



REPRODUCTION OF IHEREN ROCK PAINTING

Takayuki Hanafusa

Reproduced painting by Y. Martin of H. Lhote mission 1970

© Cliché J.-C. Domenech – MNHN

IHEREN – TASSILI N'AJJER



In the heart of the Algerian Sahara, there is a plateau called Tassili n'Ajjer where over 15,000 paintings and engravings are found over the area of 72,000sq.km. These rock arts are the memory of the past populations, from about 8,000BC to the first centuries of the current era, during the time when the Sahara was verdant until it became desert. Tassili n'Ajjer has a meaning of “Plateau with water” in the local Tuareg language. The plateau was a crossroad of various peoples and they left their own rock arts.

In Iheren, located in the northwest of Tassili n'Ajjer and far away from the touristic area, there is a marvelous prehistoric rock painting drawn by a pastoral people coming from the Mediterranean seaside. Its exact dating is unknown but presumably dated from 3,000BC to 1,500BC.

The Iheren painting is so unique and special. In a rock surface of 3 meters by 9 meters, various scenes of the life of the pastoral people are described with extreme fineness. “The most brilliant work found so far in the Sahara, the master piece of the School of neolithic naturalist” as commented by Henri Lhote, one of the first explorers who investigated thoroughly the rock arts of Tassili n'Ajjer, in his book *Toward other Tassili* (Vers d'autres Tassili). It is amazing that such fine art was realized by prehistoric nomadic people who were not under any dynastic power.

IHEREN ROCK PAINTING



Photo by T. Hanafusa



Reproduced painting by Y. Martin of H. Lhote mission 1970

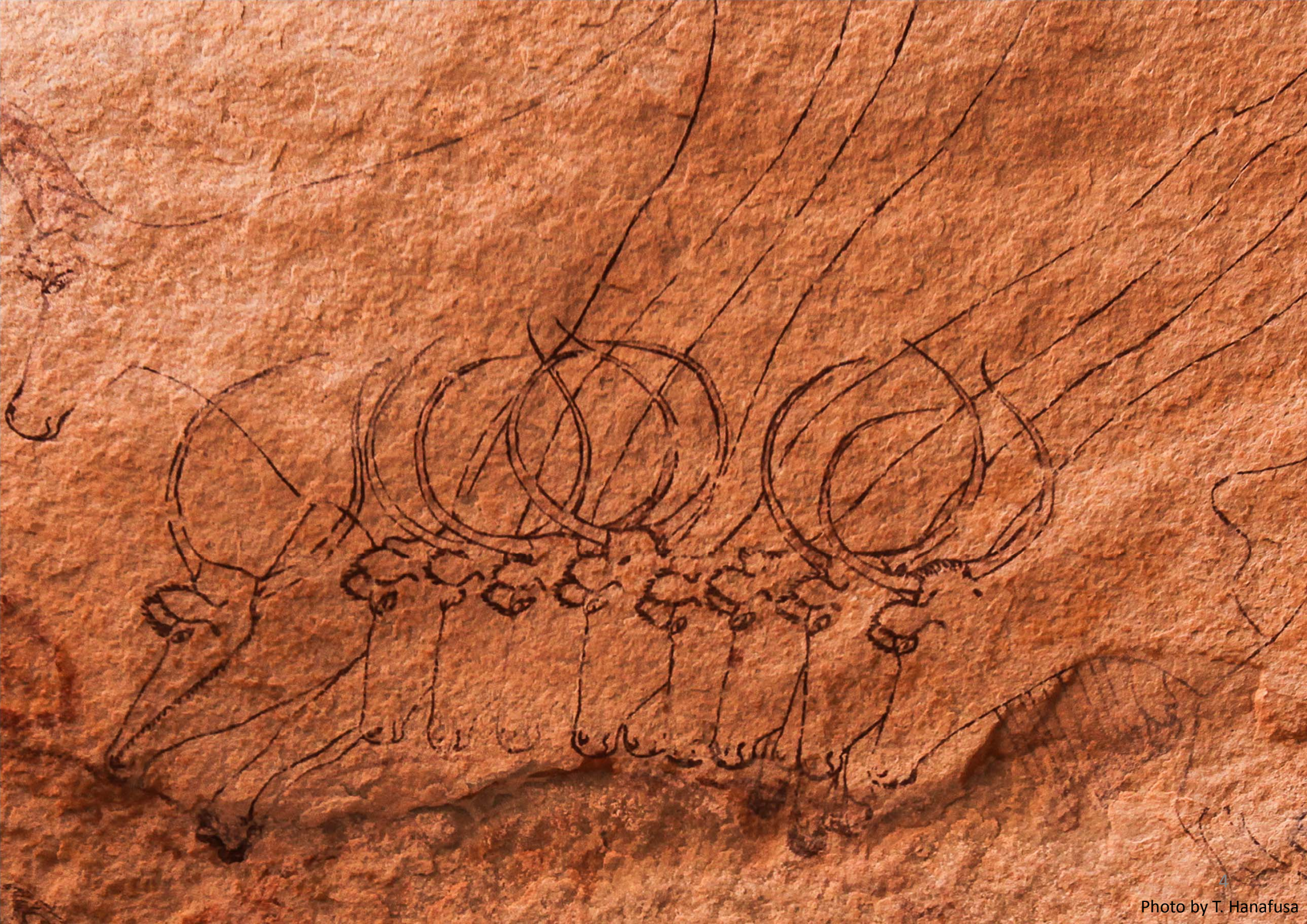
© Cliché J.-C. Domenech – MNHN

Sadly, about two third of the painting is invisible or difficult to recognize the details. However, a reproduced painting made by Pierre Colombel and Yves Martin at the time of the mission of H. Lhote in 1970 can be a good help to understand the complete scenes.

The scene starts from the right showing the people breaking up a camp and moving to a new camp together with their cattle. Women are on the back of cows. Many wild animals are present next to the caravan: giraffes, gazelles, ostriches, etc. At the arrival to a new camp, women start building up tents. Men with spears are hunting a lion intruded into the camp and attacking a sheep (or a goat). Many other scenes of the life of the pastoral people are described in detail.

The fineness of the painting is not comparable with the reproduced painting by the mission of H. Lhote. But the reproduced painting shows the parts which are invisible with the actual painting: the lion is holding a sheep (or a goat) under the front legs and a man running away from the lion after throwing a spear. Without the reproduction, it is impossible or difficult to imagine the invisible parts.

The reproduction works of H. Lhote were done after wetting and cleaning by using a sponge. This enabled more clear visibility of the painting. Of course, such method is forbidden today.



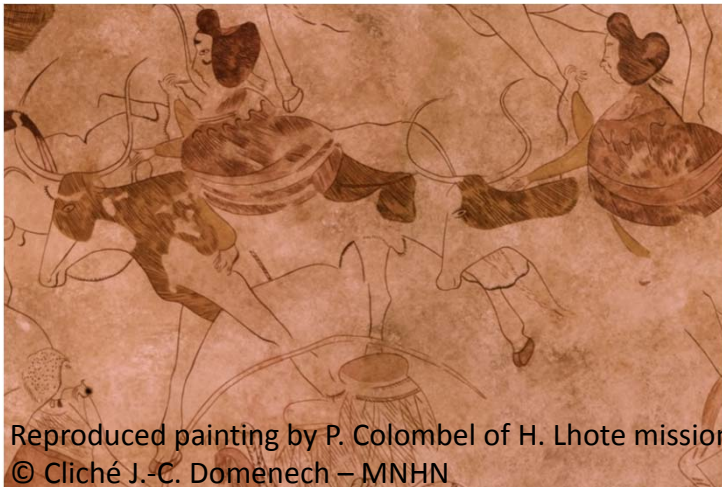
PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTION PROJECT



1. REPRODUCTION OF IHEREN PAINTING AS A WHOLE

Some visible parts of the painting were photographed and published so far but no photo was taken as a complete painting. A high-Definition photo will be realized and it will allow to print at one to one scale with high definition for the whole painting of 3m x 9m.

This photographic reproduction will have a good value as cultural archive as well as witness of its actual situation. Last but not least, it is valuable to introduce this amazing prehistoric fine art.



Reproduced painting by P. Colombel of H. Lhote mission
© Cliché J.-C. Domenech – MNHN

2. REPRODUCTION OF THE REPRODUCED PAINTING OF P. COLOMBEL AND Y. MARTIN AS A WHOLE

Some part of the reproduced painting were published so far:

- Vers d'autres Tassili, H. Lhote, 1976
- Sahara 10000 Jahre zwischen Weide und Wueste, 1978

The first book shows a small part of the paintings in black and white. The second book published by the City Museum of Cologne contains the most of images but difficult to know the total composition and the quality of the print is limited due to the small printing size.

The Musée de l'Homme in Paris, owner of the reproduced paintings of P. Colombel and Y. Martin, agreed to use their digitally archived photos from which one to one scale prints are possible.

3. REPRODUCTION OF IHEREN PAINTING USING STATE-OF-THE-ART IMAGE PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY

The image processing technology developed in the medical fields is now applicable also for rock arts. Invisible parts can be revealed.

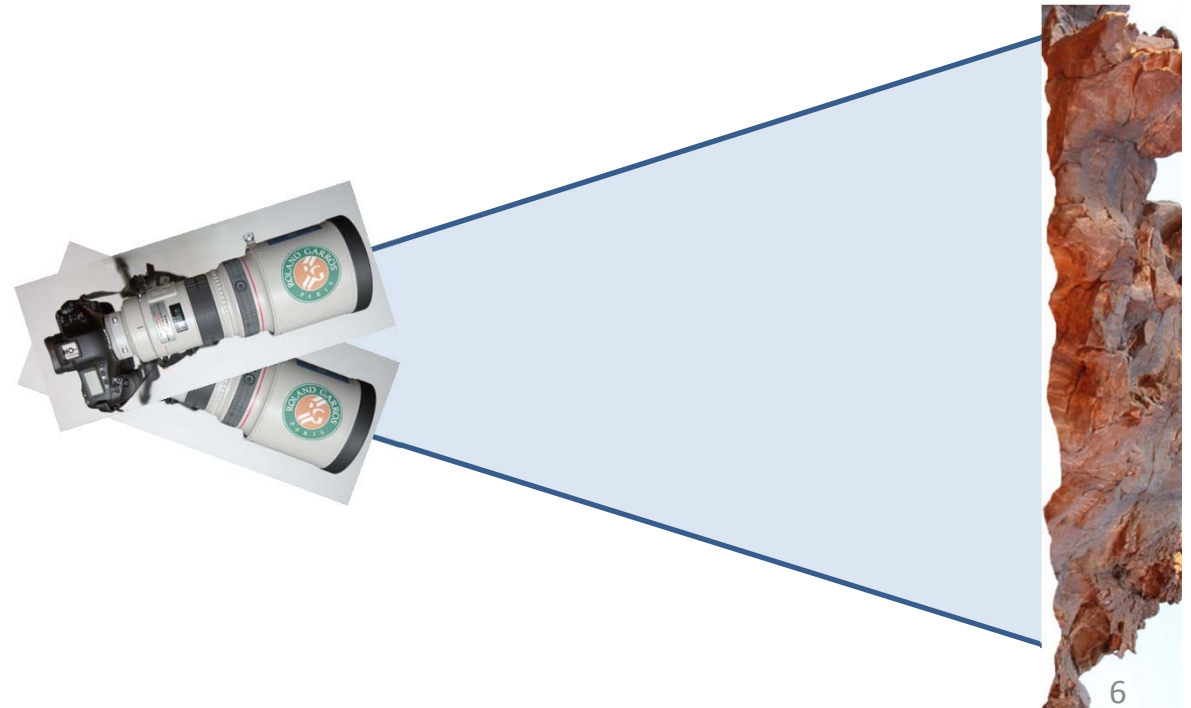


DStretch

HIGH-DEFINITION PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTION



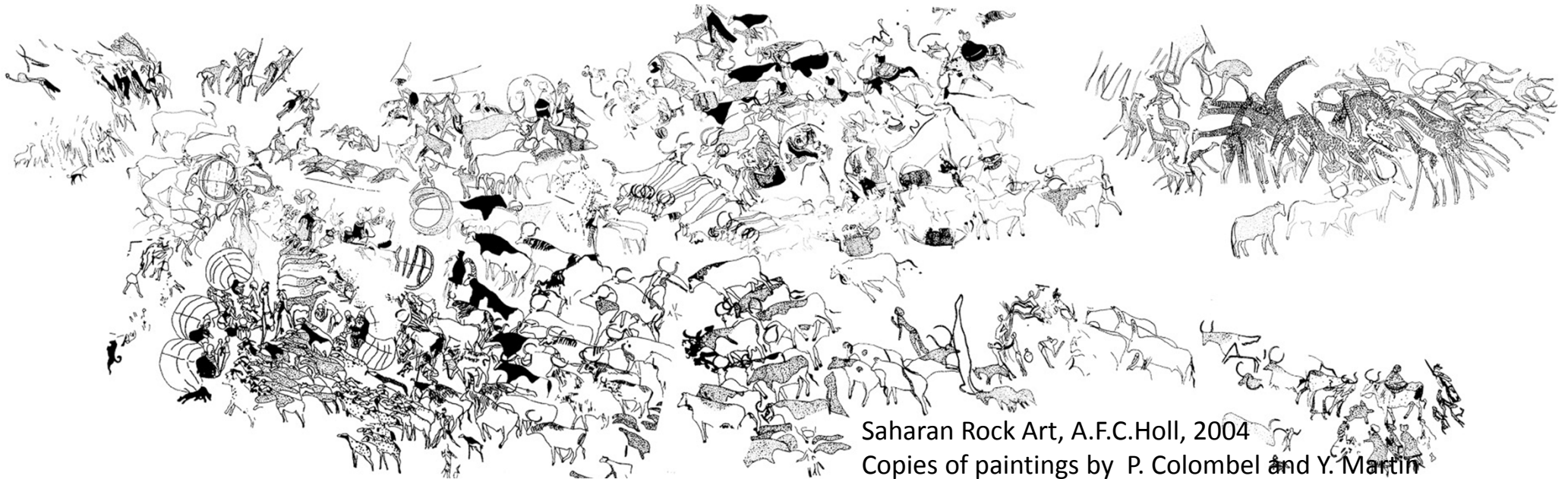
- Prints which are watched closely require a definition of 100 ppi (pixels per inch) or higher
- Printing Iheren painting at 1:1 with 100 ppi requires a definition of 35,500 x 11,800 pixels
- Good depth of field is necessary to cover the irregularity of the surface
- Composed with approx. 45 (9 x 5) shots stitched to one image



REPRODUCED PAINTING BY H.LHOTE MISSION 1970



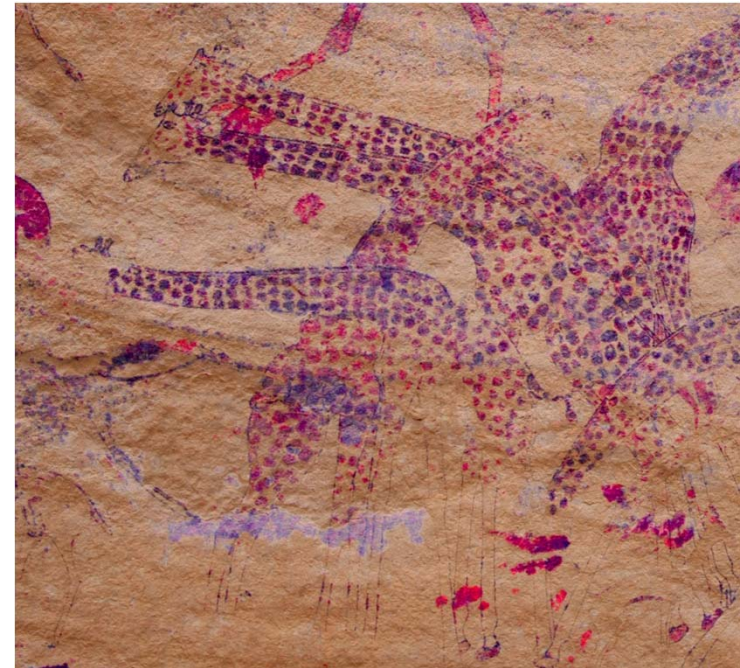
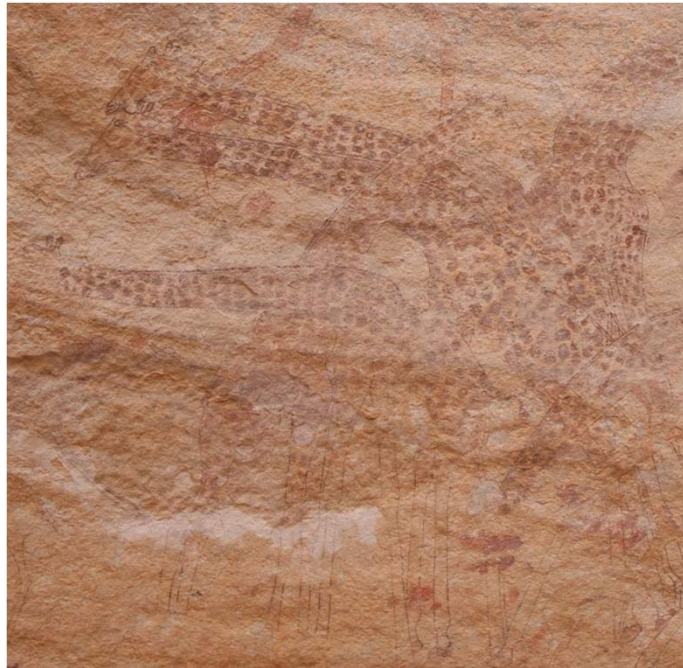
Reproduced painting by P. Colombel and Y. Martin of H. Lhote mission 1970, © Cliché J.-C. Domenech – MNHN



Saharan Rock Art, A.F.C.Holl, 2004
Copies of paintings by P. Colombel and Y. Martin
repositioned by A. Holl.

REPRODUCTION USING IMAGE PROCESSING

Dstretch, an image processing software dedicated to the rock arts, enables to show faded or dust covered invisible parts. It gives a surprising result with the surface covered by dust. It is expected to give better result than wetting by water.



ROAD TO IHEREN



Iheren can not be reached by any vehicle and it requires several days by walk.

Photo by T. Hanafusa

COMMUNICATION PLAN

EXHIBITIONS IN JAPAN

- One to one scale Prints of Iheren painting and its reproduced paintings of P. Colombel and Y. Martin

POSTER PRODUCTION

- Original inkjet prints of 60cm x 180cm of 1/5 scale. With this scale, the size of a person will be 4 to 5cm with good details

REPORTAGE (PHOTOS, DIARY AND VIDEO)

- For magazines and web publications
- Road to Iheren and photo shoot of the Iheren painting

ARCHIVE DATA

- High definition image data for non profit organizations
- Resized image data of 1/5 with approx. 7,100 x 2,360 pixels will be made. This will be good for guiding the painting by using iPad type of tool.

REQUESTED SUPPORTS AND BENEFITS

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

- Algerian government to support shooting photos in Tassili n'Ajjer
- Musée de l'Homme has accepted to support this project and allows to use their photographic archive of the reproduced paintings made by P. colombel and Y. Martin.

In return to their supports, they will get copies of the high-definition images in digital form with the right to use for non commercial purposes

POSSIBLE CORPORATE SPONSORS

- Magazines such as French and Japanese Travel magazines, etc.
- French and Japanese travel agents
- Printer for ink-jet printing

Depending on the level of support, they will get photos with certain rights. They will also get their appearances in the exhibitions. Details are to be discussed.

Biography & Contact

Takayuki Hanafusa

was born in Gifu, Japan in 1952. He received his B.A. in French Literature from Sophia University in Tokyo. He worked 35 years in the international business and he lived in the overseas countries for 18 years: Holland, Germany, France, USA and Algeria.

He has photography experience over 40 years as amateur. His experience in Algeria made him a lover of the Sahara and enriched his photography life. In the past 5 years, he visited 7 times the Sahara in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt.

He studied photography at Spéos Paris Photographic Institute in 2012-2013 to become a freelance photographer. His home address is Osaka in Japan but he lives currently in Paris.

Contact

e-mail: hana52@osaka.email.ne.jp

Tel.: +33 (0)6 81 80 53 64 (France)

+81 (0)90 8982-1112 (Japan)

Homepage: <http://hanafusa.info/>

Copy right: Takayuki Hanafusa

Date: 08-06-2013

