

The Perplexing Panel

Considerations Of Style and Cultural Affiliation

David Sucec / BCS PROJECT
www.bcsproject.org

URARA 2015



Northern Study Area / Upper Colorado Plateau

The Sheep Canyon Painted Panel



The Sheep Canyon Painted Panel



The Sheep Canyon Painted Panel

Sheep Canyon Painted Panel

"This lovely pictograph...is located in the heart of Fremont style rock art but it doesn't fit that style very well. It is similar to Barrier Canyon Style and looks "sort of" Fremont style. It doesn't fit either style completely."

Post / Explorers Of Native American Rock Art

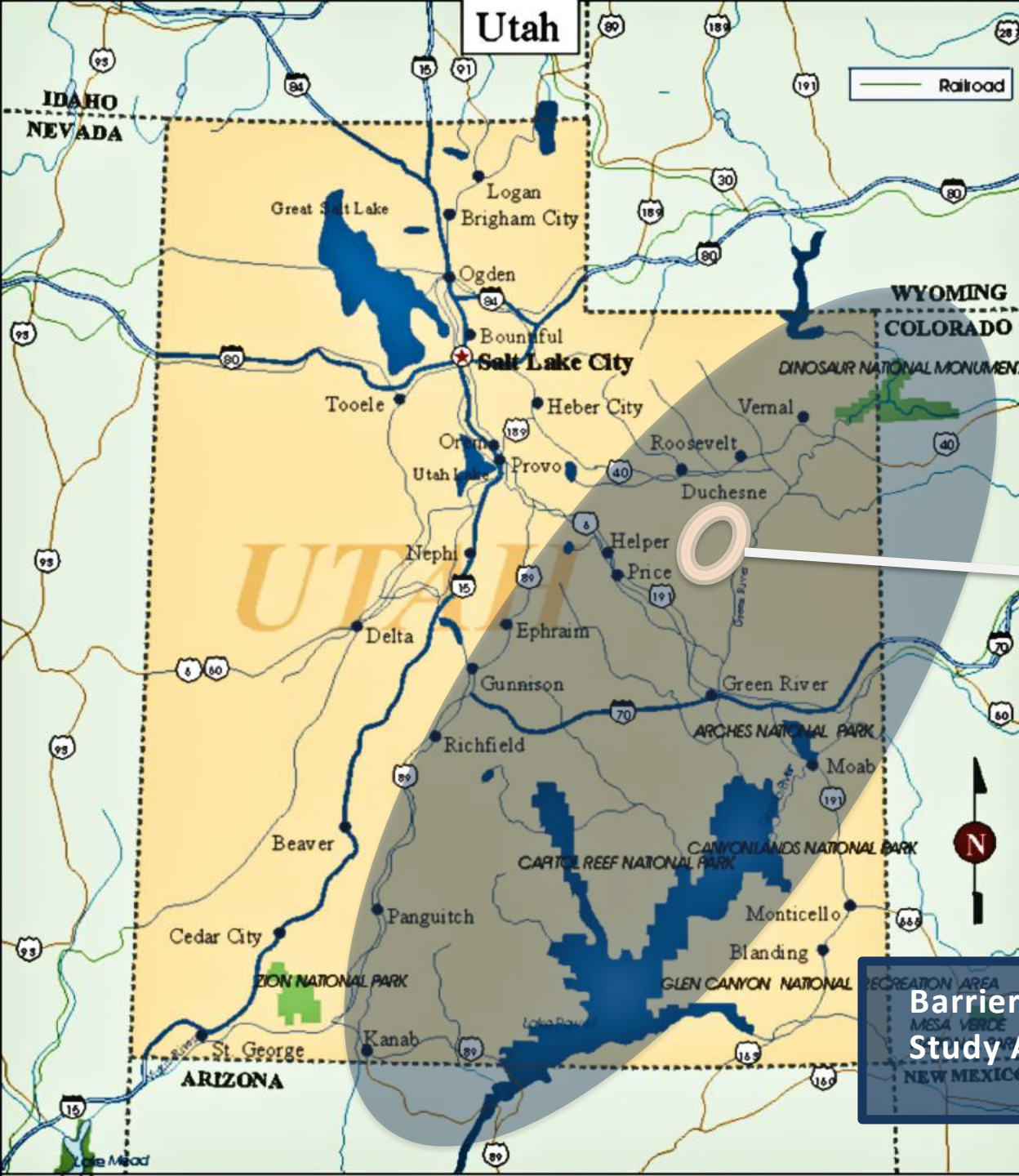
Sheep Canyon Painted Panel

Art Historian comment:

"I always wanted to see that site. From photos it seems to be a copy of a Barrier Canyon style composition, but not quite Fremont."



The Sheep Canyon Painted Panel, Craig Law



Utah

Railroad

Nine Mile Canyon

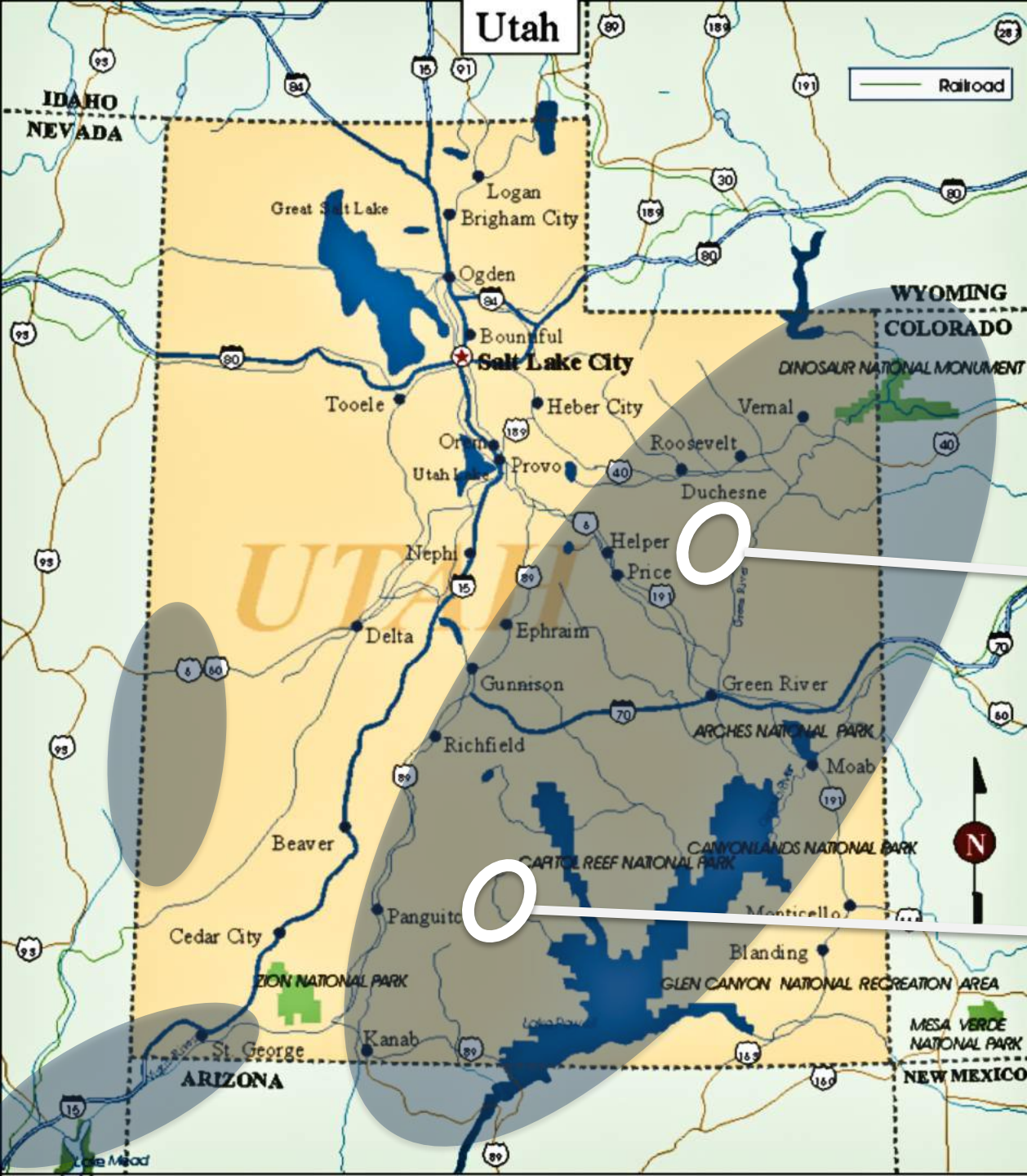
Barrier Canyon Style Study Area



Nine Mile Canyon drains into the Green River

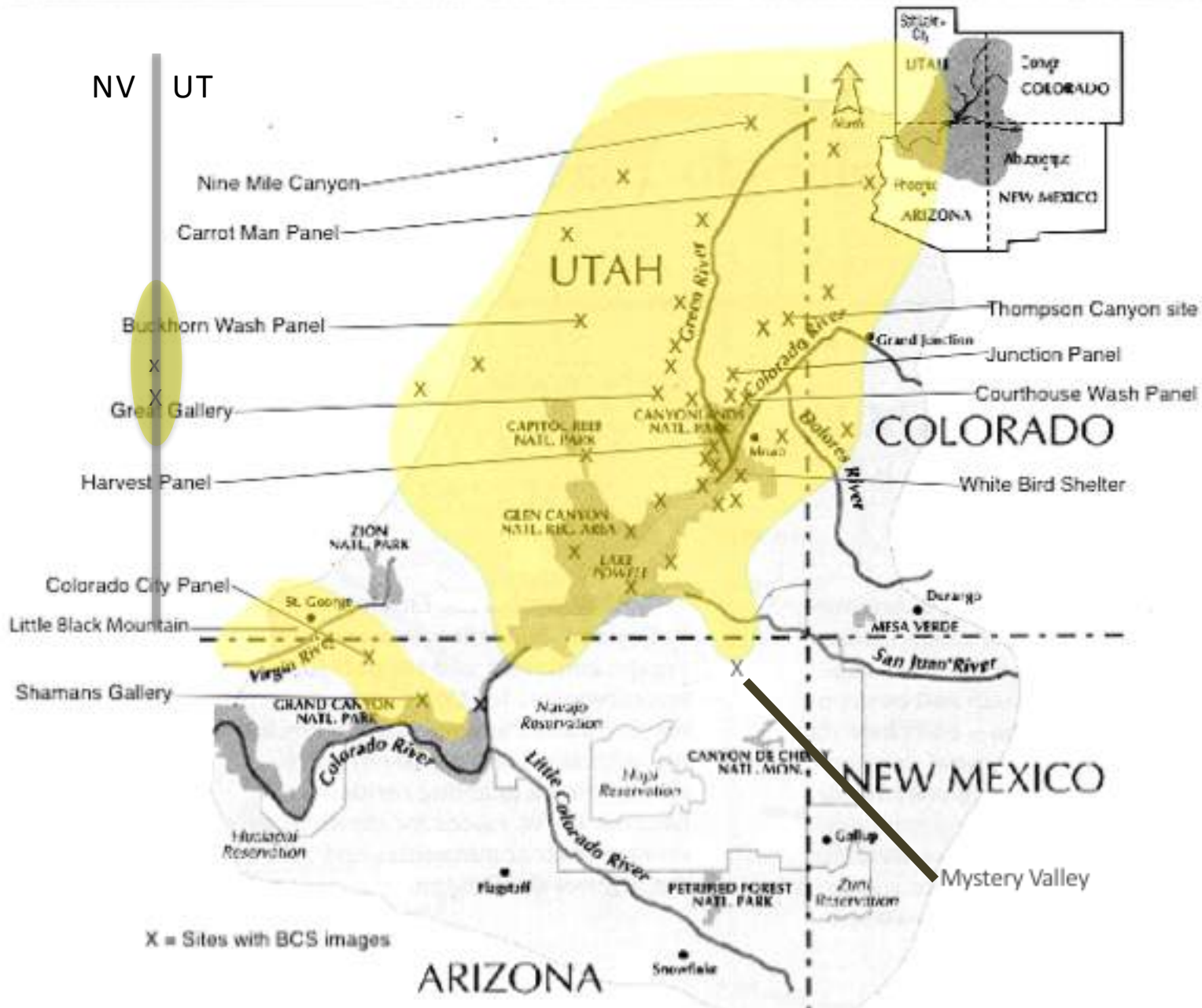


Junction of Nine Mile and Sheep canyon



Nine Mile Canyon

Escalante



NV UT

Nine Mile Canyon

Carrot Man Panel

Buckhorn Wash Panel

Great Gallery

Harvest Panel

Colorado City Panel

Little Black Mountain

Shamans Gallery

X = Sites with BCS images

UTAH

COLORADO

NEW MEXICO

ARIZONA



Thompson Canyon site

Junction Panel

Courthouse Wash Panel

White Bird Shelter

Durango

MESA VERDE

San Juan River

Mystery Valley

The background of the slide is a photograph of an ancient Egyptian wall covered in hieroglyphs. The image is dimly lit and has a dark, olive-green color cast. The hieroglyphs are arranged in several horizontal registers. In the center, there is a prominent figure of a man wearing a kilt and a broad collar, possibly a deity or a high-ranking official. To his right, another figure is visible, and further right, a smaller figure. The overall scene is a textured, weathered stone surface.

THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL



THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL

> Sheep Canyon Painted Panel



THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL

- > Sheep Canyon Painted Panel
- > Sheep Canyon Pecked Panel

THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL

- > Sheep Canyon Painted Panel
- > Sheep Canyon Pecked Panel
- > Discussion

THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL

- > Sheep Canyon Painted Panel
- > Sheep Canyon Pecked Panel
- > Discussion
 - ~ The Painted Panel

THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL

- > Sheep Canyon Painted Panel
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 - ~ The Painted Panel
 - ~ The Perplexing Figure

THE *PERPLEXING* PANEL

- > Sheep Canyon Painted Panel
- > Sheep Canyon Pecked Panel
- > Discussion
 - ~ The Painted Panel
 - ~ The Perplexing Figure
 - ~ Style...Considerations



Reference: Jim Farmer

Photo by Craig Law



The Sheep Canyon Pecked Panel

Probable Sequence of Image Making



First image-making episode / first two painted figures



Dry paint technique



Courthouse Wash Panel



First image-making episode / first two painted figures



Second image-making episode / third painted figure



Over-painting



Third image-making episode / fourth painted figure



Over-painting technique (blending not mixing)



Fourth image-making episode / fifth figure, pecked



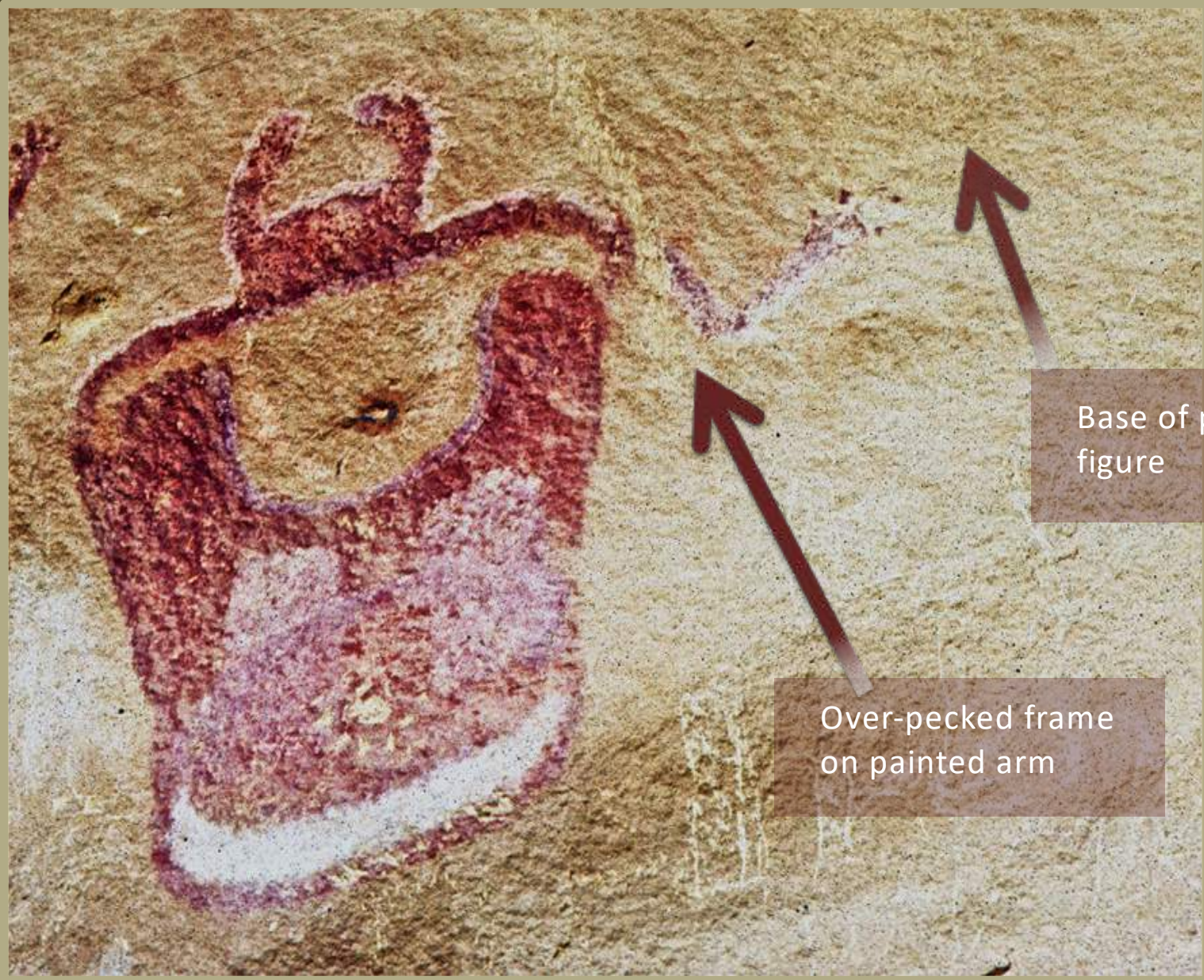
Fifth figure, pecked enhanced

Sequence of Image Making
Superimposition
Chronology



Superimposition

Reference: Carrot Man Panel

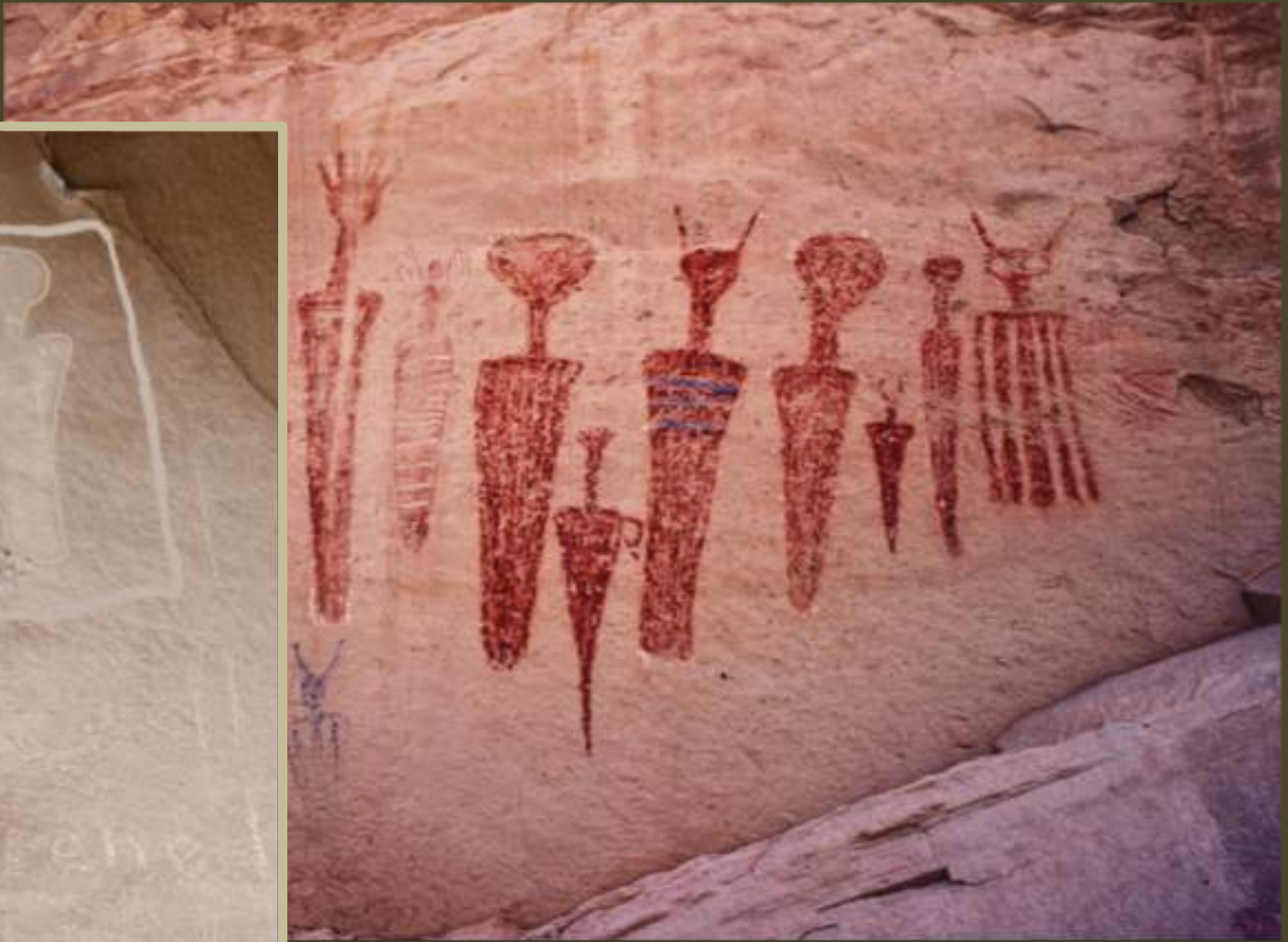


Base of pecked figure

Over-pecked frame on painted arm

The Perplexing Figure

Superimposition



Unscaled Figures...Regional/Temporal Variation

Sequence of Image Making
Superimposition
The Perplexing Figure

The Perplexing Figure



Bilateral symmetry

Wet on Wet Technique



Bilateral symmetry

Thompson Canyon High Panel





Northern Book Cliffs



Uintah Basin
Blending



Fremont horn motif



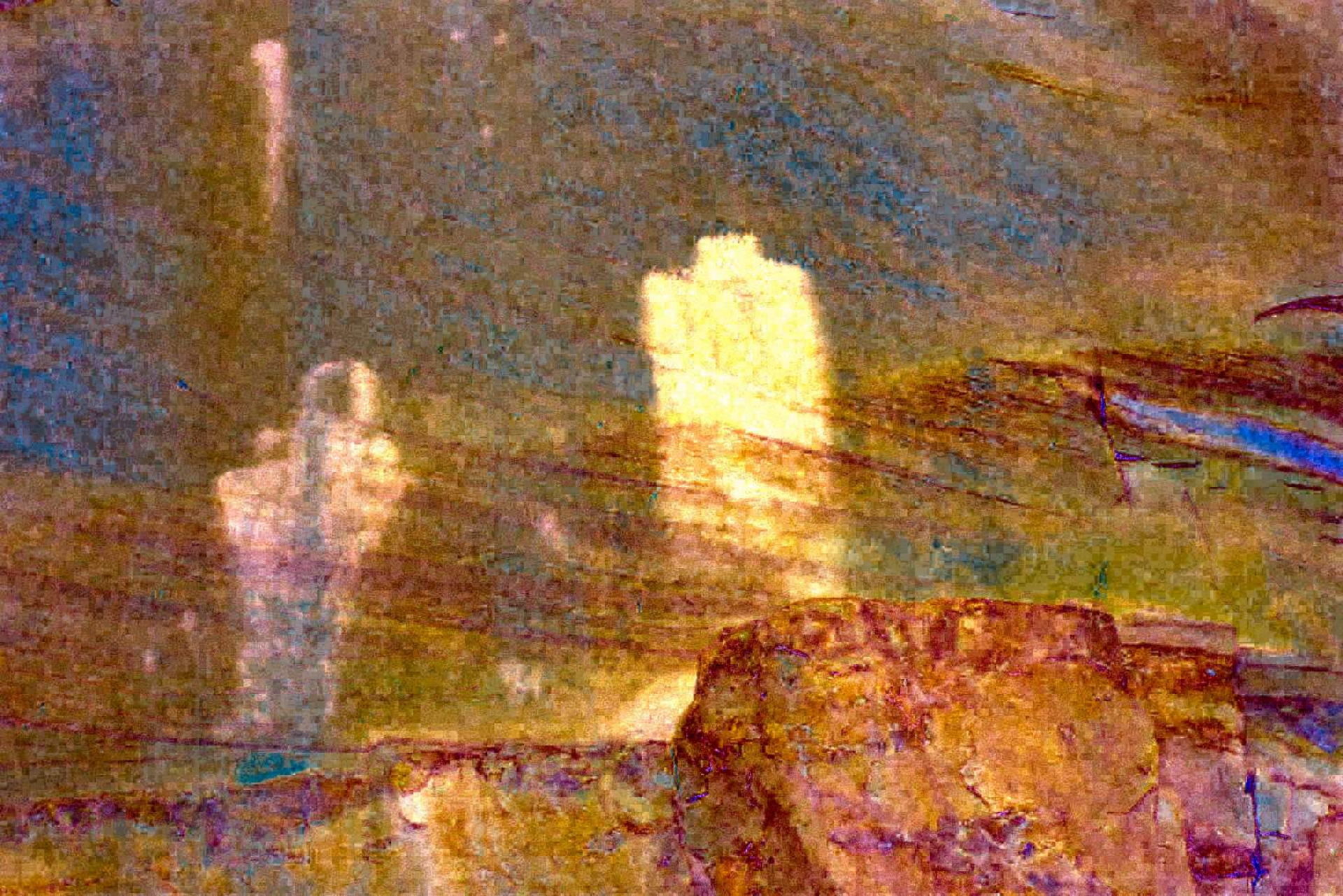
Head motif...short, no neck form



Another possibility

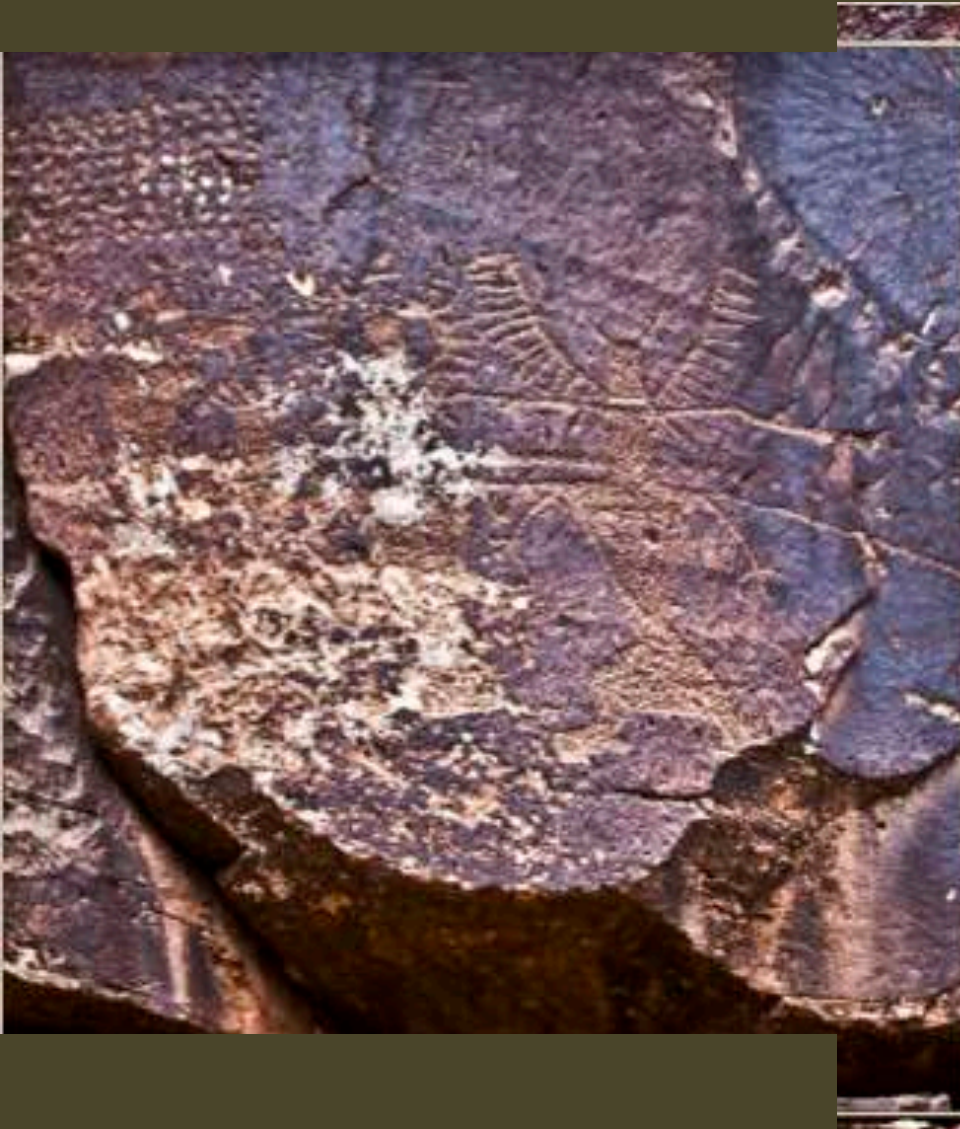


Escalante Study Area





9 Mile Canyon. Shamans' Panel



9 Mile Canyon. Shamans' Panel



Figure in the Fremont style



Body motif
(proportional)



Canyonlands Study Area



Canyonlands Study Area



Canyonlands Study Area



San Rafael Study Area



San Rafael Study Area



San Rafael Study Area



The Sheep Canyon Painted Panel, Craig Law

Sequence of Image Making
Superimposition
The Perplexing Figure
Pecked images





Base of Sheep Canyon Panel

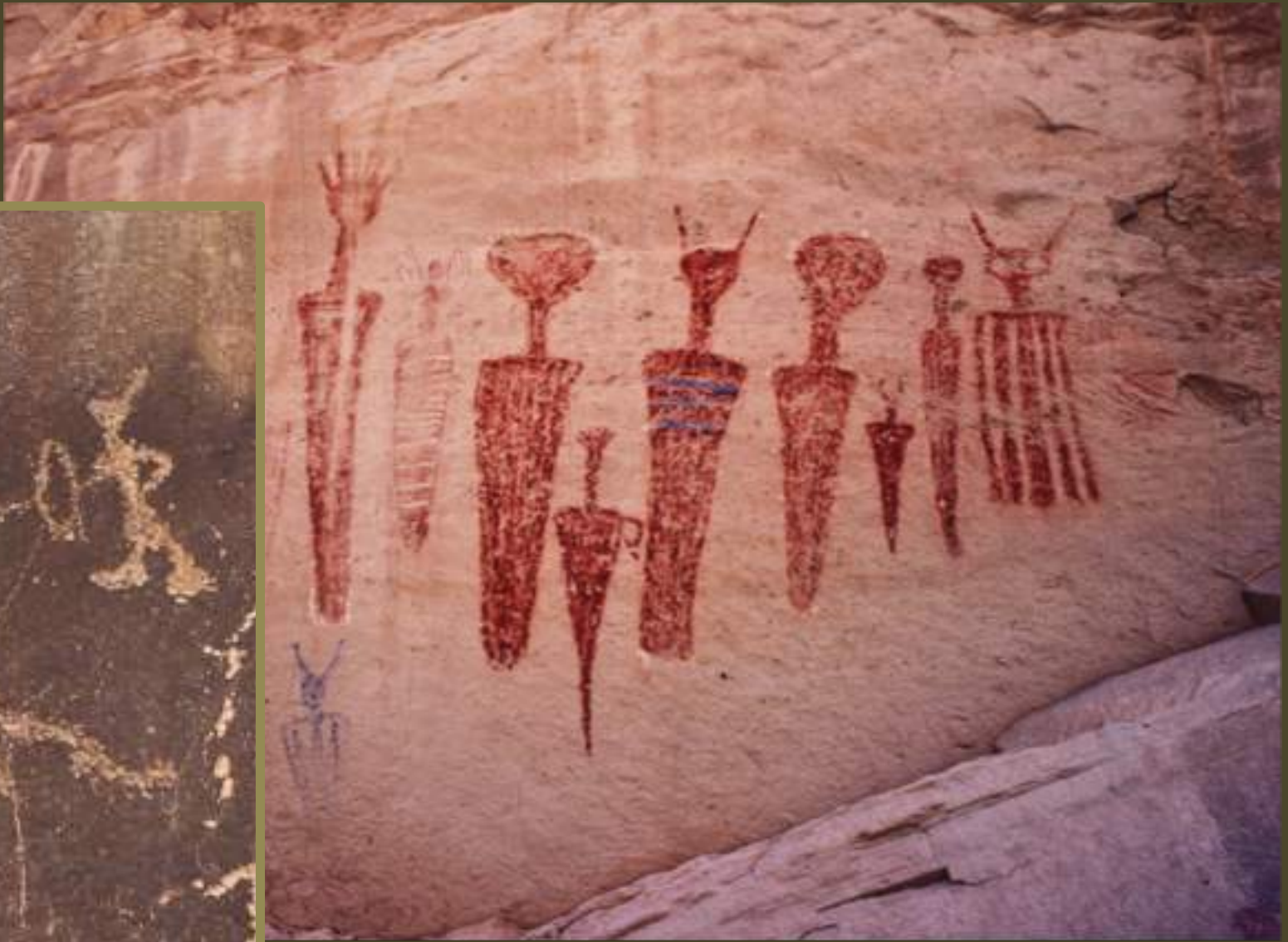




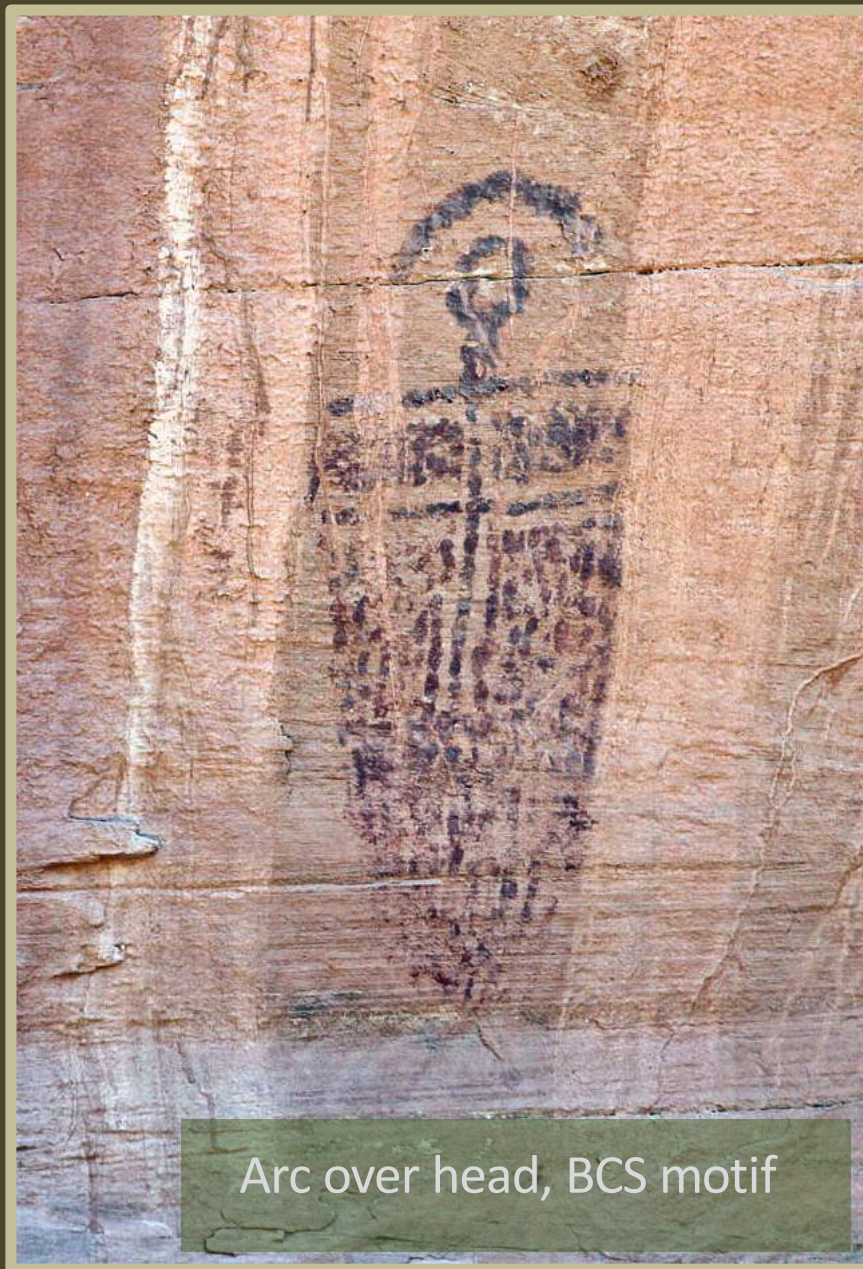
The Sheep Canyon Pecked Panel



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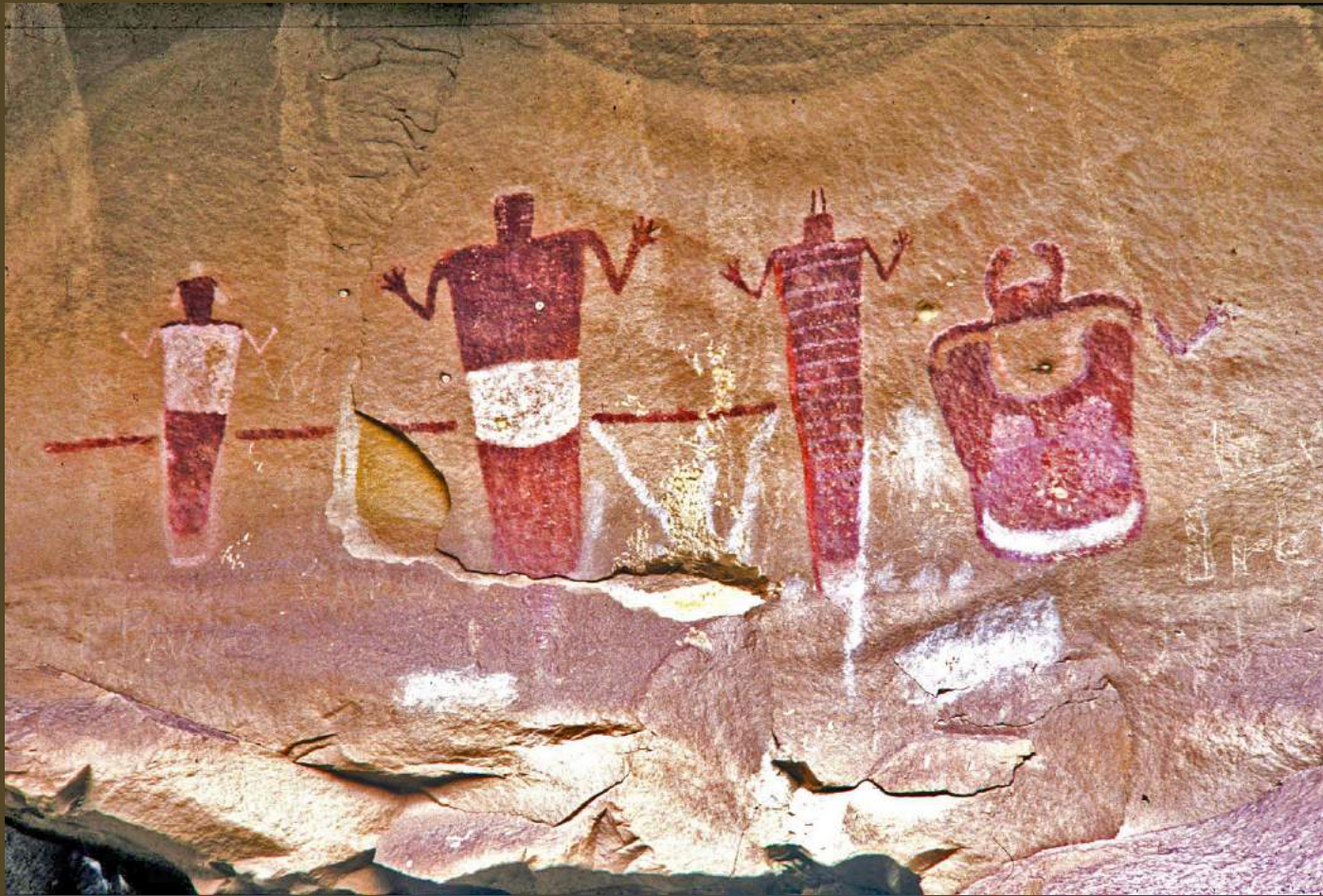


Unscaled Figures...Regional Variation



Arc over head, BCS motif

STYLE: Appearance or Culture?



"No panels of Schaafsma's Barrier Canyon Style have been found to this date in Nine Mile Canyon."

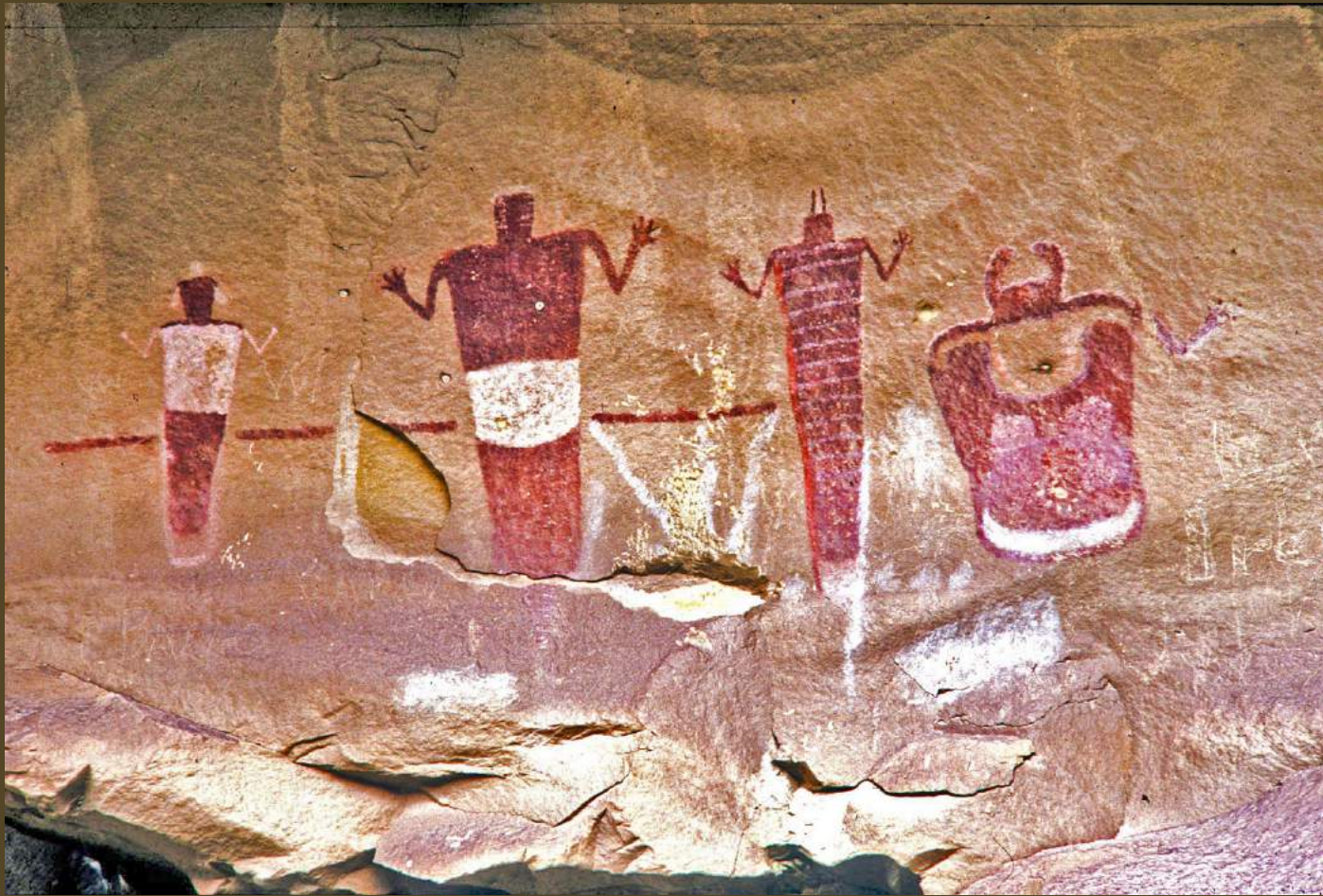
URARA Researcher



“It may look like Barrier Canyon Style but It Isn’t.”



Is style is determined by the way the figures appear?



Is style determined by the way the figures appear?
Or from what culture group or time period the image-maker is thought to have lived?



Utah Historic Style...or...(Neo) Classic Style?



Classical facade with columns...(Neo) Classic style.



Classical dome...New Classic style.



Style is not exclusive to any one time period or culture...although it seems to be almost always the case.



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Heads and Up – Individualistic Head Treatment



Wet on wet painting technique



Head treatment





The Banded Figure





Dry paint technique



The Courthouse Wash Painted Panel





Canyon Pintado, W. Colorado



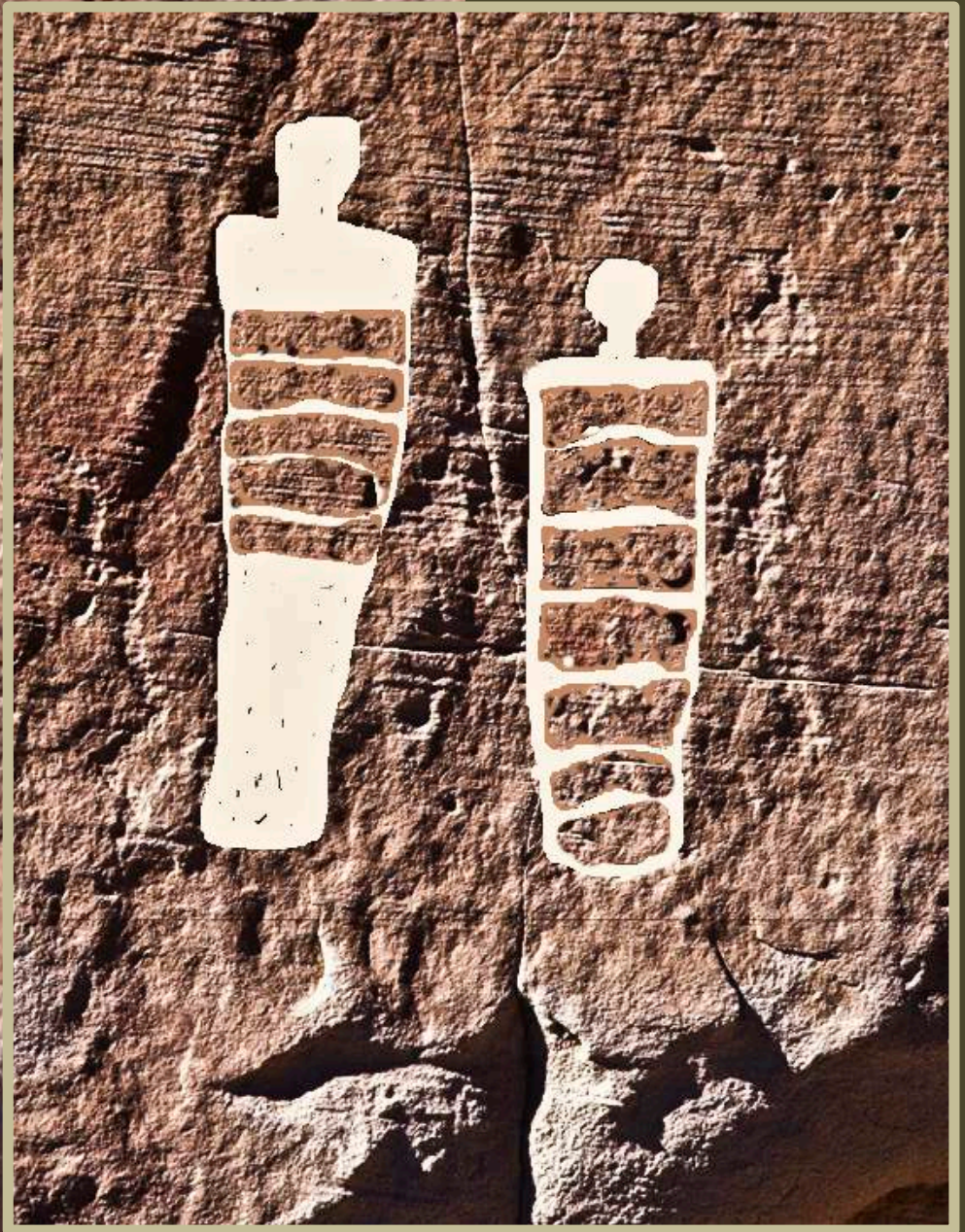
Great Gallery, Canyonlands National Park





Horseshoe Canyon





www.bcsproject.org



Chris Rhodes photo

The concepts (involved in visual analysis) stress the appearance of objects rather than their purposes, their forms rather than their meanings...

J. J. Brody, *Anasazi and Pueblo Painting*

The development of pictorial form relies on basic properties of the nervous system, whose functioning is not greatly modified by cultural and individual differences.

Rudolph Arnheim 1960:167

Style is perceived as a function of the human imagination

Art is conceived of as an intellectually expressive activity wherein systematic, rational decisions are made by individual artists, each guided by his or her own cultural and social history.

J. J. Brody

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)
2. Image Maker (*chooses*)

Cultural Affiliations:

"The arts are perhaps peculiar among man's cultural creations simply because the behavior involved in their creation produces a product which, as an object of study, can be treated quite divorced from cultural context."

Alan P Merriam, *The Arts and Anthropology*

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BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

Conscious Origin

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

Conscious Origin

Unconscious Origin

Image Maker Intention:

> "All depth psychology of whatever school or shade insists on the importance of unconscious processes in creativity, and there is no question that most of the decisive impulses of the artist—and, indeed, of the scientist—issue, as I mentioned earlier, from below the threshold of awareness."

Rudolph Arnheim, *Guernica*

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

Conscious Origin

Unconscious Origin

2. Image Maker (*chooses*)

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

Conscious Origin

Unconscious Origin

2. Image Maker (*chooses*)

Unconscious Menu

Image Maker Intention:

>" ...the similarity between the language of the dream and that of the work of art.

During sleep the human mind seems to descend to the more elementary level at which life situations are described not by abstract concepts but by *significant images*. We cannot but admire the creative imagination awakened by sleep in all of us. It is this dormant power of picture language on which the artist also draws for his inventions."

Rudolph Arnheim, *Art And Visual Perception*

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Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

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Conscious Origin

Unconscious Origin

2. Image Maker (*chooses*)

Unconscious Menu

Conscious Menu (Intention)

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

Conscious Origin

Unconscious Origin

2. Image Maker (*chooses*)

Unconscious Menu

Conscious Menu (Intention)

Conventional Menu (Culture)

BCS PROJECT

Rock Art Scholarship / Study of The Visual

1. Image (*choice*)

Conscious Origin

Unconscious Origin

2. Image Maker (*chooses*)

Unconscious Menu

Conscious Menu (Intention)

Conventional Menu (Culture)

Outside Menu (What's on the Walls)



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Cultural Affiliations:

"Do we ever understand what we think? We understand only such thinking as is a mere equation and from which nothing comes out but what we have put in. That is the manner of working of the intellect."

C. G. Jung 1936:129

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been ingrained in him from earliest times , and, eternally
living, outlasting all generations , *still make up the
groundwork of the human psyche.*"

C. G. Jung 1936:129

