Chapter 1: The Stone Age
STONE AGE:

PALEOLITHIC ART 40,000 - 9,000 BCE

NEOLITHIC ART 9,000-2300 BCE

Paleo = old (Greek)
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
Dating System of the Gregorian Calendar

Century = 100 years

Millennium = 1000 years

CE = Common Era (AD)

BCE = Before Common Era (BC)

ca. = circa = about
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Millennium</th>
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<td>1542 CE</td>
<td>16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; c.</td>
<td>2nd mill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>583 BCE</td>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; c. BCE</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; mill. BCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>1013 CE</td>
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<td>5750 BCE</td>
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<td>2006 CE</td>
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<td>2 BCE</td>
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<td>Early 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; c. BCE</td>
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<td>Late 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; mill CE</td>
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Waterworn pebble resembling a human face, from Makapansgat, South Africa, ca. 3,000,000 BCE. Reddish brown jasperite, approx. 2 3/8” wide.

Is this a work of art?
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. 40,000-9000 BCE
Paleolithic Sculpture
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.)

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

40-35,000 BCE – first works of art
Bison with turned head, fragmentary spearthrower, from La Madeleine, Dordogne, France, ca. 12,000 BCE. Reindeer horn. 4” long
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
Petrkovic, Czech Republic
c. 23,000 BCE. Hematite,
height 1 ¾” (4.6 cm)
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 (Lion/Lioness?) head, from Hohlenstein-Stadel, Germany, ca. 40,000-35,000 BCE Mammoth ivory, 11 5/8” high.
Upper-Paleolithic Burin
(chisel-like tool)
Paleolithic Painting
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.
Hand stencils. El Castillo cave, Spain. 38,800 BCE

World's Oldest Cave Art—Made by Neanderthals?
The researchers used a uranium decay technique to date the substance that encrusts the wall paintings — a mineral called calcite. The art beneath is presumably somewhat older than the crust.

Cave of Pettakere, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Hand stencils estimated between 33,000-38,000 BCE
Aurochs (extinct wild oxen), horses, and rhinoceroses, wall painting in Chauvet Cave, Vallon-Pont-d’Arc, Ardèche, France, ca. 30,000–28,000 BCE or 15,000-13,000BCE. Approx. half life-size.
Bison. Altamira cave, Santander, Spain
ca. 12,000–11,000 BCE
Paint on limestone

1879: Marcelino Sautuola discovered the paintings in Altamira

https://youtu.be/eQWKpKbvc9M
4:49
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)
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.

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

https://youtu.be/IN0ODP2c-kc
Abstract/Non-representational art: Compositions which do not rely on naturalistic representation.

**Signs.** Lascaux. Dordogne, France
c.a. 15,000–13,000 BCE
Paleoanthropologist and rock art researcher Genevieve von Petzinger has studied and codified 32 ancient markings in caves across Europe.

https://www.ted.com/talks/genevieve_von_petzinger_why_are_these_32_symbols_found_in_ancient_caves_all_over_europe?utm_campaign=tedspread-a&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
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 (O-kee-pa Ceremony) by George Catlin. 1832. Banks of Missouri River. USA
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 11,700 years ago.

Woolly mammoths (along with other large mammals such as woolly rhinoceros, saber-toothed cats and cave lions), went extinct as warming weather reduced their food sources, and due to human activity.
Holocene Extinction (the Sixth Extinction)

The Holocene Epoch began 12,000 to 11,500 years ago at the close of the Paleolithic Ice Age and continues through today.
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?