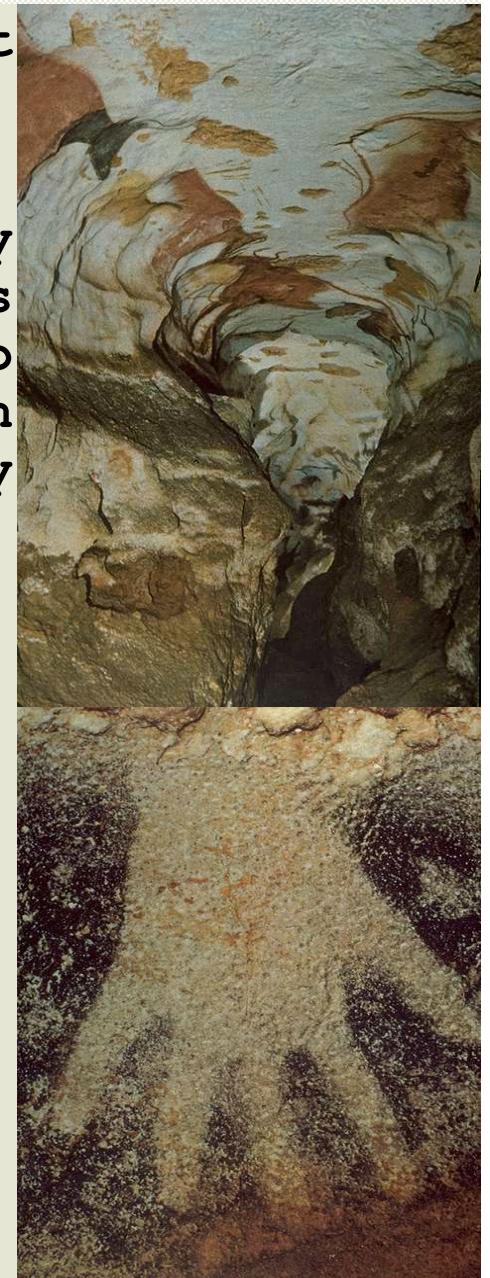




Prehistoric and Primitive art

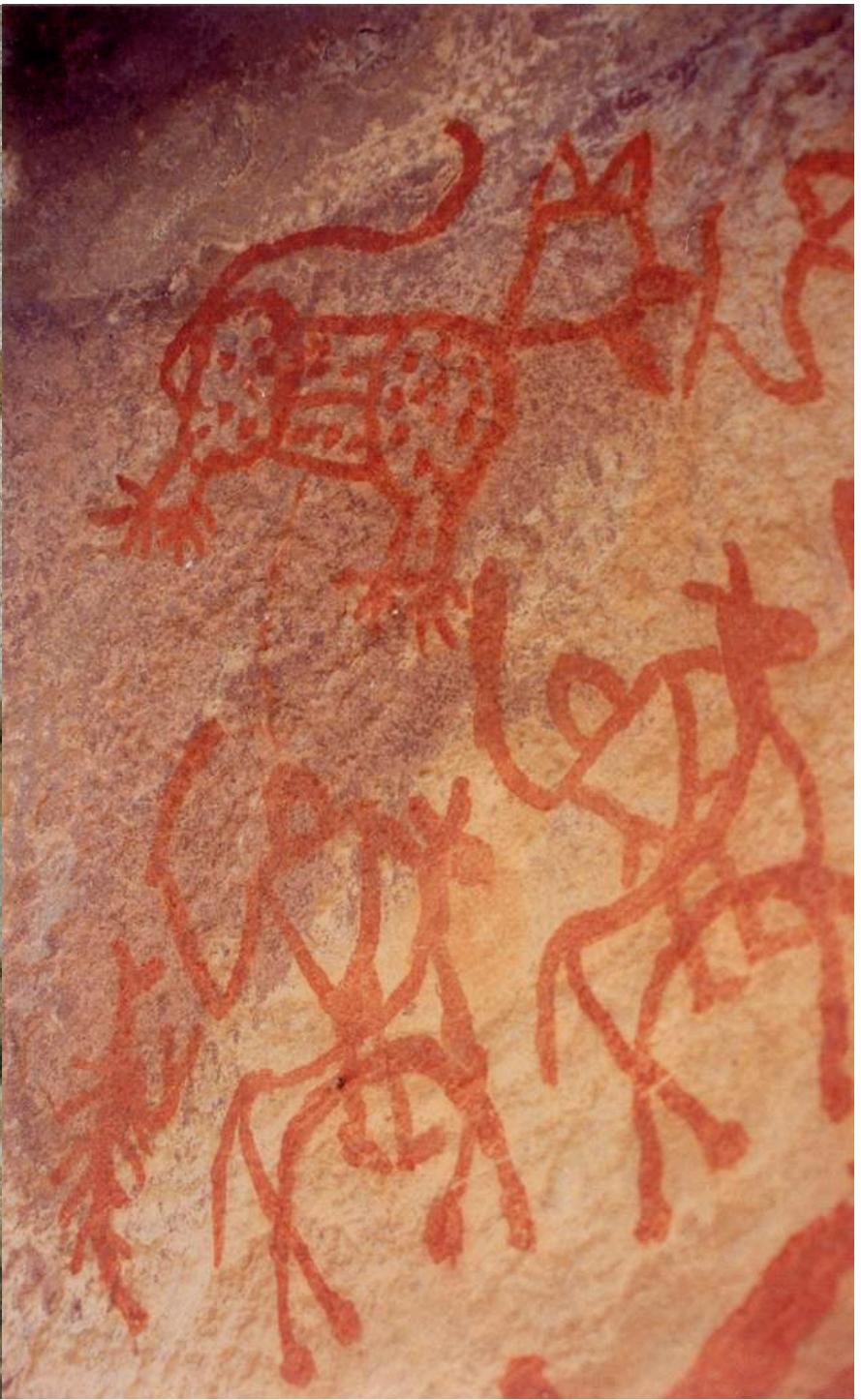
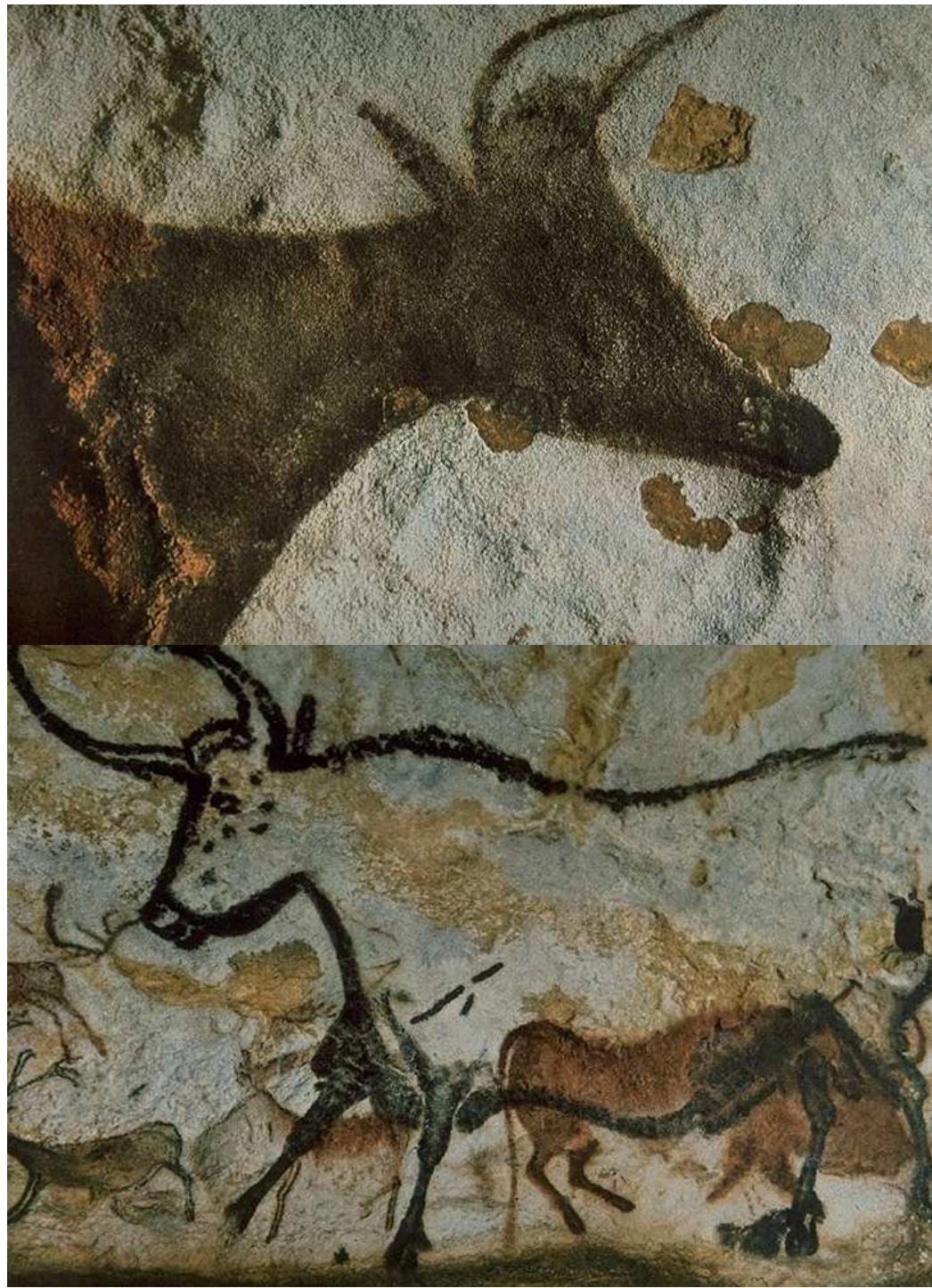
Prehistoric and Primitive art

- Paleolithic art: art of the most recent ice age.
- Present study of this art is largely confined to works discovered at various sites in Western Europe, particularly to the magnificent cave paintings in Northern Spain and the Dordogne valley of South West France.
- It developed in huge limestone caves, that served as habitation.
- The art consists of highly Naturalistic carvings
Monumental paintings
Engravings
Relief Sculptures





- Both of these great cave complexes were discovered by accident : Altamira in 1879, Lascaux in 1940.
 - Produced during two vast, overlapping periods.
1. c.14,000 - c.13,500 B.C. includes the Lascaux paintings in SW France.
 2. c.14,000 - c.9500 B.C. includes the drawings on plafond of the cave at Altamira, N Spain





- Magico-religious in inspiration
- In most Paleolithic caves animal figures predominate, suggesting that the art may have had ritual significance related to hunting.
- Drawn with vitality and the elegance of great simplicity, the animals are the masterworks of prehistoric art and are of an accuracy that provides invaluable evidence to zoologists researching on Paleolithic age remains.



Magico-religious nature of art

Magico-religious in inspiration, the art of the Franco-Cantabrian school consists entirely of paintings of unrelated animals functioning as icons that played a role in dramatic rituals invoking success in the hunt and in animal fertility.



- The richly decorated lime stone caves with engravings on soft stone, bone, and ivory, as well as low relief and a few freestanding sculptures and more than 400 paintings are the oldest on record, c.32,000 years old, and depicts creatures with bold realism.





Franco-Cantabrian school

- Paleolithic art that flourished in SW France and the N Cantabrian Mountains region of Spain is known by this term.
 - The school maintained a coherent development and a consistent approach, covering the two major artistic phases of the Late Paleolithic Period.
 1. The Aurignacian culture
 2. The Magdalenian culture
 - The Aurignacian culture is marked with specialization of tools, that included the invention of burin and drawings with shades and modeling of shapes.
- 



Bison, Aurignacian Culture



Horses and Rhinoceros, Aurignacian Culture



Magico religious inspirations , Aurignacian Culture



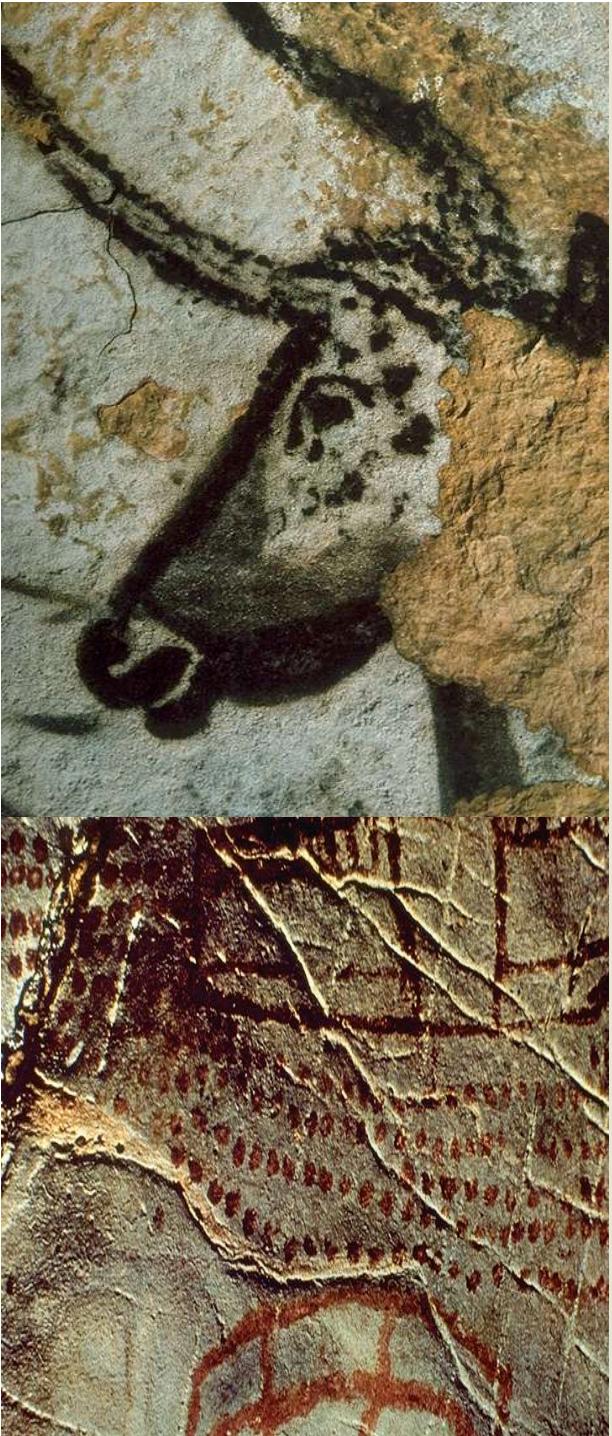
- The Magdalenians represent culmination of Paleolithic cultural development in Europe.
- The widespread artistic production is marked by a return to simple line drawing or pictures drawn in silhouette
- Generally, coarse black drawings with little concern for detail characterized the art in this early phase.
- Retreat from Aurignacian achievements in modeling.



Horse, Magdalenian Culture



Horse, Magdalenian Culture

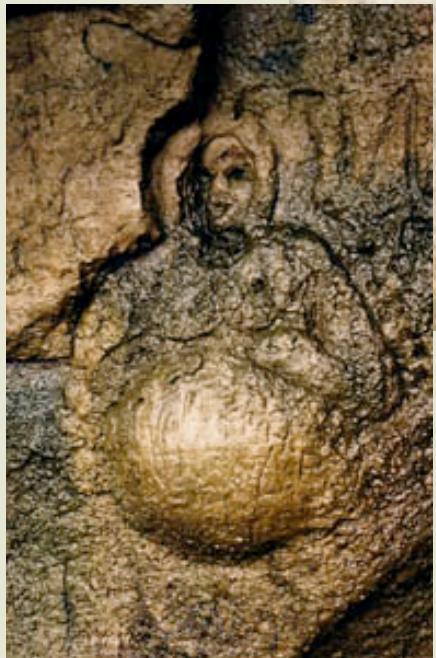


Techniques of Painting

- Franco-Cantabrian style embrace a variety of techniques, including painting with fingers, sticks, and pads of fur or moss; daubing; dotting; sketching with colored materials and charcoal; and spray painting through hollow bone.
- The paints used for these creations were derived from natural earth pigments like ochre and zinc oxides.
- The paintings at Altamira boast of as many as three colors in the body of a single animal--a significant advance in technical skill over most cave artistry.



- This technical skill is reflected in the accuracy of the physical proportions of depicted animals.



Many of the figures are painted or carved on natural protrusions from the rock face



In many cases, the creator of the designs exploited the natural contours or the facets of the rock surface.



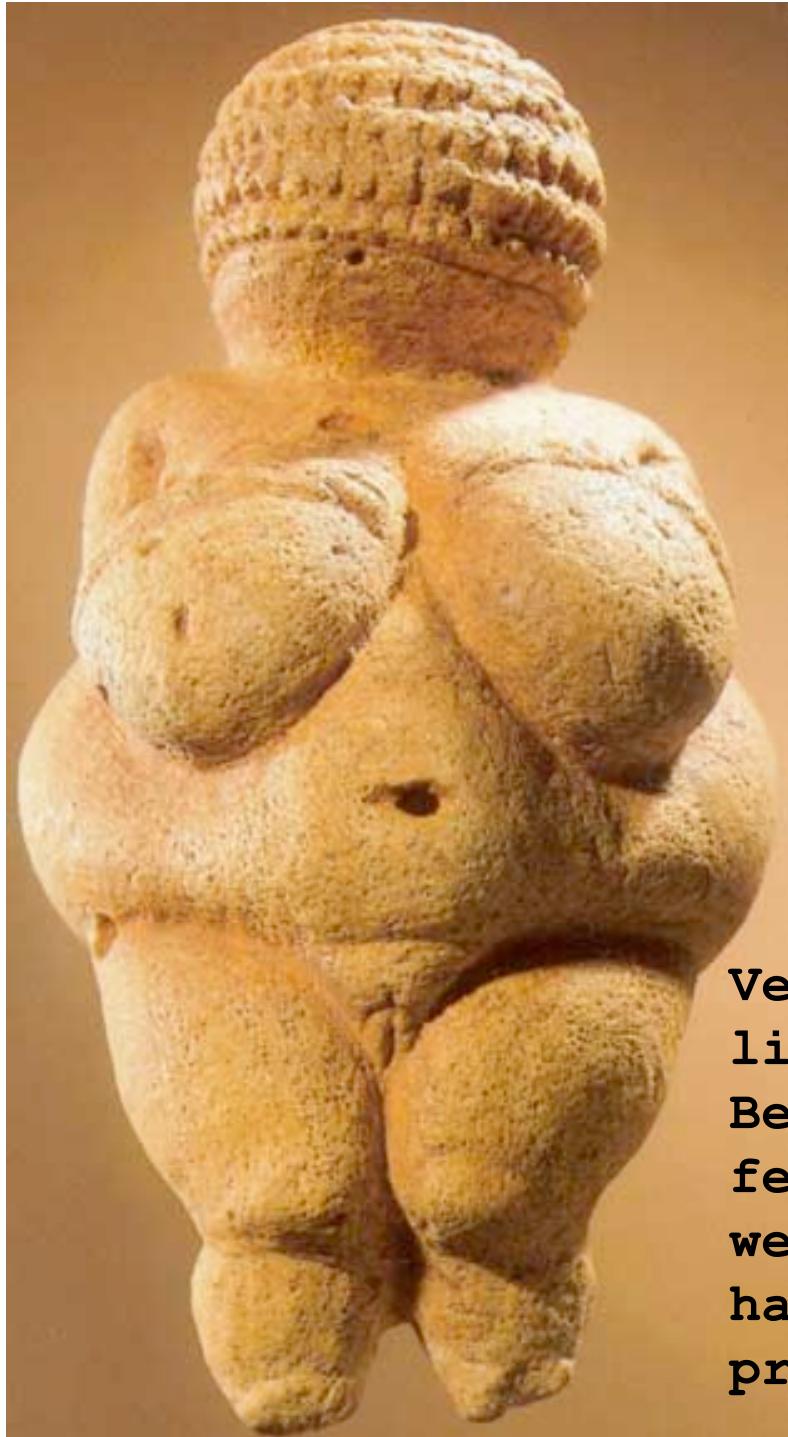
Several pigments were used
Irregular surfaces were often decorated.



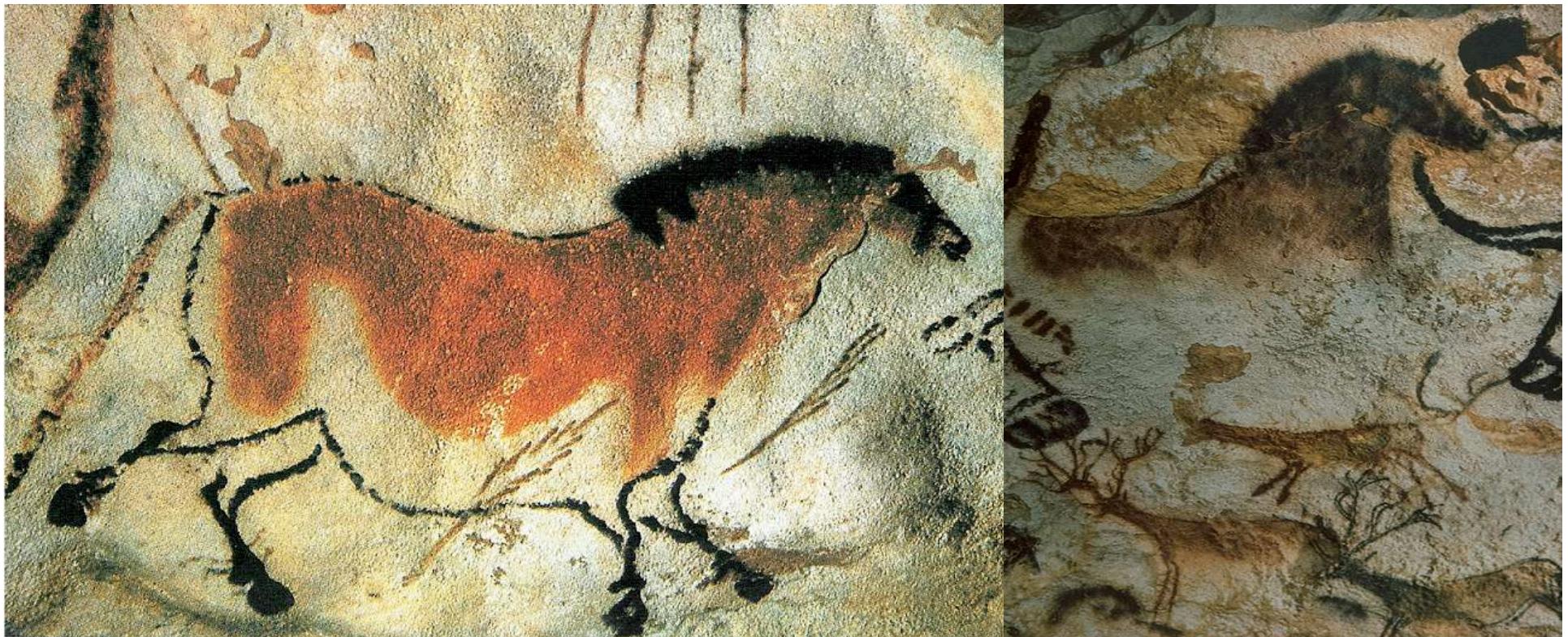
Animals depicted by the Franco-Cantabrian school are often lively, and mostly with an overpowering vitality.



Sculpture in round is rare although small carved figurines are freely incised with linear details. Carvings were usually incised or chipped out with a stone. Sometimes they were deeply gouged out in intaglio technique. Engraving and painting techniques were sometimes combined.



Venus of Willendorf - carved limestone, c. 30,000-15,000 BC.
Because of the importance of fertility, (infant mortality rates were high making it a necessity to have many children for survival) probably a fertility symbol.



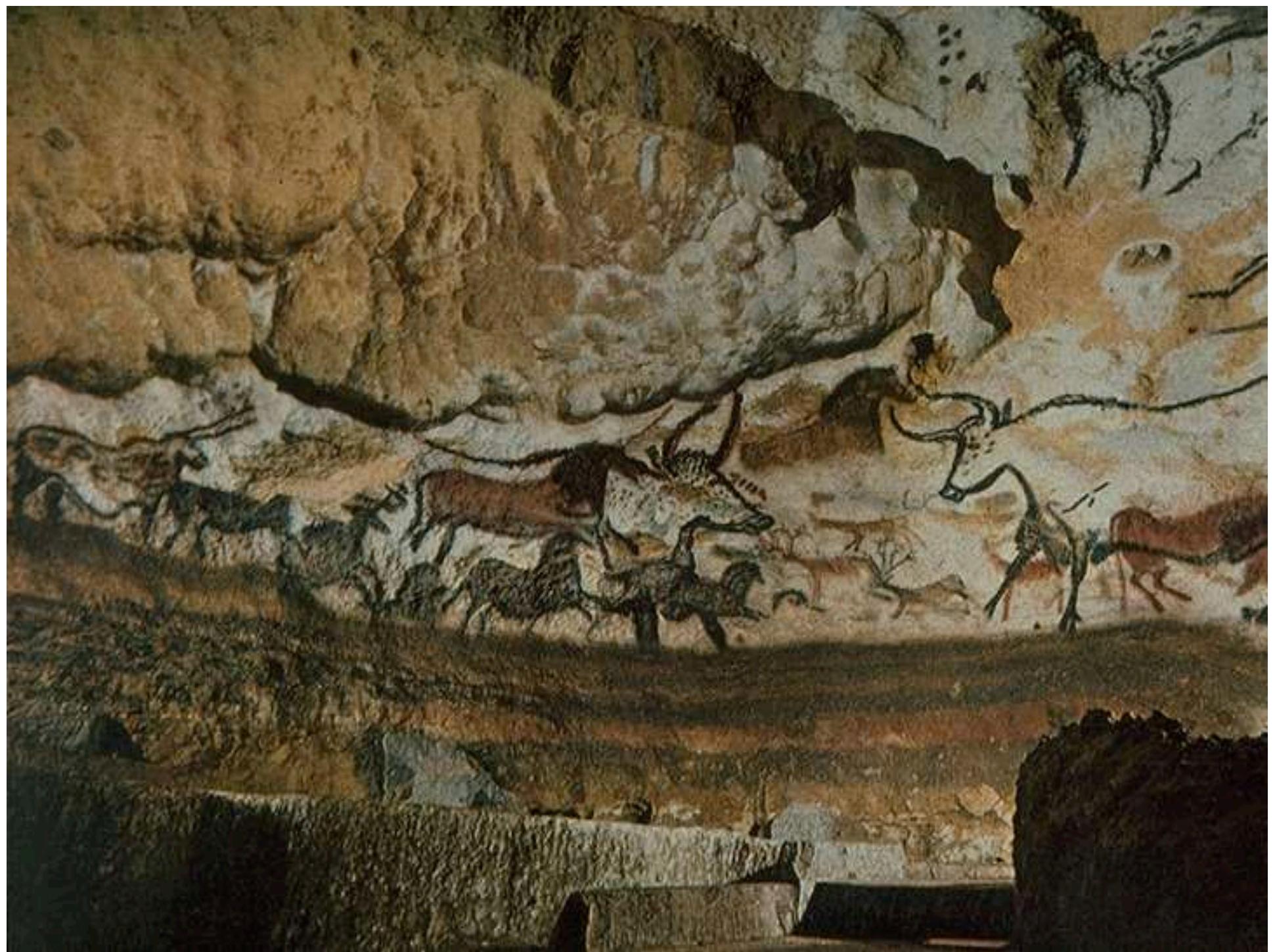
Foreshortening and shadows were skillfully employed and volumes are well expressed.

Images were often crowded close to and on top of each other, sometimes with obvious respect for previously applied paintings.

In Europe and Africa the style was largely naturalistic, while Australian and American designs were more often symbolic and geometric.

The paintings, made with charcoal and earth pigments mixed with grease, gum, or water, vary from crude outlines to polychrome compositions.

Stenciled human hands were found in numerous places.



- Cave paintings have been found in every continent and are usually from prehistoric times.
- Petroglyphs (rock carvings) more widespread than pictographs (rock paintings): preserved chiefly in dry regions, inside caves, and under overhanging cliffs.
- Designs created for purposes of communication religious propitiation and based on magical beliefs. Whatever the motive, the prehistoric artist often reached great aesthetic heights.
- Successive styles and phases are found, and several layers of designs were often superimposed.
- Wild animals and hunting scenes abound, while the scenes of daily life were depicted alongside representations of ceremonies and deities.
- In Neolithic times herders and cows appeared, but gradually rock art seems to have declined and disappeared with the advent of agriculture.

