

Title: Horses and Deer

Date: 22,000-14,000 BCE

Location: Altamira Spain

http://en.museodealtamira.mcu.es/Prehistoria_y_Arte/la_cueva.html

“The cave of Altamira was discovered by Modesto Cubillas towards 1868, who subsequently informed Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola, who first visited the cave in 1875. Three years later, he attended the World Fair held in Paris where he saw firsthand some of the prehistoric objects discovered in the caves in the south of France, where excavation work in search of humankind's most distant origins had been under way for some years. The cave of Altamira has the privilege of being the first place in the world where the existence of rock art from the Upper Paleolithic age was identified. Its uniqueness and quality, the stunning conservation, and the freshness of its pigments meant its acceptance would be delayed by a quarter of a century. At the time, it was a scientific anomaly, a discovery that constituted a giant leap and not an incremental step, and the phenomenon was difficult to understand for the society of the nineteenth century, gripped by extremely scientific and rigid propositions.

Bison, horses, deer, hands, and mysterious signs were painted or engraved over the 9,000 years during which the cave of Altamira was inhabited. These representations extend for a length of more than 270 meters throughout the cave although the best known are the famous polychrome paintings. Conserving their excellent condition is a challenge for science and heritage management and is the priority of the Museum of Altamira.”

