

RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

ART TRAVEL PRESENTS:



2008 THE ORIGIN OF ART: PREHISTORIC CAVE PAINTINGS OF SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE

WITH A FOCUS ON CUISINE OF THE REGION

Ninth Annual Expedition: June 2 – 12, 2008

Reserve Online: www.ARTTRAVEL.org



PROGRAM ESCORTS

“No one knows the caves and the archaic regions of the soul in our times as does Clayton Eshleman. He is a guide among the animal images of the primordial psyche. His work takes us into the source of imagination, the dark origins of the human mind.” - James Hillman, author of the book, *The Soul's Code*

CLAYTON ESHLEMAN, author of *Juniper Fuse: Upper Paleolithic Imagination & the Construction of the Underworld*, is Professor Emeritus at Eastern Michigan University and a National Book Award winner. He has researched Ice Age cave art of southwestern France for the past 30 years with research support fellowships from Eastern Michigan University and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and several fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Eshleman has published twelve collections of poetry and nine volumes of translations of authors such as César Vallejo, Aimé Césaire and Antonin Artaud.

This fall Black Widow Press will bring out a new collection of essays and interviews, *Archaic Design*, which includes “The Back Wall of Imagination,” an essay on the research and writing of *Juniper Fuse*.

CARYL ESHLEMAN has collaborated with her husband on prehistoric research since 1974, and has co-written, with him, numerous travel and food magazine articles on regions of France.

MATHILDE SITBON is a bilingual resident of Paris, a former cultural attaché at the French Embassy in Outer Mongolia, and will be our travel coordinator in France. She is a translator and lecturer for Dartmouth College's program in Paris, and will provide current information on cultural attractions and events throughout the program.

THE ORIGIN OF ART: PREHISTORIC CAVE PAINTINGS OF SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE

WITH A FOCUS ON CUISINE OF THE REGION

Ninth Annual Expedition: June 2 – 12, 2008

Led by Clayton Eshleman, Ice Age Cave Art Expert

Discover the origin of art; the foundational imaginative moves made some 25,000 years ago that have resulted in art as we know it today. Exploring the caves, most as they were thousands of years ago, in the same shape with the same materials in place, we will experience what Clayton Eshleman calls, “the incredible breakthrough from no image to an image of the world.” It should be emphasized that this is not “primitive art,” but realistically rendered animal and human forms, often polychromatic, and as complex and sophisticated as any in the historic Western tradition. The workshops of the Cro-Magnon people lie beneath the roots of oak trees on which grow black truffles, one of the most costly and aromatic foods in the world. In this idyllic region we explore the underworld of man’s earliest creativity and at the end of each day savor the modern artistry of a well-crafted meal.

“It is not French, not Austrian, not European even: it is the country of enchantment which the poets have staked out and which they alone may lay claim to. It is the nearest thing to paradise this side of Greece. Let us call it the Frenchman’s paradise, by way of concession. Actually, it must have been a paradise for many thousands of years. I believe it must have been so for Cro-Magnon man, despite the fossilized evidences of the great caves which point to a condition of life rather bewildering and terrifying. I believe that Cro-Magnon man settled here because he was extremely intelligent and had a highly developed sense of beauty. I believe that in him the religious sense was already highly developed and that it flourished here... I believe that this great peaceful region of France will always be a sacred spot for man, and that when the cities have killed off the poets, this will be the refuge and cradle of poets to come. I repeat, it was most important for me to have seen the Dordogne: it gives me hope for the future of the race, and for the future of the Earth itself. France may one



day exist no more, but the Dordogne will live on just as dreams live on and nourish the souls of men.”

- Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Maroussi*



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

BORDEAUX, LES EYZIES AND THE DORDOGNE

Arriving individually, our journey begins when travelers gather on June 2 at the Hôtel de Normandie, located in the heart of 18th-century Bordeaux. Early that first evening we will convene for a tour overview followed by dinner at Restaurant Gravelier. On the second day, we will visit the Musée d'Aquitaine, which features the famous Venus of Laussel, and later Clayton Eshleman will speak on Cave Art Theory. That evening we will dine at La Table de Didier Gelineau.

On June 4th, we travel by private motor coach east to the village of Les Eyzies where a sense of excitement lingers still, from major archeological discoveries made more than a century ago. Cut through by rivers that in primordial times carved gorges in the limestone plateaux, this region is permeated with caves, some of which contain polychromatic paintings, engravings, and bas-relief sculpture of the animals and people who roamed the tundra during the last phase of the Upper Paleolithic era, between 35,000 and 10,000 years ago.

We will visit the National Museum of Prehistory, the July 2004 opening of which was “considered a major event in the French cultural world. The \$30 million museum, designed by Jean-Pierre Buffi, was two decades in the making. A replacement for the small, dark museum that housed the late 16th-century castle next door, the new museum, built with local stone, announces its presence by jutting obtrusively from its yellow limestone site above the village of Les Eyzies. The museum’s display of 18,000 objects is regarded as one of the two or

three richest collections of European Ice Age artifacts in the world.” (From the New York Times, Elaine Sciolino, September 4, 2004)

Upper Paleolithic art is the oldest art of mankind. Made by Cro-Magnon people, our direct ancestors, it is considered the true back wall of the human endeavor to recreate the world in images.

HOTEL LES GLYCINES

While in Les Eyzies, we will stay at Hotel Les Glycines, the dining room of which opens onto a garden park of linden, wisteria and a swimming pool. From this idyllic setting, we explore the Dordogne and its inspiring prehistoric art. We will dine at the hotel on several evenings, and also enjoy the authentic traditional regional cuisine at the charming Restaurant Au Vieux Moulin and take pleasure on other occasions in the sumptuous gastronomy of the Michelin-starred Vieux Logis just outside the village.

CAVES

Most days we will visit one or two caves. Before doing so, Clayton Eshleman will talk about the cave to be visited, and then gradually over our stay, fill in the details of what is known about prehistoric art. Among the caves to be visited:

Rouffignac: A cave so immense that an electric train takes visitors to the decorated areas. Also known as "The Cave of 100 Mammoths," Rouffignac also contains paintings and engravings of rhinoceroses, horses and bison.

Les Combarelles: A narrow, winding cave, the walls of which are as furrowed as elephant hide, making the more than 600 engravings a challenge to discern (the guide's flashlight and beam will help us spot them). Combarelles also has in excess of 50 human figurations, more than any Upper Paleolithic cave.

Font-De-Gaume: Font-de-Gaume is a showpiece of engravings and polychromatic paintings — of bison, horses, mammoths, reindeer, woolly rhinoceros, a wolf and a lioness. The painters built scaffolding to allow them access the wall 16 feet high. One can see that the painters used a unique type of perspective.

Cognac: In the midst of a fairyland of stalactites we will view a frieze containing giant elk, mountain goats, and two "wounded" human figures, possible shaman apprentices depicted during initiation.

Peche Merle: One of the most beautiful of all Upper Paleolithic caves, Peche Merle is known for its frieze of spotted horses surrounded by negative hand prints and ancient finger drawings depicting women entangled with mammoths and bison.

Lascaux li: Known as "The Sistine Chapel" of Upper Paleolithic art, Lascaux is filled with animals and mysterious signs. Here painters who worked with the verve of Caravaggio made use of wall contours and depressions to evoke animal dimensions.

Following the visit to Lascaux II, we will go to Le Thot Museum to view additional artifacts and facsimiles from the original Lascaux cave.

All of the caves we visit can be walked through (that is, there is no crawling or waddling involved). However, there is a certain amount of walking on the trip in the

towns we visit and to the caves. Travelers must be able to negotiate some stairs and inclines as well.

On many of our visits, Mathilde Sitbon, our French coordinator, will spot translate the comments made by French guides.

While our time in the Dordogne is shaped by visiting the caves, we will also enjoy regional specialties: stopping at scenic towns along the Dordogne River, visiting the fortified hill town of Domme, and wandering the Saturday market in the medieval city of Sarlat.

In the past, some participants have brought their sketchbooks, journals, or cameras along to capture Les Eyzies' curving limestone cliffs, the Vézère River, lush vegetation, rich landscape color. Across the road from our hotel, kayaks, canoes, and bicycles may be rented. In addition to various prehistoric, gastronomical, and regional activities during our eight days in the Dordogne, there will also be leisure time for relaxing and strolling about the village, which along with Domme and Sarlat, offers ample shopping opportunities.

IN THE WORDS OF PREVIOUS TRAVELERS:

"The trip was extraordinary."

"Outstanding. Clear, probing, questioning, coupled with deep knowledge of the subject characterized Clayton Eshleman's presentations... he created the right space for me to see in my own way, while giving me the facts as they are presently known."

"The meals were truly outstanding. I spent an entire year in Paris in the early 1980s and never had such consistently fabulous evening meals."

"We were never treated as a group or herded about. It was a highly individual experience. Many thanks."

"It was a full itinerary, richly varied, exceptionally provocative."

"Bravo! Cro-Magnon!"

Eight of the travelers from the first trip in 2000 were so thrilled with the experience that they commemorated it with a permanent plaque and the planting of a Royal Poinciana tree on the Ringling College campus.

YOUR TOUR PRICE INCLUDES:

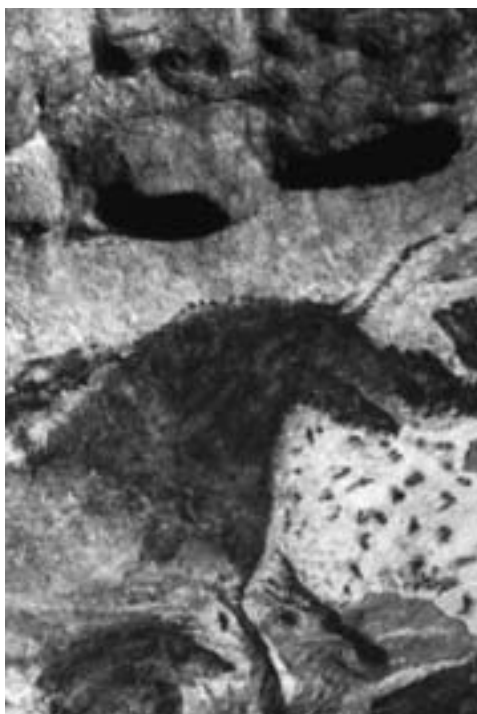
- A comprehensive program of informal talks, cave trips, and regional excursions.
- Visits to national prehistoric exhibits and museums in Bordeaux and Les Eyzies.
- Expertise of distinguished American poet, Clayton Eshleman, including five informal lectures.
- Research collaborator, Caryl Eshleman.
- All admissions to sites per itinerary.
- Translator and French travel guide and coordinator, Mathilde Sitbon.
- Three nights accommodations at Hôtel de Normandie, double occupancy.
- Eight nights accommodations at Hôtel Les Glycines in Les Eyzies, double occupancy.
- All breakfasts and all dinners.
- Group dinner at Restaurant Gravier
- Group dinner at La Table de Didier Gelineau
- Group dinners at Hotel Les Glycines
- Group dinner at Au Vieux Moulin.
- Group dinner at Vieux Logis.
- Tour transfers, portage, services and taxes.

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Participants are advised to purchase trip cancellation insurance and general/medical travel insurance through a travel agent. Your registration represents your acceptance of the following Terms and Conditions:

Not Included in Your Price: Airfare and transfers to/from Bordeaux hotel; personal expenses such as beverages and wine, laundry, room service and any meals not specified; excess baggage expenses; gratuities to your French travel guide, bus driver, hotel maid and hotel wait staff, which are at your discretion; optional sightseeing and activities; communications charges; travel protection insurance.

Cancellations and Refunds: Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following charges per person: Written cancellation received by February 1, 2008 will receive a full refund minus the non-refundable \$300 per person administration fee. For cancellation received after February 1, 2008, no refund will be issued however, you may substitute someone to attend in your place. The effective date of cancellation will be upon receipt by this office of your written notification of such cancellation. Please note that Ringling College will not refund the cost of any unused portion of your tour program.



Responsibility: Liability of Ringling College of Art and Design, as sponsor, is strictly limited. Ringling College of Art and Design purchases land transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurant and other services from independent suppliers not under our control. We are not agents of these service providers and suppliers and therefore will not accept any responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, their employees, agents, servants, or representatives. Ringling College of Art and Design is not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident or delay that may be caused by events not within our direct control including without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party. All coupons, tickets and receipts are issued subject to the terms and conditions specified by the independent suppliers.

We will make every effort to operate our tour as planned, but we reserve the right to make itinerary changes if necessary. If unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality.

We reserve the right to cancel any group tour prior to departure for any reason including insufficient numbers of participants and to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour at any time.

Phone: 941-955-8866

Email: cssp@ringling.edu

Web: www.ARTTRAVEL.org

REGISTRATION FORM

The Origin of Art: Prehistoric Cave Paintings of Southwestern France : June 2 - 12, 2008

Please fill out completely. Please PRINT or TYPE. This form may be duplicated.

Name _____ Email _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State/Country _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____

Evening Phone _____ Date of Birth _____ Male ____ Female ____

U.S. Citizen? yes no

Emergency Contact Name _____ Phone _____

_____ \$4,999 Land Tour Price per participant based on double occupancy.

_____ \$9,749 Land Tour Bonus Price per couple reserved prior to January 15, 2008.

_____ \$5,649 Land Tour Bonus Price single occupancy reserved prior to January 15, 2008.

_____ \$5,749 Land Tour Price per participant single occupancy.

\$ _____ **TOTAL DUE**

\$ _____ Reservation Deposit \$950 per person (includes \$300 non-refundable administrative fee).

\$ _____ Balance due (payment in full due no later than **February 1, 2008**)

AIR TRAVEL

Make arrangements early for best airfares. For air reservations and/or travel insurance assistance, you may contact Linda Boerner at Yellow Bird Travel, phone: 727-789-2771, email: ybtravel@aol.com.

_____ I understand that full payment is due February 1, 2008. Later reservations accepted as space allows with payment in full. Payment may be by Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or by check payable to Ringling College of Art and Design.

Visa, MasterCard or Discover Acct. No _____ Exp. Date _____

Cardholder's Signature _____

The undersigned has read the tour itinerary and recognizes and accepts any risks thereof. The undersigned also understands and hereby agrees for and on behalf of his/her dependents, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns to abide by the conditions set forth in the terms and conditions listed above and to release and hold harmless the Ringling College of Art and Design and any of its officers, trustees, agents, licensees, or representatives from any and all liability for delays, injuries or death or for the loss or damage to his/her property however occurring during any portion of, or in relation to, the trip.

EACH PARTICIPANT MUST SIGN AND DATE.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

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