

History buffs get peep into rich rock art from across continents

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Visitors at the exhibition 'World of rocks' at IGRMS on Friday

BHOPAL: From rock shelters of UNESCO-declared world heritage site Bhimbetka to prehistoric sites, caves of the Vezere Valley, France, displayed at 'world of rock art exhibition' transported art lovers to ancient times. The month-long exhibition titled 'world of rocks' organised by IGRMS, Bhopal, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), was inaugurated at Avritti Bhawan of [IGRMS](#) on Friday.

With over 120 photographs on display at the gallery, the exhibition brings to light a fascinating world of primitive

men, who decorated their abodes - natural caves and shelters with paintings and engravings and, in the process, gave today's generation an amazing view of life through their eyes. The exhibits of rock art are from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North and South America.

"The effort of exhibition is to introduce people of the region, students and history lovers to treasure trove of art and its varied expressions," said IGRMS director Sarit K Chaudhuri.

Simple geometrical and abstract motifs, battle scenes, family scenes, hand-prints are common to rock art from all the five continents. Animals are the most favoured subjects of the early man as they were source of life sustenance. The fact stands out in almost all the exhibits. Some of them depict evolution from hunters and gatherers to a more settled life with domestication of animals and growing of plants.

The exhibits indicate diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, surroundings as is evident from the rock paintings. Rock art from Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh has been displayed.

IGNCA project director B L Malla gave an introduction to the exhibition. He stressed on the significance of this art form all over the world.

Some 200 students of government Gitanjali College, government MLB College, Government Arts and Commerce College and students of Parvarish, the museum School of Bhopal attended a workshop on rock art titled 'Impressions' which was part of the exhibition. After inauguration, former director Adivasi Lok Kala Parishad, Bhopal, government of Madhya Pradesh Kapil Tiwari shared his experience of working with Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar, the 'Pitamah' of Indian Rock Art School and discoverer of the Bhimbetka rock caves.

Tiwari said: "Paintings in rock shelters give information about the mankind before they started living as a society. In the rock art paintings around the world, colours were never of importance but the design was the important element. The key elements of design were dot, line and then colours."