

The prehistory of visual arts, music, and language

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Abstract:

The origins of music, visual art and language go deep into the human lineage. Yet, only the visual arts have left a material trace in the archaeological record. The earliest evidence of music and speech in prehistory come from instruments and writing respectively, however these inventions are relatively recent and cannot inform us directly about when these behaviours first emerged. Nevertheless, the analysis of prehistoric and cross-cultural musical instruments and visual arts may shed some light on the evolution of human vocal and visual expression. The aim of this special session is to exchange knowledge about recent archeological discoveries and interpretations in the domains of visual arts, music, and language from an interdisciplinary perspective spanning archeology, anthropology, biology, cognitive science, musicology, linguistics, and philosophy.