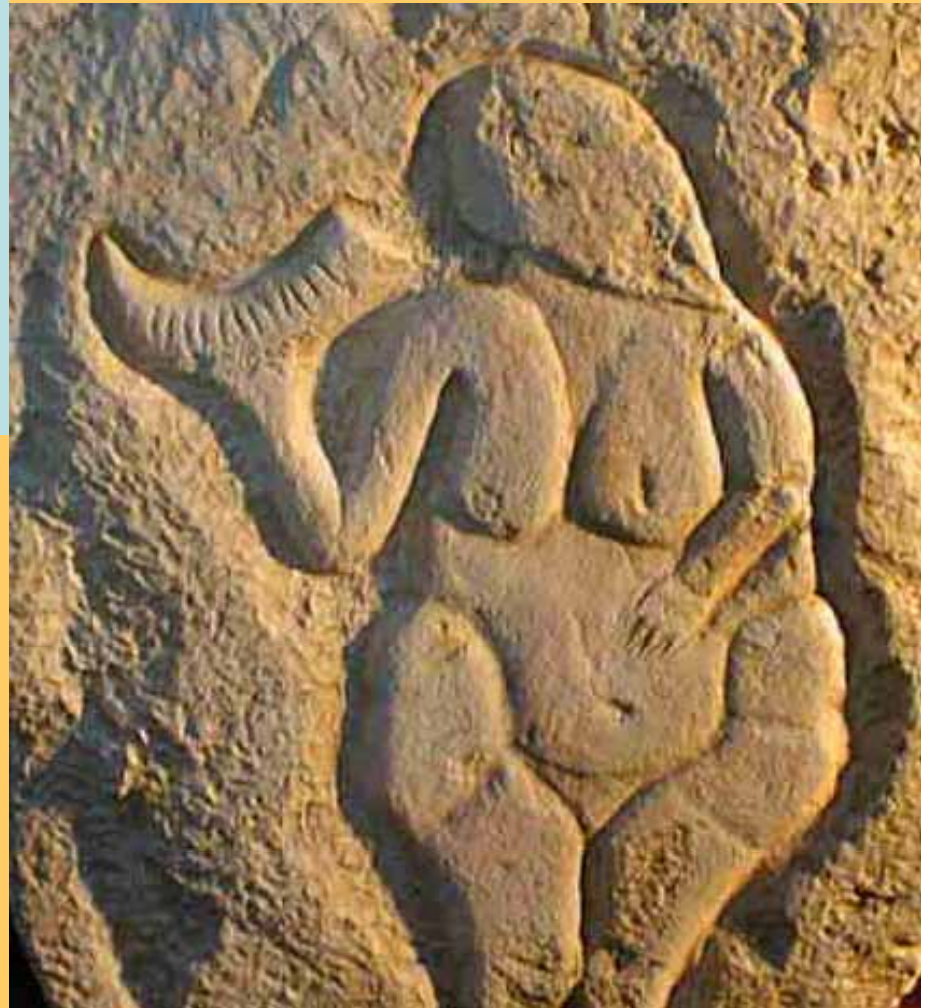
**Relief:** In sculpture, figures projecting from a background of which they are part. The degree of relief is designated high, low or sunken.

**Woman holding a bison horn**  
from Laussel, Dordogne, France,  
ca. 25,000–20,000 BCE. Painted  
limestone 1' 6" high



- The **cornucopia**, also known as the **Horn of Plenty**, is a symbol of food and plenty.
- In Greek mythology, Amalthea raised Zeus on the milk of a goat. In return Zeus gave Amalthea the goat's horn. It had the power to give to the person in possession of it whatever he or she wished for.

**Woman holding a bison horn**  
from Laussel, Dordogne, France,  
ca. 25,000–20,000 BCE. Painted  
limestone 1' 6" high





**Female relief.**

Dordogne. France  
c. 25000 BCE.  
Limestone



**Woman holding a  
bison horn**

from Laussel,  
Dordogne, France,  
ca. 25,000–20,000  
BCE. Painted  
limestone 1' 6" high



**Venus of Willendorf**

from Willendorf, Austria, ca.  
28,000–25,000 BCE Limestone,  
approx. 4 1/4" high

*Woman from Ostrava*  
*Petrkovice, Czech Republic*  
c. 23,000 BCE. Hematite,  
height 1  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (4.6 cm)





**Abstract (non-representational):** distorts, exaggerates or simplifies the natural world to provide essence or universal.

**Vulva Symbol (?)**

Dordogne. France  
c. 25, 000 BCE





## **Radiocarbon dating:**

The determination of the approximate age of an organic object by measuring the amount of carbon 14 it contains.

The technique is most accurate for material no more than 50,000 years old.

**Human with feline head,**  
from Hohlenstein-Stadel,  
Germany, ca. 30,000–28,000  
BCE Mammoth ivory, 11 5/8”  
high.





**Upper-Paleolithic Burin**  
(chisel-like tool)



# **Paleolithic Painting**





**Animal facing left**, from the Apollo 11 Cave, Namibia, ca. 23,000 BCE.  
Charcoal on stone, approx. 5" X 4 1/4"

# Paleolithic Cave Paintings

Paints were manufactured from combinations of minerals, ochres, burnt bone meal and charcoal mixed into mediums of water, blood, animal fats and tree saps.



# Prehistoric Europe and the Near East



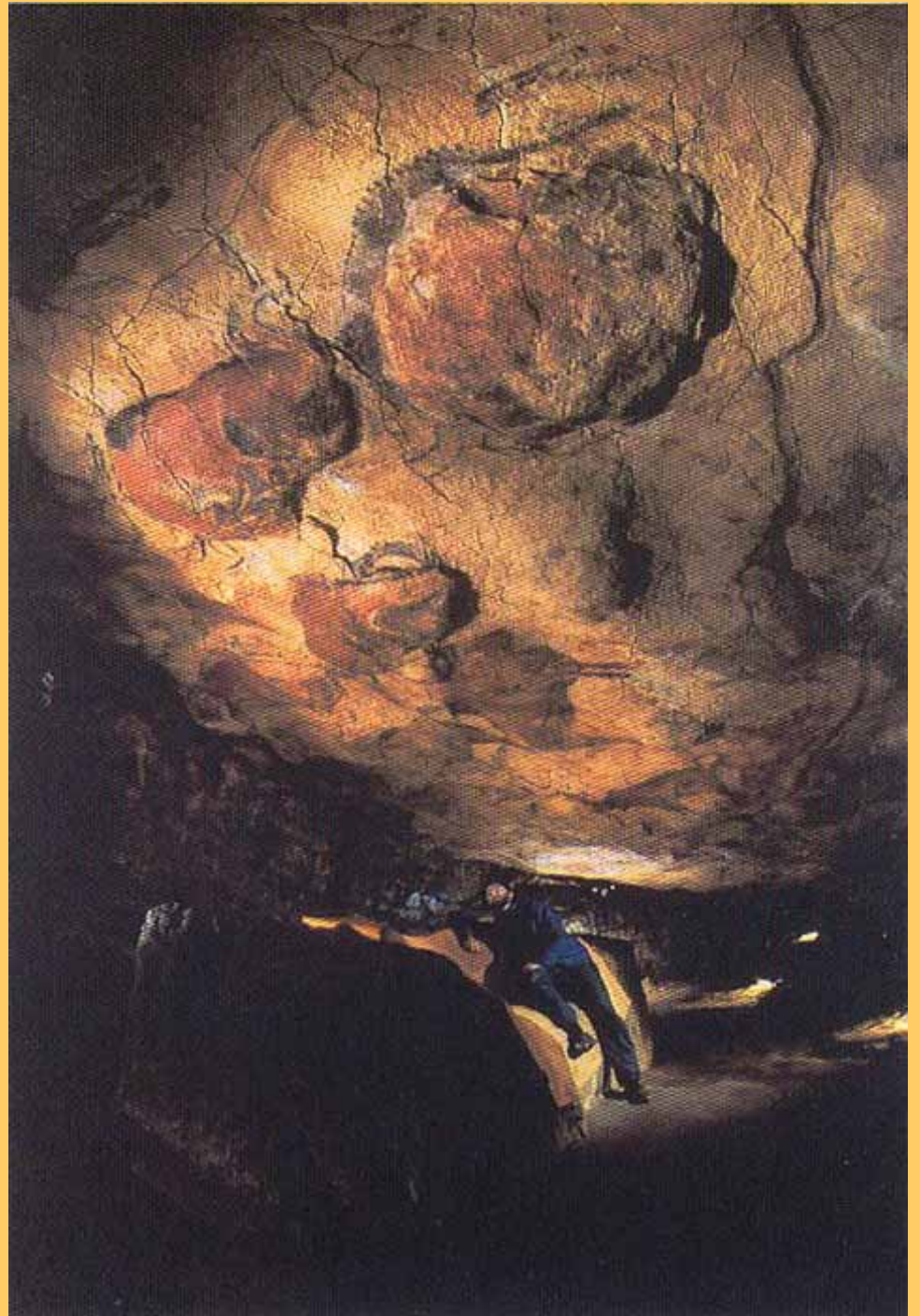




**Aurochs (extinct wild oxen), horses, and rhinoceroses**, wall painting in Chauvet Cave, Vallon-Pont-d'Arc, Ardèche, France, ca. 30,000–28,000 BCE. Approx. half life-size.

1879: Marcelino Sautuola discovered  
the paintings in Altamira

**Bison. Altamira cave**, Santander, Spain  
ca. 12,000–11,000 BCE  
Paint on limestone





"Every sacred place is where Eternity shines through Time."

Joseph Campbell



**Bison. Altamira cave,** Santander, Spain. ca. 12,000–11,000 BCE. Paint on limestone

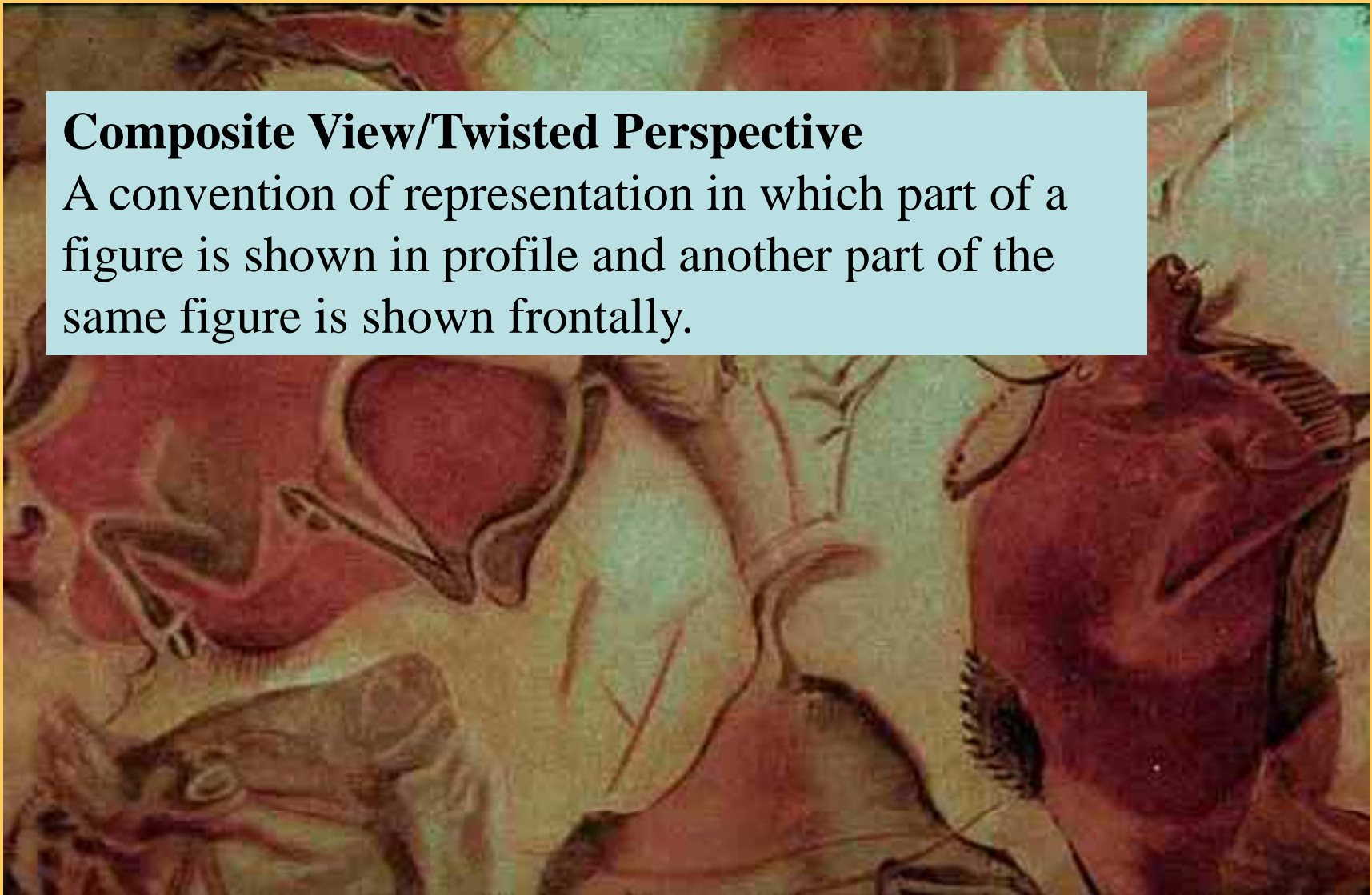


**Bison.** Altamira cave  
Santander, Spain  
ca. 12,000–11,000 BCE  
Each bison approx. 5' long



## **Composite View/Twisted Perspective**

A convention of representation in which part of a figure is shown in profile and another part of the same figure is shown frontally.



**Bison. Detail of a painted ceiling in the Altamira cave.** Copy. Santander, Spain. 12,000–11,000 BCE (Magdalenian Culture)



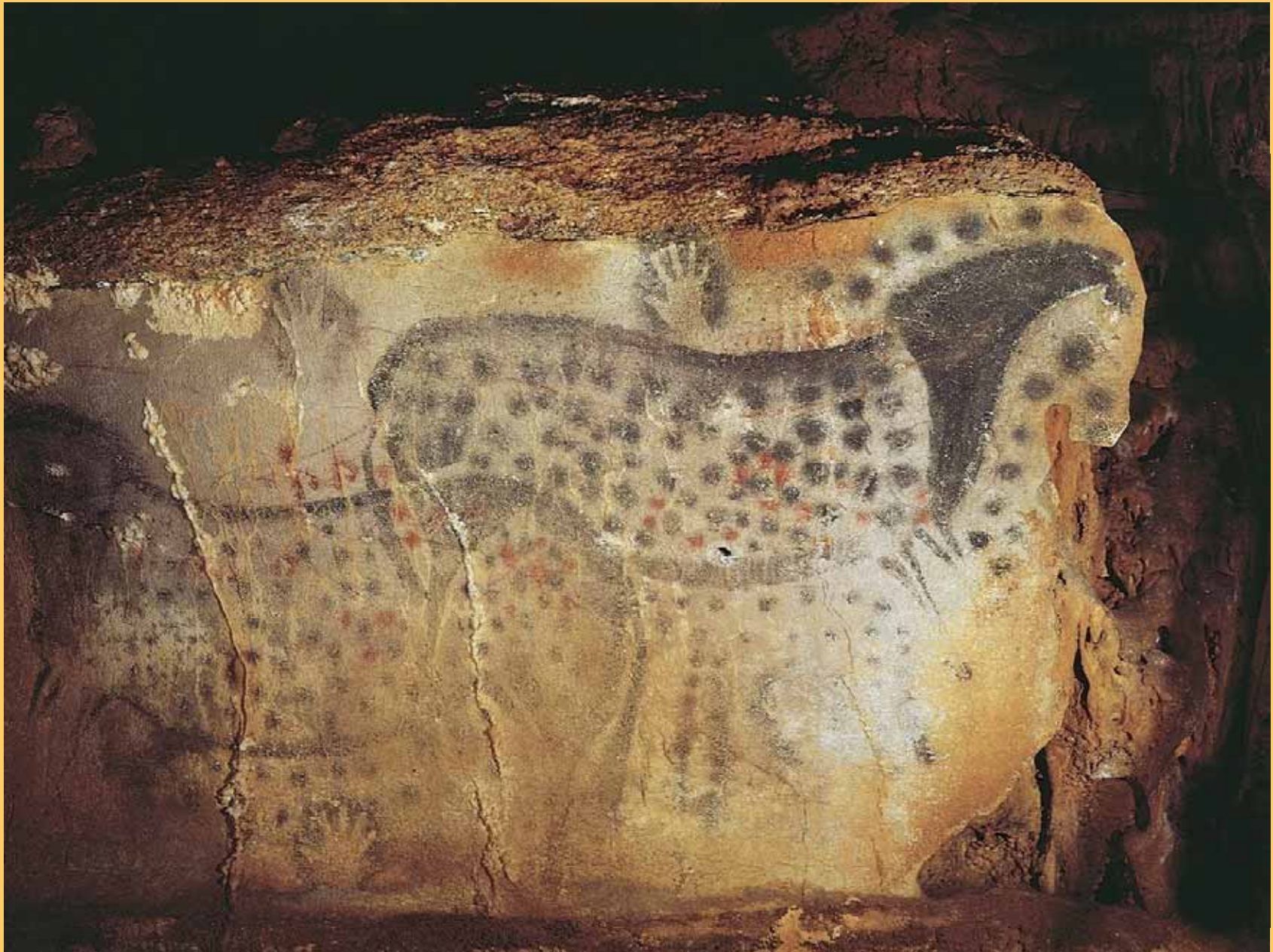
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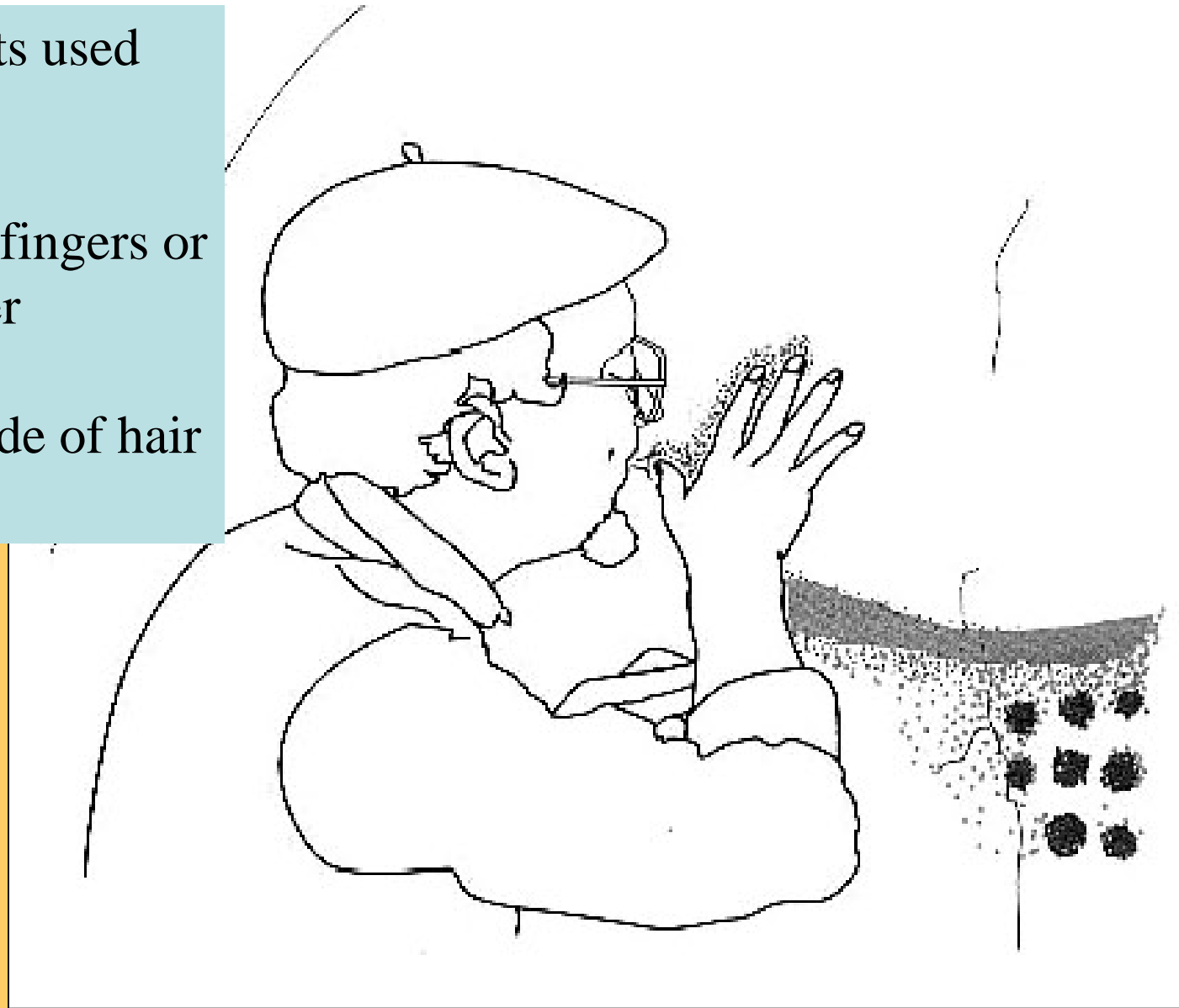


**Spotted horses and negative hand imprints**

wall painting in the cave at Pech-Merle, Lot, France, ca. 22,000 BCE. 11' 2" long.

Cro-Magnon artists used three techniques:

1. Spraying
2. Drawing with fingers or blocks of ocher
3. Daubing with paintbrush made of hair or moss.



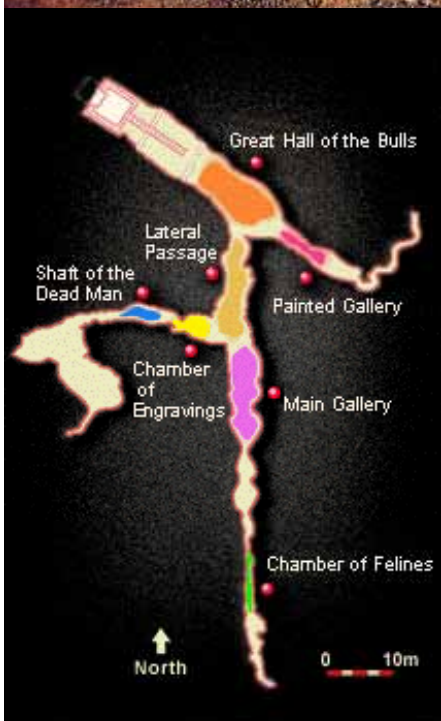
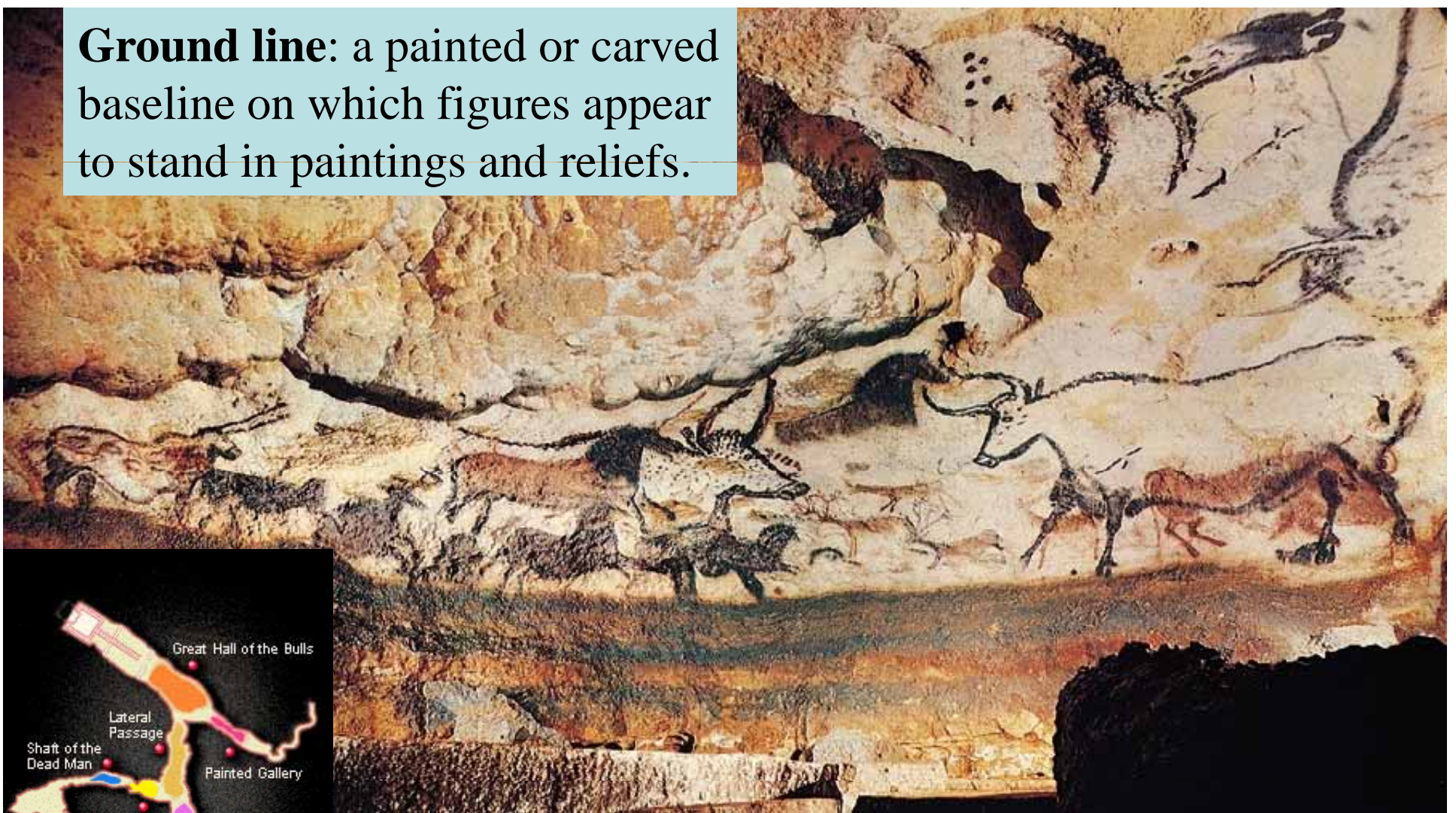
Michel Lorblanchet, a cave archeologist, demonstrating a prehistoric painting technique. It took him only 32 hours to complete the horses, his speed suggesting that a single artist created the original.



**Signs.** Lascaux. Dordogne, France  
ca. 15,000–13,000 BCE



**Ground line:** a painted or carved baseline on which figures appear to stand in paintings and reliefs.



**Hall of the Bulls**, Lascaux, Dordogne, France  
ca. 15,000–13,000 BCE. Largest bull approx. 11' 6" long

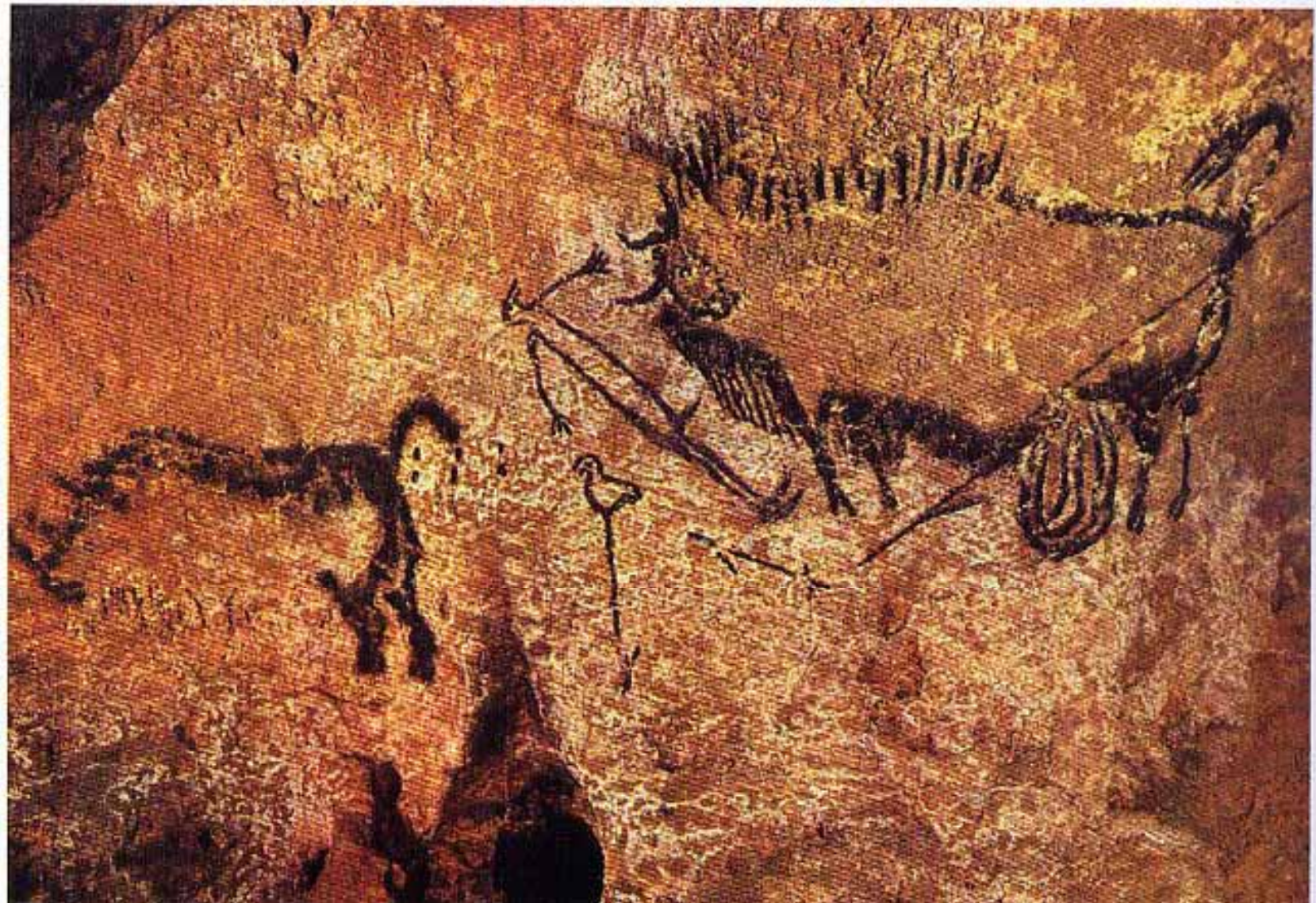


**T. “Chinese horse.”**  
Lascaux. Dordogne France  
15,000-10,000 BCE  
(Magdalenian Culture)

**B. Living Horse**







**Shaman and Wounded Bison.** Lascaux. Dordogne. France  
15000-13000 BCE. Natural pigments on Limestone



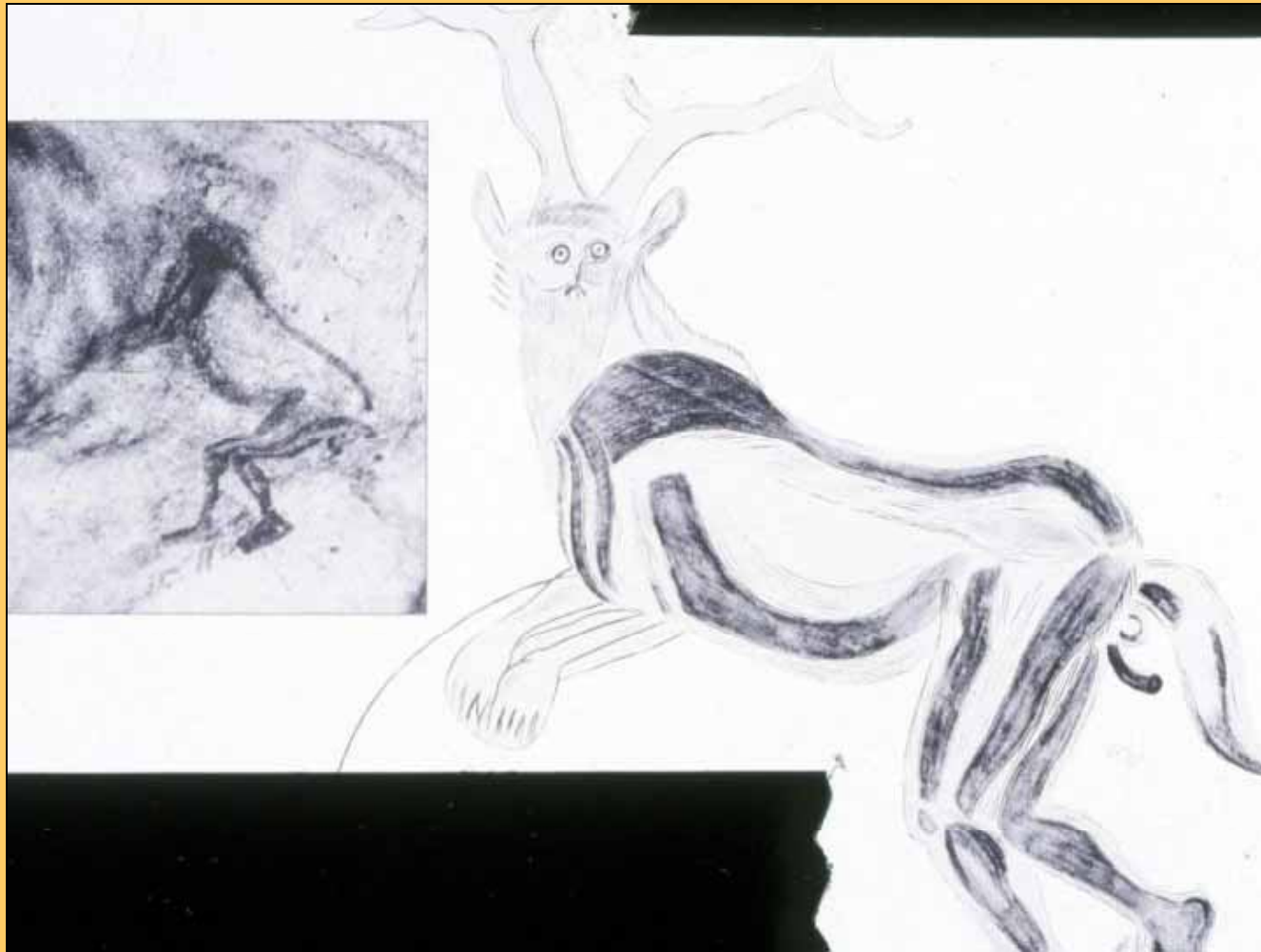


### **Shaman and Wounded Bison**

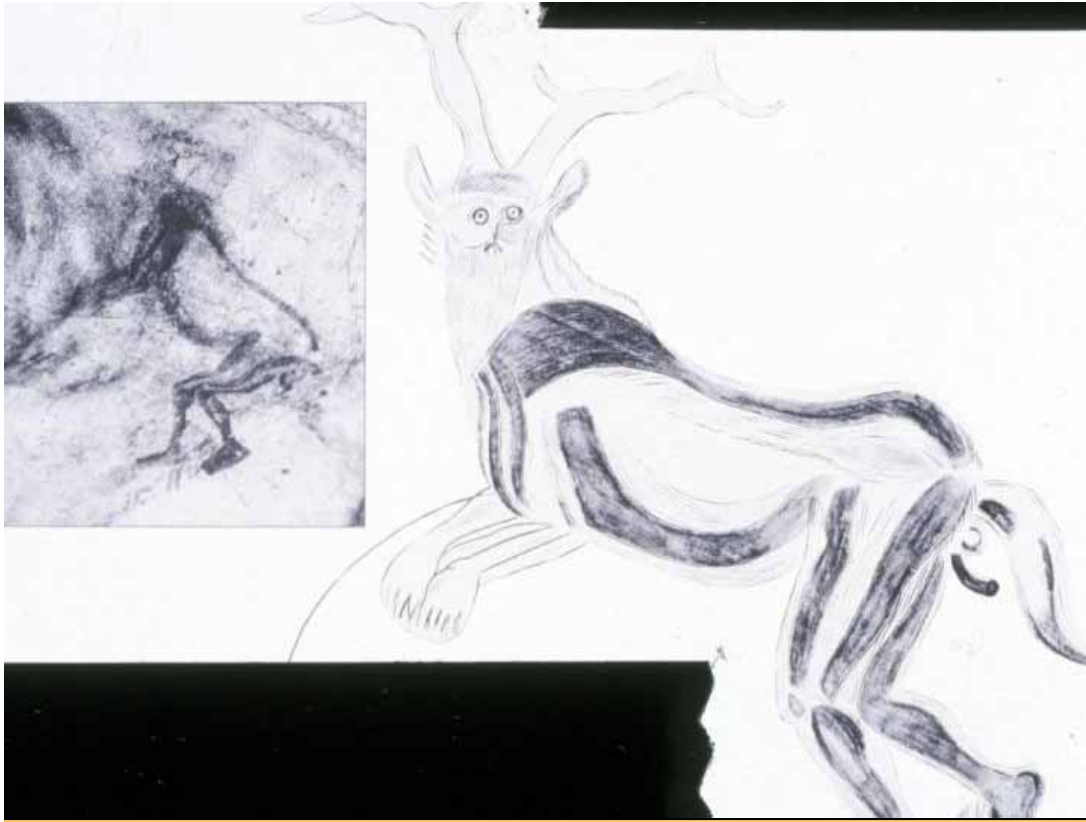
Lascaux. Dordogne. France  
15000-13000 BCE. Natural  
pigments on Limestone







**Masked Dancing Shaman.** Dordogne. France. 15,000-10,000 BCE.



**Masked Dancing Shaman.** Dordogne.  
France. 15,000-10,000 BCE.



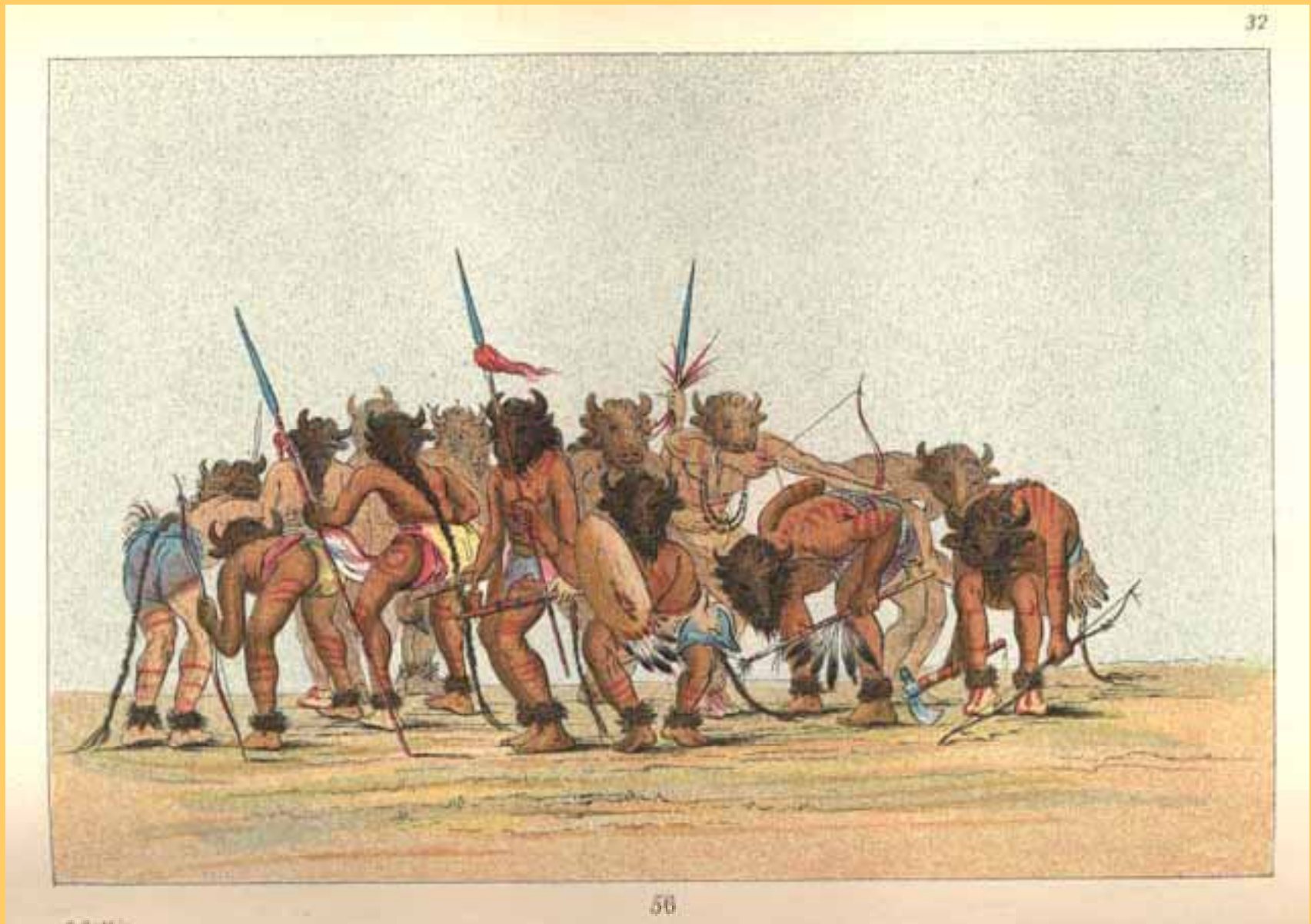
**Human with feline head,** from  
Hohlenstein-Stadel, Germany, ca.  
30,000–28,000 BCE Mammoth ivory,  
11 5/8" high.



**L. Masked Dancing Shaman. Copy.** Dordogne. France. 15,000-10,000 BCE

**R. Mandan Bull Dance** by George Catlin. 1832. Banks of Missouri River. USA





**Mandan Bull Dance.** Banks of Missouri River. USA. George Catlin. 1832

# **Paleolithic Bone Huts**



**Paleolithic Dwelling.** Reconstruction. Mezhirich. Ukraine  
18,000-17,000 BCE. Mammoth bones





“bone hut” sites made  
of Mammoth bones  
have been found in the  
Czech Republic,  
Poland and Ukraine.





**The last glacial period ended about 10,000 years ago**

**Woolly mammoths (along with other mammals such as saber-toothed cats), went extinct as warming weather reduced their food sources.**



# Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why do you think that images of men were less prevalent in Paleolithic art than those of animals and women?
- ❖ What purposes may Paleolithic cave paintings have served?  
Why are they generally not found in the inhabited portions of the caves in which they're found?