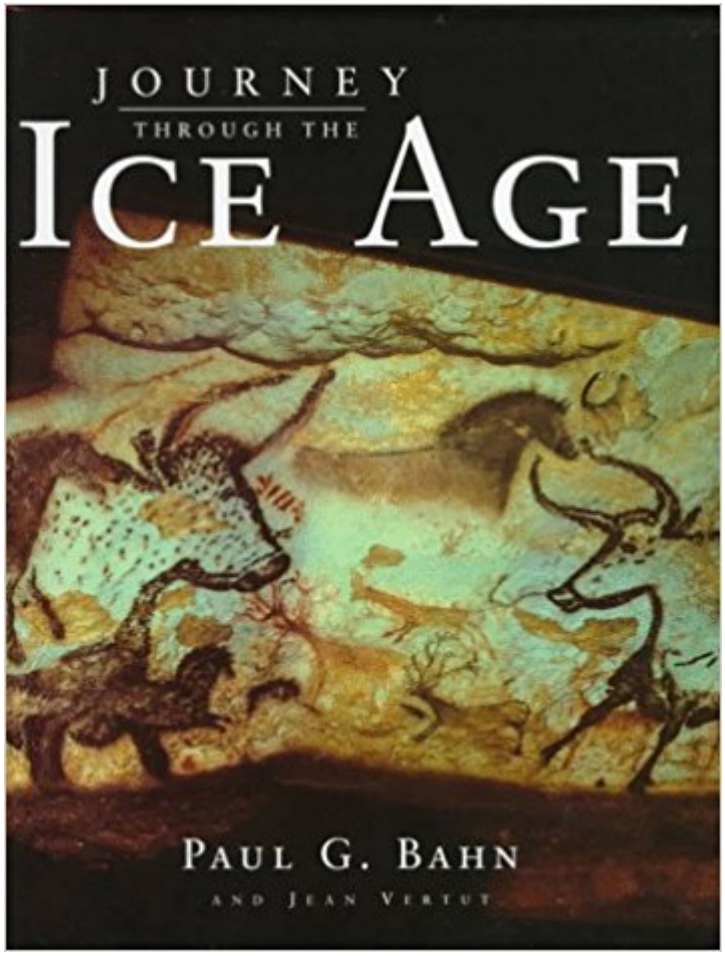
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Journey Through The Ice Age



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Synopsis

Some of the oldest art in the world is the subject of this riveting and beautiful book. Paul Bahn and Jean Vertut explore carved objects and wall art discoveries from the Ice Age, covering the period from 300,000 B.P. to 10,000 B.P., and their collaboration marks a signal event for archaeologists and lay readers alike.Utilizing the most modern analytical techniques in archaeology, Bahn presents new accounts of Russian caves only recently opened to foreign specialists; the latest discoveries from China and Brazil; European cave finds at Cosquer, Chauvet, and Covaciella; and the recently discovered sites in Australia. He also studies sites in Africa, India, and the Far East. Included are the only photographic images of many caves that are now closed to protect their fragile environments. A separate chapter in the book examines art fakes and forgeries and relates how such deceptions have been exposed.The beliefs and preoccupations of Paleolithic peoples resonate throughout this book: the importance of the hunt and the magic and shamanism surrounding it, the recording of the seasons, the rituals of sex and fertility, the cosmology and associated myths. Yet enigmas and mysteries emerge as well, particularly as new analytical techniques raise new questions and cast doubt on our earlier suppositions.A comprehensive, up-to-date analysis of all that has been discovered about Ice Age art, Bahn and Vertut's book offers a visually rich link with the past.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This publication updates Images of the Ice Age (Facts on File, 1988) with new discoveries and

illustrations. The reproduction of the photographs is greatly improved over the first edition. As with similar popular books on ice age art (for example, The Cave Beneath the Sea: Paleolithic Images at Cosquer, Abrams, 1996), the strength is photographs taken by Vertut. This work is too detailed for general readers, though it is very readable overall, covering many aspects of various art forms, their creation and meaning, dating techniques and results, forgeries, and their history and discovery. The text reflects Bahn’s experience with compiling popular and reference works on archaeology. As it is very up-to-date, informative, and beautifully produced, including a scholarly bibliography, it is recommended for art lovers, archaeology fans, and libraries with collections of any size in art, archaeology, and anthropology.?Joyce L. Ogburn, Old Dominion Univ., Norfolk, Va.Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Bahn’s conclusions about Paleolithic art are revealing and humble in understanding our ancestors."--"Sacramento Bee

Paul Bahn’s, "Journey through the Ice Age", is the most comprehensive book on cave art available today. His scholarship is extensive, very readable and is illustrated through the excellent photography of Jean Vertut. The art itself encompasses a wide range of formsÃ Â Journey Through the Ice Ageincluding paintings, drawings (using perspective), engravings, relief sculptures (life-size horses at Cap Blanc) and smaller portable sculptures. Treated in a very respectful way, animals are the predominant subject matter. The drawing skill, and the range and quality of the art is as sophisticated as anything being done today. My only suggestion for the next edition would be to expand the size of the photographs of the mural-size art. Having seen some of the the actual artwork myself, I felt that the layout reduced to small things that were amazingly large in reality.

Paul Bahn’s grand survey of prehistoric art in Europe opens a conversation with the men, and possibly the women, who made it. The art and artifacts are all carefully chosen and clearly described. The rest is up to the reader.

good value for price

Happy with book

I wasn’t sure whether this book or "Prehistoric Art: The Symbolic Journey of Humankind" by Randall

White would be better, so I bought them both.It turns out that they are both excellent books. Both are loaded with color photographs of artifacts famous and less well-known. Both have scholarly, informative text, considering anthropological and historical contexts, the techniques and materials used by the artists, the history of the study of prehistoric art, and plenty of cautious speculation about the functions the art had to its artists' communities.They are organized quite differently: Bahn's moves from topic to topic: chapter 7 is on portable art, chapter 8 on rock shelters and cave art, chapter 9 on outdoors art, and so on. But White's book has a regional arrangement: chapter 4 is on Western Europe, chapter 5 is on Central and Eastern Europe and Sibera, chapter 6 is on Africa, the Near East and Anatolia, and so on.Obviously you can see that White's book has more of a global focus than Bahn's. In fact, Bahn's third chapter deals with prehistoric art outside of Europe; in every other chapter he focuses on European art, especially the caves.Although Bahn's book devotes a chapter to "Portable Art" such as jewelry and miniature statues (including the famous "Venus figurines"), White's book has a far superior coverage. On the other hand, Bahn has better coverage of interesting issues such as how to reproduce prehistoric art for public enjoyment, dating issues, and forgeries.If you are primarily interested in European cave art and will be content with a glance at the rest of the world, then Bahn's book is better for you. Personally, although Bahn deals with some interesting issues that White neglects, ultimately I prefer White's global perspective; further, I appreciate his introductory comments about modern Western art and cultural assumptions, and consideration of what might be universal in human art.Incidently, when it comes to books about art, for some reason I prefer hardcover to paperback; and at this time White's book in hardcover is available at great discount on , making it almost as inexpensive as Bahn's.So, my preference is clear. However, I want to emphasize that despite my partiality to White's book, they are certainly both excellent, and I do not think one of them is clearly, inherently better than the other. It just depends on what you are looking for.

After a brief overview of the "oldest art in the world" and a discussion of the caveats associated with the term `art' as applied to extinct cultures Bahn describes the problem of taphonomy where knowledge of another older culture is shaped by the survival of artifacts. He also discusses the problem of controlled and limited access to ancient sites, as well as the use of modern photography to capture and transmit information about these sites to a larger audience.Next, Bahn discusses different kinds of ice age art, which he categorizes as: 1) parietal art which takes the form of wall paintings and sculptures, floor tiles, and other large relatively immovable blocks of stone on which "signs" have been worked. Wall art can be incised, sculpted (additive or subtractive), or painted. 2)

portable art which takes the form of figurines, musical instruments, tools, weapons, pottery, and other items that could be easily carried. Surviving portable items are generally made of ivory, bone, or ceramic clay or some other relatively durable inorganic substance.Bahn then describes how analysts attempt to date ice age material. At one time, scientists believed ice age art could not be dated because it was either inorganic or the methods available for dating organic material were clumsy and destructive. Recent improvements in dating techniques have changed that. For example, charcoal (an organic substance) was frequently used by ice age artists to create the black outlines seen in many wall paintings. For years, scientists thought the black paint was manganese dioxide, an inorganic substance. Since only a pinprick of paint is now required for radio carbon analysis, scientists have been able to test the black paint, discover it was carbon based, and date it.The book is filled with wonderful technical material as well as plenty of stylistic and other material of interest to art historians. I most appreciated the section that reviewed the various theories about "Why" ice age art was created. Was it art for art's sake? Was it the work of hunters practicing sympathetic magic? Was it a fertility ritual? Bahn pretty much dismisses these theories with practical observations about their shortcomings. What he does not dismiss is the creation of the ice age art for mythical purposes associated with healing rituals. Parietal ice age art is located inside dark passages near water. Often this water derives from warm springs. Sometimes the water flows from dark passages into the daylight. Often, mysterious markings that correspond to the seasons and the moon can be found at the entryways to cave chambers. Does this circumstantial evidence point to ritual undertakings that involved a Mother Goddess?

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