

# VALLTORTA MUSEUM

Valltorta Museum was created in 1994 by the Generalitat Valenciana with a mission to publicise and promote the preservation of Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin, included in UNESCO's World Heritage list since 1998.



## AN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

Besides being included in UNESCO's World Heritage list, Rock Art in the Valencian Community is also listed and protected by state and regional legislation. However, Rock Art is an extremely fragile heritage which can only be properly understood within the context of the landscape in which it has been preserved for thousands of years. In fact, Rock Art and the landscape ought to be considered as an inseparable unit to be treated with the utmost respect; and it is the duty and responsibility of everybody to ensure its continuing preservation.

The current inventory of Rock Art in the Valencian Community includes almost six hundred groups spanning a long period: from the Upper Palaeolithic, 26,000 years ago, until the Bronze Age, 3500 years ago and comprises the most complete graphic archive of the prehistoric period in our region.



Cova dels Cavalls (Tírig)

## ROOM 1 PALEOLITHIC ART: THE FIRST SYMBOLS



Exhibition rooms in Valltorta Museum

The first artistic expressions took place during the Ice Age, with the arrival of Homo Sapiens. These include engravings, rock paintings and decorated objects; a series of symbolic creations used by Palaeolithic hunters as a means of communication. Animals are the primary and almost exclusive subject matter in Palaeolithic art, at times accompanied by signs. Human figures are rare and generally not very naturalistic. To date there are few known examples of Palaeolithic Rock Art in the Valencian Community, the most

outstanding of which are Cova Fosca (Vall d'Ebo, Alicante), Cova del Comte (Pedreguer, Alicante), Cova de les Meravelles (Gandía, Valencia), and L'Abric d'En Melià (Serra d'En Galceran, Castellón). The number of engravings and paintings in La Cova del Parpalló (Gandía, Valencia) makes it a particularly remarkable example.



Hunting scene  
Detail of central panel in  
Cova dels Cavalls (Tírig)



## ROOMS 2 AND 3 THE ART OF NEOLITHIC HUNTERS AND FARMERS

At the beginning of the Holocene, 10,000 years ago, the world climate saw a progressive rise in temperatures and in humidity (Preboreal Period). The region of Valencia was still inhabited by hunters who started to develop new technology and social organisation, leading to the Mesolithic period. The whole Mediterranean basin then underwent a radical process of change around 7,500 years ago when people began to exchange products, technology and ideas. Macroschematic Art can be found in the area comprised between

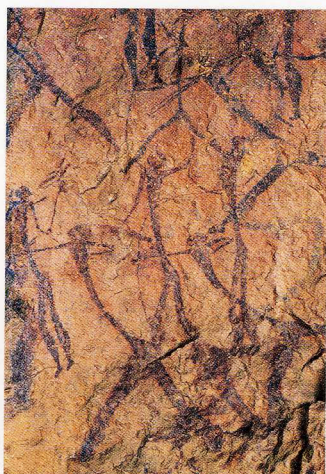
the Benicadell, Mariola and Aitana mountain ranges. This is one of the first examples of eminently Neolithic art, characterised by large red painted figures: praying humans and snake-like patterns. The most representative group is found in Pla de Petracos (Castell de Castells, Alicante). In the Júcar basin and in other remote places there are similar rock art paintings that would seem to be an evolution of this style. This is known as Old Schematic Art. Levantine Art is found widely within the Valencian Community, with more than two hundred

known examples, and its main characteristic is scenes including both men and animals. The details tell us a lot about their makers, for instance, clothes, weapons, personal ornaments and social behaviour. The most important examples of this style are located in the Valltorta and Gasulla ravines in Maestrazgo, Castellón. These rock art paintings tell us about the lives of the last hunters to inhabit this area 10,000 years ago.



**Archer**  
Saltadora caves  
(Albocàsser / Les Coves de Vinromà)

## ROOM 4 NEW FORMS OF EXPRESSION



**Group of archers**  
Ribassals or Del Civil caves (Tírig)

Farming was consolidated in the region of Valencia throughout the 3rd millennium B.C. This was also the time when metal was introduced and the first copper objects were made. During this period, Schematic Art developed in several forms such as rock paintings and engravings. Schematic Art is widely distributed throughout the Iberian Peninsula and in the Valencian Community. It is characterised by depicting humans and animals schematically, with anatomy reduced to its bare essentials.

The most common motifs are anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, idols and geometrical patterns, transformed into a form of abstract art. The last examples of rock art can be traced back to the end of the Bronze Age. In the Iron Age Iberian people developed a culture of Mediterranean roots whose most typical expressions were the decoration of pottery and writing. For thousands of years before the invention of writing, which was to open up a whole new era, Rock Art was the most elaborate form of graphic expression.



**Two archers**  
Remigia cave (Ares del Maestrat)

### Winter (October-April)

Tuesday - Sunday: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm & 4:00 - 7:00 pm.  
Guided tours: Mas d'En Josep, 10:00 am; Cova dels Cavalls, 12:00 noon; Coves del Civil, 4:30 pm.

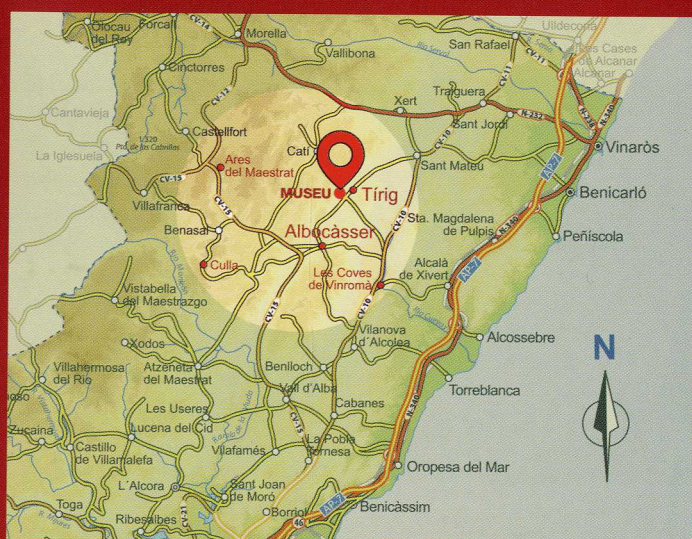
### Summer (May-September)

Tuesday - Sunday: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm & 5:00 - 8:00 pm.  
Guided tours to rock shelters:  
Mas d'En Josep, 10:00 am;  
Cova dels Cavalls, 12:00 noon;  
Coves del Civil, 6:00 pm.

### Closed Mondays

Group visits must be booked in advance. The museum and visits to the rock shelters will be closed on 24th, 25th & 31st December, 1st & 6th January.

THE GUIDE'S INSTRUCTIONS  
MUST BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES



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