



World Rock Art (Conservation & Cultural Heritage)

Jean Clottes

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Although cave paintings from the European Ice Age have gained considerable renown, for many people the term "rock art" remains full of mystery. Yet it refers to perhaps the oldest form of artistic endeavor, splendid examples of which exist on all continents and from all eras. Rock art stretches in time from about forty thousand to less than forty years ago and can be found from the Arctic Circle to the tip of South America, from the caves of southern France to the American Southwest. It includes animal and human figures, complex geometrical forms, and myriad mysterious markings.

Illustrated in color throughout, this book provides an engaging overview of rock art worldwide. An introductory chapter discusses the discovery of rock art by the West and the importance of landscape and ritual. Subsequent chapters survey rock art sites throughout the world, explaining how the art can be dated and how it was made. The book then explores the meaning of these often enigmatic images, including the complex role they played in traditional societies. A final chapter looks at the threats posed to rock art today by development, tourism, pollution, and other dangers, and discusses current initiatives to preserve this remarkable heritage.

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