

EXHIBIT SYNOPSIS

Dark Caves – Bright Visions

Ice Age Cave Painting of France and Spain

Theme

Prehistoric art represents man's earliest attempts to express his views of life and influence others. It exists in many forms and sites around the world and its origin is lost in antiquity as are records of who first reported or discovered various sites until only recently. This exhibit focuses exclusively on the cave paintings and engravings produced by Cro-Magnon man from approximately 33 thousand until 10 thousand years ago in the caves of southern France and northern Spain. This time period encompasses the European ice age and is called the paleo-(old) lithic (stone) or 'old stone age'. It embodies the very cradle of art with a more sophisticated style than the two dimensional, 'stick man', primitive sketching efforts of early man.

Scope

Exhibit coverage includes discovery of the art and mistaken origins, Cro-Magnon man, tools, art sites of the Paleolithic period (in France & Spain) with examples of paintings from various caves, research, the suspected purpose and influence on modern artists and museums where cave art is reproduced for the public as many sites are now closed or inaccessible. The exhibit presents the art by site in order of their respective approximate ages. Fantasy or stylized cave art designs as well as mobile art - such as carved objects - are not included.

Material Availability

Postal materials with 'identifiable' paleolithic cave painting designs of this period are relatively few. The total sum of items does not justify a two frame exhibit and is a serious challenge for the exhibitor. All postage stamps issued to date, most postal stationery, roller cancels, advertising or commemorative hand and machine cancel designs, as well as postage meters are represented.

Philatelic Elements

Elements are an important part of this exhibit and care has been taken to include as many as possible. Philatelically inspired items are minimized and mint or commercially used materials make up the majority of pieces. The following material types are included:

Die and Presentation Proofs, Postage Stamps - definitive, commemorative, airmail and semi-postal issues, Booklet Singles, Gutter Pair, Printing Date Block, Precancel, Imperforate Variety, Maximum Cards, First Day Cover, Commemorative and Printed to Private Order Postal Stationery, Commemorative Hand, Machine Advertising Slogan and Roller Cancel Devices, Postage Meter Indicia, as well as various Destinations and Rates.

Highlights

- 1976 Presentation Proof (signed), France (page 1).
- 1989 Bromide Proof, NiuaFo'oo (page 3).
- 1949 Progressive Die Proof (signed), Monaco (page 16).

Thematic and Philatelic References

Cambridge Illustrated History of Prehistoric Art - Paul G. Bahn, 1998, Univ. of Cambridge, Publishers, U.K.

The Creative Explosion - John E. Pfeiffer, 1982, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, USA.

Old World Archaeologist (numbers 1 - 71) - George Holland, Editor, 2002, OWASU-ATA, New York, USA.

Præhistorie in der Philatelie (numbers 1 - 94) - Johan C. van Soeren, 1978, Geologie, eV., Erlangen, Germany.

Title page, synopsis and an award history may be accessed on the worldwide web: <http://www.franadams.com>